



RETTENDON & BATTLESBRIDGE NEWSLETTER ★ OCTOBER 2020

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 Please note the views contained within are offered by individuals/organisations privately and not in conjunction with the compiler or the Rettendon and Battlesbridge Newsletter organisation.
 Contributions for next Newsletter to be with RetBatNews@gmail.com, by 18th of the month

Battlesbridge and Rettendon Events				
To publicise event here, please notify the compiler on RetBatNews@gmail.com .				
EVENT	DATE / DAY	TIME	VENUE	ORGANISATION
Parish Council Meeting	Tuesday, 27 th October	7:30pm	Virtual meetings held online via Zoom	Rettendon Parish Council
Look on the website or Facebook for details.			https://e-voice.org.uk/rettendonparishcouncil/	
REGULAR EVENTS				
Sunday Service	Sundays	11am	Battlesbridge Free Church	
Sunday Service	Sundays	11:15am	All Saints Church, Rettendon	
Pre-school	Monday - Thursday	Mornings	Rettendon Memorial Hall	Pre-school
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY				
A.G.M.	Tuesday, 17 th November	7:30pm	Telephone Conference	Rettendon Horticultural Soc.
Parish Council Meeting	Tuesday, 24 th November	7:30pm	Online – see Facebook	Rettendon Parish Council
MOBILE LIBRARY – 3 week intervals between visits				
South Hanningfield Village Hall Salforal Close	Tuesday	12:25pm to 12:55pm 1:45pm to 2:15pm	6 th & 27 th October, 17 th November	
Goose Cottages	Friday	9:40am to 10:10am	2 nd & 23 rd October, 13 th November	

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, RETTENDON

The good news is that church services have resumed at last, however the not so good news is (like in the shops) you have to wear a mask. We are seated two metres apart and are not allowed to serve liquids. These regulations are not from the Church of England but from the Government.

Another casualty is the harvest festival in its usual format has been cancelled for this year. We are however still making an appeal for long life food, dried food and tinned food so that we can support HARP, as we usually do at Harvest time. HARP (Homeless Action Research Project) is the organisation that cares for the homeless in the Southend area. There is a great demand for their services as unemployment is soaring in the area. We as a Church community are trying to support some of our fellow citizens who are having a difficult time

The Annual Meeting of the Parochial Church Council will be held in the church following the 11-15am service. The meeting will start around midday on Sunday 27th September.

Jane Fallows Churchwarden on 01245 400394

Newsletter Appeal

This newsletter is distributed free-of-charge to every household in the Parish and we wish to keep it that way. Unfortunately the cost of printing and ancillaries means we are reaching the end of the funds already kindly donated. Unless we have a cash injection the newsletter will have to stop in the New Year.

We cannot go back to the way it was funded, because of the necessary changes we have made.

We know a lot of people wish it to continue, so we are having to plead for some donations to keep it going. Contact the compiler for details.

We would like to thank all those who have already contributed: individuals, groups, businesses - without which we could not have continued for so long.

Rettendon Memorial Hall

Just as we got hopeful about possibly having a group meeting or two, down came the shutters again. BUT

Our **Pre-School** continues to function in splendid isolation without any interference from the older age groups. The young fry should be able to grow without fear and since the rest of us are able to Facebook and natter over garden fences for our own social needs, for the time being we must be creative, responsible, grown-ups and do our best remotely!

You may have spotted that the front of the hall now has the **community herb garden** with herbs. The garden gnomes had been holding off to avoid the hot weather just when the plants need watering to establish them. Now it is getting a little wetter, and colder, they can be put in to grow for next year.



There is quite a variety, and we hope to put up a list to say what they all are. If nothing else - try crushing a leaf and sniffing for the smell. Everyone should be able to reach a few as there is also a bed along the pathway, near the front entrance to the hall.

You can reach the Booking Clerk, Dianne Francombe, on 01245 400297 for future dates in 2021.

We wish all our customers in the wider community to be aware that we are acting with their care in mind.

Hall Management Committee

BELL FIELDS CHARITIES: STATEMENTS FROM ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.

Rettendon Parish Council statement re judgement

The members of Rettendon Parish Council (RPC) are pleased to have achieved resolution regarding the long-running dispute about who are the valid trustees of the two charities associated with the Bell Fields. The final judgment was handed down by the court on 14 August 2020 and confirms that those appointed by RPC on 25 July 2017 (for a tenure of 4 years) are indeed the trustees.

The dispute was important because, for the nearly 160 years since the fields were allotted for the benefit of residents of Rettendon, it has been the parish council that has either managed the Bell Fields directly or by appointing trustees (each for a limited tenure of 4 years). With parish council elections every 4 years, residents have been able to determine who are their parish councillors and hence been able to exert influence over how the Bell Fields are managed. A small group of people, previously appointed by RPC for 4 years, took the position that they had become autonomous and able to appoint further trustees themselves. RPC's view was this position was without legal foundation, a view subsequently supported by our solicitor and then by expert legal counsel, and ultimately by the court.

There is to be a "consequential hearing" in November to determine other aspects of this dispute, so it is best that we limit this statement to the judgment itself and provide residents with a further update once the consequential matters have been also been resolved.

Rettendon Parish Council

Statement by the Defendants of the case regarding the Bell Fields Charities

We would like to say Thank You to all those who supported us.

Back in 2016 the Parish Council (PC) itself was advised by Birkett Long, one of the leading Charity Solicitors in Essex, that "once appointed the Trustees become self governing in accordance with the various Acts such as the Charities Act 2011 and Trustee Act 1925". This led us to believe we were the true Trustees of the Bell Fields Charities. The PC subsequently appointed Tees Law who advised differently, but this caused us, supported by a number of villagers, to question the motives of the majority of the PC.

Other actions by the PC caused us alarm in relation to the security and protection of this cherished open space, including

1. The cancellation of the purchase of one acre of land at the end of Meadow Road, with access, for starter and assisted housing of youngsters, and the elderly of Rettendon, together with an extension of the Sonters Down recreation area. This cancellation was looked into by the then Parish Clerk and he thought it could be unlawful.
2. A subsequent suggestion by Tees that the Bell Field Charities be disbanded.

Although The Charity Commission accepted that the legal issues could only be settled by a court, they ruled that litigation would not be in the charity's interest. Two mediation sessions were held, but we were unable to reach a satisfactory conclusion. We did not understand why the PC felt the need to regain control of the fields as we felt we were running them perfectly well, but they would not budge and it cannot be denied there was animosity between the parties. The PC had, in fact, started legal action against ourselves *and* the Charity Commission even before mediation. The case had to resolve conflicts between various possibly relevant laws, and ultimately the Judge ruled in the PC favour.

We hope the outcome will not affect the security of this village asset, which in any event is under the protection of the Charity Commission.

We sincerely believed our efforts were to protect the Bell Fields for the residents of Rettendon. They are an extremely important Parish asset. They are not owned by the PC.

We hope that this issue is now concluded, the matter can be laid to rest, and divisions in the village healed, although there is to be a consequential hearing in late November, the outcome of which we will report to the Newsletter.

Yours very sincerely Roy Hart and fellow defendants.

News from the Bell Fields Trustees

As residents may be aware, the judgement handed down in August confirms the trustees of the Upper and Lower Bell Fields Charities as those listed in the last newsletter. Their term of office will be for four years from July 25th 2017. We have met several times since the judgement to identify and deal with any urgent items and to start planning projects to increase the benefit to residents of these wonderful parish assets.

We found that there was no public liability insurance in place with either charity and have now put this in place.

We met recently with representatives of South Woodham Ferrers Football Club (who rent the Upper Bell Field and are responsible for maintaining it). They explained that the drainage, installed by the Parish Council in 2015, enables them to play during wet weather when many of their other pitches are flooded. However, following the recent prolonged dry spell, and shrinkage of the underlying clay, the pitch is currently unusable for matches, though it is still used for training. We are discussing next steps with SWFFC to determine what additional improvements could be made to the pitch to make it available for matches.

Our thanks to a local resident who has generously volunteered to cut the grass verges surrounding the fields. Of course any further offers of help are very welcome, as are any ideas about how the fields could be of greater benefit to more residents.

Finally, we consider ourselves privileged to have been appointed by Rettendon PC and entrusted with maintaining these fields. The charitable purpose of each field was set out nearly 160 years ago and our straightforward intent is to continue to pursue each charity's stated purpose.

Ray Ride home@rayride.plus.com (Chairman of the Trustees)

Rettendon Horticultural Society

Lots of planning - almost no events; so this year we thought we'd have a different sort of A.G.M. in November. There will be a mailed report to all members with the usual missives from the chair, secretary and treasurer. Then - as officers are elected annually, these will be arranged by cross-in-d-box.

We can suggest that a glass of wine will put some cheer into this procedure.

For those who prefer horticulture - take pictures for showing later and plant bulbs now.

Our best regards to you all.

Hazel Dale-Evans, chairperson.

tel: 01245 401538

As above the committee have decided that it would not be in the best interests, nor perhaps possible (the Society definitely do not want to waste money on any fines imposed for gatherings of lots of people), to hold the A.G.M. face-to-face. Instead an agenda will be sent out in one of two ways: email or post. Either way members will have the choice of joining our A.G.M. on a telephone conference call, or by email/post replies beforehand for voting on the items on the agenda, which is being sent out.

Hopefully all will become clear when you receive it.

We have had our diary committee meeting and have planned events for next year, similar to this year, but hopefully they will actually take place. A few additions we hope will keep the interest, or perhaps encourage you to join us.

Looking forward to 2021 - as I expect everyone is, and better health for everyone.

Secretary email: RetHSsec@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.essexinfo.net/rettendon-horticultural-society/>

Garden Notes

My lawn still looks quite happy - green despite the hot, dry times. But its not all grass - there are the usual wild flowers and a fair crop of white clover beloved by the bees.

I don't cut it too short - about 2 inches - then the roots don't get cooked and are protected also from my big feet tramping about. The edges get clipped rarely now - those big cracks in the naked 6" of earth on the edge of the flower beds simply leach valuable water when our butts are empty.

Most of the flowers are pretty tough - they are thickly planted and protect each other from the sun so the earth avoids being baked.

New plants get a drink every third day for about 2 weeks before I forget them to tend something else and they usually get the message.

So not much watering, less mowing, no weedkiller, and a twice yearly feed drop.

Aaaah I love my garden - be kind to yours too.

Mrs. McGregor

Newsletter Contributions - Have your say

Contributions from local individuals, societies or groups are encouraged. Please send to me, Barbara Wright, as soon as you can via e-mail: RetBatNews@gmail.com, or tel: 01245 321554

Or paper copy to 55 East Hanningfield Road. Mark for Newsletter.

John Meyn

Pat and family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to everyone for their cards, messages of sympathy, offers of support and donations towards a memorial bench in John's name. We were overwhelmed by the response to John's sudden death. Whilst this has been such a sad and difficult time for us, it was a huge comfort to know so many people cared. Any excess donations after the bench has been purchased will be shared between The Dog's Trust (Rosie's choice!) The British Heart Foundation and the Essex and Herts. Air Ambulance.

John loved the village, was passionate about the wildlife and enjoyed his daily walks with Rosie by his side. A life well lived in the beautiful place that is our village. He never stopped saying how lucky we were to live here - and he was absolutely right.

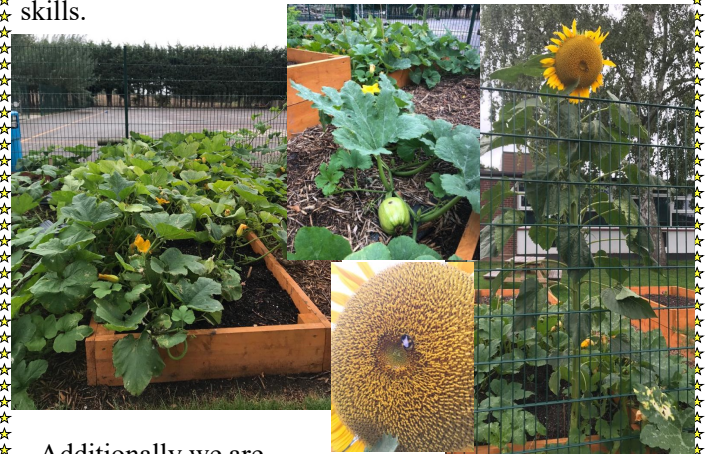
Our thanks, once again to you all.

School Gardening

We have been privileged to see the new raised beds in action at the school.

The pumpkins are growing well, with lots of growth, spreading out in all directions even into the playground. They are well cared for, and producing flower and vegetables. The sunflower in one garden is taller than the fence, and the birds will love it.

We would like to praise the children for their gardening skills.



Additionally we are hopeful that the courtyard will be able to spring flowers next year as the troughs have already been weeded and made ready for the spring bulbs. In fact by the time the newsletter gets to you the tulip and daffodil bulbs may have already been planted.

The geraniums are still flowering, but looking a bit leggy and past their best. It is planned to take cuttings to keep for next year, saving some money as well as teaching the children, not just economy, but how to grow new plants from old.

Barbara Wright and Jane Fallows.

The oldies are the best

Why did the elephant paint himself yellow - to hide upside down in a bowl of custard.
I've never seen an elephant in a bowl of custard... See, it works!

How do you get four elephants in a mini?

Two in the back and two in the front.

How do you get a rhinoceros in a mini?

Get one of the elephants out.

What football team never played together before?
Queen's Park Strangers.

Country Diary

As readers of this column know I live adjacent to Old Bell Lane. For the first two hundred yards it has a hard surface which is bordered on one side by houses but it then it turns into a footpath and bridleway. The lane is very pretty winding gently on its way to Rettendon village; It is bordered by trees, hedges, shrubs and brambles.

During lockdown it has been used by a lot of dog walkers, great. However people have come to adopt an unhealthy dreadful habit just putting your dog poo in a plastic bag and then hanging the bag on overhanging branches. This disfiguring habit scars the landscape and is totally unnecessary. There are dog poo disposal bins at either end of the footpath provided by the Parish Council. Those dog owners know who they are so please dispose of your dog's poo bags responsibly.

This little tale is a bit of a mystery. I was walking down the lane and the dog pulled me to one side. There not two yards away was an Owl sitting on a branch at about chest height. This Tawny Owl did not move and had his eyes closed. I did not disturb him and continued with my walk. The following day I returned but the owl was not there. Was it ill? Injured? Had it been taken by a predator? There was no sign of a disturbance. No-one has heard or seen this Owl, but me?

Jane Fallows 01245 400394

From our special correspondent:

Sent before the latest restrictions came in, but perhaps still valid anytime, anywhere, and anyhow.....

Townies or Locals?

Now that all those people on lockdown can get away on a short staycation. Townies going to the country and country dwellers dashing off to the big city. I found the following advice in a national newspaper.

How to spot a townie?

Here are a few things to be avoided if you want to blend in.

- # Wearing skin tight black exercise kit in public.
- # Carrying around a yoga mat and a water bottle.
- # Carrying a little dog under your arm.
- # Putting doggie clothes on your little dog.
- # Having a serious designer handbag.
- # Having music blaring out of your top down convertible.
- # Running away from seagulls.
- # Having a picnic hamper.
- # Wandering around with your phone in the air looking for a signal.

How to appear more like a local.....

- # Wear oversize sweaters with moth holes.
- # Know your tides and your knots.
- # Read the local newspaper.
- # Have a wet suit with holes in it and beach shoes.
- # Have a beaten up car.
- # Smile and say hello to strangers you meet on the path.
- # Hang about in the sea chatting especially on your mobile phone,
That should do it.



Battlesbridge Free Church

Our Christian Faith teaches us that God's gift of his Son, Jesus Christ, who came and lived a human life beside us 2000 years ago, was to reach out to show us, by his example, how to live our human lives for the greatest success and fulfilment. He was opposed by those who sought personal power, worldly wealth, gained by whatever means, those who felt that they had God's favour in their hands, but on their own terms. So they plotted, put him on trial by false pretences, abused and tortured him and finally had the death penalty imposed on him.

Jesus had been a man of the people; he worked all the hours that there were to bring healing, relief and wise advice to mostly everyday people. He could not be bribed, cajoled, out-witted, did not deceive or seek to curry favour. He had come from God, preached fervently for people to return to God's wise laws of behaviour in order to enjoy all that life offers, leading to peaceful existence with their fellow neighbours, above all, to treat each other as each wishes to be treated.

God did not abandon his Son, Christ, but brought Jesus back to life within three days after the most public and horrific death by crucifixion. Historically there are accounts of many people witnessing this resurrected Christ. At one point, he told his terrified disciples to touch him, examine him, to assure themselves he was not a ghost!

God's plan was that anyone, freely believing in the divinity of this risen Jesus, would have the faulty part of their lives, the wrong doings side of humanity, which separated them from God, obliterated. They would become totally accepted by God and were promised renewed life after their mortal death. Without accepting this gift of reprieve through Christ, mankind, at human death, would need to face a judgement on his earthly existence. All this is explained in the Bible's New Testament.

If ever there was a time when we needed to be able to lean on our loving God's care and hope, surely it is here and now in the year 2020.

June Edwards

PARISH COUNCIL contact details

Katherine Kane, Parish Council Clerk

rettendonparishcouncil@outlook.com 07811 254163

The Parish Council website is:

<https://www.essexinfo.net/rettendonparishcouncil/>

ESSEX HIGHWAYS - Report a problem website address:-

<https://www.essexhighways.org/transport-and-roads/tell-us/report-all-issues.aspx>

CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL

<https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/>

This newsletter can be found electronically on the website:-

<https://e-voice.org.uk/retbatnews/newsletters/>

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