

Volume 2 – Issue 2
Spring 2013

Langford & Ulting News



Langford is bloomin' beautiful

This photo shows a blackthorn bush in full bloom in Ulting Lane – a sight guaranteed to raise the spirits and make you feel glad to be alive. The bush gets its name from its blackish bark and dense, stiff, spiny branches. Not only is it beautiful when in flower, but the fruit - sloes - are black with a purple-blue waxy bloom, ripening in autumn, and harvested in October or November after the first frosts. The fruit is similar to a small damson or plum, suitable for preserves, but rather tart and astringent for eating, and is more usually found as one of the ingredients in so-called 'sloe-gin' and it makes a very passable country 'wine.'

Blackthorn hedges used to be common in England as proof against livestock. Blackthorn wood takes a fine polish and is often used for tool handles and canes. Straight blackthorn stems have traditionally been made into walking sticks, and the Irish Shillelaghs and in the British Army, blackthorn sticks are still carried by commissioned officers of the Royal Irish Regiment.

The Blackthorn is the first of the flowering bushes to come out, closely followed by Hawthorn or 'May' but to many it is much denser in bloom and far prettier. So now is the time to get out and about and view the beautiful countryside in our villages (see page 5). Sights like this reinforce the reasons that we chose to live in a rural location, and why we need to ensure that they are protected for future generations to come. Remember that birds will be setting up their nests for this year's breeding season, so do take care not to disturb them. Last year was a very rough time for our native species and we need to give them every consideration we can so they survive for another year. See more on page 8.

In this issue

Editor's Note	2
The Neighbourhood Plan and 'Think Local'	2
Meet your councillors Richard Perry	3
Places of Worship.....	3
Did you know? Sugar Mill in Ulting	4
Explore your local area	5
New Local History Recorder.....	6
Maldon Golf Club	6
Future Emergency Numbers	7
Community Diary.....	7
Do your bit to save the planet – Feeding the wild birds in your garden.....	8

EDITOR'S NOTE

I know it seems strange in February to be wishing you all a Happy New Year, but that's the way the issues go! Let's hope that 2013 is better (and drier) than 2012. Don't forget that we are looking for additional sources of funding for this excellent little publication, so do get in touch if you would like to help. To encourage you in this train of thought I am delighted to be able to tell you that our Newsletter was shortlisted for a prize in the RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) magazine competition, which is a great feather in our cap. Although we didn't win this time around, it is very encouraging that we were thought good enough to be shortlisted to the top ten newsletters in Essex at our first attempt, and we now know what to aim for in the future.

Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you very much to everyone who returned their questionnaire about the Parish Plan despite some of you being unhappy about providing such information feeling that it was intrusive. The questionnaire was structured in such a way as to gather as much information as possible, anonymously, to give a 'picture' of our community in terms of demographic, travelling patterns, schooling needs, etc. This will feed into the sustainability aspects which will need to be addressed as part of producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

This opportunity comes about as a result of the Localism Act which received Royal Assent on 15th November 2011 after eleven months' parliamentary scrutiny, and was fully implemented in April 2012 by The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The government published the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. This replaced the old lengthy and top down planning regulations and effectively put localism at the heart of future planning. Whatever plan we finally achieve will have to be in step with the Local Development Plan of Maldon District Council, which should be delivered in 2014, and this, in turn has to be in tune with both Essex County Council policy and Central Government policy.

This is a wonderful chance for our very small Parishes to have some autonomy in deciding what we as a community want to happen within our villages in the future; effectively it gives us a 'voice' and allows us to have aspirations and a degree of control. If you haven't already completed the form please do, as the larger the number of residents we have responding

the better the chance of reflecting the widest possible view. Please return any completed forms to Vicky Anfilogoff at Fords Farm House, Hatfield Road, Langford or to the village shop at St. Giles' Church.

Further copies are available if you have mislaid yours. We hope the information we gather will enable us to put forward plans that will enhance our two villages and endeavour to meet the requirements of our inhabitants for years to come. And while we're on this subject ...

Local shops and services are the backbone of the economy and the Think Local campaign is a programme which aims to keep money in the local economy. You can be part of this scheme by supporting your local shops and businesses and to

'Think Local' before buying goods or services. Don't forget that travelling to out-of-town shopping areas often costs you more, as instead of the few items you went in for you end up buying more than you need. Local shops, especially those within walking distance, also mean that you get exercise as well as saving petrol! Local shops are often very happy to stock what you use on a regular basis, so do talk to them.

To that end, the team at the Heavenly Supplies in St. Giles' Church, Langford have now regularised the opening times to avoid confusion. So, from March 2013 the shop will be open **every day from 10-12**. But it has been noted that it has not been very well supported during the week, and if it is not used sufficiently then it will only open at weekends as our volunteers are only there to serve the village, not themselves. **So if you don't use this wonderful facility it will cease to operate** and that will be a very backward step. Why not drop in for a cup of tea and a chat and see how they can help you.

Parish Council

www.essexinfo.net/langford-ulting/

Chairman – Andrew Tween (Tel: 01245 381598)
andrewtween@btinternet.com

Vice-Chairman – Irene Allen (Tel: 01621 855447)
IreneA@leprahealthinaction.org

Councillors:

Vicky Anfilogoff (Tel: 01621 840532) anfilogoff@gmail.com

Kathy Palmer (Tel: 01245 382417) Katherinepalmer@live.co.uk

Richard Perry (Tel: 01621 841518) Millhousehotel@uk2.net

Clerk – Jenny Clemo (Tel: 01245 380852) Ultingcattery@gmail.com

Meet your Councillors . . .

Councillor Richard Perry



Richard became a Parish Councillor in May 2011 and is delighted to represent Langford until the next Council elections which will take place in May 2015. He lives at the Mill

House Hotel in Langford. He said "I have been operating this Hotel for about 12 years which in turn has promoted tourism in our area so I am very familiar with the area and have met many local people and made lots of friends. I really enjoy living in our pretty, historic village with its rivers, canals and open spaces and will be a strong advocate for preserving these in the future together with our culture and heritage."

Richard has already been on, and is booked to go on many more courses for Councillor training including modules on producing village plans, planning law workshops and emergency planning which, he says, will hopefully enable him to be the best public servant that he can be. Richard also sits on Heybridge Parish Council where he holds positions in the Budget, Planning and Personnel Committees. He said "I see no conflict of interest

in holding more than one Council seat and in fact you will find many Councillors hold more than one position and some often go on to become County Councillors or MEPs so who knows what the future may bring?"

Richard especially enjoys spending time on the canal in his small boat and enjoying our local wildlife which he seeks to protect; he also has a strong aversion to animal cruelty. To illustrate this point Richard said "In spring 2011 on the river at the Mill House Hotel the ducks were causing a terrible commotion and upon investigation I found a mother duck trying to drown one of its ducklings, so together with some of our guests we rescued this really tiny half drowned ball of fluff. I put her in the warm and phoned around the local rescue centres and the RSPCA. It soon became apparent that no one could help me so after some researching on the internet and a short trip to the really helpful 'Pet Shop Girls' in Heybridge to buy cages and other supplies, we were ready to bring our new member of the family "Daisy" back to life. The first couple of days were worrying but after this she perked up.

I found Daisy an old bath that I kept behind the Hotel and put river water in it for her to have her daily swim with fresh weed and water fleas to eat and build her size up. Normally ducklings' parents smear a film of oil over them to keep their heat in and the cold out, but now I was Daisy's surrogate mother the responsibility now fell to me (much to my Hotel guests' amusement)! I used a hair dryer on her which Daisy really loved and would often fall asleep while being pampered.

I then bought a rabbit run which we situated next to our river for Daisy to go in during the day where she watched and mimicked the other ducks and became used to them, and after several months when she became fully grown we let her go. She hung about for several days with the other ducks and was very assertive but then she disappeared and hopefully now has ducklings of her own."

If this spring you rescue any ducklings and want any help or advice, please call Richard at the Mill House Hotel on 01621 841518.

Places of Worship

St. Giles' Church, Langford

Rev. Peter Low – 01621 841274

Email: Revpeterlow@sky.com

www.stgileslangford.org.uk

Services at 9 a.m. every week

1st Sunday – Holy Communion

2nd Sunday – Matins

3rd, 4th, 5th Sunday – Holy Communion

All Saints Church, Ulting

Rev. Stephen Northfield – 01245 380958

Email: SRNorthfield@aol.com

Services of Holy Communion at 9 a.m. on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month

Did you know?

Sugar Beet Mill in Ulting

Did you know that the first sugar beet mill in England



was built in Ulting? In 1832 Robert and James Marriage visited France to study the process of extracting sugar from beet – a crop then grown widely in this region. As a Quaker

family, they wanted to stop the slave trade between Africa and the West Indies, and believed that refining sugar from locally grown beet would reduce the importation of cane sugar and thereby the use of slave labour. Their aim was to promote the abolition of slavery by producing sugar by 'free labour' in England.

They formed a company, and built a steam mill (at a cost of £2,000) half a mile downstream from the existing Hoe Mill. It was sited just upstream of the present Sugar Mill (or Sugar Baker's) Cottages, in Ulting Lane, where the river and the lane are at their closest), using the most modern sugar production principles. The mill employed thirty people, comprising men, women and children.

The beet roots were drawn and rasped, then crushed to a pulp in the mill. This pulp was bagged up and subjected to a pressure of over 100 tons. The liquid expressed from this process was boiled to the consistency of molasses and then clarified. Local farmers also benefited from the process, as the residue pulp, in a form similar to oil cakes, was widely used by local dairy farmers to feed their cattle. However, various influential businessmen with interests in the West Indies, or perhaps shares in the large sugar companies, joined forces to oppose the new initiative, and after two years the mill failed through lack of capital.

No trace of the original mill building remains today, and it is only commemorated by local names – 'Sugar Bakers Hole' is a favourite spot on the river for anglers. However, close inspection of the banks of the river at the point closest to Ulting Lane, reveals

hints of raised banks suggesting the existence of buildings in former times, and in the grazing meadow on the south bank there are several very old boundary posts. Many suggestions have been put forward as to why they are there, including one that implies that the emerging Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation Company might have been delineating their property when the sugar mill was being built but, of course, research to date has not been able to verify this.

So there is nothing left today to bear witness to this altruistic venture except the cottages that bear its name; but even these are not the



original buildings. These were built in 1870 by E.C. Brook Peachel, to replace the original workers cottages after he had bought the Ulting Estate in 1857. They bear the date of their construction, and the initials ECBP. Local information suggests that the original cottages were called Hall Cottages, and formed part of the Ulting Hall estate, and were renamed when the former houses were demolished after the sugar mill venture failed.



It is a great shame that such a worthy project failed, but its endeavour to bring slavery to an end is one of which we should all be very proud. The Marriage family have an important place in Essex sugar making history, and shows that they were a family ahead of their time because it wasn't too long before sugar beet became a regular crop along the river.



Explore your local Area

Keeping our Footpaths Open



As always at the start of a new year, our thoughts turn to the bulge in our midriffs and ways of getting rid of it. What better way than to get out in the fresh air and explore your local area. We have an abundance of excellent footpaths in our parishes – some following the course of rivers or canals, some around picturesque farmland, and some along old disused railway lines and farm tracks. Walking costs nothing, and can show amazing results in quite a short space of time, as well as improving our awareness of the beauty of our surrounding countryside. In our recent questionnaire, many of you stated that one of the best things about living in your parish was being in the country, so let's get out there and keep our footpaths open.

The laws in England and Wales provide you with the right to walk, ride and cycle along footpaths, and bridleways, but if you are not sure what the difference is this can be confusing, and so to help you, here are a few pointers:

Footpaths – These are meant for pedestrians only. You are allowed to walk your dog as long as it is under your close control. When walking a dog, you must ensure that it keeps to the public footpath and does not trespass into nearby properties. You must also clean up after your dog if it fouls on a footpath. Prams, pushchairs or wheelchairs can also be used on a footpath.

Bridleways – These are meant for walkers, horse riders and cyclists; cyclists are expected to give way to walkers and horse riders. Motor cars, mini motors and motorcyclists are not allowed on bridleways.

Please also note the following:

- Do not disturb or harm any wildlife found on a public right of way.
- Do not drop or leave litter – take it home; animals can die from ingesting litter.
- Do not trespass on lands adjoining footpaths or bridleways – you can be prosecuted!
- Always close gates after you.

Your Parish Councillors walk these paths at least once a year to ensure that they are in a fit condition to be used, and we report back to the County Council department responsible if there are any problems. If you find any problems i.e. finger posts missing, potholes etc. do let your Councillors know and we will ensure that something is done about it.

In future issues we will be showing you the various footpaths in our two parishes that you may not realise are there and we hope this will encourage you to get out and explore your local area and appreciate just what a beautiful part of the country we live in. Our two photographs here show part of what used to be the old railway line from Witham to Maldon, so why not take a stroll along here one day to Maldon instead of taking the car? As well as improving your health, it will improve the environment with one less car journey.

In the next issue we will tell you something about



the railway line that used to run through Langford, but why not now enjoy its legacy – a beautiful walk in the countryside, with no traffic!



Local History Recorder

For many years, the Local Historical Recorder for Langford and Ulting has been Dr. Patrick Chaplin, but he has now decided to step down from this post. As you may know, Patrick spent a large part of his youth in Langford, and although he now lives in Maldon, his interest in local history has not changed, as witnessed by the book on Langford that he and Irene Allen are currently finalising prior to publication. Patrick very kindly suggested to the Parish Council that Irene should replace him as Local History Recorder, and she is delighted to accept the position.

So what is a Recorder? They are all volunteers, and although not necessarily historians, most of them have a working interest in local or family history. Many already have other roles in the community and, as you know, Irene is a churchwarden and parish councillor, and as she has lived in the village since 1957, she brings a wealth of experience, interest and local knowledge to the work. So if you have any queries about the history of Langford or Ulting, or any information to impart, do get in touch with her Irenea@leprahealthinaction.org or 01621 855447 and she will be delighted to hear from you.

Parish Council Precept

Parish councils are funded principally by an annual precept. Income and expenditure for the financial year are calculated annually in the form of estimates. The net amount is added to Local Council Tax which is collected by Maldon District Council. Parish councils do not receive direct Government funding; any additional money relies on funding through grants or funding awards. During 2012/13 six streetlights and the churchyard fence and gate at Ulting were replaced. (The gate was funded by Mr. Austin in memory of his wife, Joy).

At the Parish Council meeting in January, parish councillors agreed that the precept for 2013/14 would remain the same as last year at £6700. For a Band D property this works out at an annual cost of £58.08 (Langford) and £38.48 (Ulting). The main items of expenditure include: administration costs, elections, insurance, cutting the grass at both churchyards, streetlighting (Langford), maintaining the tractor mower and repairs to churchyard fences. The Neighbourhood Plan requires funding and a provision for this has been made. CML have kindly sponsored the newsletter for the last two years but we are looking for new sponsors so that this publication can continue.

Maldon Golf Club



Take the road beside the Museum of Power in Langford down to Beeleigh Falls and go over the bridge to the Club House. Set in the attractive golf course between the river and the canal, the Club House is available for hire for private functions with bar and excellent catering. Play Bridge? You can join the once a month bridge drive in the Club House also. Play golf? Green fees are available as well as membership for all on a golf course which, although only nine holes, is not the easiest to play – mind the canal and the river! Lessons available with a PGA professional.

Back in 1891 a small band of local men from different walks of life decided to form the Maldon Golf Club and land was decided upon. Forty-two members were ready to play. In 1914 a Club House was built and also ladies and juniors were encouraged to join. Numerous trees were gradually planted and now provide a completely different look to the landscape and sustain much wildlife. The swans return every year to the canal to nest and sit with their family quite happily on the golf course.

Members have various social events to enjoy and



participate in: Coffee mornings for all, lunches, a quiz evening, auctions, holidays to play golf in the sun and, of course, a Christmas party. Competitions and functions are organised to raise money for different charities each year – the current being 'Music for All.' So join us at Maldon Golf Club and get into golf, new members welcome, or have your party in the Club House. For information ring 01621 853212 or check www.maldon-golf.co.uk for full information

Future Emergency Numbers



NHS 111 will be operational nationally by April 2013. It will take over from the current NHS Direct 0845 4647 service, which ceases at the end of March. The introduction of NHS 111 will affect everyone – patients, staff and services.

NHS 111 is for when services are closed or for when people just don't know what to do for the best. It does not replace the usual direct contact between patients and their GP, dentist, pharmacy or other primary care service. NHS 111 will offer a new way to call your local NHS when it's not a life threatening situation, but you need urgent attention. Dial 111 and a call adviser will give you advice or guide you to the right local service, and even book you in for an appointment in some cases. The aim is to make life simpler for patients who need urgent, unplanned and out of hours care, so that people go to the right place at the right time – and not just to a hospital accident and emergency department because that's the only known service available.

As more urgent care services are developed, such as rapid assessment units and integrated care teams, neither the public nor clinicians can necessarily know about everything. With NHS 111 it doesn't matter, they will get you to the right place. The effectiveness of the system relies on a comprehensive Directory of Services (DoS) and an agreed clinical governance framework, including referral protocols. The North Essex 111 project team is building the DoS with advice and development from all service providers and clinical commissioners in north Essex.

- All calls to NHS 111 are free, even from mobile phones.
- The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- 999 is still the number to ring in a life-threatening emergency.
- When you dial 111, you speak to a team of highly trained call advisers, supported by experienced nurses. Call advisers use a clinical assessment system to assess needs and get people to the right care.
- The possible outcome of the call could be:
 - Information, advice and reassurance that will help with self-care
 - A referral to an NHS service, or suggestions about contacting an alternative service
 - An ambulance dispatched without delay.

Community Diary – February – May 2013

Tuesday 5th March - Parish Council Meeting LUVH 7.30 p.m.

Sunday 17th March – Science Sunday – Museum of Power. Adults £5, Concessions £4, children under 15 £2.

Sunday 31st March – Eastern Steam Gala – Museum of Power, Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children under 12 free. & Easter Day services in our two churches.

Tuesday 16th April – Langford Parish Meeting – LUVH 7.30 p.m.

Sunday 21st April – Lilleshall Steam Day – Museum of Power, Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children 5-16 £2.50, Children under 5 free

Sunday 5th May – Miniature Railway Running – Museum of Power – Free entry to grounds

Sunday 19th May – Old Tyme Rally – Museum of Power, Adults £6, Concessions £5, Children under 12 free

Tuesday 28th May – Ulting Parish Meeting – Crouchman's Barn 7.30 p.m.

Sunday 30th May – DOT Outdoor Theatre Company – Finding Alice – Museum of Power 7.30 p.m.
(Gates open at 6.30 p.m.) Tickets £12 in advance, £14 on the night.

The Oval Park appeal has now been postponed to June. If you are planning to attend please contact the Parish Clerk, Jenny Clemo, so she can give MDC some idea of numbers



Do your bit to save the planet - Feeding wild birds in your garden

Did you take part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch 2013 on 26-27 January?



Last year's very wet conditions proved devastating for our wild birds, especially ground-nesting ones. Supplementing garden birds' diet with extra food – especially in the winter - can be a real life-saver, but can also help you. Birds get used to coming for food in your garden and will search for greenfly, caterpillars and snails during the rest of the year – mutual support.

When should I stop? Some people believe you should stop (gradually) once winter is over and more natural foods are available; others say that stopping increases the stress to birds when they are already under pressure building nests, defending territories etc. Try not to hang peanuts in the spring as young birds cannot digest them and they could die, but all other food is acceptable. There should be plenty of natural food in the garden in summer - caterpillars, greenfly etc. - in abundance, but do continue feeding, especially with wild bird seed mix.

Where? Hanging food is ideal for members of the tit family, so using a peanut or seed dispenser is fine. Site it high enough up so that cats can't get at it. Put it near roses or other shrubs where you may have greenfly or caterpillars – they will be found too! If the food is too exposed, the birds may be in danger from sparrowhawks, so provide cover nearby, like trees or hedges. Don't site the food near nest boxes, as the busy atmosphere will put birds off nesting. Also, don't forget the ground feeders. Put food on the lawn too – well away from shrubs which can be hiding a cat – but don't put too much out at once; if it's still there when night comes, the rodent population will flourish! If you have old trees, smear fats and nuts into crevices in

the trunk, which nuthatches, treecreepers and woodpeckers adore.

Fresh water should be provided at all times, in a shallow container so birds can drink and bath without danger of drowning. If the bird bath is on the ground or in the form of a pond, then other animals, such as hedgehogs will use it and it is important to have sloping sides so that they can get in and out.

What?

- High energy foods, various nuts and seeds
- Soaked bread (white or brown) – dry bread swells in the stomach
- Leftovers, e.g. cake, cooked rice etc. are fine, but no spicy or salty foods, or those that have 'gone off'
- Apples, cut in half and put on a table or the ground are excellent for blackbirds and robins.

Why? People have fed birds for many years simply for their own pleasure, but there is more to it than that. The massive loss of habitat in the wider countryside means that birds are now very dependent upon us for survival. The best gardens are those that provide a wide range of natural foods, shelter and water. But even these struggle to support the numbers of birds seeking food in winter. By supplementing their diets with extra food, you are, in a way, maintaining a falsely high population of birds in your garden, and once you have started feeding it would be disastrous to them if you stopped as there is simply not the wild food available. So please help our wild birds – life would be empty without them.

Newsletter Items

Don't forget that if you have an item of interest you would like to share, please send it to IreneA@leprahealthinaction.org or to 11 Ulting Lane, Langford CM9 6QB. We are always in the market for local news stories. If you are new to the village, or have mislaid any of them, back issues of the newsletter are available and can be forwarded to you on request, or pick up a copy from the 'Heavenly Supplies'.

