

Birdbrook Parish News



Editorial

The Parish Council has continued to make progress over the festive season with the highlight being the securing of a grant towards the replacement of the swings in the playground. Cllr Katie Gentry has been highly active at fund raising organising two events at the Community House. These events enabled much-needed socialising and in addition added funds to the children's playground equipment replacement fund. In recent times Cllr Martin Gilbert has applied for many grants and at last he was rewarded for his perseverance with a successful CIF application. The grant just short of £10,000 together with the fund raising and the money the PC has put aside will enable the swings to be replaced and a new climbing "fort" to be installed. Clearance work in the Birdbrook playing field should have begun by the time you read this.

In January the budget was finalised and we were successful in keeping it at the same level as for the past three years. We thought it was only right to buck the trend of ever-increasing costs.

If all goes to plan my wife, Louise and I will be moving from the village in the coming weeks to be nearer to family and to give us a home renovation project to undertake while we are still able to do so. We have lived in Birdbrook for over eight years now and I would have served seven years on the Parish Council in May. It took some time for me to adjust to the pace of working but as time has gone by things seem to have streamlined themselves and a good number of successes have been achieved. The introduction of each Councillor being responsible for a specific area seems to have moved us forward. Defibrillators have been installed in Baythorne End and Birdbrook, telephone box renovated, a new village sign, street lighting has been changed to LED cutting the cost of electricity substantially to the PC, the pond receives routine maintenance, the speed limit reduced on the approach to Baythorne End, one or two crossfield footpaths restored, some footpath bridges replaced, additional 'dog bins' installed, and a fabulous new Parish Council publication introduced along with a Facebook page.

The present programme of advancement includes the two playgrounds, a new parish council website, and possibly the renovation of the pond. The PC is trying to use electronic banking but held up by our bank whose own administration appears to malfunction at the application process. We should like to see a greater sense of community and I am delighted to see that the PC has been re-energised through the efforts of its clerk and councillors. Undertaking this voluntary work is rewarding and I am hoping now there will be more social events organised by the Community House and the PC and hopefully more people will come forward and undertake the duties as a parish councillor. The PC

meet once every two months and it is rewarding, making a difference.

I should like to thank our highly effective Clerk and Finance Officer Debbie for all her work on behalf of the PC and for her support during my time as Chairman. Diana Garrod our Braintree District Councillor has supported us wholeheartedly since being elected and she has steered us in the right direction on many an occasion and made a significant difference to our overall effectiveness. Additionally, I should like to thank former Cllr Richard Walker for all his support and encouragement over the past years. His knowledge of the locality is exceptional. All my present fellow councillors have made a major impact on our work and as you can see from the list in the above paragraph much has been achieved in recent years. I am delighted to see that the PC is in such excellent hands with Katie, Alan, Martin and Steve all in situ with the added assistance of Val, Steve's wife when it comes to the BPC News. Huge huge thanks to you all. There is a real sense of purpose amongst the PC members, Clerk and District Councillor at the moment and I feel the village is on the verge of a new era with this group of able and highly motivated people. It has been a privilege and real pleasure working alongside you all. Wishing you all every success with your endeavours and look forward to catching up on your news in the years to come.

Peter Smart, Chair, Birdbrook Parish Council

Birdbrook Parish News brought to you by Birdbrook Parish Council

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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

Introducing Essex Authors: Josie Dom & Daniela Burley

Daniela, based in Chelmsford, joined forces with Jane Komussar (a Birmingham based author) to form a collaborative venture for independent children's authors in Spring 2021. Josie Dom from Halstead was one of the first to come on board with Book Planet 4 Kids and has been working in the background on a variety of admin tasks to support Daniela and Jane in their efforts to market the group's 40 independent authors and their books.

The group's first outing was at the NEC in Birmingham for a huge Festive Fair, but since then the focus has turned to Essex events led by Daniela and Josie, who joined us at the Birdbrook Community House in December and were delighted with the support shown by visitors on the day. Daniela and Josie both publish their own books independently, giving the the joy of being involved in

the entire process from original idea to publication (everything from proofreading to illustrating to printing) – more so than a traditionally published author would enjoy.

For less than half of her life, Daniela lived in Slovakia and ventured to England in 1997 where she later settled down. She studied at King's College University and graduated in 2008 with a degree in Computer Science. Daniela's first book 'Elen and the Water Goblin', published in 2021, is perfect for children age 8-12. The story borrows from traditional folk tales from Eastern Europe. 'Elen and the Water Goblin' was originally penned in 2009 but then Daniela left the manuscript alone for a few years while her life took a different direction. However, after marrying in 2014 and since sharing the story with her husband, he encouraged her to publish her book. Daniela is now working on the follow-up story and we'll bring you news when it is published.

Local girl, Josie grew up in Halstead before moving away, spending some time travelling and then returning to Halstead with her young family in 2007. It was her love of reading, coupled with becoming a Mum which led her to start writing picture books.

Since 2015, Josie has published 2 picture books: 'Lum' and 'Lum's Mum' which have kindness at their heart. In 2020, Josie was inspired by her daughter telling her that sloths were good swimmers to write a rhyming story telling of animals taking over when humans were not able to compete in the Olympics, and Animalympics was born! That summer, Josie shared the story via a fundraiser for zoos across the UK with help from many Olympian, Paralympian and World Champion athletes who each read their own sport's verse. Adam Hills from Channel 4's The Last Leg even got involved to read the closing ceremony verses. Then in 2021, Josie published the story as a book which is beautifully illustrated by Sarah Lou. Animalympics is perfect for children age 6-11 but also works as a read-aloud for younger children and adults love it for the crazy animal antics too. Josie has a few projects she's working on, including new stories in the Lum series and a Winter Animalympics book. We'll keep you updated!

You can keep in touch with Josie and Daniela, as well as Book Planet 4 Kids at the following links: <https://bookplanet4kids.co.uk/>
<https://www.danielaburley.co.uk/> <https://josiedom.co.uk/>

They're all on Facebook and Instagram too!



Daniela



Josie at the Birdbrook Christmas Fayre



Birdbrook Celebrates the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

The Platinum Jubilee Beacons is the first community event of the four-day Jubilee Weekend, 2nd-5th June 2022

www.queensjubileebeacons.com

Extract from Unity Healthcare December 2021 Newsletter

Once again we are engaged in a stand-off with the Covid-19 virus. Optimism and hopes for a national recovery from the pandemic are facing yet another setback with the threat from the new Omicron variant and it's as yet unknown forthcoming impact on the severity of illness, the health service and on wider society. What we do know is that it is spreading fast, is more contagious, and evades the protection provided by 2 doses of vaccination. A third dose seems to increase protection significantly.

Advice, rules and guidelines seem to be changing daily, which I appreciate is highly frustrating and at times confusing. One thing that has not changed however, is the importance of arranging a PCR test if you have a new cough, fever, or loss of sense of smell / taste. A lateral flow test cannot be used to exclude Covid-19 in someone who has these symptoms.

After our initial decision to focus our priorities here on delivering General Practice services (with the delivery of routine Covid-19 vaccination being offered by other providers-), there is now a clear need to increase the urgency of the vaccination programme.

We have therefore been mandated to once again suspend

some routine services (such as long term conditions health-checks) in order to focus on vaccine delivery, as we did when delivering the first rounds of vaccination at the EpiCentre. We apologise for frustration that this may cause you, but do appreciate that we cannot do everything at once. My colleagues may be a team of super humans, but are not magicians. You will be contacted by practice staff to book your booster, so please do not contact the practice directly to request this. Doing so will not get you booked in any sooner and just serves to increase telephone queues, makes everyone wait longer and diverts practice staff from other duties.

You can of course continue to access the national vaccination booking services and other providers via the NHS website, or attend one of the many walk in events in the region should you prefer. It is really "all hands on deck" for this one, to get as many jabs in arms as quickly as possible

We will continue to do our best to maintain our other urgent medical services as comprehensively as we can (in the first instance accessed via eConsult, or telephone if unable), and will continue to ensure that a safe and high quality service is provided on a timely basis. Please do not be put off consulting with us if your health problem is urgent, or are concerned that you may have symptoms of cancer. We will continue to be available to help you.

Despite many of the substantial pressures facing General Practice in the UK, our innovative approach has continued to allow us to ensure that all of our patients are able to access what they need (if not necessarily always what they want), in a safe, responsive and accessible manner. Do please be mindful that my team are working under considerable pressure, and treat them with kindness and respect.

We have continued to recruit and expand our numbers, including further long-term GP staff who continue to join us. I appreciate that there are a lot of new faces in our growing team, and thank you for making them feel welcome.

Dr David Brandon
www.christmasandclements.co.uk/news

Health & Children's Centre Service in Cartwheels Family Hub Spring Timetable Monday, 10th January to Friday, 8th April <small>All virtual groups are offered through MS Teams. Please ensure you have access to a computer, or the Microsoft Teams App downloaded to your tablet or Smartphone.</small>					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	LOCAL	INFO
Under 1's 9.30 to 10.30am Cartwheels Family Hub (Puddlebrook Room) To book please email cartwheels@suffolk.gov.uk or message us via our Facebook page.	Early Days 10.00 to 11.30am Cartwheels Family Hub 5 week post-natal group for families with babies aged 0 to 3 months. Speak to Health Visitor to book your place. Little Stars 10.00 to 11.30am Methodist Church Hall Group for children aged 0-5 years with additional needs. Speak to Health Visitor to book your place. Infant Massage 12.30 to 1.30pm Cartwheels Family Hub To book please email cartwheels@suffolk.gov.uk or message us via our Facebook page or speak to your Health Visitor.	Over 1's 9.30 to 10.30am Cartwheels Family Hub (Puddlebrook Room) Group for 1 up to 2 years supporting play & development. Invite ONLY via Health Visitor.	Infant Feeding (Virtual) 10.00 to 11.30am Group offering practical feeding support. Email to add to waiting list or speak to your Health Visitor. Introducing Solids (Virtual) 1.30 - 2.30pm Monthly Workshop. For dates & to book your place email cartwheels@suffolk.gov.uk Toileting Workshop / Sleep Workshop - alternate weeks Methodist Church Hall COMING SOON	Haverhill Library Tot Rock & Storytime Tuesdays, 11 to 11.30am FREE session. Active songs & rhymes for pre-school children. Baby Bounce Fridays, 11 to 11.30am FREE session. Gentle fun with soothing singing and nursery rhymes to enjoy with your baby. Sunday Crafts for Children aged 2 to 10 years. FREE. Two sessions: 11am to 12noon or 2pm to 3pm	Suffolk Health Business Centre (Hub) To speak to a health visitor, health enquiries appointments, information & advice, please contact Suffolk's Health Business Centre (Hub). Monday to Friday, 9 to 5pm. on 0345 607 88 66 or email childrenshealth@suffolk.gov.uk Suffolk Health Visiting 0-5 Parent Line TEXT SERVICE Message us for confidential advice & support with 0-5 child feeding, sleeping, behavioural, toileting, developmental, child health and parenting support & emotional wellbeing concerns. on 07312 277 020 S.C.C. Suffolk Family Information Service 0345 60 800 33 Free impartial advice about childcare & other services supporting families.

Birdbrook Wild Life Column

Hopefully, by the time you read this the weather will have started to warm up, although honestly I don't feel the winter has been that bad – do you?. Compared to last year when we had a lot of snow in early February the forecasters are predicting fairly mild weather for the first half of the month with any snow expected further north and limited to higher ground. If that is the case perhaps we can start thinking about tidying up the garden which for me usually means what can I do to attract more birds.

I quite often get asked about bird feeders and food, nest boxes and what plants will attract birds. These are a few of the more common questions but if you do have any specific questions or see (or hear) a mystery bird please do not hesitate to drop me an e-mail.

Q: We have a lovely variety of visitors to our bird feeders: including woodpeckers, blue tits, great tits, long tailed and coal tits. How can we attract the finches? We seldom see those nowadays.

The main diet of all finches is seeds and other plant material, ie fruit tree buds. Our three commonest finches, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Chaffinch can all be attracted into the garden with mixed seed but I find that the one thing that all finches (and the 3 common tit species) find irresistible is sunflower hearts. A basic seed feeder costs under £10 and a 30kg sack of sunflower hearts should cost around £30 and will last you a few weeks. Finches are messy eaters but the sunflower hearts that do fall to the ground will soon get picked up by Robins, Dunnocks, Blackbirds, Woodpigeons and may also attract Wood mice and voles.

Q: We've heard about the parasite-induced disease trichomonosis, is there anything we can do to help prevent the spread?

This disease is an absolute killer and numbers of Greenfinches have plummeted in the last ten years mainly due to this disease. It is thought to spread through bird's saliva and faeces so regular cleaning of feeders and bird table surfaces and moving feeders every couple of weeks to other sites around your garden will help to control this fatal disease.

Q: Are there particular small/medium/large plants for the garden that would particularly benefit the bird population?

Simple answer is yes but obviously there are far too many answers to fit on this page! The two main things that bring birds to our gardens are food and shelter. If we can provide a safe habitat and a regular source of

good food then we will get a good selection of wild birds in our gardens. Fruit and berry bearing plants are a great source of nutrition to many bird species, whether it be the simple blackberry which are great for Blackcaps and other warblers, but adored by most birds in late summer, or something more exotic. Bird cherry is an excellent choice as are Cotoneaster and Pyracantha, and apple trees provide fresh blossom in the spring (loved by Bullfinches) and of course lots of fruit for the Blackbirds and Thrushes in the autumn and winter. If you can, leave any wind-falls on the ground; apples are a great source of food during hard winters. There are numerous books and articles on wildlife gardening and of course there are sites dedicated to making your garden more bird friendly.

One thing that will of course attract birds into your gardens are nest boxes. A simple box made up from some scrap wood can provide a home for a Blue or Great tit family and provides great entertainment once the adults start feeding their ravenous young.



Blue tit with grub. Photo by Jane Garnham

Different birds require different boxes whether it be a House sparrow terrace, or a Swift or Starling box at high level just under your gutter. And for all the farmers out there, how about an Barn owl box in one of your barns or a Tawny

Owl or Kestrel box in a tree. They'll help to control your rats and mice and provide a safe home for an iconic bird.

Happy birding everyone and just think, in 2 months time we'll be welcoming our first summer migrants – see I told you that winter wasn't too bad!!

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



Long tailed tit. Photo by Jane Garnham

Birdbrook Bowls Club A View from the Green

Let me first wish you all a very happy new year, let us hope that it is a safe & healthy one for us all.

Can you hear the grass growing? Apart from brushing, yes you heard right, brushing the green & the occasional cut there has been little action on the green over the winter.

Cutting the grass generates a pile of cuttings either to put on a compost heap or in the green bin ready for collection. You can imagine, cutting the bowling green generates a lot of cuttings, especially during the season when the green is cut at least twice a week. The green team used the closed season to construct some new compost bins out of recycled pallets. It has also tidied up the area where the grass cuttings used to be stored. Well done chaps, a great job!

Some of you may have watched the indoor bowls championships just recently shown on BBC2? What struck me was not only the skill of the players, but their ages, the youngest was in her 20s the eldest being in his 70s. Bowls can be played by people of all ages & abilities, especially in the fresh air on a pleasant sunny evening.

During these trying & testing times, while keeping ourselves safe, being vaccinated & wearing face masks, we have also been advised to take some exercise, especially in the fresh air. What better than to try your hand at the ancient game of bowls?

The green officially opens for our club nights on Tuesday 26th April at 6.30pm & then every Tuesday evening throughout the season.

We can offer you a warm welcome, with coaching if you would like, for a thoroughly enjoyable few hours gentle exercise on a

warm summers evening. Oh yes and refreshments in our refurbished club room & bar. In the meantime, keep safe & listen to the grass grow.

Alan Cook

The Bowls Club will be holding an open afternoon from 12 noon to 4pm Sunday 24th April 2022

Do come along, meet the club members & enjoy a relaxing afternoon trying your hand at bowls, you never know you may like



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Hello From Your District Councillor

Essex Police Focus on Hare Coursing & Cybercrime

Officers from the Rural Engagement Team have been proactively preventing and locating those involved in hare coursing. On Sunday 12th December officers from RET, Suffolk Rural Policing Team, Kent Police Rural Crime Team, Officers from Uttlesford, Halstead and our Road Crime Team came together for the national Operation Galileo to tackle Hare Coursing. This operation was a success with 5 men being interviewed and issued with Community Protection Notice Warnings for Hare Coursing. On 13th December officers located 3 men suspected of hare coursing in the Ongar area late in the evening and issued them also with community protection warnings. If you witness or suspect hare coursing is occurring please call 999 to report the crime in action. Alternatively contact 101 (online) or CrimeStoppers.rural.engagement.team@essex.police.uk

This year one of the main focuses will be cybercrime and the effects it has on organisations. They will be looking to see what advice and guidance can be given to be best prepared against these attacks. The scale and complexity of cyber attacks is wide ranging. 'Off the shelf' tools mean that less technically proficient criminals are now able to commit cyber crime and do so as awareness of the potential profits becomes more widespread. Cyber attacks are financially devastating, disruptive and upsetting to people and businesses. Essex Police are looking to highlight the importance of cyber security working with the Eastern Cyber Resilience Centre and Police CyberAlarm. For further information: business.crime.team@essex.police.uk where they can also involve Essex Police's new Cyber Protect Officer to

give you an understanding of what can be done.

If you would like to put your questions to Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex. The next online Rural Crime Public Meeting is March 21st 19:00 – 20:00 (more details on their Facebook page).

Local crime 16/12/21: Phoenix Rd (Bumpstead Ward): "Suspects

unknown have attempted to break into victims' vehicle, a white Ford transit. Suspects drilled the lock off the nearside sliding door setting off the alarm. No entry gained. No property removed".

£1m Arts & Cultural Fund Opens for Applications

A new £1 million fund has been set up to support Essex's art and culture sector and has opened for applications. The Essex County Council Arts and Cultural Fund will offer artists and cultural organisations grants from £2,500 to £30,000 to deliver projects. It will support projects across the creative sectors and is open to individual artists, co-operatives, community groups, charities, community interest companies, social enterprises, private and public organisations. More information at: <https://www.community360.org.uk/1m-arts-and-cultural-fund-opens-for-applications/>

Support for Businesses Most Impacted by Omicron

The Government announced on 21st December 2021 that additional support will be available for businesses who have been impacted by the Omicron variant.

Businesses in the hospitality and leisure sectors in England will be eligible for one-off grants of up to £6,000 per premises, plus more than £100 million discretionary funding will be made available for local authorities to support other businesses. Government will also cover the cost of Statutory Sick Pay for Covid-related absences for small and medium-sized employers. £30 million further funding will be made available through the Culture Recovery Fund, enabling more cultural organisations in England to apply for support during the winter.

More information at: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/advice-environment/coronavirus/4>

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



Cllr. Diana Garrod

The Birdbrook Plough

Upcoming events at The Plough;
27th March Mothering Sunday- Roast dinner / set 3 course menus.
Details to follow. Bookings now being taken.
Currently offering 2 for £15 on 2 diners' main meals for 15 weeks on Thursdays and Saturdays from 5 to 8pm. Offer ends on 28th April.
Contact **01440 788066** to book.

St Augustine's Church, Birdbrook

Discovered on stone tablets inscribed more than 4,000 years ago, the ancient civilisation of Sumer in Mesopotamia can lay claim to be the first people to record a recipe. And theirs was for beer! They began a long tradition of the writing down of ingredients, and a method of combining them so that others could copy and recreate a dish of some sort.

Isabella Beeton, in the middle 1800s, was a pioneer of the modern cookery book. Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management sold 60,000 copies and cemented her place among the greats of the genre. In more recent years, TV favourites James Martin, Mary Berry, Jamie Oliver, and the Hairy Bikers have sold hundreds of thousands of volumes, regularly writing new books to satisfy the appetite of a hungry public.

Scientists have also suggested some recipes of their own. From what's needed to make a sun, to the essential elements for a planet, to the ingredients for life. In these cases, the theory sounds good, but the practical application is of less use, as building suns and making planets and even creating life is impractical in a science lab. Although they can suggest the 'how', there's less agreement over the 'why'.

Perhaps the answer can be found in human creativity. Our desire to make and create, to beautify our surroundings and environment, to build and model and mould tells us something about God's creative urge. In the opening few verses of the Bible, we read how God made humankind in his image. So, it's no wonder that we reflect back something of our creator and his urge to create. Without recipe or

Photography in and around Birdbrook

Do take your camera with you when exploring around and taking walks in the area. Aside from providing relaxing screensavers and news for friends and family, we love to see your contributions of interesting local features for this magazine. There are also lots of photographic competitions and it's great to see our very own photos appreciated by others, and in print.

Following the success of the 2022 calendar, **Friends of Haverhill Library** are repeating the invitation to send your entries for the 2023 calendar. The A3 wall calendar features at least 25 photos. You can see a copy of the 2022



Winning photo entry featured for February in the 2022 FOHL Calendar

edition in Haverhill Library. Entry is open to all, with the theme, once again of 'Scenes in and around Haverhill'. Closing date 3rd October 2022. Copies of next year's calendar will then be on sale early November, priced around £7.

Email entries to:
FOHLcalendarcomp@gmail.com

Ridgewell Garden Society

Invitation to a Quiz and Afternoon Tea
Saturday 2.30pm 26th February 2022
Ridgewell Village Hall

Tickets £10.00 per person
Pam Amos 01440 788595

guidelines or ingredient list, God created because he could.

Blessings,
Jonathan
Revd Canon Jonathan Lowe
01440 731687 vicar@2rivers.faith

On-line family worship :

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

YouTube: <http://tiny.cc/nx6zlj>

February 2022

Sunday 13th 10:30am Morning Worship
Sunday 27th 10:30am Benefice Holy Communion at Birdbrook

March 2022

Sunday 13th 10:30am Morning Worship
Sunday 27th 10:30am Benefice
Mothering Sunday service at Birdbrook

Service Pattern for all six churches :

www.stmaryschurch.org.uk/servicepatterns

Village Playground Fundraising

Bring and Buy Plant Sale Sunday
22nd May 2022
1-4pm



Followed by
Auction in July

Introducing your Parish Councillors: Katie Gentry



Born into a close family on a large family run farm in Hertfordshire, I was brought up to enjoy village life and all

that community creates within it. I enjoyed local school life and whilst studying myself became part of the local Girl Guiding family to assist my parents ensure the unit stayed open. At first I helped run the Brownie unit and then moved to introduce a Guide unit due to need within the village until I left the village to follow my career path.

Growing up in the countryside my love of animals was always apparent, Oaklands college was where I began my career in horses. My career has seen me work throughout Herts with many amazing equine yards before settling locally at a local yard where I enjoy my real passion of working alongside some amazing animals in Birdbrook itself.

In my free time you will see me out walking or running with my dog where I also enjoy taking part in half marathons while fundraising for various charities, (Cancer research UK, Macmillan and Tommy's to name a few.) As a way of giving back to charities that have supported myself and my family during some of the darkest times, I have tried to give back by raising funds in a way I love.

My partner and I have grown our family and raise 2 young boys together so wanting them to have a safe and open environment to grow up in led me to attend my first parish council meeting. Peter welcomed me with a smile and ease of conversation enabling me to feel welcome and wanting to continue my attendance. Quickly being persuaded to join as a Parish Councillor. Since joining I hope lots of you will know me through also becoming co-editor of the Birdbrook Parish News alongside Val Rhenius. Having found my feet, I am thoroughly enjoying improving and helping to maintain and support this fantastic community alongside my fellow councillors. 2021 Enabled me to meet many more of our parishioners through events held at Community House for which I am very grateful. I hope to see and hear from many more old and new faces in 2022.

Christmas Craft Fair

Wow, what another fantastic event! December 12th, we held our first Christmas Craft Fair at Community House, it was a lovely day full of both returning and new traders. All local and very exciting individuals each with their own stories and talents to share. Having both parishioners and members of the public visit and continue to be so supportive of the playground project while enjoying some festive shopping made for a lovely event. From cakes, jewellery, pottery and our tombola, all seemed popular throughout the day.



!! In total fundraising events in 2021 raised £875 !!

Over the coming months refurbishment and replacement of playground equipment can now begin. Again thank you to each and every individual who supported, visited, donate or purchased during our 2021 fundraising events. We hope to see you again in 2022 at our next events. Our first fundraising event for the year is the Plant Sale, Sun 22nd May at The Community House.

Colne Valley Arms

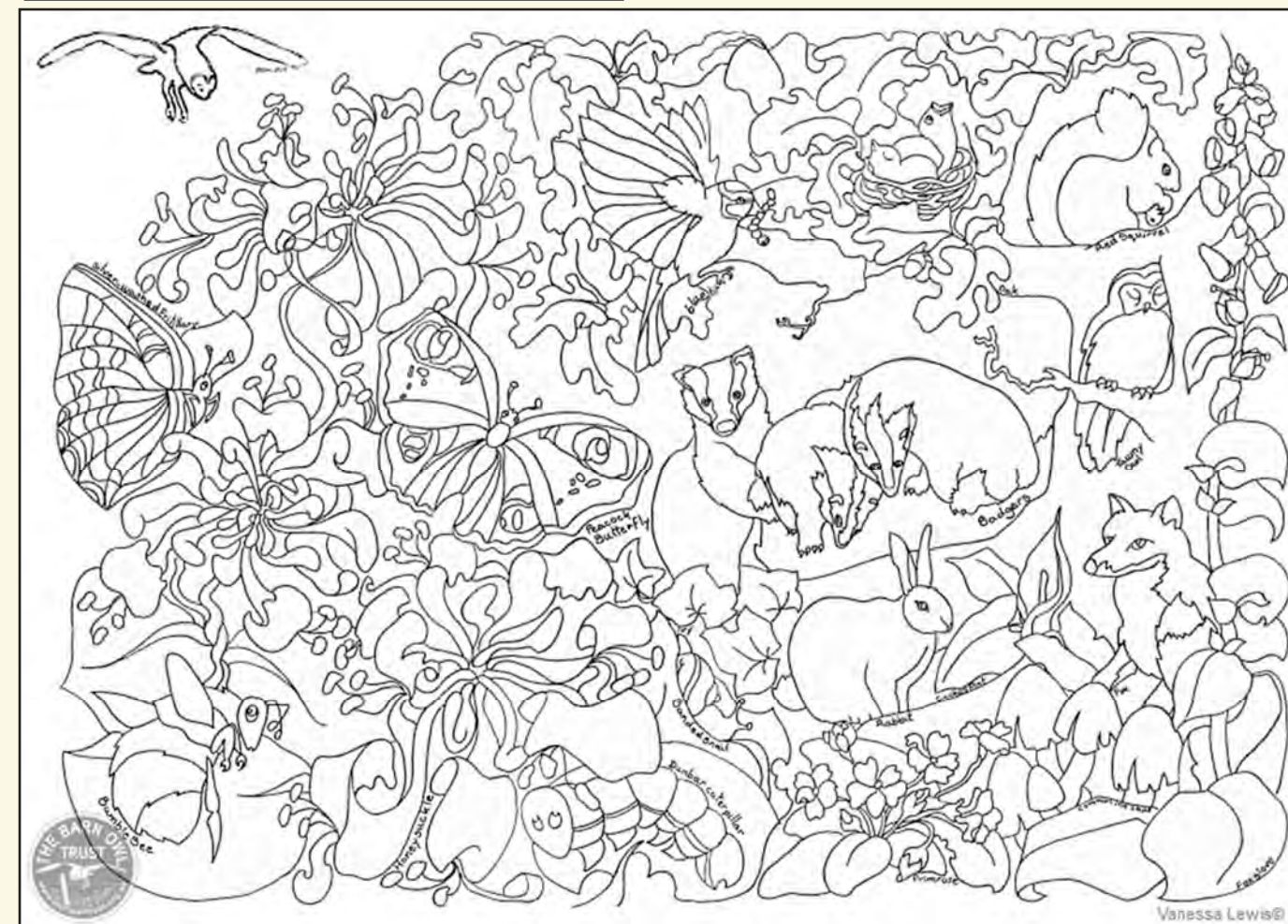
New England, Birdbrook

80's charity disco on 12th February 2022
not many tickets left, £12 each

Hall hire, wedding reception and functions
Various events throughout the year.
For more details on hire please call Siobhan on
07977365966 or visit our page on Facebook



Colouring Activity



This UK nature colouring sheet is teeming with animals, birds, insects and flowers that can all be found living in Britain. Their common English names are hidden alongside them – how many of these species have you seen in the wild?

As well as a Barn Owl, see if you can find all of these animals, birds, insects and plants in the picture:

- Oak Tree
- Tawny Owl
- Peacock butterfly
- Silver-washed Fritillary butterfly
- Common Ink Cap toadstools
- Cuckoo Pint
- Red Squirrel
- Badgers
- Fox
- Rabbit
- Honey Suckle
- Blue Tits
- Foxglove
- Ivy
- Bumble bee
- Dunbar caterpillar
- Banded Snail
- Primrose

Illustration by Vanessa Lewis reproduced with kind permission from the Barn Owl Trust www.barnowltrust.org.uk

Birdbrook Ladies Group

Winter 2021—2022

At the last time of writing we were anticipating Christmas and looking forward to our first meal out as a group, which took place at the beginning of December at The White Horse in Ridgewell. The meal was good and a fair bit of Christmas spirit was consumed, with indulgent husbands playing taxi-driver. "Santa" did magic and inspirational things with a £5 budget for presents and we finished the evening feeling very tuned in to Christmas.

Our January meeting was primarily to plan the calendar for the coming year. A mixture of events at the Community House and a few trips out are planned,



beginning with what will be a surprising and amusing talk from Celia Stevens, one of our regular speakers, about one of her unusual and sometimes scary life experiences. Other treats planned include a Pudding Party and a summer picnic. Our January meeting finished with a quirky quiz – I mean who would have imagined that you could concoct a round all about vegetables, and sad to say, who knew before hand that they would actually be able to answer most of the questions !!

We are all looking forward (cautiously) to a covid and restriction free year with lively and interesting meetings. Ladies, why not come and join us ?

Alison Gilbert



Rediscovering Lost Railways

The Stour Valley Railway

youtu.be/abTbmy1ubNw

This clip follows the present day route of the old railway line between Cambridge & Sudbury.



Above: approaching Sturmer station; Below: Sturmer Railway Station; Far below: Boyton End Bridge.



The Colne Valley & Halstead Railway

youtu.be/5GE8MVvi5G0

The line branched off towards Birdbrook shortly after crossing Manor road, Haverhill.



Top: crossing Sturmer Arches; Above: crossing Station Road; Below: the site of Birdbrook Station.



Screenshots reproduced with kind permission from '©Rediscovering Lost Railways'. These are just two of their fascinating videos. You can find out more on their social media: www.facebook.com/ and many more videos on the YouTube Channel www.youtube.com/channel/UC50JKMM_ke2zyt8y_djYBg

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Planting for Bees and Wildlife



We all want to help the bees. While taking up beekeeping isn't for everyone, we can all help, and it's not just honeybees that benefit. There is a vast range of other bees, hoverflies and many other insects that provide

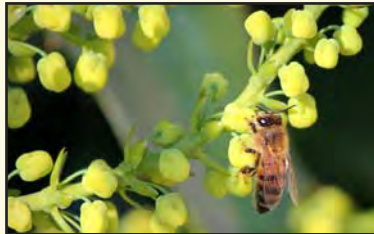
food for the small birds: baby blue tits, for example, need feeding an unbelievable number of caterpillars for survival.

Insects need a variety of plants to support their diversity. Beekeepers see this from the advantage of proximity to towns with many different flowering plants, compared to the reduced variety for forage in much of the countryside.

We can help by growing plants that flower early and late in the season, when food is scarce.

Late examples: ivy, winter flowering jasmine, clematis and honeysuckle; asters, sedum and mahonia.

Early season examples include: snowdrops, crocuses, winter aconites, hellebores, primrose.



Some of these rambling plants also provide shelter for insects and small birds.

Salt Bags for Winter Weather

Salt bags will be available again by popping to the entrance to the Birdbrook play area on **19th February between 10am-11am**

Where our councillors will be on hand to distribute salt bags, all parishioners welcome.

Donations kindly accepted to go to
The E & H Air Ambulance

They are small bags easy enough to store ready for the icy winter weather

! Please make use of these as we have lots in storage and donations go to a very worthwhile cause!

During the summer, choose long flowering varieties, avoid (mostly) double flowers and, as pollen is a good protein source, unless you are allergic, avoid pollen-free varieties.

Great as it is to keep the bird table well supplied, planting for wildlife is a more permanent support for the life around us.



Insects finding nectar and/or pollen on winter aconites (top left), mahonia (left) and hellebore (above).



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Visit our distillery shop at Great Yeldham Hall, the home of English Spirit: Britain's original rum distillers. Here you can sample and shop our range of remarkable spirits, from the original English rum to divine gins, mouth-watering vodkas, experimental single malts, luscious liqueurs, and limited edition varieties, which aren't available for purchase anywhere else!

You can also book a Distillery Tour & Tasting, where you'll be shown around the workings of our small batch distillery, followed by a guided tasting of our spirits.

Available to book via our website or by phone.



SHOP OPENING TIMES

MONDAY - FRIDAY 9AM - 5PM

SATURDAY 10AM - 4PM

SUNDAY & BANK HOLIDAYS - CLOSED



Mention this magazine for a locals 10% discount on distillery tours and in the shop!

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