

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

Buntingford Journal



Bridgefoot House today, now a Grade 2 listed building.

Inside this month: An update on the restoration plan for the River Rib through Buntingford; two talented new music teachers come to our High Street; a history of the Buntingford Workhouse, better known today as Brigefoot House; and a sad farewell to Mr Basra, former Town Councillor and Mayor.

70p

**May 2021
Volume 46, No.3**



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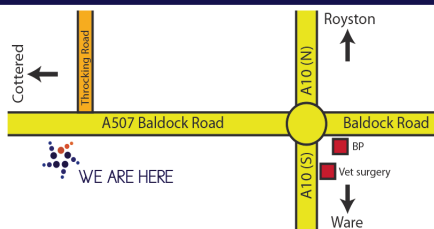
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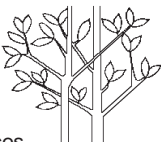
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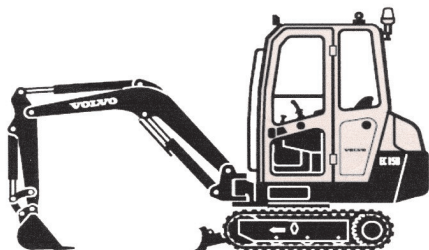
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Providing transport for hospital and doctors

appointments. Tel: Colin Horgan 07733 091731

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, RAPE,
RACE or HATE CRIME:**

Confidential Information Helpline: 01992 554440

(in emergency, dial 999)

LOCAL COUNCILS:

Buntingford Town Council – 01763 272222

East Herts District Council – 01279 655261

Housing – 01279 714714

Benefits – Freephone 0800 373852

For emergencies out of office hours: 01279 655261

Adult Care Services – 0300 123 4042

Children's Services – 0300 123 4043

Hertfordshire Highways – 0300 123 4047, or report
faults online: www.hertsdirect.org/highwayfaults

BUNTINGFORD LIBRARY:

High Street, Buntingford

Opening times: Mon, Tue, Thur 10:00–17:00

Fri 14:00–17:00 Sat 10:00–13:00

Telephone enquiries – 0300 123 4049

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

Option 2 – All other enquiries Mon–Fri 08:00–20:00,

Sat 09:00– 6:00

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 due to Covid.

Our nearest open recycling site is in Royston.

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 good to be back with a printed Journal! As more than one person has commented to me, it helps us feel that we are starting to get back to normal. We did produce online Journals for March and April, which were published on the Buntingford Civic Society website. If you missed them you can still access them there, where they are now part of an archive of most of the Journals since the switch to creating them in digital format.

You know that old saying about waiting ages for a bus and then two coming along at once? Well there's a hint of that in two of the articles this month. Buntingford has not one but two exciting new music teachers who have set up shop on the High Street. Could this be the start of our town becoming a centre of musical excellence? When I acquired an old piano from my nephew years ago, there were no music teachers here and I travelled to Cambridge for lessons. They sadly petered out, also years ago, but I am tempted to start again ... Another new venture now taking off is the CrossFit Gym on the Watermill Industrial Estate which was officially opened by our current Town Mayor, Graham Waite.

I was very sad to hear that former Town Mayor Surjit Basra, who used to run the Post Office in Baldock Road, has died. In tribute to him I have included an article based on one first published almost exactly five years ago, when I interviewed him shortly before he retired. My sincere condolences to Mrs Basra and the family.

Brian Lemay updates us on progress of plans to improve the condition of the River Rib through Buntingford. With this year's ducklings already emerging, this is vital for them as well as the rest of us! Elsewhere, FORQ (Friends of the Rib and Quin) ask for volunteers to help monitor and promote the health of the river and its wildlife. What the river really needs right now is rain, and so does my garden! Whatever happened to April showers?

Before getting down to produce this Journal, I was concerned that I wouldn't get enough material in to fill its pages. I need not have worried. With lockdown starting to ease, things are opening up and clubs and societies are all thinking about getting back to their activities, even if they haven't actually started yet. There is a feeling of pent-up energy and anticipation, but as the experts warn us, we must not take our progress for granted. The virus has not gone away and we must continue to do all that we can to stop its spread and prevent a recurrence. But it does feel good to be out on a sunny Spring day!

Christine Noble

Many thanks to Brian Austin for proofreading

**Editorial copy deadline for the June 2021 Journal
is Saturday 15th May 2021**

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



At last it seems as if we may be starting to get back to some kind of normality. The past year must have been so difficult for many of you and it is good to think that some of the pressures that so many have been under have started to ease. There is still some way to go but hopefully that light at the end of the tunnel may be getting just that little bit brighter.

As with most organisations, the work of the Civic Society has been seriously affected during the past year but we hope that in the coming months we can start to re-look at some of the projects we have in mind. The printing and circulation of the Journal this month is a big step in the right direction.

With more shops now being allowed to open, East Herts District Council (EHDC) and Buntingford Chamber of Commerce are looking at ways to attract shoppers back to our High Street. They are investigating ways to provide additional seating areas so that more people can relax and make use of the facilities on offer. This may mean the temporary use of barriers in some locations but these would eventually be replaced by more suitable planters similar to those currently in use at some locations in the High Street.

You will probably all remember the infamous bicycle rack that was installed by EHDC at the top of Church Street some while ago, to most people's dismay. Following much negative reaction it was removed and relocated to Freman College which is a much more suitable location. A simpler 'toast rack' type design was requested for the Church Street location, but apparently EHDC have decreed that it would be a trip hazard and therefore cannot be put there. Watch this space, I guess!

It is with much sadness that we received news of the death of Surjit Basra. Surjit served as Mayor of Buntingford on three separate occasions and was a huge contributor to Buntingford life. Always with a friendly smile, Surjit will be sadly missed and our thoughts and condolences go to his family. RIP Surjit.

And of course The Civic Society must also pay its respect to HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, who passed away on Friday 9th April. Thank you, Sir – a life of exceptional service. A life well lived.

Graham Bonner, Chairman Buntingford Civic Society
graham_bonner123@yahoo.co.uk

Buntingford Civic Society was established in 1972 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. **Annual household membership is just £10** and includes delivery of the Buntingford Journal (10 issues a year) to your door. If you would like to join Buntingford Civic Society, an application form is available on the website at www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk. Or you can email the Society's Membership Secretary, Peter Hay, at membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk.

UN Global Road Safety Week (17th-23rd May 2021)

Road Danger is a global issue and tragically, 1.35 million people die every year on the world's roads. Speed is a contributory factor in a large percentage of these deaths and 54% of them will involve vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists where they have come into contact with motor vehicles. What is so disheartening is that most of the deaths and injuries that occur on roads around the globe each year are preventable. It is not complicated, reducing the speed that vehicles travel at on roads where people mix with motor vehicles dramatically reduces the number of people that die or sustain life-changing injuries.

Nations and governments around the world (as well as many local authorities in the UK) have already recognised that the best way to dramatically reduce the risk to pedestrians, cyclists, children, older people and people with disabilities is to make 20mph/30kmh the norm where people mix with motor vehicles. The UN is leading the way with a big global shift to mitigate road danger by spearheading an ambitious plan of preventing 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. Unfortunately, our country is lagging behind. Although most of the larger cities in the UK have adopted 20mph speed limits for residential streets, many local authorities (including Hertfordshire) have chosen not to use the powers afforded to them by the UK Government to implement wide area 20mph speed limits on residential roads in the towns, cities and villages in their remit.

The key focus of this year's **UN GLOBAL ROAD SAFETY WEEK (17th to 23rd May)** is a call to make 20mph/30kmh speed limits the norm in places where people on foot or on bicycles mix with motor vehicles. To coincide with this, 20's Plenty are calling on the UK Government to set a national default 20mph urban speed limit for England. You can help with by Emailing your MP and asking them to support the setting of 20mph as a default speed limit for urban and village roads as called for by the United Nations and World Health Organisation.



It's really easy and takes a couple of minutes. Just use the link below to visit the page on the 20's Plenty for Us national website and enter your postcode and address to send the email message to your MP. www.20splenty.org/ungrsw-ukmp

20's Plenty for Buntingford are planning an event to take place locally during UN Global Road Safety Week. Lookout for details on Facebook and Twitter or, if you haven't already done so, sign up for to our Mailing List to stay up to date with this and other news and events. (See details below.)



JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN

Join Mailing List/Contact: buntingford@20splentyforus.org.uk
Facebook: @20's Plenty for Buntingford
Instagram: 20splentybuntingford
Twitter: @20Buntingford
www.20splentyforherts.org

Music Lessons and Moving in a Pandemic!

We moved to Salisbury House at 59 High Street at the end of January 2020 full of excitement for good times to come, never imagining the year that has just passed!

The oldest part of Salisbury House dates back to 1485 – a timber-framed, late-medieval open hall house comprising two cross-wings with an open hall in the centre. We have spent a good amount of time researching the history of the house which has been fascinating and have compiled a book, should anyone be interested. Many original features still exist and as Covid restrictions have allowed we have had craftsmen in to repair all 20 windows and have been cleaning and renovating the property that has stood empty for the last ten years. We love the house and are looking forward to sharing it with family and friends old and new as and when we are allowed. We have wonderful neighbours and anticipate meeting many more people in the village.

As a music teacher it is exciting to have a bespoke teaching area at the back of the house. Many existing pupils from Hatfield where we lived previously transferred their lessons to Buntingford and I have gained some promising new pupils locally. But it has been a strange year with lessons commencing and then ceasing as lockdowns hit.

My musical background has been varied, working at Radio 2 and Radio 3; the Royal Academy of Music; and The Park Lane Group, a music charity based in Covent Garden. For 15 years I was Head of Music at St Columba's Prep School in St Albans and have always continued to teach privately, which is an area of work that I am passionate about. I teach piano and flute from beginner to diploma level plus theory up to Grade 8. Working





with young people at the start of their musical journey is a privilege, as is supporting adults who are keen to revisit previous learning or start from scratch – it is never too late!

Having had three children who have all gone into different areas of the music industry, I am well placed and keen to guide the unique path of each student. Whilst many learn an instrument purely for pleasure, some of my students have gone on to successful careers in music. Researchers conclude that the skills developed in learning a musical instrument from a young age lead to enhanced education overall. Benefits include: relieving stress; giving a sense of achievement; building confidence and improving patience. Playing music actively engages and stimulates the brain, making you feel happy and occupied.

If you are interested in a free consultation lesson I currently have limited vacancies on Monday and Thursday afternoon/evening and Saturday morning.

Looking forward to brighter days ahead!

Lesley Bills BA Mus Hons; LGSM
Salisbury House, 59 High Street, Buntingford
07904 346347 / lellyboo@hotmail.com

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

Melodies Music is coming to Buntingford

We all love music don't we? My name is Jon Bartlett and I certainly do. At a very early age I found a special passion for the piano. My first piano was an old dusty upright rescued from a building site by my Dad and I was so excited to have it! I would sit for hours experimenting with notes, making up tunes and pretending I was performing on stage. At age 6 I was lucky enough to begin piano lessons with incredible support from my parents who recognised the special gift I had been given. When I was 8 the family moved and I had lessons with a different teacher who taught me in a way that would change my life forever. Her methods of teaching have shaped the way I work with students to this day.



Following mainstream schooling I studied at the Purcell School in Harrow for two years. I was then offered a place at the Royal College of Music in London learning how to perform, compose and arrange music. I love the classics to this day but they are not for everyone and after graduating from the RCM I became a session musician with MCA Records. My piano professor was not impressed! However, during this period of my life I did have an amazing time working with new writers, singers and bands, in multiple musical genres.

I have always wanted children and adults to do what I could do and enjoy music for itself, not for the qualifications alone. That was my inspiration in starting Melodies Music, which was born in October 2002 when I opened the first studio in Northwood, Middlesex. To be able to share my knowledge and joy of music and encourage students in their learning was something I would find incredibly rewarding, but I soon realised that running the studio solo was at times a lonely experience. Over the next 18 months, as the studio quickly established itself and began to grow, I started to build a small team of dedicated and passionate teachers who shared my vision, some of whom I trained and are still with me today.

During 2018, my wife Nicky and I had discussed the possibility of moving out of London to somewhere in Hertfordshire, somewhere that offered fresh opportunities, space, a greater sense of community and a better work/life balance. One sunny Sunday our travels led us to Buntingford – we fell in love with the place instantly. This was the place we wanted to be. We moved here in February 2019 and haven't looked back.

Being able to share my love of music in my local community is so important and the idea of a second studio really appealed to me. This year the right property became available in

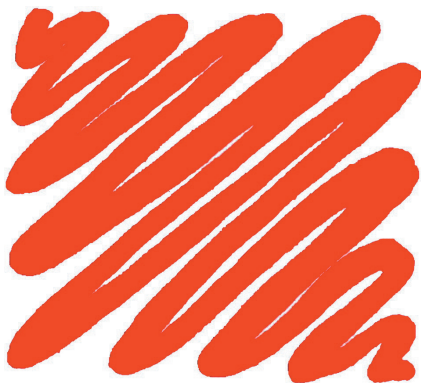
Buntingford High Street and seemed an opportunity not to be missed. I am now happy and excited to be launching Melodies Music Buntingford in June 2021. Our new studio will offer students of all ages the opportunity to learn music with the main focus on piano, keyboard, vocals and music production.

We will be offering two main examination platforms: ABRSM for classics and RSL (Rock School) for rock and pop piano and vocals and music production. There will be something for everyone, whether you are budding concert pianist, fledgling record producer, or simply want to play for pleasure. We will be offering free taster sessions from late May and have already started taking bookings!

Please visit our website melodiesmusiceducation.com for further details and how to contact us. You can also find us on [facebook.com/melodiesmusicuk](https://www.facebook.com/melodiesmusicuk)

I hope Melodies Music will become an integral part of community life here in Buntingford and we look forward to opening our doors to you a little later this year and being able to share your musical journey.

Jon Bartlett
melodiesmusiceducation.com



Gravelly Barn exhibition on hold for another year

Last year we had to postpone our Vision Matters charity exhibition at Gravelly Barn in Braughing due to Covid restrictions. We had hoped to hold the exhibition sometime this year to showcase all the wonderful art work that we know many of you have already completed. We have a selection of completed work already, which is stored safely in our studio, waiting to be hung and sold.

Sadly, we have had to take the difficult decision to postpone again as there is currently so much uncertainty over future regulations and restrictions. We know that many of you will be as disappointed as we are, but we have to put first the safety and well-being of everyone involved. At present we are looking at a date for May 2022 – dates, times, safety procedures and precautions will be confirmed as soon as we can.

All the money raised so far from the sale of blank canvases is ring-fenced in our charity account, and a decision has been made to give an initial cheque to each charity, with a final cheque after the exhibition. The charities are The Epping Breast Care Unit (specifically for the mobile screening unit) and the BLISS and SANDS neonatal charities. So please keep working on those canvases. We can't wait to see them hung and to welcoming visitors at the exhibition. If you would like to any more blank canvases, or know anyone who would like to take part, we still have some available at £10 each. You can use any medium you like – paint, crayon, knitting, charcoal, collage, photography, sculpture, metal ... you are restricted only by your imagination!

Contact **Jane** (jdavalle@aol.com) or **Glynnis** (glynnisb2910@aol.com) for further information

Mayor Opens Fantastic New CrossFit Gym in Buntingford

On 12th April, Gyms were allowed to re-open in England!



CrossFit Buntingford originally opened in January 2020, but due to Covid19 has been closed more than open since 17th March 2020. With continued rule changes and tiers throughout the year, a decision was taken to move to a larger unit to ensure our members were kept safe.

It's important to know that CrossFit gyms (a Box in CrossFit terms) are not like your usual gym. There aren't many machines and instead we make use of free weights, med balls, kettle bells and anything you can pick up or hang from to do our workouts. In a nutshell, it is "Constantly Varied, Functional Movements performed at High Intensity". CrossFit is currently the world's leading platform for health and performance and is accessible to anyone at any age or fitness level. You don't have to be fit to start CrossFit – but you will get very fit doing it!

We originally made the move from Unit P1 to Unit 17, The Firs (right), on the Watermill Industrial Estate over the Christmas period with the hope of opening in early January. Covid of course put paid to that, but thanks to our lovely community of members, to whom we are eternally grateful for keeping us going, we survived the lockdown and were



able to open on 12th April. The Mayor of Buntingford, Councillor Graham Waite, kindly took the time to perform the official opening (left) and our new space is currently the largest gym in Buntingford.

To keep our members fit and engaged during lockdown we loaned out equipment, did 1-2-1 sessions outside, and zoom sessions online (programmed with the equipment we had loaned). We have planned a BBQ at The Fox in Aspenden in June to thank our members properly for their support and in the meantime have supplied them with some merchandise.

So, what does CrossFit offer? At this time, we are allowed 6 people inside for open gym sessions where each person has their own space (9 sq.m.) and all the equipment they need for a suggested workout consisting of a Warm up, a Strength or Skill, and a "Workout of the Day" (WOD). Sessions last an hour and are available at 6, 8.15 and 9.30am, then start again at 5, 6 and 7pm. All equipment is sanitised after each session ready for the next person to use.

As well as CrossFit sessions, 1-2-1 PT is available in a fully equipped studio above the Box with either a Qualified CrossFit Coach or Qualified Personal Trainer Sarah Smith. We can now also offer Sports Massage at weekends with Qualified Masseuse Kelly Austin.

Contact us on:

www.crossfitbuntingford.co.uk

Instagram @crossfitbuntingford

FB Mick Nolan

Phone 07912 653164

Kelly Austin – 07843 909647 for Sports Massage

Sarah Smith – 07984 045921 for PT



Above: Sarah Smith,
Qualified Personal Trainer.

Below: Kelly Austin,
Qualified Masseuse



Open Days at Buntingford Bowls Club



Buntingford Bowls Club are holding their annual **Open Days** for new bowlers on **Sunday 2nd** and **Monday 3rd May** from **10am to 1pm** on both days. It will be a morning of fun and games and anyone who wants to continue and join the club can look forward to four **FREE** coaching sessions from our enthusiastic volunteer coaching team.

So come and try bowls at our friendly club in Wyddial Road (about half way along between the ford and Vicarage Road).

All you need is a pair of flat shoes or trainers (no heels!). All ages are welcome, but as a general guide, children should be over 10 (due to the size of the bowls and being able to handle them). Please phone if you want further information, or if you can't attend those dates but are still interested in bowling.

Dave Murphy – Coach, Buntingford Bowls Club – 07917 084881



Christ Church

Baldock Road, Buntingford SG9 9AA

Minister: Rev. Sue Fender **Secretary:** Peter Godbert / Tel: 01763 281359
buntingford.urc@talktalk.net

Services at 11.00am every Sunday via Zoom

May	2	Morning Worship	Rev Prof David Thompson
	9	Holy Communion	Rev Janet Tollington
	16	Morning Worship	Rev Allen Morton
	23	Morning Worship	Rev David Cornick
	30	Morning Worship	Malcolm Haslett
June	6	Morning Worship	Nicola Grieves

Christ Church URC Buntingford's new Minister will be the Rev. Sue Fender who will be moving from her current pastorate on Teesside to her new home in Melbourn on 10th May and will begin work shortly afterwards. Her induction as Minister for the Linked Pastorate, including Buntingford, Great Chishill, Bassingbourn, Melbourn and Fowlmere, will be on Saturday 26th June. Details will be communicated in due course.

Christ Church is continuing to worship via Zoom but hope at some point in the reasonably near future to begin to worship again in person in the Church on Baldock Road. Details of all services can be found on our website where they are regularly updated. Our Zoom services are accessible via phone or online. If you would like to join us please contact the church secretary for details of each service.

Website: www.buntingfordurc.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/URCBuntingford

The Ash and Quin Valleys Group

(cont. on page 13)

St Mary the Virgin



Living God's Love

Rev'd Julie Gawthrop – 01920 823531

Services for May 2021

St Mary's, Braughing

Sun 2 nd	11.15am	All Age Holy Communion
Wed 5 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 9 th	10.00am	All Age Morning Worship
Wed 12 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 16 th	11.15am	Holy Communion with Baptism
Wed 19 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 23 rd	9.30am	Holy Communion
Wed 26 th	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)

United Benefice of Aspenden, Buntingford and Westmill

St Mary's Aspenden, St Peter's Buntingford & St Mary the Virgin Westmill



Postal address: St Peter's Church, Chapel Lane, Buntingford SG9 9AL

Website: unitedbenefice.org.uk

Email: admin@unitedbenefice.org.uk

Telephone: 07484 345027

Sunday Church Services

We are pleased to announce we are back in our Churches as follows:

2 nd May	9.30am	Holy Communion Service	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
9 th May	9.30am	Holy Communion Service	St Peter's, Buntingford
16 th May	9.30am	Holy Communion Service	St Mary's, Aspenden
23 rd May	9.30am	Holy Communion Service	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
30 th May	9.30am	Holy Communion Service	St Peter's, Buntingford

We continue to monitor the rates of Covid within our local areas and whilst we have endeavoured to put in place precautionary measures, we ask that you respectfully follow the Covid Safety Guidelines and continue to keep each household two metre distance from another, face coverings to be worn (unless exempt), hand washing/sanitising, track and trace.

If you are unable to join us in Church, please join us for our Sunday Zoom Services from the comfort of your own home!

Sunday Zoom Services

Please contact us on 07484 345027 or email admin@unitedbenefice.org.uk for further details of how you can join our services below. The services can be accessed by phone or via the internet.

Sunday 2 nd May	11.15am	Sunday Zoom Service with Hymns
Sunday 9 th May	11.15am	Sunday Zoom Service with Hymns
Sunday 16 th May	11.15am	Sunday Zoom Service with Hymns
Sunday 23 rd May	11.15am	Sunday Zoom Service with Hymns
Sunday 30 th May	11.15am	Sunday Zoom Service with Hymns

Details of all our services will be announced on our website, social media pages and Church noticeboards – unitedbenefice.org.uk

The Ash and Quin Valleys Group (cont. from page 12)

**ST. MARY'S
FURNEUX
PELHAM**

St Mary's, Furneux Pelham

Sun 2 nd	9.30am	BCP Holy Communion
Sun 9 th	11.15am	Holy Communion
Sun 16 th	9.30am	Café Church
Sun 23 rd	11.15am	Family Morning Worship

**St. Mary's
Stocking Pelham**

St Mary's, Stocking Pelham

Sun 30 th	10.30am	Benefice Holy Communion
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Seeds of Faith

Last spring, St Peter's Church started a little project that grew and grew into ... well, lots of giant sunflowers!

I usually do 'planting sunflower seeds' as a Spring activity with Little Sparks Children's Church (St Peter's weekly Sunday school), but last year, as we were in lockdown doing sessions on Zoom, I was trying mostly to use resources people would have at home. However, I really didn't want the children to miss out on this activity, so I decided to bag up some seeds to distribute with pots and soil. Then I thought, how great would it be to give more children in town the opportunity to join in? And adults too!

Following some discussion with Rev Ian and Sarah Hill, and having persuaded my husband to build a suitable structure, the Seeds of Faith stand was set up on The Vicarage driveway, with seeds, small pots, and soil available for collection, so even those without a garden could join in. Signs encouraged passers-by to take what they needed to plant their seeds, join our Facebook group, and share updates as their plants grew! In a time of uncertainty and low morale, we wanted to spread God's message of hope and to raise spirits with the gift of new life that we, as a Church, celebrate at this time of year.

We were delighted by the engagement we got with the project. It was not long before we had to top up the supplies on the stand, and every time we did, they went again! The Facebook group grew and was a fantastic platform for people to unite during a time of isolation. Over the course of the spring and summer, literally thousands of seeds were taken from the stand, and it was a joy to see sunflowers growing all around town!

Furthermore, I had the pleasure of getting to know some like-minded individuals through the project. Paul Sarjantson was also distributing seeds from his front garden, and very kindly made up and donated many, many packs to the stand. We were also very grateful for all his gardening advice to the group, especially the lesson on how to save sunflower seeds once the heads have died, so we have got plenty of seeds ready for this year!

The Seeds of Faith stand will be back up by the end of April (we've been trying to wait out the last of the frosts), and we invite everyone to plant a seed, watch it grow, and rejoice in the amazing gift of new life freely given to us by Jesus Christ!

**Alexandra Kanold, Little Sparks Children's Church
St Peter's Church Buntingford**

Join the 'Seeds of Faith' Facebook group and pop by The Vicarage to collect your seeds!
www.facebook.com/groups/126808307672807

Pop by Paul's Seed Bank or join the 'Buntingford Plants and Gardens' group on Facebook for more to grow!

Or if you want to grow your own but have no garden, or if you simply don't know where to begin, you could contact Maddie for some guidance, supplies and growing space at the Buntingford Community Garden (see 'Growing Together', above right).



Finally, we will be holding a **Plant Sale** outside St Peter's Church on Market Hill in Buntingford on **Saturday 8th May** to raise money for St Peter's and for St Mary's Church in Aspenden. Check the notice board outside St Peter's Church for details.



Growing Together

For all families and individuals



Come and learn how to grow the fruit and veg you love!

Pick and eat what you grow!

You don't need to have your own garden – there's room at the **Buntingford Community Garden in Baldock Road**

Free instruction and materials supplied.

Please contact me, **Maddie**, if you are interested in finding out more

Call **07778 298605** or email **madela1@hotmail.co.uk**

Can't wait to get started!

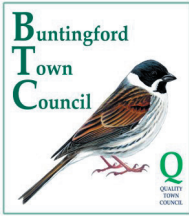


It has been such a long time since the Choir met up on a Monday evening at Millfield School. In fact it has been well over a year. We have kept going with weekly zoom meetings which has been fantastic in keeping everyone together, having a laugh and

singing some of our favourite songs, but it's not the same. However, there could now be a light at the end of the tunnel. With the Government lockdown roadmap progressing, it may be possible that before too long the Choir will sing again together. We will of course not plan anything until it is safe and legal to do so. Hopefully in the next edition of the Journal we will have more good news on resumption of Choir Meetings.

For information go to our website: www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk

Or e-mail info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk



BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

A QUALITY TOWN COUNCIL

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Councillor Surjit Basra. Mr B, as he was affectionately known, served on the Council over a 15 year period and was Town Mayor for three of those years. Whilst serving as Mayor, he represented Buntingford on many occasions and he and Mrs Basra were well received wherever they went. He will be greatly missed by both his fellow Councillors and Council staff. Our sincere condolences go to the Basra family.

Facilities in the town are gradually re-opening. Activities at the Community Centre are still limited to services for children, but hopefully on the 17th May we will be able to open for a wider range of classes and groups. Layston Court Gardens now close at 7pm; this will increase to 8pm from 21st June. It was sad to see that COVID signs and sanitisers in the High Street have been vandalised. We are endeavouring to get replacements.

A full programme of pitch maintenance has commenced at the Community Centre. Inevitably, this has caused inconvenience for the football clubs, but we are limited to the time of year when this maintenance can be undertaken. The spring maintenance programme should take around eight weeks.

The Manor House will serve as a Polling Station on the 6th May, all measures to ensure COVID compliance will be taken. We are now able to take interments at Layston Cemetery. Details can be obtained from the Clerk's Office.

If after lockdown you feel the need to work away from the house then we have a small empty office at the Manor House, on the 2nd floor. This will accommodate a small business. If you are interested in leasing an office please give us a call.

Jill Jones MILCM Cert HE, Town Clerk

Office hours: Monday–Thursday 10am–4pm; closed Friday.

The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford SG9 9AB

(The offices are currently closed due to lockdown, except by appointment.)

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

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

Website: www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk

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

Town Council meetings for May 2021

Thurs 6 th May	7:00pm – Amenities Committee
Thurs 13 th May	7:00pm – Resources Committee
Thurs 27 th May	7:00pm – Annual Town Meeting, Annual Meeting of the Council, Full Council

Venue details will be published on the Agenda. The Amenities meeting will be held remotely, details for observing the meeting are published on the agenda and can also be obtained from the Clerk's office. Depending on legislation, all other May meetings will either be held remotely or at the Seth Ward Community Centre.



East Herts Council launches Restart Grants scheme

East Herts Council is now accepting applications for the national Restart Grants scheme to help businesses liable for business rates across the district during the Covid-19 pandemic.

These new one-off 'Restart Grants', which replace the Local Restrictions Support Grants, were announced by the Chancellor in the budget. The amount paid out will vary according to the type of business and the rateable value of their premises.

Grants worth up to £18,000 for the largest businesses will be allocated to hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym business premises.

Non-essential retail businesses can get up to £6,000 per premises through the Restart Grant scheme to help them reopen.

Su Tarran, Head of Revenues & Benefits, said: "We have emailed all the businesses which received LRSG grants previously with a link to a short application form to collect additional data required by the Government. If a business has not received an LRSG grant previously, please visit our website for the full application form. If your business is eligible then please apply and we will process payments as quickly as possible.

"We would also encourage people in East Herts to spread the word and share the details of the scheme with those businesses they are aware of that might be eligible for support."

For more information, visit 'Restart Grants' under the 'Coronavirus and Business' section of the East Herts Council website.

2021 Local Elections – Thursday 6th May

Don't forget to exercise your right to vote to decide who will be our elected councillors on Hertfordshire County Council, as well as who will be the next Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

Buntingford W.I.

I'm pleased that this month we have a printed copy of the Journal – it feels as if we are getting back to some sort of normality.

During the last few months our Secretary, Pat, has been busy keeping in touch with us and sending friendly newsletters from our President, Veronica, as well as details of Zoom talks which the WI arranges.

We were so very sorry that one of our much valued members, Jenny Brown, passed away recently. Jenny had been a member for many years and also served on the committee. She cheerfully joined in all our activities, including taking part in our Carnival entries, and we will all miss her.

Our committee are hopeful that we will be able to have an outdoor get-together in July and, fingers crossed, resume our normal meetings in September. Watch this space!

Val Hume

In Memory of Surjit Singh Basra 1950 to 1921

Surjit Singh Basra, affectionately known around Buntingford as Mr B, passed away in April. He was liked and respected by all who knew him and will be very sadly missed, but he will not be forgotten. In the three decades of his connection with Buntingford he became an integral part of the community, always ready and willing to get involved and help whenever and wherever he could. He served on both the Town and District councils, was a school governor of Freman College, and was Town Mayor three times, representing Buntingford on the local and wider stage.

Surjit was born into a Sikh family in the Julandhar Punjab in northwest India on 7th October 1950. His father, Sardar Kehar Singh, was a well-educated man, a landowner and local landlord, and the head of his village for more than 25 years. He was also a famous footballer, having captained both his college team and the province team. Surjit's mother, Darshan Kaur Basra, was Sardar's second wife whom he married, with his first wife's blessing, following the sad death of his first son at the age of 18. Surjit was Darshan's first-born, followed by three more boys – Gurmit, Gurchranjit and Balwinder Singh – and a daughter, Balwinder Kaur. Surjit also had an older half-sister, the daughter of his step-mother who he called his 'elder mother'.

With his father as head of the village, Surjit enjoyed a privileged upbringing and an education, achieving very good grades in the equivalent of our GCSEs. But his father was also generous to a fault. He constantly exceeded his income, often to help others, and by the time Surjit was in his teens his father had sold most of his land to pay debts. Surjit decided his prospects would be better in England. He left India in December 1968, aged just 18, but before he went a marriage was arranged for him to 16 year old Satwant Seto Kaur. Satwant had moved to England with her parents in 1959, when she was just 7, and lived in Letchworth.

The couple met briefly, but had little contact before they married. The civil ceremony took place in Hitchin on 7th February 1969, with the Indian ceremony – the "real wedding" – over a year later, in Letchworth, on 26th April 1970. To quote Mr B, "Luckily we fell in love with each other very quickly!" The newly married Mr & Mrs Basra lived for a few months with his uncle in Nottingham, where Surjit worked as a bus conductor, then moved in with



Mr & Mrs Basra photographed during one of Mr. Basra's periods in office as Mayor.

Satwant's parents in Letchworth. He worked for ICL, she worked at the Kayser Bondor factory, and before long they were able to buy their first home in Hitchin – a tiny house with no bathroom, but it was theirs and they were happy there. Their two sons were born there – Kanwaljit Singh (known as 'Bas') in 1972 and Jaspal Singh ('Jassi') in 1976. Surjit's brothers also came to England during this time and although Mr & Mrs B weren't much older, they became like parents to them.

Financially life was a struggle. As well as working, the couple did piecework sewing at home late into the night for a couple of years until they had saved enough money to set up a business. In 1981 they opened a shop in Letchworth. That same year Surjit's father came to visit them from India and while he was here went for a check-up at the doctors. The doctor told him to take a seat in the waiting room and he sat down in a chair and died. Surjit could hardly believe it. The strong, athletic, generous father he had loved and looked up to all his life was gone in an instant. Shortly afterwards, his mother came to live with them.

In 1986 they moved to Bedford where their daughter Sukhjjevan Kaur ('Suki') was born and they were still living there in 1991 when Surjit spotted the opportunity to take on the Post Office in Buntingford. He already had experience of running shops and after just two weeks training – one week for him and one for his eldest son – they were in business. They commuted daily for 5 years, but found they liked Buntingford so in 1996 they moved into the flat above the shop. Over the next few years the business expanded into the supermarket, stationers and generally useful shop that many of us now look back on with such fondness. Mrs Basra, a very good cook, began preparing a selection of tasty Indian dishes for the shop – they were sold frozen, except for the delicious daily samosas (my favourite snack, when they weren't sold out!). In the shop's heyday they employed 16 staff, all local people who lived in Buntingford, plus there were the sorting office staff before the Post Office transferred them to Ware at the end of 2015.

In 2001 the Basras bought a family house in Bowling Green Lane. It needed a lot of work but Surjit could see its potential to be a beautiful home, and after about a year of renovation and alteration the house was ready to move into. Mr Basra was also starting to get involved in local politics. He became a Town Councillor and the Town Council elected him as Town Mayor three times. He was also a District Councillor and became a Governor of Freman College when Suki was a student there, a role he held for 10 years. He said he liked to think he was giving something back to the community, which he certainly was, but he was also working too hard – up to 70 or 80 hours a week in the shop – and he suffered two heart attacks which forced him to slow down. He made a good recovery and returned to work, he was even persuaded back onto the Town Council, but the time had come to retire. In 2016 the shop was put on the market and it became McColl's at the end of that year.

By the time Mr Basra retired, he said he didn't want to live anywhere but Buntingford. Over the years he had returned to India from time to time, often to help in some way – he transformed a track in his birth village into a proper road, now named for his father, and he helped to fund a local school – but it was no longer his home. If home is where the heart is, his home was in Buntingford. He had achieved a great deal since arriving in this country, aged just 18 and with only £2.50 in his pocket, and it was done through sheer hard work and determination, combined with his generous and friendly nature. Sadly, health problems returned all too soon and cut short his well-earned retirement. Many condolences to Mrs Basra and his family. Rest in Peace, Mr B.

Christine Noble

I am pleased to say that, for those who missed it, the recording of the FORQ public meeting, held on 17th March 2021, is now available to watch via the FORQ website.



New volunteer roles

One of the things we focused on during that meeting was a request for volunteers. We are very grateful to the people who have already put their names forward. We have identified some roles and ways supporters can help us, so if you think you could help with any of the following, please let us know by sending an email to forqcomms@gmail.com

Wildlife Recorder – If you are a smartphone user, you can report what you find along the river via the iNaturalist app. This is available from the Apple App Store or Google Play. The app and community can help with identification and sightings, records from our catchment area, are automatically included in the project we have set up.

Riverfly Monitor – We can arrange full training in this scheme, when it is available again, via The Riverfly Partnership. They hope to restart training sessions when COVID restrictions ease a bit further. We would like to have a string of monitors along our rivers, so if this is something that interests you, let us know and we will keep you informed.

River Warden – If there is a stretch of river you visit regularly and can keep an eye on, we'd love to hear from you. We are currently working with other river groups to develop a specification and list of simple activities involved in this role, so let us know if you have a stretch in mind and we will be in touch shortly.

Riverwork Gang – Balsam bashing this summer is top of the priority list with two sites already identified. We also hope to include winter and project specific work on bank-side improvements in the future.

Educational Link – We are keen to have strong and close relationships with our local schools and colleges and develop materials that link with the curriculum at various age points. We are hoping there are local teachers or educational specialists who could assist us and help formulate this programme.

Administrators and Researchers – As our work develops it will need more organisation, undoubtedly the more we know about our catchment the better we will be able to represent it. If you could help with some of the research and admin, do let us know.

As mentioned in last month's Buntingford Journal, the latest Chalk Aquifer Alliance speaker was Andrew McKenzie from the British Geological Survey. His talk on 21st April was entitled 'Groundwater flooding on Chalk aquifers; rare events or short memories?' A recording of the lecture is available via the CAA website.

Another CAA meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 5th May 2021, again online – please see their website to register for the event. Theo Thomas, also known as the "London Waterkeeper", will be speaking. He is expected to talk about his innovative method for gaining real-time notification of sewage overflows in rivers, as well as tales from London's riverbanks.

Useful Links:

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

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

Pauline Ayres, Communications FORQ

We are pleased to announce that, along with Sports massage now being back, we also have a Hypnotherapist and Nutritional Therapist joining the clinic.



Amanda Lonergan (left) originally graduated from De Montfort University, Leicester, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology of Human Communication and French. She has since qualified as a hypnotherapist (Cert Hyp CS) and is able to offer a variety of treatments, in particular for anxiety and chronic pain.

Amanda takes a “working together” approach in her sessions and considers hypnotherapy to be one of the most empowering therapies there is. She says: “I lay the groundwork to enable the client to make the changes they require, opposed to making the change happen myself. Ultimately the only person who can change their perspective and make

things happen is the individual themselves. The more open [they are] to the possibilities hypnotherapy can offer, the more hypnotherapy can offer the individual.”

Deborah Lethby (right) is a Registered Nutritional Therapist (MBANT) who graduated from the London College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) in 2007. Deborah uses an evidence-based approach, supporting her clients with personalised nutrition and lifestyle advice, in order to help them with their health challenges.



Deborah is a specialist in supporting women’s health in midlife and she also has a keen interest in the link between food and its effects on our brains – be it mood, anxiety or cognitive function. She

has discovered through her training, and through personal experience as well as that of her clients, the wonderful power that food has not just on our bodies but also our minds. Optimising aspects of our health such as hormones, gut health and lifestyle factors can greatly impact how we feel mentally as well as physically, and she wants to share that knowledge with her clients.

From 17th May we are hoping to be able to start using our new studio and are starting to take bookings for Tai Chi, Yoga and Pilates. Classes will be limited to just 6 people and will be £14 a session booked 6 sessions at a time. Here is the class timetable (left); to book just call 01763 878087.

Studio Timetable

- Monday**
11am Tai Chi with Gary and Janet
- Tuesday**
6pm Yoga with Jenny
- Wednesday**
11.30am Pilates with Jacqui
- Thursday**
1.30pm Trigger Point Pilates with Jacqui
2.45pm Seated Pilates with Jacqui
- Friday**
9.30am Pilates with Emma
11am Yoga with Jenny



Classes £14 each 6 week blocks 6 in a class

Louise Hampton



**WHAT DO YOU WANT
BUNTINGFORD
TO LOOK LIKE IN
2050?**



Buntingford Action on Climate Change and Sustainability (BACCS)

Presents a

Second Online International Model Citizens' Assembly on the Climate Emergency

On Sunday 6th June 2021 @ 19.00

We trust that at least some of you were able to join us for our online Citizens' Assembly on Climate on Sunday 25th April which introduced our newly-branded Buntingford Action on Climate Change and Sustainability initiative on to an unsuspecting world, along with its slogan: "Think Globally – Act Locally!"

Journal deadlines force us to write this article before that launch event happens – so we cannot know what priorities the audience and jury determined, nor what suggestions for local actions were proposed. However, we will definitely have mentioned the "Twenty's Plenty" initiative for 20mph speed limits in all our towns and villages as that is an essential first step to ensure that we all embrace the self-discipline that living sustainably in a socially responsible way requires.

We will also have talked about, and celebrated, the fact that Buntingford is privileged to have a Chamber of Commerce that encourages its members to think sustainably. There is a page on the CoC website dedicated to sustainability: <https://www.buntingfordchamberofcommerce.co.uk/sustainability/> Although currently there are only three CoC members featured on that page, over the next few months BACCS will be working with the Chamber of Commerce to increase that number, and present awards and incentives to make Buntingford a market leader in sustainable businesses and institutions.

After the flurry of international activity in April around Earth Day, we hope that we can inspire more local action on Climate Mitigation measures. Further, as we come out of lockdown, we shall seek to encourage Buntingford entrepreneurs to think creatively about the new business/income-generating opportunities that new green investment funds and sustainable products provide. It is no accident that Ethical investment funds are doing so well at the moment: start-ups focused on plant-based and/or cell grown meat and fish substitute companies grew six-fold last year and are now a £240 million industry. Big corporations are very conscious of the fact that "Brands with Purpose" – brands that take environmental and social ethics seriously – are growing much faster than those without. Consumers are driving the transition to green sustainable living, even if governments are not doing as much as they should. As one of our Citizens' Assembly witnesses points out: big companies didn't create Fairtrade, consumers did – because they didn't want products that exploit small farmers in poor countries. Big companies eventually came on board and have grown Fairtrade into a multi-billion dollar industry –today, around 1.7 million farmers are getting a Fairtrade premium which enables them to live a better life and also incentivises them to farm more sustainably.

BACCS has only been going for a month – but already, we have confidence in its future. Do join us and help us plan activities that will make us even happier with the way that Buntingford looks in 2050 than we are with our town today. Contact: David or Madela at BACCS@tutanota.com

David Woollcombe



Christmas Window Picture Winners

Throughout December the Buntingford Chamber of Commerce ran a competition with the challenge of finding all 24 posters in our High Street Living Advent Calendar, then submitting the complete list along with an original Christmas Window Picture. The Chamber of Commerce would like to thank everyone who took part, and recognise our three winners, who have each received a tasty chocolate prize!

- ◆ Lilly, 11½ years old, presented a wonderfully modern Christmas tree design.
- ◆ Aiden, 8½ years old, displayed a festive scene with Father Christmas driving his sleigh through the snow.
- ◆ Ryan, 11 years old, delighted us with a very artistic plate of treats for Santa and his reindeer.

Well done to our winners, and our thanks once again to all who took part.



Restoration Plan for the River Rib through Buntingford

I have rather lost track of where I was with the Rib project updates. Things have moved on I am sure, but perhaps a bit of background first.

The planned work is still based on the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) plan published in June 2019. The Rib through Buntingford (right) is still suffering from low flows in summer and flash flooding in the winter and from being overgrown and heavily shaded by trees throughout. The HMWT plan calls for tree thinning to allow more light and rain into the river. It also proposes sculpting of the river bed, within the existing banks, re-gravelling and construction of brushwood berms (raised banks) to narrow and speed the flow of water to clean the gravel. All this is to improve conditions for the river wildlife, from invertebrates in the gravel bed through to fish, birds and mammals, and restore the Rib to something more like a healthy chalk stream should be (below).



From its inception Buntingford Town Council has supported this plan. While it is the HMWT's plan, it will be owned by the people of Buntingford, to protect their chalk stream heritage and the wildlife in the river.

When the covid pandemic struck it bought the plan to a halt for most of the spring and early summer last year. In discussions with the Trust, the Town Council discovered that to bring the plan to fruition it

was necessary to hire a consultant to produce a Detailed Design Plan based on the Trust's outline plan. This new design plan will be like an architect's drawing of the river, which would be acceptable to the Environment Agency for them to issue permits.

HMWT suggested a company called Five Rivers, very experienced in producing river design plans, and a quotation was obtained. It became obvious at that time that there was no funding for this elsewhere so rather than allowing the plan to die, and after much discussion, the Town Council agreed to fund this work. Five Rivers will also give us a budgeted costing for all the work they suggest. This will help greatly when it comes to future fundraising.

We had a start-up meeting with Five Rivers in November 2020. There we agreed a timetable with the next step being a river survey in December. The river survey team consisted of three representatives from Five Rivers and residents of the town. Two of the team donned waders and walked the river bed while the rest of us walked the bank.

We had an update with them in January and another to view the final draft in February. I am pleased to say that at this stage Sarah Perry, the Hertfordshire Living Rivers Officer, from HMWT, came on board and her help and advice has been invaluable. Sarah sent the draft plan to the Environment Agency (EA) for their views and comments.

Not only does the plan give details of the tree and river work but also adds nesting boxes for bats and birds and kingfisher holes along the river banks and it gives us a planting plan for marginal plants, reeds and native sedges. We have worked with Five Rivers to ensure that some of the work can be done, under supervision, by local people and we will be recruiting volunteers later this year and next.

We have just received the EA's comments so the plan can now be updated and finalised and be re-submitted to the EA to obtain their necessary permits for work to take place in the river. Also the EA require a Flood Risk Assessment report which the Wildlife Trust has offered to finance

All this, believe it or not, has been the easiest and cheapest part of the project. The real work will start in trying to raise funds to pay for the work required. We have formed a small steering group of local residents, town councillors and the HMWT to finalise the plan and start fundraising. Being the experts, the HMWT will take the lead in this process

Our fundraising motto is: **Bring Buntingford's Rib Back to Life**

This plan is not ideal. We would far rather see extraction from the chalk aquifer at Chipping stopped altogether and the Rib returning to its natural state with springs from the aquifer feeding a steady supply of water. While this is not impossible it could take many years for extraction to stop. If left for too long without any action the Rib through Buntingford would eventually dry up and all the local wildlife would die or move away, hence this plan to preserve the river for as long as possible.

I will now try to give regular monthly updates through the pages of the Journal, covid permitting. If anyone has any questions they can reach me at the email address below.

Brian Lemay
brianlemay@btinternet.com

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



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Recipe for May

With the onset of warmer weather this tart is perfect for picnics! I always think the best way to make pastry is to use a food processor, but you can also make it by hand.

Mushroom Quiche with Parsley Pastry

Recipe ingredients: Pastry

155g/5oz plain flour	15g/½oz chopped parsley
90g/3oz cold butter	1 egg yolk

Mushroom Filling

30g/1oz butter	1 tsp lemon juice	1 egg, lightly beaten
1 red onion, chopped	Chopped parsley	80ml single cream
175g/6oz mushrooms, sliced	Chopped chives	

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C / fan oven 190°C / gas mark 5, and grease a rectangular flan tin.
2. Process the flour, butter and parsley for 15 seconds or until crumbly. Add the egg yolk and 2 tbsp of cold water and process in bursts until the mixture comes together. Add a little extra water if needed. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Roll out the pastry until big enough to fit the flan tin. Lift the pastry over a rolling pin and fit it into the tin. Trim off excess pastry
4. Cover the pastry with baking paper and fill with baking beads. Bake for 5-10 minutes. Reduce oven to 180°C / gas mark 4.
5. To make the mushroom filling, fry the onions in the butter until soft, add the mushrooms and cook for a further 3 minutes. Stir in the lemon juice and herbs.
6. Mix the egg and cream together and season.
7. Spread the onions and mushrooms into the part-baked pastry shell and pour over the egg mixture.
8. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until set.

Elaine Wyld – Tel: 01763 289 738 m. 07501 495 940
Facebook – Sumptuous Soups and Country Cakes

Buntingford & Stortford Hybrid Studio



WWW.JACQUI-SMITH.NET
07956 647806

Personal Training, Venue
Exercise Classes, Online
Exercise Classes and Pre
Recorded Workouts

Fitness Pilates, Circuits, Dance Fit,
HIIT, Hooping, Boxing & Mindfulness



March saw our 1st anniversary of teaching online, aiming to keep the residents of Buntingford fit and healthy!

Step 2 of the Roadmap out of Lockdown saw the release of outdoor classes as well as Personal Training. Classes are buzzing and our online Hybrid Studio is certainly not going away anytime soon. Personal Training has also been booming, seeing a lot of new clients taking on charity events later in 2021, so lots of training programmes for climbing mountains, cycling and running to raise much-needed charity funds.

Thanks again to Anne & Mike of Alswick Hall for allowing me to use their tennis court. I will be donating a percentage of my Friday class takings to the British Red Cross Open Gardens for Charity, as they have been unable to open their beautiful gardens in support of the charity, as they usually do each year.

As I write this I am waiting to hear if the government is ready to progress into Step 3 of the Rollout of Lockdown, allowing us to get back into venues to teach indoor exercise classes. I have everything ready – class participants, Covid regulations in place, risk assessments & health questionnaires all done – so we are ready to roll from 17th May.

I will also be teaming up with Attend to Health and running some Chair, Trigger Point & Rehabilitation Pilates in their new studio at their new venue in the former Barclays Bank in Buntingford, so exciting times ahead.

And lastly if anyone wants some help getting into fitness (whatever your age), some mental health assistance or to join a class, please contact me by email or phone.

Jacqui Smith, Personal Trainer

theteam@jacqui-smith.net / 07956 647806

Buntingford Shorts Film Competition 2021

This annual amateur film-making competition, begun in 2017 by Jake Andrews with the help of the Buntingford Film Club, has gone global. Forced by the pandemic to launch online last year, it attracted entrants from all around the world and was a huge success. A full report on the competition, the awards ceremony and winners, plus details of online links to many of the entries, was featured in last month's Journal and published online. If you missed it, you can still access the April issue, as well as other back issues of the Buntingford Journal, on the Buntingford Civic Society website: www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk

CURWENS

S O L I C I T O R S

Why do I need Lasting Powers of Attorney for Health and Welfare?

In the midst of Covid-19 we are reminded more than ever of the need to plan ahead. In these unprecedented times, you may find yourself in a position where your health deteriorates suddenly and you are too unwell to make decisions about your own affairs.

Background to Lasting Powers of Attorneys

Whilst Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) have been available since 2007 and many are aware of the benefits of the Property and Financial Affairs document, we have found that people are more hesitant to have the Health and Welfare LPA prepared.

Perhaps because the LPA for Property and Financial Affairs followed on from Enduring Powers of Attorney (which covered the same decisions and was available from the mid-1980s) people seem more comfortable with this application and the areas that it covers.

In its basic form, an LPA allows you to give someone (or some people) of your choice, that you trust, the legal authority to act on your behalf in relation to your affairs in the event that you are no longer able to make decisions (i.e. you lack mental capacity).

The LPA for Health and Welfare allows your chosen attorneys to make decisions about your daily routine (what you eat, wear and who can visit) and also make decisions about your care (including where you live) and life-sustaining treatment. This document can only be used if you have lost mental capacity and are no longer able to make decisions in relation to your health and welfare.

When would I need an LPA for Health and Welfare?

The LPA for Health and Welfare is particularly important if:

- you have strong feelings about whether you wish to receive life-sustaining treatment;
- you would prefer to live at home or in a residential care home (and if in a care home which one); or
- your family are likely to argue over who should make decisions on your behalf.

What if I don't have an LPA for Health and Welfare in place?

If you were to lose mental capacity (and therefore cannot make decisions for yourself) and didn't have an LPA for Health and Welfare in place, the risk is that you may have people making decisions for you that you have not appointed and that you do not want to do so, and those that you may have wanted to make such decisions may not have the ability to stop them. For example:

- You may be kept on life support or resuscitated against your wishes.
- Only your legal next of kin would be consulted about decisions.
- Social Services could make decisions about where you live and the level of care that you require.

The Court of Protection may have to become involved if there is a dispute with regards to decision-making on your behalf, which can be expensive and time consuming.

Can I still make my own decisions? Does this take anything away from me?

Having an LPA for Health and Welfare does not stop you making your own decisions whilst you have mental capacity to do so.

Setting up a Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare gives your attorneys the legal authority to act on your behalf in your best interest only once you have lost mental capacity.

If you would like to discuss Lasting Powers of Attorney for either Health and Welfare or Property and Financial Affairs, please contact our Private Client team on 01763 241 261.

www.curwens.co.uk

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



Energy Costs

My energy bill really shot up last month. I don't feel like I've been using any more heating or electricity than usual, so I'm worried I'm being overcharged. I've tried to contact my energy supplier for support, but no one ever seems to answer the phone or respond to my emails – I've waited on hold for nearly an hour several times before giving up. What should I do?

It's normal for your energy bills to change depending on the time of year and how much gas and electricity you're using. But if your bills seem strangely high, then it's important to investigate why.

Firstly, check your meter is working properly and your usage has definitely not gone up, even accidentally. Also check what heaters you have and whether you're using them correctly. Night storage radiators and immersion heaters in particular can cause very high bills if used incorrectly.

There are a few things worth looking into. It could be that your bill is an estimate, in which case you need to give your supplier a new meter reading. If it's not an estimate, check your last meter reading to see if it matches the one on your bill. If none of this points to an answer, your supplier might have raised their prices. In any case, you're doing the right thing to contact them.

Customer service varies between suppliers and, unfortunately, we hear of many bad experiences similar to this one. We also know the problem has worsened during the pandemic. If you're struggling to get through to your energy supplier, you could make a formal complaint. We offer advice on how to do this and things to consider first.

We publish a comparison table every three months which rates suppliers' customer service, based on things like telephone waiting time, email response time and the accuracy of their bills. Have a look for yours to see how they fare against others. If they're low on the list, consider switching to a different one.

If you'd like to talk an energy problem through with someone, get in touch with us for support or contact the national consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133**.

At Citizens Advice East Herts we provide free and confidential advice on any issue.

You can call us on our Message Line on **01920 459 944** (call at any time – leave a message for someone to call you back), or for more information see:

www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk



Essex & Herts Air Ambulance

Your local life-saving charity

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance is blazing a trail for the environment

On the eve of Earth Day 2021 – 22nd April – Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is excited to announce the steps taken to date at their new base as well as news of future plans to reduce their impact on the environment. In what EHAAT believes is a first for a UK air ambulance charity, it has carried out a thorough review of its carbon footprint and sustainability, and is now looking at how it can achieve a net zero impact.

The first stage of this process was to engage a carbon consultant and work with them to calculate the charity's carbon footprint for the year 2019-20. This involved capturing the data on the fuel used under Scope 1 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (fuel used in aircraft, vehicles, heating buildings, etc.) and under Scope 2 (fuel used indirectly as a result of the charity's activities, such as in the production of purchased electricity).

As James McInroy, EHAAT's Head of Workplace and Infrastructure, explained it: "EHAAT is committed to making the very best choices for the environment, our people and the community. We have reviewed all areas of the charity and calculated our Carbon GHG (Green House Gas) footprint. With long term sustainability and carbon impact forming our decisions across all areas of the charity, our objective is to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve a net zero impact".

One of the first places where the impact of this trailblazing work can be seen is EHAAT's new airbase at North Weald, which will become operational this summer. The building has been designed to current BREEAM ratings. The acronym stands for 'Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method', which was launched in 1990 to set and assess standards for the environmental performance of buildings right through from design and construction to their operation. EHAAT's new base has achieved an energy performance certificate (EPC) grading of A, the highest possible. Specific features installed so far include photovoltaic panels on the roof; electric vehicle charging points in the car park; and motion sensor lighting inside the building so lights are only active when areas are occupied.



Eco boilers are also being installed at the airbase and at the charity's headquarters, as well as its charity shops. Additional steps such as improved waste segregation and recycling are also being made, plus further steps to further improve sustainability and EHAAT'S carbon footprint will be announced and taken over the coming year.



Above: Aerial image of EHAAT's new North Weald Airbase showing the ranks of photovoltaic panels on the roof. Through these, the building actually generates more electricity than it uses, with the excess being sold to the National Grid.

Below left: The car park is equipped with electric vehicle charging points.

Barkway Park Golf Club

After the latest lockdown, members have been keen to return to the fairways and enjoy the camaraderie and exercise along with the occasional frustration that comes with playing golf. The course is in excellent condition, benefiting from the three month closure and the care and attention given by new head greenkeeper, Joe Graves.

Competitions and matches against other clubs have resumed. The Barkers (Seniors) first match was at home against Golf World, Elsenham, which was won convincingly 5-1. Peter Bolden won April's Stableford competition with 41 points, 5 shots ahead of his nearest rival.

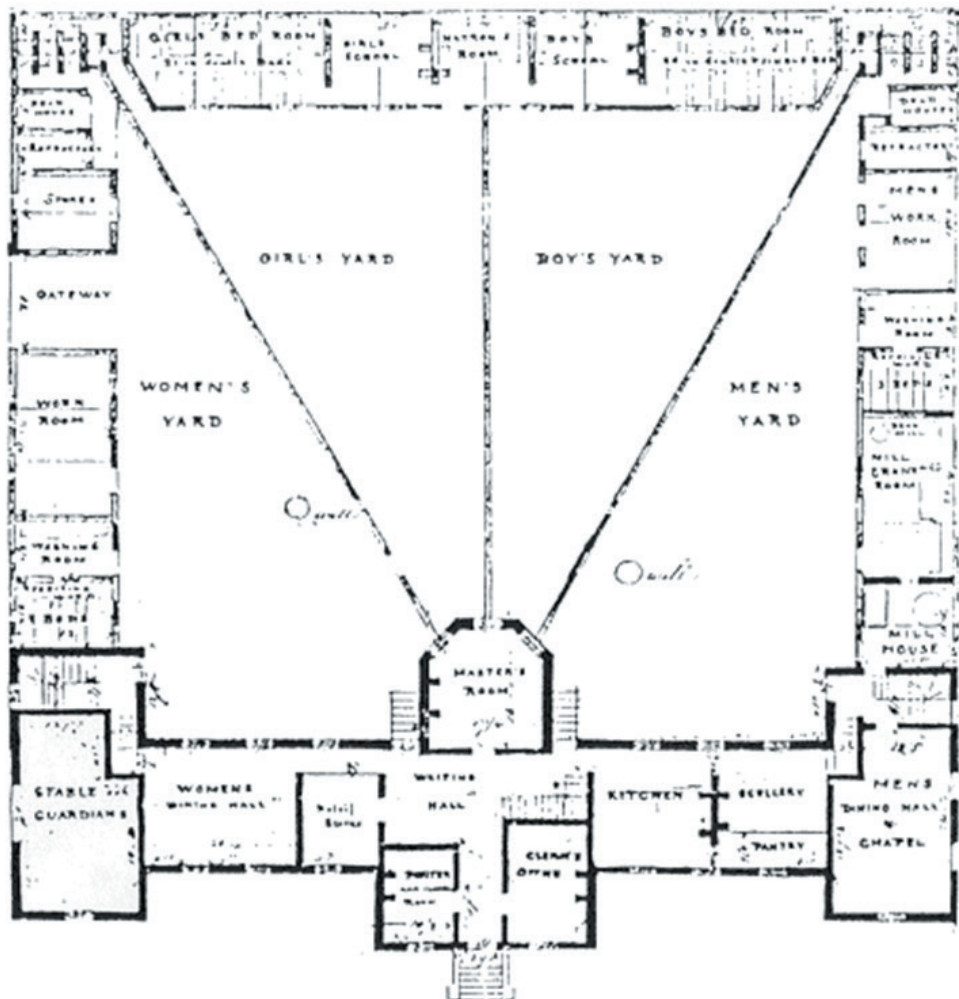
Barkway Park is a friendly club which welcomes new members of all standards and age range. We offer regular competitions as well as social golf. If you are looking for a club, or thinking of taking up the sport, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Tel: 01763 848215

Buntingford Workhouse

There have always been people that have found themselves destitute either by ill health, loss of job, family circumstances or other factors beyond their control. Before the welfare state was formed, looking after the homeless and destitute fell to local villages and towns. Prior to 1834 the relief of the poor was very haphazard and varied depending on local areas arranging their own help. But in 1834 the government brought in a new Poor Law Act which clarified how relief for the poor was to be administered.

The first thing the Act specified was that neighbouring parishes be grouped together to form a Union. Each Union would have a board of Guardians whose job it was to oversee the running of the Union and decide on whether someone should be admitted to the workhouse or not. As it was funded by the parishes, Guardians were keen to off-load



Buntingford workhouse plan, 1836

people to other Unions if they thought they didn't come from their area or didn't deserve a place. Tramps might be given an overnight stay but would quickly be moved on if not from one of the receiving villages.

Buntingford's Union was formed in 1835 covering the parishes of Anstey, Aspenden, Broadfield, Buckland, Cottered, Great Hormead, Layston, Little Hormead, Meesden, Rushdon, Sandon, Throcking, Wallington, Westmill, Wyddial and Yardley. The Union workhouse was built in Buntingford in 1836 to 1837. It was designed by William T Nash, who had designed other workhouses, and cost approximately £2,600, a significant sum at that time. The plan on page 16 shows the layout, from which you can see that adult males and females were kept separately and children were also separated. Workhouses were often quite imposing buildings, often much larger than other properties in the area, and Buntingford's was no exception. It was built to hold 160 inmates.

Whilst I can't find the census results for 1841, I did manage to find those for 1851. Like the census we have all just had to complete, this was taken on the 30th March and its shows the master as Edward Camps who was 60 years of age and came from Barkway. He was formerly a corn dealer, so quite a career change, and he was assisted by his wife Hannah who was 57. I would imagine that other helpers didn't live in the workhouse, although inmates were expected to do the bulk of the work required to run the establishment. There were a total of 155 inmates, 92 male and 63 female. The vast majority were agricultural labourers whose work would have been seasonal. The ages ranged from babies and small children to several inmates who were over 80. One surprise was a surgeon who was listed as an inmate rather than staff.

The next census was taken on 7th April 1861 and shows that Edward and Hannah Camp, although now aged 70 and 68, were still the master and mistress. The number of inmates had fallen to 65, made up of 36 males and 29 females, and again a large percentage were labourers or agricultural workers; the surgeon was no longer there.

The census of 2nd April 1871 shows a new master and mistress – George Croft, aged 57, and his wife Mary, who had four sons and one daughter aged from 8 years down to 1 year old. They had an assistant matron, even though the number of inmates had dropped slightly more, down to 35 males and 16 females. Again, 'agricultural labourer' seemed to have been the predominant occupation. In 1872 an extension was built on the southwest corner of the building.

By 1881 the master was William Lodger, aged 41, who lived with his wife Charlotte, 40, and their two children. They had one servant, a cook, and there were 65 inmates, 41 males and 24 females; one was an orphan, aged 11, from Anstey. The 1891 census, taken on 5th April, shows the master still as William Lodger, aged 51, living there with Charlotte, now 50, and their son aged 21. This time there were 69 inmates including, sadly, six children from the same family aged from 15 to just 3 years old. They had no parents – perhaps the parents were dead, or the children had been abandoned – and it was not known where they had come from.

The 1901 census taken on 31st March shows a new young master, William Cook from Tring, aged 27, and his wife Clara aged 28. The couple had a 5 month old daughter. There was a cook to help out, but inmate numbers had fallen dramatically to just 27. The age of the inmates was also a lot older, most being over 70.

By 1911 Frederick William Butler, a former policeman, had taken over as master. He was aged 30, his wife Edith was 29, and both came from Essex. They had a labour master and a cook to help out and there was also a Florence Butler, aged 16, listed as a servant; she wasn't their daughter but she was born in Layston so may have been a relative. There were 34 inmates in total. Frederick and Edith would be the last master and mistress of the Buntingford Union workhouse.

Over all those years, many of the women were listed as widows. Possibly, once the man of the family and breadwinner died, the wives fell on hard times and may have been made homeless as jobs, especially on farms, often went with a 'tied' cottage.

There were also unmarried mothers in the workhouse. Up until the Poor Law of 1834 parishes had to support a mother and her child or find the father and make him pay for the child's upkeep. In 1834 it became the mother's responsibility to support the child until the age of 16. An amendment was subsequently made to the law stating that if the mother could not support her child and was dependant on the rates, the Guardians could apply to the Quarter Sessions for a maintenance order against the father for children under the age of 7. The Poor Law commissioners issued guidance in 1842 that "loose women" should be kept away from women and girls of good character in workhouses.

The treatment of women with illegitimate children led to what was referred to as "baby farming". Having a child out of wedlock was regarded as a sin and often the young woman would be thrown out of the family home and disowned so she didn't bring shame on her family. It would be very hard to get work if you had a baby to look after with no help from your family. Adverts were sometimes seen in newspapers for "babies wanted to nurse or adopt" and desperate single mothers would pay the woman who had placed the advert to look after her child or adopt it. She could then look for employment and hope to get her child back when her situation improved. This led to lots of these children being left to die, often from starvation, while the baby farmer kept the money they had been given in good faith. Very few women ever got their child back, either because it had died, or the baby farmer had moved away to avoid being caught by the police (the practice was illegal), or the child had been sold to someone who wanted a child.

Some workhouses, especially large ones, sent children to separate establishments. One such place in Tooting in South London was run by a Mr Drouet who in 1846 had 723 children in his "care". He was supposed to give them some form of teaching, but the girls received just over 7 hours a week and the rest of the time they sewed shirts, around 600 of which were produced each week. The boys worked at mainly menial tasks, although some may have been lucky enough to learn a trade. In 1848 Drouet had 1400 children when a cholera epidemic broke out and 180 children died. Inquests put the cause down to overcrowding and poor diet – the children were given very little food and what they did get was barely fit to eat. Drouet was charged with causing the deaths of three of the children, but he was acquitted. His establishment was much like the one that Charles Dickens described in 'Oliver Twist'.

Those in Buntingford's Union were more fortunate, but the workhouse was not a good place to end up and most people tried their hardest not to have to resort to going into it. Unless inmates were too old or infirm, they were expected to work at laundry or sewing, or at hard laborious tasks such as breaking up rubble for road making, or unpicking oakum, old Navy ropes, which were sold back to the Navy mixed with tar and used as a sealant on wooden boats. Often children were taught a trade so they would be able to support themselves when they left the workhouse. The 1911 census shows that the children at Buntingford's Union attended school.

Newspaper reports on the Buntingford in Old Newspapers Facebook site paint a somewhat rosy picture of life when Frederick Butler was the master in what was by then referred to as Bridgefoot House. A piece dated 22nd July 1932 reports that Miss Lushington, daughter of Sir Henry Lushington, formerly of Aspenden Hall, invited all the residents who were able to go to visit her at Aspenden. About 25 sat down to ham sandwiches, bread and butter and cakes. Several were taken there by car, driven by Mr Sutterby, as they were too elderly to make the journey on foot. On leaving they were given presents, tobacco for the men and sweets and flowers for the women. Miss Lushington distributed the same gifts to those at the Union who hadn't been able to make

it, along with sandwiches and cakes. At Christmas the Union was decorated in festive cheer and parties were held attended by local dignitaries, who also distributed gifts to the residents. There was also a yearly sausage supper for the residents, most of whom by now were elderly.

By 1932 the days of the Union in Buntingford were numbered. The Hertfordshire Public Assistance Committee had decided that closing Buntingford's Union House and sending the remaining residents to Bishop's Stortford Union would save £1400 per annum. Local residents petitioned against the closure, saying it would be hard for relatives to visit inmates because the journey to Bishop's Stortford was difficult. Local tradesmen would also suffer. As you can see from this notice from 1832 (right), the goods needed at Buntingford Union not only included grocery items but also boots, shoes and coffins. Tenders were usually accepted from local shop keepers, so closure would be a major blow to the trades people in Buntingford.

The report below, from September 1933, records the removal of the last patients. By this time the Butlers were highly regarded in Buntingford. Frederick had served as a special constable, he was a member of the British Legion, captain of the Bowls Club, had been secretary of the War Memorial Fund, and was involved with the football club. The couple's son, Reginald Cotterall Butler, who was born at the Union in 1913, would become a world-renowned sculptor. In 1935 Frederick and Edith moved to Brookman's Park, where Frederick died in 1937.

BUNTINGFORD.

BRIDGEFOOT HOUSE.—The last of the patients were removed from Bridgefoot House on Wednesday last. It was stated at a meeting of the Guardians Sub-Committee on that day that the Master and Matron (Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Butler) would remain as caretakers for the time being.

building was left unused for some time until it was converted to house homeless families. Then in 2008-9 it was given a new lease of life and redeveloped into five private houses. Only the front section of the original workhouse remains and it is now Grade 2 listed.

Carol Emery, Buntingford Local History Group

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

Public Assistance.

Bishop's Stortford Guardians Committee Area.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Guardians' Committee for the BISHOP'S STORTFORD AREA of the County of Hertford are prepared to receive on behalf of the County Council TENDERS for the supply to the Bridgefoot House Institution, BUNTINGFORD, of the undermentioned goods for the periods stated below, namely:—
BREAD AND FLOUR, MEAT, FISH, GROCERY, OILMAN'S GOODS, DRAPERY, COFFINS, BOOTS AND SHOES, for six months from the 1st day of October, 1932.

Forms of Tender (specifying the goods required) with conditions of Contract may be obtained on application by letter (enclosing a stamped & addressed foolscap envelope for reply) addressed to "The Clerk to the Guardians' Committee, Bishop's Stortford, Herts." to whom tenders duly sealed should be delivered not later than the 6th day of September, 1932.

The County Council do not bind themselves to accept the lowest or any Tender, and reserve the right to accept a tender in whole or in part as they may think fit.

ELTON LONGMORE,

Clerk of the Hertfordshire County Council.

August, 1932.

In the next phase of its existence, Bridgefoot House became council offices, when Buntingford and Much Hadham councils joined forces. Neither would allow the other to become the lead name of the new council so in a compromise it was called Braughing Rural District Council. In 1974 Braughing RDC was disbanded when seven local councils were merged into East Herts District Council, the offices were closed and the



We have now completed our third Lockdown which was relaxed on Monday 29th March when we were allowed to meet again in groups of six outdoors, and then again on Monday 12th April when non-essential shops opened, as did pubs with outdoor patios and gardens for groups of up to six people, and perhaps most important of all, hairdressers and barbers re-opened!

Many of our members have now had both their vaccines, either Pfizer or AstraZeneca, and most of them were received at the Drill Hall, Ware. Everyone agreed it was very efficient and the volunteers very friendly and helpful.

Sadly, the easing of restrictions is not yet enough to allow much change for our u3a groups, most of which still cannot meet because of the restrictions on meeting indoors. Outdoor meetings are still restricted to 6 people so even groups such as Walking are not yet practical. The Group Leaders will continue to monitor the situation to decide when it is safe to restart their groups. (Keep Fit may be able to restart earlier than others under the auspices of their governing body which allows greater flexibility.)

Some groups have continued to meet via Zoom including the Book Club, Current Affairs and one of the Spanish groups. In other cases members have kept in touch via Zoom, WhatsApp and email for quizzes and chats. Our u3a has also continued to keep in touch with members via our monthly newsletter, edited by Kate Farquhar, and our monthly meeting via Zoom.

April's monthly meeting was a talk by Louise Prior, entitled 'Mine to Mistress'. Louise is an international diamond consultant and has held many senior posts in the industry, including Executive Director of the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, the largest trade organisation in the global diamond sector. Her talk took us on a 3 billion year journey from the creation of diamonds, through mining, cutting and grading, to jewellery manufacturing and the end product. She covered the workings of this fascinating industry, its ethics and sustainability and finished with some fascinating stories about famous diamonds and diamond scandals.

(Chairman Jim Farquhar suggested that normally Louise would give out free samples at the end of her talk, but unfortunately Zoom would make that impossible! Wishful thinking!)

We had an additional monthly Zoom group meeting on Wednesday 21st April when Sue Shanahan from Hertfordshire Trading Standards gave a talk about 'Scams', with examples of the different types of scams which are currently around, how we can protect ourselves and how to report them when they occur. The topics covered included telephone scams, doorstep salesmen, buying goods online, and also what happens if we are taken in by a scam phone call and press a number on our telephone as directed by the message! A very topical subject and timely warning as the incidence of scams has increased dramatically and the scammers are getting cleverer and more sophisticated by the day. We must be alert 24/7.

Although our monthly meetings by Zoom are good, they are not as good as meeting our fellow members face to face and being able to have a chat! But one benefit is that our speakers can now talk to us from anywhere – the distance to where they live is no longer a problem! The speakers for our next two monthly meetings are:

Monday 10th May: Philip Cane, 'Barrow to Baghdad & Back Again'

Philip's work has taken him to many countries around the world and the last 10 years of

his working life were spent in the Middle East. Since retiring in 2015, he has become an author and guest speaker and will tell us how a career that began in Barrow-in-Furness ended in Baghdad.

Monday 14th June: Charles Garland, 'Dad's Army'

Charles is an actor, TV producer and speaker who worked as an assistant producer with David Croft and Jimmy Perry at the BBC when they were making this classic show. He promises to give us an inside view.

Jean Cook

www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford



Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire

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spending more time on the phone than ever before, touching base with people we can't actually see? Equally, how many of us have spent so much time on video and phone calls that we just can't face another one?

Missing our families, and that feeling of isolation from them, is really bad for our mental health. With this in mind, Home-Start have launched an online "Garden of Happy Thoughts". People are invited to visit the Garden, purchase a butterfly to add to the garden (all purchases are donations which go to Home-Start), and leave a message for their families to read and enjoy.

We're aiming to fill the Garden with beautiful butterflies and lots of lovely, happy thoughts. If you'd like to help fill the Garden, please visit [Garden of Happy Thoughts - Home-Start Royston, Buntingford and South Cambridgeshire | Visufund](#) and buy your butterfly!

Thank you for supporting Home-Start. We can't wait to see how our Garden grows!

If you would like to know more about your local Home-Start and the vital work that we do, please visit our website at www.hsrsc.org.uk or get in touch with us at admin@hsrsc.org.uk or on **01763 262 262**.

The Garden of Happy Thoughts

I was chatting with a friend a while ago, and she mentioned that she hadn't been able to see her extended family (parents and siblings) for well over 12 months owing to Coronavirus restrictions, and there was very little chance of her getting to see them for another three or four. It got me thinking ...

How many of us are relying on Zoom or Skype or WhatsApp videos to see our loved ones? How many of us are

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

Ghostly Musings of a Highwaywoman

A short story

My name is Katherine, and Hertfordshire is my stomping ground. Has been ever since the 17th century, and make no mistake, I'm still here. I see you on the common with your prissy dogs, and sometimes sit with you in the pub gardens. Just listening.

Everything's changed, but nothing has changed.

Back in the 1600s my parents were wealthy, but my menfolk all died when I was young. My grandfather, my father and my brother all gone by the time I was six. Then my mother married again, but after two years she died too. I was left with an uncaring stepfather, but there was no shortage of money. I was to inherit all of my family's fortune.

When I was 14, I was told to marry a 16-year-old from another wealthy family. He was a useless husband. Then just to make things worse, a civil war broke out. We were on the losing side. It didn't have much to do with me, the men did all the fighting, but our money was soon lost to the cause.

I was very bored. We still had a good lifestyle, but what was there for me to do? One evening I was riding on the common when I had an idea.

I went home, and dressed in some of my husband's clothes and took one of his pistols. I was used to riding side-saddle, so I had to get used to riding like a man. I escaped from the house via a secret passage as dusk was falling and rode to the common.

Eventually, along came a gentleman on horseback. I galloped up to him. His horse pulled up sharply, nearly dislodging his rider. The man was alarmed.

I pointed my pistol at him and demanded his money. He said he didn't understand. Then along came another rider. To my surprise he told the first man to give me what he had or he would shoot him! So the man gave me six guineas and his pocket watch. He then went on his way.

The other man stayed and we talked. He was very handsome, and we rode together across the common and through the countryside. He was amused that I had dressed as a man and become a highwaywoman!

His name was James, like our king, and he was on our side.

James and I fell in love, and had some great times robbing unsuspecting passers-by. We accumulated all sorts of treasures and needed a place to hide them. We found a large tree on the common, and James dug a deep hole, and placed our riches in a box made of sheet iron by a blacksmith. It was all so exciting. Sometimes we went to the Inn for a drink. We didn't hide our love. My husband didn't care.

As time went on we became more ruthless. The war had made us so. People's goods were being stolen, and there were unfair taxes. When my inheritance finally arrived, it was eaten up by the cause, as everything had been in recent years. James went off to fight, so I had to get my adrenaline by myself. I often worked alone and enjoyed the notoriety, although no one knew who this lone highwaywoman was.

One dark night, I stopped some men right outside the Inn. They'd been drinking, so I thought it would be easy. But they pulled out their pistols and shot me, right in the head.

I galloped off towards home, but before I got there the world turned dark and then left me. I was 26 years old.

But I didn't leave the world. I was stuck here. I roamed the common and watched as the world changed. I saw wagons pulled by horses, and as people died, more were born. Each generation having to start again as their immaturity stopped them from progressing as they might have done. It has been frustrating to watch.

I'm aware that sometimes I am visible to some folk. It startles them and that makes me laugh. But sometimes they can hear me too. I have screamed with frustration, and frightened the pants off passers-by.

My horse is still with me as he was also injured and finally succumbed. We ride around the common and if anyone goes near my stash of treasure under the tree, we gallop at them and they hear the hooves and scatter.

Sometimes I go into the Inn, though I no longer have use for food or drink. One night the landlord saw me standing in the doorway. He and his wife tried to capture me by approaching from both sides of the doorway with their arms out. But all they did was bump into each other. It was so much fun! I hear them talking. They have named me the wicked lady, and even named the Inn after me! How about that for notoriety!

The common is now known as Nomansland, and if you see me you can say hello. But don't go near my tree!

Sue Shearing, Buntingford Writers' Group



Like so many other people throughout our country, the Summer Arts in Buntingford 2020 Organising Team were hugely disappointed when the 3-Day Weekend Event in Layston Court Gardens, right in the heart of our town, which had been planned so meticulously, had to be cancelled because of the Covid 19 pandemic. However, we are pleased to announce that this innovative Outdoor Festival has now been re-scheduled for next year, by which time we hope it will be safe for everyone to support and enjoy a really wonderful celebration of Music and the Arts in Buntingford.

It will be held from Friday 17th June through Saturday 18th and end on Sunday 19th June 2022.

We have been able to secure bookings with all the performers previously booked which includes the fabulous Jersey Boys, Miami Royals, The Swiftbeats, the well-known Cambridge folk duo Hannah Sanders and Ben Savage.

The whole event will begin on Friday 17th June with the final of The Battle of the Bands!

Watch this space for more details as we continue with our planning of this brand-new event for our town. If you would like to join our enthusiastic organising team, please contact either **Jenny Thomas on 01763 448435** or **Christine Stuart-Taylor on 01763 272990**.



STD Graded classes in Ballet, Tap & Modern and recreational classes in Commercial Dance

We are back with face to face classes! After all but a few weeks of the last year conducting our classes on Zoom, we are back in our Halls. Our classes are now in Buntingford, Great Hormead and Barkway.



It has been fantastic to welcome all our pupils back to classes plus lots of new pupils as well. Our classes all started back from 12th April as planned and it's so lovely to be able to see and chat to our pupils and parents. We are so pleased so many of our pupils persevered on Zoom and thank the parents for their support during what has been a challenging year for everyone.

Here are some of our youngest Modern and Ballet pupils immaculately turned out in their uniforms with their hair in very neat and tidy buns for their first classes back.

We have a performance planned for the 17th July for all our pupils. Due to circumstances, the performance will only be filmed for distribution to our families and will take place in a Hall rather than in a Theatre with a live audience, but it's great to have a performance to work towards. Everyone has had to adapt in so many ways this year to keep things as normal as possible.

New pupils are always welcome, many of our classes are currently full but please contact us to go on our waiting list for September. We offer a **NO OBLIGATION TRIAL IN ANY DANCE GENRE!** We currently offer Ballet, Tap, Modern & Jazz and Commercial Dance classes. We have waiting lists for some classes but review these every term.



Have a look at our website www.buntingfordschoolofdance.co.uk

Or find us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)



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MILLFIELD FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL



www.millfield.herts.sch.uk

As I write this, I can hear the welcome sounds of children playing and learning at Millfield First & Nursery School; I will never again take for granted a full and busy school! The Easter term was a very different and challenging term for our children, families and staff, but even so there has been much to celebrate. The children showed themselves to be very resilient, whether learning at school or at home, and they should be very proud of how they adapted to new circumstances and continued to achieve. Millfield staff have also been adaptable and creative in their teaching, and have been very supportive of each other, as well as of the children and their families. I am truly thankful to work with such a dedicated team of professionals. I am also very grateful to parents and carers who, I'm sure, had their 'juggling' skills tested to the full, but still managed to support and encourage their children while learning at home. And our thanks also to **Jonathan Hunt Estate Agents** who kindly offered Millfield families the option of printing additional home learning resources to assist with remote learning, which was greatly appreciated.

After this experience of our school community being separated, we were so excited to be re-united in our year group bubbles, as well as a whole school when we meet virtually. The teaching staff were thrilled to have the children back and I was delighted to see that most children settled quickly and happily when they returned to school on 8th March.

Update on Millfield Pre-School (2-3 year olds) and Nursery (3-4 year olds)

We have had to make some amendments to **Millfield Pre-School** provision in light of the impact from COVID-19. Demand for our normally very popular afternoon Pre-School sessions has reduced and as a result we have temporarily suspended our afternoon provision. **Our morning provision remains open.**

There has been reduced demand for 2 to 3 year old childcare in general around the country. As a school, we have been told that this is for a range of reasons, from changes in parental employment to parental choice – Early Years provision is non-statutory. However, the change is clearly evident in the reduced number of applications for a September 2021 start at Millfield Pre-School and we have reluctantly decided to suspend provision from September until further notice. We are incredibly proud of our Pre-School, it offers young children a great start in their educational journey, and we are disappointed to have to withdraw it at this time. However, we are simply adapting to the current needs of our community, which may change again in the future, so please look out for Millfield Pre-School developments. We will advertise any new information as changes occur and also share it on our school website at: <https://www.millfield.herts.sch.uk/admissions/>

Fortunately, **Millfield Nursery** has not been impacted in this way and from September we will be utilising the Pre-School to create a larger Nursery unit for 3 to 4 year olds. We are offering a full 15-hour Nursery provision across every week-day morning, as well as additional afternoon 'Early Explorers' sessions, enabling us to offer a full 30-hour Nursery provision. See the poster opposite for more details. We have a limited number of morning spaces currently available; please contact the School Office for more information.

Hands – Face – Space The Millfield community continues to work together to ensure a safe environment and that everyone is playing their part in adhering to Government guidance. We very much appreciate the support and understanding from our community.

Laura Kennedy-Weeks, Headteacher

(A longer version of this article is in the online April Journal, published on the BCS website.)



Come and join Millfield Nursery

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*As a Christian school, we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.
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How was learning from home different after Christmas?

Live lessons became a regular feature of the week, whereby teachers taught students both in school and out simultaneously, and staff also made tutorials, so a teacher could model what was expected. Opportunities for Live Chat sessions for students to talk through problems with their work and get help from their teacher were also available. Like all teachers across the country, our ICT skills were challenged and we had to learn as quickly as possible. Our staff training focused on improving our ability to communicate effectively from afar.

Live Collective Worship sessions (right) were available to students on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the end of the day. We explored the values of 'friendship' and 'service' and I am pleased to say that between 150 and 200 students logged into these sessions, which gave them the opportunity to catch up, connect with our community and reflect.



During January to March 2021, the majority of students continued online learning and were confident to submit their work electronically and stay in regular contact with their teachers. As teachers, we increased our flexibility in working hours, often receiving messages of help or submissions of work outside of the normal school working day. It was not unusual for learning conversations to take place at weekends or evenings and when students needed help, the majority of teachers were able to provide it. This meant students returned to school confident in the learning they had completed remotely, making it easier to continue their learning journey.

We had between 75 to 90 students attending school during the pandemic, including our keyworker children and vulnerable children. We provided 'one to one' mentoring and intervention sessions, learning and well-being support for those in need. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the community of parents, grandparents and carers who continued to help their children learn from home and we are immensely grateful.

How did we prepare for students to return to school in March?

We were excited to hear that students were finally returning to school, but we faced new challenges with the Lateral Flow Testing programme for KS3 and mask wearing in classes for all. We worked closely with Freman College to co-ordinate a system of testing for all KS3 students (Year 7 and 8 students) prior to their return to school. We would like to thank our students, parents and the staff who organised the programme, it was a significant operation to implement with only two weeks' notice. The students were exceptionally mature during the in-school testing (photo, top right); the staff and volunteers were very impressed with their commitment to test.

Students remarked that they felt "good" about finally doing something to help everyone. Testing kits were distributed to students, as they continue to test in Years 7 and 8, although this process now takes place at home! Students in Years 7 and 8 are also required to wear a mask in class as well as corridors and again, although uncomfortable



at times, students have worked hard to make sure that they are following the guidelines and supporting the community to stay safe. We are remarkably proud of their response to such difficult and unusual requests and how committed they are to supporting our community.

What changes take place after Easter?

Following consultations with parents via a questionnaire online and talking with students

and staff, we know how much they miss their other subjects. As lockdown begins to relax, we have decided to extend the number of sessions from two to three, which allows students to cover almost all of their subjects next term. However, this will increase the number of teachers they will be exposed to, the number of classes a teacher works with and the risk of the virus spreading. Staff and students are very familiar with COVID-19 procedures at school and we believe the gains outweigh the risk. Our Parent Questionnaire about expanding the number of sessions in school was resoundingly in favour of this change. Please be aware that we continue to include Collective Worship and well-being sessions as learning time. As lockdown relaxes further, we hope to introduce some enrichment activities and students can begin to engage in after school clubs again.

World Book Day at Edwinstree

Most students experienced World Book Day at home this year, but for those in school, we had a Harry Potter outbreak. To celebrate the day, students had extra reading time and favourite books were shared in class!



Comic Relief fun and laughter

As a Church of England School, we are asked to help students “to flourish and live life in all its fullness”. Fullness often means exploring all of life’s experiences, including some sad ones, but since the Coronavirus pandemic, we feel we need to plan to support our students to see more of the fun side of life during the summer term, especially as lockdown guidelines begin to relax.

Initially, we used the Comic Relief day to raise funds for others and to have some fun. It was wonderful to hear laughter during our Comic Relief sponsored ‘silly walks’ around the school field. In the afternoon students and staff took part in a masked singer competition. Students enjoyed the freedom to express themselves and the mood throughout the school was uplifting, a feeling we have all missed during these difficult times. We raised a total of £668.78 and we are very grateful to everyone who helped support this event. We look forward to more laughter and fun this term!

Virtual Easter Service at Edwinstree

On the last day of term, the school community attended a virtual Easter Service via Teams, conducted by Reverend Norman Jones. Students listened to the Easter message and took time to contemplate the sacrifices made, and how we can support each other.

Jo Gant, Headteacher



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As I sit down to write this column I do so with a certain amount of trepidation as both my previous entries were full of optimism about a restart to our footballing activities and yet, before they even hit the press, football hit the buffers yet again. Hopefully that won't happen this time! With grassroots football being suspended in early December, it has been an anxious wait to see when and under what conditions we would be allowed to resume. Would the season be declared null and void for the second year in a row? Or would the leagues be brave enough to adapt their structures to allow the remaining fixtures to be played out and arrive at some sort of competitive conclusion?

So what happened during Lockdown 3?

Unfortunately both the Herts Senior County League and Beds & Herts Women's Football League decided to scrap the league season and replace it with cup competitions. The County League unilaterally replaced the season with a Divisional Cup Competition, with each division split into four groups and each team guaranteed three games before the winners of each group progressed to a semi-final and, from there, a Final. Given that both our teams had 20 games to play, this feels like we've been short-changed to be honest!

The Ladies League at least had the courtesy to involve their clubs in the decision-making process with all the clubs voting. Whilst our Ladies could have completed their season, the majority decision was to replace it with a smaller league format, in effect increasing the number of divisions and guaranteeing each side eight games – somewhat more generous than the HSCL!

The Vets have time to complete their league fixtures with three games being treated as double headers.

Resumption!

Training time was limited before the return to competitive action, so for the first few games we were concerned about who would be fit, what injuries we might pick up and, frankly, how many players would be up for a game after the best part of five months off. We needn't have worried – over 70 players returned to training across our four squads!

The First Team returned to action in Group C of the Division 1 Cup with a resounding 3-1 home win against Aldenham, a team who subsequently dropped out before the final round of games! They followed that fine start with a goal-filled 3-3 draw away to Old Parmeritians, leaving St Albans convinced that they deserved the full three points. Their final game on 17th April saw them travel to Wheathampstead Wanderers needing just a draw to qualify for the knock-out stages of the cup, but a last gasp goal saw them lose 2-1, a result made even more galling as we failed to convert three open goal chances!

The Reserves fared similarly in Group D of the Division 3 Cup, winning their first game against Harpenden Rovers away 4-1, then following that up with a 1-1 draw at home to Hatfield Town U23s. They welcomed table-topping Lemsford Reserves to The Bury, needing all three points to qualify for the latter stages. A competitive if cagey game gained both pace and niggles with Lemsford taking the lead early in the second half, but Bunt soon swept down the other end to equalise. A cagey last 20 minutes saw us searching for the winner and eventually Liam Faik obliged, which spurred Lemsford on to pour forward hoping to salvage their season. In the last few minutes it appeared they had been successful with the ball nestling in the back of the net and no Linesman's flag to be seen. The oppo poured away in celebration, our lads hit the deck in frustration, then the

ref blew his whistle ... and gave a freekick for a foul on the goalkeeper which, to be honest, only he saw! So the Reserves march on with a semi-final game this weekend, away to Stevenage Community FC – a tough fixture!



The Ladies started their renewed campaign in early April with a well fought 4-2 home victory against BSC FC Ladies, but they faltered the week after, falling to a 3-1 defeat away to Bury Rangers. They now have a week off to recover and resume on the 2nd May at home when they face the formidable Sherrardswood Ladies.

The Vets resumed their league with an away fixture at Bullsmoor Vets where a topsy-turvey game saw us throw away a two goal lead to draw 5-5 against a side that has often been a bit of a bogey team for us away from home. Their second fixture is best skipped over– let's just say that Broxbourne were too strong for us to the tune of 7! Their first game at The Bury, however, saw them dominate a below par Barkway to run out 3-0 winners which, in all honesty, flattered the opposition.



The Walking Football Squad, sponsored by the Town Council, also resumed training and took part in a mini-tournament at the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation, facing the likes of Birmingham City, Leyton Orient and Watford. Bunt enjoyed the event hugely, but the disparity in the average age of squads and 'unusual' rules meant they didn't progress past the semi-final stage, but it's good to be back and more tournaments are to come.

Players, Sponsors and Volunteers wanted!!!

The last two years have, obviously, been disruptive to our plans. We are keen to improve and have a vision of offering high-quality, exciting football at a higher level, but we can only go so far without the support of the local community whom we serve. We are blessed with a small but dedicated group of volunteers and enthusiastic players, without whom there would be no Buntingford Town FC, but we would love to see that dedicated group increase in size. If you would like to join us on our adventure, either as a player, sponsor or supporter, please contact me on chair@buntingfordtownfc.com or 07976 869 532.

You can follow us on facebook (@BuntingfordTownFC), Twitter (@BuntTownFC) or Instagram (@buntingford_town_fc) for details of upcoming games.

Mark Cotton, Chairman, Buntingford Town FC

The Ware & District Photographic Society



The Photographic Society has continued to meet via ZOOM which has allowed us to have lecturers from far and wide. The Society recently competed in the final of the Melbourn Trophy and was successful once again, with one of our members, Mark Sims, winning the award for best image for "Passing Storm, Hayden Valley" (above). The Society also competed in the Enfield Craft Cup and was joint 2nd. The current season finishes at the end of May but the Society hopes to arrange one or two visits during the summer months.

The new season commences on Wednesday 8th September at 8pm, hopefully still at Thundridge Village Hall. We have a very interesting programme for 2021/22 including a variety of lectures, competitions and one or two workshops to help the less experienced with their photography. Help and advice are always readily available from our more experienced members who produce colour and monochrome prints and projected digital images. Details of the programme will be on our website in due course. We are planning to hold our Annual Exhibition (including hand embroideries) this year on Saturday 20th November in Thundridge Village Hall. We hope you will come along and be inspired!

We are always looking for new members and would love to welcome more members from the Buntingford area. The Club is affiliated to the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain through the East Anglian Federation of Photographic Societies. We are open to everyone interested in photography, but anyone under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. As an added incentive we offer the first 3 weeks free of Club subs! You can find more information on our website, or you can give me a ring on 01920 822104, or call Mark Sims, our current President, on 01920 411458 or 07712 898 525.

Barbara Norris, Secretary
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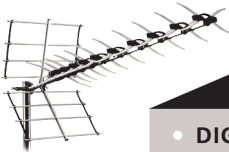


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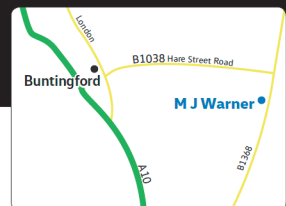
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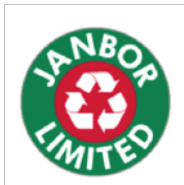
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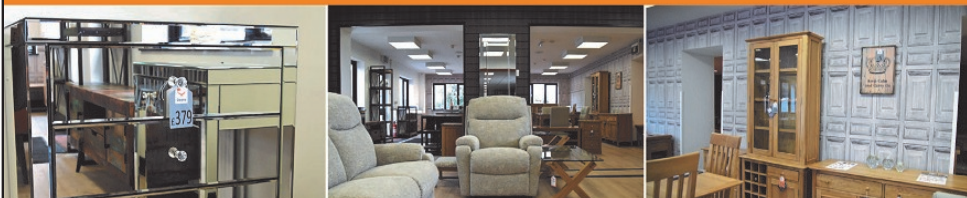


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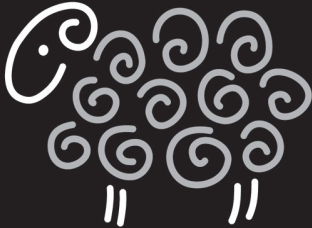
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