



# RETTENDON & BATTLESBRIDGE NEWSLETTER ★ MAY 2021

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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

## Battlesbridge and Rettondon Events

To publicise your event in this diary, please send a note to the compiler giving: event, date, time, venue, organisation and/or charity benefitting.

EVENT	DATE / DAY	TIME	VENUE	ORGANISATION
Parish Council Annual Meeting	Tuesday, 4 <sup>th</sup> May	7:30pm	Zoom - online	Rettondon Parish Council
Essex County Council Elections	Thursday, 6 <sup>th</sup> May	7am – 10pm	Rettondon Village Hall	Government Elections
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) Election	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	7am – 10pm	Rettondon Village Hall	Government Elections
Pre-order Plant Sale Collection (members only) & plant swap	Saturday, 8 <sup>th</sup> May	10:30am – 12:30pm	Rettondon Hall Car Park & Primary School Car Park	Rettondon Horticultural Society

REGULAR EVENTS				
Sunday Services	Sundays	11am / 11:15am	Battlesbridge Free Church /	All Saints Church, Rettondon
Pre-school	Monday - Thursday	Mornings	Rettondon Memorial Hall	Pre-school

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – Subject to Government guidelines on COVID restrictions.				
Horticultural Summer show	Saturday, 10 <sup>th</sup> July	1pm – 5pm	Cricket Field	Rettondon Horticultural Society
MOBILE LIBRARY – BACK IN OPERATION – 3 week intervals between visits				
South Hanningfield Village Hall / Salford Close	Tuesday	12:25pm to 12:55pm / 1:45pm to 2:15pm	4 <sup>th</sup> & 25 <sup>th</sup> May, 15 <sup>th</sup> June	
Goose Cottages	Friday	9:40am to 10:10am	30 <sup>th</sup> April, 21 <sup>st</sup> May, 11 <sup>th</sup> June	

**ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, RETTENDON**

We are now delighted that we can meet again on Sundays for our regular morning service at 11:15. We do still need to be careful and for the time being we will need to wear masks, not sing hymns and keep our distance. But for all that at least we can meet again, signs of hope and a new spring!

**Richard Jordan, Priest in Charge, 01268 766565**  
 E: [rev.richard.jordan@gmail.com](mailto:rev.richard.jordan@gmail.com) T: 01268 766565  
 Website: [www.hrr-churches.org.uk](http://www.hrr-churches.org.uk)



**LOCAL ELECTIONS - Thursday 6th May 2021**

**Polling Station for Rettondon:**

**Village Hall from 7am till 10pm**

**Essex County Council**

The ballot paper for this election will be white and people can only vote for one candidate.

**Stock**

- Paul Hayden Clark, Independent Network
- Ian Spencer Grundy, The Conservative Party
- Jake Havard, Labour Party
- Brian Littlechild, Green Party
- Tom Willis, Liberal Democrat

**Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)**

The PFCC represents the whole of the county. This election will use the 'supplementary vote system', where people can vote for their first and second choice candidate. However, people do not have to cast their second choice vote if they do not wish to.

The candidates standing in the PFCC election are:

- Roger Hirst, The Conservative Party
- Robin Tilbrook, English Democrats
- Chris Vince, Labour and Co-operative Party
- Jon Whitehouse, Liberal Democrat

**A visit from the High Sheriff of Essex**

At High Noon, on Good Friday, the Sheriff of Essex arrived at All Saints Church, Rettondon, to conduct the Ceremony and award a certificate to 17 year old Monika Jones, for her unceasing energy, and contributions to the Parish of Rettondon.

Due to COVID 19 regulations the ceremony was reduced from 30 residents to just 12, and was performed outside, in the grounds of the Church. The Reverend Richard Jordan started the Official Ceremony with a prayer to the less fortunate in life.

The High Sheriff of Essex, Mrs. Julie Fosh, gave a wonderful, and very interesting, explanation of the duties of the High Sheriffs' offices, its Customs and History.

Mr. Peter Maloney, a respected resident, introduced and presented Miss Monika Jones, who then, received one of the highest achievement awards in Essex, from the High Sheriff.

This was an extremely proud day in the History of Rettondon, even though the sky was overcast and the North wind was very cold, but this wonderful occasion, was like a ray of sunshine for the Parish of Rettondon.

**Roy Hart**

**HAYES PARK** - Dear residents, we again find ourselves asking for offers of help to distribute the newsletters around the Park. Obviously the more the merrier so that there can be a division of labour. If you are willing and able to do even a few homes, please contact Barbara Wright on 01245 321554. Thank you.

## Hedgehogs need your Help!



We had the privilege of having a hedgehog nest in our garden this winter and I bought a infra-red camera so that we could observe its night time movements. It has given us much enjoyment and we were prepared with water and food for when it became more active.

Sadly, hedgehogs are in decline and have been added to the Red List for British Mammals as

'vulnerable to extinction'. This is shocking news and as individuals we have a chance to change this by making our gardens more hedgehog friendly and providing a nest box or materials. Putting out suitable food and water before and after hibernation also helps, so let's all do our bit and try to save this beautiful creature before it is too late.

Another way of helping hedgehogs is to make a donation. The British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS) is hoping to raise £2,000 during Hedgehog Awareness Week 2021: 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> May. That is such a modest amount to aim for, so with more awareness and sharing I'm sure this amount can be superseded and the society given more chance to campaign and to help save this creature. Remember, hedgehogs are now on the 'vulnerable to extinction list'. Let us change that and each do our bit. Donations are welcome any time and this week is simply to raise awareness to the urgent need for support and help.

You can donate to the 2021 [#hedgehogweek](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/HAW21) appeal at: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/HAW21>

**Sandie Cottee**

**BHPS** (charity number 1164542)

website: <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk>

## Rettondon Memorial Hall

We are following the Government guidelines but are hoping to open the hall to all when we can. We are aware other halls may be starting to open, but we need to be aware of what can be done and when. The hall is being used so if we start to allow groups in, when we can, it will need to be cleaned more, with, obviously, an additional cost. It is as frustrating to us as it is to you, our users.

However, the Pre-school are still managing to learn and play safely and looking forward to warmer weather when they can go outside more. They are observing restrictions too, but giving an element of fun to them so the children find it easy to comply without realising it. They all know how to wash their hands and can teach their parents a thing or two.

At least some of the groups are meeting up now, even though it is outside. Limited, of course, to 6 people socially distanced, but actually seeing each other and discussing how they will be getting back together and playing bowls, knitting and nattering, and keeping fit.

We are looking forward to May 17th to see what changes are made, and to June 21st, in the hope that all will be well for more activities inside with more people.

The Committee is still keeping an eye on everything and maintenance is continuing to ensure the hall is fit for everyone to return.

**Hall Management Committee**

Have you some good news? Something interesting or historical? We ENCOURAGE items from local people.

Why not add your input to the newsletter.

We check the truth, and may ask for proof, trying to ensure it is not libellous. But it could just be a simple "Thank You".

Please send to Barbara Wright via e-mail

([RetBatNews@gmail.com](mailto:RetBatNews@gmail.com)), or tel: 01245 321554

## Rettondon Horticultural Society

We all seem to be awaiting our release from COVID restrictions, but we all know there will be some curtailment to festivities. However, the Horticultural Society have decided to continue with our Summer Horticultural Show planning. This will be very much a Horticultural Show, as of old, with marquee and exhibits, but not the normal fete.

Our co-operation group with the school and the Friends of Rettondon School will still be there, but in capacity of stewards, rather than providing stalls, giving that bit of extra help to ensure the smooth running of the show given that some restrictions may still be in place. We are very grateful for the offer.

We are looking forward to having our members contribute with their flowers, fruit, vegetables and crafts. To show off to the judges, who are still keen to come. We still encourage children to exhibit, but unfortunately due to the excessive amount of teaching the children have lost, the school, quite rightly, does not feel it would be appropriate for the children to make, bake or grow within the school hours. However, if they want to provide any exhibits we will be pleased to accommodate them.

Obviously we are looking forward to May 17th, where we hope to be able to meet with friends, and members, so that we can prepare for the show. And for the 21st June, when, again hopefully, restrictions will be lifted further and we can know if what we are planning can go ahead.

The plan is to adopt the usual show schedule, possibly with some revisions and to leave the show open to everyone who wants to enter. The schedule is available to view on our website <https://e-voice.org.uk/rethortsoc/> and printed copies will circulated with the Newsletter prior to the show.

We also hope to have some 'non contact' stalls, eg plants, raffle, treasure hunt etc and to provide refreshments.

It is also proposed that the garden judging should go ahead on the Sunday prior to the show as normal.

It may not be the village show as we know it but at least we should be able to have a village social event.

The committee of the Horticultural Society will be meeting in May to work out the fine details of the event and full particulars will be made available by way of the Newsletter as soon as possible.

Please support our show. If you don't want to enter why not come along to view the exhibits and maybe meet up with friends for afternoon tea and a chat?

Finally, a quick word about our plant sale. We plan to go ahead on the basis of pre-orders for members only and order forms will be circulated soon. Collection will be from the village car park by arrangement.

I look forward to seeing you at our Summer Show.

**John Bruty, Chairman**

If you have not received your pre-order form by the time you get this newsletter, please get in touch.

**Barbara Wright, Secretary 01245 321554**

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

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



### Rettendon Primary School

We were thrilled to finally get our whole school community back on site by the end of the Spring Term, just in time for an Easter break. Our heartfelt thanks and admiration goes to all our parents and pupils for such hard work at home under incredibly unusual, and at times very stressful, circumstances. Hopefully, we will not be revisiting that, as a whole school, for a long time!

It has been great to see the children get straight back in to their learning and enjoying some on-site activities with outdoor learning and PE as the sun has begun to show its face again. The site has been full of the babble of voices and laughter again – it’s a real joy for all the staff.

Once further lifting of measures takes place, we look forward to restarting some of the other activities and extra-curricular activities that the children love and start to mix our children across the school once more – music, singing, gardening, team sports and so much more.

Thanks for all the kind thoughts and comments over the past months.

**Phil Andrews, Deputy Headteacher,  
Rettendon Primary School.**

### Grave matters

All Saints’ is a beautiful church set in wonderful grounds and we are indebted to the volunteers who keep it in such good condition. Over the years the task has become more and more challenging as people decorate graves with flowers and other bits and pieces. While we understand that at special times of the year, e.g. anniversaries, this is appropriate some of these are causing serious problems and can be dangerous. A while ago one of our volunteers tripped and hurt themselves on railings, vases blow in the wind and can get smashed by mowers, the wire in artificial flowers can tangle in mower blades.

The person ultimately responsible for the management of any Church of England churchyard is the Chancellor of the Diocese. He allows local clergy to approve headstones provided that they meet closely regulated criteria, but nothing else. The process of applying for permission to have anything else (including a headstone or other monument that does not fit the criteria) is expensive and time consuming. The purpose of this is to keep churchyards distinctive, as easy as possible for volunteers to maintain and a place of reflection and peace for all those who are bereaved.

However the responsibility of keeping the churchyard looking as good as it does falls into the hands of a few volunteers.

*Please, if you have added things to the grave of a relative or friend, don’t leave them there. Please have consideration for those who give their time generously and freely to keep the churchyard in good order, so that above all, they and their mowers are kept safe and undamaged.*

*This includes railings, vases that are not part of the headstone (for which permission has been given) and all other decorations.*

Churchyards and cemeteries are very special places. They express our love, hold our memories and give us a sense of perspective, reminding us of our own mortality and our brief place in history. For many they are also a place to express our deepest hopes and faith. Faith that the love of God holds us both during our brief moment in time that is our life but also beyond. For Christians it was by a grave that the disciples first met the risen Jesus and became aware of the resurrection and the hope that that offers to us all.

Each graveyard is different and says different things about those we love. Who can be unmoved by the ranks upon ranks of graves in a First World War cemetery that speak so eloquently of the cost paid by so many?

Our own churchyard at All Saints speaks in different ways, the messages on headstones lovingly and carefully chosen express both our love and our hope. Please help restore the churchyard, keep it special for all those who mourn and, above all, safe for those who use and care for it. If you have any questions about this please contact me.

**Richard Jordan, Priest in Charge 01268 766565**

### Country Diary

April has been a wonderful month for the wild life — it is a month for new life, baby birds, young animals and an abundance of flowers and blossom in the hedgerows. It is however a month of contrasting temperatures; during the month we had gales, snow, frost, heavy rain showers and bright sunshine. Yet the dawn chorus has started and in my garden it is the blackbirds that opens proceedings.

This brings me to the bird populations in our area, blackbirds being one of the success stories of the twenty most seen garden birds, however out of the twenty most seen, sixteen have gone down in numbers. Helen has heard and seen some chiff chaffs in the lane as well as long tail tit flocks. It is however the time to listen out for the cuckoo and also watch out for the swallows and house martins.

The dandelions are flowering everywhere and this is good for our insects and if any flowers have been left for the dandelion wine makers; flowers are traditionally plucked on April 23rd.

The old boys who were partial to the odd drop of home made dandelion wine were called 'piss-a-beds'. Not very complimentary.

I cannot not mention the hedgerows! The blackthorn has clothed our hedgerows like white clouds. (look forward to the emerging leaves in May.) We have so much to appreciate at this time of the year. **Jane Fallows 01245 400394**

### Rettendon Parish Matters

#### Re: the wonderful pleasures of anticipation.

I have just spent a memorable hour just sitting on my lock gates at Battlesbridge. There was a gentle breeze from the south, it was 5pm and the rays of the sun were still pleasantly warm. Yes - it is the early start of summer.

The floodtide had just reached the lip of the 18” barrier across the lock opening. I was silently waiting for the first flash of silver in the river, of the first sea bass to arrive, shooting through the lock after the small ruddy roach in the upper river or large carp coming the other way after shrimp, or even a glimpse of a kingfisher .

What did I see, not a single movement, all was very still in my small world. I was not sad, it was a stolen hour of my life of pure magic, it was the anticipation that something could have happened.

I am a total optimist, the reverse outlook is extremely sad, “the person with a ½ empty glass”. Problems in life are only challenges, more I say like Rettendon Parish Council. Life is too short to stagnate and be negative.

Bobby, my small black and white cat, has just jumped up and tapped my pen. She is one of my best friends.

It is good to see football being played on the Bell Fields. The pitch looks quite good, but needs a bit of top soil in some of the drainage gullies, but it received a glowing report by the Essex Grounds Support Network Advisor, who had last reported in May 2016. The report states “ The pitch looks far far better now so well done to all involved.” The improvement is down to the old trustees and help from volunteers. **Yours Sincerely, Roy Hart**

## PARISH COUNCIL

Over the past few weeks work on the new Council website has begun. We are looking at the information currently provided and will move across all the documents that are required as well as adding new pages to give residents more access to important information.

Councillor Phillips has been collating all the responses from the Village Survey and this report will be brought back to Council at a future meeting. The responses will be used to inform future decisions and the Council thanks all residents who took the time to reply.

At the March Council meeting, the Council voted to provide a grant to the Upper Bell Fields Charity for work to improve the playing surface on the football pitch. The Council also considered appointing trustees to the Bell Fields Charities in the same way that trustees were appointed last year to the Richard Cannon charity, but this was not approved. Appointment of trustees will be considered further at a future meeting.

At the time of writing the Council is waiting to hear the outcome of a case that will decide whether or not remote meetings can continue after 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Government has not extended their regulations allowing this, and this could mean that from 7<sup>th</sup> May physical meetings would be required. This would obviously be difficult at the moment with current Covid law and guidelines to consider also.

If any resident has any query about any Council matters please do not hesitate to contact me. It is not necessary to wait for a Council meeting. I can be contacted on: [rettendonparishcouncil@outlook.com](mailto:rettendonparishcouncil@outlook.com) or on 07811 254163. I cannot always answer the phone but if you leave a message I will come back to you.

**Katherine Kane, Parish Council Clerk**

The Parish council website is:

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

Parish Council Annual Meeting is due to be held on  
**Tuesday, 4th May 2021 starting at 7:30pm.**

**Please check on the Parish Council website for details of meetings and agendas, being held online via Zoom at present. Meetings can also be attended by ordinary telephone on 0203 481 5240 or 0203 481 5237 or 0203 051 2874, but you will need the meeting number so please ask the Parish Clerk or any Parish Councillor.**

### Newsflash

At the Rettendon Parish Council meeting on 30th March, 2021, the Chairman stated that he had resigned as a trustee of the Bell Fields Charities. No explanation was given.

### Newsflash

I was visited today by a gentleman trying to encourage us to fill in a census form.

We said we had posted it on the Monday morning, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and he replied that this was the reply of all on his list. Why did this not surprise me?

*Local resident, name and address supplied*

A RESIDENTS RESPONSE TO MRS PREBBLE'S ARTICLE IN FEBRUARY'S NEWSLETTER ENTITLED:- "As I see it....."

With regard to this item printed in the April newsletter, Mr Knight has given us the following statement:-

"In light of a handful of complaints received concerning Mr Knight's reference in the last issue to the unsafe state of the Bell Fields football pitch, Mr Knight would like to make clear that it was declared unsafe by EFA officials who were forced to cancel games early on in the playing season".

### Garden Notes

Much activity in the greenhouse - things popping up apace. The need to nurture and care plays a big part here. Soon - nearer end of May, all the babies can be put into the wider world to hopefully do their thing, and only need a little help if times are hard.

We have an old video of "Bill and Ben, the Flowerpot Men". I did love "Little Weed" - so she was invited to one out our village shows as a special guest.

Dare I admit that?

**Mrs. McGregor**



### Battlesbridge Free Church

What glorious weather we are having, with brilliant, sunny skies, though, between very cold, duller days. It was lovely that the sun shone for Prince Philip's funeral day. What a moving day of remembrance, ceremony and a beautiful, simple service within St. George's chapel. Our hearts went out to our Queen, seated alone during the service. In these days, when the country's Christian faith often seems to take a back seat and schools no longer hold a short worship time during Assembly, so that the faith of their forefathers passes many young people by, that thoroughly Christian burial service was a refreshing reminder of the country's roots.

The laws of our country stem from the Biblical ten commandments of our God. He sent his son, Jesus Christ, to show us the way to live in peaceful harmony with each other. He did not come to create a "religion" but to urge the "Way" to live to the best of our human ability. But on our own we could never quite match up. Christ promised spiritual help in our struggle against the insinuating allure of evil; we need only to believe! Not only were we promised help against the temptation of wrong-doing, but through Christ's sacrificial death, then resurrection, we were assured of a renewed life beyond our human death. It's all in the New Testament of the Bible and this was written by eye-witnesses to that life, death and return to life of Jesus Christ, over 2000 years ago. Many hundreds of people have phoned a good neighbour to countless isolated, lonely or homeless during this time of pandemic. How many realised that they were following Jesus's call to treat others as they would wish to be treated? They heeded the call from the hymn "When I needed a neighbour, were you there? We pray that this "Way" of living will continue to be the 'Way of life' through and beyond COVID.

**June Edwards**

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