



## St Andrew's Church



I was just the right age to be highly impacted by the first Star Wars movie that was released. Suddenly there were queues around the block in America. This sci-fi blockbuster's impact was seismic. But then the tricky question: how do you follow up on a world wide hit? It turns out you start on an ice planet and your main hero nearly dies in the opening scene. The Empire Strikes Back was a masterpiece and the rest is history but the critical question remains: how do you follow up something important? It's an issue for film makers, bands and car makers.

The congregation of St Peter's Church, Alresford, was struggling with just such a question. An ancient 13th century church, which even had tiles from a roman villa in its walls (still visible today) burnt down on the 2nd of October 1971. So what next? The congregation did a brave thing, they surveyed folks in Alresford and asked where they would ideally like the church to be located; the general view was in the heart of the village. Land was gifted and plans made, the church met in the village hall during the build and the day came when the new church of St Andrew's opened on Palm Sunday 1976.

At our 25th anniversary, the Bishop of Colchester made the following observation; "What happened all those years ago in 1971 must have been a profound loss, not only to the congregation but to the whole community. But, as so often happens, what appears to be a disaster opens the way to new opportunity."

We would warmly like to invite you to our 50th anniversary services this year.

On the 29th March, our Palm Sunday service will walk up from St Peter's, with a service commencing at St Andrew's and be followed by a shared meal.

The actual date of the opening was around the weekend of the 11th and 12th April, 50 years ago so we are going to have an open church at St Andrew's, an exhibition and tea party on Saturday the 11th. Then on the 12th we will have a special 50th anniversary service at 11am with lunch after.

Please do feel welcome to come along and join us for our celebrations. Maybe this account, 50 years in the making, can encourage us about how new life and opportunity can come out of the biggest of set backs.

Every blessing  
Rev Andrew Fordyce MBE

## St Andrew's Church Family Friendly Easter Trail

### Save the date!

Join us to find out  
about the Easter story

Free!  
All welcome

Children must  
be accompanied  
by an adult

Saturday  
4th April  
2 - 3.30pm



Crafts

Activities

Games

Refreshments



St Andrew's Close, CO7 8BL

DETAILS OF OUR EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE CAN BE  
FOUND ON THE BACK PAGE

## ST ANDREW'S CHURCH CONTACTS

Rector: Rev Andrew Fordyce - 01206 920848  
Email: [rector@tenpennyvillages.uk](mailto:rector@tenpennyvillages.uk)

Associated Priest: Rev Pauline Hart - 01206 826318  
Email: [assocpriest@tenpennyvillages.uk](mailto:assocpriest@tenpennyvillages.uk)

Churchwarden:  
Nick Berry - 01206 824496  
Email: [standrewswardens@tenpennyvillages.uk](mailto:standrewswardens@tenpennyvillages.uk)

Bookings for the Hub: Meg Burdus - 01206 820618  
Email: [admin@tenpennyvillages.uk](mailto:admin@tenpennyvillages.uk)

[www.tenpennyvillages.uk](http://www.tenpennyvillages.uk)  
Find us on ParishChurchesofAlresfordElmsteadThorrington-TennpennyVillages

Information about our Services can be found on our notice sheet at <http://tenpennyvillages.uk>

## MEMORIES GROUP

Do you, or someone close to you, have Memory problems? If so, why not come and join us for an informal afternoon of socialising and reminiscence.

We meet at the Hub at St Andrews Church, on the second Monday of the month from 2.30 - 4 pm. You would be most welcome.

For further details please contact :  
Jeanette Downing on 01206 825008

# CLUBS AND SOCIETIES NEWS

Do you run a club or society? If you would like something included in the Alresford Advertiser, please email [alresfordadvertiser@gmail.com](mailto:alresfordadvertiser@gmail.com)

## ALRESFORD VILLAGE HALL REGULAR GROUPS

### MONDAY

- Mindfulness Yoga: Monday mornings
- Alresford Indoor Carpet Bowls Club: Every Monday afternoon/evening

### TUESDAY

- Alresford Lunch Club: Every Tuesday morning and early afternoon
- 1st Alresford Scout Group (Beavers): Tuesday Teatime.
- Dog Training Classes: Tuesday evening.

### WEDNESDAY

- Tai Chi: Every Wednesday morning.
- Alresford Women's Guild: Every other Wednesday afternoon.
- Pilates: Every Wednesday evening

### THURSDAY

- Exercise Classes (Extend): Every Thursday morning
- Alresford Women's Institute: Second Thursday evening of the month

### FRIDAY

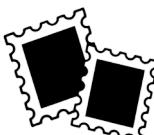
- Alresford Calligraphy Group/Art Club: Every Friday morning.
- Simply Singing: Every other Friday afternoon October to May
- Meditation Sound Bath, Mother & Baby Sound Bath: 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month

### SATURDAY

- Alresford Craft and Farmers Market: First Saturday morning of the month (February to December)
- Alresford Colne Rangers Football Club (using the Pavilion at the rear of the hall)

If more information is needed for any of these groups, please see :<https://e-voice.org.uk/alresfordvillagehall/> or contact Russell Milburn on 01206 825739

## CHRISTINE'S CHARITY BAG



Stamps are still being collected for Bone Cancer Research. They should be cut from envelopes with a half inch border. Please put them through the letter box or leave them by the back door.

Wool, needles, patterns and some soft toy stuffing material are available for anyone who wishes to contribute.

Collection or delivery of wool or knitting can be arranged.

Stamps and knitting can be delivered to 2 Coach Road as before or brought to any WI meeting.

John Stimpson  
2 Coach Road  
01206 825068



### St Andrew's - not just for Sundays

#### Friendship Circle 10:30-12:00

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday

Although we are a bereavement group, we welcome anyone who is lonely and is seeking company for a chat, coffee and cake.

#### Memories 14:30 - 16:00

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday

Do you or anyone you know have memory problems? If so, you are very welcome to join us for a time of reminiscing and refreshment. If you are interested, please contact **Jeanette Downing on 01206 825008**

#### Tuesday Tots 10:30 - 12:00

Weekly term-time

Somewhere to bring your little ones to play and somewhere to meet other parents and carers.

#### Knit and Natter 14:00 - 15:30

Tuesday Fortnightly

Bring your latest craft project or just come along and natter over tea and cake.

#### Start-up Café 10:30 - 12:00

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday

The Church transforms into a café to meet old and new friends over tea, coffee and cake, borrow a book or jigsaw and take part in a quiz.

#### Relax and Renew 13:45 - 15:00

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday

Learn relaxation techniques and enjoy some refreshments.

#### Ministry for Men 19:30 - 21:30

4<sup>th</sup> Thursday

Meet at St Andrew's, Elmstead Green or Thorrington for a lift to the venue. Put the world to rights over a drink and support our local pubs and other venues.

Tenpenny Villages Benefice of Alresford, Elmstead, Frating with Thorrington.

More details on our website [www.tenpennyvillages.uk](http://www.tenpennyvillages.uk)

## ALRESFORD BOWLS CLUB

You are invited to join us to play carpet bowls

SESSIONS ARE HELD EVERY MONDAY

2.00PM AND 7.00PM

ALRESFORD VILLAGE HALL

JUST COME ALONG

FREE TRIAL SESSIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO NEWCOMERS

THEREAFTER THERE IS A £10 ANNUAL FEE AND £2 PER SESSION WHICH INCLUDES REFRESHMENTS

For further information contact  
Andrew Pyman on  
07393 381257



## ALRESFORD WI

The speaker at our February meeting is Melissa Milburn talking about Tropic Cosmetics.

In March we have Lewis Rabett telling us about his career as an auctioneer at Reeman Dansie in Colchester.

We meet on the second Thursday of each month in the Village Hall.

Meetings start at 7.30p.m.

Visitors are always welcome.

For further information please contact

Chris James 07977 495382  
Hilda Newbold 01206 823477

## SIMPLY SINGING

Do you find yourself joining in with songs you're listening to on the radio, on the TV or when in your car? Well if you do then you're the ideal person to come and join us at the Simply Singing afternoons. We cover lots of the old favourite songs inviting you to offer your own favourites to sing. Don't worry about knowing all the lyrics, because they will either be projected onto the stage screen or you'll have a paper lyric sheet.

We are not a choir, but on average 25 men and women, who enjoy a good old sing song and a very enjoyable social afternoon, so why not come along and see what we are all about.

We meet every two weeks from 2pm to 4pm in the Village Hall, Ford Lane. CO7 8AT

It's just £2 as session which includes refreshments at half time.

Dates so far for 2026 are:

23rd January  
6<sup>th</sup> & 20th February  
6<sup>th</sup> & 20th March  
10th & 24th April  
8th & 22nd May



For more information please contact:

Jeanette on 01206 825008 or Chris on 07484334698

## ALRESFORD CRAFT & FARMER'S MARKET

A big thank you to all of those that attended our Christmas Market on the 6th December 2025.

It was a really busy, but lovely morning. Our annual raffle raised £288, which is a fantastic amount. This has been donated towards the cost of the new footpath at the grave yard at St Peters Church to enable easier access for all.

My thanks also goes to Hayley for her amazing support for the market sorting out the adverts with photos and next dates etc. I look forward to working with the new team.



## 1<sup>st</sup> ALRESFORD & ELMSTEAD MARKET SCOUT GROUP

Beavers meet on a Tuesday evening in term time and have a few spaces for any boys or girls age six or seven years who would like to join us. Cubs and Scouts for older children meet at Elmstead Community Centre on a Wednesday evening.

Please contact [alresfordbeavers@outlook.com](mailto:alresfordbeavers@outlook.com) for further details of any of the sections within the Scout Group or to add younger children to our waiting list.

## ALRESFORD ANGLING ASSOCIATION



ANGLING  
TRUST



FISH  
LEGAL

Patron: Sir Bernard Jenkin MP

The new year has started off cold and frosty, but at the time of writing this, rain still seems something of an anomaly this side of England. As much as rain is a dampener for planned days out, excuse the pun, but without it we become a desert. The rest of the country seems to have had loads and, in some cases, too much where we are still struggling with water levels. But as it has been said many times, "be careful what you wish for".

The last of 2025's matches have been fished with catches matching the time of year. Perch and Pike remain on the catch list as carp and silver fish take a rest, but not completely. A hot drink to hand plus warm clothing is the order of the day and to stay sheltered from the wind. The latter not always the easiest to achieve.

Large flocks of Canada, Brent and Grey Lag geese are about on the lakes as well as Mallard ducks along with other winter visitors. Again, at the time of writing this, the lakes have remained unfrozen so Kingfishers, Egrets and Herons have not struggled for food.

Maintenance continues through the winter months and the woodland around the end of Bramley lake will be thinned out to encourage future ground cover and enable the spread of birds, small mammals and insect life. This will be done in sections as an ongoing exercise under advisement of the Animal Welfare Assessment Grid. Any member who can spare a few hours on a Wednesday morning to clear away dead and redundant undergrowth, your efforts would be greatly appreciated. Maintenance on Alresford Lake continues on a Thursday morning, weather permitting.

All of the donated fishing equipment has now found grateful new owners and hopefully will be put to use in the forthcoming months.

As always, enjoy your fishing, stay safe and look out for one another

Tight Lines  
Mike Day (Secretary)

## MUSIC NIGHT - THANK YOU

Thanks to all who supported the Music Night on the 21st November and for the kind donations made that evening, These totalled £90 which has been sent to a very appreciative Macmillan and the East Anglian Children's Hospices.

Chris Sanderson

## ALRESFORD COLNE RANGERS FOOTBALL CLUB



The men's teams continue to struggle with truly little hope of the situation improving. The managers do a terrific job, and no one can point a finger at them for the failings that exist. Every week they spend hours just to get two teams together and still games have been forfeited. It is the "so called" players who are the problem, will it change with so little commitment shown to managers or club? The problem is also existing in youth football as games are cancelled as teams cannot be raised. At grassroots level, the paying of players is certainly a contributing factor as this can become the attraction of playing elsewhere. The problem is difficult to solve and is causing many clubs to struggle. Sadly, in December we had to make the painful decision to request that the men's first team be withdrawn from the league as the fines for cancelling consecutive matches was accumulating and it became a financial decision alongside the lack of player commitment. At that time, it was hoped to get back to two teams for the 2026-27 season, and a lot of hard work and thinking was needed before then. The Club will continue and if the right decisions are made it will be in a stronger position.

The Walking Football season finished with an enjoyable end of season social event in early December 2025 and they return for their pre-season in February 2026.

The youth teams continue to perform well, although as stated there is a slight problem with player unavailability. The parents and managers are to be congratulated for the way they conduct themselves as the behaviour of some clubs who visit, mostly the "adults" is questionable.

The Ladies team continues to flourish with commitment to training and games excellent. In early December with a match away to Leiston, fourteen players made the trip in horrible conditions and were winning 2-1 at half time when the referee deemed the pitch dangerous and abandoned the game. There were no moans from the players, they got changed, drove home remembering the route for when they travel for the rearranged fixture in March. Something our men's teams could learn from!!

So, we must not look backwards but focus on the future and hopefully see the fruits of this within all our teams.

### STOP PRESS

Father Christmas bought Alresford Colne Rangers Football Club a huge Christmas present in the shape of a manager wanting to bring his team to the club as Alresford Colne Rangers. The Hon Sec and the Chair have worked so very hard and our good relationship with the league has resulted in this adopted team being allowed back into the Premier Division to fulfil the remaining fixtures as Alresford Colne Rangers Football Club, these people are owed a huge vote of thanks, and we can look forward to 2026 with a degree of hope and work towards encouraging all within the club to **BELONG**.

Brian Martin

The Ranger

## KNIT AND NATTER

Having come 4th last year with our first entry in the Christmas Tree Festival at Elmstead Church, the Knit and Natter Group were thrilled to be voted top in the adult category this year with our entry 'Away in a Manger'. This was a combination of knitting, crochet and needlecraft taken on by a number of our group.



We are a small, friendly group who meet fortnightly on Tuesdays in St Andrews Church Hub 2pm - 3.30pm. Our February dates are 3rd & 17th continuing every 2 weeks throughout the year. We would love to welcome anyone who would like to join us for a natter and refreshments. There is no charge or commitment and bringing knitting or any other craft is optional.

## LUNCHEON CLUBS

**TUESDAYS at  
ALRESFORD VILLAGE HALL**

**12.30 - 2.30pm**

**FRIDAYS at  
BRIGHTLINGSEA COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**12.30 - 2.30pm**

2 Course Meal including Tea / Coffee - £7.00  
Transport, door to door, if needed - £4.00  
Raffle - £1.00

We welcome back all past members and newcomers.  
It is not too late to join us for these friendly meals.

For any further enquiries, please contact:

The Autumn Centre, 1 Osborne Court,  
Victoria Place, Brightlingsea CO7 0EB  
Or telephone 01206 303702

Or email [theautumncentre@outlook.com](mailto:theautumncentre@outlook.com)

## PATH FOR ST PETERS

### CHURCHYARD APPEAL

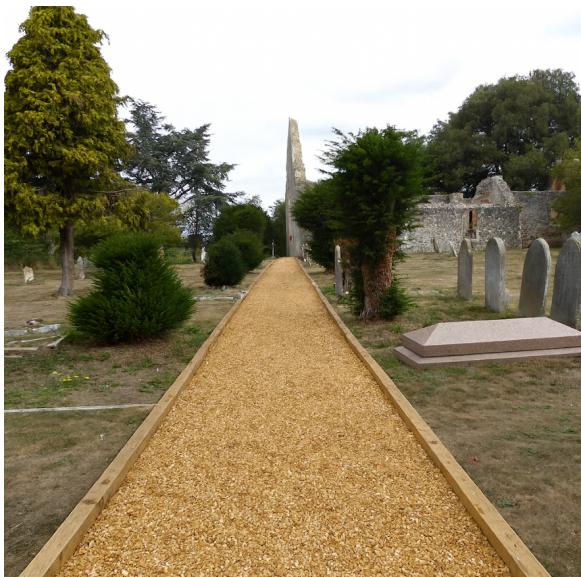
Following on from the October/November Alresford Advertiser the Faculty (permission) from the Diocese at Chelmsford has now been granted and we can now progress this project.

As stated in the previous article of which is copied below

“The third part was if we could get all these parts in place to sustain the future of the St Peters Churchyard, I would manage a project to reinstate an original pathway into the churchyard that would increase accessibility to all enabling even those with mobility issues an opportunity to visit their loved ones resting place or just visit and enjoy the peace of that space. A Faculty has also been applied for. At present and for over 50 years people have used the adopted path (which was not a path prior to the fire in 1971) which routes over existing graves.

St Peters is in my view along with The Creek the only real place of peace and tranquillity within Alresford where many visit just to sit and enjoy. A path will make this a safer option and allow those who have not been able to visit loved ones for years the possibility to do so. The path will be constructed to fit in with the rural aspect and would be wide enough for wheelchairs. It is planned to be located from the main gate and would extend to the Memorial Garden and would again extend at the junction east and west to allow full access to all the recent resting places. A local contractor will be used, and the estimated cost of the project is £11,000. To date £8,000 has been pledged and this is and should be a “people-based” project that the community of Alresford should be offered the opportunity to support by way of a donation. They will then always feel a part of this beautiful part of Alresford and help protect and indeed enhance the future of **ST PETERS CHURCHYARD**.

**This is a proposed image to give you an idea of what it will look like**



Since then, we have further donations bringing the total now raised to £9100.00. This is a fantastic effort, and there are residents in Alresford who have pledged and are awaiting the details of where to donate to...These donors were just waiting for the permission to be granted....

**IT NOW HAS BEEN!**

#### Donations to:

**Name: Alresford Parochial Church Council**

**Sort Code: 20-21-73**

**Account Number: 20102318**

**Payments should be referenced as St Peters path or similar.**

If you want to know more about this or anything else relating to St Peters Churchyard then do, please contact me ...**Russell Milburn 01206 825739 or**  
**[russellmilburn57@gmail.com](mailto:russellmilburn57@gmail.com)**

## WHO KNOWS

**By Brian Ford**

Near the Colne estuary the remains of a Roman villa have been found;

All that now remains is fragments of floors, buried underground.

Was it built by a retired squaddie, spending his pension pot

On a pristine piece of potential farm land in a secluded spot?

Or was an ambitious, nouveau rich social climbing Brit

Keen to flaunt his status and anxious do his bit,

To show his allegiance to local oligarchs sent from Rome,

By imitating them in dress, language, manners, food and home?

The leaves rustle as the wind blows,

**Who knows? Who knows?**

And who was Aella who gave the village his name?

Some raiding Saxon pirate whose purpose when he came

Was to plunder, loot and rob, kill, destroy and harm?

Or a settler looking for space to settle down and farm?

Or a local petty autocrat, showing his authority?

Or perhaps all three.

The trees tremble as the wind blows.

**Who know? Who knows?**

In the grave yard at St. Peter's, there is Robert Bray's gravestone,

On it, there is sculpted a skull and cross bones.

Was this man a pirate? No, it's purpose was possibly to state,

That dying of bubonic plague was this man's final fate.

Did this peaceful, isolated village receive a visitation,

From the deadly, dreaded scourge that swept across the nation?

The grass whispers as the wind blows

**Who knows? Who knows? Who knows?**

# ALRESFORD VILLAGE HALL

Charity Commission Number: 301233

Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/alresfordvillagehall>

Facebook:

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



An online calendar is available via the website to allow visibility of when the hall is available for hire. Bookings will still need to be made via email or telephone with a booking /security deposit now required to confirm the booking. Hirers are encouraged to pay deposit/fees using BACS and after the hire the deposit is quickly refunded subject to the hall being left as the contract of hire defines.

Email: [alresfordvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:alresfordvillagehall@gmail.com)

Contact No: 07548 742796

Please see the website for all news and updates regarding hire times, booking process and advice as to end of session times and clear up including vacating the hall.

## NEWS

- The Contract of Hire is still under review and will be bought online March 2026.
- An updated keyholder form will be sent to all regular groups to return with updated details of keys held and those who hold the keys.
- The Blood Donation session on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January went very well with no issues raised. Further sessions will be arranged for July. We are awaiting confirmation from the NHS Blood & Transplant.
- Replacement window panels are being sought for windows in the hall and foyer.

As we approach the end of another fiscal year February 2026 we now collate and present our accounts for independent inspection in readiness for the AGM which will be scheduled for late April or early May.

## DOES THE VILLAGE PROVIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY?

From our Trust documents from May 1937 and still our mission statement is as follows...

**“..... shall be held upon trust for the purpose of physical and mental recreation and social moral and intellectual development through the medium of reading and recreation rooms, library lectures, classes, recreations and entertainments or otherwise as may be found expedient for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish of Alresford in the County of Essex and its immediate vicinity without the distinction of sex or of political religious or other opinions subject to the provisions of theses presents”.**

During the school term time our occupancy of the Village Hall is 80-85%, and when we look at the types of activities that are offered it is with a degree of satisfaction that most if not all regular activities comply with the statement.

So, what is happening at the hall?

We have Yoga in its various forms and is open to all age groups, Indoor Bowls again open to all age groups (with members being well into their 80's). There is the Lunch Club offering a very decent hot meal and although customised by the more mature, not restricted by age.

Then there is Beavers, which is providing for children from 6-8 years, A dance and theatre group that uses the hall during the school holiday periods and provides for the young through to late teens.

Various exercise groups, Tai Chi, Extend which is aimed at the more mature from 60 years, and Pilates which is structured for all age groups.

Various groups namely the Guild and Woman's Institute offer social and educational content to all adult ages. There is even Dog Training that not only covers our animal friends but also educates their adult owners.

For Leisure, we have Simply Singing offering a very enjoyable social and recreational afternoon for all adult ages, and the Movie Night which again fits the recreational and leisure bracket.

Soon to start again will be a young children's Activity morning and there is to be a Guardian/Babies Sound Bath afternoon.

Weekends are normally used for private hires, the majority of which are for children birthday parties or christening celebrations. The adults get into the act with milestone celebrations or events.

The Alresford Craft and Farmers Market offer all ages something to look at or a chance to meet and chat over a bacon roll.

So, on balance we believe the hall is serving its purpose in alignment with the Trust statement of leisure, recreational, entertainment, both in physical and mental capacity. Of course, there is a need for more with focus on the age groups in early adult years through to end of working life years and it is something the Trustees would be very interested in hearing from yourselves if you feel that you can or want to explore .

Note, we have a separate meeting room that can seat 14-18 persons, perhaps a Book Club?

**Simply Singing and Movie Night** continue to be well attended with 30-40 attending. The Simply Singing is an afternoon with singers performing on the screen with

*Village Hall continued on page 8*

*Village Hall continued from page 7*

words to the songs at the bottom of the screen. Those who want to sing along do, and those who just enjoy listening and enjoying old footage of bygone artists without singing cannot sing without any need to feel uncomfortable.

### **COME ALONG, GIVE IT A TRY AND ENJOY A CUP OF TEA**

#### **PAVILION HIRE**

The Pavilion can be hired individually or in conjunction with the Village Hall.

All enquiries should be via: [alresfordvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:alresfordvillagehall@gmail.com)

Russell Milburn  
Chair AVHMC  
01206 825739

### **ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL CONTACT DETAILS**

The Parish Office, The Pavilion, Ford Lane  
Alresford CO7 8AT

Council meetings are held at the Pavilion on the first Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm. Public and Press are welcome. Agenda & Approved Minutes on website

Website: [www.alresfordpcsessex.uk/](http://www.alresfordpcsessex.uk/)

Facebook: Alresford Parish Council (Parish Council only)/The Pavilion & Playing Field - Alresford Essex

Twitter: @alresfordsessex

Chairman: Cllr Frank Belgrove - 01206 823739

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Ernie Osborne

Cllr Linda Belgrove

Cllr Simon Clark

Cllr Gary Scott

Cllr Ann Wiggins

Cllr Vincent Dalzell

Cllr Bina Swash

Cllr Julia Claremont-Brown

Cllr Courtney Muller

Cllr Kristen Doulai

District Council Tendring

District Councillor Ann Wiggins - 01206 825153

Email: [cllr.awiggins@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.awiggins@tendringdc.gov.uk)

District Councillor Gary Scott - 01206 820769

Email: [cllr.gscott@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.gscott@tendringdc.gov.uk)

County Council Essex

County Councillor Alan Goggin - 01206 308023

Email: [egog@btinternet.com](mailto:egog@btinternet.com)

Parish Clerk - The Proper Officer

Matt Cooke - 01206 615117 (Answerphone 24/7)

Email: [alresfordpc@outlook.com](mailto:alresfordpc@outlook.com)

Responsible Finance Officer & Assistant Clerk

Angela Baxter - 01206 615117 (Answerphone 24/7)

Email: [rropcessex@outlook.com](mailto:rropcessex@outlook.com)

### **AA Road Sign Alresford**

In the last copy of the Alresford Advertiser I requested location information about a vintage Automobile Association sign that showed distances from Alresford to Colchester, Clacton and London.



I have had a response:  
A 99 year old lady in a local care home remembers the sign. It was on the wall of a dairy in Wivenhoe Road. The sign was apparently removed in the second world war to confuse German paratroopers! The dairy was demolished in the seventies and a row of houses were built.

Number 48 Wivenhoe Road was the approximate position of the sign (not far from Fanman's Farm). The sign turned up at a car boot sale in Hampshire and was purchased by an Alresford (Essex) resident!

Frank Belgrove

### **CHRISTMAS HAMPERS**

For the fifth consecutive year Christmas Hampers were assembled in December and hand delivered to ten households in the village. They were very well received, and the recipients were extremely touched to know that Alresford Community was thinking about them at Christmas time.



We would like to thank Alresford Fete Organising Group for the generous donation to the Christmas Hamper Fund this year, to make this possible.

Becky and Mike King, Wivenhoe Road, Alresford.

### **MOBILE LIBRARY: 2026**

Alresford Village Hall

The Mobile Library visits every: 3 weeks

DAY: Thursday

TIME: 11:55 to 12:25

05-Feb 26-Feb 19-Mar 09-Apr 30-Apr  
21-May 11-Jun 02-Jul 23-Jul 13-Aug 03-Sep  
24-Sep 15-Oct 05-Nov 26-Nov 17-Dec

Essex County Libraries  
<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/home>



## ALRESFORD FETE ORGANISING GROUP

In December, The Alresford Fete Organising Group (AFOG) hosted two events to bring our community together and create joyful, festive fun for all.

To kick off the festivities, we held our ever-popular, annual Christmas Tea Party for Alresford residents aged 75 and over. Over 90 people enjoyed an afternoon with friends old and new, and joined in with carols, sung beautifully, by Alresford Primary School's Year 6 pupils. A superb Christmas themed tea, prepared by Blue Onion Catering, was then enjoyed by all, accompanied by a glass of sherry, mince pies, and a free raffle.

It was a great opportunity for residents to catch up with each other.

Later the same week, we were very excited to welcome Father Christmas and his Elves to the Village Hall. Children were offered a range of craft activities, including a star decoration table (hosted by volunteers from St. Andrews Church), a gingerbread figure creation, and 2026 calendar decoration table.

The children were also able to write a letter and post it to Father Christmas. Each letter received a personal reply to their home!

Refreshments were provided, with all cakes and biscuits donated by the local community – thank you to all those talented bakers!

Children were also able to enjoy free carousel rides outside, our thanks to Steve for this.



This entirely free event (with donations only) was a resounding success, with many local children and their families visiting throughout the day.

Both events received lots of positive feedback and were enjoyed by all who attended. They are both also eagerly anticipated and enjoyed by our amazing team of volunteers, who work tirelessly throughout the year, behind the scenes, to pull everything together.

Also, a huge thank you to everyone in Alresford who support these festive events so generously at the Picnic in the Park in the Summer. The funds raised at the picnic is what makes these other community events possible.

We look forward to all that 2026 has to bring and ask that if you have any time to spare and want to be part of future events, to please get in touch (07535707002), or come along to a meeting, where you will be very warmly welcomed. We need volunteers to continue to bring these events to you.

Thank you all!

Alresford Fete Organising Group wish everyone in Alresford a very happy and healthy 2026.



## ALRESFORD BIKERS - SPRING IS COMING - DUST THOSE BIKES OFF!

As I sit here writing this, the Sun is blazing in through my window and it makes me think about riding my bike, where to go, what we're going to do this year, and all that stuff, as usual in mid-Winter. But, unfortunately it's minus 2 degrees outside, so I think I'll leave my base-layers where they are, stay put for now, and burst into print for you all, hurrah!

Going back to my original thoughts about where to go this year, we have our usual stops, restaurants and tea bars, and other places we already like to visit for a brew and maybe even our favourite sausage rolls. But, we are always open to new suggestions and 2025 brought a couple of really good ones to our attention! So, our riding has gained a few more destinations and we visit them quite a lot. One reason is that so many of us are now retired, so our mid-week rides have increased, especially in the gorgeous Summer of 2025, and we hope to continue with them in the coming year.

There are things Riders need to do especially when riding in Winter, which many seem to forget, and it is part of our self-responsibility. Here are a few thoughts for anyone thinking about riding in this seasonal weather, like me!



Riders will be well aware of the phrase "SMIDSY". For other road users out there kindly reading this, it stands for "Sorry Mate I Didn't See You". Unfortunately one of the commonest phrases ever heard by bikers. It is so common, it is completely understood by the authorities, Police, and even gets listed in legal and insurance documents as a "SMIDSY statement"! So riders, GET SEEN! That means being in the mirrors of other vehicles all the time, make sure you can see the driver's eyes seeing you as you come up behind them! It means having appropriate lighting on, all the time. I can't turn mine off - there's no light switch anymore on most machines, but make sure thy work. Wearing the right clothing always helps too. Hi-Viz might not be that stylish, but it works if they look, and that's the hard bit. If they look. Hi-Viz gets attention. I do know, and have seen myself, that a certain group of car drivers are much too easily distracted by their own cars these days, and have sometimes got other things on their minds. You know, texts, messing about with screens in their car, I remember passing a lady putting her lippy on once on the way to work on the A12. Being permanently steamed up on the inside is very common, because some drivers are too dim to know how their own cars actually work. Being in the right place on the road is also important in preventing accidents, but also in preserving your safety anyway - staying off long strips of mud that appear all over the place for months on end, staying away from gravel in the centre of the lane on Church Hill leaving Brightlingsea for example, avoiding

where possible the streams of melt-water running over the roads, (ditto), not going into huge puddles where you can avoid it, all help you get seen, and stay safe anyway. I have my own way of getting seen if the driver in front of me is as blind as a bat, or just never looks in their mirrors, which is far too common - a good way to tell is either a steamed up rear window even if fitted with heated screen, or rear wipers still on mile after mile. I slowly move from side to side across my lane behind them and get their attention, hopefully. The sideways movement of the lights lets them know I'm there. I very often also give hand signals when indicating for a corner, if I see the drivers gazing hopelessly into the sun behind me. First, it helps them see me, second, the movement alerts them that something is there, if not what that something is. It's not always their fault if they can't see me coming, but I try very hard to make sure they do! If you still have that accident, but were doing everything right, including dressing appropriately, being in the right place, not speeding or doing anything else that insurers always use to wriggle out of coughing up, you will have a better chance of an insurance payout in your favour. I know from bitter and painful experience that all of this counts! And my big crash was in July, at 7 pm, in broad daylight! As the driver pulled out straight in front of me less than 20 yards away, and I slammed into the side of her Golf, writing it off at 40 mph, (the speed limit was 60, and I had about 50 witnesses!) I was staring at the back of her head, - she was looking the other way! Down-Sun, probably because it was easier! D'Oh!

So, if you want to learn more about how to protect yourself from accidents, look after yourself on the road, be safe, or just about anything to do with bikes, biking, and bikers, we're in our HQ, The Pointer Inn, on the second Friday of each month at 8pm. Come see us!

Al Gillard

## FRIENDSHIP GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY

It was lovely to see so many members of the Friendship Circle attend our Christmas gathering on the 15th December. We enjoyed chatting and eating Christmas cake, mince pies and other sweet treats. Thank you to Claudia and Tim for making the cake.

The Friendship Circle meets at The Hub, St Andrew's Church, on the first and third Monday each month at 10.30-12.00. We are primarily a bereavement Group but anyone struggling with loneliness is very welcome to come along for coffee and a chat.

Becky and Mike King and Russell Milburn



# ALRESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### February/March 2026

#### Highways

The loose and missing kerbstone issue that has blighted a key estate in Alresford for a considerable time is now being tackled by Essex Highways. It has been a tremendous battle over several years to achieve action regarding these repairs. The Parish Council has spent precept money in the past to repair some stretches as the repairs just did not happen via Essex Highways. It appears government funding has now been used, combined with pressure from residents, the Parish Council, our County Councillor and our District Councillors. A list of roads for repair over the coming months includes Coppice Road, Heath Road, Ash Road, Chestnut Road, Orchard Road, Laxton Road, Cox Road, Worcester Crescent, Oaktree Road and Bramley Road.

The railway bridge (the viaduct!) weight restriction on the B1027 continues to cause issues as HGVs divert along Wivenhoe Road and also use Coach Road. The signs advising drivers of HGVs that Station Road and Coach Road are unsuitable for large vehicles are often ignored and although the Parish Council welcomes the raising of the bridge weight limit it is concerning that ECC Highways do not currently intend to repair the bridge due to cost. The Parish Council is now in contact with our MP to see if there can be a higher level of intervention in this matter.

#### Planning and Development

Tendring District Council are responsible for planning and development in our area. There is immense pressure on the District Council to considerably increase housing development allocations across Tendring. I have included here important statements from Tendring District Council regarding the Local Plan Review:

“Altogether, these new allocations across the district could deliver about 8,800 homes, bringing the overall number of new homes expected between 2025 and 2042 to around 19,500 when combined with existing allocations and windfall sites. This figure already includes approximately 4,525 homes planned for Clacton under the current Local Plan.”

“Additional growth will also be distributed across Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross; Manningtree, Lawford and Mistley; Brightlingsea; Alresford, Great Bentley and Thorpe-le-Soken; Little Clacton and St Osyth; and smaller rural villages.”

Tendring District Council have therefore made it clear in their draft Local Plan that Alresford has been earmarked for more housing.

The concerns raised by Parish and Town Councils from across Tendring, including Alresford, are that the infrastructure needed to support such increases in housing is simply not a major feature of the plans and should be. The Tendring District Association of Local Councils has therefore contacted the Government to make known the serious issues the area faces if improvements to school provisions, medical facilities, policing and highways improvements are not made to support housing development. The loss of prime agricultural land and the effects on the environment are also issues to be considered.

#### Projects for 2026

With a growing village population and also the necessity to maintain facilities to a high standard a number of projects have been authorised by the Parish Council for this year. Tenders will be sought for a complete refurbishment of the hard court on the main village playing field. The Playing Field Working Party has considered in detail what is required and the following has been approved at full Council: Repairs to

the court's substrate to enable an up-to-date multi-use games area to be installed that will provide a safer surface for football, tennis, basketball and netball.

At Staunton Gate (South site) there will be a review and upgrade of some of the play equipment. Both projects will be financed from planning gain monies (Section 106).

#### The Precept/Finances

Alresford Parish Council Finance Committee has met twice to consider the budget and precept for 2026-2027. The Precept is the amount that a Parish Council requires to be raised from Council Tax for its running costs for a range of local services and provisions. The Committee makes recommendations to Full Council. The pressure on resident's finances always features when considering local taxation and with that in mind every effort is made to keep the Precept as low as possible, whilst maintaining services. An increase of 3.61% was recommended by the Finance Committee. In fact the actual increase felt by residents will be 3% due to an increase in the village tax base (several more homes have been occupied). With inflation much reduced but running at 3.5% now and with a forecast fall next year to around 2.5%, the 3% increase will cover inflationary pressures and other cost increases. Alresford residents should expect a band D equivalent annual bill for Parish Council services of £105.69 in tax year 2026-2027. For comparison, in our neighbouring village of Great Bentley, residents currently pay £146 (Band D equivalent) each year for the Parish part of their Council tax.

#### Q & A

##### Q) Does the Parish Council have to maintain rural footpaths and bridleways?

A) Footpaths and Bridleways are the responsibility of landowners and the Highways Authority, however under the Highways Act 1980 the following applies “The council of a parish or community may undertake the maintenance of any footpath [bridleway or restricted byway] within the parish or community which is, in either case, a highway maintainable at the public expense; but nothing in this subsection affects the duty of any highway authority or other person to maintain any such footpath [bridleway or restricted byway].” So the answer to the question is that Parish Council’s can use their powers to intervene when a footpath or bridleway is overgrown etc however the duty in law rests with the landowner and the Highways Authority (Essex County Council Highways).

##### Q) Does the Neighbourhood Plan prevent further development in the village?

A) Neighbourhood Plans help shape development. They provide control over the type and location of developments. They do not prevent development but can insist on the quality of housing. Neighbourhood Plans influence planning decisions and are part of the statutory development plans of a region, they cannot stop more housing.

#### And finally..

The Parish Council is very grateful for the support it receives from so many in the village and for the amazing volunteers that make Alresford a very special village. (Essex Village of the Year twice and runner-up twice in the last twelve years!).

With grateful thanks to the outgoing Editor of the Alresford Advertiser Hayley Milburn.

Cllr Frank Belgrove  
Chairman Alresford Parish Council





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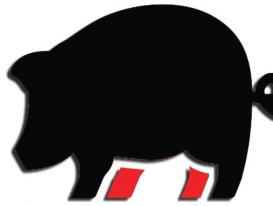
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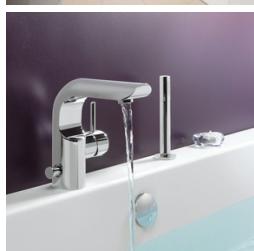
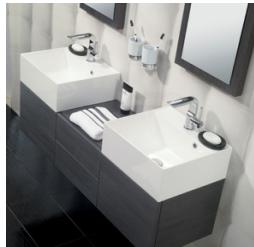


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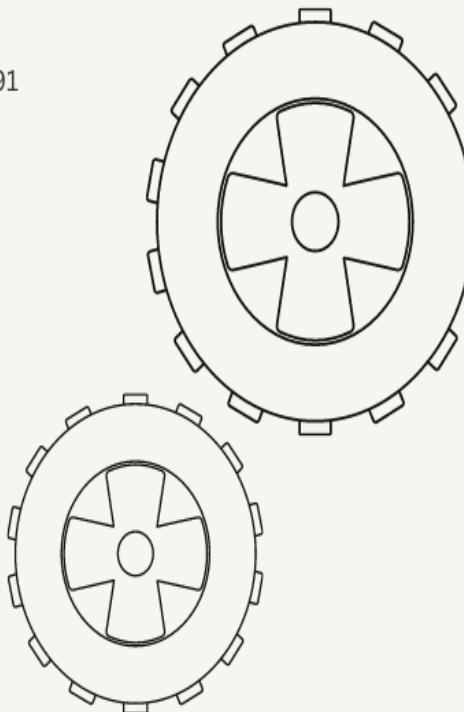
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## THANK YOU

As long term residents of Alresford (56) years we would like to extend our thanks to Hayley Milburn after her relinquishment of The Editorship of The Alresford Advertiser.

Hayley's voluntary responsibilities were performed professionally & in an exemplary way to maintain & improve an already existing product. Her leadership undoubtedly soon showed as an improvement.

Long may it continue.

Thank you Hayley

Pam & Les Ward

## THANK YOU

Thank you Hayley for your time as editor / compiler for the Advertiser, the reminders, corrections and general jazzing up of what would otherwise be some fairly dull reading has been a real bonus.

Under your editorship, the Advertiser has grown into a very professional and informative publication, which continues to be a very important part of the community of Alresford. Many in Alresford and in our surrounding community, comment on the fact that it is a much envied publication, so well done you for the time and effort you have afforded it.

My best wishes to the new team of Sarah, Becky and Gina who are taking over the editorship

Chris Sanderson

## Thank you from the Editor

After ten years at the helm, this edition marks my final contribution as editor. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has been part of this journey—our advertisers, contributors, readers, and most especially the dedicated team who supported me from the moment Allison and I took over from the late Michael Hester.

Special thanks in particular, go to Mary and Russell for their unwavering commitment, whilst remembering Allison and Ian, whose influence and support were invaluable. To the deliverers who do an amazing job ensuring the magazine reaches every member of our community - thank you! Without each of you, the magazine could not have continued to thrive.

I also want to say thank you to Chris, Neil and Tracey from Osborns Printers who have gone above and beyond in their contributions, far exceeding the responsibilities of printing alone.

A new team, comprising Sarah, Becky, Gina, and David, is now taking the reins. I extend my best wishes to them for every success as they guide the magazine into its next chapter.

Please continue to support the magazine, which remains an important and valued source of information for our village community.

Thank you for everything.  
Hayley

## THE ALRESFORD FETE ORGANISING GROUP (AFOG)

### GRANT FUNDING

Applications are invited from any not for profit village organisation, group or individual for small scale grants to develop our village community in some way, and not just to cover running costs but to do something new.

Applications should be made in writing to either:

[AlresfordFOG@gmail.com](mailto:AlresfordFOG@gmail.com) or  
19 Furze Crescent, CO7 8BN

**DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS**  
**28<sup>th</sup> February 2026**



*He is Risen*

Come and join us for our

6.30am Sunrise Service

11.00am Family Holy Communion

Easter Sunday

5th April

St Andrew's Church

[tenpennylvillages.uk](http://tenpennylvillages.uk)

### COPY DEADLINE

The editorial and advertising deadline for the APRIL/MAY 2026 edition will be:

8TH MARCH 2026

[alresfordadvertiser@gmail.com](mailto:alresfordadvertiser@gmail.com)

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