



Parish News

Great Waltham Ford End Howe Street Little Green North End

March 2026

FILM, TV and RADIO QUIZ

It was a packed house for the multi-media, multi-generation quiz. Over a 100 people attended. The picture round tested people's knowledge of the shipping forecast and vintage TV logos. Nostalgia continued with vintage radio and TV themes and then extracts of funny adverts from the last century (guess the product). It was easy to guess the name of well known films from video snippets, but harder to guess the year they were premiered. The penultimate round was guessing the romantic film from just a bit of the poster, but an AI description of the film gave a clue. The final Traitors round required audience participation, banishment of a team member from each table, (unless you had a shield), then they got their own back on the faithfulls. As always, our quizzes aren't just a competition, they are an entertaining night out with drinks, supper and good company. **Mike Steel - Quizmaster**



Pancake Race



The weather cleared nicely for Sunday 22nd February afternoon, for the annual pancake races held by the Community Network and supported by the Walthams Scout group. We ran races for Families, Adults, Children, Dads, and Mums. All had to complete the course including tossing the pancake several times. Well done to the Family winners the Radleys, and to all the other competitors from the Whittaker and Allen families. The scout group provided excellent refreshments – freshly cooked sausage rolls and beautiful home made cakes.

Above: Joanna Steel, Community Network chair presenting the prizes to the Radleys who were the winners. Right: One of the childrens races.





Martin Palmeri's Magnificat

Saturday 28th March 2026
7pm

Wessex Auditorium, Brentwood School

With special guest
Martin Palmeri

Brentwood & Ingatstone Choral Society
Waltham Singers - Director Andrew Fardell

Conductor: Art Wangcharoensab Tickets: £15
Bandoneon: Julian Rowlands (under 16s £8)

For tickets go to:
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BICS Charity Number:
801138

Inside this months Great Waltham Parish News

Parish Council Annual Report, Local club updates, Twinning visit to Ceyrat, Great Baddow Fun Run, Shoebox deliveries, Parish Council news, Church notices, Local events, and more than **two pages of adverts for almost every need.**



From The Vicarage

It's raining as I write this. For days and days the sky has been that greyish white - the colour of sadness. Oh February you drab old thing. I had a thought this morning however. I made myself a promise. Perhaps you can do the same. When the spring comes I vow to be at least as ecstatic as I am grumpy right now. And spring will come. The blustery days will leave. The cloud will clear. "This too shall pass". The evenings will get lighter. We will bath in blue sky. For now the ground is grateful for the rain. And soon the sun. Thanking God for life and breath today. And for tomorrow. Peace. Rev'd Dan.



We will step into Lent 2026 following material offered by Bishop Guli for this extraordinary season of discovery.

Thursdays

Feb 19th, 26th,
March 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th

5pm @St Martin's, Little Waltham.

Before our regular 6pm Still Waters Communion service

You're most welcome to come to either or both.

Please do not worry if you can only make some sessions. Come to what you can

Services at Blackchapel, North End March 2026

Sunday 1st at 3pm
Sunday 15th at 3pm

Coffee Morning Blackchapel, North End



Come and join your neighbours for a coffee and chat

Last Wednesday in the month
10.30 - 12.00

GREAT WALTHAM FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Love was in the air at the February meeting, the first of 2026. Members took part in a musical quiz of romantic songs and refreshments served amidst lively chatter.

The Annual General Meeting will take place in March followed by a Cream Tea.



Church of England Services March 2026

Sunday 1st	11.00am	Communion	Great Waltham
Sunday 8th	11.00am	Communion	Ford End
Sunday 15th	11.00am	Mothering Sunday Service	Great Waltham
Sunday 22nd	10.00am	Family Service	Ford End
	11.00am	Communion	Chignals
Sunday 29th	11.00am	Palm Sunday Service	Little Waltham

Still Waters every Thursday Evening 6.00pm – 6.30pm held at St Martin's Little Waltham
"An oasis of calm in our otherwise busy lives".
Please join us.

Contact: Alison Creighton Parish Administrator
Tel: 07957 228467
admin@littleandgreat.org.uk

World Day of Prayer

Will be held on
Friday 6th March
at **St Andrews Church**
Good Easter
11am



"I will give you rest"

Each year, on this day, Christians of many cultures, traditions and races in over 120 countries around the world reunite in prayer. Our sisters in Nigeria invite us to join them for the World Day of Prayer on Friday 6th March 2026. The service they have prepared reflects on the theme "I will give you rest." The World Day of Prayer is an international, women led ecumenical movement that shares the hopes, concerns and prayers of women around the globe. Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggles and anxieties. Please join us, everyone is welcome.

Little Waltham United Reformed Church Services for March 2026

Contact: Liz Hagon - 01245 360874
All services begin at 10.30am.

Sunday 1st - Alex Jacobs
Sunday 8th - Charles De Lacy
Sunday 15th - Marina Price
Sunday 22nd - Rev. Hans Stein
Sunday 29th - John Amos - Palm Sunday

Other Events

Thursday 5th March - Coffee and Cake - 10.00am - 12 noon
Saturday 21st March - Coffee Morning - 10.00am - 11.00am

LITTLE WALTHAM GARDENING CLUB 4th FEBRUARY 2026

Plant Photograph Using a Smart Phone or Tablet By Marion Sidebottom MA. ARPS. RHS Gold & Silver Gilt

A really interesting talk by Marion about all those obscure apps that are on your mobile phone camera app which you didn't realise were there. How to create a piece of artwork from your photo images, thinking about creating depth and focus and colour variations. How to brighten the middle area of the image and change the background focus and many other excellent 'techi' information to make you think about composition.



For instance, to take a photo with long exposure- if you switch on Live photo the camera will now capture 15 seconds before and after you take the photo. If you hold on tight to your phone and find a brightly coloured plant. Take an image whilst walking towards it. Take another image of the same plant and rotate your phone. Place your phone on a stable surface and take a picture of running water. Find the images on your camera roll and click on the Live down arrow and select Long Exposure.

She showed images of photographs of the same subject, such as a huge ancient oak tree from ground level and other aspects. Of garden plants up close and clearly focused.

All this information was very useful if you want to enter photographic competitions. Speaking of which there is a Photographic Class in the

Gardening Club Spring Show on Saturday 11th April.

Marion also showed examples of artwork she creates from Pressed Plants & Oshibana, Cyan-otype Sun Printing and Print Making with Gelli plate which she demonstrates at various venues such as Hyde Hall and Flatford Mill.



Another sociable, information evening at our local Gardening Club.

Visitors are always very welcome, please come along to see what we do.

On Wednesday 4th March we will be holding our AGM and the programme for 2026 will be revealed. Please make a note in your diary for **SATURDAY 11TH APRIL** when we'll be staging our Spring Show. There will be classes for spring flowers and veg, flower arranging, cookery, craft and photography.

Schedules are available from Marion Lawson (01245 361857) or on our website, www.littlewalthamgardeningclub.co.uk



Walthambury WI



Good afternoon, at the February meeting of Walthambury WI we had an instructive evening given by Karen Odinga, on how to make paper craft items. We made paper envelopes and favour boxes from craft paper. An enjoyable evening was had by all the members. Who all went home with envelopes and favour boxes.

Our next meeting is the 10th March 7.30 when we will be having a talk by Ed Cannon "an insight into life as a locksmith"



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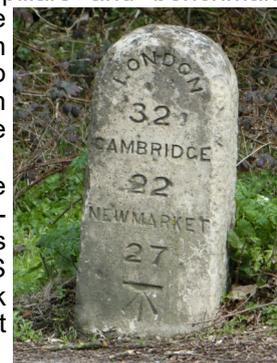
Ken McDonald, Secretary

Now that Spring is on its way, the weather should encourage us to make more use of bridleways and footpaths. Around 150 walk descriptions are available to download free from our website above. As well as saying when to turn left or right, our route descriptions aim to point out things of interest along the way. Some of these will be marked on the local Ordnance Survey map.

Ordnance Survey ("OS") has been the UK's official mapping body since 1791 AD, having originated for military purposes. Its activities have left various physical markers which may still be encountered, albeit that mapping techniques have moved forward in recent times with the satellite-based GPS (global positioning system).

The two historic OS markers that are most likely to be encountered are "triangulation pillars" and "benchmarks" (right). Several thousand triangulation pillars (also referred to as trig points) were installed all over the UK - solid concrete pillars about 4 feet tall, usually erected at a high point with a clear range of vision. Each has a place on top for positioning a map measurer's tool, a theodolite. The pillar's location and height above sea level have been precisely measured and recorded so that from here the map-maker can plot the surrounding landscape.

OS surveyors also left "benchmarks" in thousands of strategic locations. These are additional altitude reference points, a horizontal line indicating height above sea level - chiselled into a wall or milestone from around 1840 until the 1990s. The benchmark was sometimes indicated on a brass plaque attached at the appropriate height. On OS benchmarks, the horizontal line appears above an upward-pointing arrow. Please look out for trig points and benchmarks. If they are on a Hundred Parishes walk route but not yet mentioned in the description, please let us know.



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For more information, email gwparishnews@gmail.com

Great Waltham Parish Council – Annual Update 2025/26

In May 2025, the Parish Council adopted both a 5-year strategic plan and an annual action plan to ensure that it focusses on matters important to its residents. Under these plans, our principal activity this year, in terms of both scale and cost, has been the delivery of a refurbished play area at Great Waltham Recreation Ground. Last year, we reported how we had set up a working group, completed the consultation and tendering processes, and begun raising funds. In October, our hard work meant



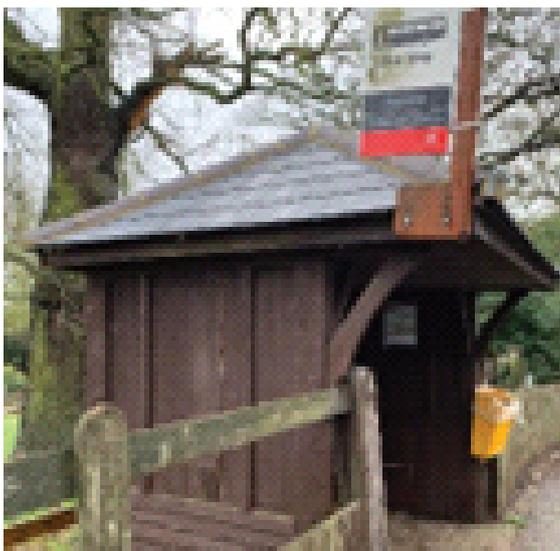
that we were able to agree to progress with Phase 1 of the project new equipment in the toddler area (illustration) – at a net cost of £62,000. However, it became apparent that raising funds for the whole project (£160,000) would take longer than we had originally hoped, therefore a phased approach has been adopted, and instead of allowing equipment to deteriorate further, or having to decommission units altogether, we decided it would be better to make a

start. Therefore, Phase 1 is an important first step to ensure children in the village have access to high quality, long-lasting play equipment. At the time of writing, Phase 1 work was scheduled to commence on 02/03/2026.

To finance the remaining junior area of the project, we will use a combination of further grants and donations, as well as additional reserves that we are able to set aside as part of the annual budgeting process. In practice, this means that unless we secure a number of large or numerous grants/donations, it will be at least 2-3 years before we can fully complete the works. If you wish to contribute to the project and donate, please go to this website: www.gofundme.com/f/great-waltham-playground-refresh-2025, or use the QR code shown.



We have also delivered improvements elsewhere. With prudent



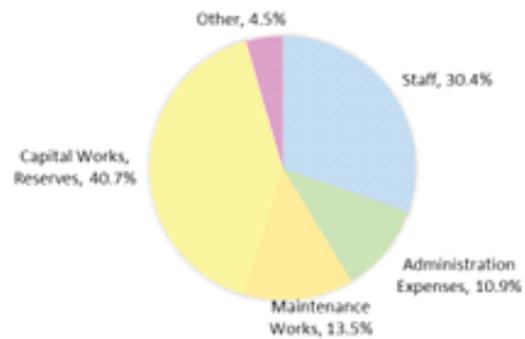
budgeting, we have not only continued with essential routine activities, but also carried out a number of planned small works projects, such as replacing the wooden posts and refurbishing the chains around the Great Waltham war memorial and repairing the roof of the bus stop shelter adjacent to Banbury Square.

We have used some of the reserve we set aside for unforeseen events. We have had to spend money on the drains at the Pavilion, and also on painting its exterior walls after they were vandalised with graffiti. We also incurred skip hire costs to clear rubbish left at the Brook Mead allotment site. However, sometimes unexpected expenditures are more pleasant – for example, we made a small contribution to help cover the costs for the erection of a Christmas tree on the green at Broad's Green (this was a community led initiative which we were happy to support).

We have developed a robust, resilient model to fully reflect all our financial commitments, including those needed to maintain all parish assets. In November, we agreed our 2026/27 budget, to ensure we maintain a healthy and compliant position. In terms of income, we made small increases to the hiring fees at the Pavilion, the first uplift since 2022, but left our allotment hiring fees unchanged.

The upshot of all the number crunching is, subject to higher authority ratification, a parish precept increase of 4.9% from April. But remember, this follows the 1.9% decrease we were able to make last year. The pie chart shows where the budget will be spent.

BUDGET EXPENDITURE ALLOCATION 2026/27



In November/December, we carried out a village survey. Although we gained



some useful insights, the response rate was disappointing – just 38 submissions from 960 households. However, while the results indicated that there is nothing fundamental we are not (or should be) doing, at best, we can only use them as complementary indicators alongside other data, rather than taking them as fully representative views of parishioners. We urge everyone to respond to future surveys to help us shape and prioritise our plans and activities.

A number of our strategic objectives rely on improved communications with parishioners. Therefore, we have looked to be more proactive, both in asking residents for their views and explaining how we have worked on their behalf. We have continued to use the Parish News as a primary conduit, as well as social media, but we know there is more to do. We will be introducing a new Parish Council website which has greater functionality and is more user friendly. We hope that it will become a popular source of information on the Council's activities.

While the Council has no direct responsibilities or powers over highways and traffic management, we have continued to gather data and highlight local issues whenever we can. In addition, we invested in speed monitoring sessions run by the TruCam team (a division within Maldon District Council) on the B1008 in Ford End village. Under this initiative, over 130 speeding motorists have been prosecuted for exceeding the 30 mph limit. At the same location, we also commissioned another automatic traffic count (ATC) survey to monitor traffic volumes and speeds over a 7-day period – this helps us to identify trends since the last ATC. The TruCam sessions are complemented by the Speed Watch groups carried out by local volunteers.



In June, to further monitor traffic incidents which would not otherwise come to our notice, we set-up a trial database for residents to report collisions and road to us, but very few incidents were notified to us – please help by reporting incidents you become aware of via the our website. More encouragingly, when we ran a survey to help us respond to a request from SERP (Safer Essex Roads Partnerships) for information to gauge views on 20mph speed limits in residential areas, we had 157 responses. 127 (82.7%) people told us that they would “support a 20mph speed limit in residential areas/your community”. We shared the results with SERP, but have not yet received details of how our input may influence their policy decisions.

We continued to comment on planning applications concerning new or existing properties in the parish. In December, we responded to the City Council's focussed consultation on proposed additional sites under its new Local Plan. The



only site in our parish is 'Growth Site Policy 14b – Land South of Ford End Primary School'. In our submission, we said the number of new homes should be less than the 75 being proposed and that the development should come with these community benefits: an average speed camera scheme and other traffic management measures within Ford End village; funding of new and improved facilities at Ford

End

End Recreation Ground; and the implementation of any improvements agreed between the developers and Ford End Village Hall and/or Ford End Primary School.

Also in December, we submitted a response to the consultation on *Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock*. We indicated that our preference was for the five new unitary authorities model. This seems a more rational way of grouping the current councils, as well as potentially offering us more influence. What remains unclear is the impact, if any, of restructuring on the resources available to the parish. Needless to say, we continue to monitor the situation carefully.



To extend the ways in which the parish's voice is heard as part of consultation processes, we joined the Chelmsford Association of Parish Councils. This is a body set up for members to share best practice and discuss and lobby on issues of common interest. We also maintained our position of objecting to National Grid's proposed pylon route through the parish, and we contributed to the cost of a landscape study commissioned by the NW & SW of Chelmsford Parishes Group which offered useful complementary evidence to support its objection to the scheme.



During the year, the matter of ownership of a village green in Ford End was resolved. The area has retained full public access. The process of formally documenting the Parish Council's ownership with HM Land Registry (HMLR) is in progress. The matter highlighted that there are a number of plots of land in the parish where ownership is not well known (or indeed, unknown), so we have begun work to identify as many of these as possible and, where appropriate, registrations will be submitted to HMLR. The episode has also triggered an overdue review of the byelaws applicable to green spaces owned, or administered, by the Council.

A number of our longer-term strategic goals involve encouraging and facilitating greater environmental sustainability on land for which the Council is responsible. In particular, our Recreation Committee has allocated workstream owners to investigate and advance initiatives such as bulb planting, tree management, and the introduction of bird boxes. These will complement previous schemes, such as the area set aside at Ford End Recreation Ground, where we worked with the City Council parks department to introduce a woodland area which is becoming established.

Again this year, much of our work involves those routine activities which can go under the radar, but which deserve recognition. These are often carried out by the Parish Clerk and our handyman. They include fielding all public enquiries, maximising the hiring potential of the Pavilion, conducting inspections and undertaking maintenance tasks on the Council's assets (in particular at our three recreation grounds), and emptying the litter bins around the parish for which we are responsible. The Council thanks Will and Jason for their work on its behalf. In partnership with the Royal British Legion, we again led the organising group for the Remembrance Day event in November. Following its decision to wind up its affairs, we are working with Great Waltham Horticultural Society about the

future of the trading hut on Brook Mead allotment site. We also continue to offer grants to worthy local causes – please check our website for eligibility.

We continue both to seek volunteers for Council-led activities and support community-led initiatives. If you have time and resource, why not contact us to see where you can help improve the community? Similarly, let us know if you think the Council can support a local initiative. In the first instance, please contact the Parish Clerk.

Overall, it has been another busy year. We have made good progress in some areas, but there remains work to do in 2026/27. We remain focused on delivery and making improvements wherever we can to enhance our community. To help us, we need your ongoing input and insights, so please take the time to take part in our surveys, and continue to contact us if you have issues or concerns which you think that we can help to resolve. Our monthly meetings are open to the public, as well as the further 18 meetings for our various committees. Do come along to these and find out more about what is going on in the parish, or to share your views in the public participation sessions.

We always welcome your interest and involvement in our activities. Both existing and new websites provide useful information on our meetings, policies, current issues, and likely future projects. If you need any further information and advice, you can contact the Parish Clerk or any of your councillors. These are the contact details for the Parish Clerk and your parish councillors:

Contact	Email	Telephone No.
Will Adshead-Grant (Parish Clerk)	clerk@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07880 717329

Church End Ward (Great Waltham, Broad's Green and Howe Street)

Cllr. Steve Gilbert (Chair)	cllr.gilbert@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07767 362673
Cllr. Matthew Bradley	cllr.bradley@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07596 117417
Cllr. Paul Holland	cllr.holland@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07812 404711
Cllr. Peter Jackson	cllr.jackson@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	01245 360067
Cllr. Jim Jenkins	cllr.jenkins@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	01245 362003
Cllr. Mark Nicholls	cllr.nicholls@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07771 964493
Cllr. Mike Steel	cllr.steel@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	01245 360918
Cllr. Lee Taylor	cllr.taylor@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07766 468126

Ford End Ward (North End, Ford End and Littley Green)

Cllr. Alan Martin (Vice Chair)	cllr.martin@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07917 037570
Cllr. Alex McDevitt	cllr.mcdevitt@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	01371 820139
Cllr. Roger Stephenson	cllr.stephenson@gtwaltham-pc.gov.uk	07803 140260

Or you can write to us at: Great Waltham Parish Council, Parish Office, The Pavilion, Great Waltham Recreation Ground, South Street, Great Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1DF.

Your Chelmsford City Council councillors are:

Cllr. Nicola Bugbee	nicola.bugbee@chelmsford.gov.uk	01245 605896
Cllr. Mike Steel	mike.steel@chelmsford.gov.uk	01245 360918 or 01245 605913
Cllr. Philip Wilson	philip.wilson@chelmsford.gov.uk	07748 624093 or 01245 605926

Your Essex County Council councillor is:

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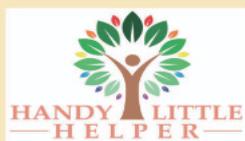
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Please support the magazine by renewing your advert or taking out an advert to promote your business. Volunteers deliver to approximately 1000 households in the Parish.

For more information,
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Stondon Singers

From Darkness to Light:
 A Choral Journey Through Easter

7.30pm Saturday 14 March 2026	Conductor: Alastair Merry	Featuring music by: Byrd, Casals, Howells, MacMillan, Rossini, Tallis, Tavener
Church of St Mary & St Lawrence Great Waltham CM3 1AR	Tickets: £13.50 adults (advance purchase) £6 under 16s Email: stondoningers@gmail.com Leave a message: 01277 886769 £15 on the door (limited availability)	

OIO 1154435

Ford End Senior Tea



on do
 The next tea will be Monday 23rd March at 2pm at Woodstock, Church Lane, Ford End. If you are new or thinking of coming please ring Sheila Bearman on 01245 237335 or 07977 077945
 I can decide how many cakes to provide. Hope to see you all and catch up for a good chat.

Anyone interested or has not been before or for more information please ring Sheila Bearman on 01245 237335 or 07977 077945

Great Waltham Parish Community Care Group

The aim of the group is to provide short term and ongoing help to meet the needs of elderly local residents for whom there is no statutory provision. Predominately this will involve providing transport to local doctor and hospital appointments.

If you require the services of the group, please call our co-ordinators who are
 Gill Mitchel 01245 362215
 Wendy Proctor 01245 360483
 John Lattimore, Chairman
 01245 363818

Christmas Shoebox deliveries to Moldova

A team of 8 volunteers travelled over to Moldova, 6 by road initially, and 2 flying into Chisinau, the capital of Moldova, to join up on the 30th December. The driving team (doing a round trip of 4322 miles) had a few obstacles to tackle in England on the route to Dover, with a puncture and a flat battery but managed to overcome the hold ups within a few hours. The rest of the journey would be pretty straight forward in comparison, with the weather getting colder the further West travelled.

Once in Moldova, and customs was cleared, the team spent the next 8 days visiting 10 villages, 1 older persons home, 1 centre supporting those displaced from Ukraine and 1 children's centre, to hand out shoebox gifts, food parcels, rice, incontinence pads and warm winter coats. Santa made an appearance at each school, which the children were delighted about. **Many Thanks goes to.....** the many individuals who made shoeboxes including:



- Great Waltham Primary School
- Walthambury WI
- Great Waltham Community Choir
- Great Waltham Church

For more information and the chance to see your shoebox please follow the link below where there are many photos.



<https://teechorg.weebly.com/january-2026-news.html>



Spring Is Here – Time To Hire An Allotment!

We have vacancies at both sites situated in Great Waltham, varying from small starter plots to large plots. Prices vary depending on the size of the plot, please contact clerk@greatwalthamparishcouncil.co.uk for further information. Hirers are welcome from within the Parish and surrounding Parishes



Rotary Baddow Races 2026

Whether you're a serious road runner, a family who need exercise, or just to attend an exciting afternoon out for all ages then the annual Rotary Baddow Races event on 17 May 2026 at Great Baddow Recreation Ground, Great Baddow, Chelmsford is the ideal location for you and the family.

The chip-timed, BARR Gold Standard 10 Mile Road Race and alternative Family Fun Run give serious runners a great competitive race and children, their parents (and even the dog!) an opportunity to let off steam over the 2 mile short course.

The organisers, Chelmsford Mildmay and Chelmsford Rivermead Rotary Clubs, stage the Races amid a fairground environment with a Hospital Radio Sound Stage and warm-up exercises, physio, food, refreshment and other market stalls accompanied by children's rides. A Races logo T-shirt is offered for both race events.

All Race finishers will receive a race medal and there will be trophy presentations for every group winner. All proceeds will be donated to local charities. To find out more please go online to www.baddowraces.co.uk for early bird prices before 31 March, to book your entry and to research all other details. Good Luck and we look forward to seeing you there on the day. The Rotary Baddow Races Team

Enter Now!

Race details and entry application forms are on our website www.baddowraces.co.uk

Jolly Boating Weather

Due to the nearly continuous rain, Mill Road between North End and Felsted has been flooded, since the start of the year! The depth of the water has varied from 'possible for large vehicles and SUVs' to 'canoes only'! After yesterday's heavy rain, the Chelmer Valley resembles a lake, as can be seen in the photo. This means that the usual short journey from North End to the village shop, post office and doctor's surgery in Felsted is now a 10-mile round trip, via Dunmow – and it has been like this ALL YEAR!

Due to the sterling work of Essex Highways last summer, water no longer runs continuously from the surrounding fields into the road whatever the weather. However, the continuous, heavy rain this year has resulted in the ground becoming saturated, so now the Chelmer overflows its banks after just one day of downpours, flooding Mill Road again. Sadly, the water in the road does not disappear when the river level goes down. The drain in the road is probably blocked; but in addition, the river level must be below that of the drain outlet pipe for the flapper on the end to open – and the river level may not go down that far.

Another exacerbating factor in our frequent flooding may be the recent building of hundreds of new houses in Little Dunmow and Felsted. This has drastically reduced the area of open ground for rain to percolate into the soil and then gradually into the river. Thus the flooding happens faster and more often.

Naturally, the flood has been reported to Essex Highways (many times) but until there is some sign of the wet weather ending, there seems little they can do. We pray for dry



weather! In the meantime, the ducks are happy.

FORD END GARDENING CLUB

Mary Williams, who gave us a talk on Planting Seeds at our February meeting, was a former secondary school teacher who retired early, completed a course at Writing Agricultural College and then went on to RHS Hyde. It was such an interesting and informative hands on evening looking closely at beans and seeds. A seed is a capsule containing a plant embryo capable of growing into a plant and contains a small amount of food for the new plant. We each peeled and split open a previously soaked bean to see a tiny spur inside that would become the root. It was completely fascinating to discover this. If you have any old packets of seeds, then to test the viability of them, drop medium or large sized seeds into water and the dead seeds will float while viable ones will sink. The viable seeds will need planting immediately after the soaking. Unfortunately fine seeds cannot be tested. The compost for planting seeds needs to be finely textured and low in nutrients and they should be planted as deep as they are long. Seedlings need to be transplanted when the real leaves have formed and not just the seed leaves which are heart shaped.

Nicola Munday is coming to talk to us about the 'Restoration of Copped Hall Gardens' at our next meeting. This is on **Wednesday 18 March at 7.30 pm** in Ford End Village and you are all welcome to join us.

We will be having a self-drive visit to Copped Hall on Sunday 7 June and Nicola will be giving us a tour of the walled garden (photo right).



Great Waltham Parish Council

The Pavilion, Great Waltham Recreation Ground, South Street, Great Waltham, CM3 1DF.
Clerk, W J Adshead-Grant. Tel: 07880 717329. E Mail: clerk@greatwalthamparishcouncil.co.uk

This is a summary of some items discussed at the January 2026 meeting of the Parish Council. For full details, please check out the full and approved minutes of all Council meetings on the parish website (e-voice.org.uk/greatwalthamparish).

Our city and county councillor, Mike Steel, reported that Essex County Council (ECC) were still scheduled to take place in May 2026, followed by the new unitary authority elections in 2027, with ECC then being abolished in 2028. He also reported that the Chelmer Park & Ride Saturday service is to be cancelled, although the hospital service is continuing.

We noted the results of our annual survey. Although the survey had front cover prominence in the November edition of Parish News and on social media, the response rate was disappointing – just 38 returns from ~960 households in the parish. Therefore, while respondents offered some useful qualitative feedback, it was agreed that generally the output data can only really complement, rather than fully inform, the Council's considerations of its activities. As we say in our annual report elsewhere in this edition, to help us focus on the work and activities you are most concerned about we need your ongoing input and insights, so please take the time to complete our surveys.

An important item at each of our meetings is where we monitor progress on actions agreed previously and to note when have been completed. This month we had updates on developments in relation to, *inter alia*, tree maintenance at the Brook Mead allotment site, work on reviewing byelaws for our recreation grounds and village greens, speed enforcement results on the B1008 at Ford End, the Great Waltham Recreation Ground play area project, and work to replace the wooden posts and renovate the chains around the war memorial at Banbury Square. After making decisions it is important to document that what was agreed has been delivered.

The Council's next monthly meeting will be on Monday 16th March 2026 at The Pavilion, Great Waltham Recreation Ground, starting at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend our public meetings. Steve Gilbert Chair

GREAT WALTHAM TRIP TO CEYRAT 21st – 27th JULY 2026

£320 for adults, £160 for children.

We're visiting our twinned town of Ceyrat in July

Would you like to come?

Are you a family with children/teenagers?

Are you a single person, or a couple, or friends?

Are you grandparents looking after the grandkids for the holidays?

Why not join us for a friendly, busy week?

The charge covers travel and there will be no expenses when you get there. You will stay with a French family and they will look after you. Ceyrat Twinning will organise interesting free trips and activities for the whole group, making sure that they are suitable for all ages.

We will travel there by coach from Great Waltham, and ferry from Dover to Calais – a long journey but stress free; no lugging suitcases around, worrying about traffic, or catching flights or a ferry. It's all done for you.

Contact Joanna Steel on joanna.2.steel@btinternet.com **immediately to book**, or if you have any queries. And look at our webpage on

e-voice.org.uk/greatwalthamparish for information and loads of photos.

A FEW MYTH-BUSTERS...

Can't speak French? It doesn't matter. But it's a great opportunity for kids learning French at school..

The kids will be bored. No!!! The excursions and activities in France will be suitable for all ages.

Not brave enough? Just go for it! **This year** is your best opportunity because it's our turn to go to France. Don't miss it!

Just come and enjoy the French way of life, great food and wine, beautiful countryside, good company and sunshine!



Felsted Choral Society

Handel Messiah

Saturday, 28 March, 7pm

Soloists: Jessica Edom-Carey, Alto soloist tbc,
Adam West and Theo Perry

Music Director: Thomas Duchan
Conducting Felsted Choral Society and Orchestra

Tickets £20 – programme & interval drink included
Under 18s Free ticketsource.co.uk/felstedchoralsociety
(No Booking Fee)

Venue: Holy Cross Church, Station Road, Felsted
CM6 3DG

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Thank you for all of the contributions to this edition of the Great Waltham Parish News. Please send your contributions for the next issue, together with any enquiries or advertising requests, by email to: gwparishnews@gmail.com. **The last date for inclusion in the April issue is March 19th 2026**