

# Birdbrook Parish News

## Election Day: Thursday 6th May

On Thursday this week we have the opportunity to vote for candidates in two local elections:

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/voting-elections/upcoming-elections>

Firstly: the **Essex County Council** Elections. David Finch, our Hedingham County councillor for 20 years and as leader of the ECC for the last eight years has retired.

There are four candidates:

[whocanivotefor.co.uk/elections/local.essex.hedingham.2021-05-06/hedingham/](https://whocanivotefor.co.uk/elections/local.essex.hedingham.2021-05-06/hedingham/)

We are also voting for the **Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner** for Essex Police Area:

<https://www.essex.pfcc.police.uk/home/pcc-election-2021/>

Because of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), there will be some changes at Polling Stations.

These changes include:

- Queuing outside the Polling Station
- Social distancing (2m) both inside and outside the Polling Station
- Staff may sit behind screens
- Everyone must wear facemasks in the Polling Station
- Sanitising hands when going into the Polling Station
- Only 1 voter able to vote at the same time in the same Polling Station
- We encourage voters to bring their own pen or pencil.



## Summer in Birdbrook



*Many thanks to Jane Garnham for the Tawny owl photo above, and read more about our local wildlife on page 3.*

## Keep Birdbrook Tidy

Some of you may remember, or may have heard of the KEEP BRITAIN TIDY (KBT) a campaign that ran in the 1960s. Litter has been the bane of my life as long as I can remember. Sit at traffic lights & look at the verges for instance, disgusting. Why is it that litter is thrown out from vehicles when it could be taken home or put in a bin? So unsightly, unnecessary and with no concern for the environment; and so universal that the KBT campaign was brought back in early March this year.

In January I contacted Braintree District Council, requesting the following items.

Litter Pickers;  
Gloves - in small, medium, large;  
Tabards - small, medium, large;  
Plastic sacks.

As we all care for our village and surroundings and wish to keep Birdbrook tidy & protect the environment then the kit is waiting for you.

The more people that join our cause the less litter there will be to collect. Once lockdown is eased small groups can go on litter picking rambles wearing protective equipment, fit for all ages & dare I say sizes. Just give me a ring if you would like to acquire your kit.

Alan Cook 01440 785458

## Profile: Diana Garrod District Councillor

I have lived in this area all my life and was delighted to be elected District Councillor to represent the Bumpstead Ward in October 2016 and again in May 2019. This ward comprises of the villages Steeple Bumpstead, Helions Bumpstead, Sturmer, Birdbrook and Baythorne End. My role is to represent the Ward and the interests of individual



constituents, to contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage community participation and citizen involvement in decision making. Also to represent Braintree District Council and contribute to the achievement of the priorities of the Council and the District as a whole. This requires personal judgement to balance the needs of local communities against the broader strategic needs of the District. Between 2016 and 2019, I served on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, incorporating the Task and Finish Group Scrutiny Review into 'Social Isolation and Loneliness', a topic I suggested in recognition of this being prevalent in rural communities. Also a further Scrutiny Review into the 'Role of the Highway Authority'. In 2018 I served on the Community Governance Review Committee. More recently, I have chaired Scrutiny reviews into Woodlands, and Vaccination Uptake in the District (prior to Covid-19).

I was appointed the Council's Representative of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Stour Valley Joint Advisory Committee in December 2016; an outside body committed to conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the Stour Valley and a post I find extremely rewarding as I am a country girl at heart!

I am Chairman of Sturmer Parish Council and have been a member for over sixteen years. Being a Parish Councillor is an unpaid, voluntary role and whilst I enjoy it, I hope this also demonstrates my commitment to the local area. I consider it a great privilege to serve the community in which I reside and since Sturmer borders Suffolk, I also regularly attend the Haverhill Forum meetings to maintain cross-border communication between local authorities.

I am a member of a local Action Medical Research (for children) Fundraising Committee; a charity which provides funding for medical research to beat the diseases that devastate the lives of so many of our children. Fundraising usually involves events such as an annual fashion show, cake making, organising and cooking large lunches or dinners; including the washing up! I participate in all of these activities wholeheartedly. I am also a married mum of five grown up children and a Director of a local, private health company where I operate a Bone Density Scanner which tests for Osteoporosis, hence, I have a particular interest in health and wellbeing and have a good understanding of the challenges that businesses face.

Cllr. Diana Garrod – District Councillor – Bumpstead Ward  
T: 0797 9790 637 E: [cldr.dgarrod@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:cldr.dgarrod@braintree.gov.uk)



## Birdbrook Wild Life Column

I don't know about you but I'm still not convinced spring is really here. My calendar says it is but the ice on my car windscreen this morning tells me otherwise!!

Despite the rather unseasonal weather many of our resident birds have started nesting and some have even got young almost ready to take their first flight. I'm sure many of you will know that we are very lucky to have Ravens nesting in the village. They successfully raised four young last year and this year have also got four huge chicks and by the time you read this, they may have left the nest and will then be very difficult to see. They are very shy and secretive birds but they have a very distinctive deep croaking call which may be the only way for an untrained eye to distinguish a Raven from the much smaller crow. Ravens historically were persecuted by land-owners throughout the British Isles and you would have had to travel to the wilds of Wales, Scotland or the Isle of Mann to get a view of this giant member of the crow family. They are slowly starting to re-appear in southern England and we should feel quite honoured to have this majestic bird nesting on our doorstep!

Robins, Starlings and Dunnocks all seem to be busy collecting nesting material and some Blackbirds are obviously feeding young as they are regularly seen with bills full of worms and grubs for their hungry offspring. I hope the recent cold-snap hasn't taken its toll on the helpless nestlings. Another early nester is the Tawny owl and Birdbrook seems to host a fairly healthy population at the moment. Most evenings there is one calling down Daw Street and I can usually also hear 2 or 3 more distant birds also hooting away. I'm sure there must be some nesting in Moyn's Park.

As spring is officially here I thought should mention some of our long-distant migrants that are just turning up in the village. Hopefully in the last couple of weeks you will have all seen some Swallows, heard Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs and possibly even a Willow warbler. The Whitethroats and Lesser whitethroats should be turning up in our hedgerows any time now and before long that true symbol of summer, the Swift, will be screaming round our roof-tops. What a mystical bird the Swift is; it never lands for the first two years of its life, staying on the wing from once it's left its nest until it breeds back in Birdbrook (hopefully) two years later.

Just a quick story to finish up with. On 1st April last year I caught and ringed a Chiffchaff, a tiny migratory warbler that weighs about quarter of an ounce. It



*Many thanks to Ian Tarbin for the above shot of the adult Raven*

winters in southern Europe and north Africa. On 31st March this year I caught the very same bird in the same net in the same place in my garden!! Where has it been for the winter? How does it find it's way back?.....ain't nature wonderful?

*Barry Williams will be pleased to answer any readers questions about local birds. You can contact him by emailing: [baz\\_williams@hotmail.com](mailto:baz_williams@hotmail.com).*

## Tiddles the Cat



*See more of Tiddles' adventures p4 & p11.*

## !!! The Plough is back OPEN !!!

We are now open Friday from 5pm  
Saturday and Sunday from noon  
Serving homecooked food in our beautiful garden  
Booking may not be necessary but to avoid disappointment, is  
encouraged: call 07944 395735 to book.

\*Outside dining of 2 households/ rule of 6 still applies

\*All customers must remain seated outside whilst consuming food and  
drink on the premises.

- All customers over the age of 16 must sign in using the track and  
trace app or via alternative written system.

I won't be providing the blankets and hot water bottles that I usually  
have available for outside use at the moment due to hygiene. You are  
encouraged to bring your own however and we will fill the hot water  
bottles with a smile, not that you'll see as we're wearing masks.  
Toilets can be accessed around the back of the building through the side  
door, not through the Pub.

Your support and patience following the rules is greatly appreciated.

**Thank you!**

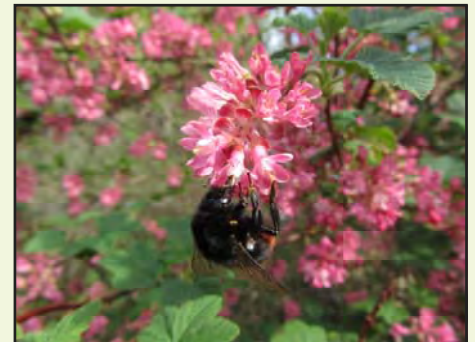
## Tiddles the Cat



See more of Tiddles' adventures  
p3 & p11.

## Summer in the Garden

I always look forward to the promise of springtime, seeing the garden come back  
to life, the flower and vegetable seeds germinate, and (most of) the wildlife. We  
enjoy seeing the variety of small birds at the bird table. Sharing the kitchen with  
a plague of mice, the polytunnel with the usual invading army of slugs and  
snails—not so much. Last year I found the only thing which deterred the slugs  
and snails was a physical barrier of bramble stalks, but even then, the little ones  
limbo'd under to wreak devastation for their gastro experience.



Above: Bumble bee on flowering redcurrant.

Below L: Cosmos

Below R: Mrs G & newly hatched gozzies



We have to be more focussed and inventive during  
lockdown and restrictions for ordering plants (I left it  
too late last year) swapping surplus, and sometimes in  
just getting motivated these cold mornings to trust  
that it will all happen as usual, and get sowing and  
planting.

So hoping for  
another good  
summer, thought  
I'd share a few  
pictures from my  
garden to  
brighten up your  
day. Val Rhenius



## Chat 'n' Stitch

Thought I'd start with a little bit of history about the group that 'was' meeting every Tuesday afternoon in the Community House.

Back in summer 2012, I had retired from teaching Textiles, and thought to keep my hand in I would start up 'an any' type of stitching group!

People initially came to my house, then decided to meet in the Community House. I think we were group of 10 to start off with. Numbers grew to over 20 at times with new people joining.

Over the years we enjoyed trips to 'Ally Pally' and Duxford for quilt festivals and to buy yet more supplies! I think everyone's favourite day out was to The Cheap Shop, the Tiptree Jam Factory for lunches, coffee and cake calling in on the way home to Perry wood's for more coffee and cake.....also a bonus of seeing their wonderful Christmas decorations.

Many of the members started taking up patch work and we made bags to help transport all our "stuff" each week. We progressed onto completing a block a month and some of us were able to turn it into double sized quilts. A jelly roll race resulted in cushions being made for the Community House. Members knitted little hats to help raise funds for Age UK. The group came together to participate in making a lap quilt to help raise funds for the church.



Three of us from our group also supported the Steeple Bumpstead Guides in their challenge of creating and making blocks in aid of JDRF a Type 1 diabetes charity, which then went onto be presented to The Countess of Wessex.

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.

As described in the last newsletter, we are proposing we all join in making bunting. When we are allowed

*Hundreds of  
face masks  
made for  
trainee  
paramedics*



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 spares can be donated to a central collection area and be used to decorate communal areas. Watch out for the new Birdbrook Parish Council Facebook page for further updates.

Make as many BUNTS as you like but it would be lovely if absolutely everyone could take part in this challenge and come together as a community! Do contact me if I can help in any way.

Anne Hepworth  
[annehepworth@aol.com](mailto:annehepworth@aol.com)

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

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Previous copies of newsletters can be found at  
<http://www.birdbrook.org.uk/bbnews.html>

Check our Facebook page for latest news:  
[www.facebook.com/Birdbrook-Parish-Council-101754315205316](https://www.facebook.com/Birdbrook-Parish-Council-101754315205316)

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

## Hello From Your District Councillor

### Essex County Council's Public Rights of Way Satisfaction Survey

How do you feel about your local PRow (footpaths)? This survey is running and if you wish to convey your thoughts, it takes just a few minutes: <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/essex-highways/473a6fb7/>

### Essex Climate Action Commission Consultation – Online Survey

Essex residents are invited to convey their views on a selection of the recommendations the Commission will make to help Essex become better able to deal with increased climate risks such as flooding and overheating and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to become a net-zero county by 2050. Their online survey can be found at: <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/essex-climate-action-commission/> The feedback received from the survey will be independently analysed and summarised in the Commission's Final Report, due to be published in the summer.

### Checking your Email for Data Breaches – Cyber Crime

I recently attending a briefing from the Serious Crime Directorate who discussed data breaches, e.g. Adobe, which affected over 7 million people in 2019, Marriott International; estimated 339 million people in 2018, eBay asked 145 million users to change their passwords in 2014, to name just a few. You can check if your email has had a data breach at: [haveibeenpwned.com](https://haveibeenpwned.com) Just put your email into the box and 'submit', then scroll down to see the history. Change your passwords regularly, use different passwords in different places and put in some special characters – try to be creative!

### The Great British Spring Clean – Million Mile Mission 28<sup>th</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> June

Over the last year outdoor spaces and places have mattered to us more than ever, so this spring Braintree District Council is joining the charity Keep Britain Tidy and their Great British Spring Clean campaign. From **28th May - 13th June 2021**, BDC is encouraging everyone to pledge to support this very special campaign and their million mile litter picking mission. Taking part is not only good for the environment, but for our mental and physical health too. Last year, 79% of people who took the Great British Spring Clean reported improved mood, and 51% said it encouraged them to move more. If your Parish and members of your local community would like to take part, it's a great excuse to get outside. All

you need is a litter picker, some gloves and a bag to collect your litter in (*see also p2*). If you are in need of loan equipment, BDC can offer help on a first come first service basis: [email:csc@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:csc@braintree.gov.uk) using the subject title **KBT Great British Spring Clean**

It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the challenges we have faced this year, but small acts of kindness – to our planet and ourselves – can help us improve our surroundings and our mood.

### Community Transport

For any resident of the Braintree District Council area who does not have access to transport, this can currently be provided for emergency health related appointments including coronavirus vaccinations. Transport is offered to those who have a mobility difficulty, people who need to travel in their wheelchair and those who are able bodied. To allow for two metre distancing, one passenger will be carried at a time, or two from the same household or if the individual needs a carer. The driver sits behind a Perspex screen and vehicles are sanitised between every trip. **Transport for vaccinations is currently free of charge** and is offered seven days a week from 8am to 6pm. For other health related appointments, e.g. doctor/dentist, a subsidised fare is chargeable. T: 01376 557883 9am-3pm. An answerphone is available to leave a message outside of these hours.

*With best wishes to all,*

**Cllr. Diana Garrod**

**District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward**

## What makes a good calendar photo?

The 2022 calendar competition run by Friends of Haverhill Library is open to all, so we hope you will all send in entries. The theme: Scenes in and around Haverhill means we can all join in. So what are we looking for?

Photos for the calendar will ideally cover all seasons; be pictures that you will want to enjoy looking at for a whole month; and will need to be 'landscape' in orientation. Obviously they will need to be high enough resolution to print crisply at A4 size, so the file will need to be minimum 2Mb for the large images on the cover, and for each month. If sending an image taken on a mobile phone, remember to send the full size image.

Send your (max 4 per person) photo entries to:  
[FOHLcalendarcompetition@gmail.com](mailto:FOHLcalendarcompetition@gmail.com)

Closing date 4th October 2021 and the calendar will be on sale early November, priced around £7.

Full details: <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on/scenes-in-and-around-haverhill-calendar-competition>

## Summary from the BPC Chair

Covid 19 has continued to alter our lives drastically and we hope parishioners are having the opportunity to be vaccinated and we trust we are beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel. Although some of the restrictions are being lifted the recent lockdown will have hit a lot of people very hard and 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.

At the weekend it was very sad to hear of the passing of the Duke of Edinburgh and we send our condolences to the Queen and her family at this sad time. The Duke inspired many people and his influence and involvement in so many areas of modern life will have a lasting effect on us and our descendants.

It is the end of an era, for after fifty or so years living at Birdbrook Hall Mrs Sarah Rook has moved to a new home we believe to be in a nearby village. We wish her much happiness for the future and thank her for her contribution to village life, including the Church over the years. As a relative newcomer I am not fully conversant with the full extent of her contribution but specifically in terms Parish Council responsibilities she has always ensured the village green has looked immaculate. In this regard, we thank her

wholeheartedly for her philanthropy. Mrs Rook is not the only person contributing to the village environment and parish for others are doing their part as well. I should like to thank the gentlemen who has decided to keep the grass cut around the village sign and to Andy King and Martin Gilbert for their restoration work on the benches in Birdbrook. Well done everybody.

At Eagles Farm car park in Baythorne End a new defibrillator has been installed. It has been commissioned and is ready for use. Councillor Steve Rhenius has overseen the project from the outset, assisted in the final stages by Councillor Alan Cook. Let us hope the defibrillator is not required but if it is that it is effective in preserving life.

We are still struggling with the playground areas in Baythorne End and Birdbrook. The equipment is outdated and some items have been taken out of use. We have applied unsuccessfully for grants and are having to rethink our approach. We are fundraising and we thank those of you who have contributed so far. In the present circumstances we are keen to have the areas open for children as soon as it is possible. Presently, the Covid 19 restrictions mean that the equipment requires regular sanitising and cleaning and as a small parish we do not have the manpower or funds to have someone available to undertake the necessary work on a daily basis. Ideas on how we can proceed to update the equipment and playground areas are most welcome. Please become involved.

David Finch Essex a County Councillor for 20 years and leader of the ECC for the last eight years has been our designated ECC representative. At the start of the year he announced his retirement from county council work. Over the years he has supported BPC and has intervened on our behalf on a good number of occasions. In recent years he personally intervened to ensure the 40 mph speed limit from Station Road to Baythorne End was introduced. Furthermore, when the bureaucracy for the installation of the village sign became out of hand he intervened and organised a speedy way forward. We thank David for his unstinting support and guidance and we shall miss his informative reports at our meetings and giving us an overall perspective of ECC and the intentions of our Government. Happy retirement David.

With the arrival of Spring we should all be able to get out and about more and our gardens should be beginning to take shape. Let us hope the summer is fabulous and that the coming months are full of good news with Covid 19 becoming a thing of the past.

*Peter Smart, Chair, Birdbrook Parish Council*



**Friends of Haverhill Library  
Calendar Photo Competition 2022  
Theme: "Scenes in and around Haverhill"**

**Closing date: 4th October 2021  
For more details visit:  
[www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on/  
scenes-in-and-around-haverhill-  
calendar-competition](http://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/whats-on/scenes-in-and-around-haverhill-calendar-competition)**

## St Augustine's Church, Birdbrook

### Jesus: Was he mad, bad or God?

At some point in life, and particularly when we've been through difficult times like we have over the last year, many people find themselves asking this simple question. We all have to make up our own minds, just as people did back when He was walking on earth. For them - and us too - there seems to be only three credible, possible answers:

He is out of his mind (Mark 3:21),  
He is possessed by Satan (v. 22) or  
[He is] the Son of God(v.11)

In other words, He was either insane, evil or God. I used to think, couldn't He simply have been a good teacher and good chap? But then I looked at His life and words. Do good teachers repeatedly claim to be God? Do they claim to be one with the Father? Do they say they have come to die for all of humankind? Do they raise people from the dead and walk on water and calm storms? Those are strong claims and strong deeds.

C.S. Lewis reasoned that "a man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be [insane] . . . or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice . . . But, let us not come up with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

Who we decide Jesus is to us is a big question with big implications for our lives. But if we study the overwhelming and compelling evidence and then choose to believe that He is who He said He is - if we can take that leap of faith and ask, "Are You really there, and are You really good?" — it can be the start of an incredible journey and adventure. An adventure into life.

That's why the offer He made two thousand years ago still stands for us today:

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28)*

Even today, for you and me, right now — that invitation has the power to change everything. If we let Him, He seeks us, saves us, strengthens us, supports us, and shows us how to live every day.

Blessings,

Jonathan

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

### Opening of Churches for Limited Sunday Worship

We are delighted to announce that our churches are once again open for limited Sunday worship from 18th April. It will be good to have the opportunity to worship in our church buildings once again, but please be assured that our on-line worship will continue.

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>

You can also listen to the daily "Words of Encouragement" via the YouTube and Facebook links.

Please do regularly check the Two Rivers Facebook page or contact the Churchwarden for the latest information.

We look forward to worshipping together again soon.

<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May</b> Easter 6	Helions Bumpstead BCP Holy Communion 10:30am	Ashen Morning Prayer 10:30am
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May</b> Pentecost	Steeple Bumpstead Morning Worship 10:30am	Ridgewell Holy Communion 10:30am
<b>Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May</b> Trinity Sunday	Steeple Bumpstead Holy Communion 10:30am	Helions Bumpstead BCP Evening Prayer 5pm
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June</b> Trinity 1	Helions Bumpstead BCP Holy Communion 10:30am	Sturmer Morning Prayer 10:30am
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June</b> Trinity 2	Steeple Bumpstead Morning Worship 10:30am	Ashen Holy Communion 10:30am
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June</b> Trinity 3	Helions Bumpstead BCP Morning Prayer 10:30am	Ridgewell Holy Communion 10:30am
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June</b> Trinity 4	Steeple Bumpstead Holy Communion 10:30am	Birdbrook Morning Prayer 10:30am



## Stambourne Chapel Care

*Matthew 25:40 (CEV) The king will answer, "Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me."*

### Providing Care in the Community

We are coming to the end of the first grant funding which was provided to set up the project. We are now in a position to take referrals and I have started the process of employing 2 volunteers, and we have others that have expressed an interest. So if you are in need of help or know of someone who is, or if you'd like to volunteer then please contact me.

It has been a challenge to contact other agencies as I prefer to meet face to face but for Covid reasons have had to use other means. Last week we had a very useful video meeting with 2 professionals which was joined by their dogs barking in the background! We have continued to provide support by delivering service sheets and the monthly chapel newsletter, always taking time to have a door step chat and have found that this is when we pick up where some help is needed.

We have also been able to take a couple of people to their medical appointments and provide support with filling in forms. Where it is necessary to be in a persons home, we will always following current COVID guidelines.

If you have some spare time and muscle, or if you are able to do a few handyperson jobs do get in touch.  
Stambourne Chapel is holding a

### Plant Swap and Sale

With books and cakes

Saturday 8th May

3—5pm

You can offer plants or place an order from the list  
Contact us for more details:

Adrian Burr, Minister, 07983 656166

Jill Holmes, Community Worker

Tel: 07883423528 Email: [holmesjill30@gmail.com](mailto:holmesjill30@gmail.com)

*All Funding is provided by Grants and Donations.*



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## Word Search

*Can you find the 25 words hidden in the square.*

*The words all occur somewhere in this issue.*

*They can be across, down or diagonal.*

*The solution will be published in the next issue of the*

*Birdbrook Parish News.*

## Hidden Treasures in the Essex countryside

Some years ago I was convalescing after major surgery and felt I needed a challenge to wake myself up physically and mentally.

I grew up in a family whose economic support depended on the aviation industry. My father originally trained in the RAF to fly Spitfires but was lucky enough for the war to end before he saw active service. He continued in civil aviation for the rest of his career.

As a child I showed little interest in spite of privileged access to aircraft and an 'inside' view of the world of a pilot. In those days flying freight around the world meant my father could be away from for months at a time and perhaps this was part of what discouraged me and turned me towards a different career path.

I can remember standing on our doorstep and seeing a glider up in the sky and thinking 'No engine, No way!' Some seed must have been germinating, however, as I remembered my Dad telling me 'if you ever learn to fly, learn to glide first'.

We visited the Ridgewell airfield, just outside Ashen, and booked a trial lesson, a half hour flight in a glider with an instructor. Visitors are enrolled as temporary members / trainees. They have the option to take the controls once in the air, or just enjoy the experience. The day arrived and I remember thinking the launch was rather serene and gentle, being towed aloft behind a powered aircraft and released at 3000 ft. My instructor demonstrated the controls and encouraged me to try for myself. It all seemed quite straightforward. I was later told that if



View of Bury St Edmunds from a Ridgewell glider



you can learn to drive a car you can learn to fly a glider. There were wonderful views of Stradishall, Clare, Birdbrook, and surrounding villages once we'd climbed by circling in columns of warm rising air which terminated in cotton wool clouds.

What I hadn't bargained for was the effect on me! Leonardo Da Vinci said :

*"Once you have tasted flight, you will walk the earth with your eyes turned forever skyward, for there you have been, and there you long to return"*

He was right, I was hooked! I signed on as a member of Essex Gliding Club: [www.essexgliding.com](http://www.essexgliding.com)

Come and have a chat with us this summer. A day where you can see fluffy cotton wool clouds is a sign there's good lift and great flying. The club is very welcoming to visitors. Social members can walk their dogs on the airfield when we're not flying, and an aeromodelling club also share our field throughout the year. We fly weekends and most Wednesdays at Ridgewell from around April to late autumn. Our field usually becomes too waterlogged across the winter and we decamp to Rattlesden Gliding club in Suffolk, near Bury St Edmunds.

So next time you look out on a sunny day and see those cotton wool clouds in the sky with a glider circling and climbing in a rising column of warm air you might be watching me! The glider in which I have a share has travelled from coast to coast in Scotland and climbed to well over 30,000 ft.

As a result of this adventure I've found myself re-invigorated at meeting a new challenge and have made friends and acquaintances amongst some amazing people.

I wonder what other 'hidden treasures' there are tucked away in our wonderful locale?

Steve Rhenius, Baythorne End

## Images from garden in Birdbrook



*M65, M66 and NGC 3628 galaxies, known as the Leo triplet (they are in the constellation of Leo) – approx 35 Million Light years from us. Photo by Martina McGovern, 2021*

Martina McGovern lives in Birdbrook village and her hobby/passion is astrophotography. It is just incredible what is up there/out there – “in a galaxy far far way” to quote my favour movie....

Over the last few years I have gotten deeper into all things Astro – I’m skill learning all the time...

I wanted to share a few images I have taken over the last year from my Birdbrook garden. This hobby has helped me greatly through the lock-down periods. Hope you find them interesting.

The light from these distance Deep Sky Objects has taken, in many cases, millions of years to get to us – photons falling on my camera and they are no more – well they have been converted into ..... these images.

*We will be sharing some of Martina’s images over the next few issues of the BPN. Ed*



*NGC 2023 (AKA Horsehead Nebula) & NGC 2024 (Flame nebula) in the Constellation of Orion - Approx 1,500 Light years from Earth i.e. 9,000 Trillion miles away – so not too far away .....* Photo by Martina McGovern, 2021

## Passionate library supporters needed!

We are the Friends of Haverhill Library, a team of volunteers who organise events and initiatives to help and support Haverhill Library. The money we raise is used to buy equipment, furniture, and other items. We also fund events and activities.

We are looking for library supporters with an enthusiasm for planning, organising, and running events and projects for people of all ages, to join our group.

We usually hold meetings every six weeks, which tend to last no more than an hour.

Our meetings are friendly, informal and productive. If you are interested in joining us to help make a difference to our library and local community and would like to find out more, please email the library manager:

[audrey.woodley@suffolklibraries.co.uk](mailto:audrey.woodley@suffolklibraries.co.uk)

## Tiddles the Cat

With time able to be spent once again with friends and family, there is time for reflection. We are very fortunate to have found things to keep us positive throughout the pandemic. During the lockdown I was lucky enough to come across a fellow parishioner’s Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=tiddles%20the%20cat>

Many of us in the village will have followed the story of, ‘Tiddles the cat’! From children to adults, he has given us both serious and comedy tales from his daily life. We give a special thanks to Tiddles’ owners for sharing their time and experiences over this last year with us.



*Tiddles, bringing love, smiles and happiness wherever he goes!*

## Defibrillators

We now have the defibrillator installed at Baythorne End, as well as in Birdbrook. Instructions are given on the units themselves, and training will be arranged in the near future. If you are interested, please let a member of the parish council know, and keep an eye on the Birdbrook Parish Council Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/Birdbrook-Parish-Council-101754315205316](https://www.facebook.com/Birdbrook-Parish-Council-101754315205316)

## Trips to Exotic Places

If you're missing your trips to the Caribbean, the Sydney Opera House or the Great Wall of China, take a leaf out of a friend's book—she needed to hasten back from Tesco in time for her 'trip' to St Lucia, S Africa.

If you're interested, these tours are not only free, though you're invited to make a donation if you enjoyed the visit, but the places are far less crowded than normal, due to covid era travel restrictions: [www.heygo.com](http://www.heygo.com)



Peru: just one of the many virtual tours at [www.heygo.com](http://www.heygo.com)

## Around the Villages

Local magazines around the area:

Steeple Bumpstead

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

Clare

[https://focuspublications.net/about\\_us/index.html](https://focuspublications.net/about_us/index.html)

Ridgewell

<https://www.ridgewellpc.org/news/ej5esi0b5q8pufuf105wpmhzw8g5g8>

Helions Bumpstead

<https://helionsbumpsteadparishcouncil.gov.uk/the-parish/village-magazine/>

Great Yeldham

<https://greatyeldhampc.co.uk/4-villages-magazine/>

## Pilates & Yoga Classes

Starting Monday 7th June!  
Birdbrook Community House.

7pm Pilates 50 minute class, suitable for all levels £6.  
8pm Yoga 60 minute class, suitable for all levels £6.  
Come to both classes for just £10!!

You don't need to touch your toes, put your legs behind your head or be a skinny mini! My philosophy is 'listen to your body'. By working with your own resistance, challenging yourself comfortably & listening to your body you'll be amazed at what your body can do for you. I've been teaching yoga for 4 years & Pilates for 3 years. My little business is called Head to toe holistic, formally Daisy yoga. Over the past few years, I've expanded my business to include massage, reflexology, crystal healing, meditation classes & facial reflexology.

**!!!Booking essential!!!**

Call, text or WhatsApp 07377 380845



## COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH GROUP

Birdbrook Parish are now on the waiting list to form a new Community Speed Watch group. (Late 2021) The idea is to help reduce speeding and anti-social driving through our parish, in turn reducing accidents and injury to increase safety to all.

If you would like to volunteer and are happy for the Parish council to store your name and contact details, please email [katie\\_owner@hotmail.com](mailto:katie_owner@hotmail.com) When called upon these would also need to be passed onto the Essex Fire and Rescue Service (EPCRS) to organise training etc.

All monitoring sessions take place in groups of 3 and all training is provided. There is no minimum or maximum time each person needs to volunteer for but the more volunteers the better. So even if you can only commit to an hour every now and then please add yourself to the list! If anyone has any questions please just ask.

For more information please visit:  
[www.saferessexroads.org/policecommunity/community-speed-watch/](http://www.saferessexroads.org/policecommunity/community-speed-watch/)  
Katie Gentry, Parish Councillor