

Birdbrook Parish News

Editorial



The year 2020 was a turbulent year and 2021 has started in a similar fashion, except we have the hope that the vaccine will eventually alleviate our predicament. It is going to be a long haul and every one of us will have to play our part in sticking to the guidelines and safeguarding all of those around us. The third lockdown will be hitting a lot of people very hard. If there is anyone in need of help and support please come forward and let yourself be known to a Parish Councillor and we shall do all we can to assist. Braintree District Councillor Diana Garrod has informed us that if you are struggling to pay bills after being asked to self-isolate by the NHS Test and Trace scheme, you may be eligible for a discretionary lump sum payment of £500. For more details, see p2.

Since our last publication two months ago we have enjoyed Christmas and the New Year and progress has continued at the Parish Council albeit slowly for obvious reasons. At the time of writing, we have just held our January meeting in which we have confirmed the budget for 2021/22 and reported on progress on our list of ventures. We are planning playground refurbishments over a number of years as the cost of replacing just the swings is in the region of £8,000. The defibrillator for Baythorne End has been ordered and we are waiting for its delivery and to agree a date for installation. At some point training will be arranged for members of our community when we can hold meetings face to face. In the meantime the apparatus has information attached on how to contact the necessary authorities and how to operate the equipment. The salt distribution was a very quiet affair in December with a few people collecting salt and we were able to make a donation of £50 plus tax relief to the East Anglia Air Ambulance Charity.

It is good to see that many people are venturing out for winter walks with many of us keeping to the metalled surfaces owing to the very wet conditions under foot on the public rights of way across farm land. The weather has been such that some farm

managers have been unable to re-instate all the public rights of way after ploughing within the two weeks required. Let us hope that we have some pleasant Spring weather so we can once again enjoy our favourite walks using the public rights of way and observe the wildlife as described by our local resident bird ringer and wildlife enthusiast, Barry, who is contributing highly entertaining and informative articles for our newsletters.

Dog walkers within the parish have suffered in recent months with overfull "dog poo" bins and we have finally understood why! The bins should be emptied weekly. Our newly appointed collector will shortly establish where all the bins are, including new bins installed near the entrance to Moynes Park. Hopefully, by the time you read this, the service will be back to operating smoothly. For any concerns on this matter please contact the Parish Council Clerk, Debbie Hilliard: debbiehilliard614@gmail.com who will pass on the issue to Braintree DC services.

Litter is a problem and it is worth noting that there have been two successful prosecutions for car littering in Braintree. Let us keep our hedgerows clear of litter and follow the example of Councillor Alan Cook who regularly picks up all the litter he sees whilst on his daily walk.

Peter Smart, Chair, Birdbrook Parish Council



*Many thanks to Charlie Richardson from Stambourne who volunteered to rebuild and repaint the village signpost as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme project.
Photo by Alan Cook*

Hello From Your District Councillor

Successful Prosecutions for Car Littering

Two successful car littering prosecutions were secured in one day at Chelmsford Magistrates Court on Thursday 3rd December. Bircan Ay, aged 54 of Coggeshall Road, Braintree, was witnessed smoking in his licensed Hackney Carriage vehicle on the 3rd February 2020 and then littering the cigarette butt while travelling along Coggeshall Road, Braintree. Mr Ay pleaded guilty to the offences, was fined and ordered to pay costs which in total came to £282. Elliot Peacocke of Montfort Drive, Great Baddow, was witnessed depositing lots of waste from the passenger windows of his vehicle by a Braintree District Council Street

Warden whilst travelling behind him along Hatfield Road, Witham to Hatfield Peverel on the 22nd October 2019. When the vehicle stopped, the Street Warden tried to deal with the offences however the occupants of the vehicle would not provide details. Mr Peacocke was identified as the owner of the vehicle and requested to provide the details of the offenders under the Environment Act 1995, but failed to comply. Mr Peacocke failed to attend court and the case was heard in his absence. He was found guilty, was fined and ordered to pay costs which in total came to £1,224. Residents can report any instances of fly-tipping, dumped rubbish or litter to us via www.braintree.gov.uk or by calling 01376 552525.

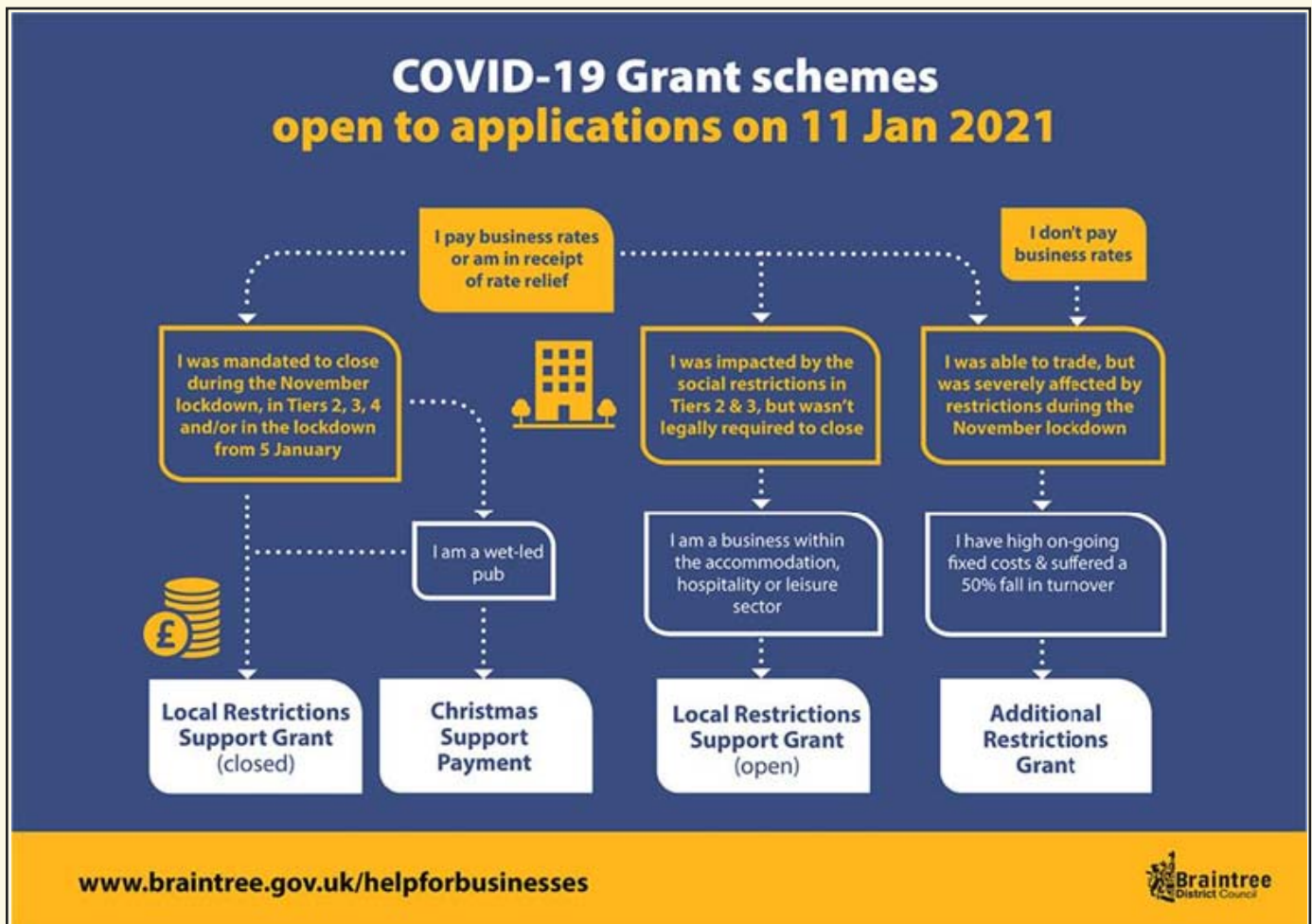
Covid-19 Vaccine Scams

Indeed, at the time of writing this the UK had vaccinated more people than



Cllr. Diana Garrod

the rest of the Europe combined, and the Government hopes that by the middle of February a first dose will have been offered to everyone in the four top priority groups. Coronavirus related scams which include ruthless criminals calling, texting or visiting individuals offering



Business Support: *The Covid-19 outbreak still presents a significant challenge to businesses*

Covid-19 vaccinations for large cash sums are increasing, so remain vigilant. These opportunistic criminals are using this crisis to trick people. Remember a genuine NHS Covid-19 vaccination booking will NEVER:

- Ask you for payment or any bank details.
- Ask you to press a button on your keypad when on the phone.
- Ask you to send a text to confirm the booking.

Covid-19 Vaccine – Who CANNOT have the vaccine?

Public Health England information states that the vaccines do not contain living organisms, and so are safe for people with disorders of the immune system. These people may not respond so well to

the vaccine. A very small number of people who are at risk of Covid-19 cannot have the vaccine and should discuss this with their GP if they are in any doubt. This includes people who have severe allergies. Women of childbearing age, those who are pregnant or breastfeeding should read the detailed information on www.nhs.uk/covidvaccination and discuss with their GP.

Let's all do our part to keep our Bumpstead Ward as safe as possible. Remember: Hands – Face – Space (if you really need to go out!)

*With best wishes to all,
Cllr. Diana Garrod
District Councillor – Bumpstead Ward*

Introducing Tarka's Cafe

The warm and welcoming Tarka's Cafe is based in Baythorne End and is owned by the Unwin Family

With five generations of your family having farmed here, what made you decide to start Tarka's Cafe? We had been thinking about a café at Baythorne Hall since the Wine Merchants opened in 2014. Once we had started the process of creating a retail destination here we recognised that one of the best ways of attracting more customers to the site was to offer food and refreshments.

What do you feel is the menu item all customers must try? Our Head Chef, Jon, has a strong background in Italian cooking, and since he convinced me to invest in a Pizza oven his pizzas have been the stand out items on the lunch menu. We also have two or three very keen cake makers amongst the staff, and one that has become a customer favourite is our vegan chocolate cake.

After relaxation of Coronavirus restrictions do you have any plans for the future? We are always looking at ways to develop and improve the site, and one thing we would love to do at some point in the future is to slightly extend the indoor seating area, without reducing the outside seating which is very popular in the summer months. We also hope to run more evening events in collaboration with Baythorne Wines (wine tasting evenings etc.)

What is your greatest memory since you have opened the business? It's hard to pinpoint a single memory, but what I'm definitely most proud of is the

wonderful team we have working in the café. It can be very hard work a lot of the time, but the team are always so positive, friendly, professional and loyal. Karen and Ellie (Manager and Assistant Manager) have been in charge since we first opened and most of our regular staff have been here for almost as long.

Do you use any other businesses within the parish, if so who? We always try to support local businesses where we can. All of our bread (Ben & Ella's Bakery), meat (Morgan's Butchers) and wine (Baythorne Wines) is purchased through other businesses at Baythorne Hall, our personalised aprons were produced by Kiiwii Clothing (Steeple Bumpstead) and much of our external landscaping has been done by Jimmy Bolton (New England Landscaping). Oh yes, and my brother would be very disappointed if I failed to mention the Accountants we use (Evolve Tax & Accountancy), also based at Baythorne Hall.

It's been fascinating getting to know a bit more about such a lovely business & we hope to be able to pop down and taste some of those pizzas very soon!



Birdbrook Wild Life Column

I hope some of you were lucky enough to see the Redwing and Fieldfare that frequented our gardens and hedgerows during the early part of January. With the ground frozen, these migrants were forced to feed on berries, fallen apples and any free hand-outs that people provided. The way the Fieldfares guard their favourite hawthorn or cotoneaster bush is always amusing. They seem to spend more time chasing off other birds from the berries than they actually do eating them. In a month or so these migrant thrushes will be gathering in large flocks prior to returning to their breeding grounds in northern Europe; I for one will sadly miss them.

These large gatherings of birds, especially in cold weather can attract predators. Whilst the sight of a bird being killed, plucked and eaten in your garden may put you off your cornflakes in the morning we have to appreciate that this is all part of nature and it's happening in your garden not on your TV. The only thing missing perhaps is the commentary by Sir David Attenborough! There are hundreds of thrushes, finches and tits around Birdbrook at this time of the year but birds of prey are still relatively uncommon, with perhaps only a few individuals around the village. Whilst Kestrels may take birds, they are more likely to prey on small mammals but Sparrowhawks are a highly specialised bird hunter. They rely on surprise and will often ambush birds in gardens around bird tables and feeders. You often only catch a glimpse of a grey flash as the hawk buzzes your garden hoping to cause its potential prey to panic and take flight, thus allowing the hawk to grab it in its needle like talons. I can assure you they are like needles....I have the scars to prove it!

We are lucky in Birdbrook because we also seem to have a healthy population of the other common British birds of prey. Buzzards are almost a daily occurrence and Red kites have certainly become a more regular sight in the 5 years that I have lived in the village. I am involved in a tagging project whereby nestling Red kites and Buzzards in east Hertfordshire are fitted with coloured wing-tags, that can be viewed at some distance and even in flight. This enables us to track the movements of the chick once it has left the nest. We have reports of Herts ringed Red kites being seen (and even filmed) as far away as north Norfolk and I would be very interested to hear of any potential nesting sites of Buzzards or Red kites around Birdbrook; it would be nice to tag some of our local birds.



*Above: Red kite showing visible wing tags
Photo courtesy of The Southern Colour Ringing Group.
Below: Sparrowhawk, caught in Barry's garden last winter*



Hopefully the icy blasts of winter are all but over and perhaps we can cheer ourselves up with the thought that spring is only a couple of months away. Blackbirds, Robins and Song thrushes will soon be singing and a warm spell will soon stimulate mating and nest building. By the middle of March I shall be listening for the first spring visitor back from their wintering grounds in Africa, Chiffchaffs are usually the first quickly followed by the Blackcap..... Getting a bit carried away...time to put another log on the fire!!!

Barry Williams will be pleased to answer any readers questions about local birds. You can contact him by emailing: baz_williams@hotmail.com.

Walking in Essex

Are you fed-up with doing the same old walks? www.walkinginengland.co.uk/essex is the website for you! Hundreds of walks from half a mile to 12 miles to download and print, free, with notes of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs. Also books of walks, contact details for all the walking groups in the county, and much more. Everyone can find a walk to enjoy. For more details email: john@walkinginengland.co.uk

Introducing your Parish Councillors: Alan Cook

I was first introduced into this world in September 1946, one of many referred to as a Boom Baby. Growing up in Leyton, East London, I was educated at a secondary modern school. There I played cricket, football & basket ball being the team captain. My allegiance switched from football to rugby when I joined Eton Manor boys club, however I still follow Leyton Orient Football Club.

I started my working career in 1963 joining a stock brokers in the London Stock Exchange. After 5 years I entered the world of insurance completing 35 years after which I took early retirement.

After spending a brief period relaxing I took a part time job working in a private hospital. Five years later, I retired permanently. 1976 proved to be one of the hottest on record & as it turned out, a momentous one as I married my dear wife Diane. Throughout everything she has been a wonderful support & encouragement to me. We have two daughters and four grandchildren who we love dearly & are our pride & joy.

I was a chorister at our local church together with my daughters & served as the Bazaar & Fete treasurer. Having finally retired in 2001 Diane & I had discussed moving away from London, resulting in moving to Birdbrook in 2012.

I am a member of Birdbrook Bowls Club & have enjoyed several seasons of competitive bowls, currently I am their treasurer.

Taking an interest in village life I decided to join Birdbrook Parish



Council in 2014. During my tenure I have been responsible for installing both the Defibrillator into the BT kiosk & for the Village Sign.

There is a good community spirit in Birdbrook, my aim is to consolidate this by making it a harmonious & safe place to live.

My current project in association with fellow councillors is to rejuvenate & greatly improve the play areas within the parish to encourage & stimulate active play, general exercise held in a safe & friendly meeting place..

However getting funding for this project is proving to be an extremely difficult exercise. If you know of anyone with a spare £50K then please put them in touch with me !!!

Alan Cook

Birdbrook Village Pond

You have probably noticed that the village pond is looking a bit sorry for itself at the present time. Over the past three or four years I have gathered together a happy band of volunteers to help tidy up the surrounds from time to time; many thanks to those of you who have offered kind words of thanks for our efforts. We cut back some of the unwanted growth and then use Aquaplankton, a plant-based product, to help keep the water clear.

Sadly, under the present circumstances, none of this has been possible and hence the current state of the pond. Please be assured that when we get through this horrible pandemic, I will again be asking the volunteers to help to get the pond looking much better. Of course, any extra volunteers will be greatly appreciated.

Martin Gilbert

Covid - Vaccination and Afterwards

Not heard yet? For information visit: www.nhs.uk/covidvaccine

As time moves on, many more people around the country will have received the vaccine.

It is important to receive both doses of the same vaccine.

However it is still vital to maintain social distancing, wear a face mask when necessary and continue to abide by the guidance in the local area.

Although the vaccine reduces the chance of serious illness from the infection, it is not yet known whether it stops us catching the virus from others, or passing on the virus to others. We can only expect the vaccine to reduce the risk, not totally eliminate it.

Census 2021

The national census comes round every ten years and we shall be receiving information on how we can complete our census forms. The following is taken from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) power point slide show to Parish and Town Councils:

Office of National Statistics (ONS)

- The census is a survey that happens every 10 years and everyone takes part.
- The ONS is responsible for the census in England and Wales.
- The census is important because it gives the most detailed information we have about our society.
- Scotland and Northern Ireland hold their own around the same time.

Keeping personal information safe:

- Before we publish our statistics, we make sure that they don't include any personal information.
- The information we collect in the census remains anonymous for 100 years.
- Everyone must complete the census. Legislation made the modern census a legal obligation in 1920.

The census provides information government needs to:

- Shape policy
- Allocate resources
- Plan services
- Monitor equality

Census information informs decisions & improves lives.

- The next census will take place on **Sunday 21 March 2021**.
- For the first time this will be a digital-first census, but paper will be available for those who need it.
- We'll focus on engaging with everyone, including under-represented and hard to reach groups.
- Help will be available for people who need support to take part online.

What happens next:

- We'll be recruiting local people to work on the census – please share the jobs opportunities which can be found at <https://www.censusjobs.co.uk/>
- All households will receive an invitation to fill out the census questionnaire with a household access code, as well as information to help them to take part online. For obvious reasons the emphasis is online completion this year, with a 60% target.

- We'll have a media campaign to encourage participation.
- We'll work within the community to support those who need help, including help to get online or to access a paper questionnaire if needed.

We cannot do without you

- The census happens once every 10 years. It gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.
- The information we collect is vital to ensuring your work has the best impact.
- Your local knowledge and expertise is essential to support a successful census in your area. It helps to ensure census information continues to improve, protect and save lives.
- Thank you for supporting Census 2021! And making a lasting impact on your community!

Keep in touch:

- If you would like support with any local activities, please contact your local Census Engagement Manager:

Valerie Newell, Census Engagement Manager, N. Essex
Email: valerie.cumming.newell81@field.census.gov.uk
Tel/text: 07452 939018

Bookmark the Census 2021 website: www.census.gov.uk

Follow us on social Media: [#Census2021](https://twitter.com/Census2021)

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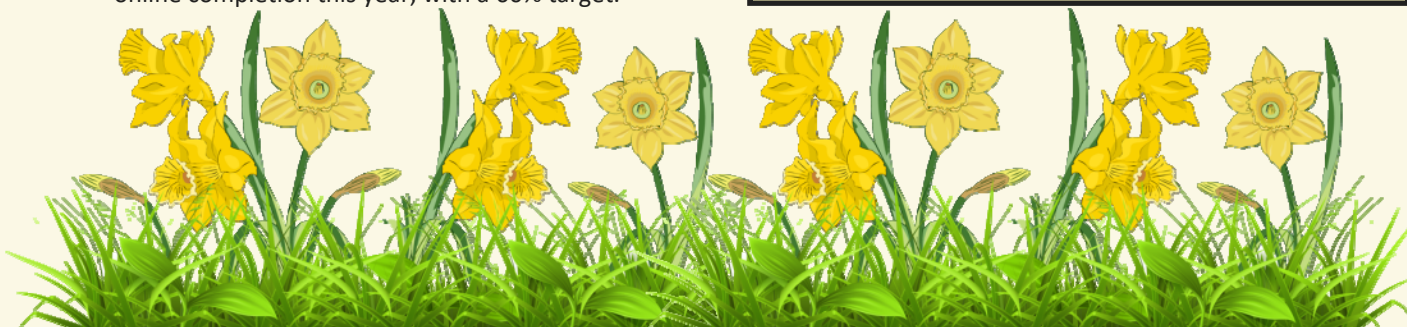
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<http://www.birdbrook.org.uk/bbnews.html>

For all submissions, contributions and advertising,
and if you prefer to receive your copy by email
please contact us at: birdbrook2021@gmail.com



A Tale of Two Village Halls

Having served a couple of times as election day polling clerk at Belchamp St Paul Community House, I was intrigued to learn of the link with our own village hall at Birdbrook. The following is from their historical records.

Val Rhenius

The Birdbrook Community House was built in the late 1950s by Bryce Foundation, whose funds were donated by the late Mr and Mrs JFC Bryce, who lived at Moyns Park. Canon Powell, who was the incumbent of Belchamp St Paul at the time, saw the Birdbrook House and persuaded the Bryces to build a second in Belchamp St Paul to serve five local parishes. Their Community House, having been built by the Bryce Foundation on land given by the late Mr Clare Wayman was opened in 1961.

It was entirely equipped, furnished, and was in those days completely maintained by the Foundation. The interior of both was designed by David Hicks. The Belchamp St Paul house had a flat above for a resident steward, now rented to provide an income towards maintenance. For some years, the steward, newspapers and television were provided with only a charge of five shillings (25p) for its' use, with the Evergreens Club paying nothing. The House was then expressly for the use of the ' five parishes '



*Birdbrook Community House
from across the village pond*

and Mr and Mrs Bryce asked that it should be known as the Belchamp Community House (not centre).

In 1973 the Trustees received a letter from the Foundation stating that funds provided for the maintenance of the House had "dried up" and the local Trustees were now on their own. This obviously called for changes in the administration of the House. Hiring charges were introduced and more effort was made to get the House used by both the five parishes and outsiders for meetings, money making events and private parties. The flat was made self-contained and let, many economies made and a caretaker appointed, as well as part-time helpers for the grounds.

The Houses are each administered by a board of Trustees, who must adhere to the rules contained in the Trust Deed.



*Belchamp St Paul
Community House in its
1.5 acres of grounds
www.belchampch.co.uk*

Chat 'n' Stitch

BIRDBROOK CHALLENGE!

During the first lock down back last March I dealt with this 'new' way of life by making hundreds of masks for the trainee paramedics to use as part of their training equipment and scrub bags for various local hospitals.

Now with this latest lockdown I feel it's time to do something for us here in Birdbrook. Creativity helps calm the mind. So I propose we

BUNT BIRDBROOK!

How good would our village look if we could all hang bunting from our houses, in prominent places around the village to celebrate coming out of this awful period in our lives.



We would love to welcome more members when we are finally allowed to open up!! Please don't feel you have to be able to sew, knit, crochet. We all help each other out over a cup of tea and of course a chat!

I wondered if anyone of you would be interested in coming together as a Virtual Chat 'n' Stitch group?

If so contact me at annehepworth@aol.com, putting Chat 'n' Stitch as the subject, by February 10th with a view to initially holding our first Virtual Chat 'n' Stitch Zoom session on Tuesday afternoon 16th February. It would be helpful if you could let me know which day and time of day suits you best to meet up.

Anne Hepworth

I would love to see absolutely everyone make at least one flag (from now on called a Bunt!!)

Bunts can be made by all children young and old, male and female. They can be made from all sorts of things although I would not advise paper or card. Just think you could up-cycle anything from an old worn tea towel to a shrunken jumper an old shirt or blouse. If you're a knitter, someone who crochets then a bunt showing those skills would be brilliant. Macramé another option! Creativity helps calm the mind!

Step 1 Size: Take a sheet of A4 fold it in half length wise and then use a ruler to create a symmetrical triangle before cutting the shape out.

Step 2: Use the pattern to cut out the 'bunt'

Step 3: Now's the time to use your creative skills to decorate your bunt!

Buttons, glue, needle and thread, applique, shells, strands of wool. Felt tips,

What will you use to make your bunt something cheerful to hang up and celebrate?

Step 4: Add some ties. No good at sewing? Use some staples to attach!

Step 5: When we are allowed to escape this lockdown hang up your BUNTING! Let's get out and celebrate, chat with your neighbours without having to worry about social distancing!

Any donated spares can be used for communal areas.



Left to right: fold A4 sheet longways and cut diagonally as shown; paper template; use paper pattern for the 'bunt'; add ties.

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St Augustine's Church, Birdbrook

From Revd Canon Jonathan Lowe

"All you need is Love..."

According to The Beatles, all you need is love – and February is a time when thoughts tend to turn to love as the feast of St Valentine is celebrated on 14th February.

As romantic heroes go, St Valentine is an unlikely candidate. Little is known about him – even who he actually was, as there were several Christian martyrs named Valentine. The most likely candidate is believed to be a Christian priest who was martyred about 270AD by the emperor Claudius II Gothicus. Why this particular saint became associated with love is also a matter of some conjecture.

One legend contends that Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, and so he therefore outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realising the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret.

Another legend contends that an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl – possibly his jailor's daughter – who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it's alleged that he wrote her a letter signed "From your Valentine," an expression that is still in use today.

Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasise his appeal as a deeply romantic figure. By the Middle Ages, his association with love was well known and the idea of Valentine's day being a day to declare one's feelings of love was set.

Over the years, the focus has become increasingly one of romantic love and, apparently, it's now the 5th most popular day to propose - Christmas day being the most popular in case you were wondering! In the past, however, it was a day when all sorts of love was celebrated: the love between parents and children,

between siblings, between friends and of course the love of God for us, his creation.

This love, between God and humanity is the purest and most intense love that there is – and as much as February's love fest is focused on Valentine's day, it's also the month that Lent begins. Lent is the period of the churches year when we prepare to celebrate the agony and joy of Easter; those days where God proved his love over and again in the unfolding events and its continued effect on our lives today.

So maybe this Valentine's day, as we exchange cards and presents, have a dine in meal for two over Zoom or maybe even get proposed to on Facetime, we could also do well to remember the greatest love of all:-

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16)

Happy Valentine's day everyone – may it be a day when you know how much you are loved.

Blessings,

Jonathan
Revd Canon Jonathan Lowe
01440 731687
vicar@2rivers.faith
The Vicarage
3 Church Street
Steeple Bumpstead, Essex CB9 7DG

Updates and how to get help during the COVID-19 period

At the time of writing, the Government has not suspended public worship, however, the Diocese of Chelmsford has advised that we should set a good example in protecting our communities by suspending public worship during this lockdown. We continue to be the worst hit area of the country and our hospitals are now under extraordinary pressure. We must therefore do all we can to protect the most vulnerable and the NHS. Consequently, all services across the Two Rivers Benefice will now revert to online only.

The on-line services are aimed at the whole family and are also available afterwards so you can watch in your own time. Simply type the following links into your browser:

Facebook: <http://tiny.cc/7y6zlj>
YouTube: <http://tiny.cc/nx6zlj>



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Photography

Looking for opportunities to be creative during lockdown, this could be a good time to take the camera on walks around the garden and countryside. There are many interesting photographic competitions 'out there', and even if not inspired to enter, it's fascinating to look through some of the past entries and enjoy the patience, skill, and luck of some intrepid and dedicated fellow photographers.

Competitions include:
The BBC Countryfile Calendar
Usually launched July.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year
<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/wpy/competition>

Royal Horticultural Society Competition
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/Promotions/rhs-photo-competition>

The Royal Society of Biology annual photography competition invites amateurs to submit photographs on a particular theme. The Photography Competition 2021 will open for entries in March 2021. For details, and to browse previous (stunning) entries, visit: <https://www.rsb.org.uk/get-involved/rsb-competitions/photography-competition>

The RSBP feature a 'Photo of the Week' in their blog: rsbp.org.uk/natureshome and inspiring reader photos in their magazine with a Garden Bird bundle as their star prize.

By Googling, there are no doubt many more competitions to find. Don't forget to tell us about your success.

More locally **Friends of Haverhill Library** are launching a 2022 calendar competition for local, seasonal photos, the theme is "Landscapes in and around Haverhill". The A3 wall calendar will feature at least 25 photos. Closing date 4th October 2021 and the calendar will be on sale early November, priced around £7. More details will be available on the Haverhill Library Facebook page, and in the next issue of our Birdbrook Parish Newsletter. Meanwhile entry is open to all, so do take your camera on your local walks.

Birdbrook Village Bowls Club and Ladies Group

Activities are obviously on hold while we're still in lockdown, but we hope to get through this, and back to our usual programme of activities very soon.

Alan Cook, Bowls Club and
Sue King, Chair, Ladies Group

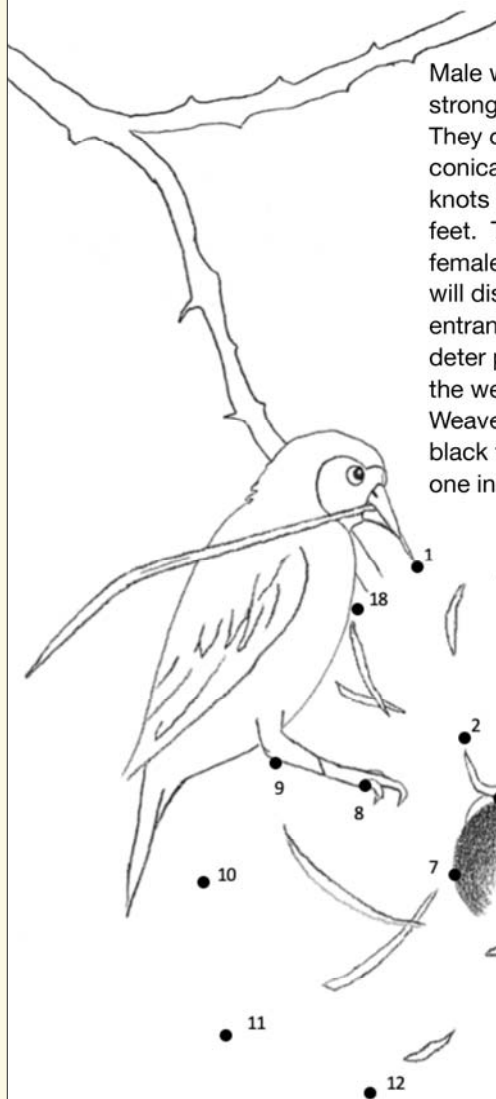
Seasonal Colouring courtesy of the Royal Society of Biology

Village Playgrounds

Many thanks to Fiona, Julia and Simon of Chadwells Stud for their donation of £100 towards village playground renovation.



Nest building



Male weaver birds build waterproof, strong, secure nests in about two days. They cut blades of grass with their sharp conical beaks. These small birds can tie knots in the grass using their beaks and feet. The males build their nests to attract females and if they are unsuccessful they will dismantle their nest and try again. The entrance to the nest is at the bottom, to deter predators. Join the dots to complete the weaver bird nest and then colour in. Weaver birds are bright yellow with a black face and beak, you can colour this one in any colours you like!

From the Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour colouring book, free to download as part of the RSB [#RSBScienceAtHome](https://rsb.org.uk/science-at-home) <https://buff.ly/3pioXqo>

British Wildlife Tales Children's Illustration Workshops

Carl Mynot, of British Wildlife Tales, Steeple Bumpstead is hosting a free, live, children's illustration workshop during lockdown at 2pm on Tuesdays.

Carl Mynott is a British wildlife enthusiast and pencil, ink and watercolour artist. His latest creation is the British Wildlife Tales series of books.

Find the link on the website and more info on Facebook:

<https://britishwildlifetales.co.uk/>

www.facebook.com/gbwildlifetales

Birdbrook Church as seen on BBC Look East 4 December 2020



Photo courtesy of Karen Farrant

From your editors

Wishing you all a Happy New Year!

As we write, we are back in lockdown, the weather is grey, wet and miserable, and spring still seems a long way off.

Our plans for this newsletter are to continue the good work established by Richard and Albert over the years, and to keep us all in touch with village news, especially in these socially distanced times.

The newsletters will appear, as before, on the village website, so you can share with friends and relatives if you wish: <http://www.birdbrook.org.uk/bbnews.html>

We'd also like to welcome you to the Birdbrook Parish Council Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/Birdbrook-Parish-Council-101754315205316

for which you are invited to email news and alerts to Debbie, our parish clerk: debbiehilliard614@gmail.com

This is **your** newsletter, so do let us know if you have interesting news to contribute. If you prefer to receive your copy by email, do let us know.

Val and Katie, Editors
birdbrook2021@gmail.com

Salt bags

On the 5th December 2020 BP Councillors were on hand to distribute salt bags to those members of the village who wanted them.

They were joined once again by the Elf who wished passing motorists & dog walkers a happy Christmas. Some looked startled at the sight of a six foot Elf but I have it on good authority that he is a very friendly fellow & has said he would love to return once again this year.

The council members prepared themselves for a rush of residents, especially as bad weather was being predicted but we saw just one resident as most still had bags from previous years.

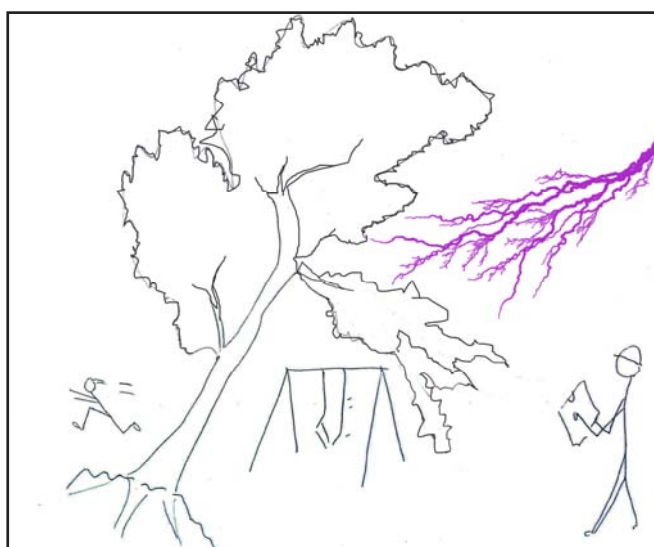
However due to advanced orders & very generous donations we were able to send to E&H Air Ambulance the sum of £50, increased by gift aid to £62.50.

On behalf of BPC thank you once again for supporting this marvellous charity.

Keep safe & keep well,



The Elf...



"Well, it's a conservation area, the tree has a preservation order, and of course there will have to be a bat survey."