



# RETTENDON & BATTLESBRIDGE NEWSLETTER ★ FEBRUARY 2021

Financed directly by residents and businesses in the area. Printed by Solopress, 9 Stock Rd, SS2 5QF

Prepared & distributed by over 30 volunteers within the parish. Issue number 393

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Contributions for next Newsletter to be with [RetBatNews@gmail.com](mailto:RetBatNews@gmail.com), by 18<sup>th</sup> of the month

EVENT	DATE / DAY	TIME	VENUE	ORGANISATION
Parish Council Meeting	Tuesday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	7:30pm	Virtual meetings online via Zoom	Rettendon Parish Council

Please check on the PC website or Facebook for details. <https://e-voice.org.uk/rettendonparishcouncil/>  
 Phone number to dial in is 0203 481 5237 Meeting number arranged at time of meeting.  
 Please get in touch with a Parish Council member, or the parish clerk, if you do not have access to the internet.

**PLEASE NOTE ALL CHURCH SERVICES ARE EITHER PRAYER AT HOME OR VIRTUAL SERVICES ON LINE. FURTHER DETAILS FROM [www.hrr-churches.org.uk](http://www.hrr-churches.org.uk) FOR ALL SAINTS', RETTENDON**

**Library Service Update:** Following the latest Government guidelines the mobile library service is suspended until further notice. <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/news/essex-library-services-during-lockdown/>

**WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.**

## Hidden Covid-19 cases in our community - Getting Tested if you have NO SYMPTOMS.



New Covid-19 testing centres are opening in Chelmsford for **people who feel well and have no coronavirus symptoms.** These centres are trying to find hidden cases in the Chelmsford area to help stop the spread of the virus in our city. These tests are aimed at *symptomless people in the Chelmsford area who can't work from home and their families.*

**Quick Testing.** - By appointment only to be booked: online, call 0333 772 6144, lines open 8am to 8pm every day, or email: [booking.confirmation@nhs.net](mailto:booking.confirmation@nhs.net). Results in around 30 minutes. **Where:** Central Baptist Church, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, CM1 1LN. Details of how to access the site and nearby parking will be available on booking.

**Take-Home Testing.** Test kits available to be collected and then done at home. Swabs are sent to a lab and you'll be contacted by the NHS Test and Trace team with your result. **Where:** The Cramphorn Studio entrance of Chelmsford City Theatres, Fairfield Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1JG. This site will be open between 11am and 3pm, Monday to Friday and parking is available close by at the Fairfield Road car park.

### Important thing to remember.

- If you have any symptoms of Covid-19 then you must use the NHS testing system to book a test in the usual way. <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/news/new-fast-covid-19-testing-centre-opens-in-chelmsford/>



## **ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, RETTENDON**

Sadly, we are again advised not to meet in church and so all our services are on-line.

All Saints' Church are working with St Nicholas Church in Rawreth and St Thomas Church in Hullbridge and so we will be live-streaming our Sunday worship from each in turn at 10:00am

We are also praying together on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 8:00 am, saying Morning Prayer together and again in the evening at 8:00 pm saying Compline (form of night prayer). Sometimes Compline has to be cancelled because of meetings but we will announce that on Facebook. We also say Compline on Sunday evenings.

To join us live, go to [www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches](https://www.facebook.com/groups/HRR.Churches) (this a group that you would need to join but you would be most welcome).

Services are then posted on our website [www.hrr-churches.org.uk/prayer-and-reflection](http://www.hrr-churches.org.uk/prayer-and-reflection) and on YouTube at [www.bit.ly/RJsYouTube](http://www.bit.ly/RJsYouTube)

It would be great to pray together – even if you can only manage occasionally!

**Richard Jordan, Parish Priest of St Thomas of Canterbury, Hullbridge, St Nicholas, Rawreth, and All Saints, Rettendon**

T: 01268 766 565 E: [rev.richard.jordan@gmail.com](mailto:rev.richard.jordan@gmail.com)  
W: [www.hrr-churches.org.uk](http://www.hrr-churches.org.uk)



**Richard Cannon Charity**, the oldest charity in the parish formed in 1605, makes a donation of £2,000 to Little Darwin's Nursery towards the repair of their broken heating system. The Nursery's cash flow this year has been badly affected by the current pandemic. **The picture shows Lucy Cook, Nursery Manager & Tom Sterry MBE, Trustee.**

### Pre-School

For the safety of pupils, parents and staff the Pre-school has decided not to reopen until at least after half-term in mid-February (15th - 19th).

A decision will be made nearer the time as to when it would be able to open safely for all.

If you have any queries please get in touch with **Pat Prebble on 07762909351**

**REMEMBER:** Keep your Social Distance (2m), wear a mask and wash your hands. *Help beat COVID.*

**As I see it.....**

4 years of hell fighting to keep our only asset, the Bell Fields, safe.

I look back to one year when travellers got on the field at 11o'clock at night. As I was the key holder I went with the police to try and reason with them. The abuse was endless. Finally we got them off on Saturday morning. This was one of many things that went on.

The Bell Field is where I have watched my son, who is now in his 50s, and my grandchildren, who are now in their 20s, play football while they were growing up. It's an asset we need to look after as trustees, and which we were advised to do. Then we received hundreds of pages of paper work from solicitors, some threatening letters, and during all this I lost my husband, he was my best friend and soulmate, which made it all the harder being on your own. Ray did a lot of work on the field, so I say to all the true villagers: we honestly thought we were doing the right thing, we are sorry it has cost a lot of money, the chair, Roy Hart, is the most honest man you could ever meet and without him we could never had done it. He is a true gentleman. He has been there for me after loosing Ray. Ray's words to me was "keep fighting to keep the football going". And although we aren't trustees now, we mustn't loose our football pitch.

Let's hope we can enjoy it for many years to come.

**x Pat Prebble**

**Ward Councillor's Report**



Happy New Year to everyone. For most of us seeing the end of 2020 could not come quick enough. Let's hope for better things this year. The lockdown continues, and so does the additional help for local businesses affected, which is being distributed via Chelmsford City Council, please look for updates on the website.

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

lots of links with information on this page, including help for residents from other agencies.

Many council staff are working from home, the Customer Service desk in the Duke Street offices has been closed during this lockdown, but can still be contacted online or by telephone. Council meetings continue to be held virtually, members are receiving regular updates from the CEO, I will pass on local information via this newsletter.

Thank you again, to the community minded residents helping those who cannot get out for essentials such as prescriptions or shopping. As we all try to observe the "stay at home" message and can't get out to visit neighbours and friends, online chats or just a simple phone call can be particularly helpful to those who live on their own.

At the moment, there are no plans to postpone the County Council or Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Elections due in May 2021. In the meantime, it might be worth registering for a postal vote. Just in case there are restrictions at the Polling Station with queuing. You can still vote at a Polling Station on the day, if you have not already submitted a postal vote. For more information, please visit <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/postal-and-proxy-votes/>

**Stay safe, kind regards, Cllr Paul Clark**

General website:- <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/>

**Battlesbridge Matters**

On flooding in Battlesbridge I have just purchased ten tons of sand for filling sand bags. Unfortunately I have run out of bags. I have had the main outfall sluice checked by the Environmental Agency.

On another note, if and when possible I will enter Battlesbridge into the Best Kept Village awards.

**Yours Very Sincerely, and Keep Well and Safe Roy Hart**

**A BIG THANK YOU**

Did you know we have a family of angels living in Rettendon Common? Us oldies were given some lovely home made cup cakes. You know there are a lot of us oldies living here In the East Hanningfield Road, Salforal Close area. I did not at first realise that this Christmas donation was not just in this part of the village but encompassed a much larger area.

This angel also cooked a fabulous Christmas dinner for those living on their own. A particularly elderly resident in Salforal Close was really upset when her carer did not come on Christmas day so our angels stepped in and provided the lady resident with a full Christmas dinner. This, in my view, was a very thoughtful and caring Christmas act.

I have not mentioned the caring angels names here as I am not sure they wished their names to be publicised. Who says that teenagers don't think of others. It is fabulous to know that such kindness exists.

**Jane 01245 400394**

I have also been asked by several people to put in a special **BIG THANK YOU** to these people, with especial mention to Monika for her lovely cakes. She has ensured everyone is looked after, putting a smile on their faces too. Thank you.

**Rettendon Memorial Village Hall**

Obviously the hall cannot open until such time as restrictions will allow. Luckily several groups have found other means to keep in touch.

The Bowling group chat to each other on the phone, ensuring their members are not isolated, and Knit and Natter keep each other entertained by way of WhatsApp showing off their projects and providing each other with lots of love and laughter.

**Hall Management Committee**

**Hall website:**

<https://e-voice.org.uk/rettendon-memorial-hall/>

**Hall Email:** [RettendonMemorialHall@gmail.com](mailto:RettendonMemorialHall@gmail.com)

**Christmas Crackers - Ho, Ho, Ho....**

Yes, like many we were locked down over Christmas, a most unreal situation but none the less a wonderful Christmas dinner. Christmas for many is a time with the family and in our case it was in prospect, an opportunity to see our newly arrived grandson who was five months old at Christmas. Pictures by email or zoom are fine but no substitute for the real thing and even the Santa hat complete with flashing light remained in the sock drawer. In a rash moment some Christmas crackers complete with silly hats appeared and the, 'oh god who wrote that' as Christmas jokes were exchanged.

*How do crocodiles communicate? By Snap Chat.  
Where do astronauts go for their milk? The milky way  
What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations? Tinsilitis.*

Go on have a chuckle and remember, it takes more muscles to frown than it does to laugh. Let us all look forward to a better 2021 and beyond.  
Ron Fallows.



**Hayes Park** - Unfortunately we have heard that the dreaded virus has visited the park. Thank goodness some have managed to get over it, and we do hope that those who are still struggling, or have caught it since, will get well soon. However, we send our heartfelt condolences to all who have lost loved ones at this time.

Please do let us know if we can be of any help to anyone in the Parish. Phone 01245 321554 if you need anything, even just a chat. If you leave a message and phone number we will get back to you - obviously we will not have gone far. **Barbara Wright**

### Rettendon Horticultural Society

I was rather hoping that my first article as the new Chairperson of the Society would be full of the joys of Spring to come. Alas, as I sit looking out of the window the garden is rapidly disappearing under water, the rain is horizontal and turning into sleet, my chickens are completely fed up having been closed in due to the threat of Avian flu and footpaths have disappeared in a sea of mud.

We had to cancel all our events last year apart from the Spring show which got in a few days before the lockdown started. We have put together a full calendar of shows and events for 2021 but already we have had to cancel the craft and cookery show planned for February. This year's Spring show due in March is looking like a non starter. I think we will have to set our sights on the Summer show in July by which time, let's hope, we have the dreaded virus under control. We have a plant sale in May which may be able to go ahead with a bit of luck.

Enough of the downside of life at the moment there are reasons to be cheerful:-

#### **Membership of the Society will be free for 2021.**

Despite the weather the garden is showing signs of waking up with bulbs showing through, buds are swelling and birds are prospecting nest boxes.

Hellebores are looking good.

RHS Hyde Hall remains open for individual exercise.

Snowdrops are coming out.

If you are interested in gardening or vegetable growing why not take advantage of our free membership for 2021 and aim to put some exhibits in the Summer show.

Keep safe and well, look forward to a new growing season and the end of lockdown.

#### **John Bruty Chairperson Rettendon Horticultural Society**

To take advantage of the free membership, and for members to join our WhatsApp group, please contact:-

**Barbara Wright, Secretary, on 01245 321554**

**or email: [RetHSsec@gmail.com](mailto:RetHSsec@gmail.com)**

**Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/rethortsoc/>**

### Would you like an Allotment in Rettendon?

Allotment Groups have seen a surge in interest in owning an allotment during the pandemic. The National Allotment Society said that local councils had reported big increases in the number of applications to join waiting lists-up to five fold in some cases.

Would you, or a member of your family, like to rent an allotment in Rettendon?

Please register your interest by Emailing or calling:

Glenys Jones-glenyskjones@hotmail.co.uk/ 07739 530611

Denise Fleming-denisefleming2011@gmail.com/07834 863570

We will work further to establish some allotments if enough interest is shown.

### **Battlesbridge Free Church**



It is with great sadness that it was agreed to close our little church at Battlesbridge once again, to aid in the fight against this dreadful virus. It is a joy to meet with friends to share in corporate worship in honour of our God in Jesus Christ. When closed, we have been glad to follow a virtual service each week. We can be together in spirit but we yearn to be able to meet physically, even if spaced apart, masked, having jelled out hands. The one-way system and muted singing could be faced, but this second closure and the reasons for its necessity, are very daunting.

But, we believe in a God of hope, a God who cares intimately for and with each one of us. This is whether we believe in him or not. His love encourages us to look beyond ourselves and to reach out to those for whom a phone call, text or even a letter, would lift them from the depression of feeling isolated. We do all need each other, especially during this rather fearful time that we are living in. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, is the most fantastic friend, companion and wise councillor. He offers himself to all. There is no examination, no test, no judgemental assessment, just open arms, beyond an open door. All it takes is for a person to sincerely ask for and accept his offer.

It is good that the Rettendon Bowlers have kept in touch with each other. It is good that the Rettendon Horticultural Society has continued to function through phoned meetings. It is good that so many have stepped in to help the isolated or lonely with shopping, etc. All goodness comes from the great God of all goodness. He says "Cast your cares upon me" and "I will be with you always". I might add "even to the far side of the Corona Pandemic". **June Edwards**

We would like to welcome Kevin and his crew to the Bell Pub, Rettendon Common. They will be cooking take-away meals. Phone 01245 400616 or 07961 552524 for details.

### **Country Diary - Winter Observations**

We have been encouraged by the Government to go outside and take a walk in the park, use the footpaths and woodlands and observe the nature around us at first hand. Outside my house my friend Helen and I (suitably distanced) have listened to a robin singing his heart out. On his daily visit this robin chooses the same branch on the same tree to sing his happy tune. Also a horde of sparrows visit my bird table daily to fight to feed on the bird feeders. The other day I counted 34 sparrows keenly and noisily feeding. You would be amazed how they quarrel and fight, they remind me of a school playground.

Starlings are regular visitors who with their vicious beaks come to the bird table to disturb the sparrows. The geese also come along flying over in their distinctive 'V' formation honking as they pass over to no doubt feed on the marram grass in the estuary. But winter is not just about the birds but the snowdrops are making an appearance — such heralds the spring. I know the aconites will shortly be bursting with their little yellow stars. The pity is I do not have any growing anywhere in my garden, but it is my 2021 'to do' list.

Anyone can take part in the Big Garden Bird Watch for one hour on either 29th, 30th or 31st January and record the bird types that visit your garden. Interested? then why not sign up at [rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://rspb.org.uk/birdwatch).

**Jane 01245 400394**

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Since the last newsletter, the Council have held three meetings.

In November the Chairman gave an update on the costs hearing in the Bell Fields dispute. He said the costs hearing had taken place and he had been surprised and disappointed that no costs order had been made, so that each party had to pay their own costs. The defendants had been required to deliver to Tees by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020 some 90 documents not previously handed over. He said that the trustees would then have two months to decide if they felt more documents were missing. The Parish Council had a limited amount of time to decide on any further action and he suggested an extra ordinary meeting should be held.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> December an extraordinary meeting was held. The land ownership of the Bell Fields was discussed. The current title deed covering the entire area mentions the Rettendon Bell Fields Trust which has no legal standing. The Council discussed the issue at some length and the Chairman said that that over the next few months motions would be brought to Council to work towards a stable, long-term resolution of this issue.

The Council also debated the three options outlined by Tees following the costs order. The options were to seek to appeal the judgment itself, seek to appeal costs or to take no further actions in this respect. All Councillors agreed that no further action should be taken.

The Council agreed their precept demand for 2021/22. Recognising the difficult year for many, it was agreed to hold the demand at last year's amount resulting in the Band D charge for a dwelling in the parish rising by a nominal amount of £0.01.

On 15<sup>th</sup> December the Council agreed to support the introduction of a clearway along Main Road, where parking on grass verges had caused severe damage and resulted in danger to both vehicles and pedestrians. Cllr Wright gave a full report on the Council's defibrillators which can be read in the minutes for that meeting.

If any resident has any query about any Council matters please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Katherine Kane, Parish Council Clerk**

[rettendonparishcouncil@outlook.com](mailto:rettendonparishcouncil@outlook.com)

Tel: **07811 254163**

Next Parish Council meeting has been set for  
**Tuesday, 23rd February, 2021.**

**Please check on the Parish Council website for details of meetings and agendas, being held online via Zoom at present, and other Parish Council information:-**

<https://e-voice.org.uk/rettendonparishcouncil/>

**Meetings can also be attended by ordinary telephone. If you would like the number and meeting number please ask the Parish Clerk or any Parish Councillor**

**ESSEX HIGHWAYS - Report a problem - website address:-**

<https://www.essexhighways.org/transport-and-roads/tell-us/report-all-issues.aspx> or contact clerk or a Parish Councillor

## Garden Notes

Lots of green shoots and the first flowers have appeared. A delicate pink hellebore is the prize exhibit, planted in a forgotten corner where only I can see it. Not for me the mass display - more of an ongoing hidden surprise for secret glee - ever changing treasures. Next week its "Hunt the Snowdrop".

Remember - one good pot of colour will put every visitor in a good mood before you open the door -

**Mrs. McGregor**

## Rettendon Primary School

After a most unusual run up to Christmas at school in 2020 - no on site school panto, no Christingle or carols in the church, no Nativity performance by Reception and Year 1 - we had all hoped for a fresh start in January. Sadly it was not to be as we had hoped. On the positive site, our wonderful friends at the FRS (Friends of Rettendon School) arranged, and paid for, a video pantomime just for us, we had the wonderful Revd. Jordan from the Parish Church come and lead a whole school Christingle on site in the playground (all wrapped up and distanced). We capped it off with an amazing Christmas lunch, thanks to our caterers, The Eatery.

So January arrived and we found ourselves, once again, open only to the children of workers critical to the Covid-19 response. However, our amazing children and their families have quickly adapted to daily lessons on Google Classroom - 2 lessons a day for most of them - and they are busy, beavering away at home on everything that is set, judging by the fantastic work returned for our staff to mark.

At the end of December, we bade farewell to our wonderful Office Manager, Mrs Walsh - she looks too young to have retired, and are welcoming her replacement, Mr Milner, in February - thank you, so much, Mrs Walsh for all your service and commitment to the children of Rettendon.

As the future months still remain uncertain, please do remember our incredibly hard-working team of teachers, Learning Support Assistant, Admin and site staff - without them we would not have been able to achieve so much in 2020 and we are so grateful for their commitment. Thank you all for your continued thoughts during this unique and testing school year.

**Phil Andrews - Deputy Headteacher**

**Ha, Ha, Ha....**

Why should you never invite a team of footballers to Christmas lunch? Because they are always dribbling.  
Who invented fireworks? Some bright spark



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**Please note this newsletter is compiled from various entries and is not the work of any one person. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the compiler, or of the Newsletter Organisation, though spelling and grammar may be corrected.**

## Newsletter Contributions

Items from local individuals, societies or groups are encouraged. Please send them to the compiler as soon as you can via e-mail ([RetBatNews@gmail.com](mailto:RetBatNews@gmail.com)), or tel: 01245 321554.  
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