

Great Bentley Parish News

**Produced by the Community
for the Community**



March 2024

Village Information

St Mary's Church

CHURCH: CO7 8QG

CHURCHWARDENS:

Wendy Smith
Burnside, Great Bentley - 01206 250098

Mrs Mandy Miles
7 Finch Drive, Great Bentley - 01206 251382

TREASURER:

Annabel Stearn
01206 251518
email: wylieandsinger@talk21.com

READER:

Wendy King
17 Larkfield Road - 01206 250852

PCC SECRETARY:

Mrs Claire Pearson
01206 256433
email: gbpcsecretary@gmail.com

ELECTORAL ROLL SECRETARY:

Rosemary Branch
4 Wents Close - 01206 250137

TOWER CAPTAIN/BELL RINGERS

Roger Carey-Smith - 07422 880921

ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL BOOKING SECRETARY:

Lyn Gordon, 79 Birch Avenue
01206 681884 Mobile: 07870 311610
email: linda.bear@sky.com

PARISH MAGAZINE EDITOR/ADVERTISING/ DISTRIBUTOR:

Mary Maskell, Caldew Cottage, The Green
01206 250524
marymaskell@sys3internet.net

Carole Allington
carole@pncallington.co.uk

ST MARY'S FACEBOOK PAGE

St Mary's Church, Great Bentley.

ST MARY'S CHURCH WEBSITE

stmaryschurchgreatbentley.co.uk

WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR

Wendy King - 01206 250852

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

Lyn Gordon 01206 681884 Mobile: 07870 311610
Mandy Miles 01206 251382
Mary Maskell 01206 250524

METHODIST MINISTER

Revd Tom Osborne
Email; tom.osborne@methodist.org.uk
Mobile 07305 805444 01206 396654

DOCTOR'S SURGERY:

The Hollies, The Green - 01206 250691

PODIATRIST:

Terry St George
45 Oakmead Road, St Osyth - Mobile: 07775 833200

POLICE:

Clacton 0300 333 4444
24 hour Non emergency number 101
In an emergency ring 999

GREAT BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman - Pippa Dennitts
07848 872018

Clerk to the Parish Council Jennifer Spear
The Community Resource Centre, Village Hall,
Plough Road Great Bentley CO7 8LD
01206 256410
clerk@greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk

Office open Monday to Thursday 9.30-1.00pm

TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCILLOR:

Cllr Lynda McWilliams,
Mobile: 07564 613603.
email: cldr.lmcwilliams@tendringdc.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR - ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL:

Councillor Alan Goggin, Freshfields, Church Road
Brightlingsea, CO7 0QT
Mobile: 07860 519117
email: Cllr.Alan.Goggin@essex.gov.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH:

Richard Nowak - 01206 250204

MEDICAL AIDS:

Richard Nowak - 01206 250204

TENDRING FURNITURE SCHEME:

Rocket House, Gorse Lane Industrial Estate, Clacton:
01255 476068

BOOKING CLERK FOR GREAT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL:

Joanna Hesketh
email: bookings@greatbentlevillagehall.co.uk
07494 234049

METHODIST HALL BOOKINGS:

Robert Taylor, Dominica, Moors Close - 01206 250087

GT BENTLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL: - 01206 250331

COLNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL: - 01206 303511

VILLAGE HISTORY RECORDER

Heather Taylor - 01206 251004

COLCHESTER HOSPITALS: 01206 747474

CLACTON & DISTRICT HOSPITAL: 01255 201717

Road, CO7 8PD
01206 250309

VILLAGE TRANSPORT REP: Peter Harry
07503 153960

VILLAGE CARETAKER:

Robert McWilliams, 07598 640622

WHEELCHAIR LOANS

Alan Bayliss, 01206 250450

TREE WARDEN

Sue and Faris Shimali 07973 534301

FOOTPATH REP.

melanie.sawers@nuffield.ox.ac.uk

EDITORIAL



2024

Here we are with spring officially just a week or two away. It's so encouraging now that daylight hours are lengthening and with spells of milder weather the gardens are magically springing into life. Always a pleasure to look forward to.

I have been looking back over past magazines this week and picking up the April 2020 edition I could not believe how thin it felt. Of course the reason was totally obvious when I remembered that Lockdown was implemented on 23rd March of that year. There were no adverts included, (for the first time ever), the diary was totally blank and the whole magazine was collated and stapled by the Great Bentley Support Group who did an amazing job throughout this rather difficult time to keep the whole village well stocked, especially for people home alone. In the next few months 3 or 4 couples collated in their own homes and we managed to keep the magazine going throughout. I am today reminded of the freedom we have now to go about our daily lives and I truly appreciate it.

Lots on this month and great news that at the 11th hour it is announced that the Carnival will be taking place once again this year. Its not long now until the Gardening Club Plant Sale, and the plant stall at St Mary's May Fair. Now is the time to get potting up plants, sowing seeds and getting enthusiastic about your gardens! Please bear this in mind and sow extra seeds for these plant stalls. I know we are supposed to be peat free now but I am finding it hard to find decent compost for seed sowing and potting on. Please let me know if you have found suitable substitutes, I'd love to hear from you.

I have written a piece about the Marvin family who emigrated from Edens Farm (see front cover) in the 1600's and explained how this ties in with the new development on Weeley Road. We get members of the Marvin family visiting every year from America, they are so interested in reaching their family history.

As the old saying goes "*If March comes in like a lion it goes out like a lamb*". I wonder what this new month will bring. Whatever the weather I wish you a happy and healthy month.

Mary Maskell



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FRONT COVER

EDENS FARM

Possibly the oldest house in Great Bentley, (unless you know differently).

DISCLAIMER

The statements, opinions and data contained in these publications are solely those of the individual authors and contributors and not of the Churchwardens, Parochial Church Council, the Editor nor the publisher. The appearance of advertisements in the Great Bentley Parish News or the website is not a warranty, endorsement, or approval of the products or services advertised or of their effectiveness, quality or safety.

LETTER FOR MARCH

Dear Friends,

It was good to see so many of you at Rev'd. Sharon Miles farewell Service at St Osyth. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

As we look forward to Easter we will be joining with our Methodist friends at their Lent courses which started on 15th February, and following on we will be celebrating with them on Maundy Thursday in their evening service. On Good Friday we will be holding a Children's Workshop and in the afternoon we will be holding a Service of meditation at the foot of the cross.

Flower arranging for Easter will be taking place on Good Friday 29th March from 4.00pm. If you would like to help please contact Rosemary Branch.

Archdeacon Ruth will be celebrating the Eucharist with us on Easter Sunday. It will be lovely to see as many of you as possible as we celebrate our risen Christ.

As we prepare for our journey into Lent a quote from our Lent booklet 'Watch and Pray'.

"For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven ..." (Colossians 1.15-20).

Canon Wendy King

A Huge Thank You!

Thank you so much to everyone who helped to organise or deliver or attended my wonderful final service at St Osyth's Church last Sunday.

There was an amazing feeling in the Church that I am sure was to do with the number of worshippers present from across the Benefice (Great Bentley and St Osyth) and my family.

I am grateful to Archdeacon Ruth for leading the service, the children from St Osyth Primary School who delivered their handwritten prayers, Sonia who made sure that everything flowed, and of course all of those who prepared such an amazing spread.

I will remember all of you and the memories of this amazing day in my prayers.

Do remember that Harwich is not that far away, so if you want to pop in, please do, however do let me know when because I could be out walking Jasmine, my Labradoodle. My email address remains the same!

With my sincere thanks, love and prayers.
Revd Sharon

CHILDREN'S GOOD FRIDAY WORKSHOP



Friday 29th March

St Mary's Church Hall

Workshop will start at 10.00am until 12 noon
followed by a short service
in church presented by the children.
Parents/Carers will be welcome

Come and decorate an Easter egg, do some
cooking and make Easter cards, and
simple craft activities.

**To ensure we have an Easter Egg for
each child please can you register
in advance.**

Ring Wendy King 01206 250852

St. Mary's Church Facebook Page

St. Mary's Church has a facebook page!

Here we will be posting news of upcoming services, as well as any forthcoming events or fundraising. Please like and follow the page to keep up to date with our news, the page name is 'St. Mary's Church Great Bentley'.

facebook

Are you going to be booking your
wedding at St Mary's Church?

If so, your first point of contact is

Wendy King
01206 250852





GREAT BENTLEY

METHODIST CHURCH

Forge Lane CO7 8GD

Don't forget our Facebook page.

Search for Gt Bentley Methodist Church

Hire our warm, large or small halls with fully serviced kitchen.
Ring 250087

Greetings to you all

We welcome you to worship at Church or on Zoom with us during March. If you would like to join our service by Computer on Zoom, please ring 250087 for the connection link.

Morning worship will be held at **10.30am** unless otherwise stated.

The leaders of worship are set out below: -

- March 3rd** Gordon Doyle
- March 10th** Rev Tom Osborne Holy Communion
- March 17th** Lin Dickinson
- March 24th** Maddie Whittle Palm Sunday
- March 31st** Deacon Angela Sherini
Easter Sunday

Events in March:

Our Lent Study Group this year is led by Rev Tom Osborne on the Methodist Collection of Art. Started on the 15th Feb and last session on 21st March 19.30 at Methodist Church.

Coffee & Chat March 1st. Warm fellowship with drinks, cakes, books **Computer problems??** experts from TDC will be there to help you. Bring the problem along if you can.

Prayer Meeting. We meet for prayer on the second Wednesday of each month 9.45 for 10am at our Church This month 13th March.

Sandwiches for Hope @ Trinity, 13th March

Each second Wednesday of the month at 9.30am we collect Sandwiches and take them to our Trinity Church in Clacton for those struggling to buy food for themselves. Collection at our Church before we go to Clacton at 9.30.

Each week the following events are normally held at our Church.

Ring these numbers for more information

Messy Church once a month after school 250087

Parent & Toddlers Group Thursdays 9-15 a.m.
251537

The Adventurers Club. Fridays 7 p.m. Ring 250087

ST MARY'S SERVICES

Sunday 3rd March - 3rd Sunday of Lent

Rev Laurie Bond

10am Joint Benefice Service .

Saturday 9th March - Womens' World Day of Prayer at Brightlingsea.

Sunday 10th March - 4th Sunday of Lent Mothering Sunday

9.30am Family Service

Sunday 17th March - 5th Sunday of Lent

David Branch

9.30am Family Service

Thursday 21st March - Knit & Natter, 2pm Church Hall

7.30pm PCC Meeting

Saturday 23rd March Churchyard Clear up 10am

Sunday 24th March - Palm Sunday

11.00am Palm Sunday at St Osyth or 10.30am at St Osyth Village Hall if following the donkey

Thursday 28th March - Maundy Thursday

7.30pm Joint Service at the Methodist Church

Friday 29th March - Good Friday

10.00am Children's Good Friday Workshop

2.00pm Meditation at the foot of the cross

Sunday 31st March - Easter Sunday

Archdeacon Ruth

9.30am Holy Communion

ROTAS FOR ST MARY'S CHURCH FOR MARCH

Sidespersons & Readers

- 3rd Linda Hayes
- 10th Carole Allington
- 17th Chris Aplin
- 24th Mandy Miles
- 31st Jennie Moss (Easter Day)

Prayer Rota

- 3rd Wendy King
- 10th David Branch
- 17th Carol Kerridge
- 24th Nicky Justice
- 31st George Wright (Easter Day)

Coffee Rota

- 3rd Lyn Gordon
- 10th Rosemary & David Branch
- 17th Mary Maskell
- 24th Hannah Justice
- 31st Lyn Gordon (Easter Day)

Cleaning Rota

- 2nd Edna Black
- 9th Bev Adams
- 16th Vicky Rothwell
- 23rd Linda Hayes
- 30th Wendy Smith (Easter Saturday)



Easter Lilies

After the service on Good Friday, 29th March, St Mary's flower-arrangers will be in action, preparing the church with colourful arrangements to celebrate Easter.

If you would like to make a donation towards the purchase of Easter lilies or generally towards flowers, in memory of loved ones, please leave it with our Treasurer, Annabel Stearn, the Churchwardens or myself. Contact details are on the front cover of the Parish News.

With many thanks,

**Rosemary Branch (01206 250137
or 07802 268897)**

COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 16th March

10.00am - 12 noon

St Mary's Church Hall

ALL WELCOME

In aid of 'Make-a-Wish'

COFFEE MORNING IN MARCH

All of the money raised from our March Coffee Morning will be going to Make-A-Wish, a truly amazing charity. We do hope you will join us to make a difference to bring joy to terminally sick children. George Wright one of our congregation is running the London Marathon to raise money for this worthy cause.

We hope to see you on 16th March at St Mary's Church Hall. Everyone will be most welcome."

"Having supported Water Aid for many years and seen first hand the amazing good it does for people and the joy and hope it brings, I thought it was probably time to share some of my efforts with another worthwhile cause. When a child is faced with a bleak future, to give them something else to focus on changes their outlook and gives them a lift and a radical change for the better.

Make-A-Wish® UK grant life-changing wishes for the thousands of critically ill children across the UK. Sadly, the number of wish enquiries from seriously ill children with less than a year to live is rising fast. They need help to meet this urgent demand now - before it's too late. For families with critically ill children, every day counts. Your support has the power to make a wish come true for a critically ill child, allowing families to create lasting memories that they will treasure forever – no matter what the future holds."

Date for your diaries: Baked Potato Lunch

**Saturday 27th April,
at St Mary's Church Hall,
12.30 – 3 pm.**

Menu:

Jacket potato with choice of fillings

Choice of Desserts

Tea/Coffee

Water provided...Bring your own drinks if preferred

Raffle

Limited numbers so please book early. Tickets at £10 each available now from

Rosemary Branch, 01206 250137, 07802 268897,
4 Wents Close

And Mary Maskell, 01206 250524
Caldew Cottage

Deadline: Saturday 20th April

Proceeds to St Mary's Church

Please arrive at 12.30 to be seated by 1pm



KNIT & NATTER

March 21st

St Mary's Church Hall

2.00pm - 3.30pm

All Welcome



DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Margaret and Arthur Banner
4th March

Margaret and Arthur Banner moved into the village from London in November 1974. They were married on 7th March 1964 at West Ham Parish Church, E15 and will be celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary this year.

Lots of love on your special day. All our love today and always, Alison, Joe, Harrison and Shauna xxx

The Great Bentley Show

This year's show will take place on Saturday 31st August.

We are looking for people who would be happy to join the committee and /or help out on the day.

Mary Barber

chair@greatbentleyshow.co.uk

ANNUAL DIARY

27th April	Baked Potato Lunch, St Mary's Hall
18th May	May Fair, St Mary's Church
25th May	Gardening Club Plant Sale
29th June	Carnival
31st August	Village Show
14th & 15th September	Flower Festival & Art Exhibition at St Mary's
7th & 8th December	Christmas Tree Festival St Mary's Church
13th December	A Christmas Carol with Antony Roberts



Supporting Church music in the Tendring area

March 10th

The Deanery choir will be singing at **St Georges Church, Great Bromley CO7 7HZ** at the 11.00am communion service. The choir will sing a version of Ubi Caritas by Ola Gjeilo. In his undergraduate career, Gjeilo studied at the [Norwegian Academy of Music](#) and transferred to the [Juilliard School](#). He studied at the [Royal College of Music](#), London, and received a bachelor's degree in composition.

March 29th GOOD FRIDAY:

The Deanery choir will be performing John Rutter's 'Requiem' at 6.30pm at **St Marys Church, Little Bentley. CO7 8SE**. The Requiem is a musical setting of parts of the Latin [Requiem](#) with added psalms and biblical verses in English, and was completed in 1985. It is scored for [soprano](#), mixed choir and orchestra or smaller chamber ensemble.

Four of the movements of the Requiem were first performed at Fremont Presbyterian Church, [Sacramento, California](#), on 14 March 1985. The first performance of the complete work was at Lovers' Lane United Methodist Church, [Dallas, Texas](#), on 13 October 1985. It was published in 1986 by [Oxford University Press](#).

This performance is supported by Peter Clayton; Organist, Graeme Bruce; Cello, Judith Clayton; Clarinet and soloists; Mary McCarthy and Shirley Davison.

Graham Bell
Deanery Choir Organiser

FREE

Hearing aid batteries size 13.

Please ring 07940583911

MAGAZINE COLLATING DAY FOR APRIL MAGAZINE

Magazine collating will be on **Friday 22nd MARCH**

in St Mary's Church Hall starting at 9.00am

ALL WELCOME TO COME AND HELP COLLATE



GREAT BENTLEY MILITARY VETERANS CLUB
SATURDAY 2nd MARCH SOCIAL (EASTER) BREAKFAST

The next get together of the Veterans Club will be 10am at The Plough for breakfast
SATURDAY 2nd MARCH

If you are ex-forces, still serving, National Service or an RBL member, why not join us for a breakfast butty, brew and banter.

All ages welcome. Our youngest member is still serving and most senior, a sprightly 99 (ninety-nine).
Namely Mr Tony Rampling

Contact David Flinn BEM
Mob: 0742 114 1131

ESSEX & HERTS AIR AMBULANCE

Dear All at Great Bentley Conservation Group,

Your kind donation of £240.96 raised by John Glover, who shredded the Christmas trees in the village will directly help the people of Essex & Hertfordshire when they need it most.

On behalf of all the people who your support will assist, we would like to say a big and heartfelt thank you - your ongoing support is very much appreciated.

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, unlike NHS emergency services, is a charity providing a free life-saving Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for the critically ill and injured of Essex, Hertfordshire and surrounding areas. Your generosity and goodwill saves lives by helping us remain operational.

If you would like to find out more about the positive impact you have made, we would be delighted to welcome you to one of our Visitor Centres at our North Weald or Earls Colne airbase. To book a tour please visit www.ehaat.org/visitor-centre or call us on 0345 2417690.

Once again, on behalf of us all, a very sincere thank you. We hope you will continue to support us in the future.

Warmest Wishes,

Sarah Crawley & Liz Fox
Supporter Care

**Bentley
in Bloom**

Once again we are offering you the chance of enjoying one (or more) of our beautiful summer hanging baskets.

At £40 each, your basket will be delivered to your door around the middle/end of May and then collected in November once the display is over.

If you would like to support Bentley in Bloom by ordering a hanging basket, please contact Dorothy on 250204 or email nowakdr@live.co.uk

BADMINTON PLAYERS WANTED

Tuesday evenings 7.30 - 10pm in Great Bentley Village Hall.

If you haven't played for a while come and give it a go. We have spare raquets.

Sorry no beginners please.

The cost for the evening is £6.

For further information contact
Jo Day
on 01206 250452
or 07794 866635.

The St. Osyth Witch Trials Part 5



The sad story of the women accused of witchcraft did not stay buried. 339 years later, in 1921, men were digging in the sandy soil behind a cottage on Mill Street when their spade hit something hard and two human skeletons were unearthed. The owner of the cottage, Charles Brooker swiftly declared them to be the bones of Ursula Kemp and Elizabeth Bennett, the two women hung for witchcraft. He capitalised on this claim, selling tickets to view the bones and even creating postcards to sell to the visitors. A fire in the cottage saw the skeletons buried under the debris where they remained for 30 years, the fire only adding to the belief that the skeletons were witches capable of causing destruction even from beyond the grave. When Charles' son, Paul, wanted to build a house on the site the more intact skeleton, thought to be Ursula Kemp, was exhumed and sold to the Witchcraft Museum in Boscastle for £99. From here it was purchased by eccentric artist Robert Lenkiewicz who had a fascination with magic, witchcraft and the occult. He kept the bone in a blue lined coffin in his library and it is said he regularly spoke to them. After Lenkiewicz's death and the lengthy process of sorting out his estate the body found in Mill Street was returned to the village. On route the skeleton was assessed by osteo-archaeologists who concluded the bones were those of a man in his mid-twenties, not a woman in her fifties. Interestingly, it also appeared that the iron rivets through some of the bones were a later addition, perhaps to substantiate the theory that the skeletons were those of witches. Whoever it belonged to, the skeleton has now been laid to rest in a corner of the Cemetery in St. Osyth in an unmarked grave.

The story of the women from St. Osyth accused of witchcraft does not rest in peace but remains a fascination for locals and visitors alike. I often wonder why it has such a pull on our imaginations. Perhaps it is all the unknowns creating a sense of mystery and unfinished business. Perhaps it is the injustice surrounding the women who were tried in such a callous and underhanded way for crimes we know they could not have committed. Maybe it is because the St. Osyth witch trials of 1582 were the first in Essex, and England, and it set a precedent for horrendous trials across Europe. Scotland saw four times as many women tried for witchcraft than England, with a much smaller population and they burned them for their crimes. Maybe it is because the people from Essex who emigrated to the Americas and settled in Salem took their superstitions and belief in witchcraft with them creating another witch craze a century later. Perhaps the witch trials represent a past we hope we are far removed from. A time of fear, repression and superstition where men sacrifice others in the pursuit of riches and glory. Looking at this period of history might make us feel superior; feel as though we are thoroughly modern and rational and could never surrender to that way of thinking. I am not so sure.

Helen Brown
Education Manager
Priory Education Centre

FOOD BANK

The main needs at the moment are for Long Life juices, tinned fruit, tinned custard/rice pudding, Jam, peanut butter, chocolate spread, Multi pack biscuits - Kit Kat, Club etc, Coffee, Hot chocolate, tinned meat - chopped ham, corned beef, Stewed steak/mince, meatballs, Fish, Tinned vegetables - eg. peas, carrots, Sauces - pasta, curry, cheese etc., Tomato ketchup, cooking oil, salt, pepper, Toiletries - shampoo, conditioner, Shower Gel, men's & women's deodorants, Washing liquid, Washing up liquid, Nappies, sizes - 4,5,6,7. Or 'Pull Ups'

**ALL FOODS MUST BE IN DATE AND HAVE AT LEAST
A 2 MONTH 'BEST BEFORE' DATE.**

Thank you for your continued support as donations have decreased recently.

Please leave any donations at the back of St Mary's church in the boxes provided.



**Weeley
Veterinary
Centre**

Winner of Best Vet UK 2023

PET NOTES



With Easter at the end of the month there's a fair chance you have a stockpile of chocolate at home. The Easter eggs were on sale before Christmas was over and I'm sure many of you reading this were tempted to buy them early. You may have even eaten them already and needed to replace them.

This month veterinary practices up and down the country will treat many pets for chocolate toxicity. Dogs are the biggest culprits, however I have also treated cats, including my own. Most pet owners are aware chocolate is bad for their pets though they don't necessarily understand why.

When you and I eat chocolate it leads to a feeling of satisfaction thanks to the release of "happy hormone" serotonin. Our bodies digest the chocolate and we come to no harm other than the additional pounds we carry if we indulge a little too much. Unfortunately pets are not capable of digesting chocolate in the same manner as people. The troublesome ingredient it contains is called theobromine which is a stimulant a bit like caffeine. This ingredient is toxic and can cause the following symptoms:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Rapid breathing
- Increased heart rate
- Incoordination
- Restlessness
- Hyperactivity
- Seizures

If your pet ingests any amount of chocolate, ring your vet as they'll be very happy to calculate your pet's risk and advise whether or not they need treatment. Most dogs I treat have eaten a moderate amount of milk or dark chocolate in the last couple of hours. There is no antidote to theobromine so I give them a painless injection of a drug called apomorphine which causes them to vomit. In more severe cases, I may also give them activated charcoal and consider keeping them in hospital on a drip. Cats require slightly different treatment but the principles are the same. It is important to know that the symptoms start 4-24hours after the chocolate has been consumed and it is better to treat before symptoms appear.

Wishing everyone a very happy Easter. Please visit www.facebook.com/weeleyvetcentre for our Easter opening hours.

Dr April Young MRCVS

**The Post Office is situated
at the front of the Garage**

**GREAT BENTLEY
POST OFFICE**

OPENING HOURS

Monday	9am - 1pm
Tuesday	9am - 12 noon
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	9am - 12 noon
Friday	9am - 12 noon

SESAW NEWS

Last month's Great Garden Birdwatch found Sparrows and Blue Tits ranked high in Suffolk and Essex, as they did in the SESA W garden. Since being temporarily housebound after a thyroid op, I've grown quite partial to ornithology. Gazing through a window in a cosy room on a winter's day has a certain appeal for a middle aged moggie but don't tell Kenneth, I'd never live it down.

An unprecedented number of rescue cats arrived for rehoming last year. Some were abandoned, some made homeless through their owner's circumstances, many were mothers with young families, some in-kitten with a second litter. We have wonderful volunteers who care for the animals but, like most charities, we struggle to find enough helpers. Currently, we particularly need reliable, conscientious adults to look after the cats on Saturdays. We often have youngsters for a while at weekends until academic commitments draw them away. 'Grown ups' who work during the week want time with their families at weekends and so we fall between two stools. We just need a few good people who could spare a Saturday (or Sunday morning) to feed, clean out and socialise our felines awaiting new homes. If you could help, please email sesawken@gmail.com or phone 07881 785535 for more information.

I must go now as there is activity around the nest box, suggesting months of entertainment ahead for me, Ollie (the Black) Cat.

Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Registered Charity No.1124029,
Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. Tel: 01787 210888 www.sesaw.co.uk

PASTORAL CARE AT ST MARY'S CHURCH GREAT BENTLEY

The members of our pastoral team are Lyn Gordon, Mary Maskell and Mandy Miles.

If they can help in some way eg. home communion, a visit to you personally or a telephone call. Also lifts to church are offered.

Please ring one of us if you feel we might be able to assist you in some way.

Lyn Gordon 681884: Mary Maskell 250524:
Mandy Miles 251382:

Are you looking to keep fit?

Gentle exercise required?

Wanting to eat more healthily with food grown not using chemical sprays?

Wanting to have bunches of flowers you can pick for yourself?

Have you thought of applying for an allotment?

Email the Parish Council

clerk@greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk

or ring 01206 256410

ADVERTISING IN GREAT BENTLEY PARISH NEWS 2024

We still have some spaces

Small	£60
Medium	£100
Quarter page	£170
Half a page (limited number)	£330

Please contact Mary Maskell 250524

email: marymaskell@sys3internet.net

AGEWELL EAST

Living happier and healthier

We welcome you to come to our

COFFEE MORNING

Dementia Friendly

Every 4th Thursday of the month
between 10.00am - 12 noon

United Church, Chapel Road,
Brightlingsea, Colchester, CO7 0HF

A chance to have company, chat and meet
others over tea, coffee and biscuits.

enquiries@agewelleast.org.uk
or phone 0300 37 33 333

COOKERY CORNER



EARLY SPRING DISHES

March weather can be fickle, with still some cold evenings before the vernal or spring equinox around the 20th of the month when the sun is directly over the equator and we in the Northern Hemisphere begin to turn our faces to its warm rays again. In March we celebrate two British saints, David and Patrick, both patron saints of countries on the western edge of Britain; Saint David of Wales on March 1st and Saint Patrick of Ireland on March 15th. Celebrating these saints has led over time to some hearty dishes.

Welsh hotpot

500g bacon piece unsmoked	4 large potatoes	3 large onions	400ml stock, or cider
2tbsp chopped parsley	1 large leek		

Preheat the oven to 120 degrees. Peel the potatoes and cut into thick slices. Peel the onions and cut thinly. Prepare and wash the leek thoroughly, chopping into thin slices. Cut any rind off the bacon leaving a layer of fat and chop into thick chunks. In an ovenproof dish layer potatoes, bacon, parsley, leek and onion, seasoning lightly (be sparing with salt) Repeat until the ingredients are used up, ending with a layer of potatoes. Pour the stock over the top before covering with greased foil and a lid. Cook for about two hours, removing the covering 20 minutes from the end to allow the potatoes to brown and crisp.

Welsh Cakes

These are easy to make and will stay fresh in a sealed tin for a week.

225g plain flour	85g caster sugar	½ tsp mixed spice	½ tsp baking powder
50g butter	50g lard plus extra	50g currants	1 egg beaten

In a large bowl mix together the flour, mixed spice, baking powder and a pinch of salt. Cut the butter and lard into chunks and rub them into the ingredients in the bowl until it all resembles breadcrumbs. Add the currants and work the beaten egg gradually into the mix until you have a soft dough, adding a splash of milk if it seems dry. Using your hands, combine the mixture to form a lump of dough. Roll this out on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of a cm. Cut out as many rounds as you can of about 6cms, rolling all the trimmings. Grease a flat griddle pan or a large heavy frying pan with lard. On a medium heat cook the cakes in batches, about 3 minutes each side until golden brown, and cooked through. Serve warm with butter and jam or sprinkle with caster sugar.

Irish Stew

A steaming bowl of Irish Stew is very popular on the menus of Irish pubs especially during the second half of March. Middle neck or scragend are cheap cuts of lamb and are full of flavour but need to be cooked for a long time. Try to buy the bacon in one piece and cut it into chunks.

1kg stewing lamb in large chunks	5 medium onions	5 carrots	6 medium potatoes
100g pearl barley	200g smoked streaky bacon		850 ml lamb stock
3 bay leaves	3 spring onions		small bunch thyme

Preheat the oven to 160 degrees fan. Peel and chunk the onions, carrots and potatoes and slice the spring onions finely. In a large casserole dish sizzle the bacon in 1tbsp sunflower oil until crisp, and thoroughly brown the lamb. Remove the meats and set aside. Add the carrots, onions and herbs and cook them over a medium to low heat until soft. Return the meats and add the pearl barley and stock and bring to a simmer. Remove any scum with a slotted spoon and turn the heat off. Put the potato chunks on top of the stew. Cover and braise in the oven for about an hour and a half until the meat is tender and the potatoes are soft. Dot the potatoes with a little butter and scatter the spring onions over the top. Serve with bread rolls or pieces of soda bread straight from the dish. Alternatively the stew can be cooled and kept in the fridge for a couple of days then reheated in a low oven or on the hob before finishing with butter and spring onions.

M.E.

University of Essex Choir

J.S. BACH
ST. JOHN PASSION

CONDUCTOR **BEN VONBERG-CLARK**

EVANGELIST **GUY CUTTING**
 SOPRANO **HILLARY CRONIN**
 ALTO **REBECCA LEGGETT**
 TENOR **DAVID DE WINTER**
 BASS **JAMES NEWBY**
 JESUS **THOMAS NIEBER**
 PILATE **ALEX JAMES**

SATURDAY **4th MAY** 7PM
SNAPE MALTINGS
 Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Snape, Suffolk, IP17 1SP



Price: £28, £22, £16, students and under 18s £8
<https://brittenpearsarts.org/events/university-of-essex-choir-presents-bach>
 BOX OFFICE: 01728 687110

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
 BRITTENPEARS ARTS
 University of Essex Choir
 University of Essex

**SUMMER RECITALS
AT
ST OSYTH CHURCH**

12.30 - 1.15pm

April 19th
 Willian Saunders, Organ Recital

May 17th
 Tendring Male Voice Choir

June 21st
 St Osyth Primary School

July 19th
 Emma Nash, Pianist

August 16th
 Strangers Band

Donations will be used for the organ fund.

VILLAGE SHOW

**PHOTOGRAPHY CLASSES FOR
2024**

ADULTS

FLOWER POWER
 CELEBRATION!
 CITY LIFE
 HAND IN HAND
 BLACK AND WHITE
 EXPRESSIONS
 OPEN

CHILDRENS

A WALK ON THE WILDSIDE
 OPEN



REQUIEM
 John Rutter

Christus factus est ~ Bruckner

Good Friday
29th MARCH 2024

6.30pm
THE DEANERY CHOIR

Sally Pudney: *Conductor*
 Peter Clayton: *Organist*

Graeme Bruce: *Cello*
 Judith Clayton: *Clarinet*
 Mary McCarthy: *Soprano*
 Shirley Davison: *Soprano*

**ST MARY'S CHURCH, CHURCH ROAD
 LITTLE BENTLEY, COLCHESTER. CO7 8SE**

Retiring collection towards church funds

POLICE REPORT

RECORDED CRIMES-

From 01/01/2024- 30/01/2024

CRIME TYPES- 14

ASSAULT (ACTUAL BODILY HARM) - 6- ASSAULT WITHOUT INJURY X2 - CRIMINAL DAMAGE- OTHER X2 - RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY - THEFT IN A DWELLING - THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE-

INCIDENTS REPORTED – 22

INCIDENT TYPES-

ATTENTION TO - BURGLARY RESIDENTIAL- CONCERN X2- CRIMINAL DAMAGE - DRINK DRIVE - HIGHWAY DISRUPTION X2 - OTHER X6 – ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISION X3 - STRAY HORSES - SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES X2 - SUSPICIOUS PREMISES - THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE.

TRUCAM (SPEEDING)

4 Sessions of 1 hour each were deployed in Great Bentley January 2024.

09/01- Thorrington Road- 18 reported- Top speed 47mph

18/01- Thorrington Road- 20 reported- top speed 42mph

I ran a **SPEED ACTION WEEKEND** in Great Bentley, due to so many reports of speeding by residents.

Saturday 27th January -Thorrington Road- **18** reported- **Top speed 42mph** (one hour session)

Sunday 28th January- Plough Road Aingers Green- **48** reported- **Top Speed 50mph** (just over an hour session)

It was unbelievable the speeds some drivers were taking the Weeley Road Junction, no consideration for pedestrians crossing.

Pedestrians- If you need to cross the road in Weeley Road, please try to cross a bit further down rather than so near the junction. As the speeds taking that corner are unfortunately ongoing I have contacted highways previously for road calming measures in that location.

Monthly total reported- **114**

The **30mph** signs were checked before and after deployment and **clearly visible. Please Drive with due care and attention. There is no excuse for poor driving.**

Thank you to those abiding by the legal safe limit.

VEHICLE IN DITCH

I attended another RTC in Collesbrook Road, where a vehicle had gone into a tree in the ditch. Please be mindful of this road, despite being national speed limit, it is not always safe to do such speed as there is usually mud on the road caused by work traffic and a lot of windy bends.

CONSIDERATE PARKING TICKETS (CPI,s)

1 considerate parking ticket was given out this month in the village. Parking services have and will be attending the village on a regular basis and **fixed penalty notices** may be issued. No excuse for inconsiderate parking.

Vehicle lights/ Visible Registration Plates

Remember to check car lights often now darkness is falling early and use them during bad weather to be visible to other drivers. If a bulb suddenly goes, Halfords are great to drive into and they fit it for you there and then. It is an offence to have dirty number plates that can't be read- Please keep them clean and visible.

Fraud by posing as officers from Scotland Yard.

This scam is still happening and unfortunately came to Great Bentley.

If anyone rings you asking for cash for any fraud purpose, it would not be a police officer. If you have any doubt of any scam and just need advice, please contact me Julia.brandon@essex.police.uk I am more than happy to chat with you, no matter how silly or small you believe it is.

Fake Emails impersonating Temu

The emails state that you can win free products by simply clicking on a link and completing a quick survey. The link will take you to a realistic looking website that is under the control of the criminals, where they will steal your personal data. These FAKE Temu emails have been reported over 30,000 times to Action Fraud from across the UK. Always report suspicious emails by forwarding them to: report@phishing.gov.uk

VEHICLE No MOT

A vehicle was reported as abandoned, whilst checking the vehicle it became evident that there was no MOT. The vehicle was then seen being driven and placed on ANPR for a stop. If your vehicle is not road legal, you just may find yourself having it seized.

Suspicious circumstances.

If you see anything that does not look right, report it. Try and get as much information as you can, including registration numbers, which are key to a lot of activity. The more you have, the more chance we have of a positive investigation, with results.

Reporting incidents the correct way.

To report an incident please **ring 101 or for Emergency 999**

Or report it online <https://www.essex.police.uk/do-it-online/report-a-crime/>

For anything else email local PCSO Julia.brandon@essex.police.uk

FRIENDS OF GREAT BENTLEY STATION

News from Great Bentley station, we are hosting a Coffee Morning at the Methodist church hall on **Saturday 13th April 10 until 12 noon.** We are hoping that as many people as possible will come and get involved. Our local station has seen some changes over the years, it has been fascinating delving into the history and seeing photographs of life in the good old days. Many families have lived here for decades and some born and bred here.

We are hoping to brighten up the station with new planting and more tubs this year. We would also like to encourage you to contribute to the ambiance of the station with pictures from the past or vibrant paintings you may have done.

We are hoping to be able to have a talking bench on the London bound platform, which we would love to have contributions towards; poems or stories, affirmations, songs, little ditties. We have 15 minutes sound time to fill. We will have a box at the Coffee Morning where we would encourage you to post any pictures, poems etc with your name and contact details on the back.

Please come along have a chat with the volunteers and hear our plans for the future and you could well be part of the rich history of Great Bentley Station. Looking forward to seeing you on the 13th April.

From Dawn Vinn and Peter Neal

FIRST RESPONDERS

Community First Responders give their time for free in support of the East of England Ambulance Service. Last year there were 959 individual Responders in 469 Groups spread across East Anglia and Essex. They provided over 230,500 hours of voluntary service and attended 26,609 emergency calls - 70 calls every day of the year!! On 18,072 occasions local responders reached the patient first. The top categories were breathing problems and chest pains. Please support your local First Responder Group, who contributed to these impressive statistics. Interested in helping or joining contact Peter Harry 07503 153960.

VILLAGE HISTORY

Following on from the references to the Mitchell family and their generous donations to Great Bentley I was asked by one reader if there were any history books available to purchase. My favourites are **How Green Is Our Village, by Carl Morton 1976** and **History of Great Bentley by L G Newman 1960**, both are now out of print unfortunately. So I will try and give you a bit of potted village history prompted by a recent phone call/visit.

The phone rings one evening and the voice on the other end says "You won't know me but...." This was followed by "I run a tour company for American tourists and one lady thinks her forbears were from Great Bentley." My response to that was "Oh, the Marvin's". Silence for a few seconds followed by "Well I wasn't expecting that". "We get several here every summer, I continue, they lived at Edens Farm". Same response "Well I wasn't expecting that".

THE MARVINS

As you will see from the photograph on the front cover the date on plaster work at Edens Farm is 1570. Maybe this is one of the oldest properties in Great Bentley? Here lived the Marvin family, wealthy well respected members of the area. I quote from "A History of St Mary's Church by Ian Doolittle"; He tells of the religious repressions which led to members of the Marvin family emigrating from Edons (Edens) farm to New England in 1636 and 1638. "We are indebted to Mr F.R. Marvin of Rensselaerville, New York, with whom we are corresponding, for the following excerpts from "The Marvin's English Ancestry" published privately in Boston in 1900."

"The Stuarts were reigning when Matthew, the first of our ancestors to cross the sea, left England. The ship which carried him bore an auspicious name, "The Increase". Charles 1 was already in trouble with his parliament and his demand for Ship Money had aroused the indignation of the people. This new burden is believed to have been the cause for Reinold's departure; he followed his brother in 1637 or 1638". Edward the father of Matthew, asked that he be buried in the churchyard of Great Bentley and in his will left Matthew "Edons alles Dreybrokes (Drybrook) and 2 croftes of land called Harttes and Brocken Heddes". Matthew was baptised at St Mary's church, Great Bentley on March 26th 1600 and was fifteen when his father died and was one of the "...very earliest emigrants whose names are known among the settlers in Hartford, Connecticut who formed the company thereafter known as "Adventurers".

"Before the departure there had been, we are told from church records, an altercation in St Mary's church; The church court records also provide a glimpse into the seating arrangements inside the church. Parishioners had their own pews and this occasioned a clash between John Mercaunt and Edward Marvin in 1596. According to the church wardens, Mercaunt "crowded" Marvin out of his seat, and "truly we think they were both at fault. Marvin, in fact, deposed that "sitting in his usual seat, Mercaunt did pull him by the shoulders, and he, willing (i.e. intending) to continue in his seat, did resist as far as he could". Mercaunt for his part, admitted "shouldering Marvin from a seat of old belonging to his father's house". In 1604 the churchwardens themselves complained of the seating difficulties in the church: "the people sit confusedly without order, the youth prevent the married people of their seat...."

What brave people they must have been to leave a small village and set sail for the new world, but also I would say very determined and resourceful. If you Google this family you will see just how very successful they became.

Every year descendents arrive in Great Bentley wanting to learn more about their roots here in Great Bentley. So the most recent was a lady called Susan who arrived just a week or two ago. At St Mary's she could stand by the font where her forbears would have been christened. We were so lucky that she could take photographs of the exterior of Edens Farm and see the family tree, which is about four foot long, going back to Edward Marvin. Amazingly from the family history she had recorded she could verify that she indeed had descended from this family line and she was so thrilled about that.

My last quote...." the very earliest emigrants whose names are known among the settlers in **Hartford**, Connecticut who formed the company thereafter known as "Adventurers".

Why should this ring a bell? Well the name of the new building development at the Eastern end of the green is known as **Hartford Green**. A lovely tribute to the history of our village.

Mary Maskell



Great Bentley Pre-school
www.greatbentleypreschool.co.uk
information@greatbentleypreschool.co.uk

This month I would like to welcome Faith, we can't wait for you to join us and look forward to settling you in and having lots of fun with you.

World Book Day

World Book Day is on Thursday 7th March which we will be celebrating in Pre-school.

Did you know that reading the same book over and over to children has great benefits? Not only do children thrive on repetition, but it also helps them to get to know sounds, words, and language. It also encourages them to value books and stories and sparks their imagination within play and stimulate their curiosity to ask questions.

It helps to develop concentration and the ability to focus, along with contributing towards supporting interaction in social and communication skills.

We will be encouraging the children to bring in their favourite books for discussion and inviting all children to dress up as their favourite character, we will look forward to seeing some wonderful costumes if they wish to dress up.

Registers

This month I will be looking at the new registers for the last term of the academic year that starts in April. This term is always our fullest and this year we have even more interest due to the new 2-year-old funding that becomes available from then.

For anyone wanting to know more information please go to the website below
childcarechoices.gov.uk

This will give you information on any childcare financial support that is available and the application process. If you are interested in joining our Pre-School, contact me as soon as possible, I now have waiting lists throughout 2025 and limited availability for the rest of this year.

Please find our details on the main advert on page O or via our details above.

Staffing

With the increase in interest and children attending we are pleased to let you know we have another new team member.

A few weeks ago, we welcomed Sue. Sue has a wealth of knowledge and experience, and an absolute passion for childcare. She has already met a lot of the children and enjoyed getting back into an Early Years Environment and supporting the community. We are delighted to have her in our team, as are the children. Finally, I would like to wish all you Mummy's out there a very special day with your little ones on Sunday 10th March.

Thanks for reading

Julie Wiles

Website: greatbentleycc.co.uk Email: info@greatbentleycc.co.uk
[Instagram: great_bentleycc](https://www.instagram.com/great_bentleycc) Facebook: **Great Bentley CC**

Season Opening Charity T20 Match.

Sunday 14th April. Bar open from noon. Match starts at 2pm.

Honorary Club Vice President Ben Fryer, who is running the London Marathon raising funds for the NSPCC will umpire, Club Chairman Henry Fairbanks will captain the GBCC XI and Club Captain Alex Youngs will lead the Ben Fryer Select XI.

GBCC are pleased to donate 20p per drink sold to the NSPCC.

***** Raffle, Cake Sale, Face Painting *****



Cricket has continued over the winter with the colts training in indoor nets and playing in an indoor league. Despite great team performances results have been mixed with a big win against Tendring (307 vs 251) and a couple of losses to the stronger sides in the league Colchester (273 vs 246) and Witham (301 vs 258). All players have put in the hard work that they will take into the new season. Seniors will also be taking to the nets from 29th March. If anyone is interested in coming along, please contact the club as places are limited.

The artificial strip has been ordered and is still scheduled to be installed in early March – just keeping our fingers crossed that the weather behaves. We are hoping the strip will be installed and ready for first use for the charity game in aid of the NSPCC on 14th April. Thanks again to the GBPC for supporting the club in this endeavour which will allow the girls and boys to play when the weather is not at its best, play on a more consistent wicket and therefore significantly improve their skills.

The adult Sunday league fixtures are now finalised so get the dates in your diary and come down and support your local cricket team and have a drink in the glorious sunshine we are guaranteed this summer! The well stocked bar is open for all the adult matches from 1pm.

Home League Fixtures			
Date	Opposition	Date	Opposition
21st April	West Bergholt	7th July	Kelvedon
5th May	Boxted	21st July	Kirby
26th May	Tendring	18th Aug	Real Oddies
9th June	East Bergholt	15th Sept	Harwich
23rd June	IpsCol		

New to the village? Looking to get involved in a friendly welcoming club? GBCC have a senior team playing league and friendly matches on Sundays (start 14th April) with practice on the Green Thursdays at 6pm from early-April. Our thriving youth and junior section (from school year one) practice on Friday evenings (starting 19th April). Hardball league matches are played throughout the summer. The well stocked bar is open on Friday evenings and for adult matches on Sundays during the season. Please contact the club via the email address info@greatbentleycc.co.uk if you or your child would like to give cricket a try or with any questions.

Patient Participation Group Meeting

Our next meeting is Thursday 28th March 6.30pm at The Village Hall in The George Mitchell Room.

I am pleased to say our PPG is thriving which is very gratifying. It is so important that we show our support for our Doctor's as they face the challenge of meeting the needs of the growing number of patients but with little prospect of increasing the size of the building to go with it. We are fortunate that we are always joined by one of our Doctors who keeps us up to date with surgery news and we can ask questions or raise any concerns we may have.

With the NHS seldom out of the news and the struggles of patients trying to see their GP's our PPG provides an opportunity to engage in discussion and thereby get an insight into the day to day difficulties of General Practice. There is no doubting the commitment of our Hollies Surgery to provide the best care for us and in return we must cherish and appreciate them.

Do come along and join us, you will be made most welcome.

Judy Bishop. Chair of Great Bentley PPG

LETTER

A Bentley Breeze

A bitterness of wind and rain
Cuts harsh across the village green.
All day the weather's been the same
Feels like the worst it's ever been.

The rain, like stair rods, hammers down
On figures folded in their fight
Who turn to shadows grey and brown
Upon the fading of the light.

Forgotten now, the warmth of sun,
The summer flowers out in bloom
The breeze, a gentler, kinder one
No place for cold or gloom and doom.

Until that time comes round again
We button up and battle on
And maybe all that wind and rain
Makes summertime a better one!

JM

It has been a year next month that I lost my beloved wife Ursula. To say that the past months have been anything other than the worst experience of my life would be an understatement! However amongst the dark days (and there are many) has been the support of my family and also of village people! The acts of kindness (gifts of cakes etc) people who offer to talk or collect shopping etc The support from the clerk and Parish Council members for a memorial bench to be placed in Thorrington Road a few yards from where Ursula lived for 60 years! A more recent act of kindness was carried out by C & C Construction and Groundworks to whom I am extremely grateful! I asked if they could assist me in siting and fixing the bench, not only did they complete the work but when I offered payment this was refused as he said they grew up in the village and knew Ursula so no charge. So to Colin and Carl my grateful thanks!

So finally just to say all is not dark in this world and as I struggle with cooking, washing and ironing and the loneliness of an empty house I get a bit of current reality from the kindness of village people and that helps!!

Michael Dorling.

DEADLINE FOR APRIL MAGAZINE

TUESDAY 12th MARCH

Material to Mary Maskell, Caldew Cottage, The Green, 250524 **AND**
Carole Allington, Poplar House, Station Road, 251086.

Please mark all material - "Parish Magazine"

email: carole@pncallington.co.uk **AND** marymaskell@sys3internet.net

IMPORTANT - PLEASE SEND ALL INFORMATION TO BOTH OF US

THE KNITTED BIBLE

Come and see a beautiful collection of Bible stories depicted in knitted figures

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, THORPE LE SOKEN, CO16 OED

Open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday from January 30 - March 2, 11am-3pm

Hundreds of remarkably distinctive knitted figures form a nationwide touring exhibition that has just arrived for a month's stay at St Michael's, Thorpe [**Open to view - Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat 11am-3pm**] Over thirty well-known episodes in the Bible are depicted in dramatic tableaux from the Beginning of the World and Creation to three appearances of Jesus after his Resurrection. Old Testament highlights include a strikingly bristly bearded Goliath towering before his downfall over the young David. Daniel is closely attended by two believable lions with his captor King Darius looking on resplendent in a silver threaded coat. Nearby another king, Nebuchadnezzar supervises Shadrach, Meshach and Abendigo going into the Fiery Furnace - a large, inverted flowerpot with flames of red tissue paper. There is infant Moses in the bulrushes. A larger woollen mannikin, Jonah is either being swallowed, or ejected, by a blue whale beside a mat of cable-stitched sea. A similarly helpless figure later is Lazarus in a head-to-toe winding sheet. Similarly, the paralysed man is lowered to be cured on hammocklike stretcher and the stricken traveller rescued by the Good Samaritan. Near the entrance two episodes foretelling Jesus's ministry have a rough-clad John the Baptist and a longhaired young Mary meeting the Archangel Gabriel.

The exhibition has the clear intention to impart an important key religious message for each scene in a refreshingly simple visual and absorbing way. But the ingenious use of different craft skills enhances the stories. Various types of knitting are employed – with miniature crochet plates for the Last Supper in a place of honour before the altar. French knitted cords are coiled to form the large wine jars for Christ's first miracle at Cana beside knitted drinking vessels. Simple rough spun wool serves as ropes to lead the two malefactors in the Crucifixion scene. The Centurion with woven breastplate and an impressive Simon of Cyrene stand beside the awaiting crosses, with dice beneath. Zaccheus the tax-collector up a tree with a rope ladder [simpler than the wooden one scaled by angels in Jacob's dream] shows how other props are employed. As well as some strikingly attired biblical figures, animals play their part: the menagerie boarding Noah's Ark a *tour de force* with a range of possible favourites from the giraffes and toothy crocodiles down to a pair of snails. I had it pointed out that even the sexes of animals depicted where appropriate, with maned lion and lioness. Elsewhere a hairy camel looks into the stable at Jesus's Nativity and two lovely donkeys with Good Samaritan and Palm Sunday. Near the end of this guided walk in the south-east aisle are two extraordinary massed figures, each slightly different and representing many days and weeks of work. These represent the Feeding of the Four [or Five] Thousand and the Parable of the Lost Sheep, with flock of ninety-nine including a black one - all lovingly made. The attention to particular details yet quiet simplicity is important in good art and craft and is clearly demonstrated in this massed assembly of pleasing figures. The opportunity to visit St Michaels in the next few weeks before they move on should not be missed.

DRB

RUNNING CLUB

Despite bouts of stormy weather it has been a busy January for the club. And if the weather was tough here it was much colder in Poland where four club members took on the Krakow Parkrun in Poland. Sammy and Martin Cotton and Donna and Mark Harris pulled on their trainers in sub zero temperatures with plenty of snow on the ground. There were also tourist visits by Laura Cook, Donna Harris and Mark Harris to East Grinstead, whilst Bee Harris stopped off at Northampton Parkrun on her way to the National Running Show. Colchester Castle Parkrun also made a return with a revised route which now sees participants running those hills by the castle 4 times!

Craig Mitchell ran the Mercury 10 mile trail race, hosted by Orion Harriers near Loughton. This was the 101st time this race has taken place and it is described as a tough ten mile cross country race through Epping Forest. This wasn't the only off road event for club members during January: Bentley Blues ventured down to South Essex and the delights of Hadleigh Country Park and the Benfleet 15mile run. Known for its gruelling hill in the last mile, it didn't put anyone off getting great times. There were fourteen runners with Josh Beaumont the first Bentley runner home, 17th place in 1:44:20 followed by Jon Mann in 1:53:16; Richard Heath 2:02:41; Paul Brazier 2:06:24; Craig Mitchell 2:07:54; Gethin Hughes 2:08:58; Gerry Gladden 2:09:28; Adam Robey 2:21:13; Tricia Stacey 2:30:53; Toni Wilson 2:48:29; Vicki Law 2:59:47; Catherine Ott 3:33:10; Emma Wright 3:33:11 and Dave Jones 3:33:14.

And keeping on the theme of off road running the fourth North Essex and South Suffolk (NESS) cross country race of the season was hosted by Harwich Runners. This took place at Wix and included freshly ploughed fields, clay, mud and ditches. The ladies team ran really well and came 2nd, whilst the men came 5th. We go into the last race of the season needing as many people out there to keep us up in Pool A. We haven't been in Pool B since at least 2010 so it's fingers crossed for the last run in the series.

We use the cycle track every Thursday evening at the Northern Gateway. This is actually a cycling facility however it makes a great place for running and since we have been using it other local clubs have started to hire the venue. If there is anyone who fancies running but doesn't like the dark winter evenings this is an ideal place to come to: it's well lit, here is a smooth surface and a café for after! We can't promise that it will be dry however: on two evenings this year it has poured so hard that the water was starting to accumulate on the track. It didn't put anyone off and we all finished the session with some pride in having toughed it out!

Our half marathon went off on the first Sunday of February. Some 640 runners were on the start line and from the feedback at the finish the event was very well received. The first runner home covered the 13.1 miles in one hour ten minutes. That's considerably short of the course record which is 1:07 but given the windy conditions was an incredible performance. As ever, thanks to everyone in the village for your support. And we hoped that many of you managed to get out to cheer on the runners. Traditionally we always use the first Sunday of February for this race so next year's event will be on Sunday 1st. We have already started planning!

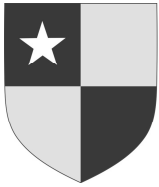
"Community Speedwatch Update

January saw an ongoing reduction in the level of 'speeding' recorded by the Community Speedwatch Team, both in terms of overall numbers, but also when compared to the sorts of speeds we were used to seeing a year ago.

We don't for a minute think it's a job done, not least because we're still catching some 'exceptional' drivers at high speeds, but it is starting to look like people are at least thinking a bit more about the speed at which they're driving in our village.

Thank you to everyone who continues to drive within the speed limits around Great Bentley!

As always, we're keen to welcome new volunteers to our team so if you can spare some time and you'd like to be part of this community effort to make our village just a little bit safer, please do get in touch at greatbentleyspeedwatch@gmail.com



GREAT BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the
Council: Jennifer Spear

Tel: 01206 256410:

Email: clerk@greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk

Nominations for Pride of Great Bentley Awards

It's that time of year when we want to celebrate and show our appreciation for those members of Great Bentley Village that go above and beyond within our community.

At our Annual Meeting of the Parish on 18 April 2024 we will be holding the Pride of Great Bentley Awards, but we need your help! We need your nominations of anyone who you think deserves this award.

This could be a kindly neighbour who visits an elderly person, someone who helps a busy mum with walking her children to school or an organiser of events that directly benefit people in Great Bentley. All nominations are welcome.

Nomination forms are available on our website, or we can email you over one, or pop into the office to see us and we will happily print one off for you. All nominations need to be with us by the end of March 2024.

So please if you know a villager who has done something special to help others, nominate them today! Anything that helps put the 'Great' into Great Bentley!

Broken, Damaged or Lost Recycling Containers

Please be aware that we do not hold any stock of recycling containers and they are no longer replaced for free unless they are broken.

However, you can purchase them from Tendring District Council (TDC) at Clacton Town Hall or Brightlingsea Town Council. You can also supply and use your own containers for recycling boxes.

If any of your recycling containers used externally get broken or damaged TDC will replace them, but you need to contact them and when they are able they will drop off a replacement container. Please note that they can only replace broken containers if the broken one is given back to them at the same time.

For any further information please go to Tendring District Council's Recycling Service:

Website link <https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/content/rubbish-recycling-collection-days>
recycle@tendringdc.gov.uk 01255 686788

Dates for your diary:

Parish Council Meeting - **Thursday 7th March**,
7 pm, Village Hall

Annual Meeting of the Parish – Pride of Great Bentley Awards – **18th April**, 7 pm, Village Hall
Clare Hamlet – Assistant Clerk to the Council

clerk@greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk 01206 256410 www.greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk

SCHOOL NEWS

YEAR 1

In PSHE year 1 thought about 'Stretchy Learning' and how we stretch ourselves when we learn new things. They made Stretchy Flowers from their hands and decorated them to plant in the class. They also gained some new class members in the shape of some stick insects!

YEAR 2

Year 2 had an intriguing egg appear in the playground. A video of a dragon in the playground was recorded. The task at hand was to tend to the egg.

As a result they started covering the news and enjoyed speaking with people about what they witnessed. They also had fun collaborating to design an awesome garden for a bird. In order to make the finest garden they had to consider how we would interact with others.

YEAR 3

In English topic they have been learning about the Truth about the Three Little Pigs story. This is a twist on the traditional fairy tale of the three little pigs. The children have been working really hard creating a story map and investigating the three little pig's houses using the 5 senses.

YEAR 4

Year 4 have enjoyed learning all about sketch maps in Geography. They started by sketching a layout of the school to get the idea of how a sketch map is created and then worked on a sketch map of the centre of Great Bentley. They annotated their maps with Ordnance Survey map symbols to finish it off and included a clear key.

YEAR 5

It has been fun for year 5. They have painted their clay pots and they look great. They have been learning about buoyancy and gravity and carrying out practical experiments to understand the science behind how boats float. They have also been enjoying learning Bollywood dancing in PE. Their heist stories are almost finished and they have all smashed their learning on decimals in maths.

FOOTBALL CLUB NOTES

ESSEX & SUFFOLK BORDER LEAGUE Div 1 KO 2 30 pm unless stated

Sat Jan 20 th Gas Rec	(A)	EJC 4 th round Postponed frozen pitch
Sat Jan 27 th Gas Rec	(A)	W 5 – 3 on pens. 1 – 1 after extra time. EJC 4 th rd
Sat Feb 3 rd Thorpe Ath	(A)	L 4 – 3 EJC Qtr Final
Sat Feb 10 th Kings Park Rangers	(H)	L 3 - 0
Sat Feb 17 th		
Sat Feb 24 th FC Clacton Res	(A)	

ESSEX & SUFFOLK BORDER LEAGUE Div 3

Sat Jan 20 th Little Oakley Res	(A)	Postponed
Sat Jan 27 th Roman Rovers Res	(A)	W 3 – 1 Covid Cup
Sat Feb 3 rd Roman Rovers Res	(H)	L 5 – 3 on penalties. 2 – 2 after 90mins Res KO Cup
Sat Feb 10 th Tollesbury	(A)	W 5 - 3
Sat Feb 17 th Gosfield Utd	(H)	
Sat Feb 24 th Barnston Res	(H)	

ESSEX & BORDER LEAGUE Div 5

Sat Jan 20 th West Bergholt Res	(H)	Postponed frozen pitch
Sat Jan 27 th Assington Stanley	(A)	L 2 – 2
Sat Feb 3 rd Boxted Lodgers Res	(A)	Postponed. Boxted unable to field team
Sat Feb 10 th Elmstead Mkt	(A)	W 1 – 0
Sat Feb 17 th Brooklands Sat	(A)	
Sat Feb 24 th Assington Stanley	(H)	

Bad weather continued to disrupt games moving into February. Frozen pitches followed by continuous heavy rain saw only 15 out of 53 games played on Sat Feb 10th in the Border league.

The bad news continued. Mersea Island, a long term club in the Border league were forced to withdraw their 1st team from Div 1 due to a lack of players and to only field a single team in Div 5. Obviously this had a knock on effect to all the teams that had played them so far this season. All points and goals scored removed from league tables.

Sat Jan 27th saw the Essex Junior Cup game v Gas Rec finally played at Gas. In what was a very physical game played in what I can only describe as a “nasty atmosphere” GB came out as worthy winners after extra time and then penalties. Lewis Mountney scored our goal in normal time. Gaz Evans, Barney Morton, Max Copeland, Toby Britton and Pacey Grimshaw all converting our penalties. Gas had put one penalty wide and then Jake Allwood saved the next effort leaving the final score 5 – 3 to GB.

The quarter final was played the following week away at Thorpe Athletic, currently unbeaten leaders of Div 1. Despite GB playing the better football, Thorpe scored the winning goal in the final minute of the game. Our scorers were Jake Vaughan x 2 and Barney Morton.

The Kings Park Rangers “circus” came to town on Sat Feb 10th. Thursday saw a pitch inspection on the green by Kings Park officials, then on match day, pre match interviews were conducted and put on youtube before a video camera and cameraman were installed on the halfway line on a small gantry ready for the game. Without doubt they are a very experienced group of players and ran out worthy 3 – 0 winners. To their credit our young side continued to try to play football and were unlucky to not score, coming close on several occasions. More interviews posted after the game but they did come into the bar after the game for some refreshment.

Our scheduled game at Dovercourt Rovers was postponed because Jake Vaughan had been selected for the Border League Representative team playing in the inter league cup. A national cup covering the whole of the English leagues.

The end of Jan saw the reserves play Roman Rovers Res two weeks running. Firstly away in the Covid Cup. Winning 3 – 1 with goals from Sam Winney x 2 and Alfie Morley and then on the green in the Res KO Cup. Unfortunately after 2 – 2 at 90 mins, we lost 5 – 3 on penalties. Scorers were Sam Winney and Jimmy Whiting. Penalty scorers were Elliot McMillan, Tom Jack and Adam Duce.

Feb 10th saw the reserves beat Tollesbury away 5 – 3. Manager Will Archibald was forced to play the full 90 mins with the 1st team stealing some players. Scorers Elliot McMillan x 2, Adam Morton x 2 and the trusty left foot of Tome Jack. Sam Winney is currently the top scorer in Div 3. Top man.

The 'A' team fell foul of a frozen pitch for the game against West Bergholt Res. The following week they travelled to play Assington Stanley who proceeded to try to kick our young side out of the park in a 1 – 1 draw. Our scorer was Lucian Hall. Boxted Lodgers Res were unable to field a team on Feb 3rd. With the points awarded to us plus the 1 – 0 win at Elmstead Market it means that we are still top of Division 5 with a game in hand over Assington Stanley.

Follow Great Bentley Football Club on Facebook and X for all the latest information. Come and watch some "grass roots" football. It's free and it's better than you might think.
Come on the Bulldogs

HOW TO MAKE AN EASTER EGG TREE

This special Easter egg tree is fun and easy to make, and looks very cheerful when the eggshell baskets are filled with brightly coloured flowers on Easter day. As a treat, fill the eggshells with miniature chocolate eggs instead.

You will need:

Flower pot
Crepe paper
All-purpose glue
Branch
Soil and moss
Blunt knife
Eggs
Ribbon
Fresh flowers.

- 1 Cover a medium-sized flower pot with crepe paper. Carefully glue the paper in place inside the pot and underneath.
- 2 Fill the pot with soil and plant into it a small branch to make the tree. Place moss on top of the soil, around the 'trunk' of the tree.
- 3 Using a blunt knife, gently tap around the centre of the eggs to crack them. Collect the yolks and whites of the eggs in a bowl (these can be used later for cooking), and leave the shells to dry.
- 4 Glue a length of narrow ribbon around the eggshells. Tie in a bow around a branch on your tree.
- 5 To decorate, pour a little water into the eggshells and carefully add a few small flowers.

Cleaner with Keys at Great Bentley Primary School

Monday to Friday – 2 hours 15 minutes per evening
For example, 16:30-18:15 this can be flexible
11.25 hrs per week

Term time only
£10.59 per hour.

Start date: ASAP

Do you want to join our fantastic school and be part of our friendly, supportive team?

We are a vibrant and happy school in a beautiful village and are looking to recruit an experienced and friendly cleaner to help look after our school, alongside our existing site team.

The post holder will be required to work as part of a committed school team.

Great Bentley Primary school is part of the Penrose Learning Trust and is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Appointment will be subject to satisfactory references, and enhanced DBS clearance and medical checks.

If you are interested and want to find out more or request an application form, please contact the Office via admin@greatbentley.essex.sch.uk

Surgery Newsletter

Easter Opening Hours

The normal Surgery opening times are from 8.00 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday. Over the Easter Bank Holiday, the Surgery will be closed on Friday, 29 March and Monday, 1 April.

If you are on regular medication, please remember to order this in good time so you don't run out over the Easter weekend. We do require three working days (excluding Saturday and Sunday) to process all prescriptions.

Pharmacy First Service

The new Pharmacy First service is now up and running and allows participating community pharmacies to receive referrals from NHS 111, GP practices and other referring centres. As well as the Surgery referring patients to this new service, patients can also self-refer themselves.

Pharmacy First referrals are requests for a pharmacist to support patients that require:

- A consultation with a pharmacist to manage a minor illness
- A consultation for one of 7 common conditions listed below:

Conditions	Age Range
Acute Otitis Media	1-17 years old
Impetigo	1 year and over
Infected Insect Bites	1 year and over
Shingles	18 years and over
Sinusitis	12 years and over
Sore Throat	5 years and over
Urinary Tract Infections (Uncomplicated)	Women 16-64 years old

If needed, the pharmacist is also able to prescribe appropriate medication for these conditions.

Surgery Training Afternoon

Along with all other surgeries in the area we will be shut from 12 noon on Wednesday, 27 March for staff training.

Patient Participation Group Meetings

The next meeting of the Patient Participation Group will be held on Thursday, 28th March at 6.30 pm at Great Bentley Village Hall in the Mitchell Room.

Sue Mitson – Operations Manager

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

**Are you ready for this month's Oscars?
Match these well-known films to their directors?**

1. Alfred Hitchcock		A. Top Gun
2. Wes Anderson		B. Dunkirk
3. David Lean		C. The Aviator
4. The Coen Brothers		D. Edward Scissorhands
5. Steven Spielberg		E. A Clockwork Orange
6. Ridley Scott		F. Rosemary's Baby
7. Tony Scott		G. The Birds
8. Christopher Nolan		H. Fantastic Mr Fox
9. Stanley Kubrick		I. Jurassic Park
10. Martin Scorsese		J. Lawrence of Arabia
11. Tim Burton		K. No Country for Old Men
12. Quentin Tarantino		L. Citizen Kane
13. Francis Ford Coppola		M. It's a Wonderful Life
14. Charlie Chaplin		N. Slumdog Millionaire
15. Roman Polanski		O. Blade Runner
16. Woody Allen		P. Pulp Fiction
17. Kathryn Bigelow		Q. The Hurt Locker
18. Orson Welles		R. Annie Hall
19. Frank Capra		S. The Godfather
20. Danny Boyle		T. The Great Dictator

1.G 2.H 3.I 4.K 5.L 6.O 7.A 8.B 9.E 10.C 11.D 12.P 13.S 14.T 15.F 16.R 17.Q 18.L 19.M 20.N

Farming Diaries

As the day time temperatures have started to rise and the days are lengthening it is soon evident that spring has sprung especially with more tractors and sprayers in the fields.

With the recent spell of dry weather drying out the top surface of many fields farmers have been busy applying fertiliser to give them a kick start to the growing season. This fertiliser contains a blend of nutrients such as nitrogen and sulphur, and is applied at a rate suited to the crop to enable them to grow away quickly and continue to photosynthesise with the increasing day length.

The very last sugar beet will have been lifted before the local Silverspoon factory at Bury St Edmunds shuts its doors for the year to begin its busy process of turning our local farmers' sugar beet into sweet products for you to use in your tea, cake baking and jam making. Any Silverspoon product you see in the shops will have been made using British grown sugar beet so where you can please support our local farmers and buy this British product.

Farmers pulling land down for spring drilling have had more beneficial winter weather with sharp frosts to help create a friable tilth. This is important as it allows tender plant roots to penetrate the soil to enable it to source moisture and nutrients. Where sugar beet once stood in the field spring cropping will now be drilled with crops such as spring barley of which malting varieties can go on to make the beers we drink. It won't be long until we start to see the familiar 'ridging up' of land for the future planting of potatoes. These potatoes depending on the variety, will remain in the ground for between 90 to 120 days being irrigated on a regular basis and products applied to prevent the outbreak of potato blight which can devastate an entire crop. The crop will then be lifted and graded depending on size where they will then be sent for processing into crisps and chips or to supermarkets to be sold loose or pre-packed.

MOTHERING SUNDAY

Sunday 10th March

Each year in Lent we celebrate Mothering Sunday. This typically involves lavishing Mums with gifts and attention and celebrating the women who have nurtured us throughout our lives.

But with the day becoming increasingly commercialised how many people are aware of its very different origins?

In the 16th century, Mothering Sunday was less about mothers and more about church. Back then, people would make a journey to their 'mother' church once a year. This might have been their home church, their nearest cathedral or a major parish church in a bigger town. The service which took place at the 'mother' church symbolised the coming together of families. This would have represented a significant journey for many.

Another tradition was to allow those working in the fields on wealthy farms and estates in England to have the day off on this day to visit their mothers and possibly go to church too. This was a variation on the theme of visiting the 'mother' church and was a move towards a more family focussed occasion. Before the days of cars and roads, family get-togethers were far more rare, (and Facetime was still a long way off) in some ways this tradition is still alive today as grown up children often visit their parents on Mothering Sunday.

Churches around the country will be sharing their own traditions, celebrating and giving thanks to the huge impact mothers have on each of our lives. The main service on Mothering Sunday in churches across the country is central to the life of the church. Families come together to have lunch, or children make breakfast in bed for their mother, leaving all the mess to be cleared up later! It's all about showing appreciation and many make a huge effort to make their mother feel special.

BENTLEY LADIES CLUB

Our A.G.M. was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 6th February, and after a warm welcome the Chairlady, Secretary and Treasurer gave reports on last year's activities. The committee stood down and the election of Officers for 2024 took place.

Once the business part of the meeting was concluded, the evening was rounded off with a fun Beetle Drive, raffle and refreshments.

During 2024 we are looking forward to a variety of speakers on topics which are listed below. If you fancy joining us new members and guests are always welcome. We meet at the Village Hall in the Mitchell Room at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month.

Dates for your 2024 diary:

- Tuesday 5th March... our monthly meeting at the Village Hall 7.30pm, 'A Policeman's Lot', a talk by Martyn Lockwood, a retired Inspector in the Essex Police.
- Tuesday 2nd April... 'Tales of Treasure and Trash', a presentation by Kate Osborne, a naturalist who loves beachcombing on Suffolk's shingle beaches
- Tuesday 7th May... 'The Palace of Versailles' with Cherry Mullins
- Tuesday 4th June... Flower Arranging with Brenda Evers, a national speaker and demonstrator with N.A.F.A.S.
- Tuesday 2nd July... Andy Moore from Colchester Zoo 'The Role of Zoos in the 21st century
- Tuesday 6th August... 'Garden Party'
- Tuesday 3rd September... 'The History of Pantomime' a talk by Anita Howard
- Tuesday 1st October... 'The Language of Flowers' with Ruth Goody
- Tuesday 5th November... 'The Bayeux Tapestry' with Kindra Jones
- Christmas Lunch... TBA

GREAT BENTLEY HISTORY SOCIETY

Thursday 14th March - 7.30pm Village Hall

Harwich and the Mayflower. The link between our local port and the founding of America.

A talk by Andy Schooler, a member of the Harwich Society.

Members and visitors are very welcome. Members £2 Visitors £4

GREAT BENTLEY GARDENING CLUB

This year we have already enjoyed two very interesting and informative talks at our January and February meetings on Gardening with Wildlife in Mind and the Dangers of the Asian Hornet and now we move on to March with – COMPOSTING – All you ever wanted to know!

What's the point? What can I do with it? What can I compost? What can't I compost?
What are the ingredients to make it successful?

Come and find out with Andrew Babicz on **Tuesday 19th March at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

All welcome Visitors £3.00

ART CLUB

Village Hall, 2pm. New members very welcome

Tuesday 12th March - "Castles"

Tuesday 26th March - "Modern Art and Mixed Media"



Wildlives

Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre

'Catkins', Frating Road, Thorrington, Colchester CO7 8HT

www.wildlives.org.uk

Opening hours: n/a 07802 767016

Outside of Wildlives' hours, please call the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999 or log on to our website for advice on what to do with a sick animal until we are open again in the morning. **See the web site for extra pictures too!**

Great Crested Grebe found

March 2024

A goldcrest was found by the side of the road in Frinton by a member of the public; he was picked up and brought to Wildlives suffering from severe hypothermia. He was probably caught in the airstream of a car. Although given critical care fluid and warmed up, at which point he seemed to become much more alert, he sadly died. These tiny birds weigh 5-6g, the same as a 1p piece, and are the smallest bird in Britain. Despite being so tiny they migrate here from Scandinavia for warmer weather. They wait until they have a tail wind before starting their journey, then cross North Sea at speeds of up to 27 mph, completing the trip from Scandinavia to our East coast in around 8 hours. They land exhausted on beaches along the east coast, and Frinton beach seems to be a favourite. If you find one, pick him up and warm him in a pocket; he will soon regain sufficient energy to fly somewhere safe and feed.

A Great Crested Grebe was found in the road after mistaking wet roads for rivers. As diving birds, their legs are situated by their rear end making it impossible to walk or take off when grounded. They can only take off on water. There is a lake near where it was found, so the lady who found it is going to release it there as it has no injuries.

A common gull (left) was found with a huge, pus-filled abscess in his throat. The abscess was drained (pictured above after draining) and he was given antibiotics and pain medication. Sadly he was also excreting blood, and could not be saved.

Our winters have now become more temperate with climate change, and this is a big problem for hedgehogs. When the temperature drops, they hibernate, and then when it rises, they wake up again. This cycle used to occur only once per winter, but now hedgehogs are repeatedly hibernating and waking; the waking has a massive energy cost, and when they wake they urgently need the slugs and snails that are not around in winter. You can help by watching out for hedgehogs when the temperature rises a bit, and giving them some good quality dog or cat food to support them through their repeated hibernations.

Fieldfares are migratory birds that breed in Northern Europe and the palearctic but migrate south for the winter. Their numbers are decreasing dramatically so where flocks of hundreds used to be commonly seen, now it is rare to see more than a few birds. This one became entangled in wire, Once he had been disentangled he was kept until he was grasping properly with that foot, then released where he was found.

GARDENING NOTES

As we run into March it is a bit difficult to know what you need to do as this year has been a difficult year. Lots of the flowers have provided beautiful blossoms a month or so early. This may well affect the results we see in March and other months. This year it is most important that you keep on top of the weeding as the warmer weather will have pushed forward their growth. In the case of say chickweed not only will it be thinking about getting established it will probably be getting into bloom and setting seeds for more growth. Remember the old saying 'one year's seeds is equivalent to 7 years weeds.'

If we get a few nice dry days you can use your old friend the hoe. It is much easier than resorting to hand weeding. This can be very tedious but just think of it as really great exercise.

One of the jobs that will most definitely improve your garden will be to pay attention to your lawn especially if the grass has been left to grow over the last few weeks (or even months). If your lawn is showing quite a few areas of moss there are several schools of thought as to what to do. Use a moss killer, improve the soil drainage, or even to just leave it alone as most of the year the moss is green and nice and soft. This does however restrict the growth of the grass that we need for a nice looking lawn. Take care with the first cut. If the grass is 6" tall don't cut back to 1" but cut to a height of approximately half the size and then continue to cut to a lower height over a period of time.

After the first cut rake the lawn lightly to get rid of some of the moss, then improve the overall drainage of the soil. The best way, especially if you have a small lawn, is to use a garden fork. Force the fork into the ground to about 6 inches deep, wiggle it about then take the fork out and repeat the same again about 6 inches apart. This will improve the drainage. Use sharp sand, spread it over the surface then use a stiff brush to get the sand into the holes. Let the grass recover a little then apply a combined weed and feed fertiliser. This kills the moss and most weeds and encourages the grass to grow. Autumn lawn feeds have a lot less nitrogen than summer feeds, and this is what makes the grass grow. Do not use up the left-overs from winter feeding for spring feeding, save them for next winter.

After a couple of weeks the moss should be dead and can then be raked over again and the grass should recover well. If it is a bit slow to grow, you can always sprinkle some fresh lawn seed over the bare patches and give it a gentle watering in.

Getting back to the general gardening, it is time to start on a few sowings. As the weather improves there are a few seeds that can be sown.

Early potatoes which by now should be chitting nicely will soon be ready to pop into the ground. You can give them a light coating of soil or, more traditionally, as the farmers do, heap up to about 9 inches which should help to keep the growing shoots safe. You will be able to sow main crops in the next few weeks.

Other sowings can include peas, carrots and parsnips and how well they grow depends on the weather. The most difficult could be parsnips and you may need to reseed these after waiting a month to see if they are actually growing. Onion sets are not recommended until April although many people do plant early.



Thank You - Good News

Following the Emergency AGM held 15th February, I am pleased to announce Great Bentley Carnival and Fete Association were able to form a Committee. We had 3 new faces willing to offer their support. Thank you Christopher, Paula and Emma. Always plenty to do if anyone else would like to help out, especially on the day. We are all now working hard to get things ready for our Annual Event **Saturday 29th June**. Donations for our popular Silent Auction would be much appreciated.

This year's theme was agreed, "Story Books". This is a wide topic which will hopefully give people plenty of options for some wonderful costumes. Don't forget there is a fancy dress category, which is open to anyone who would like to dress up. Just request an Entry Form and let your imagination go wild!

Just a reminder why people from your local community go to such lengths to ensure Great Bentley Carnival and Fete is a success. It is not just a fun-filled day for all the family, but a day to raise much needed funds for local youth clubs and organisations.

Look out for further updates on our Facebook page and Parish Newsletters.

Julie Wall
julestheedom@hotmail.co.uk

TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL

CALL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT SITES AS PART OF LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Landowners, developers and the public are being invited to suggest how land could be used for either new development or environmental protection to support future growth up to 2041. Tendring District Council (TDC) is now in the process of reviewing its Local Plan requirements.

The council's current adopted Local Plan is designed to run until 2033, but legally has to be reviewed at least every five years, the review of the Local Plan will extend its timeframe from 2033 to 2041, which may bring about the need to start planning now for additional development to meet longer-term future needs.

The process for reviewing the Local Plan calls for a sites consultation exercise – where people have an opportunity to put forward, for the council's consideration sites, ideas and proposals for say new housing developments, business parks and associated infrastructure, or even community facilities, wildlife areas or open space.

It is said that submitting an idea, site or development proposal as part of this "Call for Sites" exercise does not guarantee its inclusion in the updated Local Plan; but it will help to understand what sites could potentially be available in different locations for different uses.

The Call for Sites is open until 5 pm on Monday, 18 March, and you can submit proposals through the consultation page of the TDC website (www.tendringdc.gov.uk/consultations).

Alternatively, you can download a form and return it to Planning Policy, Tendring District Council, Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 1SE.

It is asked that you provide as much detail as possible in your submission and to be as clear and helpful as possible. You may be contacted by the council's planning team later on if further information is needed. Some of the provided information will be made public – such as your name and details of the site – but your address and contact details will not be included.

HELP SHAPE HOW COUNCIL CONDUCTS PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

Your views are being sought on how Tendring District Council (TDC) carries out consultation on planning applications and policies.

TDC has a Statement of Community Involvement. This sets out how the council will involve its communities and other stakeholders in the planning process, which includes public consultation on the Local Plan and other planning policy documents, including planning applications. This is also used as best practice for developers on how to do early community engagement prior to submitting their applications.

The Statement of Community Involvement is regularly reviewed, and a six-week public consultation is already live inviting views on the latest version of the statement. There will be a review and update of the Local Plan this year. Unfortunately the consultation is only available for a very short period of time and is closing at 5pm on Monday, 4th March, you can also make a comment through the council's consultations web page at www.tendringdc.gov.uk/consultations. Alternatively, there is a paper copy of the Statement of Community Involvement which can be viewed at Clacton Town Hall during normal opening hours and comments can be submitted in writing to the Planning Policy, Tendring District Council, Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 1SE.

HOUSEHOLDER PARKING PERMIT SCHEME RENEWED IN TENDRING

Households across Tendring will once again receive a free car parking permit for the year ahead. Since 2012 Tendring District Council (TDC) has provided each home with a permit, which allows free parking after 11 am in most TDC car parks for ten months of the year.

Homes which already have a permit will have them automatically renewed, but new households wishing to set up their permit for the first time, or need to change their details, which incurs an administration fee, will need to complete a form.

A letter detailing the scheme and including the sign-up form details will be posted to each household over the coming weeks.

The scheme covers one vehicle per household, though additional permits can be bought for a fee, which allows free parking at most TDC run car parks from 11 am until midnight – though the council does not currently charge for parking between 6 pm and 8 am.

Permits are not valid during July and August

Holland Haven, The Naze and the Walton-on-the-Naze Lifestyles leisure centre car parks are not included, neither does it permit parking in council housing car parks or those connected to council offices.

Non-Tending residents can also buy the permit.

Many thanks

My apologies if you have not been able to contact me on both of my phones, but it appears that 02 phone masts locally have met with some issues. I have given below my two email addresses should you need to contact me.

Cllr Lynda McWilliams - Tending District Councillor for The Bentleys and Frating Ward

Mobile Phone number 07564 613603

email lynda@boblyn.co.uk or cllr.lmcwilliams@tendingdc.gov.uk

NATURE NOTES

Due to the mild winter birds have been less dependent on garden feeders. Certainly fieldfares and redwings have tended to stay in the wider countryside. However long-tailed tits using feeders is now widespread, an adaptation of really only the past decade. Similarly goldfinches and siskins are more often seen, especially where nyger seed is dispensed. Goldfinches have been reported to be on the increase, bucking the general picture of decline in many species.

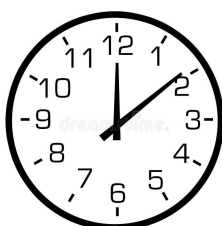
Recently I had some of the best views of siskins that seem less wary of humans nowadays. Black-throated yellow males could almost be taken for canaries with females having distinct white wing bars and delicate streaking. In good early March light with spring nuptials under way their plumage is at its most vivid. Recently there has been early spring passage moving north supplementing winter residents that probably are mostly Scots bred. Conifer plantations are their favoured breeding habitat but in autumn some siskins migrate south favouring river valleys, often feeding on the miniature conifer-like cones of deciduous alders.

Redpolls, a close relative that also favour winter alder are also occasionally seen at garden feeders. They have dramatic fluctuations in population. In the 1980s they became quite common breeding locally before mysteriously retreating back to their northern strongholds and appearing only in winter, mostly on passage.

The third member of the finch family seen very occasionally in winter gardens is the brambling, the chaffinch's northern cousin. Attracting them offers a challenge for the dedicated bird feeder. Boreal conifer forests interspersed with birch are the favoured summer homeland of these three finches. It is notable that two other small birds: the goldcrest and coal tit can be attracted into our gardens by the mere presence of a conifer or two, both having ecological links with those winter visiting finches. Some coal tits and goldcrests are locally resident, breeding in small numbers while others are passing through or winter visitors. When human migration and renewal of national boundaries is topical the age-old avian superhighway's traffic continues to flow back and forth regardless of borders, almost without notice.

DRB

**DON'T FORGET
CLOCKS GO FORWARD
ON SUNDAY 31st MARCH**



CHURCHYARD CLEAR UP

Saturday 23rd March

From 10am

Everyone welcome

Tea and Coffee provided

What time is High Tide

'Please don't hurt me. No hooks', said a small notice fastened to a lamppost. 'Try not to overcrowd me in your little bucket. Put me back in the water carefully', continued the request - a written plea spoken with a smile by a colourful cartoon crab. The small but emphatic notice was one of many, each fixed to a lamppost along the edge of the small wharf at the seaside village of Blakeney. Children joyfully screamed as they hauled up their lines from the deepish water, carefully avoiding the searching pincers of their crustacean captives. I read the crab's message several times whilst sitting on a wooden bench - the type of hardwood bench found at any viewing point - the top rail of which displayed, not one, but several brass memorial plaques, testament to the popularity of the vista. In the midday sunshine, children's laughter seemed to add to the peacefulness. It was wonderful.

The distant scene in front of me featured the flat salt marshes of the north Norfolk coast, a seafaring environment of past times - not just fishing - but all that went with its once coastal location; cargo traffic and the onetime respected but now defunct life boat station, today, a bird monitoring site. The silting of the channels by the shifting tides may now deny entry to those larger vessels, but the cyclical arrival of the sea is ever punctual; the sea is the boss; the sea and those beautiful marshes. It is no longer cargo that arrives at these shores, it is the summer breeding terns, and the colonies of grazing grey seals.

Man's precarious relationship with the oceans is well chronicled, and this tiny wharf has stories to tell of past ruination; devastation brought upon this community by the power of the sea. As I enjoyed a cup of tea, I noticed behind me, mounted on a wall of red bricks, several rectangular wall plates fixed at various heights. An embossed line was present on each of the cast-iron plates, a horizontal line above which was clearly printed, 'Flood Level'. Below the line was a date. There were several of these plates - maybe eight? - all at a height well above my head. The dates ranged between 1887 and 2013. On such a beautiful day, it was hard for me to imagine that the sea would be so cruel; so utterly heartless as to engulf this tiny village but, to reach those heights indicated on that wall, the sea was obeying forces far beyond the normal. The Guild Hall with its vaulted undercroft lies a short distance away from the quayside, up a steeply inclined pathway. As I peered at the flood level height markers, I wondered if that 15th century classic had escaped those rising waters of later periods.

Blakeney, a charming settlement of pavement-less streets the width of one vehicle, is akin to a time capsule. Off that main street, tiny openings between street-fronted houses allow entry into a mews-like rows of terraced dwellings behind - the entry corners chamfered to make the turn manageable. Quintessentially, a model yacht rests on most inside windowsills. The one constant in all of this, a feature that will represent a traditional Norfolk craft for decades to come is the flint wall rendering - no dwelling is without it. St Andrews church, located high above the village, must be one of the finest examples of this trade, the external walls being a paragon of Norfolk flint wall covering. Amid the inner architectural splendour of the church is a space devoted to an archive of local sea-going feats of heroism, detailed records of the days when Blakeney was an active life boat station.

Usually, where historical interest or scenic attraction is in abundance, space will be at a premium, and Blakeney's appeal becomes a magnet for those seeking outdoor leisure. Provision of convenient parking away from those narrow streets is therefore essential, secure places from which people can easily browse souvenir shops, sit with a coffee, or just relax and inhale the delicious smells of marine life. At Blakeney, parking is unique - they use the upper reaches of the beach itself, an area the size of a couple of tennis courts. This arrangement is the perfect answer perhaps, after all, what could be more convenient than to park the car next to a beach-side tea hut? But there is an interesting proviso.

Negotiating the wide entry ramp onto the beach looks an easy manoeuvre - the sand is stable enough. There are no markings, just open sand gently sloping down to the narrow channel nearby - the fierce ebbing tide flowing unnoticed by the people as they concentrate on their parking skills. Nature seems to be determined to drain the small sandy beach as soon as possible in order to accommodate the vehicles. There is harmony here I thought; humans sharing a tiny beach with the might of the ocean. But that sharing is not free, there is a pay-and-display system in operation by way of a ticket bought at a nearby machine. However, I wondered if the drivers had heeded the large warning sign placed alongside that pay machine, a no-nonsense reminder that drivers must remove their cars from the sand before the next incoming tide. I smiled. It is common knowledge that, when a person has been caught ignoring a warning, he or she will, on being confronted, make long and sometimes noisy protestation - 'I'll only be a couple of minutes,' - or words to that effect.

There is no arbitration regarding the parking arrangement here, no compromise or mitigation. Cars or not, when the forces of nature dictate, the sea will obey - it will eagerly regain its indisputable beach ownership. JE

MUM'S EULOGY - MARY BEARD

Age is an insidious thing. It creeps up on you when you least expect it. At school reunions, where the conversation once revolved around boyfriends and exams, talk is now of grandchildren, hearing aids and hip replacements. But we're the lucky ones. As someone once remarked, "The alternative to getting old is dying young." And mum was living proof that old age is not something to dread. Her maxim was "You're okay as long as you can laugh!"

She also maintained that your age has nothing to do with your years, and she was living proof of this, retaining her mental faculties almost until the day she died. After her 105th birthday she wrote to thank the King for his card and mentioned that she had already had one from his mum!

A friend recently lent me a book about ancient Rome, written by mum's namesake. On the back cover one of the critics had written:

"If they'd had Mary Beard on their side back then, the Romans would still have their empire!" How true. After her generation they broke the mould.

When she was born the First World War was still in full swing (she was the result of granddad's only leave from the trenches!) and she was 6 months old before he finally got home to see her at Christmas 1918.

It is important to reflect on just how many changes she would have seen in her lifetime: two pandemics, two World Wars, lots of stock market crashes, depressions and recessions; the progression from an era when soldiers, such as her father, took their horses out to the war in Flanders, right through to the present day when drones can hunt down single individuals behind enemy lines in remote parts of the Hindu Kush. From a time when phones were wall-mounted with bells, with the whole village listening in, to today when small pieces of unattached plastic connect you to anywhere on earth, and also take photos, play music, and offer more information than 35 volumes of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Her memories were incredible, encompassing mind-boggling changes in technology, transportation and fashion. The fact that she learned how to send text messages when she was 98 speaks reams about her ability to adapt.

Her life was far from easy. She was widowed at the age of 20 when her young husband of 8 months was lost in a submarine, the *Thetis*. The sub was on sea trials off the Welsh coast, and was unable to be recovered. In total 99 men died in what was the worst peace-time accident in naval history.

Then another war came. She spent the Second World War alone in a flat in Romford, where by day she worked in London, hopping over the fire hoses in the aftermath of the night's bombing to get to the office, and serving as an auxiliary Red Cross nurse in Ilford Maternity Hospital at night, cycling down the A12 in the blackout.

After the war she met up with my father, John, an old school friend, and they married in 1947. Dad had kept a diary of their honeymoon in Tintagel, and I recently found this lurking in one of mum's cupboards. On the first page was a description of the order of service for their wedding in Braintree church, and included the music played as we entered the crematorium, Mendelssohn's *Spring Song*, which mum also used to enjoy playing on the piano.

Mum was very modest, always had a great sense of humour and was blessed with a remarkable way with words. She also had an incredibly enquiring mind, and wrote down all kinds of philosophical truisms which really deserve to be published. A couple she was fond of included:

"If you don't enjoy your own company, how do you expect other people to?" and "You can learn something from almost everyone – even if it's how NOT to do something!"

I rather liked: "The best way to get rid of a pain is to find another pain, worse, somewhere else. It makes you forget the first one."

Mum was physically very active and loved walking. When she was 90, she got her picture in the local paper doing a 4-mile walk, sporting "90-today" balloons tied to her rucksack. Her nose was slightly put out of joint by the fact that, on the opposite page, a lady of 100 was enjoying a game of golf!

And she didn't do too badly herself when she reached 100, marching into her party with the aid of a mere walking stick. It was a great occasion when, unbeknown to her, 8 Australian relations, including a first cousin named Thelma, aged 92, flew over from Oz and materialised in the lounge of the Bull at Long Melford. Mum had been on the phone to Thelma at the time, thinking she was speaking to Australia.

"I do wish you could have been here Thel", said mum. "But it's not a very good line."

That was because the signal in Long Melford is not brilliant, and the lady in question was on her way down the stairs from her room on the first floor. In marched the Aussies, with Thelma still on the phone, asking "Can you hear me better now, Mary?!"

The photo of mum was taken immediately afterwards, on what mum had called "the best day of my life". It was, indeed, a happy day. I'm only sorry she had to wait 100 years for it.

As most of you know, mum has lived in Great Bentley for the last forty two very happy years. When she first arrived she was still working in an office in London, which involved a long daily commute – no mean feat for a lady pushing 65! Back in the '80s mum announced to the most junior member of this office, a 17-year-old girl, that she intended to wait until she turned 60 before getting her ears pierced so she could get a pensioners' discount. The girl replied "'Ardly seems worth it!" 45 years later mum was still wearing earrings so yes, it had been worth it!

For a while mum worked in the village wool shop, during which time there were several interesting interludes, including the occasion, shortly before the annual Great Bentley carnival, when an elderly gentlemen entered the shop and quietly asked for some "woite toits". "Yes sir", says mum. "What size does your wife take?" The gentlemen giggled self-consciously before admitting "they're for me!" He subsequently appeared, white tights and all, on one of the floats parading through the village.

After she retired mum was secretary to the church council and also to the WI. She was active with the Good Neighbours and also with Friends of the Green, to name just a few. It was a bit like Fawlty Towers: wherever you went, whatever you joined, Mary Beard popped up to greet you.

When it came to choosing the hymns and orders of service, mum left me in no doubt as to what she wanted. After her death I found a note in the kitchen drawer which stated exactly what she had in mind, including "good rousing pithy hymns, please, not those silly little ones which are hardly worth struggling to your feet for." There was one hymn she mentioned about which I was not too happy. I had always found the tune of this particular hymn difficult to remember, and I had said to Wendy that maybe this one could be omitted. After all, mum had lots of others. After Wendy had left, I decided it was time to tackle the wardrobe in mum's spare room which, to my shame, still contained items of clothing – mine! – dating back to the seventies at least. Right at the back of the top shelf, undisturbed for at least 40 years, I found three hymn books belonging to my late father, who had been a church organist. A loose sheet of paper in one of these turned out to be the words – and the musical score! – of the very hymn which mum had requested so adamantly. Naturally it was sheepishly restored to the order of service!

To conclude, I offer one more recent example of her vivid imagination: "I don't understand anything anymore in this modern world. I feel like a piece of flotsam which a freak storm has tossed up and left stranded above the tide line!"

She would often ask "Why on earth am I still here? I think someone up there has lost my files!" Unfortunately for us the files were finally found; but I feel extremely lucky to have enjoyed her company for more years than I had any right to expect.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to **everyone** who cared enough to come and give mum such a wonderful send-off; to her many friends who have faithfully supported her, both mentally and physically, over the last few years, and without whom her later life would have been very much the poorer.

Mum was, as far as I know, the village's oldest resident, although Great Bentley (or Bent Greatly, as she was fond of calling it!) is obviously a healthy place to live, since I know of at least two other residents who are both currently over 101.

An extra special thank you to Wendy King, the church wardens, the bell ringers, Fiona for her wonderful organ music, the marvellous catering ladies from Food for Thought, and everyone else who worked so hard to make mum's send-off so perfect. The support was absolutely amazing, and mum would have been astounded. My deep appreciation also goes to the Undertaker, Lesley Barlow and family, whose sympathetic and imaginative service cannot be faulted.

Mum used to say to me "It's strange to think that here I am, in this body, looking out through these eyes, and I can't get out – can't nip round and look at the back of my head – not until I die. Then, because of injury or disease, my shell cracks and out I come. Like an egg."

I hope you're enjoying the rear view now, mum, and that you like what you see!

YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

All the wet weather in January and February has disrupted some of Great Bentley Youth Football Club's matches but it hasn't stopped the boys and girls training with a smile on their face in the colder conditions. With things hopefully drying out in the coming weeks things will be getting much busier as we head into the final third of the season. Of the football that did go ahead, the under 13s (or rather the parents of the under 13s) got a real treat when they played Takeley Hoops in a County Cup tie. Takeley are sponsored by none other than Sir Rod Stewart, who turned up to watch the game and posed for photos! The two teams played out an eight-goal thriller so it was a great day all round. Elsewhere, the under 7's are progressing well in their first real experience of team football and both under 9's teams are being competitive in their respective divisions. The under 10's have been promoted to the top tier of the Colchester and District Youth League, and have been playing admirably against teams with much bigger catchment areas, and the under 12's are really beginning to gel as a team and have picked up some useful results lately.

The club have also started up a mini-kickers team this year for the under 6's and they too are getting their first experience of football training before heading into more organised football next season. Please note, that there is some availability in three of our teams. The under 9's Blues (current year 4), the u12's and the u13's (years 7 and 8) are also on the lookout. So feel free to get in touch if you have any football mad youngsters who want to come and try out. You'll be greeted by a friendly smile and some great children who are passionate about the game. For any interest get in touch with club secretary Tony Nash on 07867 748184 or Neil Cross on 07802 206197. We are also always on the look-out for volunteers to help run the teams and help with training, the club can help you get the necessary checks and coaching badges if you are keen to help football grow in our thriving village. Once again, just contact Tony or Neil, and you'll be given all the information you need. Don't forget to come and give your respectful support on Sunday mornings, when the children don the blue and white stripes of Great Bentley with pride! Kick-offs are usually around 10am and 11am and it would be lovely to see you.

Ben Fryer

MARCH DIARY

- Until March 2nd **THE KNITTED BIBLE**, St Michael's Church, Thorpe
11am - 3pm
- Fri 1st **COFFEE MORNING**, Methodist Church, 10-12 noon
- Sat 2nd **VETERANS BREAKFAST**, The Plough, 10am
- Tues 5th **BENTLEY LADIES CLUB**, Village Hall, 7.30pm
- Thurs 7th **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**, 7pm, Village Hall
- Tues 12th **MAGAZINE DEADLINE**
- Tues 12th **ART CLUB**, 2pm, Village Hall
- Thurs 14th **HISTORY SOCIETY**, 7.30pm, Village Hall
- Sat 16th **COFFEE MORNING**, St Mary's Church Hall, 10-12 noon
- Tues 19th **DEANERY CHOIR**, St George's Church, Gt Bromley,
11am
- Tues 19th **GARDENING CLUB**, 7.30pm, Village Hall
- Thurs 21st **KNIT & NATTER**, St Mary's Church Hall, 2.00-3.30pm
- Fri 22nd **MAGAZINE COLLATING**, St Mary's Church Hall, 9.00am
- Sat 23rd **CHURCHYARD CLEAR UP**, 10am
- Tues 26th **ART CLUB**, 2pm, Village Hall
- Thurs 28th **PATIENT PARTICIPATION MEETING**, 6.30pm,
Village Hall
- Fri 29th **CHILDREN'S GOOD FRIDAY WORKSHOP**, 10.30am
- Fri 29th **REQUIEM**, St Mary's Church, Lt Bentley, 6.30pm
- Sun 31st **CLOCKS GO FORWARD**