



Birchanger Village Magazine

September 2025 Issue 272



"There's nothing like the peace of the countryside, the quiet and the lack of distraction. It helps you focus your mind" — Jenny Nimmo

City & Country - digging up trouble for the village

In November last year City & Country held a presentation at the football club outlining their proposal to build 1050 homes on the Green Belt between Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet which many Birchanger residents attended.

Following this, at the beginning of December, representatives from Birchanger Parish Council and Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council, along with a few District Councillors, met with representatives of C & C to discuss their proposal. They were told in no uncertain



terms that we were not in favour of any housing development on our Green Belt. C & C said they would contact us again in the new year for a further meeting once they had looked at all the issues we had raised, congested roads, full schools and doctors etc. In fact, we only recently heard from them again and are due to meet in September. C & C own the land and, as such, they can harvest, carry out surveys etc. What they can't do is build anything.

No planning application has been made to Uttlesford District Council but I understand they are in discussions regarding a Planning Performance Agreement. This is not unusual when a large development is proposed and ensures a clear timeline for determination. This PPA is not a pre-application.

As soon as an application is made the Parish Council will be informed and we will let villagers know. The Parish Council will, as always, defend the Green Belt and strenuously object to any application.

As you may know, a planning application has been made to UDC for a huge solar farm to be built on Parsonage Farm, which is in the Green Belt, to supply electricity to an industrial estate at Stansted Airport. Both Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Councils have objected to this. No decision has been made. Angie Driscoll, Chair, Birchanger Parish Council

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Inside this months' stonker

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Please send me your news, views, notices, pictures, grumbles and funny things. Funny things are best. Otherwise I will just make it all up.

Advertisers are very welcome. This magazine is read by smart, sometimes wealthy, people.

All copy should be submitted by the 16th of the month, preferably sooner, and may be edited mercilessly.

Please contact by E-mail (preferred), text, phone, or letter (not preferred). Thanks, The_Ed



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217 Birchanger Lane CM23 5QJ



The_Ed's InBoxBag ©

Dear Villagers,

It's a privilege to take up the reins from Peter as editor of our local mag. I want to thank him and the outgoing team for their work over many years to keep the printing press rolling so very well. It can be hard work, especially if content is scarce.

We live in a wonderful village. This magazine can be one way to get people together, informed and - I hope - amused too. I want to keep and improve on the useful content but also introduce some different, lighter sections. Expect more, shorter, articles; more pictures and fun stuff too. Finally, I hope you will engage to make this change the best it can be. Send me anything you'd like to share (anything legal that is!) and I will do my best to include it. Thank you, John (aka *The_Ed*)

The wires were humming and Ed's InBoxBag was bursting with the breaking news on Sky that an editorial shift had happened somewhere in rural Essex (but near enough to Hertfordshire for us to prefer that address sometimes).

I present below just a taste of the mass-media onslaught.

Dear Ed,

Blah, blah, blah you want to change it all up and destroy a perfectly good magazine. For the love of God (*Ed-other deities are available*) please reassure readers that dog bins, airport and pavement parking, daytime bonfires, speeding, aircraft noise and pollution will still have their rightful place! I enclose my picture to show you how concerned I am.



Yours, *Mrs Troubled from HighView*

A Concerned Woman, yesterday

Dear Mrs Troubled,

Slightly concerned about your state of mind, I've asked your GP to make a call to you as soon as possible. I think that would be around May 2028. Anyway, yes absolutely these newsworthy items will feature as these, amongst other things, are what concern villagers. And we are the people's publication (sic). P.S. please don't write again or I will set your messy dog on fire during the day and put it on a busy flight from Stansted.

And I will break the speed limit doing it. *The_Ed*



A Flying Dog, yesterday

Dear Ed,

Why are there never any recipes? Call yourself a cookery magazine! I've been reading it for over 20 years, that's 240 editions, and I can't find any. Before writing this, I went through all those back copies I have pasted to my living room wall to be certain as I don't want to make a fool of myself. Nope, there's nothing there. Not one. Please explain yourself.



Yours, *Mrs F Cradock, Tots Lane*

Mrs F Cradock, yesterday

Dear Mrs Cradock,

Slightly concerned about *your* state of mind too. Do you know Mrs Troubled? And where do you actually live - there aren't houses in Tots Lane so I'm assuming you live in a field. Are you responsible for the fly tipping with your takeaway trays and back-copies? Anyway, YES, you will be pleased to know we are introducing a monthly recipe. The first is in this edition, from Mrs *The_Ed*. It uses Blackberries that are no doubt all around you in that field. P.S. you haven't made a fool of yourself. I've done that by printing your letter. *The_Ed*



Some blackberries, yesterday

Liz Godwin's News & Views



*Liz at the very authentic
Mountfitchet castle, perhaps.*

How were your holidays? Almost forgotten? Yet to happen? Or just can't be bothered. We came back from a few days visiting family in the Lake District on over crowded roads and services with queues for absolutely everything wondering why on earth we were doing it, but already planning for next time.

In this country the weather can throw anything at you. Abroad it can be far too hot and we who come from northern climes find ourselves quickly turning into lobsters unless we are covered head to foot in sun tan cream often with an odour we would never normally buy. Not the image we were hoping for. We use the pool to cool off, only to find it covered with a thin layer of other people's suntan oils. We are on holiday we just put up with it. This is our holiday which we have saved for all year.

Never mind the not so good food, the not quite clean bedrooms, the dirty cutlery in the dining room with its misted glasses. We are on holiday and we are going to enjoy it whatever. You may burn on a beach in Spain, or freeze on a beach in Britain but whatever happens it is our holiday. We will have fun.

And in the end, somehow we do. After we have got over the traffic queues on every road you can think of, the long waits at the airport, the over crowded trains, whichever way we come home has its own problems. However most of us are already planning the next one and starting to think where it will be and even perhaps making a booking. A holiday never just lasts a week. What with the planning and the memories good or bad, a holiday can last forever. Plan carefully and enjoy your next one.

First Day at School Blues.

Can be a bit traumatic if you are not quite ready for it. The children mostly are but parents are reluctant to see their children seemingly disappear as they move into their new lives. It is hard for us as parents to change and adapt to their new routine. Most children are really ready for this whatever their parents think. They have had their taster days and met their teacher several times. Issues of toilet training, unheard of years ago must be settled as schools cannot be expected to accommodate children in nappies as happens in some schools all over the country. That is the parents' responsibility not the schools. Sometimes parents feel upset because the day went so well and their child leaves school happy and smiling and eager for the next day. They should feel delighted, they are doing their job well. So enjoy the day with the children. Take lots of pictures and keep the memory of that first day at school for years to come. Cont. Page 13...



*Children enjoying school, yesterday.
Always drag your own.. The_Ed*

From 20th to 28th September this year is designated "u3a Week", an annual event which celebrates the activity, learning and fun taking place across the movement every day. It is a celebration of positive ageing, highlighting our members' lived experience. Whether you want to sing, dance, exercise, or learn something new, there's no better place to do it than in the company of friends and likeminded people. Joining the u3a gives you all this and more!

u3a
Stansted Mountfitchet

If you would like to know more about being a member of Stansted Mountfitchet u3a come along to our monthly meeting at St Theresa's Centre, High Lane, at 1.30 for 2.00pm on Thursday, 18th September where you will not only be assured of a very warm welcome along with tea and biscuits but will also hear from Steve Lester and learn all about the Titanic from Launch to Loss. Steve, an experienced Fine Art valuer and auctioneer, has not only run several provincial salerooms across Essex over the past 20 years but is also a member of a renowned Titanic Historical Society and has been consulted by several TV production companies as the "go-to" expert. He will share his love of the Titanic in an interactive talk.

Stansted u3a Singers have been very pleased to welcome some new members to the choir, bringing a new depth and vibrancy to their sound. Singing in a group is an invigorating experience and breathing/singing together benefits our health and sense of well-being. So, whether you're already an experienced choir member or a novice, come along and join us! Rehearsals are well underway for our annual concert in St John's Church, at 3pm on Saturday 4th October, save the date! Posters will be displayed around the village in September giving details of where to buy tickets. **Susan Sedgebeer**



Birchanger All Girls Society

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

Next meeting:

Wednesday 24th September 7.45 for 8.00 pm

bags@birchanger.com

A seated exercise demonstration including some pilates and yoga movements!

Rosemary: 01279 814678 - Liz Turner: 07473 508056

Puzzle Page



Who doesn't like a puzzle every month?
Sit back and enjoy the distraction.

This month's theme/clue - **BIRCHANGER**

1. Find 10 references to the theme/clue in this grid. Words can be in any direction, including diagonal and backwards!

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | U | R | L | O | E | A | I | M | E | T | W | A | R | F |
| E | N | N | O | A | N | S | W | Y | C | B | O | U | P | U |
| A | I | S | L | C | A | I | E | O | E | A | O | N | Y | N |
| A | B | R | A | D | L | E | Y | C | O | M | M | O | N | T |
| E | R | D | K | I | T | E | S | B | N | M | A | T | D | R |
| A | L | O | S | W | O | L | L | I | W | E | E | R | H | T |
| W | N | O | S | F | T | S | E | D | P | L | Y | U | X | E |
| E | U | W | D | C | I | R | N | W | K | S | R | H | N | E |
| S | W | Y | O | B | T | E | M | O | D | U | X | C | N | L |
| E | A | B | I | E | K | T | D | L | S | O | R | A | T | Y |
| Z | K | G | O | C | A | A | R | C | J | I | L | D | O | W |
| E | U | I | U | A | F | S | M | S | I | D | R | P | D | S |
| U | O | D | V | W | R | N | S | T | O | G | L | R | T | M |
| S | E | Z | E | G | A | T | T | O | C | E | H | T | A | R |
| D | K | A | X | E | R | O | W | E | I | V | H | G | I | H |

2. Unravel this one-word answer to reveal something quite popular in the village

My 1st is in PARISH but not LANE or ROAD
My 2nd is in BEECH but not in BIRCH
My 3rd is in COTTAGE and also in TOAD
My 4th is in VICAR but not in CHURCH
My 5th is in PARKING but not AIRPORT PARKER!
My 6th is in QUESTION and QUERY- not MARKER
My 7th is in THUNDER but not in RAIN
My last is in PUZZLE - and my whole is a game!

If you get stuck, email The_Ed and tell him how much you enjoyed failing.
Or, wait for the answers next month.



A man doing a crossword in the village, early yesterday, placed purely to fill up the gap under the second puzzle.

(No ladies I don't know where he lives - Ed)



*What are your favourite puzzles?
Let The_Ed know and we'll try and get them in! magazine@birchanger.com*

ENVIRO ELECTRICAL SERVICES
enviroelectricalservices@gmail.com

DANIEL ROSS
07703484090
City & Guilds Qualified
Part P Registered
DBS Checked

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

Gordon Bleu

and his restaurant review

THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE



The_Ed is delighted to welcome the return of Gordon to these hallowed pages. Each month he will trawl the surrounding area to sample various eateries.



A tartiflette, yesterday

This month;

Le Peche Mignon

3A High Street, Bishop's Stortford

lepechemignon.co.uk

There are many things Bishop's Stortford is famous for - whether the traffic gridlock made so much worse by never-ending roadworks, or the largest gap between a platform and the train ever recorded at a station. Another world record was set when the 37th Italian restaurant opened on South Street, moving that category up to second most prevalent behind only the number of Barbers (hairdressers not jackets although actually it could also be a contender). So what to make of yet another restaurant, this time a Frenchie!

Aha! I hear you say! Frogs legs and Steak bleu served by disdainful waiters. Well actually none of that is on offer at Le Peche Mignon. This is the second branch to open (so I suppose you can call it yet another one of those chain places) in 2023 after the hugely successful first one opened in trendy Highbury in 2006. Gosh, we are so blessed that you chose us for your second. Storty must be looking up after all!

Now your reviewer is not the most sensible person but surely booking a table online must be easy peasy right? Apparently not. I tried a few options for a weekend lunchtime and on each occasion it was booked solid. I thought this was unusual so we chanced it and rocked up at 2pm hoping to have missed the rush and although there aren't many tables, we were able to grab a cosy one by the window. It turns out that you can only (and are advised to) book for the evenings where they focus on heartier French fare on Fridays and Saturdays only. Nice work if you can get it eh?

So to lunch. I should say that they serve a cracking coffee, gorgeous pastries and a French take on a full English if breakfast / brunch is more your thing. The lunch menu is a delightful crossover of items, with some breakfast (Croque monsieur) and dinner items (Tartiflette) available at lunch depending on availability. We opted for two sandwiches which came with a simple but nicely dressed salad and some French Rosé. I had the chicken, avo and bacon and it was absolutely worth the tenner it cost (pret could never!) whilst the other half had the salt beef which was also packed with the right amount of good quality filling.

All in all, the place is lovely. The staff are warm and welcoming and I hope it's successful given what it has to offer. It is unashamedly French but not in an overt way. With such quality on offer, including a range of artisan products and wines to buy for home, why not be proud of it!

Oh last thing - of course it's a French restaurant so they shut for two weeks in August. By the time you read this, I'm sure they'll have reopened so get yourselves down there.

As predicted, picking fruit and jamming has kept many of us busy in August, which means we will have a fantastic jam and jelly tombola at our Apple and Bees Day on Sunday 21 September.

The plum trees have been covered in fruit, with the various heritage varieties ripening in quick succession. The first plums were the Early Rivers, a variety developed and named by the Rivers Orchard in Sawbridgeworth, which lives up to its name "Prolific". And our huge raspberries started cropping and selling at the beginning of August, swelled by the rains in the second half of July.

Visitors have also been buying our vegetables through the month and we have planted more, so we should be cropping summer vegetables well into the autumn, together with later season produce: the sweetcorn, peppers and squash.

August is family time in the Gardens, as it's a relaxed space for children in the school holidays, with a variety of garden games.

Our volunteers worked on many additional traditional fun activities for our August Sunday Open Day. We had a grass coil basket weaving workshop in the Gardens at the beginning of the month and cordage making at the end of the month.

This year the flowers and perennials have been growing strongly after the drought, so hopefully the dahlia border will be looking more like its best by September and the other borders will also fill out again. The roses will still be stunning and the walled kitchen garden as welcoming as ever. We remain open for visitors on Thursdays, from 11.00-3.00, through September and October. And we will have fun activities and stalls for our Apple and Bees Open Day on 21 September. There will be live music from the Rock Choir and Harlow Concert Band and various local produce stalls, as well as our own apple juicing and cider for sale. For more information go to www.eastonlodge.co.uk

Jill Goldsmith



Raspberries ready to pick

What's On In The Village?

Tell The_Ed about any event you want the village to know about and he'll drop it here.



In September

The winds are in the wood again to-day,
Not moaning as they moan among bare boughs
In winter dark, nor baying as they bay
When hunting in full moon, the spring to rouse,
Nor as in summer, soft: the insistent rain
Hisses the woe of my void life to me:
And the winds jibe me for my anguish vain,
Sibilant, like waters of the washing sea.

Thomas MacDonagh



A fete, yesterday

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

Garden Waste Skip Outside the Club on Saturday Between 15.00-16.00: 13/9, 11/10, 8/11

| 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 Church Hall: 09.30-11.00 Ayatana Yoga 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.30 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom | 2 Garden Bin Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet Apton Dance: 17.30 Teen Latin 18.45 Teen Street 19.30 Adult Street 20.15 Rock'n Roll | 3 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance | 4 Black Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo | 5 Church Hall: 09.30 - 11.00 Apton Dance private lessons 15.30 Ellouise Dance | 6 Summer Fayre Church Hall: Apton Dance: 09.00 Apton Mini 09.45 Kids Latin 2 10.30 kids Latin 1 BSSC: 13.00 Meat draw | 7 St Mary's Church: 11.15 am Family Service BSSC: Sunday Roast |
| 8 Church Hall: 09.30-11.00 Ayatana Yoga 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.30 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom | 9 Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet Apton Dance: 17.30 Teen Latin 18.45 Teen Street 19.30 Adult Street 20.15 Rock'n Roll | 10 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance | 11 Green Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo | 12 Church Hall: 09.30 - 11.00 Apton Dance private lessons 15.30 Ellouise Dance | 13 Church Hall: Apton Dance: 09.00 Apton Mini 09.45 Kids Latin 2 10.30 kids Latin 1 BSSC: 13.00 Meat draw | 14 St Mary's Church: 10.45 Matins Service BSSC: Sunday Roast |
| 15 Church Hall: 09.30-11.00 Ayatana Yoga 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.30 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom | 16 Garden Bin Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet Apton Dance: 17.30 Teen Latin 18.45 Teen Street 19.30 Adult Street 20.15 Rock'n Roll | 17 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance | 18 Black Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo | 19 Church Hall: 09.30 - 11.00 Apton Dance private lessons 15.30 Ellouise Dance | 20 Church Hall: Apton Dance: 09.00 Apton Mini 09.45 Kids Latin 2 10.30 kids Latin 1 BSSC: 13.00 Meat draw | 21 St Mary's Church: 11.15 Family Service BSSC: Sunday Roast |
| 22 Church Hall: 09.30-11.00 Ayatana Yoga 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.30 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom | 23 Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet Apton Dance: 17.30 Teen Latin 18.45 Teen Street 19.30 Adult Street 20.15 Rock'n Roll | 24 Church hall: 10.00 Tai Chi 16.15-17.15 Ellouise Dance 18.30-21.15 Apton Dance | 25 Green Bin Church hall: 12.00 Line dance 16.45-20.30 Ellouise Dance BSSC: 20.00 Bingo | 26 Church Hall: 09.30 - 11.00 Apton Dance private lessons 15.30 Ellouise Dance | 27 Church Hall: Apton Dance: 09.00 Apton Mini 09.45 Kids Latin 2 10.30 kids Latin 1 BSSC: 13.00 Meat Draw | 28 St Mary's Church: 11.15 am Holy Communion Service BSSC: Sunday Roast |
| 29 Church Hall: 09.30-11.00 Ayatana Yoga 16.00-18.45 Ellouise Dance 19.00 - 20.30 Apton Dance Latin/Ballroom | 30 Garden Bin Church hall: 09.45-10.45 Ballet Apton Dance: 17.30 Teen Latin 18.45 Teen Street 19.30 Adult Street 20.15 Rock'n Roll | | | | | |

For The Love of Dog - Pet pics and prizes!

Introducing a new page for your favourite pet pictures! Please send in your snaps (any pet) and a short story or description. The winning picture each month gets an incredible FREE dog treat* from the club.



Simply present this magazine to Terry at the bar and choose your tasty canine treat from the array of options. Note: If the winner is not a dog, you can choose a free bag of crisps*

This month's very worthy winner is Remy, sent in by his owners Paul and Sarah. Looking like a resplendent lion in the Birchanger sunshine, Remy is shown actively protesting against the threat of countryside development across our lovely fields proving that the sun does indeed shine on the righteous! Congratulations Remy, Paul and Sarah. Skip on down to the club and gather up your free dog snack you lucky people.

**Not the pricey ones, mind, only the small bags, The_Ed.*



"Pure Rage in the Eyes"

One of The_Ed's dogs (not sure which) yesterday after being told she had failed to win a prize despite being far beautifuler. Even her plastic sausage was joyless as there's no fun in failure.



Some pets around Birchanger, yesterday. Easiest way to guarantee a bus seat



"Winner, Winner Dog Treat Dinner" - The Lion that is Remy



The Village People. This month: Terry Earnshaw

Each month we will feature a person, couple or family from the village. Let's get to know each other! If you would like to send in your picture and answer the questions below (or similar of your choice) just email The_Ed.

To kick us off we profile the ever-present hard-working Terry Earnshaw, the current steward of our wonderful club.



1. Tell us a bit about yourself and what and when was 'life before Birchanger'?

I'm 44 and am from Barnsley in South Yorkshire. Before arriving in Birchanger my main job was as a locum in pubs and restaurants in a management role for about ten years. I travelled a lot between jobs and still value the chance to travel abroad when I am able to.

2. When did you come to Birchanger and what were your first experiences?

I arrived after Covid ended and the first thing that struck me was how unusual it was to find such a small village with no amenities surrounded by wonderful fields and so close to nature. The close-knit community is very special and reminded me of growing up in Yorkshire.

3. What do you like most about the village?

I think it's the location and how easy it is to access the fields and enjoy the countryside. The people are very special in this village.

4. What would you change if you could?

Not much - but we could benefit from a village shop and post office!

5. What's your best memory of the village so far?

My best memories are the many nights I've enjoyed with the locals after I've finished work. Too many to recall!

6. Any advice for people who have just moved here?

I would encourage villagers to engage as much as they can with the village, and of course, come over to the club!

www.birchangerclub.com



The Club committee dignitaries, supporting Terry in all his work, yesterday (allegedly)

THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY



Since the launch of the Society in 2014, its website has continued to evolve and expand as a resource for the local area. It is hoped that this article may help people make the most of

www.hundredparishes.org.uk. You are encouraged to step through the menu to get a feel for what is available. If you want to look something up, you might try either Parishes, What's On, Articles or Walks.

Parishes holds the key to lots of things. From either the map or the alphabetical listing, select an individual parish to find out a little about its history, the nearest walks or details for a pub or tea room. Introductions include ideas for further reading and links to useful websites.

What's On lists future events in chronological order. Many entries have a link to further information. We are pleased to give publicity to any event that promotes local knowledge or culture, exploration or conservation.

Articles offers local insight into a wide range of topics.

Walks has general guidance and then three options: Station walks, Quiet Lane walks and Other walks. Scroll down the list to find one that suits your need in terms of location and distance. Then click on the walk number to call it up. The first few paragraphs will describe distance, terrain and opportunities for refreshment. When you find a walk you like, print it to take with you. [Control, P] is a useful shortcut to start printing.

Feedback is a way of telling us of changes or something we have missed – perhaps a pub closure, bus route change, additional activity for What's On, or website links or phone numbers that no longer work.

The Way We Woz - A Dive into the Archive

This month we roll back the years to 2004. The village fete was held in The Three Willows pub garden at that time and as you can see Dave, the landlord, got very involved.

It's good to see Jay's pig roast was legendary, even 21 years ago. In this same month was the announcement of the opening of the A120 bypass too, so a real thunderer 'can't put it down' edition of your favourite north Essex village magazine beginning with B.



The A120, yesterday.

August 2004

Issue 20

ALL THE FUN OF THE FETE

A bright sunny day greeted the village on fete day. The earliest of the participants to arrive at the Three Willows car park was Jay Leavers to set up his now legendary Pig roast. Soon others were arriving to set up their attractions and by twelve noon all was ready.

The fete was thankfully well attended with villagers arriving as soon as it was open so a brisk trade was soon being done all over the pub gardens. Several of the stalls actually sold out, notably the Teddy Tombola run by Ann Smith, the Magazine Bottle stall and the Pig roast. The cake stall was as usual very popular and the other stall holders all reported a successful afternoon.



Here's Ken playing his Cards right for the over 60s



Hang on Dave, the UN inspectors are just down the road!

Many of the visitors remarked on their preference for the pub as a venue due to the compact nature of the garden and a general feeling of togetherness it generated.

The pub remained open throughout and finished off the day with a performance under the marquee by a Jazz band. All in all everyone involved declared the fete a great success for which we must give our thanks to Paul and Paula at the pub.

The highlight of the afternoon was the result of a poll to see who was declared the most desired victim for the Gunk Tank, this honour was won by Dave Tucker who after stripping for action was duly, inundated with a red sticky mess to cheers and laughter from the crowd. However Dave's day was not yet complete as may be deduced elsewhere in this issue!

What's that all about then? This month: Helicopters

Birchanger residents are often heard complaining about helicopters flying directly over the village, especially during the summer months. However, very few complaints are lodged by local residents with Stansted Airport, even in cases where a noisy, low-flying helicopter has passed directly over the village.

It only takes a couple of minutes to register a complaint about helicopter noise. Just send an email to stanstednoiseline@stanstedairport.com providing your name, address and postcode and stating where and when the noisy helicopter incident took place. This helps to trace the offending helicopter, the operating company and the pilot.

According to Stansted Airport's published statistics, the airport catered for just 654 helicopter movements last year. Many local residents will feel that there were far more than that but there are no statistics to prove otherwise. The majority of helicopter movements are in the summer and there are particular peaks when special events are taking place, for example, racing at Newmarket, so there will be days when it seems there are endless helicopter flights.

Helicopters are generally forbidden by the CAA from flying over populated areas at a height below 1,000 feet. However, the 1,000 feet minimum is reduced to 500 feet in the controlled airspace near the airport. Unfortunately, this includes Birchanger.

The majority of helicopter traffic in and out of Stansted is to and from the west. They generally fly visually and are guided by the A120 towards the Puckeridge 'Way Point'. They are asked to avoid over-flying Birchanger and are given a preferred route to reach the A120 (and return from the A120) via Hazelend Wood, avoiding Birchanger and the Forest Hall estate.

The actual wording in the NATS Aerodrome Regulations for Stansted is as follows:

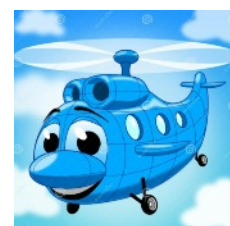
"Approach to the runway from the west via Hazelend Wood VRP, or the north from Audley End Railway Station VRP shall remain north of Bury Lodge Hotel and remain clear of Burton End.

Helicopters landing from or departing to the west are to avoid overflight of Birchanger, Stansted Mountfitchet and Bishop's Stortford."

It's important to make Stansted Airport management aware when the above regulations are breached. The regulations are not legally binding but airport management will speak to Stansted-based helicopter operators to remind them of the regulations when complaints are received, so please take a few minutes to lodge a complaint whenever a low-flying, noisy helicopter goes directly over the village.

It's more difficult to control visiting helicopters (i.e. those not based at Stansted) but, when using Stansted, they are expected to read and follow the local regulations.

Helicopters operated by the emergency services and the military are exempt from the regulations. There is therefore no point in complaining about a police or army helicopter.



Menacing helicopters, yesterday

Village Recipes: This month - Blackberry Jam

The Birchanger bushes are bursting with soft fruit and what better time to plunder some of that juicy flesh than September. This month, to kick us off with the series, Mrs The_Ed shares a recipe for BlackBerry jam.



Kids scrumpling in Birchanger, yesterday

Always ask the landowner before stealing fruit, or grow your own in the Birchanger allotments like normal non-criminals.



A lazy repeat of the picture from page 2

Blackberry Jam

Makes roughly 2.2 litres (about 8 jam jars) easily halved.
Prep: 20 mins Cook 40 mins
Plus cooking overnight

Ingredients

- 1.8kg blackberries
- 1.5 kg jam sugar
- Juice and pips of 1 lemon
- finger-tip size knob of butter

Method

Step 1 - The night before you make your jam have a glass of wine. Layer the blackberries and sugar together in a very large bowl, then cover and set aside at room temperature.

This helps the sugar to start dissolving so you don't run the risk of over-cooking the fruit when you actually begin to make the jam.

The next morning, give everything a quick stir, then set aside again until you are ready to start cooking. Don't leave it days or weeks, let's keep moving.

Step 2 - Afternoon - before you start, have a swift glass of wine. Put a small saucer in the freezer. Take a preserving pan or a large, wide-based pan (the wider and more open the pan, the faster the jam will be ready, so a preserving pan is really ideal) and tip the berries in, scraping out all the juices and any undissolved sugar. Stir in the lemon juice, then collect all the pips and secure them inside a tea-leaf strainer or piece of muslin before adding them to the pan (cooking the pips along with the fruit extracts the pectin they contain helping your jam to set).

Step 3 - Start the blackberries over a low heat until all the sugar is completely dissolved, then bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and spoon a little hot syrupy jam onto the chilled saucer. Refill your wine, you deserve it. Once the jam has cooled, push it with your finger. If it wrinkles a little, it's ready and has reached setting point. If you've burnt your finger, you haven't been following the instructions and maybe need to lie down.

If it's too runny to wrinkle, return the pan to the heat and boil in 2 or 3-minute stages, removing the pan from the heat each time you do the saucer check, until the jam wrinkles.

Step 4 - Skim off any excess scum, then stir in the knob of butter, if you want - this will help dissolve any remaining scum. Leave the jam for 15 mins before ladling into sterilised jars - this allows the fruit to settle so it doesn't sink to the bottom. The jam will keep in a cool, dark place for at least six months. Which is where you might want to curl up once the wine is done. Refrigerate jars once opened.

Sweetly reminiscent, something mother used to bake?

Send your recipe gems to the The_Ed now!



Bin Collections now include SMALL Electrical Items!

As this month's presses were rolling with the September edition of the magazine news came through from Birchanger Parish Council that villagers can now leave SMALL electrical items (that would fit in a supermarket bag) out for the bin men to collect. Either on recycling or non-recycling days, just leave on top of your bin. So, if you have that dodgy kettle, a broken toaster, a worn out electrical whisk, or any other item of similar size - you can now dispose of it that way.



A broken messy toaster, yesterday

Village Services and Activities

| Service | Contact | Telephone No. |
|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Allotments | Council Clerk | 01279 814473 |
| 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 | John McArthur | 07488 315349 |
| 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 |
| Laundrette | Ian Kennedy | 01279 866183 |
| Legal Services | Nockolds | 0345 6460406 |
| 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 |
| Printing Services | M&B Printers | 01371 874695 |
| 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 |

VJ Day Commemorated in the Village

August 15th 2025

This day marked 80 years since the Japanese surrendered and World War Two officially ended. It's known as Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day for short).

To mark this very special anniversary a group of villagers led by Parish Chair Angie Driscoll raised a flag at the village club specially designed to commemorate the occasion. In the evening a beacon was lit at the club, and in many other parts of the country too, to honour those who served and gave their lives during the war effort.



St. Mary's Church



Church News

Services at 11.15am unless otherwise stated.

- 7th September Family Service with Pam Lee
- 14th September Matins with Hugh Mascetti
- 21st September Family Service with Pam Lee
- 28th September Holy Communion with Revd Colin Fairweather

I do not recall details of the church services that I attended as a child but nowadays, it is customary to pray for peace at every single service. Peace not just for ourselves or those that we know, but all the peoples of this earth. We pray that God will bring peace for everyone. It is a big ask but as Christians we believe that when we repented of our sins, God is listening and that He goes on to grant requests – not necessarily in the way that we might want or expect, but in a way that our world needs.

In chapter 14 of John's gospel, we are told that God has given His very own peace. A legacy of peace unlike anything that the world has to offer. God's peace. An inner peace of the soul coming from an awareness of God's Holy Spirit entering our minds and bringing a stillness. To appreciate this, we need to set aside time to listen to the quietness of our minds and feel the stillness of our busy lives. Let go of the business of our lives and let our minds reach out to the peace that He offers.

Dates for your Diary

- 6th September Village Fete
- 27th October Essex Organ Association visit
- 9th November at 10.45am Remembrance Service with Pam Lee
- 19th December at 7pm Evening Carol Service

Prayer for the Month

May the peace of the Lord, enter the hearts and minds of all who display aggression, who oppress the weak or show no compassion towards humankind. May He draw out all feelings of hatred and greed so that this world can move forward in harmony and appreciation for all gifts that He has provided

Amen

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WHAT'S ON AT THE CLUB

8pm

FREE QUIZ NIGHT

20th September

THE VAULT

BEAT THE BANK

ROLLOVER!

FOR A CHANCE TO WIN
£500

IF THE FIRST DRAWN KEY OPENS
THE BOX YOU WIN THE JACKPOT
SECOND CHANCE KEY WINS £50.00

20th SEPTEMBER

BIRCHANGER SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB SUMMER FAYRE

6th September

Our ever popular fun-packed Summer Extravaganza is back and **BIGGER** than ever!

1pm

LIVE MUSIC
HOG ROAST & BBQ - AND LOTS MORE!!!
NON MEMBERS WELCOME

PLUS

- KIDS BOUNCE ZONE
- REAL ALES & CASK LAGERS
- ARTS & CRAFTS STALLS
- Charity Dog Show

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NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

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For more information visit www.birchangerclub.com



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Liz Godwin's

News & Views - Part 2's...



New Beginnings for Birchanger Magazine

There is a new team at the helm of Birchanger Magazine. The editor Peter and treasurer Ken Wheatley are standing down after producing and guiding Birchanger magazine through the various ups and downs of the past few years.

Not an easy job. That small magazine which lands on your front door mat every month takes a great deal of hard work by a small team of volunteers who somehow have been getting it together every month. Consulting with printers, finding material for the magazines, persuading groups to give donations and keeping in touch with all the contributors to try and make sure that the magazine is full of content interesting to Birchanger. It is the editor who makes sure Birchanger magazine is delivered regularly every month, while the treasurer makes sure we have the money.

The editor and treasurer are the ones who spearhead the operation, backed up by all those who contribute to the magazine and the team who proofread all the contributions correcting bad spellings and impossible grammar. Then there are all those who deliver the magazine to Birchanger residents regularly and mainly on time. Everyone associated with the magazine gives their time voluntarily, so printing the magazine monthly is the biggest cost.

Birchanger Magazine will continue depending on donations and your contributions. Hopefully people will find at least one small part of it useful? We need to know what we do right and what we should leave out or do differently. Tell us what you like and what irks you and our magazine will be around for a long time to come. After all it is a little magazine for our own small village and we welcome input and comments from you.

Couldn't agree more! - The_Ed calmly composing.....



Keep Your Cycles Safe.

Sadly some of us lost our bikes this summer. We just left them by the gate or on the path and they weren't there when we came back. Mortified and angry there was very little we could do about it except report it with little hope that it would ever be found.



And Your Brand New Car.

Looks lovely parked on the drive. You can't believe it is actually yours. The latest model with all the latest in design and electronics. You like it but it is very possible that someone else likes it too and is determined to that it won't be on your drive very much longer. That is unless you have invested in a security box with screened or blocking panels. Even then you must keep the box out of sight and hopefully tucked away on a far side of the house in some sort of Faraday box well away from downstairs windows.



Many people have been robbed of their car as the thief has looked through the glass and seen that little unit where the family has kept their keys for years. For the intruder it is in, out and gone. Don't let this happen to you. It has happened to

too many of us . There are some new cars around which the burglars just can't wait to get their hands on. Your car will probably have left the country before you have even woken up. Small changes can prevent this. Just remember where you have actually hidden the keys in the morning and use special safety pouches, easily purchased to keep keys and valuables in.

You Don't Need to Apply For a Winter Fuel Payment.

As suggested by some fraudulent hackers in emails and texts which many of us have received in recent weeks. Do not respond to this. Your winter fuel payment should arrive in the next few weeks and if it doesn't, then it becomes a matter of concern and it is time to report the missing money . I have yet to receive mine and I don't expect to see it until October as in previous years. If you have moved and you have not received your allowance make sure the authorities have your new address.

Do You Really Need All Those Pills?

Do you even know what they are for? Do the professionals even know what they are for? Prescriptions are sent in monthly often with patients failing to check whether they really need the same monthly amount as often the patients are given more pills every month than they actually need. Patients rarely check the amount of drugs they actually have in stock. Could save the NHS a fortune.



City & Country - digging up trouble for the village

Continued from Page 1. Further comments from Birchanger Residents Association

We've joined forces with the recently formed "Birchanger and Stansted Greenbelt Preservation" group in the face of the threat of a massive new housing development on Green Belt land to the north and east of our village. The developer's proposal is for up to 1100 houses. This is almost three times more than the total number of houses currently in Birchanger.

It is clear that residents do not want this development to happen and we hope that, nearer the time, we can unite to oppose the plans that the developer, C&C, intends to submit.

There are reports currently that architects have been employed and they are planning an initial batch of 400/500 houses. The truth is, we don't know how many there will be until they submit anything.

There have also been lots of concerns about C&C scoping out the land in and around Birchanger and Stansted recently. This is standard if they are to submit their plans in the near future and is something they need to do in order to submit something we can object to.

It's also been noted how frustrated people are with the current plans for the solar farm. However, this was not matched with formal letters of objection on the planning portal which was a shame. The letters were minimal in number compared to the comments on Facebook.



Moving forward, this group and the action it takes **MUST** be resident driven. This is separate to any meeting previously held by Councillor Nick Church.

From the minute plans are submitted, we will all need to pull together. This means full engagement, community meetings to discuss ways forward, supporting those not on the Internet or social media and making sure that our argument for opposing this is factual and watertight rather than emotive and personal.

In the near future, we aim to hold a meeting with residents of both villages and will expect people to stand up and support this campaign in several ways.

We will be producing example letters but these will need to be delivered by residents, each delivering maybe two or three streets, in order to reach the maximum amount of people possible.

If you are happy to support this by letter dropping, spreading the word, attending community meetings please look out for further information coming soon on social media and in this magazine.

It's really important that we stand together and make sure that this planning application doesn't get approved.

Thanks in advance for your support



Statement and Right of Reply

As I was not invited to comment prior to the publication of material about me in the Birchanger Village Magazine (BVM), I now provide clarification to ensure the public record is accurate. While a small number of residents - around 125–150 of approximately 1,800 - have expressed objections, this represents only a minority of the community. The proposed development of nine houses on two acres is low density and fixed forever and offers the opportunity for residents to move into attractive new-build homes, thereby freeing up existing properties for the younger generation of families wishing to remain in the village.

It is good practice for publications to give a right of reply before printing information about identifiable individuals, particularly where the content may affect reputations or ongoing legal matters. I set out below factual corrections to certain statements in recent editions of the BVM. This should not be taken to imply agreement with, or acceptance of, the accuracy of any other statements not specifically addressed here.

April 2024 Issue 225 – The track referred to is not a “Sand” track. It is constructed of hard core and road plainings, installed by the farmer decades before my father purchased my land from the farmer in 1980. The track runs from the farm gates at the village green to Harrisons and the A120 where if you walk the route, you will see the substance of the track. The section of the village green providing access to the track has a hard surface suitable for farm and other vehicles installed by the farmer. Rights of way over a village green are recognised in law, particularly where they pre-date registration of a village green. The village green was registered in 1981. The photograph in this issue labelled “Entry to the Sand Track” and a statement in an objection by a former Parish Council Chair both confirm that the farm Track is accessed from the village green. The farmer owned my land before my father purchased in 1980, and the rights attach to my land.

May 2024 Issue 256 – The Parish Council’s permission is not required to use the vehicular right of way over the village green, as these rights attach to my land and adjoining farmland well before the village green was put into the ownership of the Parish Council. The Parish Council acquired the land subject to the rights of the farmer to the farmland and my rights to my land. The ditch alongside my land, including the section near the riding arena, is not spring-fed. Instead, it fills after rainfall as a result of five drainage pipes that feed into it. After periods of heavy rain, the ditch holds the water without overflowing, thereby serving its intended purpose.

September 2024 Issue – Reference to a “Sand Track” is inaccurate. Mapping records simply show it as a “Track.” Also, historical maps show that the Track leads out over the village green, going back to at least 1950.

January 2025 Issue 264 – I hold a vehicular right of way, which includes the right to maintain it for that purpose. On 4 December 2024, an overgrown hedge and tree branches were cut back to enable vehicle access, including farm vehicles and horse boxes. This work was carried out mid-morning during school term time, with no children present at the accessway. No one was harmed, and the reversing of the arborist’s vehicle was halted when two individuals approached from behind and proceeded to lean against it. Work commenced after a delay of over an hour waiting for police who did not arrive. A person with access rights has the right to abate nuisance to those rights. Neither the hedge nor tree cut back were vandalised. They should not create, or risk creating, an obstruction to a person’s access rights.

June 2025 Issue 269 – The statement “the appellant cannot demonstrate legal access rights over the village green” is incorrect. My rights are documented in the 1980 Conveyance of my land, transferring existing rights from the previous owner, ie the farmer, who had exercised those rights for decades prior to the village green being vested in the Parish Council. Those access rights are now vested in me as current owner of my land. Please consider - if you had a garage at the rear of your property accessible via a legal right of way over land in the ownership of your neighbour, would you be aggrieved if your neighbour blocked your access to your garage – I would say you would.

My intention in providing these corrections is to ensure public understanding is based on accurate, documented information. Anyone is entitled to apply for planning permission, and others are entitled to object, but it is important that discussion on such matters is informed by factual detail. I reserve all my legal rights in relation to these and any future publications.

Tina Dobbs

Village Church Hall



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Telephone: 07475 092658
Email: birchangerhall@gmail.com

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