



Birchanger Village Magazine

February 2024

Issue 253



Travellers Have Won Their Appeal to Stay in Birchanger

PINS have just published the decision and the Travellers have won their appeal. A quick reading indicates that the key issues were as before, in the best interests of the children and the lack of alternative sites.

The Inspector also referred to the lack of progress by UDC on identifying alternative sites in the time since the last appeal. Thus, the Inspector granted that appeal despite attaching significant weight to protecting the Green Belt and to the adverse aircraft and road traffic noise impacts to which the site was subject.

The Inspector has applied some strict conditions including the limiting of occupation to the same named families as before and the requirement for 'noise compliant' caravans. The Inspector also rejected the travellers application for costs. Full details of the decision can be found as follows:

- 1) Type "Planning Inspectorate" in your search engine.
- 2) Open the Planning Inspectorate home page.
- 3) Click on "Search for an Appeal".
- 4) In the top right-hand box, type "3324961" and click "Submit Search".

See Page 2 for Birchanger Residents Association response

Winners of the Big Light Up Christmas 2023

Richard and Lesley receiving the winners' cup from Uttlesford District Council chairman Geof Driscoll at the social club.



Rat Run Chaos in Birchanger Lane Again!

Community Speed Watch Were out and about for three days during January, braving minus degree temperatures to monitor the effects of the road closures in Stansted and Forest Hall and the consequential rat-run through Birchanger Lane.

The lane was so congested with traffic from Stansted Road that there was no chance of drivers speeding. The fastest vehicle was recorded (from the J8 Junction direction) at 32 miles per hour, which is within tolerance limits and therefore not recorded.



Between 08:00 and 09:00, 460 Vehicles were recorded, on the 15th January. 485 were recorded on the 17th January and 428 on the 19th January. 301 vehicles were counted in one direction from Stansted Road towards the M11/J8 junction which compares to the survey of 2018 that recorded only 105 vehicles during the same time window in the same direction! Many thanks to the CSW volunteers: Geof, Bernadette, Sarah Keith, and Lorraine.

As a footnote, Essex County Council has just been given £121m over the next 10 years for highway maintenance. As Birchanger Lane has suffered during the last 2 years with excessive traffic caused by the roadworks on the A120, resulting in large dangerous gaps along the verges, District Councillor Ray Gooding has been asked by Birchanger Parish Council to arrange repair of the lane damage as a matter of urgency.

Letter to the Chief Executive, Uttlesford District Council From Birchanger Residents Association 29th January 2024 - Regarding Birchanger Travellers Site

You will by now be aware of the Inspector's decision, announced last week, to allow the appeal made on behalf of the travellers who unlawfully moved on to a Green Belt site in Birchanger in July 2018. Local residents are understandably dismayed by this decision and the Inspector's Decision Letter clearly indicates that the blame for this lies squarely at the door of the Council:

"31. Furthermore, the Council have not presented at the hearing any notable progress since the last appeal on this site with regards the new Local Plan, annual monitoring report or in the provision of other Gypsy Traveller sites.

32. I am therefore satisfied that, on the basis of the evidence before me, that there are no alternative sites and if the Appellants cannot continue to live on this site it would necessitate a return to a largely roadside existence. This is a material consideration to which I afford significant weight."

This finding is almost exactly the same as that of the Inspector at the 2021 Appeal, and it stems from the ongoing failure of the Council to comply with government policy, as set down in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites ('PPTS'), which requires as follows:

"Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

- a) identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets;
- b) identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15; ..." [emphasis added]

The Council's most recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment ('GTAA') was undertaken in 2016. This, of itself, is unsatisfactory, and it is even more unsatisfactory that the GTAA has only been updated once since 2016 whereas government policy, as set down in the PPTS, requires the GTAA to be updated annually. Moreover, the GTAA relies upon the Birchanger site to meet projected demand despite the Council refusing permission for this in June 2023. It is therefore understandable that the Inspector concluded that, despite the harm to the Green Belt and the poor environmental conditions of the Birchanger site, the travellers should be allowed to remain, because the alternative was a roadside existence or another unauthorised encampment, and he had a duty to consider the best interests of the children and Article 8 of the ECHR.

In the case of the 2021 appeal, the Inspector attached a number of conditions to the planning permission. Similar conditions have been attached to this permission and, in addition, there is a strict noise condition (Condition 11), which will require the occupants to make significant and speedy investment to comply with BS8233:2014 and the Noise Policy Statement for England.

The Council will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all the conditions and, in this regard, it is worth noting what the Inspector had to say in paragraph 54 of the Decision Letter: The conditions are drafted in such a way as to require the appellant to comply with a strict timetable. I am very much aware that it was the failure to comply with a similar condition on the 2021 Appeal that resulted in a resubmission and subsequently this Appeal. Nonetheless the conditions and requirements are necessary and relevant, as is the need to ensure compliance within a timely manner." Having regard to the planning history of the Birchanger travellers site, there is little expectation that the travellers will comply with this latest set of conditions. Moreover, the travellers now know that, for as long as the Council is unable to provide an alternative site, there is no need for them to comply with the conditions.

The best interests of the children and Article 8 of the ECHR will continue to trump all other considerations if there is nowhere else for the travellers to go. Accordingly, the Regulation 19 Draft of the Local Plan needs to make contingent provision for a suitable alternative site for the Birchanger travellers and thereby enable the current site to be returned to the Green Belt. Just six per cent of Uttlesford is designated Green Belt and so, clearly, this deserves strong protection. It goes without saying that alternative traveller sites should be located within the 94 per cent of Uttlesford which is not designated Green Belt. In the unlikely event that the travellers comply with all the conditions, there will be no need for this alternative site. But if no provision is made for an alternative site, the Inspector will have wasted his time by setting down conditions.

Birchanger residents are entitled to feel that, once again, they have been badly let down by their Council. It beggars belief that UDC has a Local Plan which is almost 20 years out of date and, for so many years, has failed in its statutory duty to make a proper assessment and adequate provision for travellers sites. What assurance can you provide to the residents of Birchanger regarding the Council's commitment to protecting our Green Belt, to ensuring compliance with the Inspector's conditions and, without further delay, making proper local provision for traveller accommodation in line with the PPTS?

CC: The Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP - Cllr Petrina Lees, Leader of UDC - Cllr Nick Church - Cllr Ray Gooding - Angie Driscoll Chair of BPC

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Join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/birchanger/

Peter Sampson



magazine@birchanger.com



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2 Harrisons, Birchanger

VILLAGE NEWS

By Elizabeth Godwin

How Can We Get Rid of the Rat Runners?

We all know who they are and have a fairly good idea where they come from, but that does not mean we can stop them making our lives a misery in Birchanger morning and evening through the rush hour period. These people appear to be normal individuals but, in their rush to avoid queuing through the road works they prefer to make our lives a misery instead and rat-run through Birchanger Lane despite the fact that they still have to queue to join the rest of the traffic on the A120 to head to the J8 M11 roundabout. Please rat-runner, stop using Birchanger Lane and return to your old route. You really are not saving yourself much time if any by selfishly ploughing your way through our village regardless of anything which has the temerity to cross your path. Fortunately, not everyone is inconsiderate. Thank you to those who actually did pause to let me out of my drive today.

Watch out for Fraudulent Car Sales

If you are buying a car you would like to know that your purchase is legitimate and all above board. This is harder to do if you are not buying from a trusted dealer or someone who is well known to you. First of all, check the given address and postcode. If you can, check the given landline and mobile numbers. Remember, all the big dealers have a landline and mobile number. Beware of any suspicious or unusual messages. Be alarmed if you cannot view the vehicle in person before the sale and run checks to make sure that the car has not been stolen, has money still owing on a previous purchase, or has been an insurance write-off.

Could You Meet the Guys Who Trashed Your House

After a burglary, most people feel violated and abused even if they were absent at the time. Meeting their abuser other than to give them a good roasting before they rot in hell is in the minds of most people after they arrive home and find their house wrecked and some of their treasured possessions gone. A program now in its eighth year and known as Restorative Justice aims to bring harmer and victim together in an attempt to find some sort of resolution. It is a chance for victim and perpetrator to meet face to face where victims can tell the perpetrators what the crime has meant to them and the offender can gain some understanding of the harm they have caused. It cannot work in every case. Some cases are totally unsuitable for this type of rehabilitative approach. Some victims feel too upset for this approach, others have too many aggressive

feelings towards the perpetrator while many just want to forget the whole incident. But for those who do participate each side gets a better understanding of the other and most seem to think it has benefits. But does it prevent more crimes?

Protect Your Car

A car is often one of our most expensive purchases in life. Like our homes, they are best locked when we are not inside them, and there are many occasions where a simple slip can cause an awful lot of problems. Like at the petrol station. You have just filled up your car and go to pay. To your horror you see your vehicle vanishing from the forecourt. You had left the doors unlocked and the keys inside. There is no saying where it will end up with that full tank for which you still have to pay. Cold mornings mean time taken to de-ice the car. Don't go back into the house or leave the car for anything. If it is left unlocked and gets stolen the insurance company won't pay. There is no protection if your car has a device which will open the car from some distance away. Thieves can get round this. Store your keys in a Faraday pouch or box or other special protection device. Even when you are in the car the thieves can try and steal it. If you are driving on your own, lock the doors or you could find yourself jumped at traffic lights. If someone bumps you from behind, drive to a safe light place where there are plenty of people around and stop there. We are not used to, nor do we expect the car thief's audacity. We have to try to learn to be ahead of the thieves all the time. Dashcams are proving invaluable to the police after an accident. Perhaps they will be compulsory one day?

Make Birchanger Beautiful Again This Spring

Many centuries ago, Birchanger was completely surrounded by trees. It was just a small settlement in a clearing where paths crossed in a deep forest. Over the following centuries Birchanger got busier and the clearing got larger and most of the trees disappeared until we have reached the very different Birchanger we have today. Now we have climate change and huge housing pressures. Many of us think that there is nothing we can do about it, but we can in our own small way. There is something every home can do this Spring and that is plant a tree or more. Be careful with your choice, a traditional oak is not exactly your best idea in a small garden, but there are other smaller varieties which you might like to look at instead. A trip to a nursery would help you to pick the right one, and there are various schemes where trees are free to plant, although the quality of the trees varies,

Birchanger All Girls Society

The 'BAGS' welcome women to join them on the last Wednesday of every month at 8.00 pm in the village hall.

Next meeting:

Wednesday 28th February 7.45 for 8.00 pm

bags@birchanger.com

Olivia: 07568 574703 Rosemary: 01279 814678
Liz Turner: 07473 508056



Victoria Stokes MCFHP MAFHP

Foot Health Practitioner

Corn removal & Verrucae treatment
Callus debridement
Diabetic foot care
Neurovascular assessment
Toenail cutting
Fungal nail treatment
Ingrown toenail treatment

Phone/WhatsApp: 07783937401
Email: victoriastokesfhp@gmail.com

and they may need a lot of care at first. Birchanger will never return to its original forest state, but we can improve and keep on improving the tree cover and start to do a bit for climate change as well.

Are Electric Scooters, Quad Bikes and Segways Legal on Our Roads?

The answer is no! These ‘Vehicles’, and some other electric assisted vehicles are classified similarly to motor vehicles and are currently subject to the same legal requirements as a motorcycle or car. At this time, they are not legally allowed to be used on the road or pavement, but there are special parks where they can be used if the landowner has given permission and the rider is over 14.



Many of these vehicles fail to meet road safety requirements. However, electric bikes can be used on the road as long as the rider is 14 or over and the bike meets the required standards. They are not classed as a motor vehicle and do not need insurance or a driving license. In some larger towns or cities, electric scooters can be hired as part of a government trial.

Crime is Down in Essex

You might not think so, but crime is actually down in Essex, apparently by some 10,000 fewer crimes countywide. There has been a huge effort by police to crack down on crime, including bad driving throughout the county. It has been helped by people actually coming forward more often to report crime, and to be a witness to it in any subsequent prosecution. People are often scared to come forward and act as a witness, often because they dislike shopping someone, or are afraid of repercussions and the possibility of having to appear in court. All very understandable, but if we all took that line, criminals would have a field day. Police or their representatives will always support those who testify against crime. We need to have confidence in them and know that repercussions are rare. Always seek help if you are concerned about a crime you have witnessed. Crime rates will rise again if people do not come forward and report anything they see which appears to be wrong. If a crime is not in progress, use the 101 number to report it.

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Friendly, Professional electrician with over 20 years experience based in Bishop’s Stortford, offering all domestic electrical solutions in Herts & Essex



Blink and You Missed It

Christmas has come and gone in Birchanger, but most of us will remember December 2023 for a very long time to come. It is amazing how the village comes together every year to produce a combined masterpiece of lights which is the envy of all for miles around. Thank you for being a part of it, as every display no matter how small has helped Birchanger produce a big display which will be remembered at least until we start all over again next December. There will be a lot to keep up with. Many are saying that the Big Light Up 2023 was the best ever. Start planning for 2024. The year goes faster than we think.

Do You Know Who supplied Your Drugs? (Not the Ones From the Chemist)

For those it might concern: As you sit there comfortably relaxing with your plug of cannabis or something stronger have you given any thought as to how the trail from grower to customer went?



Does it bother you that it was probably transported part of the way by children and youngsters, who after being lured into the business by promises of designer clothes and trainers find the reality is that they cannot even

raise enough cash to buy shoelaces never mind trainers. They are trapped, as they now have acquired a habit which they cannot break and the only way to survive is to carry on for a pittance and an assured drug supply. That is how most of the drugs arrive in this country. It will never be right until we do something about it.

Is Your Renewal Request Genuine?

At this time of year, a lot of the things we subscribe to come up for renewal and we get a lot of requests for renewal online. But are we sure that they are genuine? Criminals often send out renewal emails purporting to come from popular services in an attempt to obtain your data and use this to steal money and your identity. Always check renewal requests and their email address very carefully before answering or sending any money. There are agencies out there who can help you. Try Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 which is open for callers 24 hours a day.

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THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE

I am writing this as volunteers work to clear the Gardens of fallen trees and boughs brought down by the torrential rains and winds at the beginning of January. Hopefully February will be seasonal with some cold weather, but also with some of those lovely bright winter days on which it is a joy to be outside, seeing the early flowers emerge.

Of course, for us that means snowdrops and with luck some aconites too. The snowdrops have spread hugely through the Gardens in recent years – partly because we have planted extra, but also because we have been careful to leave grass cutting till after the bulbs have replenished themselves and divided, producing extra bulbs; and after they have formed seeds, which apparently are planted unwittingly by ants carrying them into their nests!

We don't have as many aconites as we would like. Their bright yellow flowers make for such a cheery sight, often coming a bit before the snowdrops. They are native to Italy, Bulgaria, the Balkans, Turkey, and Iraq. I have read they were introduced to Britain in 1596 and were first recorded as being naturalised in the wild in 1838.



We have some longstanding clumps and I wonder when they were planted. In any case, we have found it difficult to establish more although we keep trying!

Our open days for snowdrops are on Sunday 18th, Thursday 22nd, Sunday 25th and Thursday 29th of February and we have our fingers crossed that the snowdrops will be at their best then. Gates open at 11.00 am and tickets can be purchased in advance through our website, or direct through www.Trybooking.com. Snowdrops in the green will be on sale. Please note that the gardens of Warwick House are not open to visitors on the Thursdays. For more information, please visit our website at www.eastonlodge.co.uk Jill Goldsmith



A chilly and rainy winter day did not keep a large hall full of u3a members from their monthly meeting where Ray Clark gave a talk; 'Stay tuned - I could say something brilliant at any moment', a familiar catch phrase many recognised. Ray's subject was the rebellious and exciting broadcasting of pirate radio and Radio Caroline in particular, where he worked for many years. Enthusiasm for the music drove him and the other presenters to tolerate cramped conditions out on the choppy sea as his fascinating slides demonstrated. Please do check the details of the 2024 monthly talks on the u3a website. There really is something to interest everyone.

The poetry group recently enjoyed sessions on Maya Angelou and John Keats then in December the theme was celebrations from different cultures. 2024 promises more intriguing poetry and discussion including sessions on Elizabeth Barrett-Browning and Sylvia Plath to be prepared by members of the group. The group meets locally on the first Thursday of each month in the afternoon and welcomes anyone with an interest in poetry and life - if that sounds a little po-faced know that Pam Ayres has been a regular choice!

The u3a Singers were welcomed back to the Hadham Country Club once again for their Christmas performance which was enthusiastically received by the audience - such that they have been booked for Christmas 2024 already! New members are welcome and details can be found on the website.



For their Christmas celebration The Bus Pass group stayed relatively close to home by journeying to Saffron Walden. This intrepid group have further intriguing destinations in store for 2024 so think about making extra good use of your bus pass in friendly company.

For details of these and many other u3a groups held in the Stansted area please visit the website: www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted Julia Cook

What's on in the village...

FEBRUARY

February 2024



Household Bin Collections: Bradley Common collected on Fridays. Rest of Birchanger on Thursdays. (Some exceptions)

Public Garden Waste skip Collection Outside the Club - TBA

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

Sun

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 Green Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo	2 Church Hall: 09.30 - 10.30 Apton Dance 11.00 Pilates 15.30 Ellouise Dance	3 Church Hall: 09.00 - 12.00 Apton Dance for kids BSSC: 21.00 Parallel Covers - Live	4 St Mary's Church: 11.15 am Family Service BSSC: Sunday Roast
5 Church Hall: 09.30-12.00 Baby Massage 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.00 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom	6 Garden Bin Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet 18.00 - 21.00 Apton Dance	7 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 13.00 Takeley Art 14.00 Tea Room 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance	8 Black Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo	9 Church Hall: 09.30 - 10.30 Apton Dance 11.00 Pilates 15.30 Ellouise Dance	10 Church Hall: 09.00 - 12.00 Apton Dance for kids BSSC: 13.00 Meat draw	11 St Mary's Church: 11.15 Holy Communion Service BSSC: Sunday Roast
12 Church Hall: 09.30-12.00 Baby Massage 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.00 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom	13 Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet 18.00 - 21.00 Apton Dance	14 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 13.00 Takeley Art 14.00 Tea Room 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance	15 Green Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo	16 Church Hall: 09.30 - 10.30 Apton Dance 11.00 Pilates 15.30 Ellouise Dance	17 Church Hall: 09.00 - 12.00 Apton Dance for kids BSSC: 13.00 Meat draw 21.00 Time Warps - Live	18 St Mary's Church: 11.15 Matins Service BSSC: Sunday Roast
19 Church Hall: 09.30-12.00 Baby Massage 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.00 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom	20 Garden Bin Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet 18.00 - 21.00 Apton Dance	21 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 13.00 Takeley Art 14.00 Tea Room 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance	22 Black Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo	23 Church Hall: 09.30 - 10.30 Apton Dance 11.00 Pilates 15.30 Ellouise Dance	24 Church Hall: 09.00 - 12.00 Apton Dance for kids BSSC: 13.00 Meat draw Quiz Night	25 St Mary's Church: 11.15 am Holy Communion Service BSSC: Sunday Roast
26 Church Hall: 09.30-12.00 Baby Massage 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.00 Apton Dance	27 Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet 18.00 - 21.00 Apton Dance	28 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 13.00 Takeley Art 14.00 Tea Room 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30 Apton Dance 20.00 BAGS	29 Green Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo			



BIRCHANGER SPORTS
AND SOCIAL CLUB

WHAT'S ON AT THE CLUB



SATURDAY 3rd FEBRUARY

Josh's
QUIZ
Night

24th FEBRUARY

THE TIME WARPS

SATURDAY 17th FEBRUARY

**WATCH LIVE
SPORTS HERE**



NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

We welcome new members. To join you can either complete the online application or speak to a member of staff at the Club.

For more information visit www.birchangerclub.com



OPENING HOURS

Monday:	5-11pm	Kitchen Closed
Tuesday:	5-11pm	Kitchen Closed
Wednesday:	5-11pm	Food: 5-9pm
Thursday:	12-3pm/5-11pm	Food: 12-2pm/5-9pm
Friday:	12-11pm	Food: 12-2pm/5-9pm
Saturday:	12-11pm	Food: 12-9pm
Sunday:	12-8.30pm	Food: 12-3pm

For all general enquiries

Telephone: 01279 813441 Email: club@birchanger.com

Website: www.birchangerclub.com

Follow us on Social Media

For all news and announcements



We have had a great start to the spring term and the children all settled well after the Christmas break. We have been enjoying exploring the outdoors during our Forest School sessions looking at the changes in seasons and making some fabulous ice pendants! The children have also been learning about colours, mixing paints and exploring colour changes and having lots of fun.



On 10th February we will be holding a Prize Bingo Night at Birchanger Village Hall at 7:30pm. Tickets are £5 per person, for further details please visit our Facebook page. If you would like to come along, please either contact us by email on admin@birchangerbutterflies.org.uk or phone 01279 810800.

We are now taking bookings for spaces in September 2024 so if you would like to arrange a visit to our wonderful pre-school please do get in touch.

Birchanger Butterflies Pre-school
Email: admin@birchangerbutterflies.org.uk
Telephone: 01279 810800

John Sisk Will Answer Your Questions on the M11 junction 8 Roadworks

John Sisk are the contractors currently delivering the M11 junction 8 improvement scheme on behalf of Essex County Council. Sisk appreciate that Birchanger residents have questions about the construction works and they would like to give you the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

Please direct your queries to m11jct8improvement@sisk.co.uk and we will collate the responses into one document for all residents to see.

BIRCHANGER BUTTERFLIES
PRE-SCHOOL PRESENTS

PRIZE
Bingo Night

Join us for a night of fun!
Prize Bingo with raffle and table games!

TICKETS £5
PER PERSON

Saturday 10th Feb 7.30pm
Birchanger Village Hall
Bring your own drinks and nibbles.
Grown Ups Only!
Email admin@birchangerbutterflies.org.uk

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CASH PAID

**WITH OR WITHOUT MOT
CARS, ESTATE CARS, 4X4S,
TRUCKS, VANS**

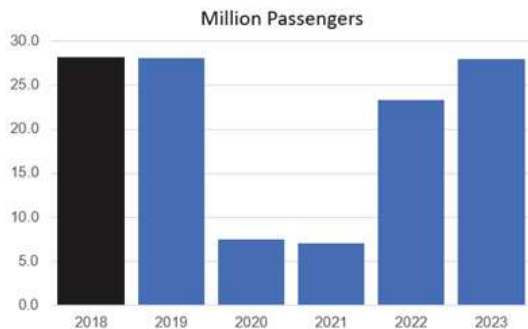
ALL MOTORCYCLES WANTED

Darren 01376 326163



Stansted Returns To Business As Usual!

Figures released in January show that Stansted Airport handled just under 28 million passengers last year, only slightly below the number of passengers handled in 2018 and 2019, i.e. before the Covid-19 pandemic caused such major disruption to air travel.



The severity of the impact of the pandemic upon air travel can be seen in the table above. Stansted passenger numbers slumped to 7.5 million in 2020 and just 7.1 million in 2021.

The speed of the recovery – just two years to return to pre-pandemic levels of flying – has confounded most forecasters, especially since this coincides with a cost-of-living crisis. And it's not just Stansted which has seen a fast recovery from the effects of the pandemic. Heathrow also is almost back to pre-pandemic passenger numbers and has just recorded its busiest ever December.

It's much the same picture worldwide. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), in November 2023, global demand for air travel reached 99% of 2019 (i.e. pre-pandemic) levels. It seems that neither economic challenges, nor concerns about global warming, are stopping people from flying.

Stansted Airport has however been taken by surprise by the speed of the recovery and now faces the prospect of severe overcrowding in the terminal over the next three years. This is because the airport cancelled a planned increase in terminal capacity when the pandemic struck. Preliminary groundwork started for a new dedicated arrivals building in March 2019 but this was abandoned within a matter of weeks.

The airport has now decided to extend the existing terminal by adding three more bays to the rear of the terminal, rather than build a separate arrivals building. This is a major project and is expected to take until early 2027 to complete. It will also mean the removal of the airport transit trains system. This will be replaced by

moving walkways. If passenger numbers continue to increase, the existing Stansted terminal will struggle to cope, especially during the busy summer periods over the next three years.

From the standpoint of local residents adversely affected by aircraft noise, the key issue is not the number of passengers handled by the airport but the number of flights, which includes cargo flights as well as passenger flights. In this regard there is some good news. Stansted handled 9,816 Cargo flights last year, considerably less than the pre-pandemic (2019) figure of 10,406. In fact, the number of cargo flights has been in slow decline for the past 20 years.

The vast majority of Stansted flights are, of course, passenger flights, and the vast majority of these (about 80%) are Ryanair flights. Stansted handled 168,715 passenger flights last year, more than 4,000 fewer than 2019, when passenger numbers were almost the same.

This obviously means more passengers per plane. On average, each flight carried 166 passengers at Stansted last year, the highest figure on record. The average number of passengers per flight has grown steadily, year on year, ever since the Wright brothers first took to the air in 1903! It will continue to increase steadily over the coming years.



Ryanair recently placed an order for 300 Boeing 737 MAX-10s at a staggering cost of US\$40 billion for delivery between 2027 and 2032. These aircraft are only slightly longer than the Boeing 737-800s currently operated by Ryanair but they have 21% more seats (228 seats compared to 189). The new aircraft are also claimed to be less noisy and to have lower carbon emissions than the 737-800s. We will need to wait until at least 2027 to find out for ourselves whether these claims are borne out.

Like it or not, Stansted has planning permission to handle up to 43 million passengers a year. If and when Stansted ever reaches that throughput, it would clearly be better, in terms of noise, air quality and carbon impacts, if this could be achieved with the fewest possible number of mid-size planes. Quite how our local roads will manage to cope if and when Stansted Airport ever reaches a throughput of 43 million passengers a year is another matter!



The Hundred Parishes Society

Chilly conditions often greet us as we step outside in the early months of the year. The old saying - "When the wind is out of the East, tis never good for man nor beast" - certainly rings true. Before the advent of broadcast weather forecasts, people had to rely on checking nearby weathervanes for the wind direction. These were usually found on tall buildings such as church spires, while Audley End House has gilded weathervanes mounted on eight corner turrets. Today, a variety of designs can be seen.



Robert McFarlane's books of old words include about fifty that describe winds, storms, or clouds. One Essex term he mentions is aigrish, used to describe a sharp cutting wind. The East Anglian word for a strong sudden gust is gussock, or twitchy for an unsteady wind.

Forecasting the weather for those who till the soil is helpful as weeks of westerly winds can bring relentless rain causing waterlogging of the ground, while cold

easterly winds dry out the soil and retard growth.



Currently, the UK Meteorological Office operates over 200 official automated sites, each recording accurate measurements of temperature, wind speed and direction, and the amount of precipitation. These readings are processed by powerful computers and the results enable forecasters to make predictions about future weather conditions. Local recording sites include the Cambridge Botanic Gardens and Stansted Airport. By searching the Met Office website <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk> you can check the local weather forecast to help plan your day.



Many individuals or schools are interested in operating a personal weather station and the Met Office is keen to enhance the weather observations network; it asks those who have a personal weather station, manual or automatic, to send data to its Weather Observations Website, WOW, at <https://wow.metoffice.gov.uk>.



Tricia Moxey, Trustee www.hundredparishes.org.uk



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

Service	Contact	Telephone No.
Allotments	Council Clerk	01279 814773
Alzheimer	Marian	07803 115826
Art Studio & Gallery	Heather Brown	01279 815453
Ballroom Dance	Fred Winters	01763 271942
Ballet for kids	Philippa McMeechan	01763 271010
BAGS	Rosemary Wheatley	01279 814678
Beauty Therapist	Sarah Whiting	07887 638359
Beauty - HEH Nails	Hana Hainsby	07730 619522
Birchanger Magazine	Peter Sampson	07817 904333
Butterflies Preschool	Carly Richards	01279 810800
BSSC Club	Terry Earnshaw	01279 813441
Car Service, MOT, Gas	D. Bonney	01279 813315
Car Service - Mobile	B. K. Autos	07786 461813
Chiropodist	Julie Golden	01279 873492
Dance - Apton Studio	Maxine Williams	07854 251528
Dementia	Debbie Baker	07927 011345
Garden Services	GWB Horticulture	01799 543483
Garden Services	Will Grange	07516 783138
Hairdresser Men/Boys	Emma Marks	07527 227943
Handyman	Charlie Grange	07514 783239
Holistic therapy/Reflexology	Shelley Williams	07476 279262
Landscaping Services	Mark Taylor	07941 357934
Launderette	Ian Kennedy	01279 866183
Line Dancing	Shelley	01279 864781
Neighbourhood Watch	Peter Sampson	07817 904333
Painting & Décor	David Debnam	07973 861268
Parish Clerk	Keith Williams	01279 814473
Pilates	Mandy Cousins	07713 272664
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	Cat Roberson	07475 092658

St. Mary's Church



Church services - 11.15 am

4 th February	Family Service with Pam Lee
11 th February	Holy Communion with Revd Helen
18 th February	Matins with Jo Pratt
25 th February	Holy Communion with Revd Colin

Church News

Now that the excitement of Christmas is over, I wonder how many presents have ended up unwanted, stuffed in a cupboard, back of a drawer or have been taken to a charity shop. Our carefully chosen gift quickly unappreciated and set aside, forgotten about. But it's not the only gift that has been forgotten. John's gospel speaks of another gift that was and still is unappreciated, the gift of Jesus to us as the Light of the World.

Sadly, today, and as it has been over the centuries, there are only a few who remain interested in Christ's message and many turn their backs on what he has to offer. For most of the time people forget all about him and yet, when they are in trouble, they cry out asking Christ to help them. They ask where is he? Why has he let this or that event happen? In one breath they demand that Christ put things right for them and in the next breath say that there is no God so no Christ.

Well, mankind cannot have it both ways. Either we accept that there is a God and do our utmost to live in accordance with his laws or, if we believe there is no God then we need stop crying out to him for help for who are we calling to?

Believing in God and Christ is not just a Christmas thing, it's a whole life commitment, a lifelong way that leads to peace and harmony. Come and meet the Lord in his house and feel the peace that he can bring to you if let him.

Prayer for the Month

Lord of life, we come to you
Be our Saviour, bless us with the light of your love.
Amen

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



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