

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

Buntingford Journal



**Snowdrops carpet the riverbank above the ford in
Buntingford.**

***Inside this month:* Summer Arts in Buntingford and Battle of the Bands; an update on our local Medical Centre from the Patient Participation Group; the final part of Carol Emery's History of Layston School; plus news from local clubs and societies.**

70p

**March 2022
Volume 47, No.2**



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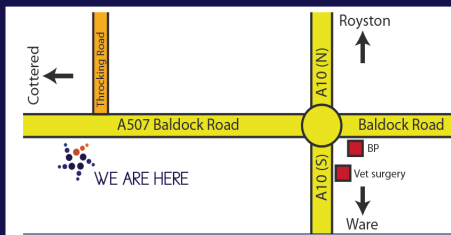
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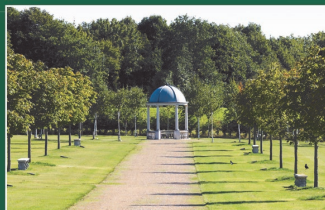
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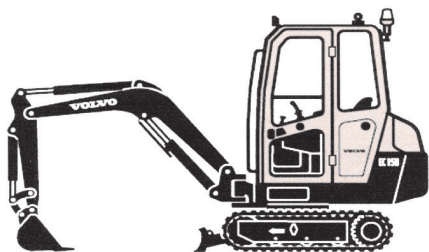
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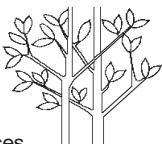
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LOCAL COUNCILS:	Buntingford Town Council – 01763 272222 East Herts District Council – 01279 655261 Housing – 01279 714714 Benefits – Freephone 0800 373852 For emergencies out of office hours: 01279 655261 Adult Care Services – 0300 123 4042 Children’s 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, Tue, Thur 10:00–17:30 Fri 14:00–17:30 Sat 9:00–13:00 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 09:00–18:00 More info at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU: The Manor House Market Hill, Buntingford	Offices are currently closed due to Covid. For telephone advice call 0800 144 8848 (Mon to Fri 10am–4pm) or call the local Messageline on 01920 459 944 for a call back
HOUSEHOLD WASTE & RECYCLING SITE: Watermill Industrial Estate Aspenden Road	Currently closed. Our nearest alternative recycling sites are in Royston, Letchworth and Ware.

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

EDITOR'S LETTER

It's almost exactly two years since we plunged into the nightmare of Covid-19 and now, despite infections still being quite high, the pandemic appears to be waning. The government's compulsory restrictions have been lifted and more local clubs and societies are resuming their usual activities. Understandably, many people remain cautious, but it seems to be good news, especially as are heading into a summer of celebrations!

First, we have a 4-day bank holiday weekend to look forward to in June in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Graham Bonner (page 4) and Jeff Jones (page 20) give us a flavour of what we might expect to mark the occasion in Buntingford, plus East Herts Council are inviting applications for small grants to help get the party started. Later that month, the much-delayed Summer Arts in Buntingford will take place in Layston Court Gardens. There's more on this on page 9, but for now the organisers are particularly keen to get the news out about the Battle of the Bands (pages 10-11), a key element of the festival, to attract as many applications as possible from aspiring young local bands.

Meanwhile, if you haven't yet got your tickets for the Dramatic Society's Panto, you'd better be quick! Performances are over the weekends of 11-12th and 18-19th March (see page 8). This is their first production since moving to the Community Centre, where the Film Club have also set up home and this month are offering the chance to see the new James Bond film, the last to star Daniel Craig. Local choirs are back rehearsing (see page 31) and Royston Choral Society are delighted to be performing again this month at St Mary's Church in Ashwell – a rare opportunity to hear Mozart's masterly Requiem.

Jenny Dingley offers a very informative article from our local Medical Centre's Patient Participation Group, summarising recent developments (page 12-13). It seems the Medical Centre is over the worst disruption of Covid and has had success in recruiting new staff, but challenges still remain. Jeff Jones outlines plans for a new school crossing outside Edwinstree School on Bowling Green Lane aimed at improving pedestrian safety (page 19). Edwinstree will be the subject of Carol Emery's article next month, but for now she completes her History of Layston First School (pages 22-26).

Finally, it seems the W.I. has some competition from a new kid on the block – the NWR or National Women's Register. This women's membership organisation and registered charity aims to connect women through regular group meetings, providing conversation, friendship and fun. A new group is starting up in Buntingford – find out more on page 27.

Christine Noble

**Editorial copy deadline for the April 2022 Journal
is Saturday 12th March 2022**

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

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

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



Buntingford Civic Society

(Reg. Charity No. 1014873)

www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk



The Town Council Chatter Tables are back after an enforced break. The Chatter Table meets between 10 and 11.45am on the first and third Mondays of every month (unless these are bank holidays). Established in 2019 as an initiative to encourage all those who would welcome the opportunity to make new friends while enjoying a free cup of tea or coffee and biscuits, the group now has a regular core of residents who enjoy the opportunity to meet up and just chat. There is no set agenda, just the chance to have a natter, and anyone who would like to join in would be welcome.

Most of the Chatter Table regulars have lived in Buntingford for many years and witnessed significant changes to the town. Their stories about what it used to be like or how much the shops have changed are quite fascinating. If you are new to the town and would like to join in please come along. You will be sure of a welcome and may be able to learn a lot about the town and what it can offer you.

Civic societies have been champions of what makes places attractive, enjoyable and distinctive for generations. Over the past ten years, countless improvement schemes of all kinds have been undertaken by civic societies in cities, towns and villages up and down the country. Streets have been cleaned, litter picked up, trees planted, plaques erected, flowers planted, rivers cleaned, events organised, and places championed! Buntingford has done all of these.

National Civic Day this year is on **Saturday 18th June**, a national day to inspire communities to work together to celebrate and champion where they live – to create civic pride in their place. Let us see what we can do to mark the day. **Ideas welcomed!**

The Buntingford W.I. would like to do something for the town for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. With the Town Council's blessing they will be decorating the roof of the 'pump' on Market Hill. They will do it in red, white and blue, using items made by their members – crocheted, knitted, material flowers, animals, squares, different shapes etc. The idea is still in its infancy. The W.I. plan to decorate the supporting posts also, and will ensure no nails are used or anything that could harm the pump.

The Civic Society **AGM** this year will be held on **5th April** at the Community Centre. Date in diary please, further details nearer the time.

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

Buntingford Civic Society was established in 1971 with the aim of improving the fabric of the Town. It has led or been involved in many restoration and enhancement projects and in planning, communication and financial support to improve aspects of life in Buntingford. It also publishes the Buntingford Journal.

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

A reminder - why 20mph speed limits are so important

Across the UK, **28 million people** are already seeing the huge benefits of wide-area 20mph speed limits where they live. Aside from the obvious (but significant) benefits of reducing road casualties (typically 20% fewer casualties). The even better news for communities is that there are so many other far-reaching benefits that go a long way towards tackling many other issues such as climate change and public health.

Reduced Noise and Air Pollution - significantly lower levels of air and noise pollution are seen on 20mph roads, compared to those with a 30mph speed limit. Typically, CO₂ levels are 26% lower and NO_x levels are reduced by 28%. Noise levels are cut by around 3dB which is the equivalent of halving the perceived noise. The health benefits seen from reductions in both air and (particularly) noise pollution have significant health benefits for residents, including lower levels of heart and lung disease (particularly in children) and dementia, and improvements in sleep quality and mental health.

Encouraging Active Travel - with the reduced road danger that wide-area 20mph speed limits bring and improvements in liveability for communities, the uptake of Active Travel increases as well. There are obvious health benefits for those who choose to leave their car at home, particularly for local journeys, and as more people decide to do this, traffic levels will also reduce. Significantly, the uptake of walking and cycling amongst women and children will then also increase. The benefits of walking for the older population are significant as well - including improved physical health, lower levels of obesity and better social interaction to combat loneliness. Implementing a wide-area 20mph speed limit (without expensive physical calming such as speed bumps) is a simple, low cost, intervention that also helps to reduce the health costs for local authorities.

Even small speed reductions are significant - it's worth remembering that even without regular police enforcement, speed reductions do occur on 20mph roads. It can be assumed that not everyone will stick to the new limit, but even small reductions in speed help to reduce road safety - 6% reduction in casualties for every 1mph reduction in speed. This is particularly the case where there is driver education and community engagement, with schemes such as Community Speed Watch (or DriveSafe in Hertfordshire) playing a significant and important role.

In conclusion, wide-area 20mph speed limits significantly reduce road danger, have far reaching health benefits, help to mitigate climate change, and build better communities at very little cost. Isn't it time for every community to enjoy the benefits of lower speed limits, not just a select few?

JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN

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

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

TWITTER: @20Buntingford www.20splentyforherts.org

Does anyone know the bride? Or anyone else in these photos?



These photographs of wedding groups were taken by Thomas Henry Mayes who used to live at 24a Hare Street Road. Thomas worked in the building trade as a carpenter (he retired in 1968) and also made violins. He was a keen photographer and his negatives were acquired by David Hobbs who has developed many of them. Although none of the photos had any details many have been identified, but not the ones shown here. From the clothes fashions and other

clues they are estimated to have been taken between the late 1940s and the 1960s. If any readers recognise anyone, whether family members, friends or neighbours, Stephen Ruff would love to hear from you on 01763 289516.



Buntingford Film Club

It is perhaps appropriate that our much delayed 2022 programme should at last get under way with an equally much delayed film: the latest James Bond film **No Time to Die**. In fact the impact of Covid 19 on the screening of Daniel Craig's farewell portrayal of the MI6 operative was such that at one point it was a question of whether we would ever get to see it. However, it is here at last and the mention of it in the Journal last month has already boosted ticket sales. So we are looking forward to a full house on **Saturday 5th March** when the doors of the Seth Ward Community Centre open at 7pm



On **Saturday 2nd April** we will be showing Steven Spielberg's new version of **West Side Story**. This is the second film adaptation of the 1957 stage musical and



is claimed to be closer to it than the well-known 1961 film version. The music, by Leonard Bernstein, has lyrics by Steven Sondheim. Ansel Elgort stars as Tony and Rachel Zegler makes her film debut as Maria. This is another film that was delayed by Covid 19, with distribution not getting under way until December 2021. It received four nominations at the 79th Golden Globe awards, winning three of them including the award for best musical/comedy picture. If you have seen the first film version, or were lucky enough to see the original stage musical, do come along and decide for yourself how this one compares.

Book your tickets through:

[facebook.com@buntingfordfilmclub](https://www.facebook.com/buntingfordfilmclub)

or in person at:

Keith Ian, 42 High Street.

Brian Thompson

Wind in the Willows



Buntingford Community Centre, SG9 9SQ

Friday	11 th Mar 2022	8 pm
Saturday	12 th Mar 2022	2.30 & 8 pm
Friday	18 th Mar 2022	8 pm
Saturday	19 th Mar 2022	2.30 & 8 pm

Licenced Bar Supper included (evenings only)

Tickets from Keith Ian or www.buntingforddrama.uk

Helpline 07 526 748 838



A SUMMER OF CELEBRATION

As was announced in last month's Journal, plans are

in hand to hold our twice-Covid-delayed, first ever Three-Day Summer Arts Festival in Layston Court Gardens FROM FRIDAY 17th TO SUNDAY 19th JUNE 2022.

Since the original plans for this were made – over 2 years ago – we have lost, for a variety of reasons, several key members of our festival team. So, the first task has been to replace those valuable people. A vigorous campaign was mounted and we're delighted to say that we've assembled an even stronger team to deliver what we hope will be an exciting and innovative event right in the heart of our town, in the perfect setting of the gardens tucked behind the High Street.

First and foremost, we've just launched our pivotal 'Battle of the Bands' competition (see pages 10-11) inviting 12 to 21 year olds throughout Hertfordshire and neighbouring counties to submit video clips of their exciting music, in whatever genre. The live final of the contest will open our festival on the afternoon of Friday 17th June and the winning band will be first to feature in our evening's entertainment.

Happily we've secured bookings with The Jersey Boys, Miami Royals, The Swiftbeats and our local girl, Tammy, of TJ and the Underlings. We also have on offer the well-known Trad Jazz Band Dixie Mix, and Hannah Saunders and Ben Savage, a folk duo from Cambridge with a growing reputation.

We will be featuring a kaleidoscope of local talent on stage throughout the weekend as well as a variety of art & craft stalls, a Children's Corner, and locally sourced food & drink from around the world.

Next month's Journal will be displaying our new poster for Summer Arts in Buntingford 2022 with all the details for you to absorb. Most importantly, tickets for the evening concerts will go ON SALE ON MONDAY 4th APRIL. So, we hope you will give us your support and secure your tickets well in advance.

If you would like to offer help, particularly over the weekend of 17-19th June, or have suggestions and entertainment to offer, please contact either

Christine Stuart-Taylor chris.camelot@btinternet.com tel no: 01763 272990

OR Jenny Thomas jenny@preferisco.com tel no: 01763 448435

www.summerartsinbuntingford.com

The Buntingford Railway & Local History Society

has started holding its regular monthly meetings once more in The Crown on Market Hill. All meetings start at 8pm.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 18th March, when the speaker will be Brian Hall with an 'Update on building the B17 Engine'.

Non-members are welcome for a charge of £2 per meeting.

For more details, contact Stephen Ruff on 01763 289516.



Calling All Young Musicians

Can you strike the right chord?

BATTLE of the BANDS 2022

FREE TO ENTER

INCREDIBLE 1st PRIZE:

**Full day recording at The Music Bunker Studio
plus professionally mastered copy of your music**



summerartsinbuntingford



summerartsinbuntingford



artsbuntingford

For full details and to enter:

www.summerartsinbuntingford.com/both



Battle of the Bands in Buntingford

As part of **Summer Arts in Buntingford** taking place this June, band finalists from across Herts, Beds and Cambridge will fight it out to beat their competitors. The Battle of the Bands is a wonderful opportunity for young people from Hertfordshire and the surrounding areas to perform with other amateur bands on a live stage.

The winning band will receive a full day recording session at the Music Bunker in Braughing, a further day of mixing and an invitation to open the evening gig in Layston Court Gardens. Other prizes include rock band tutor sessions for vocals and production, kindly donated by Melodies Music Education in Buntingford, and a professional vocal mic worth over £150 for outstanding vocal performance.



As a newcomer to Buntingford a couple of years ago I decided to get involved in local community activities in order to get to know the neighbours. It has been a lovely experience and – as someone who has lived and breathed music my whole life – interesting

to discover the wealth of creative people living here. We have a great team organising the Battle of the Bands and I am confident it will be a great success. There are so few opportunities for young bands to perform live these days, so with the combination of an auditions day in front of a live audience and the main event, we hope to give a good number of talented local bands a valuable opportunity to promote themselves and enjoy the experience.

The panel of judges – all from Buntingford, with professional experience in teaching, composing and performing in bands – will watch all entries and select a maximum of eight bands to perform in live auditions held at Seth Ward Community Centre on Saturday 21st May. Entries will be judged initially on their video recordings uploaded to the website.

Entries are welcome from amateur bands, aged from 12 through to 21, from the Herts Beds and Cambridgeshire area. As we in Buntingford are the hosts, I would encourage you to spread the word to anyone you know locally as it would be great to have a strong Buntingford contingent applying, but be quick as **the deadline for entries is April 15th**. For full entry details and to apply visit www.summerartsinbuntingford.com/both

We are also looking for help with the loan of a drum kit and bass amp for the auditions day. Please contact me if you can help: Neil McDougall at neilmcdougall@live.com

Summer Arts in Buntingford is a local community event run by volunteers from the neighbourhood

Buntingford and Puckeridge Medical Centre

Patient Participation Group

Our February meeting began with a review of the practice website and it was acknowledged that the maintenance of the site is an enormous job if everything is to be kept up to date and relevant to the needs of the community. Serving over 19,800 patients over the two sites, the website contains a great deal of information which is best accessed using the menu bars in the top right corner. Details about online services, opening times, prescriptions, appointments, clinics, staffing, etc. are supplemented with additional information listed at the bottom of each page – diabetes, flu, carers, pregnancy, bereavement, what to do when the practice is closed, practice policies and many other topics can be accessed by just a click.

Similarly, the Practice Newsletter continues to be worthwhile reading. If your mobile number is registered with the practice you should get an alert when the new newsletter is published, as well as all sorts of other information regarding appointments etc. If you haven't registered your mobile number you can do so just by contacting reception or dropping them a note through the practice letterbox. If you cannot access the newsletter online via the practice website, hard copies are available at the practice.

We had some discussion about the out of hours' service available to all patients. The number for a medical emergency is, of course, always 999, but dialling 111 will give access to expert advice when the practice is closed. A wide range of healthcare professionals including GPs, nurses, pharmacists and mental health professionals are available on the 111 service, depending on need. Just like an attendance at A and E, a call to 111 is logged and a report is sent back to your GP so that they remain aware of any help you have been given. Your GP surgery should, however, always be your first port of call during working hours.

At our meetings we explore some of the statistics that may not be obvious to anyone outside the immediate working of the practice and they provide a very eye-opening insight into some of the pressures the practice is under on a day-to-day basis. It seems that we are 'over the hump' for issues put off because of the focus on Covid and demand appears to be easing. However, in the last 8 weeks there have been 19,836 appointments with 12,550 of these face to face and 7198 of those with a GP. There were 7067 same-day appointments. Did-not-attend data remains very low.

Clearly the practice is under intense pressure and has been quite right to increase their staffing levels. Buntingford has seen the start of one new doctor with another new starter for Puckeridge in February. Additional nursing hours for existing staff have been allocated as well as another new nurse for each site. A long-term locum has also been appointed to cover maternity leave which means that both sites are now running at full staffing capacity. The trainee programme should also see a few new faces as potential GPs learn the ropes under the guidance of their more experienced colleagues. The practice acknowledges that on-line services have their place but are not good for everyone or for every matter. They firmly believe that healthcare is about people and giving people whatever is best for their needs and that continuity of care is very desirable. This will become much easier as new staff embed and the practice becomes more settled following the profound disruption caused by staff changes.

There are a small number of people who have not yet had the vaccine and/or booster and the practice is running small clinics to 'mop up' those outstanding. The limiting factor to running these clinics on a larger scale has been the need for the 15-minute wait after the vaccine has been administered and no space in which this can happen. There are also mop-up sessions for the flu jab for anyone eligible who might have missed it.

The main challenge to the practice is the premises from which the two surgeries operate. They have found it relatively easy to attract new staff, but there are real issues regarding space in which they can work. There is some money from the S106 fund available from the various recent housing developments, but this is not given directly to the practice but to the Clinical Commissioning Group responsible for the area. A specialist GP premises consultant has now been appointed to explore a range of options with the key objective to research and source a site to meet present and future needs, including car parking and any anticipated increase in population for the area. Ideally, an acre of land with good access is being sought as the practice covers a large rural area and many patients come by car. Currently, staff often park on the grass or elsewhere to free up as many spaces as possible for patients, but the situation is not helped by some people using the car park whilst they go shopping or neighbours of the practice using it for their own private purposes. On the plus side, the extension to the Puckeridge surgery is taking shape with a target of the end of March when the new area should be in use.

A recent review of the phone answering service with the current provider has taken place and a few useful strategies have been suggested to make it easier for the patients to know their position in the queue, how long they may have to wait and a possible call-back option to avoid having to hang on until the phone is answered. The provider is now coming up with the costings for these upgrades so watch this space for any new developments.

A 'Cancel Out Cancer' online group information forum is being established to address screening, symptoms, lifestyle choices etc. More details about this next time. Finally, the National GP Patient surveys are now underway. Participation is through random selection and it would be good if you could take part if you are someone that is contacted during the next couple of months. Results will be published in the summer.

Jenny Dingley



On 24th January it was a full year since we moved into our new Attend2Health premises! We have gone from having just 3 treatment rooms at the old clinic to 7 treatment

rooms in use, some of which are shown in the photo, plus the studio! By having more rooms we can have a larger selection of treatments available, which now include:

- Chiropractic • Osteopathy • Physiotherapy
- Chiropody & Podiatry • Reflexology
- Sports Massage • Acupuncture • Audiology
- Counselling • Hypnotherapy • Nutrition
- Botox & Fillers • Hair loss treatments
- Skin tag removal • Mole checks
- Health Checks including blood tests

Plus Tai Chi, Yoga and Pilates in the studio. It's great to be able to provide such a large number of treatments under the one roof. On 13th February all our receptionists and some of the practitioners will renew their first aid certificates and this year we are able to use the studio for this rather than having to travel elsewhere. For more information on any of our treatments please give us a call on **01763 878087**. We are open 7 days a week.

Treatment Rooms





The
United
Reformed
Church

Christ Church

Baldock Road, Buntingford SG9 9AA

Minister: Rev. Sue Fender
revsuefender@gmail.com
Tel: 01223 375588

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

Services at 11.00am

Junior Church meets the 2nd & 4th Sundays in the month at 11am

Mask wearing is not a requirement whilst in church but is recommended. However, when joining in with hymn singing the wearing of masks is expected.

March	6	Morning Worship	Rev Sue Fender
	13	Holy Communion	Rev Lythan Nevard <i>Moderator of the Eastern Synod</i>
	20	Morning Worship	Rev Dr David Cornick
	27	Morning Worship <i>Mothering Sunday</i>	Rev Sue Fender
April	3	Morning Worship	Rev Sue Fender

Churches Together Lent Course

will commence on 2nd March for 6 weeks, in the URC Hall.

Lunch at 12.30 - bring your own, tea & coffee provided*.

Course 1pm to 2pm prompt. (*subject to Covid restrictions)

REGULAR EVENTS

Coffee and Company meets every Thursday from 10.30am (see box, right).

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

ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER Catholic Church

3 Station Road, Buntingford. Telephone 01763 271471

Parish Priest: Reverend Father Cyril Chiaha

SERVICES FOR MARCH 2022

ASH WEDNESDAY – 2nd March 2022 – Mass times 9.30am and 7.00pm

VIGIL MASS for Sundays is at 6.00pm every Saturday

SUNDAY MASS is at 9.15am and 11.00am every Sunday

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, our parish churches in Puckeridge and Old Hall Green have been temporarily closed following the necessary risk assessment. So, at the moment, all services are currently at St Richard's in Buntingford.



The Ash and Quin Valleys Group

Living God's Love

Rev'd Julie Gawthrope – 01920 823531 / vicar@braughing.org.uk

Services for March 2022

St Mary the Virgin



St Mary's, Braughing

Sun 6 th	11.15am	All Age Holy Communion
Wed 9 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 13 th	10.00am	All Age Morning Worship
Wed 16 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 20 th	11.15am	Holy Communion
Wed 23 rd	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 27 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (with Rev'd June Knight)
Wed 30 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)

ST. MARY'S CHURCH FURNEUX PELHAM

St Mary's, Furneux Pelham

Sun 6 th	9.30am	BCP Holy Communion
Sun 13 th	11.15am	Holy Communion
Sun 20 th	9.30am	Café Church
Sun 27 th	11.15am	Family Morning Worship

St. Mary's Church
Stocking Pelham

St Mary's, Stocking Pelham No services

COFFEE AND COMPANY

Thursdays 10.30am – 12 noon, at URC HALL,
Baldock Road, Buntingford

(Opposite McColls/ the Post Office,
disabled access from Meeting House Lane)

Come along for Coffee,
Cake, Company and Chat

All Welcome

Elderly? Living Alone? New to the area? Working from Home?

Just turn up and give a small donation for the refreshments.





United Benefice of Aspenden, Buntingford and Westmill

Website: unitedbenefice.org.uk

Email: admin@unitedbenefice.org.uk

Postal address: C/O St Peter's Church, Chapel End,
Buntingford SG9 9AL Telephone: 07484 345027

March 2022

Sun 6 th	9.30am	Sung Eucharist	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	11.00am	Family Worship	St Peter's, Buntingford
Sun 13 th	9.30am	Morning Service	St Mary's, Aspenden
	11.00am	Holy Communion	St Peter's, Buntingford
Sun 20 th	9.30am	Sung Eucharist	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Mary's, Aspenden
Sun 27 th	10.00am	<i>Please join us at Buntingford</i>	
		Mothers' Sunday	Benefice-wide Holy Communion
			St Peter's, Buntingford

In light of the current rate of the new variant of Covid and high numbers of local and national cases we are once again asking, in line with the Government's and Church of England's Guidelines, that face coverings be worn in church (unless exempt).

We also respectfully ask that you sanitise your hands on entry, and that social distancing be observed to help keep us all Covid safe.

For news on our upcoming events and services please see the notices opposite, or head to our website, unitedbenefice.org.uk, for further information.

ROYSTON CHORAL SOCIETY MUSICAL DIRECTOR ANDREW O'BRIEN

Mozart's Requiem – Saturday 26th March 7.30pm

With anthems by Brahms, Mendelssohn and Mozart

AT ST MARY'S CHURCH, ASHWELL SG7 5LY

We are very excited to be performing in Ashwell again. The Covid 19 pandemic was declared within a week of our last planned concert in this beautiful church!

More mysteries and legends surround Mozart's Requiem than any other musical work. The last work of a dying man, his Requiem is a masterpiece, emotional and stirring. Its fascination is enhanced by the dark myths about who completed the parts Mozart could not, and the challenges of sifting the truth from claims made by his family, pupils and rivals. This extraordinary work is rarely heard live due to the cost of assembling the orchestra and soloists the work demands. If you haven't heard it, don't miss this opportunity. If you have, you won't need further persuasion!

Tickets £15 (under 18s just £1) available from www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk,
from choir members, or call 01920 822723



Mothering Sunday

Benefice-wide Holy Communion Service

27th March 2022

10am

St Peter's Church, Buntingford



Churches Together Lent Course

"Who is The Christ"

Will be held weekly on Wednesday's

Starting 2nd March for 5 weeks

12:30pm

The United Reform Church

Please bring your own lunch, refreshments will be provided



Easter



**HOLY
WEEK**

Dates for your diary

Compline Services at 7:30pm on

11th April - St Mary the Virgin, Westmill

12th April - St Peter's, Buntingford

13th April - St Mary's, Aspenden

Maundy Thursday

14th April - 7:30pm - St Mary the Virgin, Westmill

Good Friday - 15th April

11am St Peter's Church

2:00pm St Mary the Virgin, Westmill

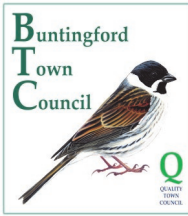
7:30pm St Mary's, Aspenden

Easter Saturday & Sunday

16th & 17th April

further details will be in April's Journal





BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

A QUALITY TOWN COUNCIL

Work to the interactive football wall at Norfolk Road Playing Field should now be well underway, funded by developer contributions. We hope that this innovative piece of equipment will be well used by all ages and abilities.

Following representation from residents regarding the proposed pump track, also at Norfolk Road Playing Field, we have published a response to concerns which can be viewed on our website.

Extensive work has been undertaken to the floor in the main hall at the Community Centre and the Bunters Suite has been decorated.

The suite of ground floor offices at the Manor House is still available for lease. The suite consists of two rooms, the main one measuring 24.5sqm with an ante room of 5.58sqm. Please call in to the Manor House if you would like to view these offices.

As mentioned in the last Journal, the Chatter Table is back after a break dictated by Christmas and the need for vigilance during increased contagion levels of the Covid variant. The Chatter table meets between 10.00 and 11.45 am on the first and third Monday of every month, unless these are bank holidays. Established in 2019 as an initiative to encourage all those who would welcome the opportunity to make new friends and enjoy a free cup of tea or coffee and biscuits, the group now has a regular core of residents who enjoy the opportunity to meet up and just chat. There is no set agenda, just the chance to have a natter and we welcome anyone who would like to join us.



Most of our Chatter Table regulars have lived in Buntingford for many years and witnessed significant changes to the town. Their stories about what it used to be like or how much the shops have changed are quite fascinating. If you are new to the town and would like to join us please come along. You will be sure of a welcome and may be able to learn a lot about the town and what it can offer you.

In line with Government legislation, the Council still holds face-to-face Council meetings on the last Thursday of the month at the Community Centre. Non-decision making Committee meetings are held remotely, but the Public are still welcome to attend. Joining details are published on the agenda.

Jill Jones MILCM Cert HE, Town Clerk

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

**Office hours: Monday–Thursday 9am–5pm; closed Friday.
 The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford SG9 9AB
 Tel: 01763 272222 Email: clerk@buntingford-tc.gov.uk
 Twitter: [@buntingfordtc](https://twitter.com/buntingfordtc) Facebook.com/BuntingfordTC
 Website: www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk**

Town Council meetings for March 2022	
Thurs 3 rd March	7:00pm – Amenities Committee (Remote)
Thurs 10 th March	7:00pm – Resources Committee (Remote)
Thurs 31 st March	7:00pm – Full Council at Seth Ward Community Centre
Members of the public are welcome to attend.	

News from Your District and County Councillor, Jeff Jones



School Crossing Patrol – Bowling Green Lane

The Highways Improvement Group of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has been developing proposals for a school crossing patrol site at Edwinstree Middle School. The crossing point will be an uncontrolled crossing on a flat-top road hump that will be patrolled only during school drop off and pick up hours. The proposed improvements will improve pedestrian safety, particularly for the schoolchildren crossing the road during patrol hours. Residents and key stakeholders will shortly receive details of the scheme for consultation response. I hope you will support these proposals which aim to improve road safety for schoolchildren.

The key features and benefits of the proposal are:

- Provision of an uncontrolled crossing point on a flat-top road hump on Bowling Green Lane south of the junction with White Hart Close.
- Provision of a school crossing patrol site on the flat-top road hump.
- Installation of wig-wags and patrol signage on the approaches to the school crossing location to highlight the patrol crossing point.
- Widening of the eastern footway south of White Hart Close for approximately 50m.
- Extension of the no waiting provision on Bowling Green Lane to the south of the proposed road hump to improve visibility to the crossing point.



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration 2-5th June

To celebrate the historic occasion of the Queen's 70th Anniversary of her ascension to the throne we have been blessed with a four-day bank holiday weekend. To mark the celebration the Town Council are organizing an all-day musical event, with fun fair, on Saturday 4th June. A street party in the High Street, as we did for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012, has also been suggested for Sunday 5th June. If you are interested in joining a working group to organize the street party, please contact me on the details below.

Equally, if you are proposing to hold your own street party, I would be happy to help organise the road closure for you. Please let me know.

Electric Buses

Hertfordshire County Council has recently submitted its bid for government funding to support the introduction of over 20 electric buses in Stevenage. The ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas) scheme is a central government initiative to help local transport authorities introduce zero emission buses, together with the infrastructure needed to support them. The county council, in partnership with bus operator Arriva, were successful with their initial proposal and have now submitted their final business plan. A decision on whether the plan has been successful should be known this March. The ZEBRA scheme funding would see a total of 27 of Stevenage's ageing diesel bus fleet replaced with new electric ones, which should be in service by 2024.

The HertsLynx on-demand rural bus service will also add an electric bus to its fleet this summer. The zero-emission vehicle will be used as a trial and hopefully, if successful, the whole fleet of five vehicles could become zero emission battery operated. I am hoping that the new electric bus will be based here in Buntingford with a rapid charging facility at the Community Centre.



Councillor Advice

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

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



Apply Now For A Grant To Help Celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

With preparations underway for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee this summer, East Herts Council has opened applications for small grants to help celebrate. The grants of up to £300 can be used to help fund street parties, lunches and beacon lighting events. We anticipate receiving more applications than we can fund. Those applications that will be successful are those that will show how they will create a lasting legacy for residents and their community. **The closing date for applications is 15th April.**



For details on how to apply, including eligibility criteria, visit our webpage:
<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/community-and-health/grants-and-funding/funding-community-organisations-and-individuals>



Buntingford Gardeners' Club

There was a good turnout of members and visitors at our February meeting. We were informed and entertained by Lucy Blunden, a Medical Herbalist, about how what we know as weeds can actually be beneficial to our health. From the humble dandelion to the innocuous daisy, each plant can be harvested to provide a natural solution to many medical conditions.

The next meeting will be our Annual General Meeting which will be held on Wednesday 1st March.

We hold monthly meetings in the United Reformed Church Hall on the first Wednesday of every month, except for January and August, starting at 8pm. We are a group of like-minded people, some more expert at gardening than others, but all enjoy the pleasures and pitfalls of the plant world. This year we are planning a trip to RHS Garden Hyde Hall near Chelmsford.

New members and visitors are always welcome. Contact the Secretary for information, telephone **01763 271885**.

The History of Layston First School – Part 2

In the early 1920s a new headmaster, Mr Dennis, was appointed at Layston School. By then the boys' and girls' schools had merged, with younger children taught in the old boys' school and older children, from about the age of 11 upwards, taught in the girls' school which was the bigger of the two buildings. Mr Dennis became well known in the town. He was very musically minded and formed a school choir that won many prizes at inter-school singing competitions. In addition to this he formed a Buntingford Choral Society and directed the local drama club in their productions. Several former pupils remember Mr Dennis – and also a teacher called Miss Anthony whose legs and feet they often had to massage because they were sore.



Headmaster Mr Dennis (centre) with the Layston School Choir who had won at the North and East Herts Music Festival in 1930.

The vicar came once a week to give Religious Instruction, which was by all accounts not a popular lesson. One former pupil Cyril Clarke recounted an incident when he was given the job of refilling a glass-fronted cistern. This entailed climbing a ladder at the front of the class while another boy, 'Dubbin' Parker, handed up jugs of water. One day Dubbin wanted to go up the ladder and fill the cistern. Cyril was not happy but gave in. The vicar had his back to the two boys, but the rest of the class could see what was going on as Cyril pulled the ladder away leaving poor Dubbin hanging from a very hot pipe, switching from hand to hand trying not to get burnt. I am sure the class found it very amusing! The ladder was restored so Dubbin could get down, and he never asked to climb it again.

There was no kitchen in either school building so children who didn't go home for lunch were walked down to the Technical Institute in Baldock Road where lunch was served. The Technical Institute was also used for some lessons: the boys went there for woodwork and the girls for cookery. In the 1920s four 14-year-olds did a teacher training course there to become pupil teachers. Lucy Harry and Phyllis Jackson, both from Buckland, and Frank Scrivenor and Mary Howard from Buntingford split their learning between the Technical Institute and Layston School.



In addition to normal lessons the boys tended a garden which was on what is now the school playground down to Paddock Road.

Every local village had its own school, most of which were affiliated to the local church, and they all encountered the same problems: lack of funds, children missing classes because they were working instead, or unable to get to school because of bad weather – children all had to walk to school, some of them for miles over fields and muddy tracks. The government wanted to change the schools into 'Board schools', which were funded by local education authorities, which gave them more control. One by one the local schools closed – Kelshall in 1922 with the pupils then walking to Therfield, and Rushden in 1936 with their pupils going to Wallington. When Wallington closed in 1939 the pupils were moved to Sandon which had got a new building in 1939. Buckland, Aspenden, Westmill and Wyddial schools all closed and most of the pupils went to Layston. Cottered



Other teachers remembered by some older Buntingford residents include Miss Marsden, later to become Mrs Corp. This picture, taken in 1926, shows her on the left with trainee pupil teacher Frank Scrivenor.



Mrs Skipp on her retirement, being presented with a Teasmaid by the Rev Blyth.

seemed to buck the trend – they managed to stay open and were moved into a new school building in 1974, but this too finally closed in 1993 (the building is now the Hertfordshire Girl Guide Centre).

As you can imagine, Layston was getting full to bursting as it catered for children from the age of 4 or 5 up to 14 and 15-year-olds. Children who passed the 11-plus exam moved on to Grammar schools, the boys to Hertford Grammar, now known as Richard Hale (the school had originally been built by Richard Hale in 1617), and the girls to Ware

Grammar, now Presdales. But everyone else stayed at Layston and by the 1930s it was obvious the situation couldn't continue: the town needed a new senior school. Finally, in 1939, Buntingford Secondary School (now Edwinstree) was built.

Possibly the best-known teacher at Layston and still talked about today was Mrs Skipp, who was the head from 1942 to 1967. Pupils remember her toffee tin at weekly assembly with children who had done well being allowed a sweet from the tin. Ron Coxall attended the school during this period and remembers his time as follows:

"I attended the school from 1956 till July 1962 whereupon I passed the 11-plus and went to Hertford Grammar. Buntingford Primary was of course the only school in the town back then ... [It] had three main buildings: the large red brick building, which is still there; the 'top class' which was a separate building (now demolished) adjoining the Causeway; and there was a newer classroom to accommodate first year pupils.

"When I started there was no kitchen or dining facilities. School lunches were provided in the Technical Institute and the entire school was marched up there and back in a long crocodile line. (I went home for lunch so didn't partake of the delights on offer.) A kitchen and dining room was built round about 1960 so that everyone no longer had to be marched through the town (I still went home for lunch however). Toilet facilities were primitive – for the boys it was just a wall (outside). Don't know what the girls had to endure ... The only option seemed to be to hold everything in until you got home!

"Meanwhile, every year a sinister mobile unit arrived and parked on the Causeway for two days, whereupon various medical people in white coats lured you in then prodded, poked and puggled every conceivable part of your body, whilst shaking their heads and whispering to your parents that you were unlikely to make it to your 15th birthday. Luckily most of us did make it and we're all now 70.

"Mrs Skipp was the headmistress, teachers were Miss Randall, Mrs Hossack, Mrs Corp, Miss Dodwell, Mrs Jackson and Mr Hazelwood who taught the 'top class'. He was replaced latterly by Mr Beverly Clifford, a cross between the Marquis de Sade and your favourite Uncle. Mrs Corp was a very traditional old school teacher. Grey hair in a bun, squeaky cork shoes and a huge upright bicycle with a basket on the front. No one ever crossed her. My favourite was Mrs Jackson, an elderly lady from Buckland, she taught me and I am forever in her debt.

"There were two houses, Emerald and Gold, and competition between them was fierce. I was in Emerald, but for 2 years I wore a gold badge because I liked the colour, which caused great confusion, particularly to myself.

“We were very much a C of E school, morning assemblies would always contain multiple prayers and hymns, often *Onward Christian Soldiers* or my favourite *He Who Would Valiant Be*. Whenever there was an accident at sea, we would sing *For Those in Peril on the Sea*, even though Buntingford was miles from the sea. At Christmas we went to Layston Church for a Carol Service. Last day of the summer term we went to church and would sing *God Be with You Till We Meet Again*, I found this very moving. Every week the vicar, Rev Williams, would take us for a lesson in religious instruction. He was the dullest ... person I have ever met. So as The Beatles once said, no one was saved.

“According to my school reports there were 41 in my class, of which three boys – myself, Hugh Ormerod and Dennis Bavister – got to Hertford Grammar and Ann Piggott went to Ware Grammar, leaving 37 to go to Edwinstree. Not sure how I managed to get to Grammar School as I discovered from my old school reports that I’d had about 4 million days off sick, having encountered every childhood disease known to medical science at least twice. I also remember in the first year at Grammar School we were given a day off to return to our primary school in order that we could be paraded in front of them like some sort of returning triumphant heroes. Really embarrassing.”



The new building with the old Adams Memorial School roof just visible on the right.

By the 1960s it was decided that the original boys' school was no longer suitable so in 1965 it was demolished and by 1969 a new building had replaced it at a cost of £51,700, including furniture and fittings. The new building contained a gym, assembly hall and dining room. The old Adams Memorial School was refurbished, the high Victorian windows lowered, and two classrooms for reception and infants were made. It was at this stage that the name was changed to Layston First School because, with other local schools, Buntingford moved to a three-tier school system which consisted of:

- a first school catering for ages 5 to 9 (Reception to Year 4)
- a middle school catering for ages 9 to 13 (Year 5 to Year 8)
- a secondary school catering for ages 13 to 18 (Year 9 to Year 13.)

When Buntingford switched to the three-tier system Layston's numbers instantly declined, giving them more room to cater for the 5 to 9 year olds. The three-tier system is still followed today by the Rib Valley Schools, which include Anstey, Hormead, Jenyns, Layston, Millfield and Roger De Clare as first schools, Edwinstree and Ralph Sadler as middle schools, and Freman College as the secondary school.

By 1984 Layston's school roll had dropped to 104 children. Millfield School, however, was oversubscribed and concern grew as to the fate of Layston. The reason for the decrease was that Millfield had a nursery attached to the school and children who attend a school nursery usually move onto the reception class in the same school. Layston had a nursery

provision but no money for teachers to staff it. Layston cut their classes from 5 to 4 with about 25 in each class, whilst Millfield classes had over 35 in each class. The Council seemed loath to do anything to improve the situation, which throughout all my research into our schools seems to have been pretty much their attitude. In September 1984 the situation improved when a Jack and Jill PreSchool opened its doors at Layston and from then pupil numbers gradually increased.

Nowadays Layston First School is thriving. They take children from 4 to 9 and each year has a maximum intake of 30, so children are taught in a single age class. They have a preschool nursery catering for children from age two-and-a-half, which operates from a room within the old Adams Memorial School. Buntings Nursery operates a Breakfast Club which starts at 7.15am and an After School Club which runs till 6pm. Both these clubs operate from Layston School buildings. So as you can see the school has changed in many ways and now delivers an excellent education for all the children there. Next month it's all about Edwinstree.

Carol Emery, Buntingford Local History Group

All the photos in this article are courtesy of Buntingford In Old Photographs, which you can find on Facebook.

Calling all Buntingford residents!

Please support Buntingford Market

**Every Monday, starting from 8am and finishing around 2-3pm,
Buntingford Market takes place on Market Hill.**

Stalls on the market can vary from week to week, but usually include plants, household goods, pet foods, bric-a-brac, handmade cards, and often a few surprises. The market is hoping to attract more traders and the best way to do that is to have more customers, so please come along and see if there is anything to tempt your fancy. Or perhaps you are interested in having a stall? Unlike most markets, the stalls in Buntingford are RENT FREE. Ask at the Town Council office in the Manor House for information, or go along on Monday morning and chat to the stall holders to find out more.

**Reed Garden Club in Reed Village Hall
Wednesday 9th March at 2pm**

This months talk is 'Pelham Stone' by Tina Rowland.

Admission £2, including tea /coffee

The Buntingford Branch of the Royal British Legion

The Branch has resumed its usual **Monthly Meetings** in The Crown's function room on the second Wednesday of the month, subject to any Government Covid restrictions in place at any time. The date of the next meeting is: **9th March 2022**.

Buntingford W.I.

There was a slight panic last month when our speaker had to cancel two days before our February meeting, but luckily Robin Webb stepped in and saved the day! His talk, entitled 'A Silk Purse from a Pigs Nose', took us through the history and restoration of Pigs Nose, the thatched cottage with topiary rabbits alongside the River Rib.

We saw how the cottage started life as a small barn in the mid-16th century and then expanded over the years. It had been on the market for some time when Robin and Pat Webb took it on to restore. It was riddled with woodworm but they could see its potential. We were able to see the progress over many years by the slides which Robin showed us, including the major setback of the 1968 flood when the river rose so high it ran through the ground floor! Robin could not throw any light on why the cottage is called Pigs Nose, but he did discover that in 1740 that stretch of the river was known as Pigs Snout. Robin created the topiary rabbits, which are so popular with passing children, as a tribute to the family's pet rabbit which they had for many years.

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 10th March** at 7.15pm at the URC Hall (opposite McColls). Our speaker is Jeff Rozelaar on 'An Actor's Life for Me'. We've had Jeff before on a different subject and his talks are very entertaining. Visitors are welcome to all our meetings, so if you are new to Buntingford (and even if you're not!) just turn up on the night and come to see what Buntingford W.I. is all about.

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

Val Hume

Have you recently moved house?

Are you newly retired?

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Your local NWR group is looking for members

A new group in Buntingford is starting soon! For more information, contact Cath Heslop at cath.heslop@nwr.org.uk

Unit 31, Park Farm Industrial Estate, Ermine Street, Buntingford, Herts, SG9 9AZ
Registered Charity number 295198

“I have made so many friends, discussed and explored interesting and challenging subjects. It has lifted my spirits in life's down periods and at times I have laughed till I ached.”

Friendship

Conversation

Fun


CONNECTING WOMEN

THE CAROUSEL OF LIFE

Life is like a carousel gently spinning round.
A more apt description is hard to be found.
Sometimes it spins fast and can make us feel quite sick.
Others times it slows right down and life is not so quick.
We start off slow as we are born and the roundabout is steady.
As we grow older it gets faster and for this we are quite ready.
For some of us it spins so fast and that's when we hit trouble.
It's the time of life we can't control and everything is a muddle.
We try to hold on and not let go as it spins us right around.
We accept the ups of life, so we must also accept the downs.
It's not easy to stay steady on the carousel of life.
But we must learn to take it all as we spin on this ride.
Then suddenly, before you know, it slows and then a full stop.
That is when it becomes our time to quietly get off.
For some the ride has not been so good, others have made it count.
But no matter what the ride was like, in the end we have to dismount .
So take the carousel of life, it's up to you how you go round and round.
But remember it's very precious, with lots of ups and downs.

Jackie Smith

BUNTINGFORD ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Following on from the February issue where we shared some tips on how to reduce energy consumption in the home, we thought it was worth taking a look at what energy tariffs look like at the moment and how 100% renewable electricity tariffs compare with non-renewable. So we compiled this table (*opposite*) from a sample drawing on both 100% renewable electricity providers and the Big Six. With so many energy companies forced to cease trading recently the choice is somewhat limited, but see how those listed compare with the tariff(s) you are on. We found that a 100% renewable electricity tariff isn't necessarily more expensive than fossil fuel or nuclear generated electricity – Octopus Energy are particularly competitive and are recommended by *Which* magazine.

You can check how your current provider is doing with regard to its green credentials by logging on to <https://switchit.green/> who evaluate the green credentials of UK energy providers against three key criteria: (1) What proportion of their electricity supply is from renewables; (2) How the energy suppliers procure their renewable energy; and (3) Do they supply green gas or carbon offset the gas they sell.

Madela and the BACCS Team

Find us on Facebook: [@BACCSBuntingford](#)
Email us: BACCS@tutanota.com Website: <http://BACCS.uk>

(see table right)



WHAT DO YOU WANT
BUNTINGFORD
TO LOOK LIKE IN
2050?



BACCS PRICE COMPARISON OF RENEWABLE AND NON-RENEWABLE ENERGY TARIFFS

Company Name	Switch It Score	Tariff type/name Rates based on single meter tariffs	Electricity Pence/ kWh	Daily rate Pence/ day	Gas Pence/kWh	Daily rate Pence/day	Exit Fee
Octopus Energy https://octopus.energy/ Which recommended 2021	5/5	Flexible/2022 Tracker Fixed (12 months) Supergreen (Fixed 12m)	27.54 37.52 37.52	18.52 24.01 24.01	6 9.92 10.17	15.09 26.10 26.10	None None None
Ecotricity https://www.ecotricity.co.uk/	5/5	Winter Fixed Electric (1 year) Winter Fixed Gas (1 year)	48.36	26.20	11.25	35.42	£200 per fuel type
Green Energy, Ware https://www.greenenergyuk.com/	N/A	Sparkling EKO	39.93 41.13	32.95 33.51	11.75 12.95	31.31 31.31	None None
Good Energy https://www.goodenergy.co.uk/	5/5	Apply in person					
British Gas https://www.britishgas.co.uk/	Tariff N/A	The Green One 100% renewable electricity	33.13	25.60	9.20	19.18	None
Eon https://www.eonnext.com/	3/5	Next 2 Year v17 (2 year fixed)	34.10	37.40	9.05	21.01	None
EDF https://www.edfenergy.com/	2/5		33.95	24.02	8.85	26.12	£100 per fuel type
Scottish Power https://www.scottishpower.co.uk/	3/5	Fixed Price May 2023 M1	37.25	24.01	10.30	26.11	£30 per fuel type

Please note that these rates were correct as of mid February 2022 but are subject to change.

Most of these energy companies will have special rates for electric car users who need to charge at home, using a reduced night time rate, so if this applies to you it is worth asking about these special rates.

ANIMALS – A Short Story

Lara, at 11 years old, had a mind of her own. She had, for example, announced to her parents last year that she was vegetarian and would not be eating any fish or meat meals prepared by them or anyone else. This was not unexpected in the family, used as they were to their daughter's complaints on behalf of animals, fish, insects and birds. In Lara's view, the human race had fallen woefully short of her own exacting standards, and particularly of compassion towards all living things and, if she could not persuade others to think as she did, she would at least have her own way at the dinner table. Her parents sighed, mounted a weak response, and then gave in to cooking vegetarian food for her even if they continued to eat meat and fish themselves, though the quantity decreased (to Lara's satisfaction) because it was easier to cook one meal instead of two. Lara's older brother, Ben, liked winding her up by insisting on sausages and beans or fish fingers and chips, but on the whole the family got on with the new regime.

Today, however, had been a bit of a jolt. Lara wasn't a big fan of Biology at the best of times, the teacher seeming to think it appropriate to bring in worms and butterflies to examine under the microscope. But today's lesson had been on Human Reproduction. Although Miss Shepherd had divided the class in two, with the boys led out by the Teaching Assistant to another room, there had been much giggling and tittering amongst her classmates. How boring, she thought loftily. The lesson had started with an anatomical look at rabbits and what they did to reproduce, and then moved on to humans. She knew a lot of it already – they all did. She'd seen some semi-porn videos, watched dogs mounting anything that stood still, listened to jokes in the playground. Her Mum had tried to tell her something last year about bleeding once a month, and they'd gone out and bought a packet of pads to keep in a bedroom drawer. But there was something about the clarity of the line drawings on the white board, the way that Miss Shepherd had talked about 'relationships' and 'giving consent' that freaked Lara out a bit. All the girls were silent whilst they listened, so perhaps they weren't feeling that confident either.

Towards the end of class, Miss Shepherd said: "Are there any questions?" One girl asked why humans didn't have an oestrus cycle like other animals. Miss Shepherd seemed not to know, but took the opportunity to emphasise that girls and women, after they had started menstruating, could get pregnant at any time. Lara began to wish she had been born a cow or, preferably, a deer which apparently only went into oestrus once a year. Lara wanted to ask a question but couldn't quite get the words out of her mouth: "Why do boys wave their penises around at every opportunity, and what is oral sex?" whizzed through her mind. As the class ended and the girls made way for the boys to have their sex ed session, she speculated to herself that animals seemed a lot more practical about the whole thing. Less love and more biological inclination, no embarrassment or complicated feelings. On the whole, she thought that human sexual behaviour was a bit weird, even if it was designed for making babies.

On the bus going home, the whole year group traded stories about their pets' sexual activities, questions they did and didn't ask in class, magazines and videos they'd seen or not seen. To Lara, it all sounded rather disgusting and disquieting and she was glad to keep her thoughts to herself. What she was actually thinking was that humans could be a bit too much like animals sometimes. She couldn't imagine ever wanting to do those things with a boy, boys being the most annoying and unattractive creatures on the planet. Others on the bus were giggling hysterically about their own parents having sex and Lara tried to envisage, for five seconds, what that might have looked like between her own mother and father. Yuk!

At home that evening, her mother asked the usual question: "How was school today?" Lara was silent and Ben grunted – no difference there. But Joyce, who'd had the letter

from the school warning parents that they were doing sex education today, made a point of asking again later as she lingered in Lara's bedroom: "How did the Biology lesson go?"

"You knew what it was going to be about then?"

"Yes, the school wrote to all parents so that we had the option to take you out of that class. Religious grounds and all that. But I thought you could cope."

"Well yes, of course. But the boys were horrible on the bus going home, even worse than usual. Everyone was giggling except me."

"Boys can be like that. But what did you think of the lesson?"

"Mmmm, well, I don't think I'd realised how much like animals we are. That's all."

"Ah yes", Joyce replied, "that's true." She smiled at Lara as she turned off the light, and heard Lara whisper "I'm never going to do that, never. I'm going to love animals for ever, not humans. G'night Mum."

Chris Kell, Buntingford Writers' Group



Braughing Sing Choir

Spring is in the air, and at Braughing Sing we have a song in our hearts! After so long not being able to rehearse, we are back on our feet. Are you ready for a change? Do you long to have fun singing out with other people? Then Braughing Sing is for you!

Braughing Sing meets every Tuesday in term time at Jenyns School in Braughing at 7.30pm. We sing everything from Mamma Mia to Mozart, with songs from the shows and sea shanties in between! We have space for high sopranos, loud altos, deep bases, and tremendous tenors. We encourage singers of all ages to come and try us out. We usually perform at least twice a year, at Christmas and in the summer. Braughing Sing are a friendly bunch who will be delighted to welcome you. There are no auditions and the first two sessions are free. Thereafter fees are £77 per term. See <https://www.facebook.com/thebraughingsing/> or <https://braughingsing.com> for more information.

This month sees the 11th Anniversary of the formation of the Buntingford Choir.

Around 20 people went along to the first session at Edwinstree School, under the Musical Direction of Mandy Wilson, and the first song was sung*.



The choir has moved to Millfield School for practice sessions, but is still together and still has among its number some of the original members. We have regularly sung at major Buntingford events, such as the Classic Car Show, the Carnival and Senior Citizens' Christmas Parties, plus in schools and Care Homes. This year we are planning to be at the Queen's Jubilee Day Celebration and the Summer Arts Festival. **Choir Practice** is now in full swing on **Monday evenings** at Millfield School in Monks Walk, Buntingford, starting at 19.30.

If you are interested in joining the Choir please email: info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk, or for more information go to our website: www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk

* The first song was The Beatles' *Eight Days a Week*

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Please contact for price list:

Soup of the Month – Broccoli and Stilton!

Phone or Text: 07501 495 940 Tel: 01763 289 738

Recipe for March *Deep Dish Plum Pie*

I bought some plums from the Market last week and made this delightful, vintage Plum Pie. Delicious with ice cream!

Ingredients

Pastry

350g plain flour
175g lard & block margarine
Pinch of salt
1 egg yolk (optional)
45ml cold water

Filling

900g fresh plums
25g butter or margarine
½ tsp almond essence
175g caster sugar
40g plain flour
40g ground almonds

Method

1. Make the pastry by rubbing the fat into the flour until it resembles breadcrumbs and add the salt. Mix in the egg yolk and cold water, a little at a time, until the pastry forms a ball. Allow to rest in the fridge for 30 minutes.
2. Grease an ovenproof dish 25.5 x 20.5 cm (10 x 8 in) with the butter or margarine. Roll out three-quarters of the pastry to fit the dish. Line the dish with the pastry.
3. Halve and stone the plums and arrange on the pastry. Sprinkle on the almond essence and dot with butter.
4. Mix the sugar, flour and ground almonds together and spread over the plums.
5. Roll out the remaining pastry and cut into 4 long strips. Lay these across the top of the tart. For extra effect, twist the strips before laying them across.
6. Bake in the oven pre-heated to 200°C, gas mark 7, for 40-45 minutes until the pastry is golden and the tart piping hot.
7. Serve warm or cold.

Elaine – Vintage Cakes and Sumptuous Soups

Tel: 01763 289 738 / m. 07501 495 940

Facebook – Sumptuous Soups and Country Cakes



The Friends of the Rib & Quin website is one of the main tools of communication, alongside our email distribution list, that we use to inform our supporters of the latest news relating to our chalk streams. This is supported by our social media channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We were thrilled therefore to see that traffic to the FORQ website increased considerably during 2021, with a 57% increase in visitors and a 45% increase on pages viewed compared to 2020. The most popular blogs were those on Peter Sinclair's walks, mapping the Rib and Quin.

We received a communication, in mid-January, from Thames Water's Catchment Lead outlining plans for sewage treatment work infrastructure, which included locations within our catchment. Included in this are their plans for Buntingford's Sewage Treatment Works. We have picked out a few key points, which you can see in the January blog section of our website.

Also released in January was the UK Government's Environmental Audit Committee's report on Water Quality in Rivers. This 139-page document takes a bit of reading but ends with more than 80 'Conclusions and Recommendations' on a variety of topics, including (but not limited to) "Assessing water quality in rivers in England", "Rivers fit to swim in", "Agricultural Pollution" and "Sewage Pollution".

One of the points the report makes is that the Environment Agency has reduced the number of sites it monitors. Therefore the monitoring done by organisations such as FORQ, as Citizen Science, becomes more and more important.

Riverfly Monitoring of all sites has continued through the winter months. Results of all the monitoring sessions, in Buntingford, Standon, Thundridge and Braughing, are detailed on our website and added to the Anglers' Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) database.

Now that things are starting to open up, the FORQ executive are keen to meet with members again so are looking to organise another public meeting. We are checking out venues and speakers and hope that it will be held in early April. More information will be sent out when available.

If you missed it, a recording of the Chalk Aquifer Alliance's talk on 19th January, given by Jo Bradley from Stormwater Shepherd, is available on the CAA website.

Useful links:

<https://friendsoftherib.wordpress.com/blog/>
<https://chalkaquiferalliance.wordpress.com/events/>

Pauline Ayres, Communications FORQ

The ***Buntingford Journal*** does not charge local community organisations or charities to advertise their events. So if you would like to see your event in these pages, please contact either **Christine Noble** on **01763 273095** / email **Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk**, or **Keith Edwards** on **01763 272032** / email **Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk**

Barkway Park Golf Club

The weather has generally been kind to golfers this winter. Very few days have been lost, although it's been a bit nippy on occasions! In any event, local golfers have taken the opportunity to enjoy their pastime in this attractive parkland course which is in excellent condition for the time of year.

The season is beginning to build up for club members. Monthly medal and stableford competitions are underway with Mark Turner winning the February stableford with 37 points, which was impressive given the windy conditions on the day. The seniors section continues to flourish, meeting every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and its programme of friendly matches against other clubs will commence later this month.

Enquiries about membership are welcome – 01763 848215.

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& Stortford
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**Personal Training, Venue
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Fitness Pilates, Circuits, Dance Fit,
HIIT, Hooping, Boxing & Mindfulness



WWW.JACQUI-SMITH.NET
07956 647806

March 2020 is when all our lives were changed and teaching fitness changed to something I would never ever have imagined. Our online Zoom Studio still has a large subscription number, so as long as people want we will provide.

Venue classes are all running well and in March we are planning some themed weeks in all our Pilates Classes – Knees, Balance, Shoulders, Neck, etc. Our FREE monthly challenge for March is back care. More information on my social media pages [@jacquismithpersonaltrainer](https://www.instagram.com/jacquismithpersonaltrainer) and in all our classes

We are running our online Absolute Beginners Club for Pilates. This is specifically for those that want to try out, but are afraid to come into a class not knowing what to expect, so sign up for our 14-day introduction club at <http://jacqui-smith.net/abc-for-pilates/>

Want to come to an Exercise Class or need help getting into a Healthy Lifestyle? Then contact us at theteam@jacqui-smith.net or call me on **07956 647806**.

Jacqui Smith, Personal Trainer

**The Buntingford Journal is delivered FREE to members of the
Buntingford Civic Society, or it can be purchased from:
THE CO-OP • LOCKS, STOCK & MORE • MARK DOEL BUTCHERS
McCOLL'S (The Post Office) • RILEY'S FAMILY BUTCHERS**

Citizens Advice East Herts' offices are currently closed to drop-ins due to Covid, but you can contact them by phone – call the local Message Line for a call back on **01920 459 944** or the Herts Advice Line on **0800 144 8848** (10am-4pm, Mon to Fri). Or see the online options at:

citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk



Resigning and Your Notice Period

I've just been offered a new job and now I need to tell my current employer. The new company wants me to start as soon as possible. The problem is, we're already a bit short-staffed where I am now and I don't know how soon I'll be allowed to leave. How should I bring all this up with my boss?

Congratulations on your new role. It can feel awkward telling your current employer you're moving on. The time between telling your employer you've found a new position and you actually leaving is known as your notice period.

If you've been in your current job for less than a month, you won't have to give any notice period (unless your contract says otherwise). If it's more than a month, you'll have to give at least one week's notice. Your contract should make it clear exactly how long is expected. If you don't have a contract, and your employer has no written record of you agreeing to a notice period, you should give at least one week's notice.

It's worth waiting until your new employer has confirmed your employment, for example by giving you a start date, before handing in your resignation. It's then best to resign in writing (email is fine), so that you have a record of the date. We have a page on **handing in your notice** on the Citizens Advice website, with tips on how to write this letter.

You can work a longer notice than the one in your contract if you agree it with your employer. If you're keen to move on sooner rather than later, it may also be possible to negotiate a shorter notice period than your contract says. If you want to go down this route, it can be useful to reassure your current employer that you will tackle any urgent work before finishing.

Fixed-term contracts are a bit different, as you won't need to give notice if you intend to leave on the last day of contract. Leaving early would usually mean giving at least one week's notice unless your contract says otherwise.

Don't forget about your holiday days during your notice period. If you have unused paid holiday you should speak to your employer about either taking these during the notice period or being paid for them.

Finally, sometimes people can change their mind about moving jobs or find their circumstances alter. If this happens to you, you should speak to your current employer to see what the options are and if you can stay in your current role.

Everyone's situation is different, but if you face any challenges with an existing or potential employer, contact Citizens Advice for advice on **0800 144 8848** or visit our website pages about what to do when you're leaving a job.

At Citizens Advice East Herts we provide free and confidential advice on any issue. For more information, see our website or call our Message Line on **01920 459 944**.

www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk



Happy belated New Year to everyone! Apologies we didn't make the cutoff date for last month's journal, we've simply been too busy! As it was January, we had a large number of people booking our 'No Sweat Intros', where a person can come in and find out what CrossFit is all about without any financial obligation, try a short taster session and discuss fitness goals. You can still book one at www.crossfitbuntingford.co.uk.

We have been able to employ our first coach, the excellent Sarah Lidsmith who is a level 4 PT Strength and Conditioning coach. Sarah –

on the left in the photo, chatting with Michelle Cunningham – is now doing part time hours for us which helps enormously. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the CrossFit team, and we are very happy to have her working with us.

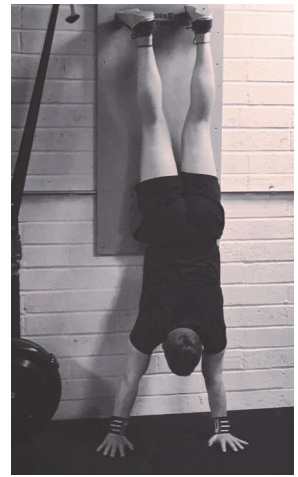
Also in January, we did it! As I think I have mentioned previously, we wanted to start a class for like-minded **Seniors** (60+) looking to maintain their health and independence as they grow older. We held an open evening and discussed it with a group to explore when they would ideally like to train. Opinion was split between mornings and evenings, so we settled on two times: **Thursdays at 10.30am and 7pm.**



The intention is to run a pilot for 6 weeks and review from there. Of course, we already have some seniors taking part in our usual classes and they enjoy what we do immensely, but if you would prefer to exercise in a group of similar age and ability you might like to try our seniors' class. Remember, everything we do is tailored to the individual. If you have a stiff back, for instance, we will find exercises that you can do without putting your back under more duress.

We hosted two workshops in January. The first was on 'Handstands', when former Team GB gymnast Maya Brodie-Dowden gave a great session on improving our handstands (photos top right). The second was on 'Double Unders' (what's that? I hear you say). There are many skills to CrossFit and a 'double under' is where the skipping rope goes under your feet twice for one jump. It takes some time to get the technique and Matty Hollingdale, CrossFit Level 3 Coach, delivered a masterclass for us.

In early February we held our first Boot Camp pilot. Four days of intensive exercise from 9am to 3pm each day. The camp included items such as nutrition coaching, hikes, kettlebell workshops and TRX, to name a few things. It worked really well and we look to do another in the summer months. We have also now added a new class at CrossFit Buntingford – 'In Person Yoga' with the fantastic Olivia Haskey on Tuesday lunchtimes 12.30 to 1.15pm, or Wednesday evenings 8 to 9pm. You can book onto these classes by visiting Liv's website at www.yogachronie.com.



In the next Journal I hope to report back on our efforts for the CrossFit Open. It's the very beginning of the CrossFit Games, where everyone can have a go at the same workouts as the eventual games winner (who qualifies through the Open and will eventually walk off with \$300,000), enter their scores online and compare themselves to someone in Brazil, for instance. It takes place on three weekends from February 24th and is great fun, so we can put Buntingford on the world map! If you fancy having a look, just pop along and help cheer on the participants. It promises to be a great atmosphere and you'd be welcome to come and see it.

Yours in CrossFit, Mick Nolan

BRAUGHING FAIR AND WHEELBARROW RACE

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday 9th July 2022



We are delighted to announce that the Braughing Fair and Wheelbarrow Race will be held this year on **Saturday 9th July – from 12.00 noon to 6.00pm.**

There will be all the usual fun of the fair, the dog show and, of course, the wheelbarrow races. We have introduced a new race this year – an Adult and Child Race: the Child must be aged 6 or over and remain in the wheelbarrow for the whole race.

So, start planning your fancy dress costumes and keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for updates nearer the time.

<https://www.facebook.com/BraughingWheelbarrowRace/>

<https://www.braughingwheelbarrowrace.com/>

Braughing Fair and Wheelbarrow Race Team look forward to seeing everyone in July.



MILLFIELD FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

www.millfield.herts.sch.uk



It's been a busy month for national events at Millfield and we have another busy month coming up! In February we marked Children's Mental Health Week (7th to 13th February), the NSPCC's Number Day and the Safer Internet Day, as well as specific year group 'enrichment days'. In March we will be celebrating World Book Day and Comic Relief's Red Nose Day and we will also be taking part in British Science Week. We would like to say thank you to our school community for all their contributions to these national events, all of which support wonderful charities.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Number Day

We were delighted to help raise funds for the NSPCC by taking part in their Number Day on 4th February. This not only makes an enormous difference to children today but also helps to change the lives of children tomorrow. Number Day is a great way to make maths fun and bring about a positive 'can-do' attitude towards the subject. Our children were invited to come to school dressed in anything related to numbers, in return for a small donation for the NSPCC. Throughout the day, the children participated in fun, curriculum-based maths challenges organised by our Maths and Computing Faculty.



Safer Internet Day

On 8th February we took part in Safer Internet Day. This year the theme was 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online'. We talked about how and where we use the internet and how to use it safely. We also looked at understanding consent in the digital world.

Roman Day

Our Year 3 children enjoyed a wonderful Roman enrichment day, taking part in a range of activities including making chariots and shields. It was a fantastic opportunity for them to embed their learning and fascination about the Romans!



World Book Day

On Thursday 3rd March we will celebrate World Book Day. On the day, the children will come to school wearing their cosiest pyjamas and everyone will bring along their favourite

bedtime story book. It will be lovely to see the children reading to one another and enjoying their books together.

British Science Week

We are looking forward to British Science Week from 11th to 20th March. During the school week, Millfield staff and children will become Scientists and take part in designing and carrying out science investigations.





Red Nose Day

Finally, we are all looking forward to having fun on Friday 18th March when the children will come into school with mad hair and dressed in red clothing to raise money for Red Nose Day.

Laura Kennedy-Weeks, Headteacher

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

Vision Matters @ Gravelly Barn



We're delighted that our much-delayed 'Vision Matters' Charity Exhibition of 12-inch canvases will finally be going ahead this year, from 13th–16th May, at the EJD studio at Gravelly Barn in Braughing.

Many of you have already bought 12-inch blank canvases – some have even been returned ready for the exhibition. Now it's time to get the rest of those canvases underway. You can use any medium you like – oil paints, acrylics, water-colours, charcoal, pencil, crayon, needlework, collage, photography, sculpture, tapestry ... The choice is as broad as your imagination – the only stipulation is that your work must remain within 12 inches square.

Blank canvases are still available at £10 each (see below). Completed canvases will be put on display at the exhibition in May and offered for sale at £45 each. All the money raised will

go to charities, which this year include the Epping Breast Care Unit (specifically for the mobile screening unit), and the BLISS and SANDS neonatal charities.

Completed canvases must be returned to Gravelly Barn by 31st March. Everyone submitting a completed canvas will be invited to a special private view on Thursday 12th May. Further details can be found on our website at www.gravellybarn.com

We are really excited that the exhibition can go ahead at last. If Covid conditions become severe once again we may have to review the dates, but you will be given plenty of advance notice. Please join us in taking part, either by buying a blank canvas or coming along to the exhibition in May. We look forward to seeing you.

If you would like to buy a blank canvas, please contact:
Jane Davalle / jdavalle@aol.com / Tel 07905 184619



Edwinstreet Middle School



A Voluntary Controlled Church of England School

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

Coronavirus update

Covid-19 continues to cause disruption amongst staff and students. We are currently experiencing our second 'outbreak' and students and staff have been in and out of school like yo-yos. First, we were told we didn't have to wear masks, then a week later all students were back in masks as the Covid virus began to spread throughout the school! Our students have shown great resilience in battling against the constant changes and restrictions. Just when we think it is all over, it changes again! We continue to be grateful to those parents who are testing their children twice a week and to those who have had their child vaccinated to help prevent the spread of the virus. We look forward to a time when we are able to live with this virus and hope that time is not too far away!

Preparing for Year 6 SATS

Our Year 6 students have been hit harder than any other group in the school: due to a Covid-19 outbreak just before Christmas, over a third of our Year 6 were in isolation. This has left students feeling under-confident and nervous about the SATs exam. We are so grateful that we are a middle school, as while these exams are important they do not indicate the end of their time with us. This allows us pursue a two-year recovery plan to support our students to learn well and secure a full recovery by the end of Year 8, before they move on to Freman College. I can't imagine how difficult it must be for those primary schools feeling pressured to cram their students through these exams.

In order to support parents of Year 6 students we held a virtual SATS meeting to provide parents with information on how they can help their child to prepare for the mock tests later this month, then the actual SATS in May. The meeting was also recorded for any parent unable to attend. We believe this information is vital in helping students to achieve. We have also made changes to our timetables to incorporate more maths and English lessons in Year 6, particularly in the mornings, rather than the afternoons.

Fullness Day

Our Christian value for this half term has been 'creation', the awe, wonder and responsibility we all have for our amazing earth. Our Fullness Day will consider how our lives contribute to climate change and the small changes we can make to help reduce the greenhouse gases we produce. In preparation, students took part in creating a vine-tree mural to display the commitments teachers and staff will make to reduce their carbon footprint. The photo shows the vine tree being painted. Unfortunately, due to the Covid outbreak and the large number of staff absent due to the virus, the day was postponed and will now take place after half term. We will share this with you in the next edition.



Jo Gant, Headteacher



www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford

More of our groups have now restarted following the lifting of Covid restrictions. Our Bridge group meets on Tuesday mornings and our Mah Jong group meets on Tuesday afternoons, both at the Bury. Members of the Carpet Bowls group, however, have decided to wait until October.

At the February monthly meeting Chairman Jim Farquhar showed members a “Lions’ Message in a Bottle”. This is a small green and white medical alert bottle for vulnerable

people. Inside the plastic bottle are two pieces of paper for the name, next of kin, details of any pets and medical information, plus two labels. Once completed one piece of paper goes inside the bottle, the other inside your purse or wallet. The bottle is then stored in the drawer of the refrigerator and one of the alert labels is put on the inside of the front door, the other on the outside of the fridge. It was the Lions organisation who came up with this ingenious safety idea several years ago and they distribute the bottles free of charge to anyone living alone or who is vulnerable.

Our speaker for Monday 14th March is Eve Regelous – “A Year in the Life of ...” During her 25-year career as a theatrical agent, celebrity booker and event organiser, Eve successfully co-ordinated more than 120 major events in over 50 different shopping or town centre venues across the UK, as well as working with numerous high profile corporate companies. From supplying one cat for a children’s party to hundreds of performers for parades and Christmas light switch-on events, whether in very small halls or at huge open-air shows, Eve has provided entertainments for audiences from as few as 6 to over 15,000. She has booked and worked with more than 70 celebrities, from pop stars to actors, presenters to antiques experts, sports personalities to novelty acts and numerous tribute performers.

We meet at the Seth Ward Community Centre – doors open 1.30pm.

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

www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford

Jean Cook

BUNTINGFORD SENIOR CITIZENS’ CLUB

MEETS EVERY **MONDAY** AFTERNOON (except Bank Holidays) AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL IN BALDOCK ROAD (opposite the Post Office/McColls) at **1.30 for 2pm** to enjoy an afternoon of tea/coffee, bingo, laughter and general socialising.

Later in the year we hope to be able to arrange a couple of outings and perhaps a meal out.

Do come and meet us.

For more information please call **Val on 01763 272019**

It's Electricker!

"What's going on Chicken Cleggy?" Both Foto Foggy and I chorused in unison. "Has the world gone mad?"

"How do you mean?" responded the main man. He had lifted his eyes from the mobile telephone which remains as always spliced onto to his palm. His sage-like countenance studied us both. "What are you two on about?" He brushed an invisible mote from the knee of his precision-ironed creased trouser of his Saville Row suit and taking a deep input of breath which was not short of despair, he continued. "Do you mean the greatest breakthrough in science and technology since the introduction of the tremolo arm?"

"No, you have missed the point, it's all this unseemly rush to make everything electric," Foto pointed out. Thankfully he is a sensible old-school type of chap and is not prone to adopting some of the buzzwords that have crept into the nation's vocabulary, like 'absolutely' and not forgetting the latest affectation so much used by politicians and reporters on screen where they start all replies to questions with the word 'Look'.

"Electric, everything's electric," Foto Foggy chirped. "We have only had electricity for all for about sixty years but now it is hailed as the panacea for all the world's ills."

Not wishing to be left out of the debate I put in my two pennyworth. "We got the electric in 1950."

"Well everything is electric now," continued Foto. "You cannot do anything without it, all the gadgets and kit in our homes runs on it, and this government of ours is trying get us totally electric within the decade. Trouble is, like online banking and the cash-less society, we will be completely dependent on the stuff."

"What about electric cars?" I put in. "That's the latest whizz and 'panacea' for all our ills." (I like to use the odd new word from time to time, I get them from old copies of Reader's Digest.)

"What about electric cars?" Chicken Clegg spoke without taking his eyes off the small device in his hand. "It says here that electric cars are cheaper to run and they are good for the planet green-wise. Everybody will be driving them in a couple of years or so. It's got to be a good idea."

Yeah! Like pulling up railway lines, answering demands for women's rights for equality by putting up the pension age, secretly selling off the NHS to foreign companies and encouraging us to go diesel, to name but a few.

I pondered upon this for a moment or so, but a niggling idea was nagging away inside my head. What if we all went totally electric for vehicles and we didn't have to pay road tax on these new vehicles, or very little anyway as now? And we didn't have to buy petrol and diesel – that would save us billions and billions of £s in fuel duty and VAT. We would be quids in! Although I can't imagine that the government will want that to happen, as the country would be broke within a week.

Again, once we are all electric, lured on by those who wish us to have the stuff in one form or another and offering bargain prices (bargain prices geared to get us all onside), then the price hikes take over, blaming world prices, computer failure or another pandemic. Of course the latest price hikes have had the effect of closing many small suppliers, bringing the Big Six a bonanza of new customers at inflated prices. The Big Six seem to operate a system in which all their prices are interestingly similar. Something which the customer cannot affect, especially since the spread of suppliers has been so severely trimmed. Could this be another worldwide cabal to make supply shortages drive

up prices, like petrol prices a few months ago, sugar and toilet rolls, and a variety of other products? I notice all the directors of main suppliers of raw materials and essentials are awarding themselves increased profits. Nice work if you can get it.

Just like with the banks, where robots and online accounts are all the rage, eliminating millions of working people's jobs, we have no control over any of this. What will be gained from that? I thought on (a dangerous activity for me at any time) – what else might be experienced not far into the future?

The power stations and National Grid will not be able to keep up with demand, there will forever be 'outages' as the media crows on about – you know, what we used to call power cuts (remember the three-day week?). Shops will close and fail, as will the lights, domestic and otherwise, refrigerators, tills and computers won't work, even essential services including traffic lights, hospitals, airports and planes, water and sewage works all will fail and everybody will need auxiliary power generators (running on petrol or diesel) in their homes to keep essential appliances like freezers running and perhaps a light or two, without which houses will be in darkness. Even so, the aforementioned taxes on fuel will be switched from petrol to electricity usage (you don't really think the government will give up their tax and VAT on fuel, do you?) Can you image such a scenario? People will be stranded in their homes, lifts will fail, under- and overground trains will stop without warning, and factories will shut. The list goes on.

At that point I was brought out of my reverie of gloom as Mrs Clegg, Mrs Foto Foggy and the memsahib came into view with a sumptuous repast. Laying out the silver tray and bone china upon the terrace's wrought-iron garden furniture, covering the sparkling white table cloth with cakes and such like, made a reassuring spectacle that brought things back into perspective. English-wise.

"What have you lot been talking about?" one of the trio asked and the other two just gave that 'look' which always said: "Behave yourself or else, when I get you home!"

Not wishing to upset the natural equilibrium and balance of power within the group and society at large, Chicken Clegg, Foto Foggy and myself thought it time to change the subject and strive for safer ground.

In conclusion, I am drawn to ask once again: "If this is progress why does it not make me feel better off, with more control over my life?" Life was far simpler when you had one area fuel company to deal with utilities and they were all owned by us, the British. Banking and buying things was much more secure all round. You could get a doctor's appointment with a smile and in good time, and the doctor actually saw you. Your records were hand-written with a pen or pencil and kept in a physical file, library cards were checked and rubber stamped, systems which worked even during an 'outage'. You could get your groceries with a torch if necessary and paid in cash, cars may have rusted quicker but it didn't need an electronics expert to change a set of spark plugs (sorry, injectors). Not to mention the snake-like cables across our front lawns and drives connected to any number of family vehicles!

Vyse

If you have something you would like to contribute to the *Journal* – a news item, a story, an opinion piece, poem, photograph or memory – please contact the editor, **Christine Noble**, on **01763 273095** / email **Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk**

BALA

Buntingford Action for the Less Able

Registered Charity No. 1094426

Minibus Trips in March & April 2022

	Time	Destination	Price
March			
Tues 1st	10-1.30	Brookfield Centre (M&S, Tesco)	£6
Wed 9th	11.30	Pub Lunch	£5
Mon 14th	10.30-2	Scotsdales Garden Centre	£6.50
Sat 19th	10-3	Thriplow Daffodil Festival (entrance fee applies)	Bus £6
Tues 22nd	10-3	Cambridge	£7.50
Mon 28th	10-2.30	St Ives	£8
Tues 29th	10-12	Coles Park Daffodils and Coffee, Westmill	£2
Wed 30th	10.30-2	Langford Garden Centre, Biggleswade	£6.50
April			
Tues 5th	9.30-3	Southend	£13
Thurs 7th	9.15-12	Bishops Stortford Town Centre	£5
Tues 12th	10.30-2	Saffron Walden	£6
Wed 13th	11.30	Pub Lunch	£5
Mon 18th	10.30-3	Welwyn	£7
Thurs 21st	10-1.30	Hoddesdon	£6
Tues 26th	9.30-1	Harlow – The Harvey Centre	£7

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

To book a seat or for more information: 01763 271909 or
07870 638480 (please be prepared to leave a message)

BALA Coffee Mornings – At URC Hall, Baldock Road

Friday 18th March, 10.00–11.30am

Friday 15th April, 10.00–11.30am

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Buntingford Civic Society

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



WHO ARE WE?

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

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

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

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

Publish the Buntingford Journal

Restored the town pump twice.

Restored the Town Cage

Initiated erection of Christmas lights in the High Street and Market Hill

Present an annual school civic award

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

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

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

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

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

Done River Rib cleans

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

Were actively involved with the production of the Neighbourhood Plan

Arranged four Buntingford in Bloom competitions our fifth in 2020 cancelled due to the pandemic.

Updated the circular walks on local footpaths leaflet in 2017

Hosted annual Civic Day walks

WHAT ARE WE PLANNING TO DO?

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

TO JOIN PLEASE SEE THE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON OUR WEBSITE

www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk

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Carers in Hertfordshire Online



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

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

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



Carers in Hertfordshire Hub groups meeting online via Zoom

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

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

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

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Most advertisers take a full year but shorter periods are available with costs on a pro rata basis.

For a small additional charge, your advert can be placed on the Civic Society website with a link to your website.

For more information call Keith Edwards on 01763 272 032 or email advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

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

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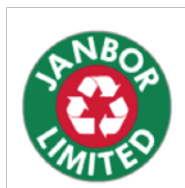
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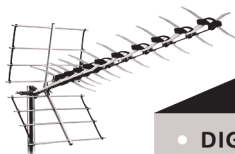
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