

# SHALFORD

Village Magazine

December 2025 & January 2026

*showcasing our community*

*Produced by the People for the People*



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AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR**

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Shalford Village Magazine can be downloaded or viewed from [www.bendlowe.co.uk](http://www.bendlowe.co.uk)

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**Mac**  
**Beanland**  
**Many Happy**  
**Returns at**  
**Meet & Greet**

# THANK YOU

SO MUCH

## JOHN

for generously funding December's magazine  
in loving memory of your wife **CARMELINA EARP**

I remember being lucky enough to meet Carmelina at Meet & Greet before she passed. We had not met before. She called me over and asked if I could point out Alice Cox. I was feeling rather "impish", I cheekily replied "Depends what you want her for. If you are going to be nice then yes I can but if you want to ..... Okay I'll own up it's me I'm Alice" and I sat beside her. My "impish" feelings turned into immense gratitude as she passed me a sizeable cheque made out to William Bendlowe Charity.

I enjoyed chatting for a short time to both John and Camelina – what a lovely couple and I remember it like yesterday.

I did not meet Carmelina again and I do feel cheated as having met her once, I know it would have been my pleasure to have spent more time with her. She is a great loss to Meet & Greet. I send my sincere condolences and will be thinking of John and family as they remember Carmelina at this extremely emotional time.

Thank you again John  
We will be thinking of you





**IN LOVING MEMORY OF CARMELINA EARP**

**18<sup>TH</sup> March 1960 – 25<sup>th</sup> December 2023**



*As another  
Christmas Day  
draws near*

*Although you are  
not with me here*

*I know you watch  
over me from a  
star on high*

*The one burning  
brightest in the  
night sky*

*Though gone from  
my side you are  
always with me*

*And we are never  
apart*

*Because you are  
forever in my heart*

*John*



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## WHAT'S ON

### TABLE TENNIS IN FINCHINGFIELD



The group comes to the village hall on Monday evenings to play table tennis 7.30 pm for 2 hours. If you would like to have a chat beforehand, please call me on 07775 531781 - Brian

### COFFEE MORNING – ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

**EVERY 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>  
THURSDAY OF  
THE MONTH**

**10.00 a.m. to 12.00  
p.m.**



### SINGING 4 ALL – LORRAINE PATIENT

This new singing group, which is held every Tuesday at Cornish Hall End Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. has become very popular. If you would like to try out this special group or join, please call 07775 531 781

### SHALFORD ROADSIDE & CHURCH FISHING LAKES



are affiliated to Billericay & District Angling Club  
The river Pant in Shalford is also covered by the Club  
For further details contact:-  
Fishery Officer: Derrick Marriott, or [www.bdac.co.uk](http://www.bdac.co.uk)

### WALKING GROUPS

From SHALFORD The George Pub every Wednesday at 10 a.m.  
From FINCHINGFIELD Green every Friday at 10 a.m.

### SHALFORD CRAFT GROUP

Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month.

At 2pm onwards.

Please bring along any craft projects you are working on.

Share ideas and learn new crafts.

Chat and craft over tea/ coffee and cake.

For dates of when and where please contact.

**Caroline Ottley  
07734140478**

**Marianna Marriott  
07450251525**

### JOIN OUR FRIENDLY GROUP OF BELL RINGERS

**EVERY  
MONDAY at  
Wethersfield  
Church, 7 p.m.  
&**

**FRIDAY at  
Shalford  
Church, 7 p.m.**

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850481**

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IN A  
FRIENDLY  
ENVIRONMENT**

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JAMES  
TEL: 07704  
070498**



### RE-ENGAGE (Formerly Contact the Elderly)

Arranging monthly get togethers over a cup of tea for the elderly



For more details:  
Contact:

**Sarah Cunningham  
[Sarah8750@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Sarah8750@hotmail.co.uk)**

Or

The Charity Website:  
[www.reengage.org.uk](http://www.reengage.org.uk)  
Freephone: 0800 716543

## WHAT'S ON



A purple poster for a quiz night. At the top right is the Shalford Horticultural Society crest. The word 'QUIZ' is in large, white, outlined letters with a purple beaded border. Below it, '2026' is in a small box, and 'NIGHT' is in large black letters. The venue 'Shalford Village Hall' is written below 'NIGHT'. A banner below says 'Saturday January 24<sup>th</sup>' with 'Doors open 7pm' on the left and 'Start 7.30pm' on the right. A larger banner at the bottom says 'Teams of up to 3 people £5 pp', 'Please bring your own refreshments', and 'Everyone Welcome'. At the very bottom, a banner says 'To reserve a table contact Jane Mills 01371 850390'. There are several question marks and puzzle pieces scattered around the text.

Shalford Horticultural Society

# QUIZ

2026  
**NIGHT**  
Shalford Village Hall

Doors open 7pm

Saturday January 24<sup>th</sup>

Start 7.30pm

Teams of up to 3 people £5 pp  
Please bring your own refreshments  
Everyone Welcome

To reserve a table contact Jane Mills  
01371 850390



## WHAT'S ON

Bendlowe's Extra Events (BEEs)

### Christmas Film Afternoon—Miracle on 34th Street

Friday 19 December 2 – 4.30pm, Shalford Village Hall

Charming remake of the 1947 classic. Richard Attenborough stars as Kris Kringle, a department store Santa who insists he is the real Santa Claus - and finds himself forced to prove it in court.



Take a break from the Christmas rush and enjoy a cup of tea and a mince pie whilst watching this festive and heart-warming story.

Suggested donation £3 to include refreshments

Donations of cakes welcome at all events. For more information please contact Sally on 07785235000 or [sallymweish@outlook.com](mailto:sallymweish@outlook.com)



## Finchingfield and District Branch

### Carol Service 6 December 3pm

This year we are again hosting a Carol Service on behalf of the “C” Group in Finchingfield Church. As last year, we will be supported by our local choir Singing4All and some of our local schools will be performing.

We warmly welcome all families to this service.

### London Lights Trip

PLEASE SEE POSTER FOR DETAILS.

Contacts: Chairman: Ivan Fleming 07525 751179 [isskhs@googlemail.com](mailto:isskhs@googlemail.com)

Secretary: Janet Ridgewell 01371 810051 [janet.ridgewell510@btinternet.com](mailto:janet.ridgewell510@btinternet.com)





**WILLIAM BENDLOWE CHARITY**



## **ITS CHRISTMAS TIME**

**FRIDAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025**

**7.30 pm to 10.00 pm (doors open 7.00 p.m.)**

**SHALFORD VILLAGE HALL**



**ITS SING-A-LONG TIME**

**ITS 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS TIME**

**ITS G&T TIME**

**ITS PARTY TIME**

**BRING ALONG YOUR OWN NIBBLES  
AND DRINKS**

**£5 AT THE DOOR**

**Funds Raised Will Be Donated To William Bendlowe Charity**



WHAT'S ON

# PLOUGH SUNDAY

*Everyone welcome!*



The Church of England  
in Essex and East London  
Diocese of Chelmsford

*A special service to support all who work  
with the land, followed by Morris Dancing  
and refreshments in the churchyard*

**SUNDAY 11 JANUARY 2026**

**11.00AM**

**THAXTED PARISH CHURCH**

## WHAT'S ON WETHERSFIELD



### **SOUP AND CHAT**



COME ALONG TO WETHERSFIELD'S  
**VILLAGE HALL FROM 12:00 TO 14:00 AND ENJOY**  
HOMEMADE SOUP WITH BREAD AND HOMEMADE CAKES

**ON THE FOLLOWING TUESDAY DATES**

**27<sup>th</sup> January 2026**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

**24<sup>th</sup> February 2026**  
**28<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

This is a self-funding meeting relying on cash donations to cover costs. We rely on your generosity to ensure its continuity

This is an adult only event

## WHAT'S ON WETHERSFIELD



**12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2025**

**CHRISTMAS PARTY –  
TICKET ONLY**

**WETHERSFIELD  
PAVILION 13:00 – 16:00**

**BUFFET &  
REFRESHMENTS**



This is a limited ticket only subsidised party. Tickets will cost £6.  
Available from Russell Green Tel: **07518 269969**

## WHAT'S ON FINCHINGFIELD

Finchingfield and District Royal British Legion  
Presents

# TRIP TO SEE THE LONDON CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

**£20 PER PERSON**

LEAVE AT  
**3PM** | **SATURDAY**  
**13TH**  
DECEMBER

PICK UP AND RETURN  
TO FINCHINGFIELD  
GREEN

CONTACT US ON  
FACEBOOK OR CALL  
IVAN ON 07525751179 TO  
BOOK YOUR TICKET

A £10 deposit PP will be  
required when booking



WHAT'S ON - FINCHINGFIELD

# GAMES NIGHT

FINCHINGFIELD GUILDHALL



**18 DECEMBER**  
**22 JANUARY**  
**19 FEBRUARY**

**7PM – 9PM**  
**£5**

ON DOOR OR ADVANCE USING THE LINK ON OUR  
FACEBOOK PAGE





## ST. ANDREW'S CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

St. Andrew's Church will be bedecked with Christmas floral arrangements ready for the Christmas Eve service and will be on view for the following 2 weeks.

All are welcome to enjoy our displays in celebration of Christmas.  
Entry is free.



At present, St. Andrew's Church is open  
every day from 9-4



## CONDOLENCES

We send our sincere condolences to the family  
and friends of

**Tony Packer**



## ESSEX BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

The Essex Bridleways Association is a registered charity formed in 1979 to enable horse riders, walkers and countryside users in Essex to:

- Preserve and maintain existing bridleways.
- Restore rights of way that may have been lost through incorrect classification and are not registered on the Definitive Map.
- Create new bridleways.

### **Benefits of Membership.**

- Reduced entry fees on all EBA rides
- Priority entry to some rides
- Update magazine twice a year.
- Email notice of news and events
- Ride with a guide scheme
- Discounts on BHS membership and new insurance policies with SEIB
- Helping to ensure that off road access to our stunning Essex countryside is not lost to us and future riders.

Please contact EBA helpers co-ordinator Sandra Deeran or Alison Power if you can help marshal at any of the rides. Helpers are entitled to a free ride entry or free EBA membership. Details on website. Without the help of volunteers we could not run rides or continue to fight for bridleways.

Essex bridleways wish everyone a happy Christmas and new year. We look forward to seeing you on 2026 rides.

*Mandy French*

## WARM SPACES

### MEET UP MONDAYS

Meet Up Mondays provides a weekly opportunity for people who find themselves on their own more than they would like, to meet up, make new friends and chat over a free cuppa, without feeling labelled as lonely.



The Coffee House in the  
Gardens  
43 Bocking End  
Braintree  
CM7 9AE

Mondays 10.00 - 11.30

[meetupmondays@ruralcoffee caravan.org.uk](mailto:meetupmondays@ruralcoffee caravan.org.uk)

Rural Coffee Caravan Office:  
01284 663 472



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# Exciting News..... *Love Your Bus*

Grant Boosts DigiGo Service in Your Area from 01-Nov-25! 🚌❤️



**Shalford Parish Council** and neighbouring parishes have secured Love Your Bus Grant funding to help meet growing local demand for transport.

**Here's what's changing:**

- 🕒 **Additional driving hours from Monday to Friday, covering late-afternoon and early-evening periods.**

This is in direct response to local feedback as Residents previously told us that when making a booking, outward journeys were available but securing a return journey could be difficult. This funding will help address that by increasing supply in these key areas.

**To find out more** about the DigiGo service and how it operates

**visit [www.digigo.uk](http://www.digigo.uk)**

## WARM SPACES



### FIRST STOP CENTRE - EDUCATION CLASSES

We provide a range of services to the community - including a range of confidence courses, employability, IT, budgeting and crafting. We can help with CV building /Job search help/Confidence classes/ IT and Maths Skills. We aim to meet the needs of all members of the community both in-house and through referrals to other appropriate local organizations.



29 Bocking End  
Braintree  
CM7 3DP

Weekdays (excluding  
Wednesdays)  
10:30am - 1:30pm  
Some services available  
outside of these hours

[contact@firststopcentre.on  
microsoft.com](mailto:contact@firststopcentre.onmicrosoft.com)

01376 346535



## LOCAL ORGANISATIONS & CHARITIES

### INDOOR CARPET BOWLS

**EVERY TUESDAY AT  
SHALFORD VILLAGE  
HALL**

**FROM 7.30 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.**



All ages are welcome to our friendly club. Come along and enjoy a game of bowls, a chat, plus tea, coffee and biscuits

**Contact: Vic 07773 707404**

### SHALFORD LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION



Meetings take place monthly  
For date and more information  
contact: Sally  
07785 235000  
or visit  
<https://shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk/history-society/>

### SHALFORD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



For more information

<https://www.facebook.com/SHSEssex>

<https://shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk/horticultural-society/>



### MEET & GREET 1<sup>ST</sup> FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

**SHALFORD  
VILLAGE HALL**

**11 am to 2 pm**

*William Bendlowe Charity  
People Working For People  
It's good to talk!*

### FOSTAC

**Friends of St Andrew's  
Church**



**Contact: [www.fostac.co.uk](http://www.fostac.co.uk)  
or  
<https://shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk>**



## **WILLIAM BENDLOWE CHARITY**

***PEOPLE WORKING FOR PEOPLE***

***STRIVING TO ENRICH LIVES***

### ***An outline of the Trustees' Vision, Goals and Plans for Bendlowe's future***

***By: Alice Cox***

I think it is fair to say that Meet & Greet has become a regular fixture in Shalford's monthly diary and the Trustees are keen to ensure it continues (or even expands) – not just for the short term or even medium term but for the ***long-term***. To achieve this goal, numerous skills are essential in order to administer a registered charity; finance, personnel, planning, organisational, communication, marketing, social media, to name but a few. Many people overlook that all Charities registered with The Charity Commission are legally bound to comply by their rules & regulations as well as Charity Law.

At a Trustees' Meeting earlier this year, The Trustees were united in their opinion that everything in their power to ensure that William Bendlowe Charity continues to flourish and grow for the benefit of Shalford and surrounding areas should be done. Challenge accepted, a plan was compiled and put into place.

**First priority – to strengthen The Governance of William Bendlowe Charity.**

**Both Rev Alex and I recognised the enormity of the task(s) we had undertaken and knew that we needed additional help. We advertised for another Trustee,** received an application from Russell Green, and were very pleased to appoint him as Trustee. At our first Trustee meeting together we were all, with each other's help, committed to completing the task(s) listed below as soon as practically possible:-

- re-writing the Governing Document dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 1954 (excluding The Charity's Objects which had been updated on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021).
- upload the revised Governing Document to The Charity Commission's online records
- draft and adopt the relevant Policies & Procedures
- draft an organisational chart for the Charity
- write, approve and implement the Job Descriptions highlighted by the adopted organisational chart
- advertise for additional Trustees to help with the impending work
- advertise for additional volunteers as required

After many an hour of "heads down", we have now emerged with our first stage firmly on its way to completion. These documents will be held in due course on Bendlowe's Website's new section entitled Governance.

The reason we were comfortable to embark on this particularly challenging and time-consuming journey is that Bendlowe's financial position is currently sound, particularly when considering its only income is from donations and fund raising. It has no income of its own.

Turning the clock back to when we applied to change the Charity's objects, the initial reply was a definite NO with little room to argue. They told me to open another Charity. Closure of the Charity was their only answer. I escalated the request and was able to submit an enormous amount of evidence (bank statements, detailed year books, photographs) resulting in the Commission changing its mind. Today, Charities have to include a Dissolution Clause which has to be approved by the Charity Commission before acceptance. As a general rule they wish any money left after dissolution to be transferred to another charity with similar if not the same Objects which brings me nicely on to the fact that the Trustees are only allowed to spend the Charity's money on items which are in line with the Charity's Objects. We are not allowed to use the money for any other reason or give it to another "good cause", it has to be compatible to our Objects.

When Covid-19 hit and we were unable to meet in person Bendlowe's Bugle" was born in order to continue (from a distance) the community spirit and friendships Meet & Greet had created. This started at one page and ended up at 64 in June 2021 escalating printing costs were funded by Bendlowe's. See some statistics below:-



### **BENDLOWE'S BUGLES' STATISTICS**

#### **A CREDIT TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK PART**

61 people contributed to the Bugle submitting 245 articles/poems/puzzles/photos etc. One copy of all the Bugles from May 2020 to June 2021 would total 391 pages – this is how it exploded - May 1 (page), June 3, July 7, Aug 7, Sept 13, Oct 22, Nov 22, Dec 34, Jan 36, Feb 44, March 36, April 46, May 56, June 64 - totalling 391 pages. All issues of the Bugle can be read/downloaded from [www.Bendlowe.co.uk](http://www.Bendlowe.co.uk) or Shalford Website.

During Covid-19 we also created and delivered a friendship card and single rose 3 times. Not only am I convinced that Bendlowe's Bugle and the single rose ensured the survival of Meet & Greet but I also believe that Bendlowe's Bugle and its offspring Shalford Village Magazine helped to change Bendlowe's image from not just being for the "old folk" and Shalford Village Magazine (which only link to Bendlowe's is me) continues to positively impact on the Community today.

Covid-19 taught us how important fresh air is and meeting outside. This prompted us to take the initiative to raise the funds to build the pétanque terrain which some of Bendlowe's supporters were asking for. The money was raised through applying and obtaining various grants, fund raising and donations. Bendlowe's topped up the slight short fall. We also felt that it was only fair, should the terrain be rented, that the Village Hall retain any income as they would be doing the work.

Wanting to celebrate Bendlowe's 450<sup>th</sup>; a good choice was to provide more comfortable chairs for Meet & Greet. Bendlowe's had received generous donations from a few supporters who had passed away; but this only enabled 10 chairs to be purchased so, again, I took the initiative to raise the funds applying for grants, fund raising and donations; finally enabling 62 chairs to be purchased benefiting not only Meet & Greet but other users of Shalford Village Hall.

The Trustees take their responsibility in administering the funds entrusted in their care from donations and fund raising very seriously and will only approve expenditure in line with the Charity's objects for the benefit of the community of Shalford and surrounding area. In order to ensure the continuity of the Charity, all Trustees will ensure that the financial aspect of the Charity:

- will continue to be run in accordance with accepted accounting principles
- is cautious to retain sufficient reserves to weather a storm or unexpected expenditure

***Our next challenge*** is to find some valuable helpers/volunteers to support our existing excellent volunteers. Sadly, we cannot do it alone. By writing job descriptions, we are hoping to breakdown the jobs needed into bitesize roles enabling a larger number of people to offer their time/skills/experience. ***Available job roles will be published in the near future.*** The old adages "United We Stand, Divided We Fall" or "Many Hands Make Light Work", are still very true today.

The Trustees recognise the importance and value of every volunteer no matter what size their contribution is. It is our wish that every volunteer benefits from:

- job satisfaction
- a warm glow that they are able to help others
- retain their skills longer after retirement
- maintain greater mobility and health by being active
- retain greater mental agility by practicing integration

What a powerful, meaningful and worthwhile organisation Bendlowe's could prove to be in the future – an organisation dedicated to the community; driven by the community. A hub to collect and distribute information. An organisation arranging various, local, and affordable social events teas, coffees, outings, coach trips - ***promoting friendships.***

If you would like to help us to achieve our vision, please do not hesitate to contact one of the Trustees – myself, Alice Cox 07850 264518 Rev. Alex Shannon 01371 810309 or Russell Green 07518 269969.

*WE'D LOVE YOU TO JOIN US*

*It is still early days but with your help our  
VISION will become REALITY*



# FOSTAC

## Friends of St Andrew's Church

Chairman  
Sue Morton  
01371 850626  
Treasurer  
Mike Chumbley  
01371 851101  
Secretary  
Sylvia Lester  
01371 850211

*President*

*Sir Roger Singleton, CBE.*

## AUTUMN NEWSLETTER - 2025

Hello FOSTAC Members

Over the past year FOSTAC has given our supporters a varied year of events beginning with our local speaker John Woollard talking about past Criminals in our area. This was followed by Braintree Male Voice Choir presenting a concert of well-known songs with the addition of the ladies choir Braintree Voices

Later on our Talks were again different – first we had A Tudor Housekeeper by Eleanor Jenkins who gave an insight to many outfits a housekeeper would wear according to the times of the year, and most were handmade – so were her exhibit outfits! Very clever lady. To complement this the next speaker was Bryan Thurlow who gave an extraordinary talk on the progress from a junior servant to becoming a Butler in a large country house

The last talk of the year was given by Lawrie Brailey from South Essex Wildlife. He spoke of the exceptional work they do in rescuing and re-wilding wild animals. How the hospital began 25 years ago by a single dedicated Sue Schwar – a police woman who having dealt with many injured or damaged animals and birds thought a Rescue Centre was necessary and due to her family's support, conceived the whole idea and managed to secure the premises which now have extensive veterinary equipment and many dedicated staff to enable them to rescue and re-wild birds, animals and even reptiles! As with all Rescue Centres funding is always a problem – we hope that many people who attended the talk donated in Lawrie's 'bucket'

Next year we are hoping to plan more interesting and entertaining events for you all to enjoy – so await our news!!

In the meantime, we thank you all for coming along to support us over the year and we wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

FOSTAC  
Committee





**It's been awhile, so I thought I'd bring  
you up-to-date with a few items  
Vic Goodey**

**Carpet Bowls**



At our last AGM we had a change of leadership, I stood down as Chairman and we elected Kevin Welsh an excellent replacement, our Treasurer Carol moved to Woodbridge way over in Suffolk and I took up the position of Treasurer and Events Secretary. We haven't lost Carol completely, she still visits every Tuesday accompanied by her fiancé Trevor.

On October 11th we competed for the Diana Hulkes' Random Triples Shield which was donated by the Shalford Village Hall Committee in memory of Diana's membership of the Committee. A close-fought competition resulting in Trevor's name on the Shield and a trophy to take home.

We have entered the League and played our first game against Finchingfield away, which we won 5 points to 3.

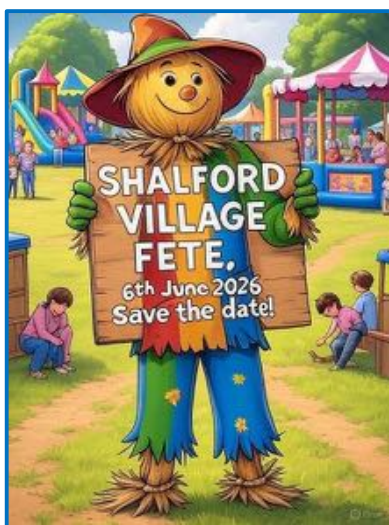
It appears that Carpet Bowls continues to suffer the effects of Covid with clubs unable to raise teams to compete in Tournaments or take part in the League. Shalford has increased its membership numbers this year which seems to reflect the social side of the game. I am very proud of that. There has been a change to playing our home-friendly games, which will now be played on a different day of the week, this does mean that if you wish to try your hand, Tuesday Club night, we will welcome you in. Subject to two annual league commitments.

Shalford VHCBC has been invited to enter teams in competitions raising money for charity and we have acquitted ourselves quite well, still awaiting our first win but we are improving.

## Village Hall

I appreciate all the work being undertaken by the Village Hall committee. The work done extending the car park is magnificent and I am pleased to add my thanks to the people that volunteered their time, energy, equipment and finance to get the work done. Mostly the committee work isn't as obvious as the car park and the upkeep, maintenance, services and future facilities expansion must be a constant concern to them. In my view a Village Hall is crucial to the well-being of the residents of any community and I have witnessed the potential loss of this asset in another village not far away.

Thank you to the committee members, users of the Village Hall and its grounds including the Dog Training groups, Bendlowe's Meet & Greet and B.E.E., Shalford Football Club, Cricket Clubs, and Private Hirers. Without their hire fees where would we be?



## Fete Committee

I am on the Fete committee and admire the attention to detail that my colleagues have. It is amazing how regulations impact on how Fetes are put together and how much money is syphoned out of a group of people trying to organise a day of fun. Don't get me wrong I fully appreciate the requirements for safety and how we need to adhere to the law but I sometimes get frustrated over bureaucratic nonsense. For instance, is it really necessary to register with the Local Authority if you wish to run a simple Raffle? Our committee members are amazing; they get their collective heads around Health and Safety Risk Assessments, Money Laundering Regulations, Anti-Slavery Laws, Laws relating to the consumption of alcohol on non-licensed premises and more. They arrange for the presence of first-aid-trained volunteer organisations. Thankfully,

all this serious work is done in a supportive atmosphere with a lot of humour. For proof just check out Terry Savage and his Shalford Fete marketing campaign on Facebook.

## Autumn to Winter

St Andrew's Church was the venue for two FOSTAC historical characters giving a glimpse of life in Tudor and Victorian times which I hope they will repeat plus a Wildlife Talk that I sadly missed.

We did a Karaoke in the Village, thanks to Russell Green for organising it. Those that attended raised the roof with their singing and when I asked if we should do it again they all said a definitive yes, so watch this space.



We share North Essex with our neighbours e.g. Weathersfield, Finchingfield, Bardfields and Panfield and share in their events and facilities to this end we are participating in an "Autumn Concert featuring choirs from Cornish Hall End and Great Bardfield with support from Shalford's G&T. (Marion and me). You may be reading this after the event as the deadline for printing is 12th November.

However, my point is that the more we co-operate, mix, compete and enjoy each other's company the more support, information and friendships we can develop. When Shalford Village Hall's roof needed repair we continued to play our Carpet Bowls because Saling Village Hall and the Essex Carpet Bowls Association (ECCBA) stepped up and made their facilities available to us.

By the time you read this we will have had the Christmas Tree Lights event up and we have been promised children singing carols which I hope you all enjoyed.

Well I am writing this in mid-October and as weird as it seems I want to be among the first to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

*Fond regards*

*VIC*

## THE PÉTANQUE WINTER FRIENDLY LEAGUE



The Pétanque Winter Friendly league started again on Sunday 9th November 2025 with seven teams. Good luck with all those cold mornings!

Bocking Bowlers V Shalford  
Bardfield V Billericay U3A  
Bocking Millers V Baddow Bandits  
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# Shalford Village Hall 100 Years' Celebration

**Friday 31st October  
2025**

We were delighted to host a fun evening with a quiz which involved mostly questions about Shalford and the surrounding areas.

Our invited VIPs were Sanjee, Delani, Phil and Anna for all their help with the Car Park Project

Andrew, our Chair welcomed everyone, introduced the committee and detailed a long list of projects achieved and those on the future list.

Kevin was the very tough quizmaster with Mel as the sidekick being more lenient. Jokers were played to double up scores (but double zero is still zero!!!)



A wonderful raffle with amazing prizes all donated by committee members and some of our local clubs.

Sally as part of Shalford Local History Association had also set up a display of all things Village Hall over the last 100 years.

After some totalling up the winners emerged as **The Misfits**; obviously an intelligent bunch! They were presented with a trophy and a bag of Halloween goodies.





Thank you to all the committee, friends, family and villagers for all their help setting up, decorating and tidying away. Thanks to Vic for helping with the sound system. Thanks to Coney's Fish & Chips for arranging pre-order and staying open later.

But mostly thanks to all who came along, dressed in your finest Halloween Costumes and joined us in enjoying the fun evening, including members of Deersbrook Farm, St Andrew's Church, Shalford Village Stores, Shalford Indoor Carpet Bowls Club, Shalford Local History Association, Shalford Fete Committee, Braintree and Bocking Dog Training Club, The Thursday Dog Training Club, Shalford Tennis Club, Fishing Lakes Club, William Bendlowe's Charity, FOSTAC, Shalford Parish Council, Shalford Horticultural Society, CFC Shalford Football Club, Shalford Bell Ringers, Neighbourhood Watch, Shalford Craft Group, North Essex Farm Cluster and WASC.

We enjoyed it so much we hope to do another event next year. We could only invite a certain amount of people due to the hall maximum capacity, so If you weren't on the invite list this time, apologies and we'll try and include you next time.





# Shalford Village Hall 100 Years' Celebration Picture Quiz, where are these from?



1



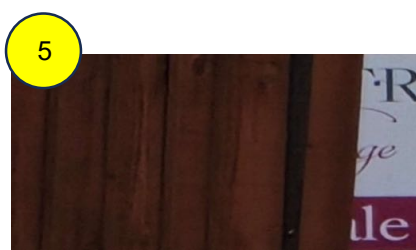
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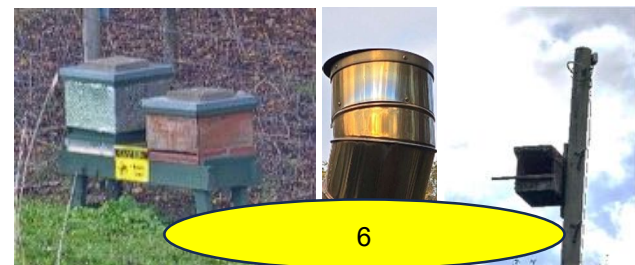
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4



5



6



7



8



9



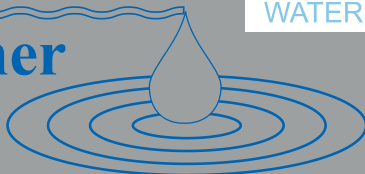
10

Answers: 1. The George 2. St Andrew's Church 3. Shalford Village Hall Clock  
4. Shalford Village Shop sign 5. VAS unit 6. Stoneley Park 7. Playing equipment Shalford park  
8. Shalford Village School 9. Parish sign near Village Hall 10. Fire Place at The George

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# Wethersfield : Finchingfield : Bardfield : Shalford

## 4 Communities Came Together

Raised **£3,338** For The Creamer Fund



Last Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> November I joined approximately 130+ others at Wethersfield Village Hall for The Creamer Fund Autumn Concert, unsure of what to expect. On arrival, there was a sense of anticipation and excitement in the air. I asked those I knew “how are the nerves?” and witnessed an uneasy smile – it will be fine! The hall was filling up nicely. Russell dressed in his finery selling raffle tickets; others on the door checking tickets. A hum audible as people gathered to chat and enjoy the evening.

Soon the hum changed to clapping as the curtains started to rise and then – hush. The first choir had started to sing.



Photo: Kevin Welsh

## Brilliant

Next up was G&T. A firm favourite of The William Bendlowe Charity. We knew they would not disappoint and they did not let us down. Amazing singing greatly enhanced by their wit and humour.



Photo: Kevin Welsh

## Brilliant

Now for our second choir of the night Singing4All. Another spell-bounding performance not to be missed.



Photo: Kevin Welsh

## Brilliant



After 1 1/2 – 2hrs or so of blissful entertainment, it was time for a break. The main feature of the break was an excellent raffle. Some 30 fantastic prizes all donated by various organisations. And, of course, the bar was not far away just through the small hall.

You could easily hear people talking about how much they had enjoyed the first half and were looking forward to the second half. Time flew; all too soon the second half equally as enjoyable as the first, was over, finishing with the last song being sung by all three performers and the audience. Clapping and cheers rang in your ears. A wonderful evening executed on true professional form.

Nosey me; I had to know more and asked Russell how the idea came about. He told me that he had been chatting to Vic at Meet & Greet and Vic said he would like to see a greater interaction between the villages and Russell suggested an intervillage concert. Vic's face lit up and in a wink of an eye, Russell heard himself volunteering to organise it.

He started by contacting the choirs from Bardfield and Cornish Hall End, and signed up the necessary helpers Kay Painter for ticket sales, Bob Harris for sound and Austin Davis to compere. They decided that all the money raised would go to the CREAMER fund. Russell went on to say: "Brian and Lorraine Patient gave me a great deal of support with their link to the CREAMER fund, and all concerned attended the planning meetings to deliver our successful first intervillage concert. We were also very grateful to Wethersfield Village Hall who gave us free use of their village hall for the event, and the local businesses and people that donated raffle prizes."

*May I take this opportunity of congratulating all who took part in delivering an excellent evening and raising so much money for The Creamer Fund. There are too many to mention: performers, organisers, helpers, donators, a fantastic appreciative audience but I **have** to mention:*

## ***Russell and Vic***

### ***You are both an inspiration***

***as to what can be achieved when people come together and  
work towards common goals***



***PS Russell – I have it in writing – you did say that was your FIRST concert – Here's to many more!***

***Alice Cox***



# CFC SHALFORD FOOTBALL



## **The 2025/26 season is now well underway**

Following a good pre-season schedule of games, we visited Stisted for our first league game, we didn't play well but came away with a 3-3 draw. We then played a first round match in the Essex Sunday Premier Cup against Priory Sports from Chelmsford who have been a very highly regarded team for many years, we came away with an excellent 2-0 win, we followed that with a 5-2 win at home against Kavern in the league, we entertained Broomfield CSL in the second round of the Essex Premier Cup and won convincingly 10-1, we then travelled to Tiptree Heath in the league and came away with a point in a 3-3 draw, unfortunately our unbeaten run ended with a 3-1 defeat at home against Sporting 77 in the BNESL Invitation Trophy group phase and suffered a second defeat in a row the following week, losing 6-3 at home against Tiptree Heath in the same competition.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> November we welcome Upshire Forest from Waltham Abbey to Shalford in the Third Round of the Essex Premier Cup, we hope for a good result to see us through to the Quarter-finals.

As always any local support at our matches is welcomed, you can keep up-to-date with our results and fixtures by following us on Instagram/Twitter/Facebook or use our website [www.cfcshalford.co.uk](http://www.cfcshalford.co.uk).

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## SHALFORD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Ladies from the Shalford Horticultural Society committee had a little day trip to RHS Gardens Hyde Hall and the Autumn colours were stunning. Nature really puts on a show this season.



**Save the Date**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Tuesday 13th January 2026**

**Details to follow**



Photographs of the George

We recently came across these photographs whilst working in the Shalford Local History Association archives. If you have any information to add we would be really pleased to hear from you. The first two might be from the 1960s.



The following are from 1992 when some major works were done when Ken and Elaine were the landlords.





Can anyone tell us when these 3 pictures were taken?



On the back of this picture it says 1962 Mr and Mrs MacDonald who were presumably the landlords at the time.

This is the view of the front of the pub with a front door. Originally the road would have gone past the front door, to the Church and then on towards Mersea, we have heard that oyster shells were found in the plasterwork, possibly during the 1992 renovation. If anyone can verify this or has any photos please do get in touch. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 2pm in the George starting again in January. You can email us at [historyshalford@gmail.com](mailto:historyshalford@gmail.com) or call Sally on 07785235000





## AUTUMN CONCERT

### in aid of the CREAMER Fund

The concert was held at Wethersfield Village Hall on Saturday 8 November and proved to be a tremendous success. Performances were provided by Great Bardfield Community Choir, a duo from Shalford known as G&T, plus Singing 4 All. Each group sung a

selection of well-known songs in each half of the programme. Enthusiastic feedback about the performances has been received from local residents who attended.

The concert was effectively a sell-out with 145 tickets sold. During an extended interval, a Raffle was held. Many local businesses and residents had contributed generously, by supplying numerous prizes which probably totalled around 50 in number. Purchasing of tickets for the Raffle contributed more than £750 – a reflection of the support and generosity of those attending the concert and the wonderful prizes on offer from local businesses and residents.

In addition to the Raffle prizes donated, some direct donations were also made to the CREAMER Fund from local businesses or residents unable to attend the concert. In aggregate, a total of **£3,338** was raised to support this worthwhile local medical and health charity. CREAMER Fund provides funding to Freshwell Health Centre for services in addition to NHS funding, plus it also provides equipment, such as Defibrillators and Bleed Kits around villages within the catchment area of the surgery.

Behind the scenes, substantial work was undertaken to make the concert such a huge success. The group responsible for running Wethersfield Village Hall were unstinting in their efforts to prepare the village hall and to clear away after the event, supported by many of those who also performed during the concert. Additionally, thanks must be made to Wethersfield school, who kindly made staging available that enabled the large groups of singers to see their conductors and be visible to their audience. A Rostrum was also loaned by Chelmsford Male Voice Choir, which required transport for collection and return. Many thanks to them and Steve Patient for organising the loan and transport.

Additionally, significant work and assistance was provided by Alex Cox, who supported through designing posters and programmes, together with printing – supported by local business, ESCO. Ticket sales were arranged by and through Kay Painter, who also worked with others to sell Raffle tickets. Many others also contributed to helping the concert to be run successfully and, without detailing all their names, we know who you are and greatly appreciate your time and contribution to the event. Furthermore, compering, sound system and lighting were admirably arranged by Austin, Bob and Steve. Many thanks guys for all your great assistance and input.





Finally, events like this cannot happen without the substantial practice undertaken by the performers and their organisers, especially Janet Dyson and Lorraine Patient. Months of regular practice sessions resulted in the exceptional performances by all the singers who participated in the concert. Your hard work and talents enabled a great evening and a substantial fund-raising for the CREAMER Fund. Thank you, one and all.

*Brian & Lorraine Patient – Trustees of the CREAMER Fund*

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## DROUGHT PROOFING

*This summer has been  
brutal*  
to the flower garden and  
the vegetable plot

However, I have noticed that those areas which were covered with planting have survived better than those in open ground. It may not be the answer to “plant survival” in hot, dry weather but I believe that plants clustered together protect the roots from drying out. With that in mind, I have been dividing my ground cover plants and distributing them around the garden to sufficiently cover any bare ground. Ground cover planting can be boring but, with thought, it can enhance your mainstay plants. The following are my suggestions for plants which not only look good but, with thought, will enhance the plants they surround: -

OPHIPOGON is a thin leafed black grass with spires of deep purple bells in late summer. This plant looks wonderful against a background of pale leaves or rocks, as it will happily spread around a rockery.

HEUCHERA are known for their varied leaf colour ranging from deepest black, reds of all shades, orange, yellow, bright greens and even a pink. I feel sure you will find a plant that fits in with your chosen planting.

LIRIOPE has thin grass-like leaves with small spires of purple bells blooming about now. This looks lovely with a lime-green background such as euphorbias.

LOW GROWING GERANIUMS will spread around but are easy to control and unwanted plants can be shared. The flowers are open cups in shades of pink, blue and white. Some geraniums are large plants so read the label to decide whether the plant is suitable for the planting space. [Note: Geraniums are not Pelargoniums. Pelargoniums are summer favourites for window boxes and tubs and need winter protection].

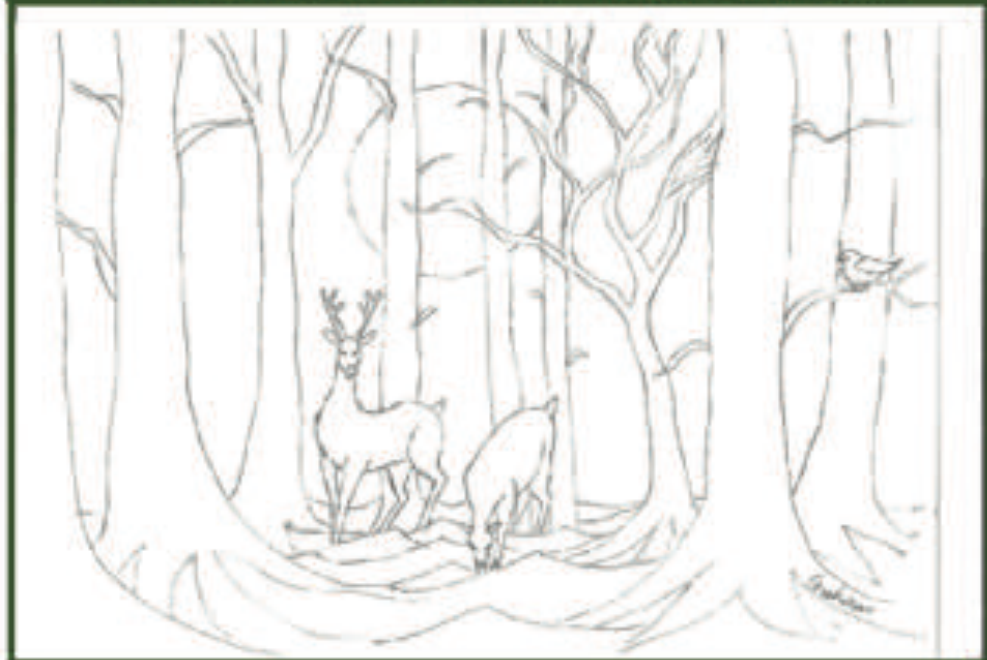
ACHILLEA MOLLIS has leaves which hold the raindrops like shimmering diamonds with beautiful frothy small lime-green flowers, lovely in a vase of flowers. Once the flowers are starting to turn brown, cut them off down to the base of the plant. This plant can be a mixed blessing. If you want new plants, it will produce them readily otherwise be vigilant in the removal of all flowering stems.

LONDON PRIDE is an old favourite. There is a variegated form with yellow and green leaves and thin stalks topped with pink flowers. This will spread happily without being a thug and unwanted plants are easy to remove.

December is the time to put your feet up and browse the numerous gardening catalogues with tempting photos of all the bulbs, seeds, and plants for you to enjoy.

Happy Christmas

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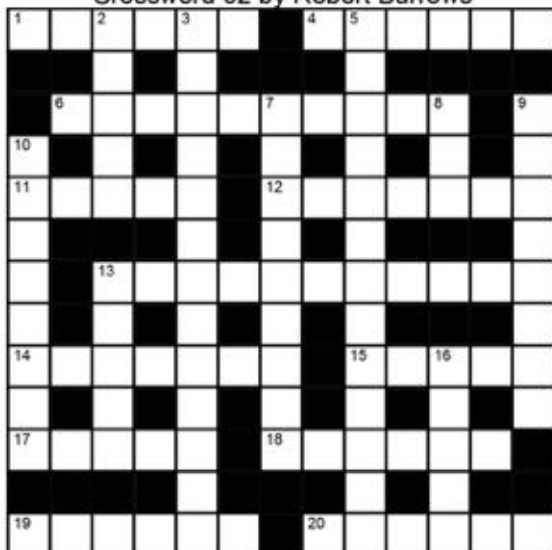
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Crossword 92 by Robert Burrows



**Across**

- 1 Owing (6)  
4 Of various kinds (6)  
6 Mersea hamlet (6-4)  
11 Insect stage (5)  
12 Singing voice (7)  
13 Essex Village (11)  
14 Grammar term (7)  
15 No motion (5)  
17 Communication industry (5)  
18 Payment for release (6)  
19 Fresh (6)  
20 Stick (6)

**Down**

- 2 Situation of conflict (5)  
3 Someone wanders (4-2-7)

**5 Reasonableness**

- (13)  
7 Riotous drinker (9)  
8 Length of thread (3)  
9 Possession (8)  
10 Valium (8)  
13 Harsh (5)  
16 Give expression (5)

**Cryptic Across**

- 1 Ten bid badly, now in the black (2-4)  
4 Was bosun drying various things? (6)  
6 Harrow Bill broke in this village (6-4)  
11 Jim a goat or insect stage (5)  
12 Soap Ron stirred in high voice (7)

- 13 Palm has stone here (11)  
14 Harp Sal played in a grammatical style (7)  
15 Still some finer teabags (5)  
17 Aimed badly but made the news (5)  
18 Romans could demand money for freedom (6)  
19 Maybe sun due? In mint condition (6)  
20 Stick to poor header (6)

**Down**

- 2 Medical group in theatre (5)  
3 Could be a fly by night or day (4-2-7)  
5 Calm maybe on M1, passed union (13)  
7 Sadly, Sal, I swear to riotous singer (9)  
8 Linen measure in the field (3)  
9 It's your own (8)  
10 Maize pad prepared for this medication (8)  
13 Right inside acid, it's bitter (5)  
16 Express feelings about some of the motels (5)





## Nature Notes - Ladybirds

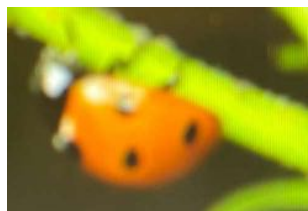
**By: Mac Beanland**

Ladybirds seem to have attracted quite a lot of attention towards the end of September and into the beginning of October with people saying they have seen groups of ladybirds gathering in the corners of their windows and some warm places. This is quite a common occurrence; if there are a lot of ladybirds about and we suddenly get a bit of a cold snap they huddle

together to keep warm and the corners of windows facing the sun are definite warm spots. Ladybirds are quite remarkable little insects and fit very well into the group of creatures which can be classed as friends to farmers and gardeners, the reason being their main food is aphids, one of the three main pests of farmers and growers; the other two being slugs and flea Beetles. We have always had our native ladybird which is bright red with seven black spots but we are now seeing increasing numbers of an immigrant in the form of the Asian Ladybird. Some were introduced into this country to help with aphid control and others have got carried here by the wind. It is very easy to distinguish between the two, as I have said the native ladybird is red with seven black spots but the Asian ladybird also known as the harlequin ladybird, is a mixture of colours from yellow to pink, all shades of red with random numbers of black spots from one upwards. Some are even black with red spots. All lady birds will bite us but the Asian ladybirds are more aggressive and do bite more frequently. Ladybirds do hibernate through the winter in frost proof places and wake up as the weather starts to warm up, once awake and active they go in search of food i.e. aphids. Once they find some they will mate and the females will lay clusters of yellow eggs stuck to leaves close to aphids and after about a week the eggs hatch into larvae which are little alligator lookalikes with ferocious appetites eating aphids they grow rapidly and keep shedding their skins to allow for growth. Once fully grown they turn into pupa which rest for about a week then emerge as a ladybird, it then takes but a few days for them to mature and get their full colour and spots. In years when there are lots of aphids about the old ladybirds will keep on breeding and the young ones will also breed so we can get a lot of ladybirds.



One very memorable Aphid - ladybird year was 1976; farms and gardens were absolutely plastered with aphids. The merchants who sell agro chemicals sold out of insecticides with waiting lists of customers being rationed as any supplies became available, I remember trying to spray a field of wheat and having to stop each time I reached the end of the field and



stopping the engine so that a seething mass of aphids could fall out of the radiator, if I didn't the engine would boil. I can't remember how many weeks we suffered with the aphids but as if by magic relief appeared in the form of ladybirds, literally thousands of them eating aphids at a rate of knots, all was fine and dandy until the ladybirds ran out of aphids and they tried to eat us yes, ladybirds do bite!



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7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 31

JANUARY 2026	FEBRUARY 2026	MARCH 2026
7 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	3 10 17 24 31

APRIL 2026	MAY 2026	JUNE 2026
0 7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29

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**GREEN BIN**  
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## **Buzzing News from the Hives of Gill Powell**



As December begins to settle in and the chill of winter deepens, life in the bees' world slows to a gentle hum. There are no flowers to visit, pollen to gather or busy foraging flights across the countryside.



Inside the hive the colony draws together in a tight, warm cluster, surrounding their queen at the centre. To keep her warm, they shiver their flight muscles to generate heat, keeping the core of the cluster to a toasty 30-35 degrees even when the frost is glistening on the ground outside. The outer bees take turns moving inwards, ensuring every bee gets a share of the warmth. When they are not warming themselves, they are fetching food from the frames that has been stored over the summer for these lean times taking it to the queen and her helpers.

It's a remarkable act of teamwork and resilience that enable the colony to survive over the winter period.

For us beekeepers, December is a time of great patience as we must leave the hives undisturbed,

wrapped up against the worst of the weather hoping all is well inside. While we wait there are plenty of jobs to be done around the apiary. Leaves to be swept up, hive boxes to be cleaned and painted ready for the new season.

Winter is also a good time to read all those wonderful books bought during the year hopefully explaining how we can become better beekeepers in the coming year. On a





warmer day when the sun is shining, a walk to the apiary may reward us with a faint buzzing sound coming from within the hive reassuring us that all is well for now with the bees. Soon enough, the days will begin to lengthen, and the first hazel catkins will appear, then the bees will be able to fly again and begin their work once more.

So, as we hunker down and light our fires, enjoying the quiet of winter it is comforting to think of our bees doing much the same, resting conserving and preparing for another busy year ahead.



#### Bee fact

A Queen bee's stinger is smooth, unlike a worker bee's, which is barbed. This allows her to sting multiple times and survive.

*Wishing everyone a peaceful and Happy Christmas*



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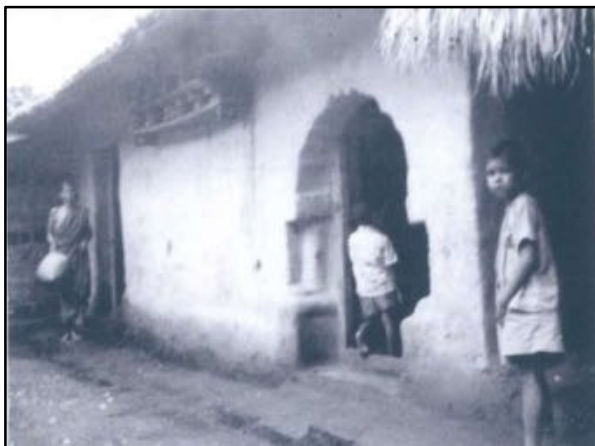
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# ***WORK WITH HATIBARI LEPER COLONY, ORISSA STATE***

***BY: DIDI CROOK (written for Bendlowe's Bugle Nov 2020)***

*SCI Long Term Project  
in Hatibari  
Leprosy Colony  
(India) 1961-1966*

*Farm Entrance 1966  
(downloaded from SCI  
website)*



Before I arrived at Hatibari, I spent two weeks at an Indian short-term work camp in Kalikapur village, in Bengal, near Calcutta – mainly agricultural work and evenings listening to classical Indian music. This was a wonderful experience of integration!

My work and life at Hatibari was another total cultural change. Most of the lepers (250) were Adivasi (tribal) people who normally would live in the scrub jungle areas, but there were also many Hindus including the highest caste of Brahmin.

Here my work was similar – to do my best to look after the health of the lepers. There had been a severe problem of corruption by a Doctor, who had been appointed there, and India SCI had revealed this, and he had left and no other Doctor was yet appointed to visit. There were only a couple of cowshed-like buildings and one square room available, other than the mud-huts which were scattered around the area, which were occupied by individual/shared lepers and two for our small SCI team. The leader was an Indian from Calcutta (Maulik), there was a veterinarian Indian volunteer, Felix, a Frenchman and a Canadian, American and Finnish girl came and went during my time there. All the others worked to develop agriculture – rice, vegetables and by grace of Oxfam, a fish tank to provide food. Most of the lepers had been beggars until they arrived here, when the Orissa State government and SCI funded basic food. Rice and Dahl daily gets a bit boring, hence the drive to get better vegetables etc.

The cowsheds were filled with a number of Indian rope-beds and became the male and female “hospital” wards respectively. The square room was used for treatments – medicine giving and treatment of leprosy ulcers. At this stage, there was no possibility of a scientific check as to which leper was an infectious case or not. This was badly needed to ascertain correct dosages of leprosy medicines available. At that stage, the effects of leprosy could be reduced but there was no cure. Nowadays there is a cure.

Gradually, I noticed that in the evenings people came who were not really ill. They just wished to be together. So with some money sent from England, we bought local Indian board

games and set them up in the room. So this, the Square Room, became also the Community Centre! Shortly after, the Brahmin wished to discuss the setting up of a small temple – which was duly built and then he would lead the lepers in the various Hindu ceremonies. People gradually became happier, although were the poorest people I knew.

I shall never forget the wandering Guru, who got leprosy and ended up in our community. I brought him into the “hospital” – so that he would rest and not wander about, enlarging his ulcer. It was cold at night and while he was there, we managed to purchase some blankets for each bed. When I did my “night-round” of the “hospital”, all the others were giggling with glee and using their blankets – all except the Guru. One leper – Nisakaru – had given himself the role of interpreter for me. When I asked him why the Guru was not using his blanket and he asked him why, the reply was “It is such a beautiful thing to be given a blanket – that before I can use it, I must say thank you to God. I cannot do this however until sunrise tomorrow, at special prayers. I will take it with me to say thank you and then I can use it”. Sure enough, he was using it the following night. Here was a man who had nothing – and waited to say “Thank you”, rather than grab it and be warm. A most humbling experience for me coming from our materialistic Western world.

Another day, I had to tell a Beggar who arrived wanting treatment for the worst foot ulcer I’d seen (half a foot only left) that I could treat him but there was no more food allowance available (we were full to capacity). On hearing that, one man whose family sent a **very** little money every so often, stepped forward and said quickly to me, “You **can** take him in; I will share my food with him”. This was incredibly moving for me. I’m glad to say that this man who looked like a skeleton when he arrived grew to be quite “chubby” 3 months later, and his terrible foot healed up at least. Maybe the maggots in the deep wound assisted the healing in fact!

The lepers were quite challenging – whenever a new person came to Hatibari, instead of the normal Indian greeting of “Namaste” with palms of the hands together – they would do this gesture, **but** enclose the visitor’s hands between **their** palms. If the visitor flinched, knowing they had leprosy, the lepers took an instant dislike. A bit naughty perhaps, but understandable. They quickly gauged whether your humanity was real towards them or not.

Not long before I left, a new Doctor was appointed to visit. He really did not want to be there – it was not helpful to his career to be sent to a Leper Colony. This trick was tried on him and he failed the test. He also made a great show of washing his hands. That night, I found Nisakaru charging about the land, with blood-shot eyes, and carrying a stick. When asked what was wrong, he raged about the Doctor, saying he would overturn his car when he next came and set it a light. Nisakaru had been smoking Gunja (Marijuana) grown everywhere by the lepers at Hatibari – and I had quite a task to quieten him down.

Nisakaru loved to be with me in the Treatment Room – he would hang his long arms over the cupboard door, and sing softly. When patients would come in, he would translate “Didi, this man has Head-defect (headache)”, or “Didi, this woman has Water-defect (cystitis)”.

I loved my time also here at Hatibari as much as with Tibetans. The worst moment was when the new Doctor on a visit called me “A Bloody White”! Racism on the other foot for a change!



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# IN THE UNITED BENEFICE of Finchingfield, Cornish Hall End, Shalford, Wethersfield, Little And Great Bardfield THE PANT VALLEY CHURCHES



**Shalford  
St Andrew's**

## From the Vicarage...



**Wethersfield  
St Mary  
Magdalene**

One of the delightful fixtures of the Advent and Christmas seasons is the Nativity Play. Whether this takes place in school, church, hall or even outside, and whether it takes the form of a traditional retelling of the events of the first Christmas, or whether it takes a fresh perspective, it requires more than one person. Helpfully, the cast size can often be flexible, with variable numbers of angels, shepherd and magi (the Bible only tells us that they brought three gifts!), and sometimes parts for animals too, but there is a minimum number greater than one, and the role which is the most important is the one without any lines – indeed, it's often taken by a doll!



**Finchingfield  
St John the  
Baptist**

Christmas is therefore a good time for us to remember the value of cooperation. Each person (and indeed animal!) had an important part to play in the events of Jesus' birth: the hospitable inn keeper who provided space in the stable even though the inn was full; the donkey (not mentioned in the Bible, but a fixture of the tradition!) carrying Mary to Bethlehem; the angels announcing the news of what had taken place; the shepherds and magi responding, and representing firstly the people into which Jesus was born, and secondly the nations of the wider world; the animals who found themselves having to give up their feeding trough, traditionally shown as offering the adoration of all creatures before their Creator; Joseph the protector of the Holy Family; and Mary, the one whose willingness to follow God's request made her the one to bring the Holy Child into the world.



**Gt Bardfield  
St Mary The  
Virgin**

The plan of God we see unfolding in our nativity plays is one in which everyone has something important to do, everyone's contribution is valuable. And God himself says nothing at all – 'How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given,' says a favourite carol. The wordlessness of the infant Jesus (which depends not on whether we take literally that line from *Away in a Manger* saying 'No crying he makes') affirms the value of our lives and actions. As the cast of the nativity draws around the manger, God's presence brings their parts into harmony with one another, not by dictating, but through the magnetic pull of love. As we gather in communities and families this Christmas-tide, may our acts of gathering in adoration draw all our parts in the drama of the human story into harmony with one another, as we sing, 'O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.'



**Little  
Bardfield  
St Katharine**



**Cornish Hall  
End  
St John the  
Evangelist**

Rev'd/Fr Alex

**Saturday 6 December**

3pm RBL District Carol Service –  
Finchingfield

**Sunday 7 December – Second Sunday  
of Advent**

9am Holy Communion (traditional  
language) – Cornish Hall End

**9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford**

10.30am Sung Communion Service –  
Great Bardfield

11am Prayer & Pilgrimage (Celtic  
Morning Prayer) – Wethersfield

4pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

**Sunday 14 December – Third Sunday  
of Advent**

**8am Holy Communion (traditional  
language) – Shalford**

9.30am Children's Carol Service –  
Finchingfield

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great  
Bardfield

11am Holy Communion (traditional  
language) – Wethersfield

4pm Sung Evensong – Great Bardfield

6pm Carol Service – Wethersfield

**Sunday 21 December – Fourth  
Sunday of Advent**

9am Holy Communion (traditional  
language) – Finchingfield

**9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford**

10.30am Sung Communion Service –  
Great Bardfield

11am Crib Service – Wethersfield

3pm Joint Churches Carol Service –  
Great Bardfield

6pm Carol Service – Cornish Hall End

**Christmas Eve**

3pm Crib Service – Finchingfield

3pm Christingle Service – Great Bardfield

**5pm Carols by Candlelight – Shalford**

9pm 'Early' Midnight Mass – Little  
Bardfield

11.30pm Midnight Mass – Wethersfield

**Christmas Day**

9am Family Communion Service – Cornish  
Hall End

**9.30am Family Communion Service –  
Shalford**

10.30am Family Communion Service –  
Great Bardfield

11am Family Communion Service –  
Finchingfield

**Friday 26 November – St Stephen**

**10am Communion Service with hymns –  
Shalford**

**Sunday 28 December – St John the  
Evangelist (transferred)**

10.30am Benefice Communion Service –  
Cornish Hall End

2.30pm Carols in the Cowshed – Boydells  
Dairy Farm

**Sunday 4 January – The Feast of the  
Epiphany (transferred)**

9am Holy Communion (traditional language)  
– Cornish Hall End

**9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford**

10.30am Sung Communion Service – Great  
Bardfield

11am Prayer & Pilgrimage (Celtic Morning  
Prayer) – Wethersfield

4pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

**Sunday 11 January – The Baptism of Christ / Plough Sunday**

9.30am Benefice Communion Service – Little Bardfield

*We warmly encourage members of our community to join the Plough Sunday service and celebrations at Thaxted Parish Church at 11am this Sunday*

4pm Sung Evensong – Finchingfield

**Sunday 18 January – The Second Sunday of Epiphany  
and the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Finchingfield

**9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford**

10.30am Sung Communion Service – Great Bardfield

11am Family Service – Wethersfield

**Sunday 25 January – The Conversion of St Paul**

8am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Great Bardfield

**9.30am Parish Communion Service – Shalford**

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

11am Family Communion Service – Wethersfield

**Regular Services and Events during the week**

**Monday**

8.45am Morning Prayer – Finchingfield

1.30pm ‘Faithful Fiction’ book club (1st weeks) – Between the Lines, Great Bardfield

**Tuesday**

8.45am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

10am Baby & Toddler Group – Great Bardfield ‘St Mary’s Munchkins’ story & song time with refreshments

**Thursday**

8.45am Morning Prayer – Wethersfield

**10am Prayer Group (1st, 3rd & 5th weeks) Coffee Morning (2nd & 4th weeks)** – Shalford

Coffee Morning (3rd week) – Cornish Hall End

10.30am Eucharist – Little Bardfield

**Friday**

**8.45am Morning Prayer – Shalford**

**Saturday**

10.30am (3rd weeks) Coffee Morning – Wethersfield

## SHALFORD CHURCH OF ST ANDREW'S PANT VALLEY CHURCHES CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT



**Shalford  
St Andrew's**



**Wethersfield  
St Mary  
Magdalene**



**Finchingfield  
St John the  
Baptist**



**Gt Bardfield  
St Mary The  
Virgin**



**Little  
Bardfield  
St Katharine**



**Cornish Hall  
End  
St John the  
Evangelist**

First of all I would like to thank everyone who has already made a donation to our Bell Fund, your generosity is much appreciated and your gift will make such a difference to the amount the PCC will need to raise for the work. If you haven't yet made a donation, but would like to, details of how to give are in last month's Village Magazine or you can contact me for the information.

Our services in church during November included the All Souls Commemoration on the 1<sup>st</sup> and Remembrance Sunday on the 9<sup>th</sup>, both well attended and an indication, if one were needed, that St Andrew's is still an important focal point for our community.

FOSTAC's autumn programme finished on the 7<sup>th</sup> November with an enthralling presentation by Lawrie Brailey of the South Essex Wildlife Hospital charity that takes in countless injured, lost and endangered wild animals every year, - every creature from snake to seal - rehabilitates them and returns them to their natural habitat. We learned such a lot and I am indebted to the FOSTAC committee and its helpers for their thought-provoking events and continued financial support of St Andrew's this year.

If you come to church in the evening from now on you'll see that the bollard lights at the top of the drive are now functional again, thanks to FOSTAC, and also many thanks to Aaden of Hearn Electrical (see his advert in the magazine) who completed the tricky job of excavating the defunct bollards and installing the new with minimum fuss and maximum expertise.

Looking forward now, the lovely season of Advent will soon be here, a time of reflection and preparation for Christmas. The St Andrew's flower arrangers will have a month off-duty but the church will be beautified by the new altar frontal given in memory of the late Margaret Smith, a Churchwarden of St Andrew's for many years and well known in the village.

There will be the usual Christmas Eve candle-lit carol service at 5pm to which all are welcome – but come a bit early to be sure of a seat! All the candles will be made by our own "chandler", Michael Mason, and they, with the floral arrangements and the singing of carols really make this service such an unforgettable experience. And you are also most welcome to the slightly quieter, but no less joyful, Eucharistic service on Christmas Day at 9.30am.

As to the New Year, well, hopefully work will begin to refurbish the bell installation in time for the bells to be ringing again at Easter-tide, but I mustn't get too far ahead of myself – when one is involved with an ancient, listed building it doesn't pay to be too complacent!

But thank you all for your support over this last year and I wish you a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and an exciting (but not too exciting!) 2026.

Hilary Penney



## SHALFORD CHURCH OF ST ANDREW'S CONTACTS

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# THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

[www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk)

By: Ken McDonald, Secretary



The Hundred Parishes Society is not a church or religious organisation but we encourage visits to churches because they are often the oldest and most interesting building in any community. Most of our churches are open regularly and welcome visitors.

Our website [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) has many short articles, including some about various aspects of churches including bells, clocks, memorials, poppyheads, spires, towers and windows. We recently added an article about church fonts, some of which appears in the next few paragraphs.



Fonts hold holy water which is used to 'baptise' people, an initiation into the Christian faith. They are often situated near the church entrance. Our local churches have a great variety of fonts, usually made of stone. For example . . .

St. George's church in Anstey has an 11th-century font that is rare in that it is decorated with mermen (the male equivalent of mythical mermaids) holding their tails.



Thorley church has a 12th-century font. It was removed from the church and for many years was used as a drinking trough on a nearby farm before being reintroduced into the church in 1855. Its ornate cover was designed by George Gilbert Scott, a prolific architect known mainly for his work designing and renovating churches and cathedrals.

Chickney church has a carved stone font from the 14th century. The bowl is lavishly decorated including

shields bearing the coats of arms of local Braybrook and Fitzwalter families.





Debden's 18th-century font is made of Coade stone and is richly decorated with roses and heraldry.

Over the last couple of years, I have been giving a talk entitled "A peek inside some Hundred Parishes churches" to local groups. The talk is a PowerPoint presentation with many photos. If your group might be interested, please contact me on [hundredparishes@btinternet.com](mailto:hundredparishes@btinternet.com) .

#### Photos

- A: Anstey
- B: Thorley
- C: Chickney
- D: Debden
- E: Barley
- F: Castle Camps
- G: Hatfield Broad Oak
- H: Standon





# BE AWARE OF SCAMS

By: Terrie Johnson, PCSO 8143

## AI-generated images

With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), some images starting to appear in scams are entirely unreal. Whether it's social media profiles peddling dodgy schemes, product listings on fake websites or scammers lurking on dating apps, fake images created from AI will be more widely used to make scams impersonating people or products harder to spot.

### Tips to avoid these scams:

- Look for unnatural details – scan images for small details such as lighting, hair and hands that look strange, and look out for any blurry parts of the image.
- If the image looks too perfect, it might be created by AI.
- Use a reverse image search tool to check if the image has been posted anywhere else on the internet. If it hasn't, this could be a sign that it's created using AI, especially if it's of a well-known person. You can reverse image search on Google by selecting the image icon on the right of the search bar.

## Voice cloning

This is when scammers use AI tools to clone your voice. They will then use your voice to call people you know impersonating you and asking for money. Fraudsters can get hold of your voice through calls and clips on social media. New rules came into force in January 2025 via Ofcom prohibiting overseas callers from spoofing UK mobile numbers. This means fraudsters won't be able to change the display number their call is coming from to look like it's coming from a UK number on a mobile phone. This could prompt scammers to home in on voice cloning to make their scam calls more persuasive, and we've already started to see some instances of it. Never rely on displayed number.

### Tips to avoid these scams:

- If you receive an unexpected, distressed call from a friend or relative that sounds suspicious, verify that it's actually them by contacting them using another trusted contact method.
- Make sure your social media profiles are private as fraudsters can record your voice from your video or audio content.
- Consider setting up a safe phrase with your family or close friends that you can say to verify if you're speaking to them

**Romance fraud is a heartbreaking scam where someone believes they've found their ideal partner, only to discover that the person they're falling for is using a fake identity to deceive them.**

Being a victim of romance fraud can stir up a whirlwind of emotions. Many people feel ashamed and blame themselves, which often prevents them from seeking the help and support they need and that reaching out for assistance is a crucial step towards healing.

### ***Do a quick reverse image check***

To help confirm the person they are interested in is who they say they are, you could help them do a quick web search on any images they have been sent. This can make sure the photos have not just been copied from another website.

To do this using Google on a desktop:

- Open a new browser
- In the search bar, click on the camera icon
- You can now drag and drop a photo into the search option
- Note: to access on a phone, you would need to download the Google image app

### **Image search using Microsoft Bing on a desktop**

- Open a new browser
- In the search bar, click on the camera icon
- You can now drag and drop a photo into the search option

There is a book written by Author Becky Holmes titled ***'Keanu Reeves Is Not In Love With You'***. It features hilarious interactions with fraudsters pretending to be everyone from Prince William to US peacekeeping soldiers and has got rave reviews on both sides of the Atlantic. As well as delivering big laughs, Becky shared the real-life stories of people who'd been lured in by the scammers and lost substantial amounts of money.

Across Essex, there have been 231 reports of romance fraud in the past 12 months with losses totalling £3.2m – an average of £14,000 per victim. The largest age group affected are between 60 and 69.

**Be safe: If Keanu Reeves doesn't love me,  
then I guess Kevin Costner doesn't either ☹️**

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# SHALFORD VILLAGE MAGAZINE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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