



Birchanger Village Magazine



Herrre's Mariah!

December 2025 Issue 275

"I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been" The redemption of Ebenezer Scrooge.

Our Green Belt Is Under Threat. Act Now to Protect Our Village!



Developer City & Country has submitted plans for 480 new homes plus commercial properties on Metropolitan Green Belt land surrounding Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet. If approved, this development will wipe out the green buffer that has preserved our rural identity for generations.

Their proposals include 180 one to six-bedroom houses across fields directly bordering Birchanger - Meadow View and Tot Grove - with access via two new roads off Birchanger Lane. An additional 300 homes are planned for land between Birchanger and Stansted Mountfitchet, bordering Forest Hall Park. Our historic villages are already under pressure from relentless traffic congestion, limited GP appointments and school place shortages. This development would intensify these problems, overwhelm local infrastructure and permanently change the character of our village.

Let's be clear. These applications are a speculative attempt to exploit national planning loopholes and bypass the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan, which is currently under examination and expected to be adopted early next year. It speaks volumes about just how out of step City & Country's proposal is in that just three new houses are earmarked for Birchanger in the Local Plan. This land was never considered a "reasonable alternative" for sustainable growth in the Local Plan, let alone suitable.

This development would affect every Birchanger resident so we must stand together to stop it. Submit your objections to Uttlesford District Council, quoting reference [UTT/25/3011/OP](#) and [UTT/25/3012/OP](#) by no later than 12th December. See Pages 5 and 6 to read more

"Mockingbird" spotted on sand track!

Dear The_Ed, Walkers have been shocked at the arrival of a new young bird in the village. It has no identifiable owner, so is assumed 'wild' and stays in just one tree without moving. Villagers believe this could be a 'Mockingbird' - fooling unsuspecting walkers that it is actually real, and not a cheap decoy camera with red eyes.



Make no mistake, when these critters are fully grown they change colour and mutate into monstrous birds of prey called "Gatso's" that can read our minds, our license plates, predict the future of the planet and next week's lottery numbers*.

Approach with caution if he's still perched in the tree by the time you go to print. Unless of course, he's damaged it, in a similar way as other trees nearby. It really is a nasty specimen.



Yours, Harper Lee

**fact checking ongoing on that bit, The_Ed*

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!
At the The Three Willows (Marquee) 6.30pm-8pm
Monday December 1st

Led by Birchanger Parish Council, this will be an informative and interactive meeting for village residents to learn more about City & Country's planning applications with support on how to oppose them in a constructive way.

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magazine@birchanger.com



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217 Birchanger Lane CM23 5QJ



The_Ed's InBoxBag ©



Santa has a senior moment

Dear Villagers,

We head towards the final month of the year and around the time this magazine is published the village will start 'lighting up' as it does every year. Birchanger is the envy of many surrounding villages as the Christmas lights display is unrivalled. In fact, it's arguably the only time of year cars drive slowly through the village. Maybe we should just keep the lights up for the full twelve months.

This month's edition contains a new-look village calendar which we hope you will like. We've also improved the Ads, and sprinkled a little more seasonal silliness too at the (temporary) expense of some regular slots which will return in 2026.

Everyone involved with the magazine hopes you all get to enjoy the village this season, whether it's the pub, club, church, hall or simply the wonderful walks on the footpaths and fields. We are blessed to have them, and really must fight to keep them.

And with that, we move from the blessed to the touched....

In a parallel universe, Mariah Carey is doing her shopping and is sick of hearing me on every store's speaker system.



Dear The_Ed,

Here's me heading off to an audition for "BraveHeart - The Panto" at the Church-Village hall dressed as Robert The Bruce. I wanted to ride a horse, but Mum said no and gave me a little tricycle instead. I didn't get the part. They told me to "get on my bike" but I was already sitting on it. They said I looked more like Robert The Smith from gothic band The Cure, I've enclosed pictures. I'm running out of money but will keep sending you the £200 for the Drone advice. Happy Christmas to you and yours, and all the lovely villagers. Even the ones who throw mud at me. Sincerely, Master Charles of Churton



Me as The Melvin Gibson



Me, before makeup



Robert The Smith



Braveheart

Dear MC of C,

My word, you really are a special talent. The resemblance to these fictional characters is breathtaking. I actually don't have any words. Please keep trying to get work, and please keep sending me money, there's a good lad, as it's Christmas, TIA. Yours, The_Ed.

I MISSED bonfire night again this year and I was wondering if perhaps your readers could come up with a short rhyme to help prevent me forgetting it next year. I tried myself but can't think of anything that rhymes with November that would help me remember.

Yours again, MC of C



Liz Godwin's Xmas Views



So here it is - Merry Christmas, at last!

Bright lights will be coming on all over the village now as keen participants of the Big Light up have spent hours unravelling their lights and planning to make another very special display to delight the village and the many visitors which Birchanger at Christmas attracts.



It is a time when so many people come together most of whom only seem to meet up at Christmas. However there are many who never see anyone at Christmas or any other time. They lead their lonely lives all on their own, but do they really like it that way? Christmas might be a good time to find out. A card or a small gift delivered personally might be a good way to start. Try to contact them. They may not readily open their doors, but try again. There could be a new friendship there and it is at Christmas when people feel at their loneliest. Everyone seems to have family around except them.

Birchanger has a lot to offer at Christmas. From special Christmas dinners at the club and pub, carols in the Church and a village full of fabulous lighting displays. Enjoy, and Happy Christmas one and all..

Watch Out for the Fatal Four!



The police this Christmas are focusing their attention on the **fatal four things** which can lead to death or serious injury if not used properly.

Their Fatal Four are Speeding, Drink and Drug driving, using a phone while driving and not using a seat belt appropriate for the car. So don't put your name on the groaning casualty list this Christmas!



Christmas Coffee Morning at Moorswood

Contributions for Raffle gratefully accepted

Tuesday
9 December at 10:30 am

All welcome at
330 Birchanger Lane
Elizabeth: 07860 188 448

Donations to St Clare's Hospice

Festive Fun!

Find the 21 references to Christmas!

The Night Before Christmas

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

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2025

This year's service was taken by Pam Lee with the attendance in excess of 30 people of all ages. The names were read out by 2 youngsters from the school, Florrie and George. There was a small exhibition in the church afterwards concerning the fallen mentioned on the memorial. Geof Driscoll



A huge thank you from me to all those people who turned out for our Remembrance service and also to the children from Birchanger school, Ed Gilbey and Pim Godwin for the information that they provided. Pam Lee

Gordon Bleu and his restaurant review



The White Hart, Moreton thewhitehartmorton.co.uk

Stress levels were somewhat elevated by the time we are arrived at the nearby car park, due to the M11 being its usual M11-self and frequented by those inconsiderate types who insist on using the outside lane despite no other traffic in the other two. I despair at the thoughtlessness.



We walked past the Dog & Pickle (which looked more traditionally Essex but likely to be tried in future) to the White Hart, unassuming and perhaps a little tired-looking from the front but with a great car park and lots of outdoor seating at the rear. It's VERY dog-friendly (as all pubs and indeed people, should be) and has the usual welcoming vibes of pleasant, eager to help staff and chatty locals propping up the bar.

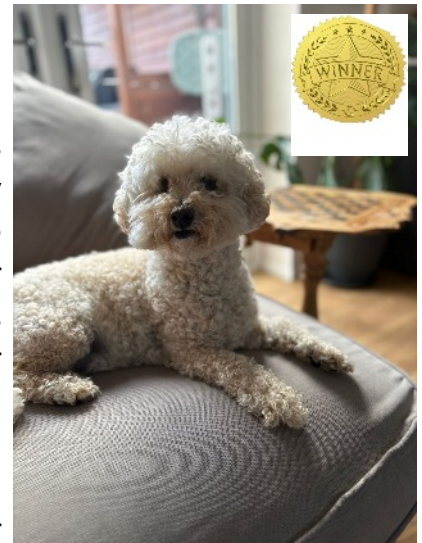
We weren't initially going to have a starter but for some strange reason they have a set menu which involves two courses at a price that was cheaper than most main courses (same quantity I imagine). So we therefore had to try the beer battered brie bites. Now these little things were really excellent. Often breaded, by encasing them in batter they felt even more decadent and not too sickly or filling. The mains (limited to a few classics on the set menu but wide-ranging on the a la carte) were as you'd expect, with an excellent burger and pizza menu to boot. We opted for the dirty burger (skinny fries) and scampi (thick cut chips) and were delighted with each. With an extensive menu we'll certainly be back to try more, I might just have to avoid the M11 and take the scenic route next time! Gordon



For the Love of Dog Augustus

This month we introduce Augustus, also known as Gussie and Gus, the 13 year old toothless pensioner owned by Joe and Hannah Farrington.

Hannah explains "He was our very own tax rebate runt-of-the-litter puppy, and has brought our family nothing but joy and love. He loves children and the senior ladies who come to get their hair cuts from his Mum".



Gus loves to sunbathe on the garden decking and also enjoys Sunday roasts and Birchanger Digby woods walks!

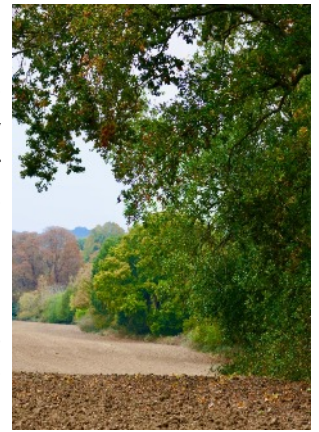


Spot the 7 differences between these gingerbread snowmen!



From Page 1: Every Voice Counts - Object Now To Save The Green Belt!

City & Country's plans for 480 homes, alongside a nursery, 60-bed care home and 2,000 sqm of commercial units, would take 8 years to complete, turning open fields around into a sprawling housing estate. Yes, new homes are needed, but this land is not the answer. The development is not sustainable, despite the developer's claims. That's why we await the adoption of the emerging Local Plan which sets out a clear framework for sustainable development across the Uttlesford. Promises by City & Country deserve scrutiny.



- **Grey belt?** Make no mistake, this is Metropolitan Green Belt under attack. Building on undeveloped Green Belt land is not sustainable. True sustainability means regenerating brownfield sites rather than sacrificing agricultural land and wildlife habitats.
- **Affordable housing?** The proposal includes 50% affordable homes, but just how affordable would they really be for local people? Hundreds of newly built homes in Bishop's Stortford remain empty suggesting they are still unaffordable to many.
- **Public consultation?** City & Country's claim of an "involved consultation" doesn't match reality. A Birchanger & Stansted Green Belt Preservation Group poll at the recent public consultation found that 95% of attendees opposed the plans. Analysis of the developer's own online forum revealed 81% were also against the plans, with traffic and infrastructure concerns topping the list.

What will this development deliver?

- **Loss of Green Belt:** The entire site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt that has been classed as strongly contributing to the Green Belt in Uttlesford's 2024 Green Belt Study Update, rated highly for preventing urban sprawl and preserving rural character. This land has not been reclassified as 'grey belt.'
- **Urban sprawl risk:** The scale and density could merge Stansted Mountfitchet and Birchanger with Bishop's Stortford, eroding village identities and accelerating unchecked expansion.
- **Years of disruption:** Construction is expected to last eight years, bringing noise, dust, traffic and health risks.
- **Traffic and pollution:** Thousands of extra daily car journeys would worsen congestion on Stansted Road and increase CO2 emissions.
- **Infrastructure strain:** Roads, schools, GP surgeries and utilities are overstretched, with no credible upgrades proposed. Combined with other large-scale developments, this could lead to severe congestion and service breakdown.
- **Safety issues:** Plans include closing Tot Lane and narrowing Birchanger Lane, already unsuitable for heavy traffic, posing serious safety concerns for drivers and pedestrians. Modelling suggests junction failures and unsafe turning movements.
- **Environmental damage:** Wildlife habitats used by birds, bats, deer and pollinators along with hedgerows and open countryside would be permanently lost. Landscaping cannot replace natural green space.
- **Flood risk:** These fields form part of the natural attenuation basin run-off from Birchanger Woods and higher ground down towards Stansted Road, already prone to flooding.
- **Sewage and drainage problems:** Thames Water says the sewer network has no spare capacity. The recent burst sewage pipe leading to a 2-week closure of Birchanger Lane is proof of that
- **Limited local benefit:** No clear evidence of meaningful amenities for residents. Section 106 funds will be absorbed into Essex County Council's structure, echoing past failures.

**1,180 MORE
DAILY CAR
TRIPS X**

Birchanger planning ref: UTT/25/3011/OP
Object by 12.12.25

Scan QR code for instructions
or go to www.saveourvillages.co.uk

Continued on Next Page >

Our Green Belt Is Under Threat But This Is NOT A Done Deal!



**SAY NO!
OBJECT!**

Birchanger planning ref: UTT/25/3011/OP
Object by 12.12.25



Scan QR code for instructions
or go to www.saveourvillages.co.uk

**ONCE IT'S BUILT ON,
IT'S GONE FOREVER**

Act now!

- View the two applications on the council website (REFs: UTT/25/3011/OP and UTT/25/3012/OP) to read more about how this planning application will affect our village.
- Submit formal objections for each application to Uttlesford District Council by no later than 12th December 2025. *It is essential that we oppose both developments because, if one is approved, the other could follow.*
- Stay informed and connected via saveourvillages.co.uk, the Birchanger and Stansted Greenbelt Preservation Facebook page and by attending the meeting on December 1st (details below)

How to Object

Every adult in your household should send separate objections to each of the two planning applications. Planning decisions are made on facts not emotions so consider using the points in this article as prompts. There are also template letters on the campaign website saveourvillages.co.uk which you can use and personalise. Objections can be submitted the following ways, remember to include your full name and address along with the planning reference numbers.

- Via Uttlesford District Council website: Uttlesford.gov.uk/planning-applications
- By emailing planning@uttlesford.gov.uk
- By writing to Planning, Uttlesford District Council, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

At the The Three Willows (Marquee) 6.30pm-8pm Monday December 1st

Led by Birchanger Parish Council, this will be an informative and interactive meeting for village residents to learn more about City & Country's planning applications with support on how to oppose them in a constructive way. In addition to hearing a summary overview and Birchanger Parish Council's view on the development, it will be a hands-on event where people can move between discussion stations and ask questions and explore issues that matter most.

Volunteers will be on hand to explain the applications, outline reasons for objection and offer practical help in drafting objections. The goal is to ensure everyone feels informed, supported and ready to take action in a constructive way.



SUDS Launderette

WASH & IRON SERVICE
CLOTHES – BEDDING –
DUVETS
Open 7 Days
9am - 6pm

Hockerill Lights, Bishop's Stortford
Large car park at rear
01279 866 183



Village Church Hall

Information and bookings:
Cat Roberson
07475 092658
birchangerhall@gmail.com

Birchanger All Girls Society

The 'BAGS' welcome women to join them on the last Wednesday of the month at 8:00 pm in the village hall.

Next Meeting:
Wednesday January 28th 7.45pm

bags@birchanger.com
Rosemary: 01279 814 678
Liz: 07473 508 056



BIRCHANGER SPORTS
AND SOCIAL CLUB

CLUB NEWS & EVENTS



Welcome to the Birchanger Social Club Festive Newsletter!

Get ready for a December packed with sparkle, laughter, and unforgettable moments! We've lined up an amazing season of entertainment — from dazzling live bands and lively Christmas parties to a mouth-watering festive menu and our crowd-favourite quiz nights. Whether you're here to dance, dine, or simply soak up the Christmas spirit(s), Birchanger Social Club is the place to be this festive season!

BIRCHANGER
Lights Up!

Join us for a magical evening as we kick off the festive season with the lighting of the Christmas tree and Village Christmas lights

CAROLS BY BIRCHANGER PRIMARY SCHOOL
HOT MINCE PIES
DELICIOUS MULLED WINE
AND PLENTY OF FESTIVE CHEER!

5th December - 6pm
Lighting of the Tree 7pm

BUMPER CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

TICKETS ON SALE NOW
BEHIND THE BAR

£2 A TICKET
19th DECEMBER

8pm



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

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



LIVE BAND
ROCK, POP & DISCO



STEREOPHONICS
BRYAN ADAMS
KAISER CHIEFS

The TRAX

CLASSIC ANTHEMS. MODERN HITS. NON-STOP GROOVE

13TH DECEMBER

Traditional Boxing Day

BOTTLE RAFFLE

2PM DRAW - TICKETS £2 EACH

PRIZES TO BE CLAIMED ON THE DAY

Good Luck!

Christmas MENU

3 COURSES £24.95
2 COURSES £21.95

BOOKINGS NOW BEING TAKEN

[CLICK TO VIEW MENU](#)

Back to THE 80'S

20TH DECEMBER - 8PM

STEP INTO A WORLD OF TIMELESS STYLE, UNFORGETTABLE HITS, AND THE ELECTRIC SPIRIT OF THE 1980S

FEATURING **GEMMA-ANNE**

Retro Party

TNT SPORTS

WATCH sky SPORTS LIVE HERE

For all general enquiries
Telephone: 01279 813441 Email: club@birchanger.com
Website: www.birchangerclub.com

NEW YEARS EVE

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF MUSIC AND MADNESS
THE UNFORGETTABLE ME AND HIM — BECAUSE NOTHING SAYS
“NEW YEAR, NEW ME” LIKE STARTING IT OFF WITH
MISCHIEF, AND MAYBE SOME QUESTIONABLE DANCE MOVES!



Follow us on Social Media
For all news and announcements



BREAKFAST
with
SANTA

SATURDAY 13TH DECEMBER

£12.00 PER CHILD
ADULTS BREAKFAST ALSO AVAILABLE

BOOKING REQUIRED

CHRISTMAS ARTS & CRAFTS
MUSIC, FUN 'N GAMES - PHOTO WITH SANTA

FREE GIFT FROM SANTA! **10-12PM**
MEMBERS CHILDREN / GRANDCHILDREN ONLY



An award for Julie!

At the 2025 AGM a long service award was made to the Club's longest serving staff member, Julie Sellick.

Julie has completed 25 years of service behind the club's bar. Julie usually worked the evening shifts when our stewards had their days off or during the Thursday night Bingo sessions as well as the Saturday afternoon sessions and was often the sole staff member on duty. She will have been present at over 1200 Bingo Sessions and a similar number of Meat Draws!

When she joined us Alan Levine was our Chairman. The Steward at the time was Tony Lucas. In the past 25 years we have had 6 different chairmen and a number of Stewards. During Julie's time we have celebrated 125 years in the community and survived the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020.

Julie's award of a floral bouquet and Cash was presented with a card by current Chairman Roy Brown. He thanked her for 25 years service and highlighted the fact that she had worked for a number of stewards and chairmen and that she had been behind the bar longer than many people had been members.

We wish to thank Julie for her loyalty and for all of her contributions for the last 25 years!

Christmas Opening Hours

	Open	Kitchen
Monday 22nd	5-11pm	No Kitchen
Tuesday 23rd	5-11pm	No Kitchen
Christmas Eve	12-10.30pm*	12-9pm
Christmas Day	12-2pm	No Kitchen
Boxing Day	12-10.30pm*	No Kitchen
Saturday 27th	12-11pm*	12-9pm
Sunday 28th	12-8pm*	12-3pm
Monday 29th	5-11pm*	No Kitchen
Tuesday 30th	5-11pm*	No Kitchen
New Years Eve	12-1am	12-8pm
New Years Day	Closed	Closed
Friday 2nd January	12-11pm	12-3pm / 5-9pm

*Stewards Discretion

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



Village Recipe

How to Cook A Turkey

Dear The_Ed,

I thought I'd share with your readers my fool-proof method for dealing with this seasonal bird. They often said of me "If it moves, she will boil it"



which was largely true in the 70's, but cooking has advanced a long way since. I'm often asked "How long can a bird last in the fridge"? Well, I put one in there last night and this morning it was dead. So, not very long really.

Happy Holidays, F. Cradock

Cooking a turkey involves thawing, preparing, roasting to a safe internal temperature, and resting before carving.

Step 1: Thaw the Turkey

If frozen, ensure your turkey is completely thawed before cooking. The safest method is in the refrigerator, allowing at least 4 hours per 450g (1 lb). For a 12 lb turkey, this can take 3 to 4 days.



Step 2: Prepare the Turkey for Roasting

About an hour before cooking, remove the turkey from the fridge to let it come to room temperature, which ensures more even cooking.

- **Remove Giblets:** Take the neck and giblets (usually in a bag) out of both cavities (*Referring to the Turkey*). You can use them to make stock for your gravy.
- **Do Not Wash:** (*Referring to the Turkey, not you*). Do not rinse the turkey in your sink, as this can spread bacteria; the oven heat will kill any pathogens. Pat the turkey dry inside and out with paper towels for crispy skin.
- **Season:** Rub softened butter or oil all over the skin (*the Turkey skin!*) and under the breast skin. Season generously with salt and pepper, and add aromatics like onion wedges, lemon halves, and herbs (rosemary, thyme, sage) to the cavity for flavour.
- **Truss (Optional):** Tuck the wing tips under the bird and tie the drumsticks together with kitchen twine to help the turkey cook evenly and look neat. (*Also known as 'doing the Liz'*)
- **Roasting Pan:** Place the turkey, breast-side up, on a rack in a shallow roasting pan to allow air to circulate. You can add some water or stock to the bottom of the pan to prevent drippings from burning.



Next Month: Burn's Night special

Apple-bobbing in Johnnie Walkers (maybe)

Step 3: Roast the Turkey

Preheat your oven to a consistent temperature, such as 180°C (350°F or Gas Mark 4).

- **Cover Loosely:** Tent the turkey loosely with aluminium foil for most of the cooking time to prevent the breast from browning too quickly and drying out.
- **Calculate Time:** A general guideline is about 13-20 minutes per pound (450g) for an un-stuffed turkey at 180°C/350°F.
- **Remove Foil:** Remove the foil about 30-60 minutes before the end of cooking to allow the skin to brown and crisp up.
- **Basting (Optional):** While some recipes call for basting, modern techniques suggest it is not necessary and opening the oven door frequently causes heat loss, extending cooking time. Rubbing the turkey with butter initially is often sufficient (*'post-mortem' of course as the Latin folks say*).

Step 4: Check for Doneness

- The only reliable way to tell if the turkey is cooked is by using a meat thermometer. (*This is not a euphemism*)
- Insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the thigh and the thickest part of the breast, ensuring it doesn't touch any bone. (*Again, this is the Turkey*)
- The turkey is done when the internal temperature reaches a minimum of 74°C (165°F) in both the thigh and breast areas. The juices should also run clear.



Step 5: Rest the Turkey

This crucial step allows the juices to redistribute throughout the meat, ensuring it's moist and tender.

How to eat Liver and onions



What's On - DECEMBER 2025

SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

		1		2		3		4		5																			
6	BSSC 13:00 Meat Draw	7	Church 11:15 Family Service BSSC 12:00 Sunday Roast	8	Skip	9	Garden Bin BSSC 15:00 Garden Skip BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	10	Black Bin Church School Christingle BSSC Bingo Night	11	Black Bin Church School Christingle BSSC Bingo Night	12	Green Bin BSSC Xmas Menu starts	13	Green Bin BSSC 10:00 Santa breakfast! BSSC 13:00 Meat Draw BSSC 20:00 Trax Live	14	Church Family Christingle BSSC 12:00 Sunday Roast	15	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	16	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	17	Green Bin BSSC 18:00 Evening Carols	18	Green Bin BSSC 14:00 Bottle Raffle	19	Green Bin BSSC 18:00 Carols BSSC 19:00 Light Up! Willows 19:00 Carols		
20	BSSC 13:00 Meat Draw BSSC 20:00 80's Party	21	Church 11:15 Family Service BSSC 12:00 Sunday Roast BSSC 16:30 Kids Xmas Party	22	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	23	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	24	Happy New Year BSSC Live: Me & Him	25	Happy New Year Church Communion	26	Happy New Year BSSC 14:00 Bottle Raffle	27	BSSC 13:00 Meat Draw BSSC 20:00 80's Party	28	Church 11:15 Family Service BSSC 12:00 Sunday Roast	29	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	30	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	31	Happy New Year BSSC Live: Me & Him	1	Green Bin BSSC 12:00 - Line Dance 16:45-20:30 - Ellouise Dance	2	Green Bin BSSC 10:00 - Tai Chi 16:15-17:15 - Ellouise Dance 18:30-21:15 - Apton Dance	3	Green Bin BSSC 09:30-11:00 - Apton Dance Private 15:30 - Ellouise Dance

*Bradley Common waste collection on Friday not Thursday

Church Hall - Weekly Classes & Activities (holiday period may vary)

SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

9:00 - Apton Mini	9:45 - Kids Latin 2	10:30 - Kids Latin 1	09:45-10:45 - Apton Dance Ballet	10:00 - Tai Chi	12:00 - Line Dance	09:30-11:00 - Apton Dance Private
			17:30 - Teen Latin	16:15-17:15 - Ellouise Dance	16:45-20:30 - Ellouise Dance	15:30 - Ellouise Dance
			18:45 - Teen Street	18:30-21:15 - Apton Dance		
			19:30 - Adult Street			
			20:15 - Rock & Roll			

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. Printers: M&B Printers Tel: 01371 874 695. Email: mbdesignprint.com.
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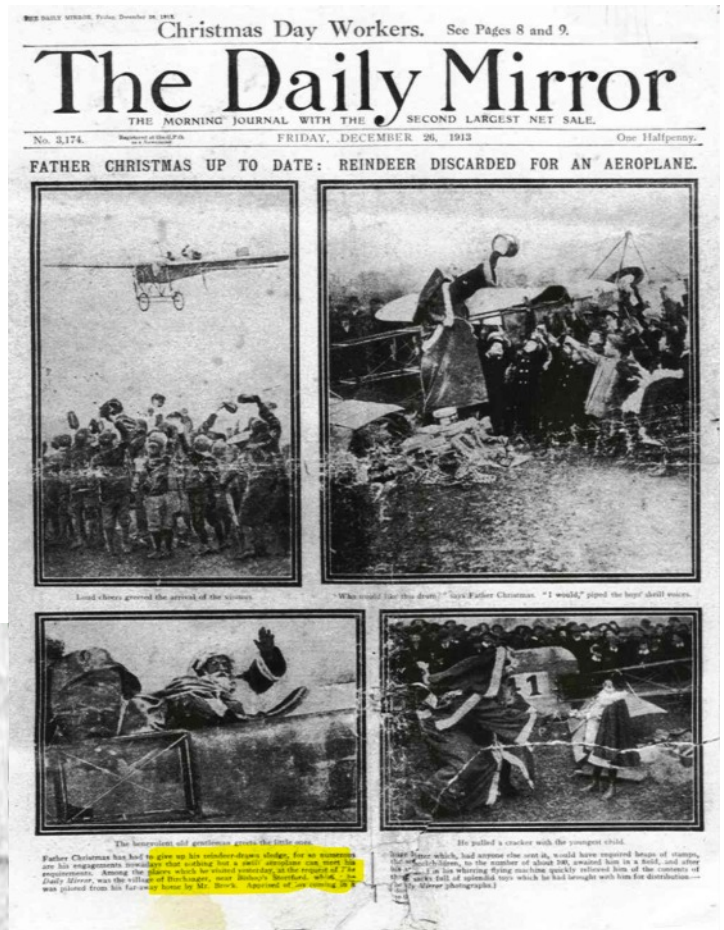
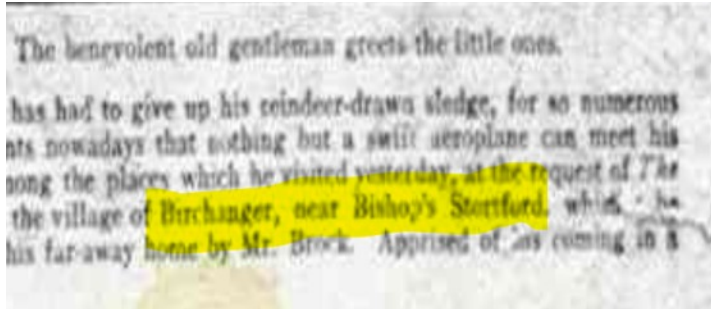
The Way We Woz

Father Christmas flies by plane into Birchanger in 1913!

Unbelievable as it may seem, this actually happened. The Daily Mirror reported on Friday December 26th 1913 that Santa did indeed stop off at Birchanger in a plane, having dispensed with his sleigh and reindeer. If any villagers have stories passed down from



relatives about this amazing event please write to The_Ed and we will feature them in a future issue!



What's that all about then?

Fights at Christmas - try and avoid these common stress points!

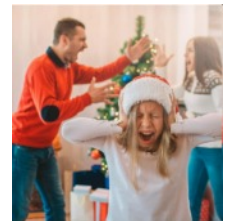
1. **The Tree** - What should have been a pleasant afternoon choosing a tree to decorate with tinsel and cheer has become a frenzied search for the holy grail of trees, pooh-pooing each other's meagre choices and falling further and further into the FOBO rabbit hole. (Fear of a Better Option)

2. **Christmas Lights** - This is followed by a tense two hours of one of you trying unsuccessfully to unravel the giant knot of colourful stars while the other shrugs and suggests you pop to The Range for another set. The mindset is admirable. We teach our children to never give up, but there is an exception to every rule. And when it comes to the lights that adorn the Christmas tree, know when *Just. Walk. Away.*

3. **Who's doing Christmas?** - Your soul mate should understand that you want to spend the day at your parent's house in Stortford. Meanwhile, his family is expecting you in Hull on the 24th. Mistletoe won't solve this dilemma. Taking turns is probably the grown-up thing to do.



4. **Clash of Calendars** - Your friends have invited you both for a once-yearly Christmas dinner. His football friends are having their night out. This isn't going to end well.



5. **Overindulgence** - 'Tis the season to go out and get merry, or in some cases, somewhat obliterated. There is always one who will overdo it at their Christmas work party. Hangover hell aside, this is the time of the year disagreements over minor differences or niggles at work spill over into a crescendo of emotions (usually because of the vat of mulled wine you've consumed).

6. **Gifts** - You've spent all year researching and then dropping subtle hints (sending them screenshots of the exact item they should be saving up for) and then on Christmas day they decide to go rogue with some bright off-piste idea. Avoid any dangerous creativity by organising to exchange gifts in the run-up to Christmas so you don't get any nasty shocks!



The Village People. This month: Sarah Matthews

Tell us a bit about yourself and when was life before Birchanger? I was born in Harlow and moved to Bishop's Stortford as a young child. I attended Leventhorpe School and then on to Hertford Regional College where I studied business and finance. I went straight to work as a junior in a local company who imported products for the then new phenomenon of the 'middle aisle'. In 2015 I set up my own business importing own-label goods for large retailers. More recently I have been working on toy products and licensed goods. I also am the Treasurer for Birchanger Club having relinquished joint role of Secretary and Treasurer last year.



When did you come to Birchanger and what were your first experiences? I first moved to Birchanger in 2000 and lived in the flats in High View. I Have since moved to one of the houses! I love the village and the beautiful countryside surrounding it. It is close enough to towns but somehow felt away from it all. Kids at the school really helped me integrate into the village and then I somehow ended up helping out with the cub scout group and many fabulous memories were made there.

What do you like most about the village? I love the countryside by my back gate for the two loopy spaniels (Jerry and Maisy), the sense of a small community and the wonderful mix of people living in the village. The club is great and there is always someone to chat to, and we are blessed to have it along with the Three Willows in our community.

What would you change if you could? A village shop!

What is your best memory of the village so far? Far too many to recall – mostly at the club on entertainment nights – Christmas is always great with the Boxing Day bottle draw a personal favourite as everyone is in the spirit and it's a fun day!

'Candlelight Carols' Saturday December 13th



At St John's Church, Stansted at 4.30pm The Harmonaires Choir is back for a Christmas concert featuring music by Rutter, Park and Todd together with all your seasonal favourites. It will also include well-loved carols for the audience to sing along to. Tickets are £5 for adults, children free. They can be bought online at www.theharmonaireschoir.com or on the door.

There will be a retiring collection for CRISIS, particularly known for their Crisis at Christmas campaign but also a charity committed to helping people out of homelessness all year round. Your generous contributions will help provide vital services and support for those in need.

The Three Willows Pub & Restaurant

327 Birchanger Lane CM23 5QR

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Menu



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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
Soft Play/Bouncy Castles	Andy / Lucie	07956 622808
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

Birchanger C of E Primary School
Celebrating Life in all its Fullness!



This week our whole school came together for a special day focused on our vision of *"Life in all its Fullness."* The children explored where this vision comes from in the Bible and took part in thoughtful discussions to deepen their understanding of what it means in their own lives. Through a range of creative and reflective activities, they considered what makes their lives full and expressed their ideas by creating beautiful "trees of life."



As a school community, we also reflected on how we can help make others' lives full and happy. Each child wrote their ideas on paper leaves, which now hang proudly on our Fullness Tree in the foyer. It was a lovely celebration thinking about living life to the full and what that truly means for ourselves and others.

Mrs Vessey, Headteacher www.birchanger.essex.sch.uk

St. Mary's Church



Services at 11.15am unless otherwise stated.

- 5th December at 7pm Carols in the Three Willows
- 7th December Family Service with Pam Lee
- 11th December School Christingle service
- 14th December Family Christingle Service with Revd Colin Fairweather
- 19th December at 7pm Evening Carol service with Hugh Mascetti
- 21st December Family service with Pam Lee
- 25th December Christmas Day Communion with Revd Colin Fairweather
- 28th December Family service with Pam Lee

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus we have already received some sad news that can now be shared with you. Our Priest in Charge, Reverend Colin Fairweather, announced in church a few weeks ago that he will be leaving us early in the new year. This announcement has come as a shock for our small congregation but given that Colin is moving closer to his elderly parents who need his help, we understand why he is having to make this move and we truly wish him well for the future. Colin was visibly distressed as he explained that he would be leaving the Benefice in January and that his last day with us will be the 11th of January. He will be sorely missed.

It will obviously take time for a replacement priest to be found but in the coming months we will continue to hold regular services just as we have done before so we ask that all of you do whatever you can to support your church through this difficult time.

December is always a busy month for St Mary's. There will be Carol singing in the Three Willows on Friday 5th December. Just as she did last year, Anne Brooks will be bringing along her keyboard to accompany carolers so if you enjoy singing traditional carols, come along and join in. There will be our usual Carol service in church on Friday 19th December at 7pm followed by mince pies and mulled wine. We will as usual be joined by the Benefice choir.

Bethlehem trail

We still need more decorated cobbles to add to the trail. Please let Pam (07702171744) know if you would like to paint a cobble.

Prayer for the Month

Lord, Jesus Christ, as we look forward to your coming, touch our world with your mighty hand, with your power, grace and love bringing peace to all your people.

Amen



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