

# Birdbrook Parish News



## Colne Valley Arms

A few weeks ago I received an invite to Colne Valley Arms for a preview evening of their carvery. I wanted to share our experience and support this new business venture within our Parish, so what did we think?

The atmosphere is lovely whether for your standard evening meal or a special occasion with family and friends for.

Despite being a very full and busy preview evening with two different sittings on their first night of service, we found the cosy booths and warming lighting one end perfect. Staff were all lovely and couldn't help more and all of the bar and carvery is set up very well for easy functioning without delays.

The food itself well, a description from a fellow parishioner: "it's the best beef I've ever had" piping hot through with a wide variety of vegetables, trimmings, and the homemade deserts.

I hope this gives you an insight into the opening of the Colne Valley Arms carvery and maybe this weekend you might enjoy a beautifully cooked Sunday roast just a few minutes drive from wherever you are in the parish.

Katie Gentry

## Birdbrook Parish News brought to you by Birdbrook Parish Council

*The views expressed in Birdbrook News do not necessarily reflect those of the Parish Council.*

*Copy and images may be subject to copyright.*

*Acceptance of, and subsequent publication of any advertisement does not in any way constitute any endorsement by Birdbrook Parish News or Birdbrook Parish Council of the goods or services being offered.*

**Next edition: news and adverts by 15 February for the March BPN**

Editors Val and Katie: [birdbrook2021@gmail.com](mailto:birdbrook2021@gmail.com)

## Friends of Haverhill Library 2023 Calendar



The 2023 A3 wall calendar is now on sale in Haverhill Library at only £7.50 featuring winning photos from around Haverhill. Don't forget to keep your camera with you taking photos for next year's calendar when the closing date will be earlier:

4th September 2023.

Entries to:

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

## 2022 National Parish Magazine Awards

Out of 450 entries, our magazine achieved sixth place in the A4 magazine category

[www.parishmagprinters.co.uk/news/](http://www.parishmagprinters.co.uk/news/)

A colorful advertisement for 'WARM HUB' at Birdbrook Community House. The top section has a red background with 'WARM HUB' in large, glowing yellow letters. Below this, 'BIRDBROOK COMMUNITY HOUSE' is written in white on a red background. The central text, on a yellow background, says 'Held on MONDAY WEDNESDAY FRIDAY 10am till 12 noon'. Two orange banners on the left list 'TEA COFFEE SOFT DRINKS' and on the right 'BISCUITS CAKE LIGHT SNACKS'. A red banner at the bottom lists 'COMPANIONSHIP FELLOWSHIP ENTERTAINMENT'. The bottom section, on a yellow background, states 'ALL FREE AND FOR ALL AGES' and 'Transport Available within the Parish' in red script.

See back page for more details

## St Augustine's Church, Birdbrook



## Hurry up... and wait!

The church is now in the season of Advent leading up to Christmas: while most of the world has been hurtling towards Christmas for some time, the church has just begun waiting, watching and preparing for the arrival of our Lord, born as a baby in Bethlehem.

We don't generally enjoy waiting – whatever they say about British people, we don't like queueing, or anything that keeps us hanging around or slows us up. That's why speed cameras were invented, because fast is never fast enough for some people.

Once there were January Sales – they gradually crept to Boxing Day, and now we have "Black Friday" well before Christmas.

Advent is about waiting, so perhaps it's not surprising that it's not popular. We, along with the world around us, would rather hurry on to the good bit. I mean, I doubt I'd get much support

if I suggested that we should hold our Christmas Carol services after the 25th of December when the church's Christmas season actually starts!

I'm sure you can remember doing maths problems which ask: if it takes one farmer with a tractor one day to plough a field, how long does it take two farmers, each with a tractor? The answer, we imagine, is half a day, but some things can't be hurried like that.

When Mary hears from the Archangel Gabriel that she's going to have a baby, she knows she'll have to wait nine months, and nothing will speed that up. As Mary waits for her baby to be born, so we also have to wait, and in Advent we join her for the final month of her pregnancy.

We don't like waiting, I suspect, because we often think of time waiting as time wasted. If we look at it as time watching, and time preparing, then it can feel quite different.

Advent gives us time to prepare not just the turkey and the pudding, but our hearts, minds, and souls. Then when the day arrives, when Jesus is born, we'll be at the right place in the story, the most important story ever told, of how God became a baby so that he could become part of our story.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

Jonathan

### Forthcoming services:

#### December 2022

Sat 24th Dec: 11:30pm Midnight Communion at Steeple Bumpstead Church

Sun 25th Dec: 10:30am Christmas Holy Communion, Birdbrook

#### January 2023

Sun 1st Jan: 10:30am CW Holy Communion, Ridgewell Church  
6:00pm BCP Evensong, Helions Bumpstead Church

Sun 8th Jan: 10:30am Morning Worship, Birdbrook

Sun 22nd Jan: 10:30am Benefice Holy Communion, Birdbrook

#### February 2023

Sun 12 Feb: 10:30am Morning Worship, Birdbrook

Sun 26 Feb: 10:30am Benefice Holy Communion, Birdbrook

#### March 2023

Sun 12 Mar: 10:30am Morning Worship, Birdbrook

Sun 26 Mar: 10:30am Benefice Holy Communion, Birdbrook

On-line services are aimed at the whole family and are also available afterwards so you can watch in your own time:

Facebook: <http://tiny.cc/7y6zIz>

YouTube: <http://tiny.cc/nx6zIz>

If you need any help, spiritual or practical, or would just like to speak to someone, please contact us in the following ways:

Email: [contact@2rivers.faith](mailto:contact@2rivers.faith)

Telephone: 07359 330596 and leave a message.

Text: Send a text message to 07359 330596

Please do regularly check the Two Rivers Facebook page or contact the Churchwarden as the information above may be subject to change.

## Birdbrook Ladies Group

### September

Michelle Rees gave us an interesting talk on Tropic, an environmentally friendly skincare company which caters for women, men and children. We heard how it was originally set up and how it has grown. There was an chance to sample some of the products and some of us took the opportunity to start our Christmas shopping and delivery was very quick.

### October

Our treasurer, Hilary, treated us to a very interesting and personal talk on the lives of her Aunt Eileen and Uncle Bill and their marriage during the war. They were the subject of a radio programme called the Wedding Detectives. A photograph, which had been found by someone, led to a "detective" tracking down Hilary and her sisters to talk to them about the tragic story of Eileen and Bill. It was a

fascinating talk from Hilary and we were able to hear some of the radio interview which had been aired.

### November

Our speaker this month was Mike Wabe, whom we have heard a number of times. He gave us an amusing talk called "Father Christmas, Mistletoe and Myths". We learned about the origins of Father Christmas, the different names used for him and why we do some of the traditions that we follow during the festive season. He gave us an unusual version of "The Twelve Days of Christmas", which had us laughing and read the poem, "Twas the Night Before Christmas".

This was followed by mulled wine and mince pies, so we are already in the festive spirit.

Our next meeting is our Christmas meal at the Red Lion



in Sturmer with our usual Secret Santa.

### January

will be a planning meeting for our forthcoming programme 2023/24.

Birdbrook Ladies Group would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a more positive New Year.

## Stambourne Chapel

Christmas Day Service 9.30am  
All welcome.

## Christmas Craft Fayre

A huge thank you to all who supported our annual craft and table sale which raised over £100 for the village.



## Mens Shed Haverhill Saturday Mornings

10am - 2pm

Just turn up on the day and say Hello:  
The Centre, No 3 Rookwood Way,  
Haverhill  
or contact Antony 07938 017851  
[mens.shed.haverhill@gmail.com](mailto:mens.shed.haverhill@gmail.com)



## Gemma's Footcare

Foot Health Practitioner

SAC Dip RFHP

- Toe Nail Cutting
- Callus/Corn Removal
- Diabetic Foot Care
- Ingrown Toe Nail Removal
- Fungal Nail Treatment

Telephone/Text: 07498 386648

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

**Foot Care in the comfort of your own home**

**Or you can come to my home in Steeple Bumpstead**

I look forward to hearing from you soon

*Fact: In an average lifetime we walk around the world 3 times*

## Hello From Your District Councillor

### Garden Waste Collection

The garden waste collection is suspended during the winter months. The last collection this year is 21st November. It is scheduled to resume on 27/02/23.

### Winter Warmth and Welcome Spaces Funding Applications Now Open

Free money to keep warm, socialise and have some fun! This funding totals £100,000 for grants of up to £1,000 to support the provision of Winter Warmth and Welcome Spaces and activities for local communities in Essex. These can be the creation of new spaces and activities or to support existing ones. Open to a variety of groups; registered charities, unincorporated clubs or associations, small community groups, etc. Projects should be delivered and all funds spent by 31st March 2023. Application form and guidance notes at: <https://ealc.gov.uk/winter-warmth-and-welcome-spaces-fund/>

### Rural Braintree Survey – Do you have financial pressures?

ECC and BDC would like to know about the experiences of those living in rural areas of the district who are having financial struggles (e.g. The Bumpstead Ward). Please help to level up our district by providing info! [https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/rural-braintree-survey/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/rural-braintree-survey/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

### Homes for Ukraine Update

Braintree District has over 200 Ukrainian guests staying with 90 sponsors, and many of these guests are coming to the end of their initial 6 month stay with their sponsor. BDC are managing the rematching of guests who need new homes with new sponsors and so are actively looking for new sponsors. Anybody who might be interested should contact Community Services. Any questions from the guests themselves can also be referred to the team.

### Share Your Views on Healthcare

The local NHS is asking people for their comments about proposals to offer fairer access to six healthcare services in mid and south Essex. "We want to hear what our residents think of the plans so we can ensure we're treating everyone fairly." The consultation runs until 19 December 2022:- <https://www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/get-involved/how/consultations/>

### ECC - Early Years and Childcare Parent Survey – Share Your Views

If you are a parent in Essex, please complete the early years and childcare parent survey. For parents of children aged 0 – 19 years living in Essex, or up to 25 years if your child has special educational needs or disabilities. ECC want to hear about your family's experience of childcare in Essex so that they can gain a greater understanding of what childcare arrangements you make and if your childcare needs are being met. They also want to hear about your experiences of your child starting primary school and the impact Covid-19 had had on your child's experiences. Your information is valued and will inform the 2022 childcare sufficiency assessment and the early years and childcare strategy:- <https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/complete-our-early-years-and-childcare-parent-survey>

### Crime in Our District

Essex Police put out a request for owners to be vigilant as quite a few Ford Fiestas have been stolen in the district recently. There have also



been a number of thefts from vehicles and the siphoning of fuel. I see the odd blackmail data too; usually where indecent images have been obtained followed by threats of posting on social media if money is not forthcoming. Shed, garage and house break-ins are also apparent. A motorhome was stolen from Ridgewell area; VRM AU17 BOJ. Essex Police have posted some really helpful advice about protecting your home and outbuildings from theft and vandalism. <https://www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/>

### Are you Prepared for an Emergency?

Do you have a home emergency plan? Whilst emergencies are luckily rare, they can happen quickly and have serious consequences. Become prepared by considering some of the emergencies that can affect you in and around you home, and make sure the whole family is aware; particularly those who are vulnerable. Essex Resilience Forum has a very good leaflet on their website called Are You Prepared?

I am also concerned about the possibility of blackouts over the winter. Have a back-up plan just in case! Talk to your elderly relatives and friends about what they might do if there is a power cut – will they reach for candles? There are safer alternatives. Information at: <https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk>

### Pop-Up Stalls Available for New Businesses at Braintree Street Market

Have you got a small home-based business that you want to expand? BDC offers pop-up stalls at their monthly Braintree Street Market to help start-ups bring their products to a new audience. The small market stalls are available to hire, with starting rates of just £11 per event. This means talented crafters, home bakers and new sellers can test the market, see how their products sell and manage their price points without having to invest in a gazebo. Find out more; email: [streetmarket@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:streetmarket@braintree.gov.uk)

### Cost-Of-Living Crisis

I recently chaired a Scrutiny Review into the Cost-Of-Living Crisis to see if there was anything more that Braintree District Council could do to support residents. 22 recommendations were made and whilst it is early days, I am very pleased to say that BDC has already implemented a number of them. Both BDC and ECC websites have a great deal of information including debt management, handyman services and grants.

### And Finally ...

Spreading peace and goodwill is so important; more so this year than ever before. It has undoubtedly been a tough time but we are a resilient community, I know so many people in this Ward that go out of their way to put a smile on the faces of others by volunteering and generally being understanding, generous and forgiving. If you have a spare place at your table, why not invite friends or neighbours to join you. Don't assume that just because someone isn't poor, that they are not lonely. Remember the winter can be long and dark for some, if you have concerns that someone

## Memories of Birdbrook

Many thanks to Keith for contacting after seeing the photo of Birdbrook Station in the last issue of the BPN.

There is a wealth of fascinating information about Birdbrook - not just the railway - on this website:

<http://birdbrook.net>

and a video regarding the railway closure:

[player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-any-more-for-birdbrook-1961-online](http://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-any-more-for-birdbrook-1961-online)



you know isn't coping well and you don't know what to do, I am here and always happy to talk.

With best wishes to all,

Cllr. Diana Garrod

District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

## Birdbrook Speed-watch group

Birdbrook Speed-watch group is now established, a big thank you to our volunteers who have now completed their online training and will start recording speeds within the Parish at assessed locations in both Birdbrook and Baythorne end shortly.

Helping keep the Parish safe and speed down especially in the upcoming colder months is very important and we hope there may be more of you willing to participate in the Speed-watch group. In groups of 2/3 minimum if you can volunteer just an hour a month then we would love to hear from you!

Please see posters on Parish notice boards for more details or email [Katie\\_owner@hotmail.com](mailto:Katie_owner@hotmail.com)

## Christmas Spot the Difference Can You Spot 12 Differences between these two pictures?



## Richard (Toby) Hunt

Toby Hunt, who died in August aged 100, was almost certainly the oldest Birdbrook resident at the time of his death. Apart from a period of military service with the R.A.F during the Second World War, spent largely in Africa, he had lived his whole life in the parish of Birdbrook.

He was born in Moyns Park and attended the church primary school in Birdbrook.

After the war, he started work with Archers builders, mostly painting and decorating in properties, amongst others, that were owned by Gurteens and Anglia Launderettes. After being made redundant, he went to work for Walter French builders where he developed his considerable carpentry and brickwork skills.

Toby, who only shortly before his death, revealed he was not that keen on the name and preferred his given Christian name, Richard, was married to Mary for over 70 years. She was the sister of Tim and Peter Ralling and was also born and reared in Birdbrook. They had no children of their own, but adopted Liz, now Liz Gatt, who has two daughters, of whom Toby was immensely proud and who were very attentive to him in his last years, particularly after Mary died in August 2019.

By the time Liz arrived, Toby was self-employed and embarked on the building of their bungalow, Ricmar, in Moat Road, where he and Mary spent the rest of their lives.

He was a keen and knowledgeable plantsman and regularly exhibited his sweet peas. He was an active supporter of St Augustine's Church, singing in the choir and taking on the role of P.C.C secretary for many years. The church was fortunate, too, to be supplied with copious quantities of flowers and greenery from his garden and greenhouse until only very recently.



Right: Toby and Mary Hunt, July 1943

## Birdbrook Yoga and Pilates

Class timetable changes for Monday nights at Birdbrook Community House.

6-7pm Pilates

7-8 is now a new class called yogalates

Yogalates is a fun class for all, combining the benefits of Yoga & Pilates.

Benefits include; core strengthening, mindful breathing, increased flexibility, overall sense of balance & wellbeing.

Individual classes £6 or £10 for both

**Last classes of 2022 will be December 19th**  
**First class back after the new year will be January 9th**

Indian head massage now available

Indian head massage benefits many with day to day complaints such as;

Headaches/migraines

Sinus pain

Teeth grinding/bruxism

Stress & anxiety

Low mood & depression

Menopausal symptoms

Introductory offer price of just £15 available until the end of January

Non evasive (you are fully clothed) and a wonderful add on treatment to any other treatment.

For our full range of treatments and classes available please pop

over to the website to book

[www.headtotoeholistic.Uk](http://www.headtotoeholistic.Uk)

Or call 07377380845

**Thank you for joining us in 2022**  
**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all**

Coco

## Birdbrook Bowls Club Update



Birdbrook Bowls Club ( BBC ) I am delighted to report is alive & greatly looking forward to the challenges ahead.

Our bowls season for 2022 is over but we are still bowling, this time indoors, see later, so at the end of this report you can put some dates in your new 2023 diaries.

Since my last report in September there has as usual been some considerable activity on the green, the lifeblood of any bowls club.

You will recall that our green had suffered from our over zealous worm population being a little too active. With great work carried out by the green team, some preventative measures have been carried out. I can assure you that not one worm was harmed during this process. You will be pleased to know, that the worms can still go about their daily excursions but deeper in the soil.

The playing surface has been prepared for the winter, with scarification, top dressing & several bags of grass seed being spread. The proof of this hard work can be seen with an excellent covering of new grass ready for next season, well done lads.

On Friday 7th November we held our first indoor bowls session.

This proved to be extremely well received by those in attendance, some bowling while others supported with great enthusiasm from the stands, well seats actually. It was agreed to hold these evenings once a fortnight again on Fridays commencing at 6pm.

I am pleased to say that on each subsequent gathering the numbers have steadily grown. I can't quite make up my mind if it's the draw of indoor bowls, our well stocked bar which I have mentioned several times before, or Eric?

Yes Eric !!! who as you will recall is our club secretary & now resident chef. Is their no end to this man's talent's. Hot food, a well stocked bar, (there I go again ) & great company along with very competitive, friendly indoor bowls matches. The atmosphere created is infectious & great fun, as one visitor said:

*"I am so pleased I came along, it can be quite lonely on these dark nights, everyone is so friendly & it's warm. I might even try bowling myself"*

So do come along & find out for yourselves, even if it's for somewhere warm & friendly on a Friday evening. You will be sure of a very warm welcome.

Although we make a very small charge for attending it's more than compensated by our very competitive bar prices.

We now look forward to next season & the challenges that present themselves. None more so than gaining promotion in both leagues, back into the second divisions.

With the members that we have, their enthusiasm, skill coupled with a strong determination, BBC is heading in the right direction. Our new members & they know who they are, have been an inspiration both on & off the green. The committee & club members thank them one & all. You are all champions & have injected new life into our club. You took that first step, thank you. Our bar has greatly benefitted from their support as well.

On the 19th November we held our annual dinner & prize giving evening, a report will appear in the next issue of BPN.

### Dates for your 2023 diaries:

\* Indoor Bowls in the Community House

**Friday 6th January @ 6pm**  
**thereafter once a fortnight**

\* **Open Day**

**Sunday 23rd April @ 2pm**  
*Come along & take that first step we will be delighted to see you*

\* Coronation of King Charles III  
Saturday 6th May

\* Sunday 14th May - Presidents Day

It just leaves me on behalf of BBC to wish you all peace, good health & prosperity in 2023.

Have a wonderful uplifting  
Christmas

Alan Cook

**Community Warm Hub, Community House, Birdbrook  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10am to 12 noon, Opening Monday 12th December**

Working behind the scenes of the Parish, the Birdbrook Community House Trustees recently applied for and have been awarded a grant to open a community warm hub.

A meeting was called and a lovely number of volunteers from all areas of the parish attended and offered their support in getting the hub set up and running regularly. It was fantastic to see such enthusiastic and willing members of the community wanting to support the village, especially at this time of year when we are all so busy with seasonal festivities and family get togethers. However, this is exactly why this hub is so important, for those of us unable to travel, see family and friends and sometimes not sure of how or where to gain support during such harsh financial times, this hub welcomes and enables everyone to take part. From Newborns to veterans, teenagers to millennials everyone is welcome at the Birdbrook Community Warm

Hub! (Please note all under 18's MUST be accompanied by a parent/guardian). The idea of the warm hub is to offer a warm space for all to visit for free and spend as much or as little time as you would like to enjoy the warm venue (without the cost of electric for yourselves) while socialising with friends, neighbours, and family together. Free light refreshments (biscuits, tea, coffee etc) will be available as well as cards, board games, newspapers, and magazines.

Depending upon the uptake and demand for the hub we would love to expand the plans further so please make use of this wonderful opportunity within the parish whenever you can.

We do also understand that it may be hard for everyone to get to the community house and so at each warm hub opening we will have a volunteer able to collect and drop off anyone within our parish to ensure that everybody is included.

(Birdbrook, Baythorne End, Finkle Green and New England) Please feel free to email us to request transport.

The warm hub opens its doors on Monday 12th December for the first time at 10am-12pm so please support and come along, socialise, and enjoy a bit of cosy comfort at the warm hub.

Home to Birdbrook Bowls Club, weekly Yoga and Pilates with Coco (Head to toe holistic) as well as regular community meeting and craft fairs, we'd love to add your function to that list of uses!

Birdbrook Community House is there for all, and we'd like to see it used more than ever as we start 2023. So, if looking for a venue for a party, wedding reception, christening, weekly club or just a family get together where you can fit everyone in, please consider using your community house.

**KiiWii** · Embroidery  
clothing & Print  
promotions ltd · Promotional

**No Minimum order**

**We supply & produce  
embroidered or printed:**

**Workwear  
Safetywear  
Sportswear**

**On site services include:**

**Design  
Production  
Showroom  
Advice**

**Located on the:  
Blois Meadow Business Centre,  
Steeple Bumpstead**



**KiiWii**  
clothing &  
promotions ltd

01440 730 330 + sales@kiiwiiclothing.co.uk + www.kiiwiiclothing.co.uk

**KiiWii**  
clothing &  
promotions ltd