JOIN

WILLIAM BENDLOWE

people working for people - helping to enrich lives

AN HISTORIC CHARITY Reg. No. 241285

Founded by Deed 20th December 1573

- **PROMOTING COMMUNITY SPIRIT & SOCIALISATION**
- **FIGHTING ISOLATION AND LONELINESS**

IN SHALFORD, ESSEX & SURROUNDING VILLAGES

WE ARE LOOKING FOR

NEW TRUSTEES & VOLUNTEERS

Could it be you?

Contact: Alice Cox Mobile 07850 264518 Email: alicecox53@btinternet.com

OBJECTIVES & PURPOSES

(Agreed by The Charity Commission 2021)

Portrait of William Bendlowe 1516 - 1584 by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge

To promote social inclusion for the benefit of the community of Shalford, Essex and the surrounding villages by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded by encouraging social interactions to combat loneliness.

For the purpose of this clause "socially excluded" means being excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of one or more of the following factors; isolation (living alone), bereavement, retirement, ill health (physical or mental), disabled, lack of transport.

William Bendlowe's Last Will and Testament contained details of his benefactions to the following villages:- Great Bardfield, Little Bardfield, Bardfield Saling, Bocking, Chappel, Debden, Finchingfield, Great Maplestead, Great Sampford, Halstead, Hatfield Peverel, Little Sampford, Panfield, Shalford, Sible Hedingham, Stebbing, Stoke-by-Clare, Thaxted, Toppesfield, Wethersfield.

OUR VISION – ALICE & REV ALEX (Trustees)

We believe in the importance and difference the Charity can make to the community and are therefore endeavouring ***to take the next step*** – expand William Bendlowe Charity into other local villages. To achieve this, we need to build a strong, versatile, team consisting of Trustees and Volunteers who are committed to not only serving the Community but also to ensuring that each and every volunteer, irrespective of the size of their contribution to the Charity, is fulfilled, feeling valued and cherished by knowing that their efforts are acknowledged and appreciated.

We are fully aware of the sacrifices individuals make in order to volunteer and, being unpaid, they must receive gratification (job satisfaction) in some other way:-

- Enjoyment, fun, laughter
- Being active and keeping fit
- Keeping their brain active and engaged
- Keeping their skills up-to-date
- Making new friends, meeting their neighbours - socialising

The old adage "Many hands make light work" is so true. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Alice, mobile 07850 264518 or email: alicecox53@btinternet.com

Together we can make William Bendlowe Charity a household name within the local community valued and revered for its dedication and contribution for

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

William Bendlowe Charity = A valued and worthwhile independent organisation to be proud of

12th September 2019 - Visit to Sounds of the Past and Craft Centre, Monks Eley

TESTIMONIALS

Tina Brine

I go to Meet and Greet once a month in my village. Because I am on the low-carb diet they always do me a low-carb plate of food. I have been on it for 18 months and have lost 3 ½ stone.

Terry Savage

About five years ago, in January 2021, my wife Karen and I moved to Shalford during the Covid pandemic. We came to the village at a difficult time in our lives, as I was recovering from a life-threatening illness and had to step back from full-time employment.

Once lockdown restrictions lifted, Karen and I realised we knew very few people locally. In fact, while out walking, we seemed to meet more dogs than people! Then a kindly gentleman known to everyone as "Smudger" suggested we come along to the Meet and Greet.

We were immediately struck by the warmth, friendliness and kindness we found there. It soon became clear just how much these monthly gatherings meant to so many local people. They were able to enjoy food, company and conversation, while being so well cared for by Alice and her loyal team of volunteers. Many of those attending lived alone, yet through the Meet and Greet they had formed genuine friendships and a real sense of community.

Over the past five years, Karen and I have met many wonderful people there — and sadly said goodbye to some too. Throughout all that time, Alice and the volunteers have continued to give their time, care and support with incredible dedication. It is a truly remarkable and selfless act of charity.

We all understand that things cannot continue forever without more support, but care like this is incredibly important. The Meet and Greet gives people a chance to socialise, to feel connected, and for friends to quietly make sure they are coping and doing alright. Karen and I rarely miss a Meet and Greet if we can help it, and we sincerely hope Alice receives all the support she needs to continue the wonderful work she does for our community.

Hilary Penney

I've no doubt that William Bendlowe would be very approving indeed of the work that is carried out in his memory in Shalford and beyond, and I have nothing but praise for the enthusiasm and care afforded to this community by the Trustees and volunteers who give of their time and talents to make the Charity such a blessing to us all. Whether you are a long-time resident of the village and enjoy meeting old friends and neighbours at the monthly Meet and Greet, or a new-comer, as I was 7 years ago, who needs to start making a connection with a new community, you will find a welcome, warmth and friendliness at any event run by "Bendlowe's", both in the Village Hall or on one of the occasional day-trips to interesting destinations. And - if you have a bit of time and energy to spare and can help support Bendlowe's in whatever way you are able, you will be doubly welcome!

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN TODAY'S WORLD

It is becoming more and more widely recognised and appreciated that fighting **loneliness** and **social isolation** is crucial because they are significant **public health threats** which are often overlooked. Chronic loneliness increases risk of premature death, heart disease, stroke, dementia, depression, and anxiety. Prioritising social connection improves mental, physical, and cognitive health, enhancing overall longevity and quality of life.

It is currently regarded as being so important that loneliness and isolation are being fought globally by international health organisations, governments, and dedicated charities targeting vulnerable groups like the elderly, young people (16-34), and those with health or financial struggles. Key initiatives include the WHO Commission on Social Connection, the Campaign to End Loneliness, and specialised services like the British Red Cross.

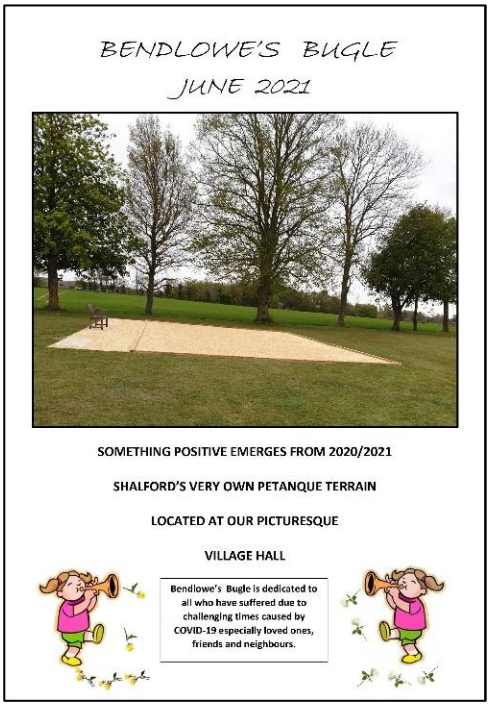
Numerous organisations are working tirelessly to fight loneliness and isolation including, Government initiatives, The Silver Line, Re-engage, Age UK, NHS, Friends of the Elderly, Independent Age, Meetup Mondays, Mind, Samaritans, Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM), to name a few.

30th June 2019 - Coach trip to Suffolk Punch Trust, Ipswich

HIGHLIGHTS - 2016 to 2026

5th July 2016	After a period of dormancy, new Trustees were appointed and the William Bendlowe Charity relaunched.
6th January 2017	The first Meet & Greet was held. Apart from a break during the Covid19 period Meet & Greet has been held every first Friday of the month now attracting 50 – 60 people.

June 2020	Over the lockdown period, 3 single roses accompanied by a friendship card were delivered. Bendlowe's Bugle starting at a one-page newsletter escalating to 68 pages was also delivered. The last Bendlowe's Bugle was delivered in June 2021 and is still talked about today.
15th February 2021	Approval by the Charity Commission to revised Objectives & Purposes
24th July 2021	Official opening of Petanque terrain located at Shalford Village Hall financed by William Bendlowe Charity securing grants, donations and holding fund raisers.
February 2022	William Bendlowe's website went live.
7th November 2022	Meet & Greet awarded a Food Hygiene Rating of "5". This was awarded again in 2025
February 2025	To celebrate the Charity's 450th Anniversary, grants were obtained together with gifts and donations from villagers to purchase 62 comfortable chairs for Meet & Greet.



14th March 2025	The Trustees agreed to increase the number of Trustees from 3 to 5.
13th October 2025	Revision of the Charity's Governing Document
October/Nov 2025	Relevant Charity Policies & Procedures studied and adopted.
Dec 2025	Bendlowe's enjoyed 6 minutes Live On Air with Ben Fryer, BBC Essex
June 2026	Shalford Village Magazine brought under the umbrella of William Bendlowe Charity

In addition to the above, we have held Meet & Greet monthly since 2017 apart from the Covid years plus organising an annual Christmas dinner since January 2018 plus an annual visit to the seaside since August 2022. We have held many fund raisers, and organised varied outings.

WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY AND ACHIEVED A GREAT DEAL BUT, WITH ADDITIONAL HELP, WE CAN ACHIEVE A LOT MORE!

The past ten years especially Meet & Greet, has proven, without doubt, that there is a *real* need for social interaction and has highlighted the benefits an independent organisation such as Bendlowe's can bring to a Community. This need is likely to grow as more and more people are working from home. As the years pass, not everyone can maintain their driving licence, bus services in rural areas are in decline restricting how far people can travel to meet for a "chat". Embedded in my memory are several comments people at Meet & Greet have said – a few of these are:-

"But if I didn't come to Meet & Greet, I wouldn't leave the house"
"I now talk to people as I walk around the village, instead of just passing by"
"Fred and I regularly meet now to enjoy playing our musical instruments together"

Fundraisers

Outings

Top Left: Bulmer Bricks Sudbury ***Top Right: RHS Garden Hyde Hall Rettenden***

Bottom: Seal Watching Trip, Hamford National Nature Reserve, Harwich

THE NEXT STEPS

1 **Create a robust and resilient Board of Trustees by:**
Appointing an additional 3 Trustees; Carry out a "skills audit" to ensure the board has available all the skills it requires; Allocate Job Descriptions; Introduce timely Trustee Meetings; Agree future goals for the Charity
2 **Attract and appoint additional volunteers**
3 **Research possible "Partners"**
4 **Update and maintain the Website & Facebook**

FUTURE GOALS

To secure the long-term future of William Bendlowe Charity for the Community

Trustees & Volunteers
It is our wish that no Trustee or Volunteer should feel overwhelmed. It is our hope to obtain sufficient "man hours" to ensure that all tasks are carried out by sufficient people to ensure light/enjoyable work. Just think, 6 volunteers agreeing to organise one event per year be it, a walk, afternoon cream tea, coach trip, would make a huge impact.

All work for the Charity is unpaid. Therefore it is vital that ***all*** Trustees/Volunteers receive gratification in another way: keeping their skills up-to-date, enjoying socialisation, keeping fit, keeping their brain active etc.

Ensure the continuity of our existing Shalford events
Meet & Greet Monthly; Annual Coach Trip to the Seaside; Annual Christmas Luncheon; Fund Raising Events

Endeavour to beat our most successful year (2018) when we achieved the following
11 Monthly Meet & Greets (one cancelled due to snow); 7 Outings; 3 Supplying of teas & coffees;
13 Newsletters/Articles Monthly Magazine; 2 Excellent Music Evenings with Vic & Marion

Research into the expansion of William Bendlowe Charity
Introduce Meet & Greet into other local villages
Organise coach trips filling the coach from local villages
Increase the number of our events
Provide a link (contact details) to other charities/organisations (e.g. Community Agents, Befriending)
Provide an umbrella for other small local organisations

MEET OUR EXISTING TRUSTEES

ALICE COX

Alice was born in Ilford and brought to Braintree by her parents when she was 14. Initially trained as a secretary but was encouraged to move across to accounts by her bosses The Financial Director and Managing Director. Since the age of 19 she has worked alongside directors and partners gaining invaluable insight and knowledge on how businesses are run from professionals.

Working for small groups of companies for many years, she has worked in various business sectors including, manufacturing, food, farming, building, shops, online sales, funerals, monumental masons. The job she retired from was a small group of Companies for which she had been head hunted for and asked to join them as Financial Controller, working for the two entrepreneurs who had set up an on-line insurance company which is still advertised on television today.

Her skills and experience include, secretarial, accountancy from source document through to audit of financial accounts. Job Costing, Management accounts, cash flows, PAYE, advanced access creating databases. Having worked for the Directors of small Groups of companies her experience and skills have encompassed all areas of the business.

Her hobbies included in earlier years squash, badminton, table tennis, chess, piano, but these were replaced when she took up horse riding in her 20s and two dogs in her 60s. Today, she leads an active life still riding occasionally and walking the dogs daily.

She looked after her brother at home for 14 months after he fell seriously ill from a brain disease. This experience opened her eyes to the care world, live-in carers, pop-in carers and the world of the disabled. Following her brother's death in 2015 Alice wrote a book outlining her experiences; this being her catalyst for recognising the importance of social interaction and accepting to become Chairman of William Bendlowe Charity in 2016.

Alice is passionate about the importance of William Bendlowe Charity and of securing its future for many more years to come for the local communities. The last thing she wants to see is the Charity fall into dormancy as it was when she became involved in 2016.

REV. ALEX SHANNON

Vicar of the Pant Valley Churches

The Rev'd Alex Shannon is the Vicar of the Pant Valley Churches, a group of the six parishes of Cornish Hall End, Finchingfield, Great & Little Bardfield, Shalford and Wethersfield, and moved here from Cambridgeshire in July 2020. He grew up in Canterbury, and before ordination, he studied mathematics, but spent nearly as much time playing music, with organ and oboe being his two main instruments. Playing the organ at his local church while growing up was what first set him on a path towards ministry, and music in worship continues to be of particular significance to him. He is married to Helen, and they have two children, Thomas and Beatrice.

As Vicar, he is a trustee *ex officio* of a number of local charities across the six parishes of which Bendlowe's is one. Although this wide scope of commitments means he isn't able to take so much of a day-to-day role in the running of each charity, he does his best to champion and steer the wonderful work they undertake in our communities. In his involvement with Bendlowe's he has been delighted to see how much affection there is within Shalford's community for the activities which the charity has organised, and to see how that has begun to spread more widely. He is very happy that the Church continues to be associated with something which does so much to promote the well-being and flourishing of many people, particularly those who might otherwise find themselves isolated.

TESTIMONIAL - VIC GOODEY

It has been my great pleasure to be counted as a Bendlowe Volunteer. The enjoyment I get from performing in the Village Hall to raise funds for the charity extends beyond our singing to you all. Marion and I rehearse every week which gets me out of the house, and perform for anyone who asks us, which extends our circle of friends and raises more funds in the form of donations for our services. More than this I feel that my association with the Trustees and volunteers of the Bendlowe group gives me a drive to put effort back into a Village and surrounding area that has given me and my family a home. The most significant part of the Bendlowe structure is “Meet and Greet”. The monthly get together embodies the goodwill and drive that may be achieved through the efforts of the Volunteers. We have had fun and laughter, sadness and tears, excitement and, well, I can’t think of any boring times.

The spin off sessions organised by the volunteers are amazing. We have had afternoons of “Geriatrics” youth club, Classical Music with a twist, Chair Pilates and learning British Sign Language on top of Bingo, Crafting and Games afternoons. We have enjoyed Trips out and my favourite annual visit to the “Hut” at Felixstowe.

I would recommend getting involved to everybody. Volunteers make all the difference, all ages and levels of ability can take part and I can assure you it never feels like work, no matter how hard we try.

WILLIAM BENDLOWE

Reg No. 241285

An Historic Charity Serving Shalford, Essex & Surrounding Villages

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- **FIGHTING ISOLATION AND LONELINESS**

Website: www.bendlowe.co.uk

July 2026

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