

# Birchanger Village Magazine

March 2026 Issue 278



"Spring fever, Spring is here at last. Spring fever, my heart's beating fast." *Elvis Presley*



## T.K. Maxx to finally open in Jackson Square!

After an extensive period of waiting which has seen multiple UK Prime Ministers come and go, local excitement rise and fall and the launch of maybe one or two trips to the moon, this landmark store is set to open in Bishop's Stortford.

Many villagers will know how much the shopping precinct has declined in the past years as more and more businesses exit. Local business commentators now believe the arrival of this behemoth shop will result in other currently empty units being repopulated making a visit into BS a far more worthwhile experience. Target opening date is March 26<sup>th</sup>, so by all calculations if you drive down to Stansted Road and join the traffic you could leave the village around mid-March to arrive on time after getting parked. *The\_Ed*



L to R: Time, Bonaparte, Scots and Presley all waiting for the store to open.



## Villagers drain "Birchanger Lake"

It won't have escaped anyone's notice that the recent downpours have caused a lot of issues in the village, not least around the area of the club and cricket field. Two intrepid villagers, Ray Gooding and Geof Driscoll spent a couple of hours this month to clear the drains and ditch nearby which appears to have solved the problem. Much appreciation to both for their efforts for the benefit of the village!

## Post boxes "taped up" - shock!

It will also not have gone un-noticed that some local post boxes (e.g. Snowley and Tesco's) have been covered in tape and put out of use. This is part of Royal Mail's effort to compete with private courier delivery services and parcel drop-off lockers. New solar-powered boxes will be introduced to



allow customers to send parcels "up to the size of a shoe-box". "I'm in shock" said a shocked villager "and I don't have any shoes to post, this is madness. I blame Brexit."



magazine@birchanger.com



07488 315349



217 Birchanger Lane CM23 5QJ



# The\_Ed's InBoxBag ©



## RAIN, DRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES



...kinda sums up 2026 in the village so far. Of course, all that alongside Green Belt threats. However I couldn't find a decent strap line using a classic film if I had to mention Green Belt. The Green Mile was a poor contender. There's been so much to report since mid 2025 on Green Belt (and there's a bit more in this month's magazine, sorry). The weather and traffic has become a perverse distraction! The positive news is that Uttlesford District Council are due to approve the long term 'local plan' for the area in March - which should reduce new attempts to develop (aka *destroy*) green belt from being approved. That's what everyone in the village hopes. It is, of course, people outside of the village who seem intent on destroying parts of it.

*The\_Ed*

## It pays to haggle on Broadband - Gigaclear vs BT PlusNet

Dear The\_Ed,

I currently have Gigaclear broadband, as do many other villagers I would think, and my contract is up for renewal end of February, I was not looking forward to the price rise from £34.00 to £43.00 a month. Every 18 months I have a conversation with Gigaclear but they never really budged much on the speed or price as they knew they had a monopoly on the service. I have lately noticed engineers working in Harrison's in the underground BT service spaces and thinking they were at last replacing the old aluminium wires with copper wires to at least give the residents of Harrison's a reasonable speed. Over the years I have previously complained vigorously to Open reach about the appalling broadband speeds and very poor service when I was a customer.

So, as I was passing, I mentioned to the engineer it was about time it got fixed and was surprised when he said they were laying fibre throughout the village. Armed with that info I asked Plusnet (BT company) for a quote for full fibre and not only did they want to give me an extra 100 MB's than Gigaclear's speed, the price was only £26.99 month with no install or activation speeds plus a £65 gift card.

I called Gigaclear retention's to negotiate, and now with competition in the village and after a little back and forth, they finally reduced the contract from £34.00 a month to £24.00 a month and upgraded the speed to 500MB's. Also they sent the latest router (Wi-Fi 6) FOC. Just shows you what 10-minute telephone call and competition can do. Hopefully this will save someone some money!

Keith Edgeworth

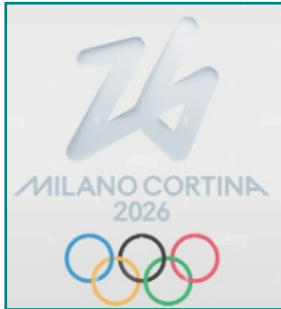
Reality	Linked in®
I chased a squirrel.	<p>Proud to announce that I effectively executed a rapid-response squirrel displacement strategy to mitigate potential yard intrusions.</p> <p>Humbled by the unwavering support of my family and local stakeholders.</p> <p>This experience reinforced the importance of vigilance, ownership, and continuous improvement.</p> <p>Looking forward to scaling this impact in future engagements. 🐿️</p>

# Liz Godwin's News & Views



## Memories of the Olympics.

The Winter Olympics enjoyed by so many of us winter sports enthusiasts helped to brighten up some pretty awful days last month despite the scarcity of medals for UK. The skills and courage of the competitors helped to brighten up the worst of days. Medals were very thin



on the ground unless you just happened to be from America or a mid European country. Most of the countries competing had never ever seen a snow flake in their own countries and were never ever likely to yet they were there for the fun and the camaraderie the Olympics always brings. The competitors enjoyed the space they had after their events finished and enjoyed meeting others who had likewise dedicated their lives to their sport and who came from all over the world.

Winter sports are changing beyond recognition. The youth of today have invented new snow sports which would be totally unrecognisable to the original Olympians who fought to start the Winter Olympics. The old downhill's are still there, but they share the games with so much more.

## Recycle Your Clothing.

Many of us have cupboards full of good clothing and household items which we are never going to use again. What to do with them all is a problem for most of us. Apart from donating the clothes to charity most of us have never even considered selling clothes on line, via eBay, Gumtree, Vinted or even just swapping with friends at a clothes swapping event. We liked them once, someone out there might appreciate that item!



*Give it away,  
give it away, give  
it away now...*

You don't even have to admit those really naff outfits are yours if you go in the dark! *The\_Ed*

## Farewell to a Very Great Friend.

When you lose someone whom you have regarded as a very great friend for a considerable time, that loss seems to be absorbed very slowly. You hear their voice, you expect to see them around the next corner, but they are just not there. It takes a long time to adjust and realise that they really aren't coming back.

That is how it was for a great many people in Birchanger when they learnt that Alex Stewart will not be back in the village again. Alex has succumbed to a long running illness fought with courage and determination over the past two years. One of two very notable Scotsmen in Birchanger he was a figurehead in for many years, involved in many village occasions including Burns nights, Parish Council, dog shows, fetes and much more making him a very familiar face in the village. He cared for everyone but as they say - did not suffer fools gladly.

I will always miss him as will the rest of Birchanger village and his many friends outside the village and in the police force.

## Our Sponsors

*We are delighted to welcome our new sponsor, GoodOaks Homecare, whose advertisement appears in this month's issue.*

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## The Way We Woz

Birchanger Green Services opened in 1995

Birchanger Green Services opened on 9 March 1995 beside the M11 near Birchanger, close to Stansted Airport. Developed to serve growing motorway and airport traffic, the site brought fuel, food outlets, parking, and a hotel, creating local jobs and boosting the economy. Residents welcomed employment opportunities but raised concerns about increased traffic, light pollution, and noise affecting the village. Today, Birchanger Green is one of the busiest service areas on the M11 corridor,



...serving large volumes of motorists and airport travellers daily. The site has expanded and modernised since the 1990s, with upgraded retail, dining options, and improved facilities reflecting continued traffic growth around Stansted Airport. Teenagers love to spend their parents cash on junk food here, and generally hang about with their mates when they should be in school. *The\_Ed*

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## Yet another travellers planning application

The latest planning application from the Travellers seeks the removal of two fundamentally important conditions from an earlier planning consent granted at appeal. These are:

- Condition 3 - restricts the occupancy of the site to 13 named travellers and their children
- Condition 4 - requires the travellers to vacate the site if Condition 3 is not met.

Those of you who have followed this saga over the years, including through two rounds of appeals to Government Planning Inspectors, will be aware that the main reason the travellers won both appeals was the individual circumstances of these particular families. Many were reported to have long-term health problems and many of their children were said to have special needs. In both appeal cases, the Planning Inspectors went to great lengths to consider the personal circumstances of each family before finally granting approval.

The decisive factor was the need to provide a stable home for the travellers' healthcare and their children's education. As matters stand, the current occupants are protected from eviction as long as they comply with all the conditions attached to their planning consent(s), because no-one else is allowed to replace them. It cannot be in the best interests of the current occupants to remove that protection but, if conditions 3 and 4 were removed, that's exactly what would happen. This would open the door to unaffordable rent increases for the current occupants and to the risk of eviction. If evicted, the site owner (himself a traveller, and who is applying for conditions 3 and 4 to be removed) could replace the current occupants with others from anywhere in the UK or Ireland who were prepared to pay more. Whatever happened to the applicant's earlier arguments about the importance of providing the named families with

a stable home so as to enable proper care for their serious long-term health problems and in the interests of their children's education? Birchanger Parish Council and Birchanger Residents Association have submitted objections to this application. To submit an objection, send an email to [planning@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:planning@uttlesford.gov.uk) providing 2 or 3 reasons for your objection. You should put **APPLICATION UTT/24/35/55/FUL** in the 'Subject' box and include your name and address at the foot of your email. Finally, for those who say that the current group of travellers have never caused any problems in the village, remember that if the current conditions are removed, the site would be opened up to 'all-comers'. Remember also, that this all about defending Birchanger's Green Belt for future generations. The current application for the removal of these two conditions could well be the start (some would say 'the continuation') of a slippery slope. Please object. **BPC and BRA**

### The Three Willows Pub & Restaurant

327 Birchanger Lane CM23 5QR

Our menu is based on great British pub classics with a modern twist, and of course the very popular fresh fish options and a classic selection of home-made desserts.

Menu



*Children and dogs welcome*

[thethreewillows.com](http://thethreewillows.com)  
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+44 (0)1279 815 913



## Gordon Bleu & his restaurant review The Gem - Stansted

## Word Search Find the 10 words relating to Spring!

When it was suggested we went for dinner to celebrate a friend's birthday at The Gem I was a little sceptical given we'd been rather underwhelmed in a visit to Linden House which The Gem has now replaced. Any concerns were quickly allayed when the six of us arrived on a Friday night, with a warm welcome from every member of staff. We decided to have a drink at the bar to start - the same layout as before, dimly lit and cosy.



Another positive sign before we'd even seen the menu was being seated at a round table. A small point perhaps but it really does make a difference than the traditional rectangle and I applaud the restaurant because it also took up much more space.

Excellent attentive service continued and we were guided through the extensive classic European menu, with starters including such delights as seared scallops with parsnip puree and chorizo, perhaps a little small but tasty nonetheless and an entire burrata with heirloom tomatoes. The menu is varied to some extent but with a definite focus on either seafood or steak. I can highly recommend the seafood risotto, the rice cooked perfectly with a good texture and a hint of chilli, enhancing rather than dominating the dish. A few of us had either ribeye or fillet steak and each was cooked to the requested level and a nice element is that all accompaniments (including a sauce!) are included in the price. All washed down with several servings of sauvignon and primitivo from the well-priced wine list although half a point deducted for the local Stansted wine option being unavailable.

We were too full to have dessert but as usual ordered it anyway. A shared cheese board to go with the final bottle of red whilst I opted for one my favourite puddings that isn't on enough menus - the Bakewell tart. Now, in the cold light of day I'm convinced this has nothing to do with how inebriated I was, but serving it with Ambrosia Devon custard is not going to go down well. I checked and even asked for the recipe only to be told it was "homemade." Yeah right - I grew up on that tin of joy so don't kid a kidder. Despite "custardgate", all in all, the place is indeed a Gem.

L V T T O G S B Z G X L B Y Y O B F N E  
 J I V A Z D E A E J E Q X L D R Y F O V  
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[birchangerhall@gmail.com](mailto: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 March 25<sup>th</sup>  
 7:45pm for 8:00pm

[bags@birchanger.com](mailto:bags@birchanger.com)  
 Rosemary: 01279 814 678  
 Liz: 07473 508 056



BIRCHANGER SPORTS  
AND SOCIAL CLUB

# CLUB NEWS & EVENTS



## Welcome to the latest Birchanger Social Club Newsletter!

March is here and spring is finally in the air at Birchanger Social Club! With lighter evenings, exciting events on the horizon, and Mother's Day just around the corner, there's plenty to look forward to this month.

Don't forget to visit our website to explore everything Birchanger Social Club has to offer. From our full entertainment line-up packed with live music, events, and socials, to our current food menu full of club favourites, there's always something worth discovering. You'll also get a

first look at what's coming next, including our exciting new food menu launching soon, alongside our brand-new wine menu, carefully selected to pair perfectly with relaxed spring evenings and special occasions. We can't wait to welcome you to the club and share what's ahead!

### CHEESE & WINE NIGHT

HOSTED BY LWC SOMMELIER

An Evening of Perfect Pairings

Join us for a relaxed and indulgent night of hand-selected cheeses paired with carefully chosen wines. Sip, savour, and discover new favourites

21st March

Please Pre-Book

### MOTHER'S DAY Lunch

SUNDAY 15 MARCH

3 COURSE MEAL

LIVE ACOUSTIC MUSIC FROM ANNA WELLS

PRE BOOKINGS ONLY - £24.95  
TWO SITTINGS - 12.30 & 15.30



## 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](http://www.birchangerclub.com)



For all general enquiries  
Telephone: 01279 813441 Email: [club@birchanger.com](mailto:club@birchanger.com)  
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**THE  
TIME WARPS  
7th MARCH**

*Past - Present - Unmissable*

**MEAT RAFFLE**  
EVERY SATURDAY

**1PM DRAW**

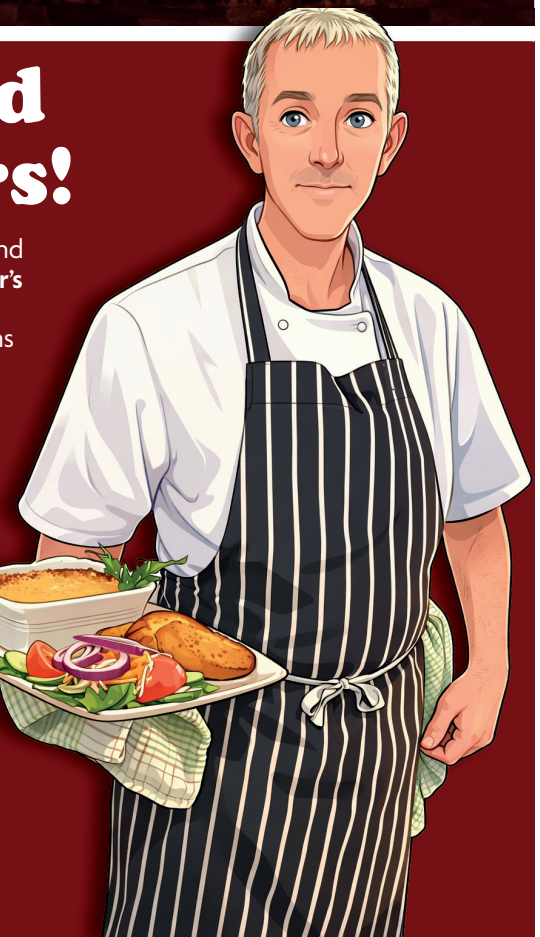
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# Notes from Chef and Latest Special Offers!

There's something new cooking! Created with fresh, seasonal ingredients and served from lunch through to dinner. We're also serving up a special Mother's Day menu and this month's Chef's Specials! And of course, don't miss our legendary Sunday Roast Dinners, best enjoyed with your favourite pints, gins and wines. Pop in, unwind, and let the team take care of the rest!



**SPECIAL OFFER**

**25% OFF MENU**

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS & THURSDAY LUNCH**

\*NOT INCLUDING STEAK DISHES

## This month's specials...

<p>W/C 2nd March</p> <p>Skate Wings Baked or Battered £14.95</p>	<p>W/C 9th March</p> <p>Thai Green Curry Chicken £10.95 Prawn £11.95</p>	<p>W/C 16th March</p> <p>Liver and Bacon with Mustard Mash £16.95</p>	<p>W/C 23rd March</p> <p>Barnsley Lamb Chop with Mash £16.95</p>
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# When the Chelsea Pensioners came to Birchanger

No one can deny the significance in the history of the Social Club of Birchanger's Bowls club. The Bowls club was at the heart of our club right at the beginning and over time several bowlers have been well respected Officers of the parent Club. George Banks and Brian Webster spring to mind. The Bowls club had a significant number of members and the annual Club AGM was always influenced by their presence. The club produced bowlers who played for the Essex County team Peter Dawson was one of these.



The bowls green was regarded as sacred turf and it was a rare thing for non bowlers to trespass upon it.

Today the Bowls club is a memory as the game became unfashionable amongst younger members. It became difficult to attract new players The Club closed in November 2020 after 107 years and the bowls green is now the Club's garden.



*The late Brian Warwick enjoying a beer!*

Seven years earlier the club celebrated its centenary.

Birchanger Bowls club began its centenary celebrations with a visit from a team of from Chelsea pensioners. On May 8th 2013.

The visitors arrived in their traditional scarlet uniforms at about 2.15 having been delayed by the state opening of parliament. A clear priority for the visitors was evident on arrival as they made a bee line for the bar!

The festivities proper began at about 3 pm with a welcome from Club Captain Colin Ferbrache to acting captain Doug Payne that was followed by a round of "spider" where the bowlers simultaneously bowled his wood at a jack in the centre of the green. Closest to the jack was a lady named Rita who won a bottle of scotch for her effort. Then a match was played on the three rinks.

While the match was being played, I interviewed some of the veterans who watched from the shelter of the club. There was a fair amount of banter

between the visitors mostly based on inter regimental rivalries and Mac, Charlie and Fred all well into their eighties told us about their life at the Royal Hospital in Chelsea. They all gave the impression of being very privileged to live there. Charlie who joined the Royal Horse Artillery as a boy soldier in 1944 served in Germany, the middle east and far east remaining in the army into the 1970s. His mate Fred was in the Royal Artillery also served for many years reaching the rank of Colour Sergeant. Mac a very taciturn chap, who likes his beer, served in the Household Division. He played in the final ends of the bowls match, that was won by the visitors.

After the match the pensioners changed back into their "scarlets" and there was a photo shoot and time for the hosts and guests to socialise. Afterwards there was a roast chicken dinner followed by fruit crumble or bread and butter pudding.

By Eddie Gilbey



For all general enquiries  
Telephone: 01279 813441 Email: club@birchanger.com  
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March is usually a gorgeous month in the Gardens - with warm sunny days bursting the leaf buds on the shrubs and trees and bringing out the first blossom on the peaches,

nectarines and apricots. There are daffodils everywhere - early tete-a-tete providing a blast of colour and then a succession of many other varieties, historic and modern. Bumble bees forage and brimstone and peacock butterflies flit around. After the snowdrop season in February, we sometimes have group visits in March but we typically don't fully re-open until the beginning of April. So, volunteers are focussed on preparations - some more spring pruning and moving of plants in the herbaceous borders; tidying; and the first planting of veg: broad beans, carrots and beetroot. Volunteers spring clean the history and information building, so that the archives can be enjoyed again by the first main season visitors. We love to welcome new volunteers in March, as it is such a pretty season for showing them around and there is lots of work pending. Thursday is our main gardening and maintenance day for volunteering, while some volunteers work on Mondays, Wednesdays or Saturdays. And our Sunday Open Days rely on volunteers too - for catering and other front of house duties. So, if you like Gardens and being outdoors and fancy volunteering, please do get in touch. If you wish to arrange a group visit or start volunteering, you can contact us through our website or direct by emailing [enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk). Jill Goldsmith

## Village Recipe

### Double cheese, salad onion & chili omelette

Spicy, cheesy and herby, this omelette is a favourite speedy lunch sent in by Margie Reen of Wood Lane. "It takes minutes to prepare and cook but still manages to feel a bit special" writes Margie "A bit like me really".



- 10g unsalted butter
- 2 salad onions, trimmed and finely sliced
- 1 Thai red chilli, de-seeded and finely sliced
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 15g mature Cheddar, coarsely grated
- 20g Brie, sliced
- Honey, to drizzle
- Coriander leaves
- Sprigs of mint
- Green salad, to serve (optional)

1. Put a 20-22 cm frying pan over a medium heat and add the butter. Add the salad onions and chilli, then cook, stirring, for a few minutes to soften. Add the beaten eggs to the pan. Season and stir for a couple of minutes so the eggs start to cook. When they are almost cooked, sprinkle over the Cheddar.

2. Turn up the heat a little, cook for a further minute, then top half the omelette with the sliced Brie. The underside of the omelette should be starting to brown a little and it should just be set on top. Drizzle with a little honey, scatter with the herbs and fold over. Slide onto a plate, scatter with extra sliced chilli and herbs, and tuck in. A fresh green salad makes a brilliant accompaniment, if liked. "A bit like me really" writes Margie (again)...*phone number redacted, The\_Ed*

## Yet Another threat to Green Belt!

We reported in November 2025 that the planning inspector had dismissed an appeal to develop 9 dwellings on Green Belt in Birchanger. We can now report that a fresh application for 8 dwellings on the same site has been submitted by the same applicant. Birchanger Parish Council and Birchanger Residents Association will always object to any plans to destroy the Green Belt around the village. If you would like to comment on this latest application it is reference [UTT/26/0284/FUL](#) and you can email [planning@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:planning@uttlesford.gov.uk) providing your name, address and comments.



## School celebrates a love of reading

This half term we've been celebrating our love of reading across the school and are delighted to have purchased a range of exciting new books for our library. Our Learning



Council, who also take on the role of school librarians, led a wonderful collective worship exploring how a love of reading helps us experience Life in all its Fullness. They proudly shared the new books with the children and spoke about why reading matters so much. As one of our librarians, Isla, beautifully put it, "reading opens a new mindset." Additionally, research shows that children who read regularly make significantly more progress, with approaches such as reading comprehension linked to an average of five months' additional progress. Mrs Vessey, Headteacher

[www.birchanger.essex.sch.uk](http://www.birchanger.essex.sch.uk)

# What's On - MARCH 2026

SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Church BSSC	11:15 Family Service 12:00 Sunday Roast	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Bingo Night	BSSC Bingo Night
	8	9	10	11	12	13
Church BSSC	11:15 Holy Communion 12:00 Sunday Roast	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Bingo Night	BSSC Bingo Night
	14	15	16	17	18	19
Church BSSC	11:15 Family Service 12:30/15:30 Mothers Day! <i>Pre-book only</i>	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Bingo Night	BSSC Bingo Night
	21	22	23	24	25	26
Church BSSC	11:15 Matins 12:00 Sunday Roast	BSSC 20:00 Quiz Night	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Poker Night (Members)	BSSC Bingo Night	BSSC Bingo Night
Garden Waste BSSC	28	29	30	31		
BSSC BSSC BSSC	13:00 Meat Draw 15:00 Garden Waste 20:00 Brutal Bingo	Church BSSC	11:15 Family Service 12:00 Sunday Roast	Church BSSC	11:15 Family Service 12:00 Sunday Roast	Church BSSC

Garden Waste@ BSSC  
 Feb 28th 3pm-5pm  
 Mar 28th 3pm-5pm  
 Apr 25th 3pm-5pm

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

SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

09:00 - Apton Mini 09:45 - Kids Latin 2 10:30 - Kids Latin 1		16:00 - 18:45 - Ellouise Dance 19:00-20:30 -Apton Latin/Ballroom	09:45 - 10:45 - Apton Dance Ballet 17:30 - Teen Latin 18:45 - Teen Street 19:30 - Adult Street 20:15 - Rock & Roll	10:00-12:00 - Tai Chi 16:15-17:15 - Ellouise Dance 18:30-21:15 - Apton Dance	12:00 - Line Dance 16:45-20:30 - Ellouise Dance	09:30 - 11:00 - Apton Dance Private 15:30 - Ellouise Dance
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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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# "To be or not to be" (*on a lead*) - that is the question! ©Shakespeare

(A "For the Love of Dog" / "What's that all about then" special - or....Much Ado About Nothing)

This can come up in conversation with villagers taking their canine friends out and about - so are leads the law, or optional, or somewhere in between?

## 1. There is no blanket "always on a lead" rule

There is no general UK law that says all dogs must always be on a lead in all public places. You don't automatically break the law just by letting your dog off-lead in a field or open space.

## 2. Local rules (Public Spaces Protection Orders)

Councils can make local legal orders (called Public Spaces Protection Orders or PSPOs — previously Dog Control Orders) that require dogs to be on a lead in specific areas, e.g. children's play areas, sports pitches, certain parts of parks, streets or beaches. Signs must be in place where

these orders apply, and if you ignore them, you can be fined (typically a on-the-spot fine or more if prosecuted).



"Bard breath"-if only he could speak

## 3. Public safety and control

Even if there's no PSPO, the law says you must keep your dog under control in public. This doesn't always mean on a lead, but you must be able to stop your dog and prevent it causing harm or alarm. It is a criminal offence to allow a dog to be "dangerously out of control" in public (or even in private places like someone's home).

## 4. Countryside and livestock rules

Under rural law (like the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953), a dog worrying or chasing livestock is an offence — meaning you must be able to control your dog so it doesn't disturb farm animals. The Countryside Code sets legal requirements in some cases: On Open Access land between 1 March and 31 July, you must keep dogs on a lead even if no livestock is present. You should keep dogs on a lead near livestock generally and follow any local signs.

## 5. Roads and highways

When walking on a public road or pavement, many local councils interpret the Road Traffic Act and highway safety rules as meaning dogs should be kept on a lead to prevent them straying into traffic, though enforcement often comes via PSPOs or bylaws.

## 6. Breed-specific rules

Certain dogs (e.g., restricted breeds such as XL Bullies) are legally required to be muzzled and on a lead in public under recent restrictions.



"The Winter's Tail" - village walkies



"You're Bard mate!"- A giant AI enhanced Shakespeare contemplates a small dog and an even smaller door.



[www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk)



Now that Spring is on its way, the weather should encourage us to make more use of bridleways and footpaths. Around 150 walk descriptions are available to download free from our website, [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk). As well as saying when to turn left or right, our route descriptions aim to point out things of interest along the way. Some of these will be marked on the local Ordnance Survey map. Ordnance Survey ("OS") has been the UK's official mapping body since 1791 AD, having originated for military purposes. Its activities have left various physical markers which may still be encountered, albeit that mapping techniques have moved forward in recent times with the satellite-based GPS (global positioning system). The two historic OS markers that are most likely to be encountered are "triangulation pillars" and "benchmarks". Several thousand triangulation pillars (also referred to as trig points) were installed all over the UK - solid concrete pillars about 4 feet tall, usually erected at a high point with a clear range of vision. Each has a place on top for positioning a map measurer's tool, a theodolite. The pillar's location and height above sea level have been precisely measured and recorded so that from here the map-maker can plot the surrounding landscape. OS surveyors also left "benchmarks" in thousands of strategic locations. These are additional altitude reference points, a horizontal line indicating height above sea level - chiselled into a wall or milestone from around 1840 until the 1990s. The benchmark was sometimes indicated on a brass plaque attached at the appropriate height. On OS benchmarks, the horizontal line appears above an upward-pointing arrow. Please look out for trig points and benchmarks. If they are on a Hundred Parishes walk route but not yet mentioned in the description, please let us know. Ken McDonald, Secretary



## Debunking conspiracies and other challenges

The welter of decisions and imponderables that seized us all during Covid, were recollected by Dr Kevin Bryant whose particular job, when the vaccine became available, was to dispel some worryingly damaging ideas that were circulating amongst student nurses training at Anglia Ruskin about the Covid vaccination. As a researcher in Physiology, Anatomy, Biochemistry and Nutrition he was tasked with allaying the concerns of nurses who were to step up to the front line of the NHS. The unfortunate misconception circulating, that somehow vaccination led to changes in DNA, caused many student nurses to balk at taking the crucial vaccination. He produced a clear and vital scientific explanation, demonstrating how the vaccine worked so nurses became convinced and able to take up their places in an NHS fighting hard for us all. The u3a audience also benefited from an excellent summary of the science of the vaccine and, during a lively Q&A session, Kevin explored techniques of combatting conspiracy theories and the significance of trustworthy science.

Yet further critical issues are to be addressed by the u3a in March, beginning with the Garden group welcoming back writer and broadcaster Geoff Hodge to give a talk on "Gardening in the Global Greenhouse" on **March 9th** - well timed to coincide with the springtime itch to get out and nurture our environment. Then, on **14th March**, David Morson will ask the question, "Are Donald Trump and Elon Musk the Logical Consequence of Globalisation?", promising a dissection of how possibly we are where we are, whilst at the monthly meeting on **19th March**, best-selling author Andrew Baker will recollect the infamous Profumo Affair.

Information on the extensive activities happening in the u3a can be found at [stansted.u3asite.uk](http://stansted.u3asite.uk), or by 'phoning 07874 385541. Julia Cook

## LOCAL DIRECTORY

### Services

Art Studio & Gallery	Heather Brown	01279 815 453
Beauty Therapist	Sarah Whiting	07887 638 359
Bed & Breakfast	The Cottage	01279 812 349
Birchanger Social Club	Terry Earnshaw	01279 813 441
Car Service, MOT, Gas	D. Bonney	01279 813 315
Chiropodist	Julie Golden	01279 873 492
Dementia Support	Debbie Baker	07927 011 345
Funeral Services	Daniel Robinson & Sons	01279 655 477
Garden Services	GWB Horticulture	01799 543 483
Hairdresser Men/Boys	Emma Marks	07527 227 943
Home Care	GoodOaks	0808 531 0016
Laundrette	Suds	01279 866 183
Legal Services	Nockolds	03456 460 406
Painting & Decorating	David Debnam	07973 861 268
Printing	M&B Printers	01371 874 695
Soft Play	Andy & Lucie	07956 622 808
The Three Horseshoes	Paul & Paula	01279 813 429
The Three Willows	Mark Boden	01279 815 913

### Classes

Apton Dance Studio	Maxine Williams	07854 251 528
Line Dance	Shelly Guichard	07824 447 156
Pilates	Mandy Cousins	07713 272 664
Tai Chi	Cait Goddard	07415 628 935

### Village Contacts

Allotments	Council Clerk	01279 814 473
BAGS	Rosemary Wheatley	01279 814 678
Birchanger Magazine	John McArthur	07488 315 349
Butterflies Preschool	Carly Richards	01279 810 800
Neighbourhood Watch	Peter Sampson	07817 904 333
Parish Clerk	Keith Williams	01279 814 473
Public Safety	Peter Sampson	07817 904 333
Speed Watch	Peter Sampson	07817 904 333
St. Mary's Church	Pam Lee	07702 171 744

## St. Mary's Church



### Services

- 1<sup>st</sup> March Family Service - Pam Lee
- 8<sup>th</sup> March Holy Communion - Revd Helen Flack
- 15<sup>th</sup> March Family Service - Pam Lee
- 22<sup>nd</sup> March Matins - Hugh Mascetti
- 29<sup>th</sup> March Family Service - Pam Lee

### Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting - 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2026

We are now three months into our interregnum and our PCC members are doing their best to keep us up to date with records and registrations so that our processes remain legal and in accordance with Church of England requirements. This is not an easy task because every year there appears to be more rules/regulations to be complied with and only a few of us willing to undertake each task.

We are preparing for the Annual Meeting which will take place after the service on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April and all persons registered on our Electoral Roll are invited to attend. At this meeting we vote for who should be appointed Churchwardens for the coming year and who will serve in other positions such as Servers, Treasurer, Secretary etc. A report on the past year's activities will also be presented for approval. For the year 2026 our Parish Share is set at £9700 and to pay this sum, we will have to look at ways of raising funds. If you can help in any way, please let us know. Ideas for fundraising are always appreciated.

**Benefice Choir** - The choir is hoping to attract new members, particularly youngsters. If you are interested, please contact Kathy West on [kewest@btinternet.com](mailto:kewest@btinternet.com) who will be able to give you all the information that you will need.

**Easter Day – 5<sup>th</sup> April** - Unfortunately, we will not have any clergy present with us so the service will be led by Pam Lee. We would still like to make this a special day. Any ideas for this would be welcome.

**Ascension Day – 14<sup>th</sup> May at 6pm** - We will be hosting all five churches here for a celebration of Christ. Revd Helen will be leading this service and refreshments will be available. Please come along and join us.

**Prayer for the Month** - Lord as this world lurches from one trauma to another, we ask that you walk beside us each and every day, guarding us from all danger and smoothing our path so that we can walk in your way of peace using the gifts that you have given to us for the good of all your people. Amen



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