

The independent journal for Buntingford & Villages
published by Buntingford Civic Society

Buntingford Journal

Join us to celebrate
the King's Coronation



A highlight of the Coronation Funday will be the children's Fancy Dress Competition. Are you getting ready for it?

Inside this month: Who won the Battle of the Bands 2023? Buntingford's First Menopause Café; the Buntingford Bowls Club Open Days; and information on ID for the coming elections.

70p

April 2023
Volume 48, No.3



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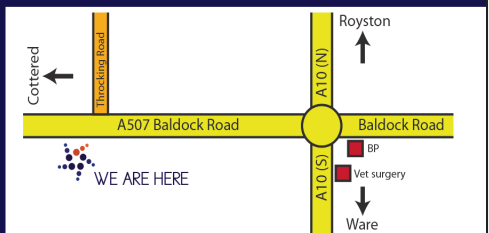
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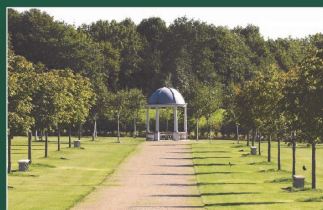
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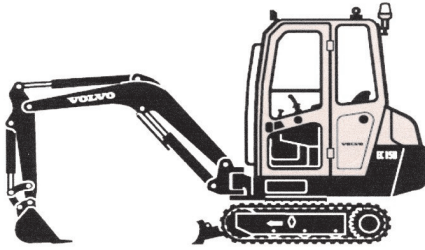
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DUE TO REOPEN IN EARLY APRIL**

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Telephone enquiries – 0300 123 4049

Option 1 – Renewals 03:00–23:45 every day

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Sat 09:00–18:00

More info at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

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EAST HERTS:**

Call the CAB Message Line on 01920 459 944 at

anytime and they will call you back. They aim to

return calls within 24 hours (except at weekends).

www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk

The Buntingford Journal is published by, but is editorially independent of, the Buntingford Civic Society. For information on how to join the Society and have the Journal delivered to your door, please email: membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

EDITOR'S LETTER

It has been a mad scramble to get the Journal done this month as at the same time I have been frantically spring cleaning and tidying to get my house ready to go on the market. With both missions now accomplished, I can relax for a bit, but apologies if the rush has led to more mistakes than usual in the pages that follow!

The Coronation is not until next month, but I chose to promote the Children's Fancy Dress Competition on this month's cover because costumes need a bit of time to prepare and the Funday will be here before we know it. Also coming up in early May are the local elections and for the first time in this country we will need photo ID to cast our votes. There's more information on this in the Town Council piece and the article from Jeff Jones (pages 16 & 17) and I just wanted to highlight the fact that if you don't have suitable photo ID, you only have until Tuesday 5th April to apply for the alternative – a Voter Authority Certificate – from East Herts Council.

I am starting to get the feeling that many more people are increasingly concerned about climate change and the apparent lack of action by the powers that be. You can read a heart-felt poem on this on page 7, and Madela, who as the driving force of BACCS has done her best to raise this issue for years, highlights action being taken this month to put pressure on government to do more. Personally, in this last month I was shocked to learn from a BBC documentary how intensive industrial farming of chickens has killed off the River Wye, one of the most beautiful rivers in the country, and all so people can eat cheap chicken every day. The Friends of the Rib & Quin note the same documentary (page 21) and that it is good to see the subject aired on primetime TV, but it's only of value if it spurs action. When are we humans going to learn that we cannot carry on exploiting and abusing our planet and treating all other forms of life with contempt?

Moving on to cheerier things, inspirational Isabel Hospice nurse Janice Penman is climbing 12 mountains, one a month throughout 2023, to raise money for the Hospice (page 19). Buntingford Live hosted another successful Battle of the Bands (pages 22-23). The Bowls Club have announced the dates of their Open Days (page 41). A monthly Menopause Café has launched in Buntingford – there's a report on the first event on page 33. The refurbished Library is opening its doors this month – I hope that regular users and the general Buntingford public are pleased with the result. And finally, Alswick Hall is opening its garden for charity once again as part of the National Garden Scheme (page 7) – fingers crossed they get a fine day. Have a good Easter.

Christine Noble

**Editorial copy deadline for the May 2023 Journal
is Saturday 15th April 2023**

Editorial submissions: Christine Noble – 01763 273095
68 Hare Street Road, Buntingford SG9 9HN
email: Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

Advertising enquiries: Keith Edwards – 01763 272032
email: Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

**The views expressed in the letters, emails and articles in the
Buntingford Journal are not necessarily those of the editor.**

LETTERS & EMAILS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Christine

I'm not sure if you or Journal readers are aware that the day centre – the old Court House behind Peel House in the High Street – has been sold. Part of the land around the Medical Centre has already been bought by an investment company. What is worrying is that the alleyway from the High Street between Nos.97 (Peel House) and 99 that leads into the Medical Centre car park is not an official footpath. This could mean that the new owner could, if they wished, close the path off so there is no access for the public.

Enquiries have been made with Herts County Council and we could apply to have it made an official footpath by getting evidence that it has been used for more than 20 years and/or historical documents showing how long it's been there. The path is used daily by many residents to get to the park and the doctors, and by school children getting to and from Edwinstree and Freman College. This information has been passed to Jill Jones, and I intend to raise it with the Civic Society at the AGM. I wondered if you could also help to raise awareness by including this email in the Journal. At a later date, we may need to get statements from residents who can state that they have been using the path for more than 20 years.

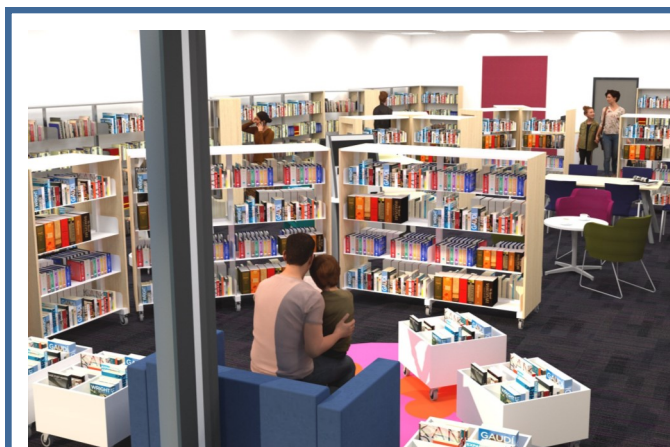
Carol Emery, Buntingford Local History Group

Dear Editor

I would be very grateful if you could find a small space to include the following in the next edition of The Journal. Thank you.

I would like to convey my sincere thanks to all friends, old and new, who attended the Service of Thanksgiving for my husband Glyn's Life held at St. Mary's Aspenden on the 7th March following his death on 27th January. My thanks too for the donations received for the Parkinsons UK and Make a Wish charities made in his memory. It was standing room only at the Church, a fitting tribute to a wonderful man. Thanks again to all who honoured him with their presence.

Joan Jones, 1 Aspenden House, Aspenden. Buntingford, SG9 9PG



Buntingford Library re-opens this month

The newly refurbished library will be opening its doors for users at 10am on **Thursday 13th April.**



Buntingford Civic Society

(Reg. Charity No. 1014873)

www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk

Member of



The London Road Active Travel Fund Scheme continues to cause much angst within the Town and social media is awash with residents' comments – mostly negative. Whilst the success or otherwise of the scheme cannot be measured until it is completed, it is probably fair to say that the disruption it has caused is greater than residents envisaged. Road closures starting at 6pm preventing people from parking outside their own homes was a particularly poor choice by the project team.

Christine Noble, our Editor of the Journal for many years, has decided to move away from the area to go back to her roots in Northumberland. As such she will obviously be hanging up her editorial hat and we are currently in the process of appointing her replacement. Christine will be a hugely difficult act to follow and I thank her for her dedicated service. We all wish her every success and happiness in her new venture.

Christine leaving is forcing us to review how the Journal is edited and produced/ distributed in the future and we are currently looking at available options. Whatever decisions are made the Journal will continue to be printed in its current format.

After some seven years as Chair of the BCS I have decided to stand down. I will continue to be a Committee member but will pass the Chair baton on to someone else. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the current committee for their outstanding help and support during my tenure in the Chair.

Graham Bonner, BCS Chairman / graham_bonner123@yahoo.co.uk

Buntingford Civic Society **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** **Tuesday 18th April 2023**

From 7pm for 7.30pm start in the Bunters Suite at the
Seth Ward Community Centre, Luynes Rise, Buntingford.

The guest speaker will be local PCSO Glen Stanway on 'My Life in Acting'.

Light refreshments will be served after the meeting.

Buntingford Civic Society was established in 1971 with the aim of improving the fabric of the Town. **Annual household membership is just £10** and includes delivery of the Buntingford Journal (10 issues a year) to your door. If you would like to join the Civic Society, you can download an application form from the BCS website or email the Membership Secretary, Peter Hay, at membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk



20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

Buntingford

20's Plenty for Everyone!

I have been an active 20's Plenty campaigner for over two and a half years now. I formed 20's Plenty for Buntingford after noticing the worrying increases in

traffic and speeding in the town, the affect that it was having on our community and feeling that something needed to be done to change the status quo. I soon became involved at county level, campaigning for 20mph speed limits for every community in Hertfordshire, and was invited to join the national 20's Plenty for Us team, where we campaign for lower speed limits nationally and internationally. In these various roles, I get to see the progress being made elsewhere, from local authorities to national governments committed to reducing road danger, air and noise pollution and creating healthier, happier communities where people come first, not traffic.

Closer to home, unfortunately, this is not the case. Hertfordshire County Council has adopted a non-inclusive policy that has no ambition to see lower speed limits in every community. Far from it, their latest update sees them only committing to implementing a maximum of 87 small scale 20mph zones by 2026 across the whole of Hertfordshire – most of which are going to be in large urban areas and not rural communities. So far, after two years of their £7M budget and 20mph policy announcement, Herts CC have yet to implement one 20mph scheme.

There are many communities in Hertfordshire – particularly rural ones – where road danger is a serious issue and not much is being done to acknowledge the problems they face or to protect residents from harm. Over the past year or so I have been leading a 20's Plenty initiative which has involved holding zoom sessions, giving presentations and communicating with parish and town councillors across Hertfordshire and calling on them to pass motions in favour of wide area 20mph speed limits, both in their communities and on every urban and residential road across the county where people mix with vehicles.

Progress has been slow until now, but recently there has been a noticeable increase in activity and an appetite for change. Parish and town councils are starting to see that the best (only) way that they can challenge the status quo is to show the level of support for 20mph speed limits in their community, communicate that with the County Council and call on them to adopt a fairer, more inclusive policy with an ambition to reduce road danger in every community. Let's face it, this is about reducing serious and fatal injuries amongst pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists who are the most vulnerable road users accounting for 40% of all fatal and serious injuries on Hertfordshire's roads (mostly on those with a 30mph speed limit) – a figure that has doubled since 2000.

By simply reducing the speed limit to 20mph evidence shows that drivers do reduce their speed and the number of these injuries decreases dramatically. People's mental and physical health improves where traffic is less intrusive as pollution levels drop and walking and cycling become a safe alternative to driving, particularly for local journeys. We all need to ask ourselves why any local authority would choose not to support such an easy, cheap to implement policy that could do so much good?

Sue Nicholls, 20's Plenty Campaigner

JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN

Mailing List, Campaign Stickers & Enquiries buntingford@20splentyforus.org.uk

FACEBOOK: 20's Plenty for Buntingford **INSTAGRAM:** 20splentybuntingford

TWITTER: @20Buntingford www.20splentyforherts.org

Why?

God made planet earth for man
Why destroy his master plan?
Flora and fauna side by side
Why destroy by pesticide?
Carbon dioxide fills the air
Why do not some nations care?
Glaciers crashing into the sea
Why do we have this catastrophe?
Earthquakes, plagues and devastation
Why this grief and trepidation?
Oceans rise, tidal waves appear
Why repeat this year after year?

The coral reef is in decline
Global warming destroys all in time
Why cannot man stop to think
Instead of making life extinct?
Why cannot all nations unite
To rid us of this awful blight?
Humanity restored, a world of green
How future nations should be seen?
Healthy, wealthy, happiness will
thrive
Why can this not be we will survive?

Leneeve

DIETS

Weighty thoughts
Come and go.

So – shall we diet?
And start right now?

Or after Christmas,
Perhaps New Year?
Or maybe you prefer
When spring is here?

But soon it is summer.
Thin clothes time,
Revealing shapes
We should have pared.

How did we so expand?
Or ever think
That doing nothing
Might help us shrink?

David Dixon – 2023



NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME
Garden Open For Charity

Alswick Hall

Hare Street Road, Buntingford,
SG9 0AA

Sunday 16 April
12 - 4pm

Adults £8 Children free
Hog roast and home-made teas.
www.alswickhall.com/gardens



WHEELCHAIR ACCESS



DOGS WELCOME



PLANTS FOR SALE



TEAS



ACCEPTED



More information at ngs.org.uk

Nutwood Business Networking

A new business networking group, launched by Nutwood Pubs, got off to a flying start at its inaugural meeting on Friday 3rd March. More than 30 attendees, representing a diverse range of services and suppliers, met at the Three-9-Eight Coffee Barn at The Woodman Inn, Nuthampstead.



On a bright and sunny morning, the event started at 8.30am with hot coffees, teas and delicious pastries. After about 30 minutes of informal chat and networking, Nutwood's Martin Prescott (left) offered a warm welcome to the attendees, who then followed on with brief introductions. This developed into a general discussion about local market conditions and opportunities, after which hot breakfasts were served.



Nutwood director Natalie Duncker was delighted with how it went, commenting: "Feedback on the day and since has been overwhelmingly positive", and adding "many networkers also commented on the additional benefits of having representatives from both the Federation of

Small Businesses and local media present."

Nutwood Networking takes place at the Three-9-Eight Coffee Barn on the first Friday of the month; full details can be found at www.nutwoodpubs.com. Membership is free for all local businesses, and all members can have their contact details and a brief outline included in the online Nutwood Business Register – also free of charge. As April's 'first Friday' is a Bank Holiday, the next scheduled Nutwood Networking meeting will be at 8.30am on **Friday 5th May**.



Calendar Girls: Curtain Call

Well, what can I say? ... It was an event. It was spectacular. It was a theatrical masterclass! Those guys and girls from Buntingford Dramatic Society can sure put on a show. I was there with my friend Betty; we were at the back, in the darkness, and I swear she had such a good time I had to keep wiping her chin. I tell you, those girls were bold, brave and blinking beautiful ... then they took their clothes off! Bigger buns, please Betty!

The show was a delight. Beautifully acted with emotional lights and darks and highs and lows. The setting was an old village hall and the set took me back to my early days of The Gladys Aman Theatre School. Whoever made the scenery must have been a dab hand with a screwdriver and a multi-mate ... and I do love a man with a dab hand!

Can I make a special mention of a certain Will Lawrence who took control of the lighting? He illuminated the stage with a lovely light touch and it really set the tone and the atmosphere. I saw him up there in his little lighting crow's nest ... and I tell you he's quite the looker! I feel I may need his help with a lightbulb or two, if you get my drift.

Well, I hear it was a sell-out run ... people were reportedly fighting in the street to get the odd returned ticket. Some people even asked if there were tickets to the dress rehearsal! So, this is where I say 'I told you so' ... because I did. I know a good show when I hear of one and this was a blinder.

The cast and team have asked me to extend a heart-felt thanks to all you lovely people who ventured down to Seth Ward Community Centre to be part of the audience. There has been some delightful feedback from those who did manage to get into one of the five sell-out performances. Some people weren't expecting such an emotional rollercoaster of a time. There were smiles, laughs, tears ... and cheers! And all that before the curtain even went up. Personally, I didn't see the funny side of the salami. Boom boom!

The show was a real challenge to stage but worth every moment. Cast and crew wouldn't have missed it for the world. We laughed so much during rehearsals it was truly a delight, friendships have been strengthened, tears were shed and much merrymaking was had.

As a result of all the hard work and kind donations, Buntingford Dramatic Society can proudly announce that we will be donating in excess of £1000 to cancer-related charities.

We have all, audience and players, made a difference to the lives of people who we will never meet or know ... but they will know their lives are better because of our little show. Now for a hot tip – and let's be honest girls, we all like one of those. I hear they are already working behind the scenes on their their next show – and it's a hoot! So keep an eye on their website, www.buntingforddrama.uk, as tickets go on sale good and early these days ... and you don't want to miss out, do you?

Lots of love, Gladys Aman

LENTEN REFLECTIONS 2023

Every Tuesday evening in Lent, 7.30 for 8pm start – 28th February to 4th April

At The Stables, 57 Wyddial Road, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9AX – 01763 271 459

(Access via the small door on the left near the top of Church Street, or via the main entrance on Wyddial Road, beyond the Fox & Duck Pub just past Flint Cottage.)

After a break of three years, Rosey and David Woollcombe have been delighted to welcome you back for their 6th series of Lenten Reflections, designed for people of all faiths and of none.

Our final session of reflections is:

4th April – Christian Values:
Honesty – the Journey to the Cross
with Revd Mark Bailey,
Vicar of Cottered, Walkern,
Benington, Ardeley and Throcking.

*We hope you want to come and
join the discussion and look
forward to seeing you.*



A Reflection on Maundy Thursday

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

In Holy Week we are with Jesus on his journey. That journey began long before Palm Sunday; long before Jesus began his ministry; long before he was born or conceived. The journey of Jesus began in the heart of God before time began. From all eternity, God was in Christ on his way to win us back to himself. ‘Love came down at Christmas’ – yes, but that love was coming down all along. That is what love does. Love comes down – that is love’s trajectory.

On Maundy Thursday we watch one moment on the journey that began in the heart of God. Jesus gets down. All along, that had been the direction of his journey; the journey that took him from his father’s side, the journey that brought him to our broken earth, the journey that brought him to birth at Bethlehem, the journey that dragged him down beneath those waters at his baptism, the journey that led him to Jerusalem, the journey that brings him tonight to a dirty floor, where dogs scavenge for scraps, where slaves kneel to wash dirty feet. Jesus gets down.

That descent, says St Paul, must shape our mind-set: “Let the same mind be in you that was in Jesus Christ, who... emptied himself, became a slave, was born like us, humbled himself, suffered death, death on the cross’ (Phil 2: 5-8). Jesus gets down. John, and only John, tells the story of how Jesus washes his disciple’s feet. For John, the story is very simple. “I have set you an example”, says Jesus. “You should do as I have done.”

On Maundy Thursday we are given a new mandate. Not an eleventh commandment, but a single commandment: “Love one another, just as I have loved you.” Jesus gets down as we must. To be sure, that descent is not the end. Very soon we shall be singing “Up from the grave he arose”, and we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. But one day at a time. We are not there yet. The cross to which we are so close on Maundy Thursday comes before the crown.

Reverend Kirsty Wainwright



The
United
Reformed
Church

Christ Church

Baldock Road, Buntingford SG9 9AA

Minister: Rev. Sue Fender
revsuefender@gmail.com
Tel: 01223 375 588

Secretary: Peter Godbert
buntingford.urc@talktalk.net
Tel: 01763 281359

Services at 11am / Junior Church in the Hall at 11am

April	2	Palm Sunday	Rev Sue Fender
	9	Easter Day	Rev Dr Robert Pope
	16	Morning Worship	Rev Allen Morton
	23	Morning Worship	Richard Lewney
	30	Holy Communion	Rev Dr Janet Tollington
May	7	Morning Worship	Penny Flynn

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BUNTINGFORD Regular Events

'Lunch, Laughter & Light' Topical discussion group meets on the first Wednesday of each month in the hall. Lunch 12.30pm – bring your own lunch, hot drinks will be provided. Discussion 1– 2pm.

Morning Prayers Every Tuesday and Thursday, 9–9.30am
at St Peter's Church – *all are welcome*

Coffee and Company meets every Thursday, 10.30am to 12.30pm, in the URC Hall. If you're elderly, living alone, new to the area, perhaps working from home, and would like some company, come along to share Coffee, Cake, Company and Chat. *All are welcome* – just turn up and give a small donation for refreshments.

Website: www.buntingfordurc.org.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/URCBuntingford

ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER Catholic Church

3 Station Road, Buntingford. Telephone 01763 271471

Parish Priest: Reverend Father Cyril Chiaha

VIGIL MASS for Sundays is at 6pm every Saturday

SUNDAY MASS is at 9.15am and 11am every Sunday

**WEEKDAY MASS TIMES, SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMMES
& OTHER PARISH NEWS are available on the parish website:**
<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/buntingford/>

All Masses will take place at St Richard of Chichester in Buntingford until the works on the parish church of St Edmund of Canterbury & English Martyrs, Old Hall Green, and St Thomas of Canterbury, Puckeridge, have been completed.





United Benefice of
Aspenden, Buntingford
and Westmill

United Benefice of Aspenden, Buntingford & Westmill Reverend Kirsty Wainwright

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7839/benefice/

Email: admin@unitedbenefice.org.uk

Telephone: 01763 271552 or 07484 345027

Postal address: C/O St Peter's Church, Chapel End, Buntingford SG9 9AL

Our Services for April 2023

Sat 1st	4.00pm	Priory Singers Traditional service of readings & music for Pashiontide	St Mary's Aspenden
Sun 2nd Palm Sunday	9.30am	All-Age Worship Meet on the Green at 9.15am to process to church	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	9.30am	Morning Worship	St Mary's, Aspenden
	11.00am	Holy Communion Meet at the Manor House at 10.50am to process to church	St Peter's, Buntingford
Mon 3rd	7.00pm	Compline	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
Tues 4th	7.00pm	Compline	St Peter's, Buntingford
Wed 5th	7.00pm	Compline Quiet prayer, reflection & music, traditionally the last service of the day	St Mary's, Aspenden
Thurs 6th Maundy Thursday	7.00pm	A service with the washing of feet and Holy Communion	St Peter's, Buntingford
Fri 7th Good Friday	11.00am	Stations of the Cross, outside	St Peter's, Buntingford
	2.00pm	'The Last Hour' Prayer & Vigil	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	7.30pm	'Iona' service of reflection	St Mary's, Aspenden
Sun 9th Easter Day	6.00am	Sunrise Service	St Mary's, Aspenden
	9.30am	All Age Holy Communion	St Mary's, Aspenden
	9.30am	Sung Eucharist	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	11.00am	All Age Holy Communion	St Peter's, Buntingford
Sun 16th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Mary's, Aspenden
	11.00am	Holy Communion	St Peter's, Buntingford
Sun 23^d	9.30am	Sung Eucharist	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	11.00am	Morning Worship	St Peter's, Buntingford
Sun 30th	11.00am	Benefice Holy Communion	St Peter's Buntingford

Please see our Easter Service Holy Week poster for further details, which can also be found on our website.

On Saturday 6th May there will be a Civic Service in St Peter's Church to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III (see poster top right.)

The Buntingford Journal is delivered FREE to members of the Buntingford Civic Society, or it can be purchased from:

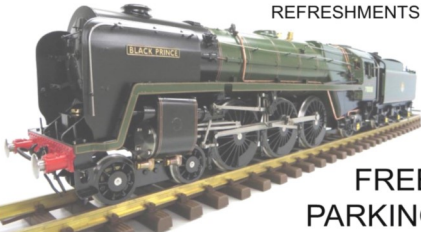
THE CO-OP • LOCKS, STOCK & MORE • MARK DOEL BUTCHERS
McCOLL'S • KIM on the CARD STALL on Buntingford Market

**ROYSTON & DISTRICT MRC
MODEL RAILWAY
CLUB EXHIBITION**

**SATURDAY 1st APRIL 2023
10.30am - 4.00pm**

Adults £5.00 Accompanied children under 16 Free

15 LAYOUTS:- IN, VARIOUS GAUGES
TRADE STANDS AND DEMONSTRATIONS
LIVE STEAM RIDE ON RAILWAY.



REFRESHMENTS

**FREE
PARKING**

**BASSINGBOURN VILLAGE COLLEGE
BROOK ROAD
BASSINGBOURN Nr ROYSTON
HERTS SG8 5NP**


 THE
 CORONATION
 KING CHARLES
 III
 2023

Civic Service
Saturday 6th May
5pm
St Peter's Church,
Buntingford

All welcome

Refreshments will be served
 following the service








PLANT SALE



Saturday 29th April
10am
 Outside St Peter's Church

All plants for sale have been grown by members of the three churches of the United Benefice and the money raised will go towards church running costs.

King's Coronation
**family
Funday**

LIVE MUSIC
 LICENSED BAR
 FOOD OUTLETS
 LASER SHOW FINALE



CHILDREN'S
 FANCY DRESS
 CHILDREN'S
 FUN FAIR
 FACE PAINTING

SUNDAY 7 MAY 2023
2.00PM - 10.30PM
 SETH WARD COMMUNITY CENTRE

Why not bring your own picnic



FREE ENTRY



Buntingford Community Choir



It has been a difficult winter for us all, but it looks like spring is finally on the way, with daffodils in the gardens and the evening light staying longer. This is reflected in a small way at the choir. We have had to cancel rehearsals recently due to the bad weather and a number of

choristers contracting either Covid or flu. Now we hope that, with warmer weather and lighter evenings, we can get back into full swing. Unusually for us we do not currently have any live performances planned to practice towards. The committee will be trying to find suitable charitable occasions at which we could perform.

We are always looking for new members. There are no auditions to join the choir and you don't need to be able to read music. Anyone over 16, with or without any singing experience, will be made welcome. We meet on a Monday evening at Millfield School at 7.30pm. If you are interested in joining the Choir or would just like a free trial evening please contact us via email at: info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk

Or for more information go to our website: www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk

Paul Webster



Buntingford Gardeners' Club

The AGM last month was well attended. The Chair, Liz James, reported that the club had had another good year. She thanked the committee for their hard work as well as the volunteers who provided refreshments, raffle prizes, competitions and plants for sale. The Treasurer, Sue Miller, reported that the club's finances were healthy enough to keep subscriptions the same for another year.

With three members – June Westwood, Michael Brown and Viv Savage – leaving, we were pleased to welcome four new members to the committee. Therefore, the committee for 2023/24 will be: Liz James (Chair), Susan Miller (Treasurer), Lesley Lowers (Secretary), Janis Chandler,

Linda Clark, Glynis Jaycock, Sarah Leaver, Janet Murrells and Kathy Roper. After finishing the business of the evening, we all enjoyed a glass of wine and a Seed Swap.

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday 3rd April**. The speaker is Nigel Start and his talk will be on 'Getting to Grips with Pruning', how to use the correct techniques and timing to get the best from your trees and shrubs.

Current club membership is 40 and we are always pleased to see new people. Having a garden is not necessary to be a member, just an interest in plants and gardens. The annual programme includes eight speakers, one social evening, an AGM, an inter-club quiz, Annual Show and days out – there really is something for everyone. The club meets at the URC Hall, Baldock Road, on the 1st Wednesday of the month (except January and August), commencing at 8pm. Membership is £17.50 a year, or £3 per visit. If you would like to know more, please phone the Secretary on 01763 271885.

Lesley Lowers

Buntingford W.I.

Another slight panic for us in March, when there was a snowstorm on the morning of our meeting and we weren't sure if the speaker (or indeed the members!) would be able to make it. But we are made of strong stuff and, apart from a couple of apologies for illness, the majority of us were there to welcome our speaker, Amanda Sutherland.

What a treat she was! She is a former costume designer who has worked in TV and films and we were amazed to see how she adapted and re-used garments to turn them into various different outfits. Nothing is wasted, as material left over is turned into bags. The picture shows a dress made from a jumper, a poncho and one of her daughter's discarded dresses.

Amanda brought along various beautiful accessories – which we were able to buy – created from re-used coke cans and milk cartons, as well as pressed flower jewellery, leaf gilding and vintage style hats and neckwear.

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 13th April** from 7.15pm at URC Hall in Baldock Road (opposite McColls). Our speaker is Lloyd Crowley who will be giving us a history of the ukulele – as well as playing it! Lloyd is great fun so we can be sure of a very entertaining evening. Visitors are welcome to all our meetings so if you are new to Buntingford (or even if you're not!) just turn up on the night and come to see what Buntingford W.I. is all about.

If you would like further information about Buntingford W.I. please contact Pat on 01763 271305.

Val Hume



Reed Garden Club

Wednesday 12th April, 2–4pm
in Reed Village Hall

This month's speaker is Alison White on 'Summer Pots and Boxes'
Entrance £2, tea and coffee provided



BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

A QUALITY TOWN COUNCIL

Work to the new pump track is progressing well and we hope to hold an opening event on Saturday 1st April, further details will be published on social media. Further work to the skate ramps is also taking place with a new path and entrance way, it's hoped that this will keep the ramps clear of mud and stones.

May 4th will see elections for both the Town Council and the District Council. This year, for the first time, voters will need photo ID to vote. Details of what is acceptable ID is available on the East Herts Council's website.

Anyone wishing to stand for election to either of the two Councils must have their nomination forms delivered by hand to East Herts District Council by 4pm on Tuesday 4th April. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the Electoral Commission website. For the first time, polling will take place at the Community Centre as the Manor House room is no longer suitable due to the increase in voter numbers.

The Town Council has joined forces with St Peter's Church and the URC to help provide warm spaces throughout the rest of the winter months. The sessions will be held at St Peter's on Mondays and Wednesdays, the URC on Thursdays, and the Manor House on Tuesdays. Please feel free to call in between 9.30am and 2.30pm and help yourself to free tea, coffee and snacks. Wifi and TV are available at the Manor House.

The popular Chatter Table continues on the first and third Monday of the month at The Manor House 10am to 11.45am. Details of the April Council meetings are below.

Jill Jones, Town Clerk

In line with GDPR Regulations, the Town Council has published a number of Privacy Notices. These can be viewed on the Town Council website.

Office hours: Monday–Thursday 9am–5pm; closed Friday

The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford SG9 9AB

Tel: 01763 272222 Email: clerk@buntingford-tc.gov.uk

Twitter: [@buntingfordtc](https://twitter.com/buntingfordtc) Facebook.com/BuntingfordTC

Website: www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk

Town Council meetings for April 2023

Thurs 6 th April	7:00pm – Amenities Committee
Thurs 13 th April	7:00pm – Planning Committee 7:30pm – Resources Committee
Thurs 27 th April	7:00pm – Planning Committee 7:30pm – Full Council meeting

All meetings to be held in the Council Chamber at The Manor House.
Members of the public are welcome to attend.

News from Your District and County Councillor

East Herts Council Elections – 4th May 2023

Buntingford Town Polling Station is moving to the Community Centre

Following the increase in the size of Buntingford Ward the Manor House, which has served as the town's polling station for many years, is no longer adequate to accommodate all our electors. The new polling station, starting with the elections on 4th May, will be at the Seth Ward Community Centre, Luynes Rise. The village polling stations remain the same.



Election Photo ID

The UK Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID at polling stations at elections. This new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4th May 2023.

You can use any of the following forms of ID to vote. Please note, even if your photo ID is out of date, you can use it to vote at a polling station provided it still looks like you.

- Passport
- Driving license (including provisional)
- Blue badge
- Identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- Certain concessionary travel cards
- Biometric immigration document
- Defence identity card
- Certain national identity cards

If you don't have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether the photo still looks enough like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. You can apply online at Voter Authority Certificate Application or you can complete a paper application – to request an application form, contact the electoral services team at East Herts Council on **01279 655261**. The deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate for use at the coming election is 5pm on **Tuesday 5th April 2023**. If you have any questions or would like to find out more, call the helpline on 0800 328 0280

Walking Football

Buntingford Walking Football are keen to attract new members at our Saturday morning sessions at the MUGA, Norfolk Road Playing Fields. If you are over 50, keen to stay active, and enjoy playing the 'beautiful game', come along at 10am on Saturday morning. The first session is free, then £3 per session. There is a mixture of ages and abilities, ranging from 50 years to our oldest member of 73. Come along and give it a try!

Councillor Advice

I receive many requests for help and advice on District or County Council matters. Also, I now hold monthly Councillor Surgeries for face-to-face informal meetings. With a Town Councillor present this gives residents the opportunity to discuss, informally, any concerns you may have in the town. These surgeries are by appointment and are available by calling the Town Council on 01763 272222 where full details will be given. I am always available by phone or email on the contact details below.

Cllr Jeff Jones
East Herts District and Hertfordshire County Councillor, Buntingford Ward
0300 123 7493 / jeff.jones@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Buntingford and Puckeridge Medical Practice

Patient Participation Group

Over 20,000 patients are now registered with the practice. In the four weeks to 5th February there were 11,148 calls in to Reception, 8272 face-to-face appointments with 5698 of these as same-day appointments and 4796 with a GP. In addition, 2838 telephone appointments were carried out. Demand for same-day appointments seems to be settling and this means that routine appointments can be managed more efficiently, with availability for these appointments improving and waiting lists reducing well as a result. GPs are usually able to book their own follow-up appointments with their patients which saves delays and additional telephone calls clogging the system.

In order to increase our GPs ability to care for their patients without them having to make a time-consuming and sometimes expensive trip to a hospital outpatients department, increased numbers of consultations are being made by our GPs with their secondary care colleagues. The advice received often enables patients to be treated locally, in familiar surroundings and by clinicians that they know, which is great for continuity of care. However, if the consultation results in an agreement that it would be best for the patient to be referred to the hospital for further investigation, then that would happen. These consultations often mean that treatment can be in place more swiftly. The myplannedcare.nhs.uk website is available for patients who would like additional information about waiting times at hospitals in our region and nationwide.

The practice continues to recruit additional staff, including to Care Co-ordination and Administrative roles which are already achieving very successful outcomes, with follow-ups for medication and chronic disease management.

In November, the practice relaunched a drive to improve the repeat prescribing process by encouraging patients to use the online system to request repeat prescriptions. Over a thousand new registrations for this service have been made. This level of uptake has been a very pleasant surprise as it really helps to streamline the service and increase security. It also means that you can request exactly what you need and so avoid unnecessary waste. The practice understands the challenges of poor internet connectivity and other digital functionality, so if you do experience problems of barriers to using the online service, please contact the surgery to discuss your needs.

By the time this article gets into print the new telephony system should be in place which the practice hopes will improve the caller experience by notifying you where you are in the queue and, at busy times, giving the option to request a call back to your phone when you reach the front of the queue. Please make sure you keep your phone handy so that this connection can be effected smoothly

Although the NHS as a whole has been impacted by various strike action we have not felt the effects of this at our surgeries. Patients continue to be seen as usual and we are very grateful to clinicians and staff at all levels for their commitment .

Finally, a little information on the Patient Participation Group. All GP practices in England should have a version of a PPG to ensure two-way communication between staff and patients. Our PPG consists of patients, carers and practice staff including the Practice Manager and a senior GP. We have online meetings to discuss the practice, current initiatives, patient experience, and any other matters that may be relevant to patient welfare and the delivery of a successful service. By being part of the PPG we get a look 'behind the scenes' at the complexities and management of the practice and are able to voice our comments and concerns on behalf of the patient body. We are able to make suggestions to help the GP surgery improve its services and communication with patients.

Ideally, each PPG should be representative of the community it serves and currently ours is weighted towards the older end of the population. So please, if you are over 18, registered with the practice and can spare one hour every couple of months for an online meeting, you will be warmly welcomed. There is no commitment beyond that hour and we would very much like to have a few younger people with us to bring increased balance to our discussions. Please contact the surgery in the first instance if you might be interested.

Jenny Dingley, PPG Member



Isabel Hospice nurse and mum-of-two Janice Penman has set herself the monumental challenge of climbing 12 mountains in 12 months in aid of our end-of-life care charity. Janice, the Interim Head of Community Services, was inspired into action to mark 20 years of working

for the Hospice, but also following a health scare last summer which has given her even greater empathy for what those she cares for go through after being diagnosed with a long-term or progressive illness.

She completed her first climb in January when she scaled Moel Siabod, the highest peak in the Moelwynion mountain range in North Wales, standing at 2,861ft above sea level. "By the time I reached the top," she said, "I was wearing all of the layers from my rucksack as there was still snow and ice from the previous cold spell in December. As I walked, I reflected on my time at Isabel Hospice. I consider myself very lucky to have worked for the same organisation for this length of time, and to be part of the growth and development of Isabel Hospice, where I have had lots of opportunities for my self-development."



"One of the best things about working for Isabel Hospice has been working with such lovely colleagues as everyone who works for this organisation is truly amazing. But the best part, without a doubt, is the patients and families that we support. Working in specialist palliative care can be emotionally challenging at times, but being able to support people at such a difficult time in their life and make a difference is such a privilege."

Next up was February's climb to the top of Pen Y Fan in the Brecon Beacons, the highest peak in South Wales, standing at 2,907ft above sea level, which Janice dedicated to the administrative staff at Isabel Hospice. "I wanted to dedicate my second climb to all our wonderful administrators," she said. "These dedicated staff work tirelessly behind the scenes to support the clinical team and without their support and commitment we wouldn't be able to do our job."

Every climb she undertakes will be in celebration or memory of someone, or something special, which has inspired not only some of her friends and colleagues to join her on expeditions, but also the relatives of her former patients. For March's climb to the summit of Cadair Idris at the southern end of Snowdonia National Park, Janice was joined by Hospice at Home nurse Rachel Wisby. On April's trek to the top of Mount Snowdon, she will be joined by Danielle Scripps, the wife of Andrew Scripps, who Janice and her team cared for.

You can help boost Janice's fundraising via her JustGiving page: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/janice-penman-2023>



The Hundred Parishes Society

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

As the weather warms, we look forward to an abundance of flowers offering food for bees, hoverflies and butterflies. A report by the Essex Wildlife Trust indicates that such sightings may be much reduced. During 2022, members of the Trust participated in the UK citizen science Bugs Matter Survey, recording 'bug splats' on vehicle number plates to monitor flying insect abundance. The numbers of insects recorded on 277 journeys suggested that insect numbers have declined by 60% since 2004.



*Left, top to bottom: Bumblebees;
Thick-legged flower beetle;
Green grasshopper; Dragonfly.
Above: Gatekeeper butterfly.
Right: Large red damselfly (top);
Mayfly.*



This is a worrying trend with implications for the survival of many other organisms. The majority of plants rely on insect pollinators to set seed, including wild and garden flowers and three quarters of our food crops. Many song-birds feed on insects, and seed-eaters such as skylarks and house sparrows feed their young on insects. The reasons for the decline are complex, but as most arable crops are grown without any weeds this reduces the variety of food supplies for caterpillars, aphids and bugs. Fewer flowers mean less food for bees, adult butterflies and moths.



Fortunately, many insect species are resilient, and we can help with the survival of some. I encourage you to plant native hedgerow shrubs and a tree or two in your garden and install a bug hotel as these provide habitats where insects can over-winter. Accepting flowery lawns and planting a wide selection of flowers provides nourishment for an abundance of insects too.

There are many helpful guides to creating a wildlife garden; the RHS website is helpful, as is *Gardening for Wildlife* by Adrian Thomas published by Bloomsbury in 2017. Visiting local gardens for tips is fun too – see the What's On page of www.hundredparishes.org.uk. To get involved with the survey see <https://www.buglife.org.uk>

Tricia Moxey, Trustee

BUNTINGFORD SENIOR CITIZENS' CLUB

We meet every Monday afternoon (except Bank Holidays) at the United Reformed Church Hall in Baldock Road at 1.30 for 2 pm.

Come and enjoy

**BINGO. TRIPS. LUNCHEES. COFFEE/TEA. plus
fun and laughter with like-minded Senior Citizens!**



It was with great sadness that we heard the news of the sudden death, in early February, of David Edwards (below) whilst on holiday in Sri Lanka. David had been secretary of FORQ since its inception until quite recently and a riverfly monitor for our

two sites in Buntingford since we started monitoring. His passion and care for the environment made him one of the driving forces behind the river improvements in Buntingford and also included volunteer work at Lea Valley Park. We send our sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to David's wife, Sue, and his family and friends.

Riverfly monitoring at the two sites in Buntingford will continue despite David's passing. We were lucky enough to have three trained riverfly monitors living in Buntingford. The remaining two – John Hood, who helped David on most sessions, and Derrick Guy – will do as many regular sessions as they can. If one of them is absent then we have monitors based in Braughing, Standon and further down the Rib who will help.



Riverfly monitoring at the sites in Braughing and Standon will start again towards the end of March. We cannot monitor at these sites during the winter months as they are too close to trout redds (breeding grounds).

WildFish is a UK Charity working to protect wild fish and their waters. FORQ were pleased to hear that in mid-February they were granted permission to challenge the Government's Sewage Overflow Plans. Whilst not directly related to our rivers, or chalk streams in general, it is great to see the issue of poor water quality in the UK's rivers getting mainstream television air time. The BBC series 'Our Troubled Rivers', presented by Paul Whitehouse, made fascinating viewing. If you didn't catch it when it went on air, we would recommend viewing it on BBC iPlayer.

Pauline Ayres, Communications FORQ

forqcomms@gmail.com <https://friendsoftherib.wordpress.com/>

BUNTINGFORD LIVE! Calling all young solo artists, duos and bands...

BATTLE OF THE BANDS





INCREDIBLE FIRST PRIZE – PERFORM LIVE AT STANDON CALLING 2023

PLUS a Recording Studio Experience Day at The Bunker Studio


For full details and to enter, visit: buntingfordlive.org/bofb

SCAN FOR DETAILS

Get your entries in by 18th February 2023. Live Final on 18th March 2023.

STANDON CALLING     [buntingfordlive](https://www.buntingfordlive.org) **LIVE!**

Fused
2022 winners
"They felt like rock stars for the day" (parent)



Excitement was in the air on Saturday 18th March as the bands who had won through to the Final of **BUNTINGFORD LIVE'S 2023 BATTLE OF THE BANDS** gathered in the main hall of Freman College. The bands were:

Industrial Language – 3 girls and a boy from the De Rosa Music Studio in Bishop's Stortford

Glass Tambourine – 4 young lads from Stevenage

Saving Jeremy – a six-piece band, 3 boys and 3 girls, from Sherrardswood School, Welwyn Garden City

Pet Wasp – 3 boys and a girl from Sir John Lawes School in Harpenden

Ex-presidents and **QuoteBook** – two bands, each with 4 boys, from Tring School.

Along with the bands came all their instruments and equipment and a host of family and friends who had come to support them on the day. The hall was packed!

BUNTINGFORD LIVE'S technical team, headed by Neil McDougall, had a 7am start to get the hall set up with all their gear to be ready to give each group of young musicians the best possible support for their performances, which began at 1pm. By this time the team of judges had assembled headed by Alex Trenchard, Festival Director of Standon Calling, and including Buntingford's Mayor, Duncan Wallace, resplendent with his chain of office. David Austin, another hugely valued member of the BUNTINGFORD LIVE team, took to the stage in the role of MC to get the event underway.



The musical standard was high and the whole afternoon was very entertaining for everyone present. It was wonderful to feel everyone's enthusiasm for live music. The judges had a really difficult task to decide the winners, but after much deliberation the prestigious first prize of an appearance on stage at the Standon Calling Festival in July went to **QuoteBook** from Tring School. They really will feel like rock stars on the day! You will have an earlier opportunity to see and hear them perform at the King's Coronation event at Buntingford's Seth Ward Community Centre on Sunday 7th May.



Above, left to right: Announcing the winners – Neil McDougall, BOTBs Chairman and organiser; Alex Trenchard, Director of Standon Calling; Luca, representing last year's winning band, Fused; the four band members of QuoteBook with Town Mayor Duncan Wallace; and Master of Ceremonies David Austin.

Left: QuoteBook on stage – Zack Barnard, lead vocals and drums; James Reynolds, lead guitar and vocals; Jasper Moran, rhythm guitar, keyboard and vocals; and Arthur Bates, bass guitar.

Other prizes were awarded to the remaining bands and all were complimented on their contribution to a fantastic afternoon of live music. Speeches were made by Duncan Wallace, Alex Trenchard and Neil McDougall, who had run such an excellent day. We look forward to going from strength to strength with this competition as it gathers momentum and more young musicians hear of this amazing opportunity!

BUNTINGFORD LIVE is also involved with another initiative on 24th March, again at Freman College, when the prestigious Maggini String Quartet will put on a workshop for the music pupils at Freman and Edwinstree.

Further events are being planned for our town over the summer, so ... watch this space! If you would like to help BUNTINGFORD LIVE bring interesting and varied entertainment to our town, please get in touch:

Christine Stuart-Taylor – 01763 272990 or 07990 572543
Neil McDougall – 07721 939646 Or contact: buntingfordlive.org



WHAT DO YOU WANT
BUNTINGFORD
TO LOOK LIKE IN
2050?



BUNTINGFORD ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY (BACCS)

THE BIG ONE!

Your opportunity to be heard

In previous articles, I have highlighted the short-term thinking of governments, the resulting inaction to take steps to slow down and minimise the effects that are being felt as a result of the changing climate.

Remember last year's hot summer? Whilst you may have enjoyed the excessively warm days, the crops grown by local allotmenters suffered badly and it was a stark reminder of the difficulties lying ahead.

We don't have to look any further than what is happening in the UK where we are not only seeing inaction but, by decisions to open new oil and gas fields and even coal mines, our government is causing actual harm to the people they are elected to protect.

If you feel left behind in all this decision making, this month you have the opportunity make your voices heard just by turning up at an event starting on 21st April in Parliament Square in London where thousands of people will gather to show unity in a wish for a safer future. Obviously, the more people who attend, the bigger the impact and the more likely the government will listen. The peaceful, family friendly gathering is taking place with the full cooperation of the Metropolitan Police and no disruption will be deliberately caused to the public. The event, organised by *Extinction Rebellion*, will be supported and attended by more national organisations than you can shake a stick at, including *Earthday.org*, *Global Justice Now*, *Friends of the Earth* and *Greenpeace*. Saturday 22nd April is **Earth Day** and the focus will be on nature and biodiversity. Sunday 23rd is the London Marathon so there will be even more to see and do. To find out more go to: **The Big One - Extinction Rebellion UK**

This is a great opportunity to be part of something big and to show your children or grandchildren that you are standing up to help protect their future. If you feel that our government should be doing more but are unable or don't wish to attend the event, I urge you to write to our MP, Sir Oliver Heald KC, at oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk – the more people he hears from, the more likely he is to voice our concerns.

Madela and the Team

Facebook: [@BACCSBuntingford](https://www.facebook.com/BACCSBuntingford) Email: baccsbuntingford@gmail.com

Standon & Puckeridge Tennis Club

Calling all tennis fans, come and enjoy a game with us on one of our three excellent recently refurbished courts. We have a range of playing options, from Pay to Play to Adult Tennis and Club Nights, as well competitive teams, including men's, ladies and mixed. We also offer coaching. New members are welcome and we offer special rates for parent/child/family memberships – for details call Sally Bradshaw on **01920 821152**.

For more information on what our Tennis Club offers please contact Diana Foster on **07778 031430**. Or come and see us on our stall at May Day in Standon on 1st May.

Diana Foster, Chairman of Standon & Puckeridge Tennis Club

Hello from the Buntingford Film Club!

It's been another enjoyable couple of months with sell-out audiences at Buntingford's pop-up cinema. In February, to chase away the grey clouds and drizzle of what is normally rather a dull month, we screened *Ticket to Paradise*. Set under the blue skies of Bali, it was the perfect remedy for anyone suffering from a bit of winter gloom – Julia Roberts, George Clooney, and fun and games on a tropical island. What's not to love?

Then in March, we went to another part of the world with *Mrs Harris goes to Paris*. The phrase 'feel-good film' barely begins to describe the warm, fuzzy glow that we all left with at the end of the evening. Sweeping vistas of Paris, beautiful couture fashion, and the heart-warming story of a lady changing the world with one small act of kindness at a time. We decided that all profits from the film should go to the DEC fund supporting the victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. We raised £370, so a big thank you to everyone who came to see the film and donated to the cause.



April's screening is Steven Spielberg's latest, *The Fabelmans*, which looks set to be another sell out, with more than half the tickets already sold at the time of writing. So if you'd like to see this Oscar-nominated film, you'd better be quick! It will be in our usual venue, the Community Centre in Luynes Rise, at 7.30pm on **Saturday 1st April**.

On **19th May**, in collaboration with FOLS (the Friends of Layston School), we will be having an outdoor screening of *The Greatest Showman* at Layston School. FOLS are working hard to make this a night to remember and will be organising entertainment, a BBQ and bar – we'd love to see you there!

Our **AGM** will be on **7th June** at 7.30pm in the back room of The Crown – all welcome. Lastly, we'd like to say a huge thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers – we really appreciate all of your help to make our pop-up cinema the success that it is.

**Vicky Burt, on behalf of the
Buntingford Film Club**

To buy your tickets to any of our performances, please visit:

<https://buytickets.at/buntingfordfilmclub>



Buntingford Local History Group

Project High Street

Our project on the High Street is coming on really well. We have done lots of work on the west side of the road and hopefully have identified most of the previous businesses. It looks like there were nine different pubs from the corner of Baldock Road up to the northern end of the High Street just on the west side, all of which have now closed, with some leaving no trace of their former use apart from their name.

The fact that the west side was in both the parish of Layston and the parish of Aspenden has made life extremely hard. We have tithe records from 1840 but have to refer to both parishes to try to make sense of what property was where. The oddest one of all is the White Hart pub – one part of the building was in the parish of Layston whilst the other part was in the parish of Aspenden. This must have caused problems: on the ground floor one part may have been living accommodation and the other part the business side, but upstairs living accommodation would I expect have gone right across the two parishes. Did the owners go to Aspenden church one week and Layston the following week? And what graveyard would they have been buried in? The mind boggles as to the problems this must have caused. I am expecting the same problems to crop up on the eastern side as that is split between the parishes of Layston and Wyddial.

We would like to thank the business owners who helped by giving us the history of their shops and details of owners etc. Following the survey of shops in the High Street, I was able to contact the owner of No.48, the bookmakers. Some years ago he had been sent a bundle of old documents – leases (previously called ‘indentures’), mortgage documents and conveyancing details – that showed previous owners of the property dating back to the 1830s. We are going to take copies of all of them then pass them over to the archives where they will be stored and available for future generations.

I made a trip to the archives to look at deeds for properties in what I hoped might be in the High Street. The first packet I was given contained details of The Angel pub (now the dentist next to Sainsburys). It contained the lease between the trustees of Henry Skynner’s charity and Simpson’s Brewers of Royston who were granted a lease for 20 years from 29th September 1862 at £60 per year.

The next packet contained lots of papers relating to the Philips family of Buntingford and property they held in the town. Unfortunately, it didn’t mention where the said property was. There was a will dated 1800 of Thomas Eling, a butcher who seemed to own Owles and a property called Burnt Farm. He also owned two cottages at Pigs Nose occupied by the overseer of the poor.

The last bundle came wrapped in filthy brown paper and said “Mr Feasey’s documents”. I was quite excited as Mr Feasey had several shops in the town. The paperwork went back to 1787 and gave a full history of a property on the east side of the High Street, but unfortunately I did not say what shop it actually was. Hopefully someone in the group may be able to unravel the clues in the papers and we can work out which shop it was.

Carol Emery, Buntingford Local History Group

The next meeting of the Buntingford Local History Group is on **Wednesday 12th April** at 2pm in the Bowls Club in Wyddial Road. Everyone is welcome. It costs £2 per person which includes tea and coffee.



Literary Lunch

with Menna van Praag

Thurs 27th April, 12.15-2.15pm

at the Old Bull Inn, Royston

We are delighted that the talented author Menna van Praag is next in our Literary Lunch spotlight, with Jude Simpson, our lovely poet-in-residence, asking the questions. Menna is the author of six magical realism novels and a fantasy trilogy, *The Sisters Grimm*. Her books have been translated into 26 languages. You can find out more about her (pictured below) at <https://www.mennavanpraag.com/about-me>



Jude will be chatting with Menna about her creative writing and in particular *The Grimm Sisters*, which Bridget Collins, author of *The Binding*, described as “absorbing and beautiful – a great achievement”. Elsewhere Menna’s fantasy writing has been compared to the work of Erin Morgenstern and Neil Gaiman. So come and enjoy a fantastic entertaining lunch in The Ballroom of Royston’s Old Bull Inn in Royston!

Tickets are £15 which includes the buffet lunch. To book please call 01763 262262, email events@hsrsc.org.uk or book online at <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/home-startroystonbuntingfordandsouthcambridgeshire/874051>

Home-Start Aquathon – Sunday 23rd April, 6-10pm

At Royston Leisure Centre. Our Home-Start team are all ready to take on this challenge. The team will swim in relay for 55 minutes, and they are asking for your help to gain sponsorship to support Home-Start in their vital role of supporting local families who are struggling with day to day life. If you would like to support your local Home-Start scheme with this event, please call us on 01763 262262, email events@hsrsc.org.uk, or you can donate online at <https://visufund.com/aquathon2023-home-start-team/?p=1> Choose a fish and leave the team a message, we love reading the messages!

Home-Start Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire

tel 01763 262262 / email events@hsrsc.org.uk

website: <https://www.hsrsc.org.uk/>

If you would like to advertise an event in the *Buntingford Journal*, please contact either **Christine Noble** on 01763 273095 / email Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk or **Keith Edwards** on 01763 272032 / email Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

The Nightgown – A short story

When she was forced into silence, Poll silently screamed inside herself – she screamed and screamed inside her own head, her body; her heart pounded against her chest powered by her silent scream.

They forced her into the nightgown. There was very little of the dusty old cambric that had not been patched or darned. Over the years the hem and cuffs had been darned by different seamstresses and the result was a ragged hotch-potch of stitches – some neat, some ugly. The numerous patches were mismatched, different scraps of whiteish material patched in here and there. The ones under the arms gave the most discomfort – the stitching was shoddy and the patching was rough and rubbed her underarms and made them red and sore. There was a placket at the neck; some of the buttons were missing and the remaining ones were odd – too big, too small.

Poll screamed when she was put into the nightgown, she fought. It meant that she would be sent to bed in the cold, dark, horrible room where she feared rats and mice would come and bite her. When she refused to go to bed in that room she was often smacked and sometimes even hit with a stick. “Ungrateful child! Shut up your screamin’ and hollering” the nurse would curse at her. She would shake Poll by the shoulders and sometimes slap her face to stop her screaming.

* * * * *

When Pippa walked up the staircase of Dorchester Court, and especially on the landing, she sometimes felt a strange chill, but she could not get Jake to take her seriously.

“I think this place is haunted Jake”, she had said to him more than once.

“Course it is. Do we know any local exorcists?” He had just mocked her.

Pippa tried to put it out of her mind, but she couldn’t stop it happening – she still felt the chill on the landing. The old Victorian building was huge, covering four floors, and had been converted into a number of flats, mostly occupied by young singles and couples just like herself and Jake. Pippa knew little of the history of the building – she didn’t even know the exact date it was built – but she did remember hearing that it had been either a workhouse or an orphanage.

Pippa started to dislike the place. Instead of feeling pleased when, at the end of a hard day, home came into view, she started to feel revulsion. The small, square windows looked like a prison. The great heavy main door must have been a source of dread for the many poor souls that had passed through it. Pippa regretted choosing their pokey little flat, but Jake said it was a reasonable rent and they should stick with it. Pippa couldn’t help but think that if she left the flat, she would have to leave Jake.

One such evening Pippa returned home, parked up and approached the main front door with trepidation. Jake was away overnight on a course and for the first time she would sleep in the flat alone. She had begun to dread reaching the landing, she feared feeling the icy, unnatural chill. Tonight was no different; as she turned on the landing to go up the next flight of stairs a ripple of cold air went through her like a huge, shuddering sigh. She shivered and dashed up the final few steps to her front door and fumbled with the key.

Once inside, she leant back against the door, her heart pounding. She wasn’t looking forward to spending the night alone in the flat – it didn’t feel homely. She poured herself a large glass of wine and slumped down on their spindly sofa and found herself facing the uncomfortable truth – she wasn’t happy with Jake, and this flat was never going to

feel like home. Worried about the night ahead, she finished off the wine, her dinner just a ping from the microwave.

She slept fitfully; she was cold and the wine had given her a headache. It was when she got up to get a glass of water and some aspirin that she heard the screaming. A pitiful, howling, desperate scream that stopped her dead. Pippa knew it came from the landing. She gulped down the aspirin with the water, her hands shaking. What to do?

Pippa feared no-one would take her seriously, least of all Jake. So, at 2 o'clock in the morning, there and then, she decided she was leaving. She would drive to her mother's. Mum had never really liked Jake, mum would help her get her back on her feet.

Back in the bedroom, she grabbed a small suitcase from the top of the wardrobe and threw as much as she could into it. The screaming had abated but she still could not think straight – and then it started again, every bit as bad as before. Pippa threw clothes, shoes, underwear into the case. She dressed as quickly as she could, pulled on her jeans and a jumper, padded jacket and boots. Then she went into the living room and scrawled a note for Jake:

"I'm so, so sorry Jake. I need to get away from this flat, I feel frightened here. Gone to mum's. I'll text you. Pip." She added a kiss. She hated doing it to him, but she loathed the flat and she could not accept his indifference to her fear. She couldn't leave fast enough.

And then it happened.

As she closed the door behind her and descended the flight of stairs to the landing, she saw her. She saw Polly in the nightgown standing with her back against the wall in the corner. The walls were covered in peeling old wallpaper, with patches of damp and mould spreading up from the dark brown paint on the skirting boards. Polly was holding a lighted candle under her chin and the flame flickered up across her thin, pale, anguished face. Pippa saw a battered pewter candleholder clasped in Poll's tiny cold hand, dripping wax all down the front of the tatty old nightgown.

Pity and fear shot through Pippa and she gasped – the look of sadness on Poll's gaunt young face would haunt her forever. And then Poll was gone. The landing had its usual plain creams walls and white paint again.

Pippa didn't know how she knew the girl's name – she just did. She knew it was Polly, and that she had been known as Poll.

Pippa rushed down the rest of the stairs and out into the night; as the cold air hit her, she wanted to stop and breathe, but she was too afraid. Like a child, more than anything she wanted her mother. She dashed to her car and felt relieved, a bit safer, once she had slammed the door shut and secured herself with the seat belt. "Calm, calm", she repeated to herself.

Mum was just mum, warm, kind and understanding. She made tea for them both and they sat at the kitchen table and Pippa told her what had happened. Mum listened carefully when Pippa told her what she had seen on the landing. And she wasn't sorry Pippa had left Jake – in fact, she was quite relieved. But she was puzzled.

"It's funny you know," she said to Pippa.

"What is?"

"I was going to call you Polly."

Elaine Gibson, Buntingford Writers' Group



East Herts

Citizens Advice East Herts operates a unique Messageline service. Call **01920 459 944** at anytime and leave a message (we aim to return calls within 24 hours, except at weekends) or visit www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk for our other advice options.

citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk

A company you've ordered from goes bust

I ordered a watch online with personalised engraving for my partner's upcoming 40th birthday. The company has since gone out of business. I keep phoning and emailing them but can't get through to anyone. I'm assuming they can't fulfil my order, but I'd paid for the watch upfront and can't afford to buy another gift until I get my money back. Can you please help?

I understand the frustration you must be feeling – especially as you've already parted with your money and presumably spent time searching for a suitable gift for your partner's special birthday.

I assume you haven't had a dispatch note yet, which suggests the order isn't on its way. If the company has gone into administration, it may still be able to fulfil outstanding orders, but if the company is already in liquidation, you'll need to try to get your money back. If you're unsure about what state the company is in, the Citizens Advice website has information on how to find out.

As the company hasn't responded to your calls or emails, is there a shop or office you can visit or write to, to get an update on your order, or request a refund? If that isn't possible, the next steps depend on whether it's a limited company (it will have Ltd or plc after its title), or if it's a sole trader (someone who runs their own business) or partnership.

If it's a limited company, you'll need to get details of the administrator or receiver – the person dealing with settling the trader's debts. The names of those administrators will usually be on the website of the company that's gone bust. You should register your claim as a creditor on the GOV.UK website. Fill out the form with details of what you're owed and send it to the administrator dealing with the trader's debts. Unfortunately, there's only a small chance you'll receive any money back because you'll be last in a long list of creditors who need to be paid.

As the order was online (and I'm therefore assuming you paid by debit or credit card) you could try getting your money back with a Section 75 claim or a chargeback claim to your card provider or bank. Full details about both these types of claims can be found on the Citizens Advice website. If the seller was a sole trader or partnership and not a limited company, pursuing a Section 75 or chargeback claim is your best option.

Every case is different when traders go under, but you can call the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on to find out exactly what your rights are – **0808 223 1133** and visit <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/somethings-gone-wrong-with-a-purchase/if-a-company-stops-trading-or-goes-out-of-business/>

If you need help about anything else, call our Message Line on **01920 459944** or visit our website for our advice options.

www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk

Citizens Advice East Herts is a registered charity.

BALA Buntingford Action for the Less Able

Registered Charity No. 1094426

Minibus Trips April 2023

April	Time	Destination	Price
Weds 5 th	10am–3pm	Letchworth	£6
Thurs 6 th	10am–1.30	Bishop's Stortford Town Centre	£5
Tues 11 th	10.30–2pm	Scotsdales	£6.50
Fri 14 th	10am–3pm	Hitchin Town Centre (market day)	£6
Tues 18 th	9.30–1pm	Harlow Town Centre (Harvey Centre + Market)	£7
Weds 19 th	11.30am	Pub Lunch	
Thurs 20 th	9.30–3pm	Bury St Edmunds	£13
Tues 25 th	9.30–1.30	Biggleswade Town Centre (market day)	£6.50
May			
Wed 3 rd	10am– 2.30	St Albans	£8
Fri 5 th	10.30–12.30	Mill End Plants and Tea Rooms, Rushden	£3.50
Tues 9 th	9.30–3pm	Southend	£13
Wed 10 th	9.30–1.30	Biggleswade (A1 Retail Park)	£6.50

All trips start from the Benson Hall car park unless otherwise agreed.

To book a seat or for more information ring:

07870 638480 (please be prepared to leave a message)

BALA Coffee Morning

Friday 21st April 2023, 10–11.30am

AGM Lunch

Friday 19th May 2023, 11.30am–1pm

Both at
URC Hall,
Baldock
Road

The BCAT bus is running trips to Royston every Thursday,
10am pick-up at Market Hill bus stop, £2 return.

Stopping at M&S Foodhall/Aldi (approx.10.30–11.45), then Tesco Extra
(approx.11.45–1.30). There is Costa Coffee opposite Aldi and instore at Tesco.



Chiropractors



Adrian
Collingwood

Louise
Hampton

Ashleigh
Cattle

Megan
Brown

We have four chiropractors here at Attend2Health who are able to help with a range of aches and pains, from low back pain and neck pain to shoulder pain and headaches arising from the neck.

Attend2Health offer chiropractic appointments six days a week, including up to 7pm in the evening for those that are working. We also offer a free chat if you are unsure why you are getting aches and pains and want to see if we can help. Give us a call on **01763 87 80 87** for more information. Appointments can also be made online at:

www.attend2health.co.uk

Attend2Health is proud to be sponsoring the Menopause Café (right) which will be running once a month at The Seth Ward Community Centre. We are hoping our Nutritionist Deborah Lethby and Acupuncturist Jethro Rowland will also be holding talks on the menopause soon – more details to follow.

Louise Hampton

Buntingford & Stortford Hybrid Studio



We have now run two Free **Move, Meditate & Relax** workshops for the Community Initiative Charity and have plans to run another 3 or 4 in Buntingford soon.

Our Easter Wreath Making Workshop produced some lovely artwork, which is all up on our facebook page. EASTER HAPPY Kids Camps will be on Thursday 6th and Thursday 13th & 14th April at Layston School, 1-5pm. The sessions are fully booked but children can go on our waiting list as there may be cancellations.

Our monthly challenge for April is all about planks, which will be popping up in all our classes. Want to come to an Exercise Class or need help getting into a Healthy Lifestyle? Then contact us at:

theteam@jacqui-smith.net / 07956 647806

**Jacqui Smith, Personal Trainer
& Chair of Community Initiative Charity**



Full Class Listings

Buntingford's First Menopause Café



The first monthly Menopause Café took place in Buntingford on the 16th March. Over 30 attendees took part and openly discussed their menopause journeys to learn from each other by sharing stories, questions and coping tips.

A Menopause Café is a discussion group, open to all ages and genders – no talks, no experts, and topics are chosen by participants. Those who haven't experienced menopause learn from those who have. The Menopause Café movement is a charity that started in Perth, Scotland, in 2017 and has spread worldwide, with volunteers now hosting events in the UK, Bahrain, Mexico, USA, Austria and India. The charity also organise an annual Menopause Festival – #FlushFest. The charity's founder Rachel Weiss had this to say: "The Menopause Café is for everyone who wants to talk about the menopause, to share their stories, experiences and questions – all made that little bit easier with tea and cake."



Claire Budd (on the right, below), a Menopause Health Coach who launched the Café in Buntingford, said: "It's great to see people acknowledging the importance of discussing

menopause openly and breaking the taboo around it. The turnout and support is a positive step towards creating an inclusive space for sharing experiences and learning from each other." Claire was supported in the Café's launch by Louise Hampton of Attend2Health (on the left in the photo) who is proud to be enabling women to connect and talk to others who can really help when going through the menopause. It's a great informal way to find out what has worked for others and not feel alone on their menopause journey.

The Menopause Café will be a monthly event held on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The next Café is on **Thursday 20th April** at the Seth Ward Community Centre, Luynes Rise, Buntingford. If you wish to attend please book your ticket in advance by contacting Claire at clairebudd1@googlemail.com or call **07841 758577**. To find out more about the Menopause Café charity visit <http://www.menopausecafe.net>





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DANCE FITNESS CLASSES

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VISIT
WWW.BOOKWHEN.COM/SARACENSFOUNDATION
OR CONTACT
SOPHIEPORTER@SARACENS.NET

‘Love to Dance’

Love to Dance is a dance class for the over 50s run by the **Saracens Foundation**, a charity that works in local communities across north London and Hertfordshire to increase physical activity, reduce social isolation and improve the health and wellbeing of the over 50s. Although the class is not yet in Buntingford, there are classes nearby including in Royston, Hertford, Letchworth, Ware and High Cross.

A typical one-hour ‘Love to Dance’ class looks like this:

- 10.00–10.05am – Arrival and registration
- 10.05–10.20am – Warm up
- 10.20–10.50am – Learn a dance routine
- 10.50–10.55am – Cool down
- 10.55–11.00am – Social catch-up and departure

Love to Dance is fun as well as good for you and you will learn a variety of dance styles as you get fitter. Prepare to leave our class having worked up a sweat, feeling empowered and strong, as you dance your way into a more active and social lifestyle! Details of all their dance classes and how to book are on the Foundation’s website:

<https://bookwhen.com/saracensfoundation>

Ware & District Photographic Society

The Society recently held its AGM, when Mark Sims was once again elected President. Mark also looks after the Society’s finances and programme. He has almost completed the programme for 2023/24 and this will shortly be available on the website. The Club nights cover a variety of topics and includes studio lighting which gives members the opportunity to try their hand at photographing models in a studio setting.

Next year is the Society’s 60th anniversary and we have managed to book international landscape photographer Charlie Waite FRPS to give a lecture in Ware Drill Hall on Sunday 14th April 2024. Charlie is firmly established as one of the world’s leading landscape photographers. Tickets will be available nearer the time but make a note in your diary now as this event is not to be missed. In 2017 Charlie launched the Landscape Photographer of the Year competition and he has run the UK’s Leading Photographers Workshop and Tour Company for over 29 years. For further information visit his website.

So why not join your local photography club and be inspired? We meet on Wednesday evenings at Thundridge Village Hall, 8 to 10pm. The first three evenings are free!

u3a learn, laugh, live

Buntingford

Lucy Allen, 'Stuntwoman', started her talk with a video collection showing herself in action in some of the many films she has worked in. These included *Titanic* and the Harry Potter and James Bond films.

Lucy's original inspiration was Olga Korbut, the Soviet Union gymnast who won a Gold Medal at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Lucy joined a gymnastics club, then a circus to work in films she needed an Equity Card – for

learn trapeze and aerial work. In order to work in films she needed an Equity Card – for this she went to Turkey with the circus for six months.

Lucy said she isn't afraid of heights, but jumping off a cliff or a tall building in cold windy conditions wearing a flimsy, flowing nightgown, and hoping she's going to land on the air bag below, is not her favourite memory. She had shown us a clip of her in the *Titanic* and explained that she was on a wire. She then showed us the protective undergarments she wears beneath her costumes – very expensive, made to measure, very necessary equipment. Protective equipment and good preparation for a stunt are vital and luckily she's only had a couple of minor accidents. It was all fascinating. Lucy does another talk just about the *Titanic* film so we hope our Speaker Secretary will book her again!!

Our **Mah Jong Group** (right) meets weekly at The Bury but recently the venue was needed for a Wake and the alternative date offered coincided with our u3a monthly meeting, so that left no alternative for the group but to go to Pearce's Farm Shop for afternoon tea! The photo below is of the group's leaders, Liz and Mike Cooper.



At our next monthly meeting, on **Monday 17th April**, Jill Campbell of the Knebworth House Archive will talk on 'Seeking Servants for Knebworth House'. Country houses and estates relied on a large staff to keep things running smoothly. In her talk, Jill discusses the types of records that can be found when tracing ancestors who were in service, focusing on Knebworth House and sharing the stories of some of its longest-serving staff.

Jean Cook

Membership of the u3a is open to anyone not in full-time occupation. We meet monthly, at the Seth Ward Community Centre, on the second Monday of the month – doors open at 1.30pm. **New members are always welcome.**

Please visit our website for news and details of all our groups:

www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford



Layston C of E First School

*Loving to Learn, Learning to Love
For every child a chance to shine!*

We started the second half of spring term exploring the value of Thankfulness. Christians believe that God loves and cares for them in many different ways in all aspects of their lives. They know their response to this provision should be one of thankfulness and praise.



Teaching and learning – The children have had a fabulous start to the second half of spring term, showing gratitude and thankfulness in their learning, especially in forest school where they enjoyed building dens and icicle mobiles. We say a big thank you to Mrs Ballard for planning such creative, exciting opportunities for the children in our forest.



Layston children also demonstrated thankfulness when making Christingles during our service at school (right). Our worship group wrote a prayer of thanks to God which they read out at the service.



We all thoroughly enjoyed taking part in **World Book Day** and it was fabulous to see the effort that the staff and children had gone to in order to bring their favourite story characters to life. We were also very fortunate to have a Drama and Storytelling Workshop led by an external provider to celebrate World Book Day.



Science week was a huge success with a visit to the school from 'Keep a Beat' who helped the children explore basic first aid (left, below left and centre). RTYFC ran an active science fitness day at Layston. All the children were active and learnt a lot about how to stay fit and healthy! Y4 enjoyed timing how long it took to melt chocolate (below) – and they didn't eat it!

Adele McMurrough, Headteacher



We are a friendly Church of England First School and welcome visits.

For more information call **01763 271235** or visit our website at:

www.layston.herts.sch.uk



Millfield First & Nursery School



www.millfield.herts.sch.uk

Millfield has had a busy and productive Spring Term!

PTA Activities

A big thank you to the Millfield PTA for their ongoing commitment to our school. **School Discos** were held in the Spring term, which the children thoroughly enjoyed! They had such fun dancing and spending time with their friends at this social event. The PTA also organised a **PTA Quiz Night** in March which provided an opportunity for the local community to come together. Each year the PTA organise an **Easter Egg Hunt** which takes place during the school day. There is great excitement as the children search for their 'egg' and are rewarded with an Easter treat.

Our thanks again go to the Millfield PTA, as well as our school community, for their fundraising efforts. The money raised by our school community has recently provided the school with coat hook trolleys to help at lunchtimes, as well as picnic benches which we are looking forward to using more when the weather warms up.

World Book Day

On 2nd March we celebrated World Book Day. On the day, children came to school dressed as a character from a story book. It was lovely to see the children reading to one another and enjoying books together.



10-19 March
**British
Science
Week
2023**

Science Week

British Science Week took place from 13th to 17th March. During that school week, Millfield staff and children became scientists as they took part in designing and carrying out science investigations.

Red Nose Day

On Friday 17th March children and staff celebrated Red Nose Day with a non-school uniform day; many chose to wear red to

mark the occasion and celebrate this fantastic charity. Thanks to our school community for their online Comic Relief donations.



Friendship Ladders

The theme of this year's Spring Term Friendship Ladders was 'Spring Arts and Crafts'. Children across Years 1 to 4 worked in groups of mixed ages to create pieces of spring related art or craft together.

Nursery Vacancies

We have places available in our Nursery to start in September 2023. If you are interested in a place for your child, please contact the School Office for further information.

Laura Kennedy-Weeks, Headteacher

If you would like to know more about our School or Nursery, please visit our website www.millfield.herts.sch.uk or contact the School on **01763 271717**.



Edwinstree Middle School



A Voluntary Controlled Church of England School

***As a Christian school, we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.
As a community, we support one another to flourish and live life in all its fullness.***

Which value have we been exploring in COWO (Collective Worship)?

Each term, the school looks at one of our 16 Christian Values and explores it within our Collective Worship. These 16 values that we study help us to flourish in life and for this term we felt as a community that we would benefit from reflecting on the value of forgiveness, something we were finding hard to do.

We begin with a study of a biblical story and this term we have been exploring the story of the Prodigal Son who gets everything wrong, while his brother does everything right, but the Father gives them equal love (Luke 15:11–32). Initially we found this really hard to understand, but we were reminded that throughout Jesus' life his mission was to support those that needed help most, whatever their acts or deeds. The father in this story gives his son love and a chance to make a difference, he is humble enough not to judge.

If I am honest I still wrestle with this story myself but it is definitely teaching us not to take the moral high ground but to love whatever. We were reminded of the Disciples and their question to Jesus: how many times should we forgive? The answer given is 77, which we discussed and take to represent over and over again. We have learnt that without forgiveness both victim and perpetrator become trapped and locked in a cycle of hate. Forgiveness allows both to move on and become free from the act.

For inspiration we turned to Nelson Mandela and his favourite poem *Invictus*, in which we read that we are the “the master of our fate, the captain of our soul”. While we can't predict or control what others do to us, we have absolute control over what we do, and forgiveness is ours to give. Some of our staff and KS3 students have been really inspired by a Radio Programme about forgiveness (for adults and perhaps older children) called *Forgiveness: Stories from the Front Line*. It does deal with adult topics, but if you need a cheer up and a steer to contentment, you may want to listen in particular to a moving episode you can find at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0018npb/episodes/player>

Next term, with Spring arriving, we are going to look at the value of hope, something our students have struggles with.

What have we been studying in Geography ?

Covid taught us to value our local area even more and the beautiful countryside we live in, so if you live in Buntingford you will see us out on walks and exploring or studying our locality. As a geographer I am clear that our students need to learn and understand their local area, if they are to be able to compare, contrast and gain empathy with and knowledge of other areas of the world. If you don't know your own backyard, you can't grasp other locations? We also use our walks and explorations to embed key skills such as reading OS maps and understanding scale. Look out for us this Easter as we visit St Peter's Church for our service and then take part in an Easter egg hunt in the local area!

As part of the KS3 Geography course, students are required to take part in a local field trip to the River Rib in Buntingford. This involves the students carrying out a number of experiments. We have been studying what part of the River we are in, and what evidence there is to confirm this. This gives us a chance to also look at how Humans are influencing the river. We are really excited to have joined forces with River Watch and are looking forward to getting involved in helping our chalk stream river environment.

Climate change and energy usage

As part of our commitment to helping students flourish and live life in all it's Fullness, we have been helping our young people make a difference to the issue they worry about most – climate change. This year our Business Manager and Site Manager gave a presentation to our students on why we need to reduce energy use and how this would help reduce greenhouse gases as well as costs, and together as a school we planned what to do. With student and staff support we are pleased to report that we have made a 20% saving this year on our energy usage. The cost of the energy used has still tripled, but we are so impressed that a significant part of this change came from the children accepting a change in behaviour, by being mindful. Both staff and students have supported turning off the heating at midday and we have sustained this through the winter. Underneath this work we are sending a clear message to our school community, who worry about their futures, that small acts and changes in themselves and their families together can have big impact.

Where did Year 8 visit in March?

Finally, we managed to fulfil a Year 8 request to visit Grenfell Tower which they have been studying as part of their Humanities course, looking into cities, how they function and the inequalities within them. Our students asked so many respectful but curious questions when they met the Grenfell community and listened to a talk by the local Reverend in the Church nextdoor to the Tower. We came away having learnt how this community pulled together to help each other in a time of crisis and that the power of the human spirit to support one and other is astonishing. We then travelled into London to see the more traditional sights, and we walked the Millennium Bridge to have lunch in the street-food part of Borough Market. Our students were interested, engaged and well behaved throughout and clearly showed they are ready for their next stage at Freman.

After the success of last year's school musical, we decided we can't wait another whole year so ... 'The Island that Rocks' auditions

Following on from the success of 'Pirates of the Curry Bean', we are pleased to announce that students are currently auditioning for our new school production called 'The Island that Rocks'. Two estranged teens become shipwrecked on a secret island, where they begin a fun new existence with its trailblazing surfing inhabitants. Their season of shared adventures will change their lives – and their respective worlds.

Year 6 Football success!

Our Year 6 boys finished 4th in the County Finals held in Watford at the end of January, with 2 wins and 3 losses against some very high-calibre opposition. There were some fantastic performances throughout, including a 5-0 win and an unbelievable top corner save!

Jo Gant, Headteacher



If you would like to advertise in the *Buntingford Journal*, please contact Keith Edwards on 01763 272032 or by email at: Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

The Buntingford Bowls Club



The 2022 Membership celebrating our centenary

Buntingford Bowls Club, now 101 years old, are holding their annual **Open Days** for new bowlers for the 2023 season on Sunday 30th April and Monday 1st May. The doors will be open from 10am to 1pm both days.

It will be a morning of fun and games and for those who wish to continue and join the club, they can look forward to four FREE coaching sessions over the following 2 weeks from our enthusiastic volunteer coaching team.

We are a mixed gender club and have over 100 members ranging in age from 13 up to those in their 80s, a sport truly for all ages. The club has a fully stocked bar, which opens every day during the season and will be open on the open days too. We hold many social events throughout the year including quizzes, dances, race nights and indoor short mat bowls during the winter months. We are a true social club where you can play to whatever level you wish to attain.

Come and try bowls at our friendly club. We are in Wyddial Road, about half-way along. All you need is a pair of flat shoes or trainers (no heels) and yourself! All ages are welcome. However, as a guide, children should be over the age of 10, mainly due to the size of the bowls and being able to use them.

Please phone if you require further information or if you can't attend those dates but are interested in bowling. We look forward to welcoming you,

Dave Murphy, Coach, Buntingford Bowls Club
07917 084881

Songs to aid memory and wellbeing

Standon & Puckeridge Community Centre, Station Road, Puckeridge SG11 1TF

Each Thursday 2.00–3.00pm

Bringing people together to sing a variety of well-known and loved songs, in a fun and friendly environment. Mind & Music welcomes everyone, especially those affected by dementia and their carers, and those concerned about their memory.

For information please contact David Ranford:
ranfordd@gmail.com / 07888 398336 / 01920 739762



It's all in the cross – Blue, Red, Yellow or Green?

Terror will come if good men and women stand by and do nothing

Here we go, once again it's nearly time for us all to put our crosses against those who are standing for the local elections and the predictable set of conditions will be put in train with the almost inevitable outcome. Some live in the faint hope that this time we'll get a change at the ballot box rather than the 'same old, same old'. Others have decided not to join in when we are given the 'choice' of whom should represent us – "Why should I bother? My vote will not count. We all know who will be in local/town/district/county elected power this time round as in every other election!" We all know that the status quo will continue and our town and even district and county will be dictated by the same colour rosette on Election Day.

Perhaps it is tardiness on the part of the electorate, lack of interest or short memories, even examples of other countries which have been leading people by the nose for ever. Indeed there is plenty of evidence that the councils in all the three main structures are led by interested parties and the population has to accept their decisions. As things stand this is very unlikely to change as any newcomers trying to change things will be out-voted 4 to 1.

But perhaps it is now time for a rethink. Could the town, its people and surrounding environs have more control over our destiny, especially the future of the next generation who will inherit any decisions going forward? We know that the present representatives who have walked the line these past many years are eventually 'controlled' by the faceless individuals in Downing Street, passed down through the established structures to our own council over which we have little or no control. For example, planning (or lack of it). The present explosion of dwellings and ridiculous infrastructure projects seems to be run by a strange oxymoron department where the town council has little or no say about what the town needs. Moreover the so-called developers with their consultants and legal advisors hold sway and overrule any decision made by the local people, indeed have even overruled the unanimous votes taken by the council assembly. By looking to Downing Street and their supporters therein they get approvals, and some say compensations, for the inconvenience caused by those rowdy, ignorant townfolk who are not at all grateful for all these new properties and a cycle track to nowhere. Tearing down or selling off existing important structures such as the Medical Centre (the only one we now have!) who are forced to decamp to an area more convenient (for whom?). And we wait in line for easy-fix projects like '20s Plenty' to be approved by those that don't even live in the area and probably never have. What are they waiting for? Another child death?

We are spoon-fed with promises and half-truths, even so-called 'consultation' visits to discuss what we want and need, but then we never seem to see any progress. They treat us with so much contempt we don't even get the consultations now. Perhaps now is the time to vote for a change of attitude, if not rosette. It would be a good start if the town council had a real say in some of the 'projects' that affect us – roads, schools, medical centres etc. The so-called planners appear to hold exclusive rights over us and it would be interesting to know if they ever even visit the town council facility (open 4 days a week) just to say they are in town, having a look round for the next prospect to cover in cement and bricks (not medical centres we note, which are not in the front rank for attention). For those who can remember the Town Plan of some years past, it was originally well considered by the independent candidate but it was talked into oblivion and re-made by those with something to gain and of course it sailed through, with codicils and caveats that allowed any 'updates', when it was deemed appropriate by those who gain and the creeping growth persists.

I have no particular loyalty to any political party as most have an axe to grind and the farther up the greasy pole they climb our so-called representatives conform and compromise, which

becomes the order of the day. However, only today a leaflet did fall upon my doormat which heralded the Green Party who promise to change things (how?). One must congratulate them on their enthusiasm but what effect might they have by way of change? They have always seemed to be a strange but well-meaning lot with noble ideals and plans, which let's face it we need more than ever for the sake of our grandchildren.

I am trying to imagine what influence they might have apart from taking part in the odd protest march, endlessly conferring with their joint leaders (equality rules, apparently). Would they themselves be of independent thought and address the real issues we face? I think they will have to throw off the hippy, dippy image, and take a long draught of reality. I appreciate they are mostly children of the 60s and 70s, but they are up against the offspring of the big beasts. So for them it's less protest and more real progress, and I think if they banged a few tables and did less 'inclusivity' debates the great unwashed may just give them a chance at the main prize. If they are successful I think that is when we could see what they are really capable of, but no doubt the blue rosette brigade and the red and yellow flags will out-gun them and the status quo will continue. Perhaps they should have a chance? After all the true representatives, the independents, have tried and failed.

By the way, don't forget to take your ID to the polling station – we don't want people to think you are somebody else or voting more than once. Leave all that to the online voter (no ID required!!). Now that's a way to gain power and influence over us all. No? Think about it. As the man said, Democracy is a bus we ride until we reach our goal, then we get off.

Wyse

Braughing Get Together – coming events

Friday 14th April – “Drinks with the Jones’s” – A Murder Mystery

Are you a budding Hercule Poirot, Sherlock Holmes or Morse? Or are you more of an Inspector Clouseau? Come and find out as BGT presents a stage version of a Murder Mystery in Braughing Church Hall. Budding detectives, i.e. you, will be seated for briefing at 7.30pm prompt, with glasses charged. The MURDER will unfurl before your eyes from 8pm; you will need to “keep ‘em peeled” for 45 minutes. During a 30-minute break, for a fish/chicken and chips supper, our detectives can reflect on what they have seen or think they have seen, then all will be revealed in the second half. Will our detectives be promoted or demoted? **Price £15** (includes food). Doors open 7pm. Booking essential.

Wednesday 26th April – Trip to Brick Lane Music Hall.

We have organised a trip to Brick Lane Music Hall for one of their St George's Day performances and still have a small number of places available. A coach will leave Braughing by 10.40am to take us to Brick Lane, where we will enjoy a three-course meal followed by a matinée performance which will finish about 5pm. **Price £75** (includes meal and coach). Booking essential.

Saturday 13th May – “A Right Royal Cluedo”

For a twist on the classic board game, come and take part in a social version. Start the evening with a Coronation supper before you have to find out who killed whom. Was it a Prince in the Keep with an Orb? Or maybe a Princess in her Boudoir with Hemlock? Pit your and your friends' wits against others. **Price £10** (includes supper). Booking essential.

For all bookings please contact Cynthia Matthews via email
cynthia.matthews44@gmail.com or call 01920 833320 or 07933 202547

WHAT'S ON – DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL

- Sat 1st** 10.30–4pm: **Model Railway Exhibition** at Bassingbourn Village College (p.13)
- Sat 1st** 7.30pm: **Buntingford Film Shorts International Awards** on YouTube
- Sat 1st** 7.30 for 8pm: **Buntingford Film Club** 'The Fabelmans' (p.25)
- Wed 3rd** 8pm: **Buntingford Gardeners Club AGM** at URC Hall (p.14)
- Tue 4th** 7.30 for 8pm: **Lenten Reflections** at The Stables (p.10)
- Wed 12th** 2–4pm: **Reed Garden Club** in Reed Village Hall (p.15)
- Wed 12th** 2pm: **Buntingford Local History Group** at the Bowls Club (p.26)
- Thur 13th** 10am: **Buntingford Library re-opens**
- Thur 13th** 7.15 for 7.30pm: **Buntingford W.I.** at URC Hall (p.15)
- Sun 16th** 12–4pm: **Alswick Hall Garden Open for Charity** (p.7)
- Mon 17th** 1.30 for 2pm: **u3a Monthly Meeting** at Seth Ward Community Centre (p.35)
- Tue 18th** 7 for 7.30pm: **Buntingford Civic Society AGM** (p.5)
- Thur 20th**: **Menopause Café** at Seth Ward Community Centre (p.33)
- Fri 21st** 10–11.30am: **BALA Coffee Morning** (p.31)
- Fri 21st & Sat 22nd**: **The Big One! & Earth Day** – see BACCS (p.24)
- Sun 23rd** 6–10pm: **Home-Start Aquathon** at Royston Leisure Centre (p.27)
- Thur 27th** 12.15–2.15pm: **Home-Start Literary Lunch**, Old Bull Inn, Royston (p.27)
- Sat 29th** 10am: **Plant Sale outside St Peter's Church** (p.13)
- Sun 30th & Mon 1st May** 10am–1pm: **Open Days** at Buntingford Bowls Club (p.41)

MAY

- Thur 4th**: **Local Elections** (p.16 & 17)
- Fri 5th** 8.30am: **Nutwood Networking Business Breakfast** (p.6)
- Sat 6th** 5pm: **Civic Service for the King's Coronation** (p.13)
- Sun 7th** 2–10.30pm: **Coronation Family Funday** at the Community Centre (p.13)
- Sun 7th** 1.30 & 5.30pm: **'Take a Bow'** Buntingford School of Dance annual show at Gordon Craig Theatre, Stevenage
- Fri 19th** 11.30am–1pm: **BALA Lunch and AGM** (p.31)
- Fri 19th**: **Outdoor Cinema** 'The Greatest Showman' at Layston School (p.25)
- Mondays:** From 8.30am: **Buntingford Market** on Market Hill
10am–12noon: **Coffee Morning** at St Peter's Church
10–11.45am: **Chatter Table** at the Manor House – 1st and 3rd Mondays
1.30 for 2pm: **Buntingford Senior Citizens' Club** at URC Hall
7.30–9pm: **Buntingford Community Choir** at Millfield School (p.14)
- Tuesdays:** 7.30–9pm: **Braughing Sing Community Choir** in Jenyn's School Hall
- Wednesdays:** 8–10pm: **Ware & District Photographic Society** in Thundridge Village Hall
Buntingford Meditation at St Peter's Church, except the 1st Wed in the month which is online: www.mindful-worklife.com/buntingford-meditation
- Thursdays:** 10.30am–12.30: **Coffee & Company** at the URC Hall (p.11)
12.30pm: **Functional Movement Class** in Reed Village Hall; contact Jessie Skeggs on 07977 146 380 / www.peacefulchangePilates.com
2–3pm: **Mind & Music** at Standon & Puckeridge Community Centre (p.41)
- Saturdays:** 10am: **Walking Football** at the MUGA, Norfolk Road Playing Fields



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Buntingford Civic Society

Reg. Charity No. 1014873
<http://www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk>



WHO ARE WE?

We are your local amenity group, established in the early 1970's initially as a conservation group covering the ancient parishes of Buntingford, Layston, Aspenden, Wyddial and Throcking. We obtained charity status in 1993.

Our main aims are to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic and public interest within the locality and endeavour to promote high standards of planning and architecture while our archives are a source of reference on local geography and history.

Over the years, the Society has broadened its interests within the community. Whilst conservation issues will always be important to us, we now try to take a greater interest in many other local organisations and activities.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

Publish the Buntingford Journal
Restored the town pump twice.
Restored the Town Cage

Initiated erection of Christmas lights in the High Street and Market Hill
Present an annual school civic award

Updated the set of Town Trails with the Discovering Buntingford booklet.

Erected a Town Sign and replaced it on a like for like basis in 2018

Installed a seat on the hill to and paid for works at the Layston Cemetary.

Erected Town Gateway signs complete with Planters and pay for the plants.

Contributed financially to the Freman College sports hall, Buntingford Film Club, previous Buntingford Carnivals, and to the planned Summer Arts in Buntingford 2022 weekend, and given a grant to the Friends of the River Rib and Quin

Done River Rib cleans

Fitted a sign in the Community gardens at the Police Station and paid for new plants there in 2019.

Were actively involved with the production of the Neighbourhood Plan
Arranged four Buntingford in Bloom competitions our fifth in 2020 cancelled due to the pandemic.

Updated the circular walks on local footpaths leaflet in 2017
Hosted annual Civic Day walks

WHAT ARE WE PLANNING TO DO?

Monitor future housing development and continue to work with local organisations for the benefit of Buntingford, including the River Rib Project.

TO JOIN PLEASE SEE THE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON OUR WEBSITE
www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk

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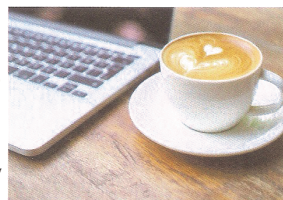
Carers in Hertfordshire Online



Due to the situation with the coronavirus most of Carers Support Hub groups are meeting online via Zoom. The main purpose of the groups is to bring carers together so they can offer each other practical and emotional support.

If you would like to join in a group online we request that you book a place. If the group for the area where you live is at a time you can't make, or is not yet running online, you are welcome to book a place at another meeting. Please note the meetings may be subject to change so contact us to check details.

To book email contact@carersinherts.org.uk or phone **01992 58 69 69** and let us know which group you are interested in. Once you've booked a place we will send you confirmation and the meeting login details. If you're booking by phone it would be useful if you could confirm your email address. **Please do let us know if you have any other technical issues or requirements, as we may be able to help.**



Carers in Hertfordshire Hub groups meeting online via Zoom

Name of Group	When Meeting
Berkhamsted (a joint meeting with Hemel Hempstead)	Second Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 11.30am.
Bishop's Stortford	First Wednesday of the month 10.30am – 11.30am.
Borehamwood	Second Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 11.30am.
Buntingford	Last Tuesday of the month, 10.30am – 11.30am.
Chorleywood & Rickmansworth	Third Monday of the month 10.30am—11.30am
Harpenden	Third Thursday of the month 10.30am – 11.30am.
Letchworth Garden City	Third Wednesday of the month 10.30am – 11.30am.
Potters Bar	Last Wednesday of the month 10.30am – 11.30am
Royston	First Thursday of the month 10.30am – 11.30am.
Stevenage	Last Thursday of the month 10.30am – 11.30am.
Ware	Third Friday of the month, 11am – 12pm noon.
Watford	Second Monday of the month, 10.30am - 11.30pm.

Our **Men's Carers' Group** is also meeting online on the **last Tuesday of the month, 1.30pm – 2.30pm** and twice a week we have some informal meet ups on Zoom for any carers to join in with so they can have a chat. Please contact us for more details or if you'd like to join any of these meetings.

Our Carer Support Advisors should also be able to advise you of other groups for carers that are meeting online during the coronavirus pandemic. You can contact them 9.30am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 4pm on Fridays for advice or support related to your caring role.

To contact us call: 01992 58 69 69
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For one-off adverts or to advertise a specific event, contact the Journal editor, Christine Noble, on 01763 273 095 or email journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk. Adverts for charitable or community events are normally free of charge.

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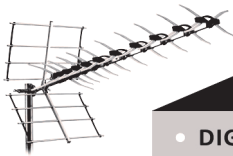
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Buntingford Civic Society

Reg. Charity No. 1014873
<http://www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk>



Annual General Meeting 2023

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Buntingford Civic Society will take place on **Tuesday, 18th April 2023**, 7 for 7:30pm in The Bunters Suite, Seth Ward Community Centre, Luynes Rise, Buntingford.

Following the business of the meeting, there will be a short presentation by our guest speaker Glen Stanway. He will be talking about his life in acting.

Light refreshments will be served at the end of the Meeting.

Non-Members welcome

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