

Vol. 32 No.1

Free to residents

Cressing Community Magazine



February 2023



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EDITORIAL February:



A belated Happy New Year to everyone. I hope you all had a good Christmas.... It seems ages ago now doesn't it. We are well into Winter now with a couple of very cold spells. Do try to keep warm, specially if you are getting on a bit in years. Don't forget you can go for a warm morning and refreshments courtesy of the Parish Council on Thursdays at St. Barnabas 10.00am to 1.00pm.

Sadly, two of our oldest residents died in December. Vera Hull was 103 years old and Betty Parris who would have been 101 in January. I didn't know Vera Hull but I knew Betty Parris. She had a most interesting life during the war. I asked her once to write down her experiences. It would have made a really interesting article for the magazine.

The January Events Committee lunch was Fish and Chips (a favourite with everyone) on 20th when there were some new guests. In February it will be a Soup lunch on 17th at the Cressing Community Church in The Street.

Remember 21st February is Shrove Tuesday time for pancakes. If you don't like cooking you can buy them readymade in most supermarkets. Fillings can be savoury as well as sweet.

Keep fit and warm. The days are getting longer so Spring is on its way!

Betty

DIARY..... FEBRUARY... 2023

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Tue.7 th | Art Group in St. Barnabas 10.00am-1.00pm |
| Sat.11 th | Quiz Night at Cressing Community Church 7.00pm |
| Sun.12 th | Holy Communion at All Saints Church 9.00am |
| Fri.17 th | Events Committee Soup Lunch at Cressing Community Church 12noon |
| Tue.21 st | Art Group at St. Barnabas 10.00am-1.00pm |
| Thur.23 rd | Knit and Natter at St. Barnabas 2.00- 4.00pm |
| Sat.25 th | Burns Night Supper at Cressing Community Church Please Book |
| Tue.28 th | Art Group at St. Barnabas 10.00am-1.00pm |



When Santa came to town



On Monday 6 December 2022, the residents of Tye Green were pleased to receive their annual visit from Santa Claus, courtesy of the Braintree Lions and local volunteers. Special thanks are once again given to Homecot Countryside Services who towed the sleigh, safely navigating Santa and his reindeer through the village.

This year the route was extended slightly to welcome new residents on the Paddocks development. On arrival of his sleigh, many residents ventured outside to greet Santa, and generous donations to the sum of £221.19 were collected for the benefit of Cressing Primary School.

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Parish Council meets with James Cleverly, MP



L to R:

Cllr Steve Watts, Parish Clerk Christine Marshall, Cllr Harvey Porrett, Cllr John Lawton (Chairman), James Cleverly, MP, and Cllr Colin Haines

On 13th January, Parish Councillors Lawton, Haines, Porrett and Watts, together with the Parish Clerk, met with James Cleverly, our local MP, to highlight some of the issues in Cressing Parish and to seek his help and support. James was accompanied by his Chief of Staff (who just happens to live in Braintree district) and associated security personnel, all of whom were happy to chat but had to stay outside in the cold and wind.

Top of the list was ongoing development that is smothering the village and in particular the effect on a long-established village and its residents. Councillors are happy to welcome new people into the parish - it keeps the village alive and prospering. However, planners, and the statutory bodies that comment on these plans, do not always take into account the cumulative effects in terms of rapidly increasing vehicle numbers and associated pollution; the lack of infrastructure to provide for both existing and new residents (public transport, medical facilities, education and shopping opportunities).

James listened to our concerns about the lack of staff in various departments at Braintree District Council which impacts on the service provided to residents. He understood our frustrations regarding the delays we have experienced in planning and enforcement decisions.

Discussion then turned to traffic volumes on the B1018, roads through the village and the effect on these roads when there are issues on the A12 or A120. He commented that he had not driven along the B1018 for some time, and when he recently travelled, he was surprised at the increased number and size of heavy vehicles. James is keen for the improvements to the A120 to move forward – discussions have been taking place for many years without any real progress. We must remember however, that this will be an extremely expensive project and the money has to come from somewhere. By coincidence he would be going to meeting with the Leader of Essex County Council after his Cressing visit and will raise some of these issues there.

Finally, we had a general discussion around solar farms, loss of productive arable land, pylons -v- offshore electricity generation.

The meeting lasted just over an hour (in fact I think we made him late for his next appointment) and all considered it time well spent. We hope to be able to meet with James again later in the year.



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CRESSING PARISH COUNCIL

BUDGET 2023-2024

At their meeting on 11th January, your Parish Councillors discussed its budget for the next financial year. Before it is presented to the Meeting, the budget has been through four iterations. The Responsible Financial Officer prepares the first version which lists all the standing payments, such as electricity for streetlights, an allowance for street light repairs owned by the Parish Council, insurance, affiliation fees, salaries, playground safety inspections, grass and verge cutting (where permitted), office rent and so on.

Next, this first pass budget is presented to Councillors who will look at the figures and comment. They will also discuss planned projects and anything else they would like to undertake in the year ahead. After this the RFO re-calculates the overall financial need to put forward the amount of Precept that may be needed.

The next discussion looks at how the Precept can be reduced – this may require projects to be postponed or cancelled.

Eventually the final budget is presented to Councillors, usually in December as the Precept request has to be submitted to Braintree District Council (the Principal Authority) for inclusion in their calculations for Council Tax demands.

This year, Councillors are more aware than ever of the rapidly increasing cost of living and the huge rises in energy bills. They did not want to add to the financial burden on Cressing residents, so, when you receive your Council Tax demand you will notice from the breakdown the Parish Councillors' decision to keep the 2023/24 Precept at the same level as the current year, 2022-23, at £43,000. This equates to **a reduction** in the portion paid to Cressing Parish Council of 7.58% for a Band D property.

With strong financial management controls in place, the Parish Council will continue to provide the same level of services to its residents, but some projects may have to be postponed for the time being.



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CRESSING ART GROUP

We meet on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at St. Barnabas. If you would like to start painting or return to painting after a break, or you sketch, please contact me on the number below to find out more information. You would need to supply your own paints and canvas etc. We would also welcome people who enjoy adult colouring which is also a form of relaxation and can help with mindfulness. First session is free, thereafter £4 per session, which includes refreshments. Currently there are 10 members.

In December we held our Christmas party when we had nibbles and refreshments. Everyone looked forward to the break but also looked forward to returning on 17 January 2023.

In February we will be meeting on the 7th, 21st and 28th.

If you are interested, please contact me on 07599182861. I will be able to tell you more about the group and advise you what to bring.

Vi Turner



Cressing Book Group

Our latest book was *The Paris Apartment* by Lucy Foley. Jess has recently lost her job and needs to lay low for a while. She travels to France to stay with her half-brother Ben in the imposing Parisian house where he rents an apartment. When she arrives, she discovers that he has completely vanished and she decides to stay on and find him. The other occupants of the house don't welcome her arrival and the more she questions them, the more it becomes clear that they must be involved in his disappearance and the more dangerous her quest becomes.

We all enjoyed this book. The plot was clever and engrossing with several genuinely surprising twists and a good and believable ending. Its setting in the rambling house was suitably atmospheric and sinister and we liked the way that it was divided into short chapters with different narrators, each with a distinctive voice and point of view. We felt that Jess was a likeable heroine, the other characters much less so and this led to a discussion about whether it's important for characters in a novel to be likeable just as long as they are interesting. In more than one reader's opinion, *The Paris Apartment* was the best book we've had for a long time and we all agreed we'd be happy to recommend it to others.

News from All Saints Church & St Barnabas

As we move into a new year we pray for a better and more peaceful time. For some of us it has been a sad time losing friends and loved ones.

We remember Mrs Parris who lived at Tye Green and passed away just short of her 101 Birthday. She will be missed by all who knew her. My memories of her are seeing her and her husband walking around the village and often walking into Braintree. We are thinking of all the people in dispute with their employers who are struggling to make the money go round as fuel and food prices keep going up.

Some of us lived through similar times in the 60s and 70s and still remember when there was no fuel, no rubbish collection and little money to survive on. However, we did survive and come through a little more resilient and wiser. So again we pray that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

To continue the research and remember those lads who gave their lives in the two World Wars.

(from our Archives)

Percy Whybrow

Served as Private 276156, Essex Regiment "C" Company. He was killed in the successful battle of Albert on the 24th August 1918 aged just 20. He was the son of Arther J and Mrs A Whybrow. His grave/memorial is in the ALBERT COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION ref 11, B.13. His parents put the inscription on his Headstone; "In Loving Memory of Our Dear & Only Child Mum and Dad. Thy Will be Done.

We continue to pray for the people of Ukraine

**Our Next Service at All Saints is on Sunday 12th
February at 09.00am All are welcome to come.**

A Warm Space!

We have just returned from our post Christmas break - a wonderful week's rest in a self-catering cottage not a million miles away. The weather was mixed, there was not an awful lot to do - what a relief - but the place itself was all one could wish for and more. If places were able to stretch out their arms, I would say this place gave us a warm and welcoming hug. And warmth, especially during these cold winter months, is not just appreciated, it is essential for our wellbeing.

Well, thanks to our wonderful parish clerk there is a warm space at St Barnabas, on Thursday from 10.30am until 1pm. Perhaps you need a change of scenery from being stuck at home or are looking for a chance to meet old friends and new over a cuppa. Please do make use of this small, but perfectly formed and communal place in Claude Ince Avenue.

St Barnabas is not just a parish hall and a space to hire for community activities, it also functions as a place of worship, and has done so pre covid regularly and will hopefully do so again later this year. St Barnabas is one of two church buildings in our parish, along with All Saints in church road, which admittedly is much harder to heat! But warmth is important because in many ways it is an expression of why we exist in the first place: because Jesus extends a warm welcome to everyone, sinner and saint alike, and most of us are somewhere in-between.

A lot of people think of church in terms of a place to go to for weddings, baptisms or funerals, but there is so much more to church than that: Church is a community of people, who worship together and learn together, it's a place of belonging, and a space which is all embracing, for every-day life and concerns, not just special events. Because God is not just available at times of great need or celebration, but also in the simple and ordinary rhythm of life with all its ups and downs. Just as we need love, warmth and affirmation every day, so his arms are always open, offering a welcome and a home.

So please make use of our church buildings - there is a communion service at all Saints at 9 am every second Sunday of the month, or indeed pop into the warm space at St Barnabas on a Thursday morning. We are hoping to offer more soon, and if you would like to get involved in church or know more, do drop me a line at vicar@caup.org.uk.

Oh yes, and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Revd Heike Prentice





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CHRISTMAS Eve to 1st January, OPEN As Usual 2nd January

FLY BY NIGHTS

I have always had a soft spot for owls. A bird that seldom sees daylight, yet is a master of the night, often heard, but hardly ever seen.



Throughout history people have regarded owls with fascination and awe. Owls are a bird that features prominently in the myths and legends of a variety of cultures. These mysterious creatures are known far and wide and viewed as mysterious, wise, lovable, or spooky, really depending on whoever you may ask. The feathers of an owl are so formed that when they fly at night they make no sound and often it is only then, when it chooses to cry out or its shape glides swiftly past, that we are we made aware of its presence.

The owl has such a sinister hooting cry that it is not surprising that it became the subject of many folk tales and legends. But this bird holds many more charms for those it chooses to teach. They are very appealing creatures with their broad, flat faces, and large round eyes that many consider childlike and innocent

They see in the same way that humans do, with both eyes straight ahead. Instead of eyeballs they have "eye tubes" that go far back into their skulls—which means their eyes are fixed in place so they have to turn their heads to see. The size of their eyes helps them see in the dark. And they are far sighted, which allows them to spot prey from yards away. Up close they depend on small, hair-like feathers on their beaks and feet to feel their food. Their eyes are adapted to see when it is almost dark but, like us, they can see nothing in the complete darkness as they always need some light, such as moonlight, to see.

An owl's wisdom is based on the shape of its face, with large eyes and having to turn its head to stare gives the impression of undivided attention. However, it isn't among the social birds, which are considered intelligent. Crows, starlings and house sparrows all show problematic ability. Many social birds have the ability to mimic predators calls to scare other birds away from a food source.

An owl expert once mentioned that, were you to see the head of an owl devoid of its feathers you would find nearly all eyes and very little skull or brain.

Whether you've noticed long eared owls roosting in bushes, a barn owl hunting | along a road at dusk or a little owl roosting in a hole in a tree, the one feature they have in common is the stare, which along with a parliament, is a collective noun for wise old owls.

Owls are part of our modern culture. By understanding the roles they have played in diverse society throughout the world we can appreciate their beauty and grace.

Lin Wenlock

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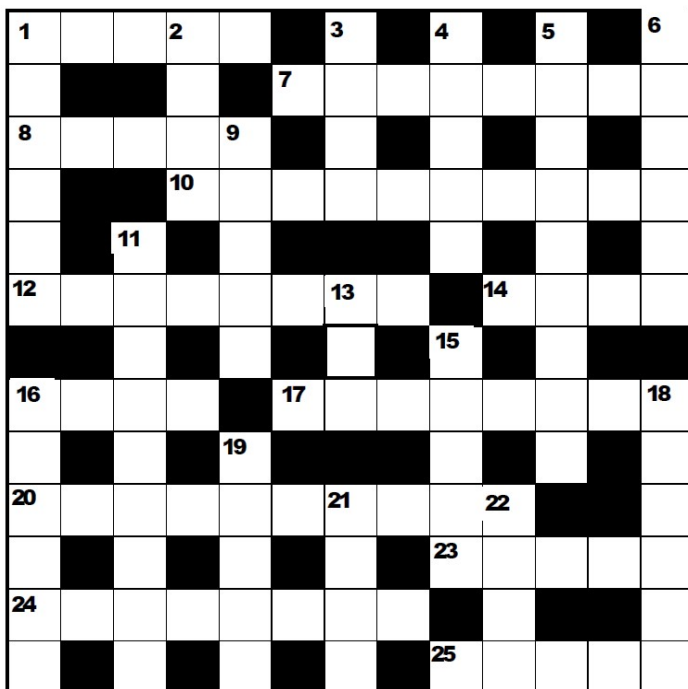
New Year – routine chores?

Happy New Year to you all! The start of the new year is a good time look at your safety and security and check that everything is as it should be both inside the house, outside and at work. Below are just a few things to consider but I am sure you can think of many more:

- This time of year is a good time prune many varieties of plants, trees and shrubs so have a look at them; ensure that they do not provide a climbing aid into your property or prevent that all important clear view into your frontage that may deter crime. Be mindful though; those brambles, other spiky plants and stinging nettles on your boundary are nature's own deterrent to intruders, any cuttings can be used to fill gaps in a hedge line.
- Consider supplementing your boundary security with some nice spiky plants, they look and smell nice but may also be a deterrent to intruders. Suitable advice can be sought from The Royal Horticultural Society or your local garden centre.
- Fences and gates, are they still intact and well maintained, do the gates lock securely.
- Outside lighting, are they all working okay and are they clean?
- Sheds and outbuilding are they still intact and well maintained, lubricate the locks exposed to the weather.
- Smoke detectors; are they working okay and in date and where appropriate do the batteries need replacing, remember mains operated ones may have a battery back-up that may need replacing regularly.
- CCTV systems: like with your lighting ensure that they are kept clean and maintained. Smart doorbells or other that may use a solar charger, at this time of year they may not be getting much of a charge so consider topping up the battery with a charger where appropriate.
- Property marking; over Christmas you may have received some new tools, electrical or computing items consider using an appropriate property marking product.
- 21/12/22 was the shortest day so we still have a few more 'darker nights', make your home look like you are in even when you are out by having lights on timers in the house and perhaps a TV simulator.
- Lastly in my list, don't leave your car unattended on the drive with the engine running whilst you de-ice/demist it, it only takes a minute to steal it and it may affect an insurance claim.

For further crime prevention advice see <https://www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/> or <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/crime-prevention-advice>

FEBRUARY 2023 CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. To slowly rot or breakdown (5)
7. Pool athletes (8)
8. Relating to the kidneys (5)
10. State of extreme disrepair (10)
12. Originates from a source (8)
14. Feral (4)
16. Join or blend ro form a single entity (4)
17. Another term for Goosegrass (8)
20. Limestone cave formation (10)
23. South American Dance (5)
24. Bright green gems. (8)
25. Beijing is in this country (5)

DOWN

1. To ridicule (6)
2. A Long way off (4)
3. Nocturnal birds of prey (4)
4. Coat or smear with a thick substance (4)
5. Small folding knives (9)
6. To go up or climb (6)
9. Tibetan or Mongolian monk title (5)
11. A feeling of being sickened (9)
13. Snake like fish (3)
15. To go without food (4)
16. More rapid(6)
18. Composition for an instrumental soloist (6)
19. An artificial waterway (5)
21. Constructed (4)
22. Every one of two or more (4)

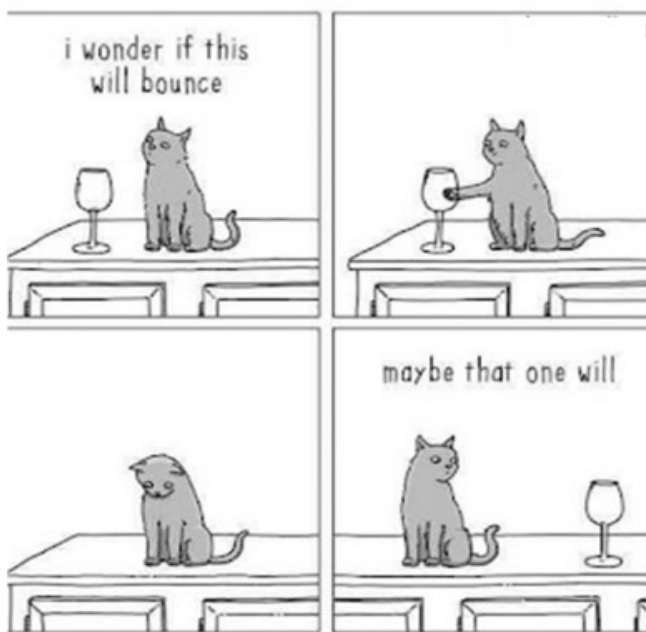
ANSWERS TO CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 STUDY (5)
- 4 RIVAL (5)
- 10 ISLES (5)
- 11 MICHAEL (7)
- 12 HUNGOVER (8)
- 13 MEAN (4)
- 15 RECENT (6)
- 17 GEORGE (6)
- 19 GLUE (4)
- 20 HARRISON (8)
- 23 REFRAIN (7)
- 24 ELVES (5)
- 25 ADDER (5)
- 26 TSARS (5)

DOWN

- 2 TALON (5)
- 3 DISCOUNT (8)
- 5 INCH (4)
- 6 AMATEUR (7)
- 7 RICHARDGERE (11)
- 8 AMBER (5)
- 9 SLENDERNESS (11)
- 14 FEARLESS (8)
- 16 CHUFFED (7)
- 18 CAINE (5)
- 21 SAVER (5)
- 22 SALE (4)



What's on at CRESSING COMMUNITY CHURCH

February 2023



Sunday 5th February Cafe Church

Breakfast is served from **09.30 until 10.15** followed at **10.30** by a short, lively, all-age service. Refreshments will be served following the service.

If you don't fancy breakfast, just come for the service.

**Sunday Services
at 10.30**

Children attend their
own ARK group

**Bible Study
Wednesdays at 19.00**

**Prayer Meeting
Saturdays at 09.00**

Winter Quiz/Trivia Night

Saturday 11th February 19.00 start Doors open 18.30

Come on your own or bring a team of up to 6

Adults: £3 children: £2

Please book via our website: www.cressingchurch.org

The Late, Late Burns' Night

Saturday 25th February

Doors open 18.30 meal served at 19.00
£10 for adults, £5 for children under 14



BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL

Menu: Haggis Pie or Cottage Pie or Vegetable Pie with vegetables plus desert. A glass of wine or soft drink will be provided.

Scottish Country Dancing will be available following the meal

For more information and to book your place,
go to our website: creasingchurch.org.
or ring Wendy on 01376 583807 and leave a message

Cressing Community Church

sharing God's love and truth where we are

Dear friends

At a recent school assembly I challenged the children to guess if I'm lying or telling the truth. I told them that one of the socks I had on that day had a hole in it, and that I just couldn't be bothered to change the sock as it was such a little hole.

We had a vote to see who believed me or not. The vote was overwhelmingly that I had a hole in my sock, even though I had my shoes on and nobody could see my socks, most believed what I said, even when I told them I was not going to take off my shoes and expose my socks. I asked them how I can prove if I was lying or telling the truth, the rather loud reply was 'take your shoes off' which of course was the simple and quickest way to find out if I was telling the truth. Then I expanded why lying was wrong.

The reason I spoke about lying is that I've noticed over the last decade or so that many politicians, for whatever their reason, lying seems to have become a habit. Not a day goes by without someone being accused of lying and they do it so well that it's hard to say whether it's a lie or not, but eventually they are found out.

One thing I know is that God knows when we are lying, we read in 1 John chapter 1 verse 6a 'we all lie and do not live by the truth' and verse 8 'If we claim to be without sin (lie), we deceive ourselves and the truth is not with us.'

We can look back in history how people have been lied to with such terrible results. Neville Chamberlain was the Prime Minister of this country just before Hitler invaded Europe, he said that Adolf Hitler had given him his word that he was not going to invade Europe and claimed he 'had brought peace in our time'. The Prime Minister was deceived by Hitler's lies and we know the terrible cost of WW2. More recently President Putin claimed Russia had no intentions of invading Ukraine.

Lying causes so much harm, the only way we can defeat lies is to tell the truth.

I will end with these words 'Evil things happen when good people do nothing' remember they told lies about Jesus which resulted in His death. May our new year's resolutions be to try our hardest not to lie but to proclaim the truth.

Every blessing in His name

Dennis

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CRESSING PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of Cressing Parish Council
held on 11th January 2023 at 7.00pm
at St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing

Present: Cllr John Lawton – Chairman
 Cllr Colin Haines
 Cllr Alison Lapper
 Cllr Harvey Porrett
 Cllr Toria Rowe
 Cllr Steve Watts

In attendance:

Mrs Christine Marshall (Parish Clerk/RFO and Proper Officer)
 County Cllr Paul Thorogood
 District Cllr James Abbott
 PC James Draper
 No members of the public

23/001 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND REPORT

- i. Charitable donations gifted at the end of December to charities that help residents locally and within the wider area are being acknowledged.
- ii. Still no date for Il Salice (The Willows) Appeal. The Clerk has contacted both BDC and the Planning Inspectorate in this regard. However, it is understood the property is being marketed through Embark Developments as a restaurant despite the change of use hearing outstanding.
- iii. Keep Warm coffee mornings are now being attended by residents and one volunteer has come forward to help. Councillors are requested to attend when they can to answer resident questions and help out.
- iv. Dog fouling remains a major issue and if witnessed, details need to be reported via the BDC reporting tool.
- v. Unfortunately, Essex Highways have not been able to attend a meeting. The Clerk will write to them highlighting issues and continue to invite them.
- vi. A report of the meeting between Councillors and James Cleverly, MP, due to be held on Friday 13th January will be published in the Community Magazine. **Action: Clerk**

23/002 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Drury. These were accepted.
Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Lapper

23/003 COMMUNITY POLICING

The Chairman welcomed PC James Draper (Braintree Community Safety & Engagement Officer) to the meeting and outlined some of the priorities for Braintree, which included: domestic violence and violence in any form; anti-social behaviour and road safety and how speed can be addressed. The Council held a wide-ranging discussion with PC Draper.

PC Draper advised that if the Community Speedwatch Team could liaise with him then every effort would be made for a Police presence. PC Draper also offered to hold an exercise with the CSW team and Councillors. Councillors welcomed this and Clerk will make the appropriate arrangements. **Action: Clerk**

In the event of suspected cannabis smoking or drug taking in Cressing, this should be reported to the Police.

The Chairman thanked PC Draper for his time and for the very useful discussion. Another invite will be sent to Essex Police for the March meeting.

23/004 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the council are subject to the Local Authorities Code of Conduct Order 2007 (SI 2007/1159) (The Revised Code) with the additional, non-mandatory, section 12(2).

There were no other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to items on the agenda to be recorded.

23/005 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Clerk confirmed that no items had been raised for discussion at this meeting. Any matters reported by residents are responded to and actioned within 24 hours wherever possible. There have been several reports of streetlights not working. Those owned by the Parish Council are repaired within 24 hours, but those in the ownership of Essex Highways are taking much longer and being chased.

23/006 REPORTS OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

County Cllr Thorogood reported: Rivenhall Incinerator Liaison Meeting – work is proceeding and Indaver are seeking a Development Consent Order to increase electricity generation to increase electricity generation without additional waste being incinerated. Condition 66 appeal not scheduled until May. Seeking donation from CPRE or Defra towards air quality measuring equipment.

District Cllr Abbott reported: New planning system at BDC goes live in February with Committee meeting every 3 weeks. Planning Forums will also go live. The Planning Committee are receiving training, and this will be rolled out to Parish Councillors in due course.

Government re looking to alter how housing supply land is calculated. The site at Rivenhall that was removed from the Local Plan and also refused by BDC, has been granted by the Planning Inspectorate.

BDC budget being set in February – currently looking at 2% increase in Council Tax, however Councillors are recommending 1%. Councilors are also trying to get the 33% cut in street cleaning grants as well as a reversal of decision to charge for green waste.

Cllr Abbott is seeking an update on the B1018 bends and the work related to the planned development.

Cllr Abbott has received a request for a road to be named after a family that were Cressing residents (Drory). *Since the meeting the Clerk has referred to the list of those included on the 1914-18 War Memorial and has confirmed "DRORY, Frank (J) - Transcribed as DRURY] Driver 208729, 4th Field Squadron, Royal Engineers. Died 15 March 1919. Aged 28. Son of Joseph and Emma Drory, of Lanham's Green, Cressing, Braintree, Essex. Buried in BEIRUT WAR CEMETERY, Lebanese Republic. Grave 269.*

23/007 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th November 2022 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded Cllr Haines.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

23/008 CRESSING COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

The Clerk confirmed that there is to be no change to the administration of the Community Magazine.

23/009

CIVILITY & RESPECT PLEDGE

The Clerk referred to the explanatory paper issued with the Agenda and requested that Councillors consider joining other councils in the Braintree district, as well as throughout the country and signing up to the Pledge. After a short discussion **it was resolved** that Cressing Parish Council has the appropriate policies in place but will keep these current and enter into the Pledge, agreeing and committing to the following statements:

- i. CPC has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role
- ii. CPC has committed to training councillors and staff
- iii. CPC has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors
- iv. CPC has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- v. CPC will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- vi. CPC will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
- vii. CPC will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council
- viii. CPC supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

Proposed: Cllr Lapper, seconded: Cllr Rowe, all in favour.

Action: Clerk

23/010

PLAYING FIELD

- i. Changing rooms – The Clerk is waiting for information from BDC to proceed to tender stage.
- ii. Seating – BDC have confirmed agreement for the installations to be undertaken.

Action: Clerk

23/011

BRAINTREE OPEN SPACES PLAN

Councillors agreed the following to be added to this plan for 2023

- i. Reflectors to posts on triangle at Polecat Road/B1018 junction,
- ii. Hedging to green on Hawbush Green (in line with LHP request for barrier)
- iii. Further seating around the village
- iv. Additional planting around the village

The Plan will be updated and submitted to BDC.

Action: Clerk

23/012

FINANCE

- i. **Financial statements:** The Clerk/RFO referred to the reports issued with the Agenda. There were no queries, and **it was resolved** to accept the reports. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Rowe, all in favour**
- ii. **A motion to approve bank reconciliation at 31st December 2022: It was resolved** that the bank reconciliation statement be approved. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Rowe, all in favour**
- iii. **A motion to approve retrospective payments for November and those presented for December 2022:** The list of payments and cheques to be signed against November and December expenditure were presented. There were no queries, and **it was resolved** to approve the payments. **Proposed: Cllr Lapper, seconded Cllr Porrett, all in favour.** Cllrs Lawton and Haines signed the cheques.
- iv. **Donations:** The Clerk advised that thank-you letters were being received.

23/013

BUDGET 2023/24

The Clerk presented the budget for 2023/24 and the following amendments will be made:

- i. King's Coronation – rather than a celebration event, **it was agreed** to purchase commemorative gifts for children at the school. Cllr Lapper agreed to speak with the Headmaster and also consider how to gift to those children in Cressing Parish who do not attend the local school. **Action: Cllr Lapper**
- ii. **It was further agreed** that the grass cutting contract for 2023 shall be re-negotiated with the current supplier and clause 11.d of the Financial Regulations 2022 shall be waived in this instance. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Watts, all in favour** **Action: Clerk/RFO**
- iii. **It was resolved** to retain the Precept request at the same level as for 2022/23 (£46,000) resulting in a decrease of 7.58% per Band D property. The Clerk was requested to submit the necessary request to BDC and publish it in the Community Magazine. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

23/014 **20's PLENTY & PARKING**
Nothing to report at this time.

23/015 **S.106**
The Clerk advised that an update is awaited from BDC. This will be chased and response copied to Councillors. **Action: Clerk**

23/016 **WARM SPACES**
The Clerk was pleased to report that residents were beginning to attend. This will be kept under review.

23/017 **PLANNING**

- A. **To note Appeals determined by the Planning Inspectorate:** None advised
- B. **To discuss Appeals submitted to the Planning Inspectorate:** Although not on the Agenda, **it was resolved** to include the following Appeal notice just received: 21/03053/OUT | Outline planning permission with all matters reserved apart from access, for the residential development of up to 35 dwellings (including 40% affordable housing), with vehicular access, areas of landscaping and public open space. | Land East Of Braintree Road Cressing Essex – the Parish has previously objected to this application and will submit a further objection to the Inspector prior to the scheduled hearing on 7th February. **Action: Clerk**
- C. **To note Applications Determined by Braintree District Council or withdrawn:** None advised
- D. **To discuss Applications received by Braintree District Council:**
 - 22/03153/DAC | Application for approval of details as reserved by conditions 16 (Biodiversity Enhancement Plan) & 17 (external lighting) of approved application 21/01940/OUT | Land Adjacent Leyfield Braintree Road Cressing Essex – *no comment to make.*
 - 22/03418/DAC | Application for approval of details as reserved by conditions 7 (Travel Pack), 8 (Satellite Dishes) & 24 (LEMP) of approved application 16/02144/OUT | Land Adjacent To Braintree Road Cressing) – *no comment to make.*
- E. **To note Applications received by Braintree District Council and consider if comments should be made**
 - 22/03078/LBC | Conversion of 1No. rear window to a double door and full height side windows together with steps to the rear. | Bulford Mill Bulford Mill Lane Cressing Essex CM77 8NS - *no comment to make*
 - 22/03196/HH | Conversion of 1No. rear window to a double door and full height side windows together with steps to the rear. | Bulford Mill Bulford Mill Lane Cressing Essex CM77 8NS - *no comment to make.*

23/018 **ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE NOVEMBER AGENDA:**

- i. 20's Plenty and Parking Project
- ii. Parish Paths Partnership

23/019

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 8th February 2023, 7.00pm at St Barnabas Hall, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing, CM77 8HG.

Any items for inclusion on the Agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk to be received no later than 12 noon on Tuesday 31st January 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

| 2023 meetings | | | | | |
|----------------|----|--------|-------------------------------|----|--------|
| MARCH | 8 | 7.00pm | AUGUST | 9 | 7.00pm |
| APRIL | 12 | 7.00pm | SEPTEMBER | 13 | 7.00pm |
| MAY | 9 | * | OCTOBER | 11 | 7.00pm |
| JUNE | 14 | 7.00pm | NOVEMBER | 8 | 7.00pm |
| JULY | 12 | 7.00pm | DECEMBER | 13 | 7.00pm |
| • May meetings | 9 | 6.30pm | Annual PARISH Meeting | | |
| | | 7.00pm | Annual PARISH COUNCIL Meeting | | |
| | | 7.15pm | PARISH COUNCIL Meeting | | |

Information only ref Minute 23/009



Civility and respect should be at the heart of public life, and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels.

Throughout the local government sector, there have been growing concerns about the impact bullying, harassment, and intimidation have on local (parish and town) councils, councillors, clerks and council staff and the resulting effectiveness of local councils. Whilst this is not an issue at Cressing Parish Council, signing up to the Civility & Respect Pledge shows residents that the Parish Council finds this type of behaviour to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It also shows support to other parish councils in their struggles against these issues.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC), One Voice Wales, the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and county associations (e.g. EALC) responded to these concerns by setting up a Civility and Respect Working Group to oversee the Civility and Respect Project.

The intimidation, abuse, bullying and harassment of councillors, clerks and council staff, in person or online, is unacceptable, whether by councillors, clerks, council staff, or members of the public. This can prevent councils from functioning effectively; councillors from representing local people; discouraging people from getting involved (including standing for election) and undermining public confidence and trust in local democracy.

NALC, county associations and OVW, as the membership organisations representing the first tier of local government in England and Wales, and the SLCC, as the professional body for clerks, have

worked together to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the wellbeing of councillors, professional officers and staff.

848 councils have signed the pledge throughout the UK, some in close proximity to Cressing, including (but are not limited to) Finchingfield, Witham, Saffron Walden, Thaxted, Shalford, Great Notley, Little Waltham, Great Totham, Maldon, Tollesbury and Wickham Bishops.

By signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge, Cressing Parish Council demonstrates that it is committed to treating Councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

- Will put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- Has signed up to and regularly reviews the Code of Conduct for councillors
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

In order to sign up, the Council must register and agree to the following statements:

- i. CPC has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.
- ii. CPC has committed to training councillors and staff.
- iii. CPC has a current Code of Conduct adopted for councillors.
- iv. CPC has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.
- v. CPC will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.
- vi. CPC will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens.
- vii. CPC will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council.
- viii. CPC supports the continued lobbying for a change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

END

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CRESSING EVENTS VOLUNTEERS



It's hard to believe it, but we are entering our tenth year of CEV lunch events. Where did the years go? This month saw us start the year, on a very cold but sunny day, at St Barnabas Church Hall with the always popular Fish & Chips lunch. Our thanks as always for the use of the hall and equipment.

The Cyprus Fish Bar delivered our order of 34 meals, as always on time, and within minutes the team were at work serving, along with rolls and pickles to Guests and helpers, while three of the meals were delivered to people who couldn't attend.

After the meal it was time for tea or coffee along with biscuits and sweets, before seeing how each table had done in our fun quiz. I say "fun" quiz but some of the questions Pam gave us were hard (or is it just me?) then on to our raffle, and may I add a big thank you to our guests for supporting our raffle, as it is the raffle that helps keep our costs down.

NEXT EVENT

Our next event is a soup lunch at C.C.C. Hall, The Street, on Friday the 17th of February from 12.00 till 2.00 where for just £2.00 you get food, warmth, and to exercise your brain on our fun Quiz, plus meet other locals. If you would like a copy of our Programme of events or just more information, please call Pam or Jackie on 584170 or 327064.

Arthur, On behalf of the CEV Team

Time to get walking again!



With Spring on its way we start to think about getting out to walk in the beautiful English countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Essex <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/essex> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

John Harris (who maintains the website) said 'There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Essex (part of the Walking in England website) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!



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GARDENING NOTES FOR FEBRUARY



At the start of every year, we have 12 months of gardening to look forward to, with each month there are several horticultural delights, some stunning others dramatic. A swath of snowdrops and aconites can help set us up for the seasons ahead.

Now is the time to purchase seed potatoes, keep the tubers in trays and in a frost-free place. Broad beans can be planted in pots or directly in the ground if you are on free draining soil. Pot sown beans need to be in a cold greenhouse and keep an eye open for mice, there is nothing more disheartening than finding knocked over containers and chewed seed!

My recommended plant of the month is a medium sized tree the Tibetan cherry [*Prunus serrula*] a beautiful polished looking bark on a banded trunk, it really does stand out at this time of year.

If you haven't already done so, apple and pear trees can be pruned in February. Take out any dead and crossing branches and try to form an umbrella shape to improve your fruit crop, the fruit buds are large and slightly bulbous.

If the soil is dry enough remove any weeds [they came with a flourish at the end of last summer] I am still removing chickweed, milk thistle etc which seem to have been hiding amongst perennial plants.

If you have recorded in your diary or taken photos of any bland areas, make a note of plants to fill in, giving you extra colour or structure. For instance, look at what is hardy to plant on a north facing wall or not so attractive to pests.

Wash pots for reuse and sort out old seed from recently purchased seed packets. Clean and sharpen tools, there is never time once the warmer weather arrives and the daylight hours fly past.

House plants need the minimum of water at this time of year. Keep them in a draught free position and feeding should be minimal. Schlumbergera, (Christmas cactus) are at their best and if you have been given, and its thriving, a Poinsettia all I can say is 'well done' they are a difficult plant to keep alive.

A belated Happy New Year.....*The Arborist.*

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Contact: www.cressingactiongroup.info
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