

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

Buntingford Journal



Edwinstree pupils on stage in Peter Pan

Inside this month: A big step in the right direction in the campaign to save Buntingford Library; Freman College in top 3 per cent of state-funded schools; Little Stars Nursery judged 'Outstanding' by Ofsted; plus local events, quizzes and the first hint of Spring.

60p

March 2015
Volume 40, No.2



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DIARY OF EVENTS – FEBRUARY 2015

MONDAYS

- 10:30am – 12 noon **Iyengar Yoga** at URC Hall, Baldock Road (term time only). Contact Jen Harris on 01920 821288.
- 10:45am – 11:30am **Stretch'n'Grow** for children who are walking. At Seth Ward Community Centre. £2 per family. 01763 273008.
- 1:30pm – 3:00pm **Stay & Play** at Jenyns First School, Braughing. £1 per family. 01763 273008
- 1:30pm – 3:30pm **Senior Citizens Club** at URC Hall, Baldock Road. Bingo and an afternoon of socialising. For more information contact Jeanne Clark on 01763 274631.
- 4:30pm – 7:30pm **Rib Valley Trampoline Club** at Freman College (term time only). Contact Andrea Allen 07989 980038 or email: ribvalleytc@live.co.uk
- 6:30pm – 7:30pm **Cougars U9s** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more information email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk.
- 6:30pm – 8:00pm **Shotokan Karate** at Seth Ward Community Centre. Contact Peter Deacon on 01462 642922.
- 6:45pm – 8:15pm **Tai Ji** at URC Hall. Contact Steve Burton 01279 777032 / 07968 052716
- 7:00pm **Bridge** for experienced players at Buntingford Bowls Club. £2.50 per session. Contact Eddie on 01763 273640 or 07976 896718.
- 7:00pm – 8:00pm **Pilates** at Layston School. Contact Jacqui 01763 273815 / 07956 647806.
- 7:30pm – 8:15pm **Abs (body toning)** at Fit Together Gym. Contact Al on 07739 131694.
- 7:30pm – 9:00pm **Buntingford Community Choir** at Millfield School, Monks Walk. No need to read music, no auditions, just bring your enthusiasm! For info see www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk or email: info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk
- 7:30pm – 9:45pm **Buntingford & District Youth Club** for young people aged 13–19 years, at the Technical Institute, Baldock Road. Contact Danny Band on 07879 853849 or email: danny.band@hertfordshire.gov.uk.
- 8:15pm **Circuit Training** at Seth Ward Community Centre. Contact 01920 823677.

TUESDAYS

- 9:15am – 10:15am **Badminton** at Seth Ward CC, £2.50 per session. 01763 273712.
- 9:30am – 11:00am **Tuesday Toddlers** at URC Hall, Baldock Road. £1.50 includes drink and snack. Term time.
- 10:00am – 11:30am **Under 1s Group** at Buntingford Bowls Club. £1 per family. 01763 273008.
- 10:00am – 9:00pm **The On Site Massage Clinic** at Seth Ward Comm Centre. Contact Kate Smith MBRCP on 07720 298306 or visit www.onsitemassageclinic.co.uk.
- 10:45am – 11:30am **Cheeky Chimps** (2 separate sessions) at Seth Ward Community Centre.
- 11:45am – 12:30pm £2 per family. 01763 273008
- 3:30pm – 9:00pm **Dance classes** with Buntingford Dancing School, at Freman College. Contact Philippa on 01763 271010.
- 5:30pm – 6:30pm **Cougars U15s Whites** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area.
- 6:15pm – 7:15pm **Cougars U10s** training, St Edmunds School Floodlit Astro Turf.
- 6:15pm – 7:15pm **Cougars U12s Blues** training, St Edmunds School Floodlit Astro Turf. For more info on Cougars training, email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk
- 7:00pm **Boot Camp** at Layston School. Jacqui 01763 273815 / 07956 647806.
- 7:00pm – 8:15pm **Grade 5 Ballet Lessons**, Layston School. Philippa 01763 271010.

WHAT'S ON

- 7:30pm **Buntingford Karate Club**, Edwinstree Gym. Bill Hooper 01763 273123.
- 7:30pm – 8:30pm **Cougars U13s** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area.
- 8:30pm – 9:30pm **Cougars U16s** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more info on Cougars training, email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk

WEDNESDAYS

- 9:30 – 11:15am **Great Hormead Baby and Toddler Group** at Great Hormead School Hall. Term time only. From 0 to 4 years. Toys, activities, arts & crafts and singing. £1.50 for first child, 50p for additional children, includes a drink and snack. Contact Annabel on 07787 562265, or just turn up.
- 9:30 – 11:30am **Barkway Parent and Toddler Group** at Barkway Village Hall. Term time only. Children 0–4 years. Singing, stories and activities; tea, coffee, juice and snack provided. Contact Kim Semple on 07964 151288.
- 10:00am – 11:00am **Story Sacks** at Jenyns First School, Braughing. £1 per child 01763 273008.
- 10:30am **BALFF** 10-week course started 14 January, 'Current Affairs', at the Community Centre, Luynes Rise. Coffee served from 10am. For details contact Julia Peacock on 01763 272584.
- 6:00pm – 7:00pm **Cougars U14s** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more information email secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk.
- 6:00pm – 7:00pm **Circuit Training for 50+** at Seth Ward Community Centre. Contact Rita on 07957 558782.
- 7:00pm – 8:00pm **Cougars U15s Blues** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more information email secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk.
- 7:30pm – 8:30pm **Body Circuit classes** at Seth Ward CC. Contact Rita on 07957 558782.
- 7:30pm – 8:15pm **Boxercise/Tae Bo** session at Fit Together Gym, Buntingford. Contact Al on 07739 131694.
- 7:30pm **Slimming World Group** at Millfield School. Tel: Glenda McLellan on 01462 894351 / 07983 224121 or email glendakmclellan@gmail.com
- 8:00pm **Horizon Divers** at Freman Pool. Contact 01920 823955.

THURSDAYS

- 9:30am – 11:00am **Anstey Toddlers** at Old School House, Anstey. Arts & crafts, free play and singing for toddlers & babies with their carers. £1 per family. Term time only 01763 273008.
- 9:30am – 11:00am **Bramble Hill Stay & Play** at the Scout Hut, Bowling Green Lane, Buntingford. Term time only. £1 per family. 01763 273008.
- 11:00am – 12:00pm **Fitness for 50+** at Seth Ward Community Centre. £4 per class. Eileen Dixon 01763 257474 / 07966 222272, email: eileensaerobics@hotmail.com
- 1:00pm – 3:00pm **Baby classes** run by the **Best Start Club** at the Scout Hut, Bowling Green Lane. **Magical Musical Playdays**, for 1 to 3 years olds, start at 1:00pm; followed by **Baby Signing classes**, for 0 to 16 months, at 2:00pm. Contact Laura Sheriff on 07801 796334. Email: laura@thebeststartclub.com.
- 4:30pm – 6:30pm **Drama workshops** 15–18 year olds, with Stagefrights Theatre at Seth Ward Comm Centre. Dave 01438 232181; email: stagefrights2009@yahoo.co.uk
- 5:30pm – 6:30pm **Cougars U7s** training at Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area.
- 5:30pm – 6:30pm **Cougars U8s** training at Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more information email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk

DIARY OF EVENTS – FEBRUARY 2015

- 5:30pm – 10:00pm **Buntingford Swimming Club**, Freman Pool. Adelaide Boon 07710 550050.
 7:30pm **Buntingford Karate Club**, Edwinstree Gym. Bill Hooper 01763 273123.
 8:00pm – 9:30pm **Badminton Club** at Seth Ward CC. Contact Liz James on 01763 274010.
 8:00–10:00pm **Buntingford Dramatic Society**, Benson Hall.

FRIDAYS

- 9:15am **WeightWatchers** at Benson Hall.
 9:30am – 10:30am **Badminton** at Seth Ward Community Centre – term time only.
 10:00am & 11:00am **Baby & toddler 'Rhyme Time'** at Seth Ward. £1 first child, 50p for additional children to include tea & coffee. Contact Bramble Hill 01763 273008.
 10:00am – 9:00pm **The On Site Massage Clinic** at Seth Ward Comm Centre. Contact Kate Smith MBRCP on 07720 298306 or visit www.onsitemassageclinic.co.uk.
 11:00am – 12:00 **Drop-in Breastfeeding Support Group** at Bramble Hill, 01763 273008.
 11:00am **All Abilities Multi Sports** at Seth Ward Community Centre. Contact Jacqui on 01763 273815 / 07956 647806.
 3.30pm – 8:00pm **Dance classes** with Buntingford Dancing School, at Freman College. Contact Philippa on 01763 271010.
 5:30pm – 6:30pm **Cougars U11s** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more information email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk.
 5:30pm – 8:00pm **Friday Project, Buntingford & District Youth Club** for young people aged 13–19. A range of activities at the Technical Institute, Baldock Road. Contact Danny Band on 07879 853849 or email danny.band@hertfordshire.gov.uk.
 6:30pm – 7:30pm **Cougars U12s Whites** training, Norfolk Road Floodlit Multigames Area. For more information email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk.

SATURDAYS

- 8:30am – 2:45pm **Dance classes** with Buntingford Dancing School, at Freman College and URC Hall, Buntingford. Contact Philippa on 01763 271010.
 9:15am – 2:00pm **Musical Theatre School** for 4–14 year olds at Seth Ward Comm Centre. Call Anna 07545 788433 or email stage-door@brilliantmusicaltheatre.co.uk.
 10:00am – 11:30am **3rd Sat** in the month, **Dad's/Male Carers Group** at the Scout Hut, Bowling Green Lane, Buntingford. £1 per child. 01763 273008.
 10:30am – 11:30am **Cougars U6s** training, Buntingford Community Centre (on grass). For more information email: secretary@buntingfordcougars.co.uk.
 11:am – 2:00pm **1st Sat** in the month, **BuntsBoutiqueFair** at Benson Hall. Crafts, Food, Art & Gifts. Refreshments. Charity Raffle. Free squash & lollypop for children!
 2:15pm – 4:15pm **Drama workshops** 6–15 year olds with Stagefrights Theatre at URC Hall, Baldock Road. Dave 01438 232181 or email stagefrights2009@yahoo.co.uk.
 2:00pm – 4:00pm **Police Surgery** at Buntingford Police Station, Baldock Road.

If you would like to advertise your event in *The Journal*, please contact **Christine Noble** on **01763 273095**
 Or email: Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

USEFUL LOCAL INFORMATION

POLICE STATION:

Baldock Road, Buntingford

Police surgeries:

Non-emergency telephone: 101

In emergencies dial 999

2–4pm on Saturdays at Buntingford Police Station

GAS:

ELECTRICITY:

WATER (Veolia):

SEWERAGE (Thames Water):

FLOODLINE:

Emergency (gas leaks) – Freephone 0800 111 999

Emergency (power loss) – Freephone 0800 7838 838

Emergency – Freephone 0800 376 5325

Emergency – Telephone 0845 920 0800

Emergency – 0345 988 1188 or 0845 988 1188

Environment Agency Incident Line: 0800 80 70 60

DOCTORS:

The Medical Centre – White Hart Close

Tel: 01763 271362 (24 hours)

Orchard Surgery – Baldock Road

Tel: 01763 272410 (After hours: 272411)

B A S H (Buntingford Action For Social Help):

Providing transport for hospital and doctors

appointments. Tel: Jane Winter 01763 271484

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, RAPE, RACE or HATE CRIME:

Confidential Information Helpline: 01992 554440

(in emergency, dial 999)

LOCAL COUNCILS:

Buntingford Town Council – 01763 272222

East Herts District Council – 01279 655261

Housing – 01279 714714

Benefits – Freephone 0800 373852

For emergencies out of office hours: 01279 655261

Adult Care Services – 0300 123 4042

Children's Services – 0300 123 4043

Hertfordshire Highways – 0300 123 4047, or report

faults online: www.hertsdirect.org/highwayfaults

BUNTINGFORD LIBRARY:

High Street, Buntingford

Opening times: Mon & Thurs 09:00 – 18:00

Tues & Fri 14:00 – 18:00

Saturday 09:00 – 13:00

Telephone enquiries – 0300 123 4049

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

Option 2 – All other enquiries Mon–Fri

08:00–20:00, Sat 09:00– 6:00

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU:

The Manor House

Market Hill, Buntingford

Opening times: Monday 10:00 – 16:00

Tues & Wed 10:00 – 13:00

Telephone advice: Mon to Fri 10:00 – 16:00

Call 03444 111 444

HOUSEHOLD WASTE & RECYCLING SITE:

Watermill Industrial Estate,
Aspenden Road

Opening times: Mon to Fri 17:00 – 20:00

Sat & Sun 10:00 – 13:00

EDITOR'S LETTER

There's lots of congratulations in order this month. First to all the staff and students at Freman College whose GCSE results are so consistently good that Freman is now officially recognised as being in the top 3 per cent of state-funded non-selective schools in the country. But they don't do it on their own: our local First and Middle schools do an equally excellent job in preparing children to achieve the very best that they can. In fact, excellent education seems to start at the very beginning in Buntingford, as reflected in Ofsted's recent report on Millfield's Little Stars Nursery which was judged to be 'Outstanding'. Well done to everyone involved.

We have good news on the Library which has been upgraded to Tier 2 status, but Brian Thompson warns against celebrating prematurely and dropping our guard – the location issue hasn't gone away, with Herts Library Service yet to commit to keeping the Library in its High Street premises (see page 14). We also have a reminder about the survey of opinions currently being conducted on local bus services (see the letters page and Town Council report). This issue is of great importance to many people in and around Buntingford, so please try to complete the questionnaire. And the draft Neighbourhood Plan will soon be available for public comment – see the notice on page 21.

Several reports this month contain reference to Secretary of State Eric Pickles 'calling in' some of the development sites in Buntingford – in particular, the Fairview development on the old Sainsbury's warehouse site and the Pigeon site in North Buntingford. I wasn't sure what 'calling in' means, so I looked it up on the HP website and as far as I can tell, it means that the Secretary of State will review these applications and make a final decision on them himself. This actually leaves me more confused than ever, because Fairview have already been hard at it for months and these were the only two developments that had sufficient local approval to be included in the Draft District Plan.

Finally, an article from The Hundred Parishes Society reminds us that this year sees the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta (page 12). They also recommend some places to visit where snowdrops can be seen at their best – and the annual Benington event is still open till 1st March. But you don't have to leave Buntingford to see lovely snowdrops – just take a walk along the riverside and check out the view up the Rib from the ford.

Christine Noble

Many thanks to Debbie Lemay for proofreading

**Editorial copy deadline for the April 2015 Journal
is Saturday 14th March 2015**

Copy and diary entries: 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 Buntingford Journal is published by, but is editorially
independent of, the Buntingford Civic Society.**

Letters to the Editor

Dear Christine

BUNTINGFORD NEEDS BUSES

I wonder if you could include a note in this month's Journal to encourage people to fill in the survey on bus services in Buntingford and the current proposals to cut them. I know that most people in Buntingford use their cars, but where does that leave those who don't have a car, such as young people and the elderly, like me? Although I used to drive, I have had to give up my car and depend on the bus to get around. The current proposal is to cut the 700 service completely and instead extend the 386 service from Royston to Stevenage, but this wouldn't help anyone who wants to get to Stansted Airport or Bishop's Stortford. Would it not be possible to obtain some sponsorship for the service from BAA, the operators of Stansted? I understand they subsidise the service to Sawbridgeworth which has a very regular service.

The survey is not very onerous to complete, although it is a little long. I did mine online at the Library (hertsdirect.org/busconsult), where the computers available for our use are marvellous and the staff were very helpful. Or I think paper forms are available at the Manor House. So come on everyone, please get behind the bus services. They are going to be needed even more as Buntingford grows.

Yours sincerely, Margaret Gardner

Dear Christine

As an escapee from Buntingford (4 years now) I received the latest Buntingford Journal and was amazed at how you have managed to change it. I can only say it is 'awesome' – what a difference colour makes.

I must say that I am glad that I am here in Florida and not in Buntingford, which I know sounds wrong but if I was there I would be so angry at what they are doing to a lovely small town. Haven't EHDC or HCC realized that the infrastructure cannot cope with all this building? When I moved into Buntingford in 1979 I was told don't worry about them building on the land next to you (Bovis), they will not be able to as the sewage system will not take any more! Now they are planning approx. 1500 houses! Have the powers that be no sense? No places at the schools, doctors etc. Where are their brains? (No comment!) My heart cries for you all.

Sincerely, Jill Cork (Smart)

Dear Christine

WORLD POPULATION

The world seems to have a major problem in that we do not have enough food to feed everybody, nor enough fresh water for people to drink, nor enough houses to house everyone, especially in England. We seem to be damaging the atmosphere with excessive carbon/CO2 emissions. We are polluting the land and oceans with waste and at the same time killing off the fish stocks that we need to support us and the ecosystem in general. On top of all this the world seems to be getting flooded with viruses that we cannot control with medicine. Malaria, E.coli, HIV/Aids, Bird Flu/H5N1, Chikungunya and the latest, Ebola, seem to be getting stronger with others on the way, and are resisting attempt to halt their movement and destructive powers with vaccines.

All of the above are caused by one major problem that the world has – that is, too many people on the planet. Experts from many fields over the years have said that the

maximum number of people our planet could support is 4 billion. At this present time we have double that and the number is climbing exponentially year on year. We need to do something about this – but what? Reducing the number of people on the planet would go a long way to solving the problems, but how do we go about achieving this? If anybody has an answer please let heads of governments and those in positions of power know before it is too late and we are all doomed.

Ashley Cantor, 49 Fairfield, Buntingford

Hi Christine

On an entirely different subject, I have just returned home after seeing my first House Music at Freman College. I have just one thing to say about it: UTTERLY UTTERLY FANTASTIC. Well done to all the students involved.

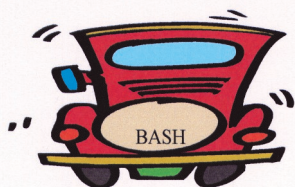
Ashley Cantor

Hi Christine

May I ask you to include the attached advert asking for volunteer drivers for BASH. We have now dropped to our lowest number of regular drivers, ever! If BASH were to fold because of lack of drivers then a lot of people in Buntingford, especially the elderly and non-drivers, would have great difficulty in getting to medical appointments in our so called 'local' hospitals. I haven't received the figures for this year yet, but in year 2013/14 BASH drivers undertook approximately 700 trips amounting to about 18,000 miles travelled. If any of your readers think they may be able to help then please contact Jane Winter on the number on the advert.

Many thanks and kind regards

Brian Lemay – Chairman, BASH (Buntingford Action for Social Help)



BUNTINGFORD ACTION FOR SOCIAL HELP

Volunteer Hospital Driver Service

Volunteer Drivers Wanted

Buntingford Action for Social Help (BASH) is a local organisation which provides hospital transport for people who use Buntingford doctors and have no other way of getting to their appointments. It relies on volunteer drivers using their own vehicles.

Unfortunately our driver pool is dwindling so we are looking for volunteer drivers who may have time to take a person to a hospital appointment, to the surgery or to visit a sick relative. We cover the cost of petrol and are grateful for any help, even if you can only do the occasional trip.

Can you help? Perhaps you are retired, semi-retired or someone with a bit of time to spare?

If you think you can help us please contact:

Jane Winter on 01763 271484 (between 9am and 7pm) for more details.



Buntingford Civic Society

(Reg. Charity No. 1014873)

www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk

Member of



‘Buntingford West’

Benson Hall was packed on Wednesday 4th February for an open meeting to discuss Bovis Homes’ application, currently known as Buntingford West, to develop land west of Luynes Drive. The evening began with a presentation designed to further everyone’s understanding of how the planning process works and to explain what the Civic Society, BARD and the Town Council have done, and continue to do, to try to influence decisions taken by our Local Planning Authority, EHDC. A lively Q&A developed but I think it fair to say the overwhelming mood was to oppose the application. The question is how?

Here are 5 ways you can make your view count:

1. Sign the petition at the Manor House.
2. Write to the responsible planning officer: Mrs H Izod , East Herts Council, Development Control, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ
3. Email your views to: Planning@eastherts.gov.uk
4. Go to <http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display> and put in the application reference #3/14/2304/OP, then press search and highlight the application reference to bring up the planning application details page. Directly above the ‘Appeal Details’ tab is the underlined ‘Comment on this Application’ tab. Ignore the closure date: it has been extended and your comments are still valid.
5. Write to our MP, Sir Oliver Heald QC; or ring **01462 486074** and ask to see him at his Buntingford Surgery; or email him at oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk

The Civic Society is committed to challenging inappropriate and poorly constructed plans, but we believe our arguments must be evidence-based and relevant to the planning process. That said, the Society is keen to support any action group or individual that we believe is acting in the best interests of our community. It is sobering to consider that legal actions can amount to hundreds of thousands of pounds

Civic Voice and ‘Charrette’

Last week Civic Voice, the national body of Civic and Amenity Societies, launched its campaign to make a planning system known as ‘Charrette’ more widely known. This system, used originally to help regenerate riot-torn areas in the USA, involves the local community and developers collaborating BEFORE an application is made. Introduced relatively recently in the UK, Charrette has been used successfully as close to home as St Albans. If you are interested to learn more, you can download the pamphlet at: http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/uploads/files/Collaborative_planning_1.pdf

The Neighbourhood Plan

Our Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is nearing the point where it can be presented for public comment. A recent decision to refuse an application in Devizes, Wiltshire, in which the emerging NP was given considerable weight has encouraged the team to redouble its efforts in preparing our area plan. Moreover, there does appear to be growing recognition within Government that Localism needs more support and NP is the best

vehicle to do it with. When adopted the plan becomes a legal document which will be used to guide future development. So please get involved and support YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**.

Paul Spears, BCS Co-Chair (email: chairman@buntingfordcivic.org.uk)

** The NP area includes Buntingford and the Parishes of Aspenden, Buckland & Chipping, Cottered, Hormead and Wyddial.



Buntingford Civic Society

(Reg. Charity No. 1014873)



Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Buntingford Civic Society will take place on Wednesday, 22nd April 2015, at 7.30pm in The Benson Hall, Buntingford.

Following the business of the meeting, there will be a short talk on a topic of local interest.

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

Non-Members welcome

MAIL ORDER PRESCRIPTION SERVICE POSES POTENTIAL THREAT TO LOCAL CHEMISTS

In recent weeks most Buntingford residents will have received a letter from a company called Pharmacy2U encouraging the patients of our local GPs to sign up for mail order prescriptions, taking advantage of a new Electronic Prescription Service launched by the NHS to make it easier to get repeat prescriptions. Some people have signed up for the service under the impression that it is in some way linked with Buntingford's own local chemists. In fact, Pharmacy2U is a company based in Leeds who are shipping out prescriptions from a warehouse, rather than a traditional high street pharmacy.

If too many local people take up this long-distance prescription service and cease to obtain their repeat prescriptions from Shahs or Lloyds, then this would have serious implications for both chemists, potentially threatening their existence in Buntingford. Both our local chemists not only offer a friendly and helpful personal service, but also offer the Electronic Prescription Service and will deliver to customers who through ill-health or infirmity cannot call in person to pick up a prescription. So before signing up to Pharmacy2U give some thought to what it might cost in the long run, and have a chat with your local pharmacist about the service they can provide on your doorstep.



Registered Charity number 1157891
www.hundredparishes.org.uk

The Hundred Parishes Society

15th June 2015 will mark the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215. The Magna Carta resulted from a revolt by many of King John's barons. Under clause 61 of the document a committee of 25 barons was appointed to ensure that the king complied with the terms of the agreement. Three of those barons had their principal manors in what is now the Hundred Parishes. They were Robert Fitzwalter of Little Dunmow, Geoffrey de Mandeville of Pleshey and Robert de Montfichet of Stansted Mountfitchet. Each of these parishes will be marking the anniversary with a range of activities, mostly in May and June. As details are confirmed they will be included in the What's On page of our website www.hundredparishes.org.uk.

From January to March snowdrops can be seen in many of our churchyards. Great Amwell churchyard always has a spectacular display, as does Birchanger Wood. Both are on walk routes that can be downloaded from our website. Great Amwell is on route 19 that covers 4 miles from St Margaret's station to Ware station, whilst Birchanger Wood is on walk number 9 – a 6-mile route from Bishop's Stortford station to Stansted Mountfitchet station. Another popular snowdrop venue is the Gardens of Easton Lodge (in Little Easton, just north of Dunmow) which has an open day on Sunday, March 1st.

Ken McDonald, Secretary, The Hundred Parishes Society

Buntingford School of Dance Ltd

**is proud to announce its forthcoming biennial performance at
Broxbourne Civic Hall on Friday 27 and Saturday 28 March**

FACE THE MUSIC AND DANCE

**Tickets from the Box Office, Broxbourne Civic Hall, 01992 441946,
or online at: www.broxbourne.gov.uk/leisure**

The school currently has some very talented pupils, including Leanne Wong who is a Junior Associate of the Royal Ballet School, Hannah Tokely who has received a prestigious Cecchetti Society ballet scholarship, and Henry Eaglesfield who is due to take a main part in Pineapple Poll with the Chelmsford Ballet Company – to name just three. Many of our pupils dance purely for pleasure, but others have gone on to vocational dance and performing arts schools.

If you would like try a dance class free of charge to see if it's for you, please contact us at www.buntingfordschoolofdance.co.uk as we are now enrolling for classes to start after the Easter holidays, subject to availability. Classes include Ballet, Tap, Modern, Street and Musical Theatre, and the age range is 3 years to adult.

Principal, **Philippa McMeechan**, can be contacted on **01763 271010** for information.

BUNTINGFORD IN TRANSITION

TRANSITION HIGH STREET GROUP GETS GOING!

As our town celebrated the proud victory of saving our Library – and the Mercury led with the headline: “*The Future is Bright for Buntingford High Street*” – 15 High Street residents met at the White House with Buntingford In Transition founder, Madela Baddock, to launch the Transition High Street project. We watched a series of videos on the worldwide Transition Towns movement, then Madela outlined the content of the Transition Streets Handbook, now generously printed up for us courtesy of Buntingford Town Council. The Handbook outlines the project’s 7 x 2-hour sessions, which cover:

- Saving Energy
- Saving Water
- Spending Less on Food and Eating Better
- Wasting Away
- Getting Around – and
- Conclusion: Next Steps

We agreed to meet once a month, in a different member’s house, for the next 6 months – climaxing in a big party in the summer. Reports from groups that have done the programme in St Albans, Letchworth and elsewhere are very positive. Several have cut £600+ from their bills and lowered their carbon footprint.

Almost all have forged new friendships and built stronger, more resilient communities.

The High Street group found themselves talking more about the difficulties we share living in very old, but very charming, properties. Ahead of our second meeting on Saving Energy, Madela has got hold of a Thermal Imaging camera to find out which of our houses are doing the best job of heating the High Street rather than our homes!

David Woollcombe

WHAT DO YOU WANT
BUNTINGFORD
HIGH STREET
TO LOOK LIKE IN
2050?



The first meeting of the High Street Transition Group held at the White House in February.

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

**A CUT ABOVE • BASRA'S SUPERMARKET • THE CO-OP
COUNTRY FLOWERS • DELISSIMO • MARK DOEL
PIGGOTTS • THE FOX AT ASPENDEN**

Buntingford Library: a result, but don't celebrate yet!

The County Library Service has been spending the weeks before and after Christmas assessing responses to their 'Inspiring Libraries' public consultation on the future of libraries in our County. The conclusions have been set out in a document dated 21st January 2015 which formed an appendix to Andrew Bignell's report to the County Council's cabinet panel for consideration at its meeting on 10th February. Unfortunately, before the panel had even met, our local edition of the Mercury came out on 5th February with the front page headline: "Campaign victory saves library service". The Mercury correctly reported that the revised proposals include redesignating Buntingford Library as a Tier 2 library and they assumed that the panel would accept this, and in fact that is what happened on 10th February: our library has been upgraded from Tier 3 to 2. But the Mercury's reading of the report was incomplete – there is a sting in the tale and we have to put our celebrations on hold.

Certainly the views of Buntingford people could not have been made clearer. The statistics are overwhelming: County Hall received 5,769 completed questionnaires and Buntingford returned 678 of them, or 11.75% of the total. This was well over 100 more than the next library (St Albans) and over 200 more than the third (Welwyn G.C.), so in terms of response Buntingford was the top library in the County. Of those 678 completed questionnaires, 650 indicated that the proposals were unreasonable (94.4%). There was clearly no arguing against such a response. Well done Buntingford! (The statistics also showed that 23 Buntingford respondents thought the proposals were "reasonable" – or were they muddled by the confusing way the question was framed?)

It was not just the statistics that influenced the decision. The report refers to residents forming the Buntingford Library Supporters Club and holding four public meetings; it mentions the petition with 2,216 signatures and a "full stakeholder response" presented to the cabinet panel at its meeting on 12th December 2014. It is pleasing that most of the points we felt were important in order to preserve an effective library in the centre of town were picked up in the analysis and recorded in the report. These included the impact of so many new houses and the remote geographical location of the town. The need for an experienced and knowledgeable library staff to deal with children and the elderly, which volunteers, however enthusiastic, could not cope with, was also identified.

Thus far our campaign has been very successful and it is a credit to all who took part that our views were put over so clearly and effectively. Of all the libraries involved only one is being regarded and that is Buntingford, upgraded to Tier 2. (For other Tier 3 libraries who objected to the proposals there has been some rethinking and there will be some support by paid library staff for their volunteers.)



Kiana and Cassie, two of the four Freman students who launched the campaign to save the Library, hold up the Mercury report of victory, but the fight isn't over yet ...

So far so good, but as I mentioned it is not a complete victory. Although our opposition to moving the library away from its High Street location was noted, the report presented to the Cabinet Panel on 10th February concludes the section on Buntingford thus:

“Meanwhile we will continue to explore the feasibility of relocating the library to provide a modern, attractive, flexible, tech-enabled and cost-effective library space suitable for the delivery of a Tier 2 library service.”

To me, this suggests we have yet to convince County Hall that their thinking is misguided. We have the most appropriate site in Buntingford already. It would be more economical to enhance the existing premises than to look for a new site, if such a site exists. If a charging rate that properly reflects local practice (around £10 an hour would seem to be the figure) rather than a county wide rate of £25, more local clubs and societies would be encouraged to use the premises for meetings. This would enhance the library's role as a social hub of the community. So we are not yet finished. When we have a clearer idea of County Hall's specific proposals for Buntingford Library we must be ready to respond.

Brian Thompson

Royston and District Ramblers Group

Walks for March 2015

Sun 1st	Great Offley, 7 + 5 miles figure-of-eight, leader Paul 01763 244038
Tues 3rd	Steeple Morden, 6 miles, leader Michelle 01462 637874
Thurs 5th	Barrington, 6 miles, leader Rama 01763 260565
Sun 8th	Baldock, Weston, 10 miles, leader Christine 01462 734298
Tues 10th	Harston, 6 miles, leader Marion Hughes 01223 871524
Thurs 12th	Pirton, 6 miles, leader Roger 01462 453752
Sun 15th	Hitchin Outer Orbital Path, 13 miles, leader Mike 01462 491032
Tues 17th	Ardeley, 5 miles, leaders Roger & Mary 01763 281368
Thurs 19th	Barkway, 6 miles, leader Jenny 01763 245969
Sun 22nd	Newport, Debden, 10 miles, Lesley 07734 111225
Tues 24th	Wrestlingworth, 6 miles, leaders John & Hilary 01223 871244
Thurs 26th	Norton, 5 miles, leader Bob 01763 250716
Sun 29th	Amphill Park, 10 miles, leaders Roger & Linda 01462 453752
Tues 31st	Wimpole, 6 miles, leader Ian 01223 872243

Unless otherwise stated:

Tuesday & Thursday are morning walks, Sunday walks are all day.

For meeting points and starting times, contact the walk leader or visit the website:

www.ramblers-herts-northmiddlesex.org.uk

Click on 'Groups' and then on 'Royston' to find full details

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



Christ Church

United Reformed Church, Baldock Road, Buntingford SG9 9AA

Minister: Rev Duncan Goldie
The Manse, Meeting Lane,
Melbourn, Cambs SG8 6AN
Tel: 01763 260747

Secretary: Peter Godbert
buntingford.urc@virginmedia.com
Tel: 01763 281359

Services at 11:00am every Sunday

March	1	Morning Worship	Mrs Penny Flynn
	8	Holy Communion	Rev Duncan Goldie
	15	Mothering Sunday	Dr Janet Bottoms
	22	Morning Worship	Rev Duncan Goldie
	29	Palm Sunday	Rev Derek Newton
April	5	Easter Communion	Rev Dr Janet Tollington

Tea & coffee is served in the hall following the morning service

Christ Church Lent Course commenced on Wed 25th Feb and runs for 5 weeks. The material is from the York course. We meet at 12:30pm for lunch (bring your own food, tea and coffee provided); the course starts at 1pm and finishes prompt at 2pm.

REGULAR EVENTS

Junior Church – Sunday at 11am during term time, all young people and children are welcome.

Bible Study – Second Wed of each month in the Hall. Lunch from 12:30pm (*bring your own food, tea & coffee provided*) followed by Bible Study at 1pm. Finishes 2pm.

The Bright Hour – Next meetings are on Tuesdays 3rd and 17th March at 2:30pm in the Church Hall. A time for fellowship with prayers, hymns and activities.

Coffee & Company – Every Thursday from 10:30am for anyone wanting fellowship and time for a chat.

Lunches organised by Christian Aid – First Friday of the month, 12:30 to 2:00pm.

www.buntingfordurc.freeserve.co.uk



ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER Catholic Church

3 Station Road, Buntingford Telephone 01763 271471

Parish Priest: Father John White

HOLY MASS is celebrated each **Sunday** at 9:15am
Holy Days at 10am and 8pm; **Weekdays** at 9:15pm
Saturdays at 6pm at Puckeridge

CONFESSIONS are each Saturday from 10:30 to 11am



United Benefice of
St. Mary's – Aspenden
St. Peter's – Buntingford
St. Mary the Virgin – Westmill
 Church of England



Reverend Ian Hill – Telephone 01763 274072

There is a full and varied pattern of worship across the three churches: St. Peter's in Buntingford has a more contemporary style; St. Mary's in Aspenden has a more traditional style; St. Mary the Virgin in Westmill has a more liturgical style.

Everyone is welcome at any of our churches.

Services for March 2015

Sun 1 st	9:30am	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill	Morning Worship
	10:00am	St Mary's, Aspenden	Family Service
	11:00am	St Peter's, Buntingford	Holy Communion
Sun 8 th	9:30am	St Mary's, Aspenden	Morning Worship
	9:30am	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill	Sung Eucharist
	11:00am	St Peter's, Buntingford	Family Worship with Baptism
Sun 15 th MOTHERING SUNDAY	9:30am	St Mary's, Aspenden	Family Holy Communion
	11:00am	St Peter's, Buntingford	Family Holy Communion
Sun 22 nd	9:30am	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill	Sung Eucharist
	11:00am	St Peter's, Buntingford	Family Worship
Sun 29 th PALM SUNDAY	9:30am	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill	Sung Eucharist
	11:00am	St Peter's, Buntingford	Family Worship



SIR OLIVER HEALD QC MP

Will hold his next constituency surgery in Buntingford on

Friday 6th March 2015, 5:00–6:30pm

At the Manor House, High Street, Buntingford SG9 9AB

By appointment only: please telephone 01462 486074

Email: oliver.heald.mp@parliament.uk Online: www.oliverhealdmp.com

The Local Interview: Freda Leaney

Do any of you remember a murder case back in 1970 when a woman was kidnapped and murdered, but her body was never found? The killers lived on a farm in Stocking Pelham and it was thought, gruesomely, that she might have been fed to the pigs. She was kidnapped from her home in Wimbledon as she was believed to be Rupert Murdoch's wife (she wasn't) and the kidnappers demanded a ransom. Even if you do remember, you may not have known that one of our local policemen, Sgt. Dennis Leaney, worked on that case and that two men were successfully prosecuted and imprisoned for life. The photo (right) shows Dennis on duty standing beside a rather old-fashioned looking police van.



Freda Leaney, Dennis's wife, has been a widow since Dennis died suddenly of a heart attack aged just 45, the year after that murder case. He left behind two children, Susan and Nigel, and Freda remade her life around Nigel, who was only 6 years old when his Dad died. Susan, 15 years older, was already married and living away from home. Understandably for Freda, her life changed completely overnight, but that was also when she found out how friendly the people of Buntingford could be.

She says that, as a policeman's wife, she had had to be careful about making friends – “people do take advantage, you have to be careful what you say” – so she hadn't mixed a lot in the town. But when Dennis died people came to the door and asked if there was anything they could do, or they'd offer to look after Nigel. “It was very nice, people were so friendly.” She wasn't allowed to go on living in the police house but the Council offered her a house in Riverside. Then she found herself a job: “I had to do something, so I got myself a job as a dinner lady at Millfield School.” Later she worked at Lelaney's newsagents in the High Street (now The Coffee Shop). People still recognise her from 10 years of being behind the counter.

Freda, Dennis and Susan began life in Buntingford in 1963 when Dennis was posted here on police work from Hemel Hempstead. “He came home one day and said ‘How would you like to move to Buntingford?’” Susan started at the Buntingford Secondary Modern School which later became Edwinstree, then after leaving school worked in the town as a hairdresser. I asked Freda what Buntingford was like in the early 1960s. Apart from a great deal less traffic, most of the shops were different back then. She liked Moss's grocery store – W.B. Moss & Sons – where you would be served by staff behind the counter. (Looking up Moss's I see that it had a gorgeous shop-front: despite my

being keen to keep our public library, I do wonder what they were thinking of when they tore down such a lovely building and replaced it with 1960s concrete and glass.) There was also Mr Jarvis the shoe mender in the shop where Libberro's is now and Mr Vaton the barber a couple of shops down from Piggott's.

Today, Freda (right) lives in a bungalow in Carter's Close, which is one of three sheltered housing sites in Buntingford run by South Anglia Housing Association. The other two sites are the bungalows in Ashfords and flats in Dixon Place and because they are all run by the same organisation the residents get to be invited to each other's functions, so Freda goes to lunches at Ashfords.

I was intrigued to discover that Nigel has set up a website about his father on www.paradata.org.uk. Freda told me that Dennis had volunteered for the Paras when he was doing his National Service in the Air Force. He and Freda had met at Allwoods Carnation Nursery where they both worked, and they wrote to each other while he was serving out in Palestine – their letters took 7 days to arrive. Dennis was demobbed in 1947 and he and Freda were married in March 1949 (below), after he'd joined the police. Nigel still does a lot of cycling to raise money for Help for Heroes, the charity that supports members of the armed forces injured in the line of duty.



Freda and Dennis were given their first home in Baldock by Hertfordshire Police in September 1949 when she was 20. "It was opposite the Kayser Bondor factory, which is now Tesco's. Our first house: I thought it was wonderful. Everything was new." After Susan was born they moved to Weston, Wheathampstead, then Hemel Hempstead. "In those days, the police were told to move and they moved. You didn't argue."

Freda's life is settled in Buntingford, although she still goes abroad on holidays with a friend. This March, when she's going to be celebrating her 86th birthday, they are travelling to Holland. "I think to myself, I'm going to do this all the time that I can do it", she says. Not surprisingly, she's conscious that things can change very suddenly. "You've got to make the most of what you've got because you just don't know what's around the corner. I've had a happy life and there's nothing I'd say I wish I'd done."

Chris Kell



BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

A QUALITY TOWN COUNCIL

We still await the decision of the Planning Inspector for Wheatley Areas 2 & 3 and Land at Aspenden Bridge. In the meantime, you may have read that some of the planning applications for Buntingford have been 'called in'. The situation as I write is that the Secretary of State is considering calling in the applications from Fairview Homes and Pigeon Investments. Although Planning Permission has been granted for these sites, the agreement was subject to the signing of certain legal documents and these have yet to be signed. The Secretary of State may 'recover' from the Inspector the Wheatley 2 & 3 applications and Aspenden Bridge. There are different processes for different applications. The Taylor Wimpey and Wheatley 1 applications are not subject to any intervention from the Government as all legal agreements had been signed for these applications.

The Government cannot intervene on the Bovis application until a decision has been made by East Herts Council. Should East Herts Council decide to grant permission then the Secretary of State may call in the application if he so wishes.

Whilst all of this is going on, our Neighbourhood Plan Team are doing their utmost to push forward in producing the Neighbourhood Plan. This document will go some way to protecting us but the production of the plan is a long drawn-out process.

The 2nd Bus Consultation is underway at the moment. The new plans are to cut the 700 service and replace it with an extended 386 service, which would continue on from Royston to Stevenage. If you haven't already done so please complete the consultation document which is available from hertsdirect.org/busconsult or in paper form from The Manor House.

We are currently sending out invitations to local organisations to The Annual Town Meeting. This is a statutory meeting of the electorate and will be held on the 16th April at 7.45pm at the Community Centre. This year's meeting will include a presentation on the planned Shared Space Scheme for Buntingford. The meeting is open to all residents.

Jill Jones MILCM Cert HE, Town Clerk

Office hours: Monday–Thursday 9:00am–5:00pm; closed Fridays

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

www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk Twitter: [@buntingfordtc](https://twitter.com/buntingfordtc)

Town Council meetings for March 2015

Thurs 5 th March	7:30pm – Amenities Committee
Thurs 12 th March	7:30pm – Planning Committee 8:00pm – Resources Committee
Thurs 26 th March	7:30pm – Planning Committee 8:00pm – Full Council

All meetings will be held at The Manor House unless indicated otherwise.
Members of the public are welcome to attend.
Please check the website for updates.



NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR CPRE HERTFORDSHIRE'S RURAL LIVING AWARDS

Supported by Hertfordshire Life and the Hertfordshire Mercury

Nominations for CPRE Hertfordshire's Rural Living Awards scheme are invited from across the county. These awards celebrate groups or individuals who improve life and enhance the environment in Hertfordshire's villages and countryside. They are judged in two categories – Community and Environment – and there are also awards for Rural Living Champions who make outstanding contributions to rural life.

The judges are looking for innovative projects which bring rural communities together, benefit the community and promote access to the countryside. Examples might be: a community-owned and run pub or shop; a community event; a photography or art project celebrating the countryside; or a volunteer group creating or maintaining access to it. Last year's top accolades went to an Infants School Eco Council and a Play Area, both in Redbourn, while in the southwest of the county, Oxhey Woods Conservation Volunteers were "over the moon" to receive a commendation.

Nominations for 2015 must be made by 30th May – don't be shy in coming forward, you can self-nominate. For full details or to download a nomination form, visit:

www.cpreherts.org.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HAVE YOUR SAY

Login to Buntingford Town Council's website **between 2nd and 16th March** to let us have your comments on the draft policies that are under consideration for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan which will be published during 2015. These policies cover:

- ◆ **Education, Business and Employment**
- ◆ **Housing**
- ◆ **Transport**
- ◆ **Environment and Sustainability**
- ◆ **Health, Leisure and Recreation**

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the parishes of Aspenden, Buckland & Chipping, Buntingford, Cottered, Hormead and Wyddial.

Once adopted by EHDC, this plan will form part of the considerations for all future developments within the Community Area.

If you are unable to connect to www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk you can pick up a hard copy from the Manor House

News from Your District Councillor

Secretary of State 'calls in' Buntingford sites

For some time I have been lobbying our MP Sir Oliver Heald QC for help from the government with all the housing developments planned for our rural town. It was great to receive an announcement, following requests from Sir Oliver and myself, that Secretary of State Eric Pickles is considering requests to 'call in' the Fairview (Sainsbury's) and Pigeon (North Buntingford) sites. He is also considering requests to 'recover' the Wheatley Homes appeals (areas 2&3 Hare Street Road South) and the appeal in respect of Aspenden Road. The new Bovis application for 400+ homes will also be considered once the application has been heard by East Herts Council which will probably be in May. Finally, a decision on the future shape of Buntingford will be made with a helicopter view, looking at all of the development as a whole and not piecemeal.

I have been hearing ideas coming from a certain member of our community that we should be taking legal action against East Herts Council. Can I assure residents that the correct way to deal with these planning issues is via the planning process and not wasting tax payers' money via the courts. Who would the courts seek advice from in making their decision? – the Government's planning process! It may be perceived that your Councillors are doing nothing to stop unwanted development, but a huge amount of work has and is going on behind the scenes to try and bring about what's best for Buntingford, even though the planning process appears to favour new development. I hope that the Secretary of State will see sense in allowing needed housing where localism allows, and not where house builders dictate.

Prime Minister launches Education Policy in Enfield

Recently I attended the Prime Minister's launch of the Conservative Party's new Education Policy at Kingsmead School in Enfield, one of the first schools in the country to convert to academy status following the 2010 General Election. I was educated at Enfield Grammar so it was good to return to the area, even though David Cameron's speech was made at the home of our school rivals! Mr Cameron announced plans to improve education provision in schools rated by Ofsted as "requiring improvement" or "inadequate" by turning them into academies. In his speech he said schools that are "coasting" or "below standard" will become academies under the new plans.



The Prime Minister at the podium in Enfield (above left) and me and Cllr Norma Symonds, my Bishop Stortford colleague, being 'photobombed' at the same event!

Health Provision

I know I am not alone in being concerned that our local surgeries will not be able to cope with the forecasted population growth for Buntingford. The recent news that the Orchard Surgery may close due to the imminent retirement of Dr Handysides at the end of April has made the situation far worse. A meeting is being arranged with NHS England to discuss how they propose to ensure that there is sufficient quality health provision to cope with the demand in Buntingford now and in the future.

Regarding Orchard Surgery, NHS England has two options: either close the practice and transfer patients to Buntingford Medical Centre; or search for a new health provider at the Orchard Surgery. There is some scope for expansion at Buntingford Medical Centre but this would be limited. A better solution would be to find a new health provider for Orchard Surgery. Or even better would be a brand-new purpose-built health centre.

Congratulations Freman College

Freman College has been officially acknowledged as one of the top 90 non-selective state funded schools in England for showing the greatest sustained improvements in percentage of students attaining A*-C grades in 5 or more GCSEs. Congratulations to Freman Head, Helen Loughran, and to all the staff and pupils.

Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth

On 9th March a Flag Raising Ceremony to celebrate the Commonwealth, followed by a single Commemorative Act marking WWI, will be held at the East Herts Council offices at Wallfields. This unique international initiative will see more than 650 flags raised in 38 countries and for the first time in maritime history the 11 ships of P&O and Cunard Line will be raising the Commonwealth flag at various locations as they cruise around the world. A specially written Commonwealth Affirmation will be read out at the ceremony before the raising of the Commonwealth Flag at 10am.



Finally, I would just like to remind readers that the **last date for postal votes** in the forthcoming national and local elections is **5pm on Tuesday 21st April**. Don't forget to register if you need a postal vote and feel free to contact me if you would like me to drop in a postal vote form – or indeed if you have any issue that I may be able to help with.

Councillor Jeff Jones, 01763 274800, email: jeff.jones@eastherts.gov.uk

BUNTINGFORD & DISTRICT CAGE BIRD SOCIETY

The A.G.M. this year will be held on:

Tuesday 3rd March

8pm in the Benson Hall, Buntingford.

Our regular club meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month, 8pm at Benson Hall.

We are always open to new members,
so bird keepers come and join us.



Enquiries: 01223 833557 or 01763 271036

Steps (not the 1990s dance band!) ...

Martin & Mandy – Part 57

Steps are cool things, especially if you want to get from point A to point B and its downhill, not so much fun if it's uphill, but they're still useful. There are a whole pile of steps being used at St Bartholomew's and since we are in colour now we thought we'd tell you about them with pictures.

The Church and the Causeway sit at two very different levels – we now have a nice York stone path running around the church and up the lime avenue, but we have a bit of a mess just inside the gates where the changing levels meet. The sycamore tree that was originally on the corner went a long time ago, but the stump was still there. The Hertfordshire Tree Officer kind of hates sycamores, and I have to say they do appear to be growing in a wild and uncontrolled way along the Causeway, so we agreed that for the safety of the church, this one had to go. Anyway, Peter (the bloke doing all the ground work) sent one of his chaps Dan along with a JCB and the stump of the tree was no more. Dan's very skilled with diggers – if you gave him half a dozen eggs and asked him to move them to the other side of a room with a digger, I would be willing to bet he could do it without breaking a single egg. I might even take you up on a bet where he had to do this blindfold, too!



Eugene and Dan have been sorting out all the York stone paths. They have encircled the church and installed the two posts for the gates on the western edge by the tower. So we now have 15 foot of slope to get from the path at the edge of the site to the Causeway below and we are going to do this with five steps. Only problem here is that in the winter the surface of York stone gets a bit slippery. Also, if it ends up covered in snow then you get a layer of ice too, and I'm really not that keen on walking down steps that are covered in ice! So technology has to come to

the rescue. You can get external underfloor heating that uses a sensor to measure the temperature and the moisture content of the air, so it can work out when the heating needs to be on to stop snow settling and ice forming. I used a small amount of this on the balconies on top of the Nave and we know it works, so that's the plan.



Next problem, steps down into the basement. We had a bit of a fight on our hands ages ago to ensure that everybody buried in the Nave stayed there and did not suffer at the hands of bureaucracy and get cremated. In the end we built a new vault under the basement and installed everybody there. By the time our residents were bricked into their new home we had a small useable area which needed some form of steps to access it – but there's not a lot of space down there.

We fitted a trapdoor into the floor which has hydraulic pistons on it like you get on the tailgate of a car so that it can be opened easily, then we tried to work out how we were going to fit in a staircase. Ships have the



same problem which they solve by having a very steep set of steps and cutting each step away on alternate sides so that your feet can easily alternate. So I hid myself in the shed for a while and made a set of these. Since it's in a cellar it can get a little damp down there so I used 'Iroko', which is an African hardwood that you can pretty much immerse in water for 100 years and it will still be intact when you take it out.

The last set of steps here are the ones in the staircase going up the spiral in the Tower. The whole church is built of clunch which was easy to get locally, but there is a problem with clunch in that it wears quickly, so over time you end up with a depression in the middle of the step.



To solve this you can fill the depression with concrete, which the Friends of Layston did and that prevented more wear, but it didn't look pretty. So we removed the concrete, corrected the rise on each of the steps to make it a more comfortable climb, then used ash to clad the whole staircase in wood. The end result works well as a set of stairs and the originals are still under the ash, but in a better state than when we found them.



For more history and information related to St Bartholomew's, visit:

www.layston-church.org.uk or follow us on
Twitter@layston_herts

THOUGHT YOU COULDN'T AFFORD TO BUY A HOME OR MOVE? THINK AGAIN ...

The Government's **Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee** scheme is still available – until December 2016. There are now loads of well-known lenders using the scheme, so help is available to more people. The main points to note about the scheme are:

- The scheme is designed to help you purchase a home when you only have a **small deposit** (at least 5%).
- It is available on most properties in the UK (not just new-builds) costing up to £600,000.
- It is available to everyone provided you do not already own another property (even if it is abroad).
- You must intend to occupy the property as your own residence (i.e. the scheme cannot be used for Buy to Let properties).
- You must obtain a **repayment** mortgage, not interest only.
- The lender must check you can afford the mortgage, and you have no history of payment difficulties.
- The mortgage must be less than 4.5 times your income.
- There is no additional fee to pay to the Government.
- There is more information available at www.helptobuy.org.uk

The Government also runs a **Help to Buy: Equity Loan** scheme. This is only available if you want to buy a **newly built** property – again with a price tag of up to £600,000. You won't be able to sublet the property, or enter into a part-exchange deal on your old home. You must not own any other property at the time you buy your new home through the scheme. This scheme is only available in England.

Curwens LLP, we are always happy to provide a quote for conveyancing work without any obligation to instruct us. So contact one of our offices today – all contact details are on our website www.curwens.co.uk



Charity Day

will be donated to Children with Cancer UK. We will be offering Chiropractic appointments along with Sports Massage and One-to-One Core Strength training. Randal, our Acupuncturist, will be doing treatments for charity on **20th March**. Becky Harpin, our resident Strength and Conditioning Coach, will also be taking part in **The London Marathon** this year where she will be raising funds for the same charity.

To book an appointment call in at the clinic or ring us on **01763 87 80 87** and we shall be happy to help. Please help us raise as much money as possible for Children with Cancer UK.

EAST HERTS CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The Manor House, Buntingford

Drop-in:

Monday 10:00am – 4:00pm

Tuesday 10:00am – 1:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am – 1:00pm

Telephone:

08444 111 444

Monday – Friday

10:00am – 4:00pm



Problems in Shared Accommodation

If you're looking for accommodation, one option is to consider sharing accommodation with friends. Or you might answer an advert asking for a new person to move into an existing flat share. These arrangements usually work out cheaper than renting by yourself but it may be more difficult to sort out issues if things go wrong.

In a flat share, you usually all have equal responsibility for paying the total rent due. If the landlord doesn't get all the rent due, you could all be evicted and the landlord can try to get all the money due from any one of you. This is called **joint liability**. However, there are other possible legal arrangements. For example, it may be that you each only have legal responsibility for your part of the rent and it doesn't matter to you if your flatmate isn't paying the rent – you can't be evicted.

So if one person isn't paying the rent, check the legal agreement you signed when you moved in. If you have a joint tenancy, you have joint liability and will have to cover the other person's share of the rent and then try to get it back from them. You may be able to take legal action against them to get back the money they owe you.

Leaving before the end of the tenancy

Usually when you move into rented accommodation, you sign up for a fixed period of time. This is often six or twelve months but it can be longer. Once the agreement has been signed, you are legally responsible for the rent for the whole period whether or not you stay in the accommodation.

One of you wants to leave

If one of you wants to leave, check the tenancy agreement. If everyone signed an individual tenancy agreement, you are only responsible for your part of the rent until the end of the agreement. The tenancies of everyone else won't be affected. But if you signed a joint tenancy agreement, you are all legally responsible for the whole of the rent. If one person leaves, the landlord will still want the whole of the rent and if it isn't paid, they can evict you all. If the rest of you cover the rent of the person who leaves, you may be able to take legal action against them to get your money back. You could try finding someone else to take over your tenancy and pay your share of the rent but this will depend on whether your landlord, and the other people you live with, agree.

You all want to leave early

If you have a joint tenancy and you all want to leave early and end the tenancy agreement, you will still have to pay the rent until a new tenant is found. If your tenancy is for a fixed term, it may have a break-clause. This is a clause in the tenancy which allows you or the landlord to end it early at a certain time. You should check your tenancy agreement to see if it has a break-clause.

For more information about sharing accommodation, go to www.adviceguide.org.uk

© Copyright Citizens Advice. For the most up-to-date version, please visit the CAB Adviceguide website at www.adviceguide.org.uk



The **Strollers Group** will be starting up again on Tuesday 31st March (weather permitting) at Fairlands, Stevenage, meeting at 2.30pm at the cafe. Thereafter Strollers will meet on the last Tuesday of each month; contact Mick Westwood 01763 272594. Our next **monthly meeting** is on 9th March, 2pm at Seth Ward Community Centre. If you would like more information on Buntingford U3A, contact **Val Reedman on 01763 272135**, **valbuntu3a@gmail.com** or visit the U3A website: **www.buntingfordu3a.co.uk**

3 rd Tuesday, Contact Carol McKimmie	Walking Group (2hours plus) 01763 271054	9.50 am – 12:00pm
Last Thursday Contact Dave Austin	Wine Appreciation	8pm Seth Ward CC £7pp + bring 2 glasses
Wednesdays Contact Val Reedman	Painting for Pleasure 01763 272135	4.15 – 5.15pm Fremam College
Wednesdays Contact Colin Gibbons	Individual sessions Family History	In Buntingford
3 rd Thursday Contact Alan Rumble	Computers (all levels) £2 01920 823608	2.00pm -4:00pm Seth Ward Comm Centre
2 nd Friday Contact Roy Ellard	Digital photography £3 01763 271578	2.00 pm – 4pm URCH
2 nd & 4 th Tuesdays Contact Christine Jeffries	Singing for Pleasure 01763 273466	2:00pm – 4:00pm Wyddial
Every Tuesday Contact Mo Cook	Bridge 01920 821755	10.00am -1.00pm Benson Hall
1 st Tuesday Contact Marion Ling	Church Crawlers 01763 272368	Varies
Mondays Contact Dave Austin	Keep Fit £2	10am – 11.30am Seth Ward Comm Centre
Wednesdays Contact Val Reedman	French for Beginners & Improvers £5	7.30-8.30pm Seth Ward Comm Centre
Friday (not school hols) Contact Rosemary Poulton	Pilates £5.50 per session 01763 271598	12.30pm – 1.30pm Seth Ward Comm Centre
Every Tuesday Contact Val Reedman	Mah Jong £2 01763 272135	2.00pm – 4pm Benson Hall
Every Wednesday Contact Dave Austin	Table Tennis £1 (inc equipment) 01763 272066	2pm -3pm Seth Ward Comm Centre
Every Friday Contact Val Reedman	Petanque/Social 01763 272135	12.30pm – 3p Crown PH, Market Hill
3 rd Friday Contact Carol McKimmie	Psychology 01763 271054	2pm – 3.30pm Buntingford
Contact Ron Brighten	Quizzes 01763 273175	As they are advertised
Alternate Tuesdays Brian Evans 01763 271155	Snooker 3/17 Feb 3/17/31 March	3pm Social Club
Thursdays Contact Steve Burton	T'ai Ji £6 07968052716	3pm – 4.15pm Benson Hall
Contact Jean Cook	Coach trips 01763 271495	Please contact to go on list
Every Monday Contact Colin Meehan	3 rd Age Ukes £2 01763 274216	4pm -5pm Seth Ward Comm Centre



Bramble Hill Children's Centre is based in Mill Close, Buntingford, and we offer access to services for children under five years of age and their families.

We are looking for some help from our local parents. Do you have a specialist skill or interest? Do you have an hour or two you can spare? Then we would love to hear from you ...

Our 'What's on Guide' is available with details of all the sessions we are running. It also has useful local information for parents and carers. Let us know if you would like one sent to you by email or post.

There are loads of ways to keep up to date with what's happening at the centre – search 'Bramble Hill Children's Centre' on Facebook and 'like' the page, call us on **01763 273008**, or email us at bramblehill@ymcacentralherts.org.uk to go on our mailing list. And there's info on our web pages at:

www.bramblehillchildrenscentre.org.uk

Sure Start
Children's Centres
Hertfordshire

We look forward to seeing you



Join Us for Our
Spring Quiz Night
On Friday 20th March
At Great Hormead School

Bring a bottle (or two!)
and some nibbles and
test your knowledge

Teams of up to 8 people **£5 per head**

Doors open 7.30pm, quiz starts 8pm sharp

For an evening of fun and a chance to win some great prizes:

Contact : Gail on 01763 289942

or email leapfrog-preschool@btconnect.com





www.barkwaypreschool.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 1004083

Barkway Preschool had a successful open morning in February. We thank the new families that came to visit and look forward to welcoming their children soon.

We enjoyed celebrating Chinese New Year, making lanterns and moon cakes before looking at life cycle and story books at the end of the month.

We will be joining in with **World Book Day on Thursday 5th March** and **Red Nose Day** a week later. We are all looking forward to dressing up as our favourite book characters and sharing our story books and story sacks.

Wanted: New Chairperson for Barkway Preschool Committee

Barkway Preschool has been running since 1977, providing great childcare for 2 to 4 year olds. We are a registered charity, independently run by volunteers and employ 8 local people. We are passionate about providing a great preschool experience for our children. Our recent Ofsted assessment resulted in a Good rating with many outstanding features, and we have just won a Hertfordshire Quality Standard award, one of only a few educational settings in the area to do so. We thank our current Chair, Alison Gower, for the commitment and time she has given to supporting the committee, staff and families for the last 2 years and for being a Committee member for 5 years. We are now looking for a new Chairperson, to enable Alison to continue with her other varied roles in the community.

We are looking for a Chairperson who can provide the direction, leadership and support to ensure that Barkway Preschool remains the great place it is today. If you feel that you have the time as a volunteer to help this vital service continue to thrive in the community we would love to hear from you. The Committee meets about 8 times a year to discuss and address the needs of the Preschool. Successful applicants need not come from an educational career background, but will be subject to an enhanced CRB check. Please contact us if you would like further information about what this rewarding role entails and how you could become a part of our amazing team: Info@barkwaypreschool.co.uk / subject: Chairperson vacancy

EASTER EGG HUNT IN BARKWAY

On 4th April 2015, at Barkway Recreation Ground, there will be a Family Fun morning for all ages, organised by Barkway Preschool and the New Pavilion Team.

The Fun and Games start from 10am and include the Easter Egg Hunt, Beat the Keeper Competition, a Raffle, Face Painting etc... And Food and Refreshments

Call Chris on 01763 849721 for more information



ANSTEY FIRST SCHOOL

It has been a very exciting first half term for me as the new headteacher of Anstey First School. I feel so privileged to come to work every day in such an amazing little place with so much charm and character. I'm proud to say that I see the pupils working hard in their learning and taking to heart respecting the rights of all in our school community. I see staff working equally as hard to provide an enriching curriculum and stimulating learning environment for the pupils. Thank you to all staff and pupils for making Anstey a great place to learn and my first half term really positive and inspiring!

We are looking forward to attending the Museum of Computing in Cambridge as our first school trip of 2015 to complement our study in computing and Safer Internet Day. Safer Internet Day highlights positive uses of technology and the role we can all play in helping to create a better and safer online community. We are also celebrating 2015 as the Year of the Goat and are learning about how many people all over the world celebrate Chinese New Year. We have made dragon masks and red lanterns and learned about traditions and customs central to the Chinese New Year celebrations.

During February we welcomed two special guests, Norman Marston and Tom Sealy, to teach the whole school about science. We learnt about types of clouds, the mechanics of windmills and hot air balloons. We also made a sundial using our bodies as the 'hands' of the dial (below left). We are so thankful to have such great community volunteers and parents who help our tiny school to flourish.



Anstey is now looking forward to becoming an Eco-School and we are working towards our Bronze award. Our pupils are the driving force behind Eco-Schools – they form and lead an Eco-Committee and help to assess the environmental performance of the school. In conjunction with the wider community, the pupils decide the themes they want to address and how they're going to do it. The Eco-Schools programme focuses on nine key topics: Energy, Water, Biodiversity, School Grounds, Healthy Living, Transport, Litter, Waste and Global Citizenship. Our Anstey Eco-warriors are ready for action!

This half term our Dimsdale Award goes to Charlotte Noy in Year 4. Charlotte has earned this award for her outstanding presentation in her learning and her commitment to improving her learning in Maths. Well done Charlotte, we are all very proud of you!

Mrs Myers, Headteacher

*If you would like to find out more about Anstey School or offer your services as a volunteer please do not hesitate to call us on **01763 848 346**.*



MILLFIELD FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

www.millfield.herts.sch.uk



This half term the children have enjoyed a range of exciting learning opportunities. Key Stage 1 have been learning about nocturnal animals and on Tuesday 3rd February we



had a visit from the English School of Falconry who brought four beautiful owls for the children to see. The owls flew in the School Hall and all the children had the chance to wear a gauntlet and sit an owl on their arm.

Key Stage 2 are really relishing the opportunity to learn about life in Roman times. They have made mosaics, written stories about Pompeii, created information leaflets about Roman life and are holding a Roman Feast!

Above: getting up close and personal with an owl.
Below: The M&M pantomime, 'Beauty and the Beast'.



The children in the Early Years have loved learning a range of traditional tales and re-enacting them. They will also celebrate Chinese New Year.

On Thursday 22nd January we had a visit from M&M Theatrical Productions who entertained the whole school with a fantastic performance of 'Beauty and the Beast'. The children had a wonderful time watching the show.

The week beginning 9th Feb was Internet Safety

Week and an opportunity to remind the children about how to use the internet safely. We have our own Learning Platform at Millfield which is an ideal way for our children to communicate with their friends online securely and safely.

Despite the cold weather we have kept up a full range of sporting activities. Some of our Year 4 children have been taking part in the 'Fit for Life' programme which teaches the children about good nutrition as well as the importance of exercise. Our Key Stage 2 pupils continue to enjoy tri-golf and netball/basketball coaching each week.

Our Parent Consultation meetings were held on Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th February. The School Council greeted the parents as they arrived and our School Governors served refreshments in the dining hall and were on hand to chat to parents. We really value the chance to meet with all our parents and share with them the progress and achievements of their children.

Kathy Willett, Headteacher

If you would like to know more about Millfield School (or our Little Stars nursery) please visit our website www.millfield.herts.sch.uk or contact the school on 01763 271717.

Ofsted rates Little Stars Pre-School as 'Outstanding'

Millfield Little Stars Pre-School was inspected by Ofsted on 27th January 2015 by Alison Reeves and we were absolutely delighted that we achieved an Outstanding judgement in all areas. The glowing report recognises the hard work and dedication of all the staff in developing the Pre-School provision to such a high standard.

The inspector praised the staff for their "diverse range of teaching strategies" and "superb role modelling". The report also details how we demonstrate "excellent working relationships and highly successful partnerships with other providers and agencies". It concludes that we "provide very high quality care and education that safeguards children superbly". The full report is on the Millfield School website:

www.millfield.herts.sch.uk.

We, at Millfield, are all thrilled at this fantastic Ofsted report, which highlights how good the provision is at Little Stars. Moving forward we aim to continue to offer the very best early years education and care. Please contact the School Office if you require any further information about Little Stars or our First School.



Some of the staff and children at Little Stars Pre-School celebrate their fantastic report from Ofsted

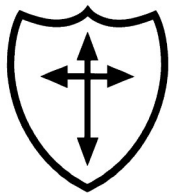
Reed First School: Save the Date FORS (Friends of Reed School) QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 7th March in Reed Village Hall

7pm for 7:30pm start / 4-8 people per team

£7.50 per person, including a ploughman's supper

Contact 01763 848304 to book a table



Layston C of E First School

Loving to Learn, Learning to Love

For every child a chance to shine

Our first snowy days of the year brought much excitement to Layston (right). The children were able to make extensive use of our beautiful grounds to learn and play. The cold brought a family of Scandinavian fieldfares to our site, to the delight of the children and adults alike. As a Forest School we utilise every opportunity to work in the outside environment and we are always encouraged to see how creatively and harmoniously the children work together.



In 'Feel Good Week', which ran in late February, all the children participated in self-chosen activities that promoted well-being, from cooking healthy food to team sport and poetry writing. The 'Menu for a Happy School' (opposite) is a wonderful contribution from six of our Year 4 children working collaboratively.

Recently we asked our children to put into their own words what makes Layston School special and they came up with the following statement: "Our School helps us to learn and grow in our own way, guided by God". As a school community we have so much to be grateful for, as a moving Christingle service at St Peter's Church, led by Reverend Ian Hill, helped us to focus on – the photos below show some of the children getting ready.

As spring approaches we relish the opportunities and excitement of challenges ahead. We welcome visits and you can find out more about us on our refurbished website at www.layston.herts.sch.uk or telephone us on 01763 274890 for an appointment.

Myra Bloomfield, Headteacher



A Menu for a Happy School

Starters

Flavourful friendships served with mouth-watering patience
Seasonal good manners with a slice of forgiveness
Tropical singing with a side order of joyful dancing

Main Course

Freshly baked exercise marinated in home-made high fives
A healthy portion of entertainment topped with good manners
Zingy bright walls topped with silky smooth fun lessons
Tender, well-mannered children marinated in hilarious jokes

Desserts

Freshly baked handshakes with a crispy coating of apologies
Organically grown happiness served with warm-hearted smiles
Traditional silky smooth forgiveness
Refreshing lessons, home-made by the finest of teachers

Layston Pre-School and Nursery

At Layston Pre-School and Nursery we have spent the early months of 2015 learning about ourselves and each other. The children painted self-portraits (below) and these have now been made into a display. This work enables the children to know some of the things that make them unique and helps them to talk about some of the similarities and differences with their friends and families. The Pre-School and Nursery runs within Layston First School in Buntingford. We provide high-quality care and education



in a happy and stimulating environment, offering children the opportunity to learn through play and a range of structured activities inside and outside, guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We currently have spaces for the **Autumn Term 2015**. Please come and meet our team, and see how we provide care and education. **Call Maggie Ball on 01763 271235** to arrange a visit. We look forward to meeting you.



The Friends of Layston School are hosting a **QUIZ NIGHT on Saturday 16th May, 7.30 for 8pm start.**

£8 per ticket (including ploughman's), max teams of 8, available from **friendsoflaystonschool@hotmail.com**

Full poster in the Journal next month.



Edwinstree Middle School



Edwinstree Historical Society led by Miss Bustard gave us a Collective Worship on 'Inspirational Women' from the past. Among others, we had life histories of Grace Darling, Queen Victoria, Florence Nightingale and Mary Anning who made the fossil cliffs of Lyme Regis world famous.

Twelve of our pupils went to the Royston Rotary Club Technology Tournament at the Cambridge Motel. We would like to congratulate Louis, Georgie, Jasper and Sophie who won the Johnson Matthey Most Innovative Design Award with their design for a transportation system.

A small group of pupils, together with Mrs Michael, Mr Monti and Mr Galanidies, travelled to St Joan of Arc Catholic School for the Holocaust Memorial Evening. Edwinstree's film 'Tree of Hope' was shown after the audience had heard from Holocaust survivor Nelly Ben-Or Clynes.

The Spring term of the Sainsbury's School Games will soon be under way. The season begins with the Sportsall indoor athletics. Last year our Year 7 boys qualified for the county finals, so they will be looking to retain their title this year. Our Year 7 Rugby team won their district tournament, beating Greneway and Highfields schools. The boys will now represent North Herts in the County finals.

Everyone has been involved with making origami cranes to wish for world peace. Pupils made a colourful display in the shape of a tree in the school hall. The cranes will be taken



Preparing the origami crane tree (above) and the spectacular finished result (left).

to Sadoku's Square in Hiroshima by Mrs Kalde, our Japanese Club leader.

Watch out for us on **Thursday 5th March** when (hopefully, weather permitting!) we will be walking along Buntingford High Street to celebrate **World Book Day**. Pupils and staff will be dressing as their favourite story book character and we are hoping for a fine array of costumes.



Scenes from 'Peter Pan'.

Just before half term two performances of 'Peter Pan' took place to packed audiences, with pupils from all year groups taking part. The story of Peter, Wendy, John and Michael, with Hook, Smee and Tinker Bell was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

As well as serving refreshments at 'Peter Pan', the Edwinstree School Association held a film evening and a disco this term. They are now organising a **Fashion Show** on **Wednesday 1st April** from 7pm; everyone is invited, so please contact the office on **01763 271446** or email **esa@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk** if you are interested in attending.

Diane George

BUNTSBOUTIQUEFAIR

AFFORDABLE CRAFTS • FOOD • GIFTS • ART

1ST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH - 11.00AM-2.00PM - BENSON HALL - BUNTINGFORD

Freman

COLLEGE

Government congratulates Freman on its outstanding results

At the beginning of February, Freman College received a letter from Minister of State for Schools, David Laws MP, congratulating the College on being "one of the top

90 non-selective state funded schools in England showing the greatest sustained improvement in the percentage of students achieving five or more A*-C grades including English and Mathematics". This is fantastic news and great recognition for all the hard work of staff and students at Freman. To put the achievement in context, we understand there are over 3,000 schools which are classed as non-selective state funded schools in England. This places Freman in the top 3%.

Technology Tournament

Freman students packed their tool bags and pooled their design knowledge to take part in a Rotary Club Technology event in February at The Cambridge Motel. The challenge was to use design and technology skills to design and construct a prototype unit to fulfil a given design brief. Three teams of four from the A Year and several teams from Lower Sixth competed against schools from North Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire. Each team produced a project portfolio and the event was judged by outside individuals involved in the technology industry and prizes were awarded.

Mr Malone, Head of Resistant Materials, commented: "All Freman teams produced excellent portfolios, which showed embedded design skills and team work through dividing tasks and testing key stages of manufacture. I was proud to see the finished products not only function consistently but enabled all three Freman Year 9 teams to finish in the top 5. A result, which was considered fantastic by the judges. It was a great day, which allowed students to challenge themselves and put taught skills to the test."



E Year Girls' (Under 16) Netball Regional Schools Finals 2015

The East Regional Schools competition took place on a very cold day on Saturday 31st January at Hassenebrook Academy, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex. Freman girls were one of 27 qualifying teams from the seven counties in the East to battle on the courts in freezing wind and driving rain/snow. Like the weather, the competition was fierce and despite a valiant effort Freman lost in the semi-final to the eventual winners Great Baddow and finished third overall, only six goals away from the Nationals. Well played girls!



Freman's Under 16 Netball team (left to right): Maddie Mitchell, Bethany Garrod, Alice Liptrot, Aimee Woodcock, Molly Watson, Marnie Norton, Primrose Farenden and Daniela Fort.

ROYSTON CYCLING CLUB

Do you like cycling? Are you looking for a cycling club? If so why not come and join us? We are especially looking for more ladies to join.

The club rides are organised every Sunday morning (weather permitting) setting off from Royston Market Hill car park at 9am. Rides are roughly 2 hours in duration, usually split into two/three groups according to abilities and covering around 30-35 miles. If you are unsure about joining a club or not sure about your ability, then come along and try out one of the introductory rides which are of a shorter duration and shorter distance on the first Sunday of the month.

For more information see the Royston Cycling website:

www.roystoncc.co.uk

The Plot Thickens?

Chance would be a fine thing!

"How's the plot coming on?" Chicken Clegg enquired whilst he was feeding his flock with some tasty morsels.

"It's not" I replied, trying to keep frustration from my voice so as not to upset the birds' karma and stop them laying.

"But I thought they said they would replace it with a new site?"

"They did, but against my best advice it was not written into an agreement by EHDC Planning. And anyway, that lot down at Wallfields only work part-time and are all too ready to help the developers by not turning up at the appeal stage."

"Surely not? They are paid by us to ensure we are protected from bad planning issues and they are renowned for being picky about the size of window boxes and such!"

"They might be fastidious about the small-time stuff and on a good day (if it's not raining) might get out of their cars to look at a site, but I think their approach to these big developers is a different story mate?"

"How do you mean?"

"I sometimes feel like Cassandra."

"What, Rodney Trotter's missus?"

"No, I mean the girl who was daughter of King Priam of Troy, who was cursed by Apollo so she had the gift of seeing the future but nobody would believe her."

"When was she on the Apollo stage then? Was she on with that guy you like, Rod Gilbert?"

"No, Cleggy, different Apollo."

"So why can't you get on your new allotment? If you don't extract the digit you will be too late to plant anything this year."

"I know, I've normally got the onions, shallots and broad beans showing their heads by now."

"What's the hold up? The new plots are well away from the main site and you can get to it from up the Causeway or across the common ground or Gypsy Lane?"

"That's what we thought and Scott's offered to help with the ground preparation, but apparently it's all down to Taylor Wimpey and EHDC planning!"

"That's daft! Don't they understand anything about the growing season?"

"No, they understand about running circles round EHDC planning department, the famous Inspector, putting applications in close to public holidays and making promises they don't keep but growing things to eat is a stranger to them."

"But what about our Town Council and our District County councillors and our MP, the benighted Sir Oliver? Can't they help? And look at all the various societies and groups around the town – can't they do anything?"

"Apparently not, apart from writing things down and having meetings and saying they are disappointed. In fact, the aforesaid knight said it's not government's fault, it's all down to local planning authorities. Apparently nothing to do with the fact that Dave and the aptly named Pickles have been banging on about building houses for all the needy for the past 5 years?"

"So it's all about need then?"

"Yes, so they say, Cleggy. Although us English types are having smaller families and getting older and dying off, we appear to want more houses. Odd that."

"But some seem to get things to move. Look at those youngsters who have slowed the library move down?"

"They were the exception and should be praised, makes the rest look a bit sick, but that battle is far from over. It wouldn't surprise me if one of the developers put a library in their next application (Easter holiday break won't be long, so look out), then when they are given permission it will be a Portacabin behind the fire station."

"So it's all likely to go base over apex then?"

"Looks that way. I think they are hoping we'll get fed up and go away, leaving them even more building land to 'develop'."

"I've just had a thought." (Always dangerous with Chicken Cleggy!) "Didn't they find an Iron Age site on your old plot? Anywhere else that would have been enough to stop development and set up a visitor centre."

"Spot on Cleggy, probably the only site of that period which was protected by the very earth covering the plots, secure for future generations."

"Why did they cover it in concrete then?"

"In the eyes of planning and their fancy lawyers it was probably deemed a brownfield site, a 2000-year-old one."

"Aren't all fields brown then?"

"That's the point, Cleggy – these companies think they are. Green is so last year, you know. Not very 'localism' is it? We haven't progressed much since 1215 and Magna Carta have we?"

"Magner's Carter? What's an afternoon delivery by a cider maker got to do with it?"

Just then one of Cleggy's hens jumped up onto his lap as if to join the conversation.

"I think your hens have more sense than the lot who are so-called 'planning' our town. Everyone is blaming everyone else."

"Didn't they have a plan and wasn't the data available at the touch of a button on those fancy overpriced computers?"

"Obviously not, said it was not available so they couldn't put a plan together – something about consulting their partners, whatever that means."

"But how do they set the budgets each year without a plan for the future? They must have some idea how many houses are needed for locals, how many children are at school, what police they need, what doctors and hospitals and of course their salaries and pensions. Isn't that a plan?"

"Beats me, Cleggy. Perhaps one of your hens could answer that one?"

"Cluck," came the sound from Cleggy's lap.

"Half a dozen fresh ones before you go?"

"Thanks mate. Oh, one last thing Cleggy, Wesley thinks that if we do get a plot eventually they will ban sheds."

"Ban sheds!! Are they looking for a war??"

The hen just went "cluck" and fainted!.

Vyse 2015

BUNTINGFORD GARDENERS CLUB

In February the club welcomed speaker Angela Whiting, her topic 'Alpine Troughs'. From a small nursery she and her son specialise in the miniature world of flowers. Silver Gilt winners at Chelsea Flower Show our intrepid duo are still striving to achieve the elusive Gold, but not this year as they are taking a year off from the competitive world to concentrate on the business. Numerous pictures of the various plants available were shown, which were much appreciated by those intrepid enough to venture out on the night, as it was slippery underfoot. To make a successful trough, a layer of charcoal is needed as a base, followed by either hessian or a tea towel to absorb some of the moisture as this can contribute to the plants' demise. Lots of grit should be added to the soil, then in go the plants. A final layer of grit helps to stop the plants getting splashed when watering. Why not give it a try? An enjoyable and informative evening was had by all.

The March meeting is the Club's AGM, which is usually a lively event. Our meetings are always on the 1st Wednesday of the month at URC Hall on Baldock Road, from 7.45pm. On 1st April when we are in for a 'Taste of the Caribbean'. All welcome.

Heather Pope

Club enquires to our Chairwoman Janet Murrells on 01763 274341

'FORGING AHEAD'



A new exhibition by 'Ladies Wot Lunch' to be held in the EJD Studio, Gravelly Barn, Braughing SG11 2RD

**Thurs 5th to Sun 8th
March 2015
10.30am–4pm daily**

Tea, coffee and cakes will be available throughout the day, with all proceeds going to the Hospice of St. Francis in Berkhamsted

Artists Glynnis Bainbridge, Jane Davalle, Anne Houghton and Jan Reichmann, all members of 'Ladies Wot Lunch', are pleased to welcome a new artist to the group. Su James Dean, a well-known artist from the Harpenden area, brings an extra exciting dynamic to LWL's exhibitions. 'Forging Ahead' is the group's fourth exhibition of varied paintings, photos and installations, inspired by the Forge Museum at Much Hadham. The group looks forward to welcoming all its old friends and extends a warm invitation to all those who love contemporary art but have yet to discover Gravelly Barn. *Free parking and disabled access to the Studio.*

For further information about Gravelly Barn, location and directions, see www.gravellybarn.com

SAVOY JAZZ BAND

At Reed Village Hall

Saturday 14th March 2015 at 7.30pm

Hot Supper, Bar and Raffle

£12 adults, £6 under 10s

**To secure your place for this popular event ring
Di on 01763 848481**

Proceeds in aid of the roof fund for the Hall

POETRY PAGE

My Lodger

The sun was shining on the ice
That hung from bow and twig
The old plum tree – she looked so nice
Bedecked in her winter rig

The ice did look like diamonds
As the sun gave off her shine
With fluttering birds and droplets
A picture so divine

The chaffinch was busy pecking
At the seeds left hanging down
On the branch above the decking
In the centre of the town

Blue tits, great tits and pigeons
All joined the happy throng
With blackbirds, greenfinch and a wren
But wait there's something wrong ...

Along comes next door's moggy
To jump up to her den
The bird table is her second home
No room for the sweet wren

She's taken to the table
As its roof protects from the storm
She watches all the birdies drop
From the sky onto the lawn

I wonder if she is thinking
Of meals that got away
Or as she hears the sweet bird sing
Leaves it for another day

Sandra



My Ageing Neighbours

I see them come, as I see them go,
my ageing neighbours.
To the sheltered housing down the row;
Till from that shelter to another,
kinder home they go.

Some still have cars when they arrive.
They look quite fit, they sometimes drive
their friends around.

For all I know they go to bingo,
see a show.

Retirement doesn't have to be
misery.

I get to know their relatives.
Those Sunday visitors with kids,
(they're *very* good, you know).
I can feel them waiting, Sunday morning.
Anticipating warm life coming.
But then too soon it's gone again
and empty life is looming.

I get to recognise the signs,
To read between their mortal lines.
The car's used less, and soon it goes.
A stick appears.
Someone comes in to 'do' for them,
A daughter does the gardening.
The telly's louder, on all day.
And time is closing in.

I just don't see them for a while,
I hear that they're in hospital.
When they come back they've changed.
There's no pretence now, they're just old.
And soon the house will have a board
outside: 'For Sale' or 'Sold'.

Anon

(name supplied)

A CONCERT OF CHORAL SURPRISES



**Saturday 14th March
7.30 pm at
St Swithun's Church,
Great Chishill**

Royston Choral Society, conducted by Richard Prince, are performing in support of the Appeal Fund for St Swithun's. This landmark church has withstood attacks upon it by Oliver Cromwell, a devastating village

fire and the collapse of its tower, but now it is falling to the ravages of time and needs major structural repairs within two years. The varied concert programme ranges from the Bach Sanctus in D to contemporary composer Will Todd's The Lord is My Shepherd. With Northumbrian Folk Songs, Victorian Ballads and 20th century favourites such as 'Bridge Over Troubled Water' and 'Fields of Gold', there will be something for everyone.

Tickets £12 (concessions £9, school students £1) available from Royston Library, choir members, the St Swithun's Appeal Committee (details below) and on the door.

More than £11,000 has already been raised towards the £50,000 needed to start the most urgent work. Future fundraising events include a Summer Ball (20th June), Music Quiz Night, a long-distance cycle ride from Winchester (St Swithun's final resting place) to Great Chishill, and more. Suggestions and offers of help welcome! For more information on the church restoration, concert tickets, future events or to make a donation contact:

Angus Gent, Appeal Committee Chairman, 01763 838941, angusgent@gmail.com

Or Erica Debnam, Parish Manager, 01763 837272, office@icknielldwayparish.com

Braughing Fair and Wheelbarrow Race 2015

20th June, 12noon–6pm

**Do you want to be part of this year's
Braughing Fair and Wheelbarrow Race?**

***How about running a stall or sideshow to raise funds
and the profile of your organisation or charity?***

**What about sponsoring a race? Contact us for details of
our advertising packages at:**

braughingwheelbarrowrace@mail.com

Follow us on twitter: [@braughingbarrow](https://twitter.com/braughingbarrow)

Or find us on Facebook: Braughing Wheelbarrow Race



BUNTINGFORD W.I.

Robin Webb was the guest speaker at our February meeting. He is a member of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust which looks after properties in Hertfordshire and his talk was entitled '200 years of Much Hadham Forge'.

At one time there was a blacksmith in every village and the smithy was the focal point of the community. Shoes were made individually for each horse and burnt on, whereas they are mass produced now.

The Much Hadham Forge was once a farmhouse on the Moor Park Estate and the blacksmith's was added in 1811. Since then it has been run by four generations of the same family with the last working blacksmith being Charlie Page, who died in 1983. He was also a beekeeper and his bee house can still be seen in the garden at the Forge. When Charlie died his daughter Jean passed the property to the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust and they had the task of sorting through some 7,000 assorted bits and pieces of metal.

The Forge and Museum were opened in 1990 by the Duke of Grafton and the guest of honour was, naturally, Miss Jean Page. During the restoration of the building, some Elizabethan wall paintings were discovered quite by chance and Miss Page paid many thousands of pounds of her own money to have these restored so that they can be seen and enjoyed by visitors.

There is a working blacksmith at the Forge again and visitors can watch him and experience the way a traditional smithy worked. The current blacksmith is Richard Maynard; he takes commissions and Robin showed us some examples of his work. Robin's talk was illustrated with lots of slides and he said the Forge and Museum are open to the public at weekends between April and September, although it's best to phone first if you want to see the blacksmith at work. There is also a garden, tea room and shop.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 12th March when Linda Ketteridge will be talking about Audley End. Visitors are always welcome to join us. We meet at the United Reformed Church Hall in Baldock Road at 7.45pm. For more information about Buntingford W.I. telephone Pat Webb on 01763 271305.

Val Hume

BRAUGHING W.I. in conjunction with MANDY'S HEAVEN present a FASHION SHOW on FRIDAY 27th March 7:30pm In the Church Hall, Braughing

Tickets £5 (to include glass of wine)

- Lovely Italian clothes and accessories to buy at reasonable prices. Raffle.
- Bring your friends for a great evening out.
- All profits to local charities.
- All enquiries to Anne Styles 01920 822683.



B A L A

Buntingford Action for the Less Able

Registered Charity No. 1094426

Minibus trips for March 2015

Thurs 5 th	9:30–12ish	Tesco at Bishop's Stortford	£4
Tues 10 th	10:30–3pm	Welwyn Garden City – John Lewis, M&S, Debenhams, WH Smith, Boots, Waitrose etc.	£6
Thurs 12 th	9:30–12ish	Bishop's Stortford Town Centre – Market Day	£4
Mon 16 th	11:30ish	Pub Lunch – White Horse, Hertingfordbury	Bus £4
Thurs 19 th	9:30–12ish	Tesco at Bishop's Stortford	£4
Tues 24 th	9:45–3pm	Bury St Edmund's – Historic town, shops	£14
Thurs 26 th	9:30–12ish	Bishop's Stortford Town Centre – Market Day	£4
Tues 31 st	10:30–2:30	Hitchin – Market Day	£5.50
APRIL			
Thurs 2 nd	9:30–12ish	Tesco at Bishop's Stortford	£4
Tues 28 th	9:30–3:30	Bletchley Park. Entrance OAP: £14.75	Bus £10

To book a seat or for more information:

Phone 01763 273623 or 01763 271708



**At Ardeley
St Lawrence School**

**Friday 13th March
6.30pm – 10pm**

Lots of lovely treatments for you to try:

Manicures, pedicures, Indian Head Massage, and more ...

And stalls to visit selling:

Mother's Day Gifts, Fashion Accessories, Neals Yard products, Beauty products, Soft Furnishings

**Prize Raffle, Licensed Bar, Snacks & Cakes
£2.50 to enter**

(All treatments paid for separately)

BALA COFFEE MORNING

at Benson Hall, Buntingford

Wed 18th March, 10:30am–12noon

Cakes / Bric-a-Brac / Books / Raffle / Marmalade
Proceeds for the Minibus



BUNTINGFORD TOWN FC
www.buntingfordtownfc.com



At the time of writing (12th Feb) our First Team still sits at the top of the Herts Senior County League Division One table, despite only having secured 1 point from the two matches played since our 7-2 victory over Hatfield Reserves on 10th January.

As is so often the case at this time of the year, bad weather has seen the postponement of many of our matches. The first of these was the Gregg Cup fixture with Hertford Town U21s, followed two weeks later by the league match with AFC Hatfield.

The point gained from the two matches successfully completed came during a 1-1 draw with Evergreen; fortunately on that same afternoon our nearest rivals, Old Parmiterians, lost at Knebworth, leaving them two points behind us. Town's next match saw a 4-2 defeat at Hinton whilst at the same time Old Parms had a week off, so still below us in the league table but now with a game in hand. We shall be playing what looks to be a crucial encounter with Old Parmiterians at The Bury on 28th March, a match we are eagerly looking forward to!

The Reserves have also had a lack of football during the last month, due to the condition of playing surfaces being affected by snow and rain. We did however manage to fit in a friendly at The Bury; the side went down 2-1 to a strong Sarratt Reserves, but put in an acceptable performance against the team which is currently joint top in the Reserve South and West Division. In their division, the Reserve North and East, the Town's second string currently sits in 4th place, just one point behind Letchworth Garden City Eagles, and 4 behind Goffs Oak Crusaders, but with a game in hand.

It will come as no surprise when I tell you that the Veterans' fixtures have also been badly affected by the weather. They finally found themselves in action on 8th February, a little rusty to say the least, having not played since their 2-2 draw with Waltham Abbey Vets on 14th December. However, the 8-week layoff didn't affect the performance and the side beat Goldings Vets 5-3, with Ross Murphy hitting the back of the net no less than 4 times! Lee Grinyer scored the team's other goal, and even the club's longest serving player, Richard Morris, got on the score sheet – unfortunately it benefitted the opposition as he headed the ball into his own net!

So, this month, a shorter than usual report from our club. With luck the weather will steadily improve and it will soon be 'business as usual'.

Chris Thurgill, Chairman, BTFC

BUNTINGFORD AND DISTRICT SOCIAL CLUB
C.I.U affiliated — 6 Church Street, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9AS
Tel 01763 271889 www.lemonrock.com

*** Every Monday BIG CASH BINGO ***
Guaranteed £150 minimum snowball prize
ALL WELCOME. BOOK SALES 7:30PM, EYES DOWN AT 8pm.

WE HAVE SKY SPORTS AND BT SPORT

ALL MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS SHOWN (times permitting)!

Darts, Pool, Snooker, Free WiFi

WE HAVE HAPPY HOURS EVERY DAY 3—7pm AND
HAPPY DAYS FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY ALL DAY.

IN-HOUSE KNOCKOUTS FOR DARTS, POOL, SNOOKER & CRIB
FOR MEMBERS: ENTRANCE FORMS ON SPORTS NOTICE BOARD

SPECIAL OFFER: JOIN NOW FOR JUST £15 FOR THE YEAR

FOR YOUR DIARY: 9th MAY — A TRIBUTE TO SWING
WITH WAYNE MORGAN AND THE POLKA DOTS

ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH

7th March — JUST FOR KICKS

14th & 28th — No entertainment. FREE Pool, Snooker, Juke Box

21st March — HUGGY FLARES

MEMBERS FREE, GUESTS £1 or £4 on Special Entertainment night.

CHECK OUT our Facebook page and website: www.lemonrock.com

Children are welcome but no prams or pushchairs when there is
entertainment. No children under 9 on a Saturday Special Night.



Rehoming Animal Telephone Service

Registered Charity No. 803364

Buntingford's local animal charity, located on Hare Street Road on the way in to Hare Street village, is planning to hold various fundraising events this year to help with their work in rehoming animals. They are kicking off the season with an:

Easter Fundraiser!

On Sunday 29th March, 1pm to 3.30pm

At Amphthill Parkside Hall, Woburn Street, Amphthill, Beds, MK45 2HX

*Hope to see you there, but if you can't make it to this one, look out for
notices of future R.A.T.S. events closer to home.*