

SHALFORD

Village Magazine May 2026

*showcasing our community
Produced by the People for the People*



ENQUIRIES & ADVERTISING:
Email: shalford_village_magazine@btinternet.com



MICHAEL J WALSH
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
A DIGNIFIED AND CARING APPROACH

Michael J Walsh Funeral Directors is a local family run business that have been providing a professional and caring service to the Great Dunmow area for over 100 years.

As well as providing traditional burial and cremation packages, in June 2022 we completed the building of Dunmow Crematorium, which we run alongside our established Funeral services.

Michael J Walsh, with our dignified and caring approach, offers the expertise and experience necessary to ensure you give your loved one the perfect send off.

**No Hearse Full Service
and Wake
(for 50 people)
£3,775***

FUNERAL INCLUDES:

- Our professional services.
- A standard oak veneered coffin.
- Transport of deceased to Dunmow Crematorium.
- Full service at Dunmow Crematorium with 2 hours between services.
- Officiant fees.
- 50 copies of the order of Service.
- A single image on screens and music throughout the service.
- 25 photo music tribute.
- Seasonal coffin spray.
- Wake after the service at Dunmow Crematorium Chapel Barn with sandwiches and cake for 50 people.
- Collection of cremated remains.

***We know seeing a hearse at a funeral can be upsetting, therefore with this service the coffin will be placed in the crematorium before the congregation arrives. A full service will then take place with no hearse or bearers required.**



**Direct Cremation
(non attended)
£ 1,125**

FUNERAL INCLUDES:

- Our professional services.
- A standard oak veneered coffin.
- Transport of deceased to Crematorium.
- Attendance of funeral director.
- Cremation fees for an unattended cremation at Dunmow Crematorium.
- Crematorium fees.
- Collection of cremated remains.

Funeral Cost Estimator

We all know a passing is difficult, that is why at Michael J Walsh Funeral Directors and Dunmow Crematorium we like to be as transparent as possible, by giving you the reassurance that the funeral cost will be kept to a minimum, with no unexpected surprises when it comes to receiving the bill. Which is why we have included a cost estimator on our website. You can find this under the funeral tab on walshfunerals.com

Please see our website walshfunerals.com for more details or phone us on **01371 856274** or email info@walshfunerals.com



**DUNMOW
CREMATORIUM**

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Shalford Village Magazine is a non-profit organisation, run by volunteers and funded by advertising, the Parish Council, the Parochial Council, villagers, local organisations, and donations. Contact by email: shalford_village_magazine@btinternet.com
Shalford Village Magazine can be downloaded or viewed from www.bendlowe.co.uk

**KNOW WHERE
YOUR NEAREST
DEFIBRILLATOR
IS LOCATED**



Jaspers Green
CM7 5AU



Shalford Village
Hall Church End
CM7 5EZ



The George Inn The
Street CM7 5HH

FRONT COVER

An enjoyable walk
with the dog
around Stoneley
Park

Sunday,
19 April 2026

Photo: Alice Cox

The George Inn

OPEN ALL DAY EVERY DAY

Opening Times: Sunday – Thursday 12-11 pm
Friday – Saturday 12 – midnight



Telephone: 01371 850 207

Find us on Facebook:



<https://www.facebook.co/thegeorgeinnshalford>

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 Patient

**COFFEE
MORNING –
ST ANDREW'S
CHURCH**
**EVERY 2nd & 4th
THURSDAY OF
THE MONTH**
**10.00 a.m. to 12.00
p.m.**



SINGING 4 ALL – LORRAINE PATIENT

This 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

SHALFORD CRAFT GROUP

Meetings are held on the 3rd 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

**WE MEET EVERY
MONDAY at
Wethersfield Church,
7 p.m. &
FRIDAY at
Shalford Church, 7 p.m.**

**FOR MORE DETAILS
CONTACT:**

ROY THREADGOLD
Tel: 01371 850481

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

Or

The Charity Website:
www.reengage.org.uk
Freephone: 0800 716543

STEBBING VINTAGE TRACTOR RUN 10TH MAY 2026



We will be coming through Shalford from Hulls Lane, down past the George at approximately 11.05 a.m. continuing past the Church entrance and up Braintree Road to Codham Mill, then on to Beazley End and Blackmore End. As usual we will be supporting the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance.

PLEASE HELP US BY DONATING



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FOSTAC

Friends of St Andrew's Church

Sir Roger Singleton OBE

President

President

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 14th May 2026

St Andrew's Church

7.00pm

**Come Along and Meet the
Committee and see what Plans
They have for the Future
and Help us with New Ideas**

We always Welcome New Members

So join us

**For Drinks and Nibbles
and Have a Chat**

www.fostac.co.uk

Affiliated to Charity No 249505

WHAT'S ON

SHALFORD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL COACH TRIP
TO
WISLEY GARDENS

On Wednesday 20th May

Leaving from Shalford Village Hall at 9:00am (prompt)

Returning to Shalford at approximately 6:30pm

£20 per person

Please contact Caroline Ottley on

07734140478

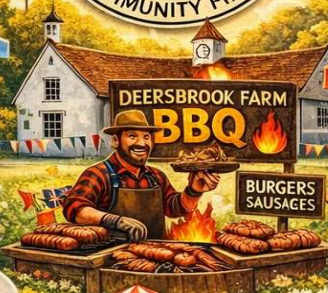
Limited availability—book now to secure your place!



WHAT'S ON – SHALFORD FETE

SHALFORD VILLAGE FETE

1PM START • 6TH JUNE 2026



- Coney's Fish and Chips
- Deersbrook Farm BBQ
- Neapolitan Pizza.
- Fresh Baked cakes and cookies
- Pimm's Tent
- Wine for a local Vineyard
- Courtyard Brewery Ales
- Barista Coffee



SHALFORD VILLAGE FETE
1PM START • FREE ENTRY

SHALFORD VILLAGE FETE FLOWER FESTIVAL

FLOWER FESTIVAL AT
St. ANDREW'S CHURCH

6TH - 8TH JUNE

A flower festival titled

“ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL”

is being held at St. Andrew's Church
starting on

Saturday 6th June for 2 weeks

The hymn is divided into 12 sections.
Each flower arrangement depicts a section.
Walk around the Church in an anti-clockwise
direction and the hymn is complete at the
12th arrangement.

The refrain is depicted at the
screen and memorial board.

Refreshments will be served 10 – 12
Monday 6th to Friday 12th ONLY

Donations welcome for the CREAMER fund

All are welcome to enjoy our displays in
celebration of the Shalford fete

Entry is free

At present, St. Andrew's Church
is open every day

from **9 – 4**

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

A Celebration Service for the Shalford Fete

St Andrew's Church, Shalford

→ Sunday 7th June at 6:00pm ←

Join us as we bring the *Shalford Fete Weekend* to a joyful close with a special service set among our beautiful

"All Things Bright and Beautiful" Flower Festival

- 🎵 Popular songs and uplifting hymns
- 🎵 Music celebrating the fun and spirit of the fete
- 🎵 A warm, welcoming community atmosphere

Plus:

Grand Fete Prize-Giving
Followed by a celebration drink!

Everyone is warmly welcome!

- 🎵 Have a favourite hymn or school assembly song?
We'd love to include it!

Please contact: Revd Canon Janet Nicholls
✉ jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

WHAT'S ON - WETHERSFIELD

WETHERSFIELD
CLUB PRESENTS



KARAOKE

Night

Special
Guest KJ

HOSTED BY MAIR & BOB

SATURDAY 9TH
MAY

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE
EXCITEMENT!

TIME: CLUB OPENS 4PM
SINGING FROM 7.30PM



**COACH TRIP TO THE
RHS SANDRINGHAM FLOWER SHOW
(THIS IS A FULL RHS SHOW OVER 5 DAYS)**

***WEDNESDAY
22 JULY 2026***

**COACH FROM WETHERSFIELD 8.30 AM
RETURN TO WETHERSFIELD 6.00 PM**

SHOW TICKET PRICE : £36.50

COACH TRAVEL APPROX : £20.00

(DEPENDING ON FINAL NUMBERS)

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US ON THIS TRIP
PLEASE CONTACT JULIA BROAD ON 0771 267 4949,
OR BY E-MAIL, broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk**

WHAT'S ON – WETHERSFIELD

PERFORMING AT WETHERSFIELD CLUB

SATURDAY 2 MAY 2026, 8.00PM

THE FOGGY DAIS' UPBEAT ORCHESTRA



**A NIGHT OF REGGAE
AND SKA MUSIC
COME AND JOIN THE
PARTY!**

WETHERSFIELD CLUB

SATURDAY 23 MAY 2026

**AN EVENING WITH OUR
GOOD FRIENDS**

**BEER VALLEY
DRIFTERS**

**PLAYING LIVE FOR US AGAIN FROM 8.00 PM
JOIN US FOR A GREAT MUSIC NIGHT!**

**WETHERSFIELD
CLUB**

OPEN MIC NIGHT



THURSDAY

21st May 2026

From 7.30 pm

**PLAY, SING
OR JUST LISTEN
TO THOSE WHO DO!!**

WETHERSFIELD CLUB

OPENING HOURS

MONDAY	5.00 - 11.00 PM
TUESDAY	5.00 - 11.00 PM
WEDNESDAY	5.00 - 11.00 PM
THURSDAY	5.00 - 10.00 PM
FRIDAY	5.00 - 12.00 PM
SATURDAY	4.00 - 11.00 PM
SUNDAY	4.00 - 8.00 PM

NOTICE OF
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING

**THE ABOVE MEETING SHALL BE CONVENED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE CLUB**

SATURDAY
16 MAY 2026
8.00 PM

CURRENT MEMBERS ONLY

**CLUB OPENS AT 4.00 PM FOR
FA CUP FINAL**

**PLEASE NOTE THE CLUB DOORS
WILL BE CLOSED ONCE THE
MEETING HAS STARTED**

SUMMER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Wethersfield Pavilion
Hedingham Road, CM7 4EQ

Saturday 20th June

1PM UNTIL LATE • FREE ENTRY

- ★ Fire Engine ★ Tractors ★ Food Stall & BBQ ★
- ★ Popcorn & Candy Floss ★ Dog Show ★
- ★ Traditional Stalls ★ Cream Teas ★ Licensed Bar ★

Classic Cars – ALL WELCOME

**OPEN MIC
FROM 2PM**

*Come along and show
us your talent!*

**LIVE MUSIC
from 7PM**

with Loran.S

★ *Come along and join us for a celebration* ★
★ *of our wonderful village!* ★

Contact broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk

Join us at Wethersfield Pavilion for the Great Summer Solstice Celebration on Saturday 20 June. We have food, music, a bar, games, dog show, stalls and a bouncy castle amongst other things on offer, so we hope you will come and enjoy the fun.

We are also including a classic car/bike display, so if you have a car or bike that you would like to show during the afternoon, then please do let me know. Contact is broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk.

WETHERSFIELD ANNUAL FINE & AFFORDABLE ART EXHIBITION

Saturday 9th May 5-7pm drinks

Sunday 10th May 10-3pm

Free entry St Mary's Church, CM7 4BY



PROUD SPONSOR

JACKSON-STOPS

Art Exhibition St. Mary's Church, Wethersfield

Saturday 9th May and Sunday 10th May

By: David Pullen

They say a picture is worth a thousand words! Hopefully those following will paint an image in your mind that will prove irresistible. This is a unique opportunity to see some fine and affordable art by 14 locally-based artists. As well as professional artists, including a Royal Academy exhibitor, there will be others equally talented but who rarely exhibit these days. So, do not lose this opportunity and come along to this wonderful exhibition which has grown in status and popularity over recent years and perhaps join us for drinks and nibbles on Saturday 9th May between 5 and 7 pm and on Sunday 10th May between 10 am and 3 pm. Please note that this dovetails with the final Wethersfield Chamber Concert of music of the very highest calibre, between 4 and 6 pm

www.wethersfieldchamberconcerts.org.uk

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THE SALINGS

Plant Sale

MONDAY MAY 4TH

VILLAGE HALL,
PICCOTTS LANE,

GREAT SALING CM7 5DW

10_{am} - 2_{pm}

PLANTS SHRUBS
TREES REFRESHMENTS
SALINGS ART GROUP

ALL PROCEEDS TO THE SALINGS CHURCHES





ROYAL BRITISH LEGION Finchingfield and District Branch

Upcoming Events

60s 70s and 80s Dance Music from Jack the Lad band. This has been postponed until **18 July**. Watch out for more details.

Our Branch would always welcome new members. Membership is £22 per year and anyone can join. RBL Membership Line is 0800-307-7773. (Apologies for incorrect number in last edition).

The Crafty Community Group meets every Tuesday from 2 to 4 in Finchingfield Guildhall. Our present project is making knitted or crochet poppies to (hopefully) decorate our War Memorials in Finchingfield and Cornish Hall End. If you would like to help, please drop in on Tuesday afternoons, or work at home. Patterns and wool can be provided. Please get in touch with Janet.

**Contacts: Ivan Fleming (Chairman): 07525 751179 isskhs@googlemail.com
Janet Ridgewell (Secretary): 01371 810051 janet.ridgewell510@btinternet.com**

DONATE YOUR STAMPS TO FARLEIGH HOSPICE



HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW YOU COULD HELP FARLEIGH HOSPICE? DONATE YOUR USED OR UNUSED STAMPS

- **How to Donate:** Cut around the stamp, leaving approximately 1 cm of paper around the edges.
- **What to Donate:** Both used and unused stamps are accepted, especially collectable or foreign stamps.
- **Purpose:** These stamps are sorted by volunteers and sold to collectors to raise funds.
- **Additional Items:** Small amounts of foreign currency can also be donated via the hospice reception.
- **Where:** Leave your stamps at either:-

St Andrew's Church, Or Meet & Greet, Shalford Village Hall, Every First Friday Of The Month. These Will Be Collected And Delivered To Farleigh By Michael Mason. Thank You Michael



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E-mail: RWheelerRoofing@gmail.com

Membership is still only £15 and free for under 16yrs. Save £5 on every ride entry by being a member.

Our policy regarding the requirement for flu vaccinations for 2026 is that all horses attending our rides must be up-to-date with their annual flu injections (i.e. the last booster is no more than a year old). On top of this we will implement any extra stipulations that our host may request (i.e. passports check, 6-month booster etc.). We will not know what these extra requirements are (if any) until we open each ride for entries.

We will also be following the new rules which are now in place for horses having new or restarted vaccines from 01.01.24 and any equine must not attend our events within 7 days of receiving any vaccination including boosters. Please speak to your vet if you require any further information or clarification.

Volunteering

If you enjoy our rides why not volunteer to marshal on a ride, help mark/unmark routes. Volunteers are entitled to a free ride entry or one year's membership.

Volunteers also needed to: -

- Help with publicity.
- Work on clearance parties.
- Become an EBA rep.
- Help research new routes.
- Help with historical research.
- Become a ride host.
- Join the EBA committee.
- Become an EBA trustee.

Rides

17th May 2026 Highwood Fringrith Hall, Writtle Park Estate, Highwood. CM1 3QF

A varied route which takes in wide grassy tracks of Fringrith Hall on the long route.

IMPORTANT. Do not follow sat nav or google maps. Only approach from the A414 from Ongar direction or from Chelmsford, Widford Church roundabout.

DO NOT TAKE IVY BARNS LANE.

13th June 2026 Elgins Car Park, Hatfield Forest, Takeley, CM22 6NE

Member £20, non-member £25. A chance to ride in an ancient forest. The route has yet to be confirmed due to ground conditions. Hopefully there will be an 8-mile route and a shorter 5-mile route. The shorter route is totally within the forest, the longer route will have some minor road work. Please be aware that there may be cattle in the forest at the time of the ride. We have had to increase the ride price to cover additional costs which are being subsidised by EBA. This ride is only open to members initially and non-members after a couple of weeks if there are spaces left as we are restricted to 100 entries only.

Mandy French

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 1ST 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
or
<https://shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk>

MEET & GREET – by: Alice Cox



My favourite
photo
Meet & Greet
December 2024
Alice

HELP – Yes please - April 2026 Meet & Greet saw a slight change to our programme - the set-up of tables and chairs and clear up times being included in the opening time of 11.00 a.m. to 2 p.m. This change was prompted to manage the effect of the rise in the hire charge of the hall imposed by the Village Hall Management Committee.

To be fair, there was a little chaos at 11 a.m. **BUT** the tables and chairs were in place by 11.15 – **what a result!** Yes, it can be done! Yet again, it proves what a warm and friendly, helpful, community spirit and culture there is within Meet & Greet. An additional benefit is that we were suffering somewhat with only a couple of people setting up the tables and chairs which was proving to be very hard work. A few more people helping not only lessens the time it takes but also spreads the load.

Now, I'm thinking of May Meet & Greet, wondering who will come forward to help but the truth is I know you won't let me down. I always find it difficult to express how grateful I am to those who step forward to help. The two little words "Thank You" never seems enough but what else can I say:-



*Your support makes a difference
It's precious, It means a lot.*



President
Sir Roger Singleton, CBE.

FOSTAC

Friends of St Andrew's Church

Chairman
Sue Morton
43, Hereward Way,
Wethersfield
Essex CM7 4EG
01371 850626
suebeazleyend@googlemail.co

Acting Secretary
Sylvia Lester
Wades Gardens
Ewen Bridge Lane
Shalford – CM7 5JA
01371 850211
sylvia.wades79@gmail.com

Treasurer
Mike Chumbley
Redwing, Church End
Shalford CM7 5EZ
01371 851101

April 2026

Dear Friends

FOSTAC committee has not been idle during the recent months and are in the process of planning new events for 2026.

The first event was on Saturday 25th April and we hope you all enjoyed the talk by Bryan Thurlow on the Mystery of Borley Rectory. We now have the Annual General Meeting which is to be held on Thursday 14th May in St Andrew's Church at 7.00 with the usual wine and nibbles!

This is the time to renew your subscription to FOSTAC – it is only £5 for a single member and £8 for family – as they are now due! A small amount to be able to have information of all events FOSTAC arrange!

Come along to the AGM and renew your membership and learn what we have for future events – some music and interesting talks being planned - then join us for a drink and nibbles

Look forward to seeing you there

Yours sincerely

Sue Morton
FOSTAC Chairman

www.fostac.co.uk

Affiliated to Registered Charity No 24950



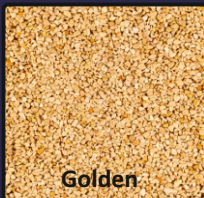
COUNTRYSIDE DRIVEWAYS

**START OF
THE SEASON**

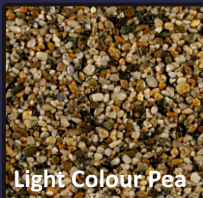
£20 per
sq
mtr

Discount For Larger Areas

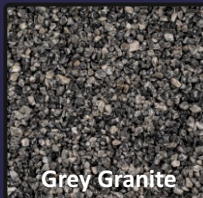
HOT TAR & CHIP



Golden



Light Colour Pea



Grey Granite

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HARDCORE, ROAD PLANINGS, CONCRETE, GRAVEL**

IF NO SURFACE IS PRESENT, WE CAN INSTALL A SUB-BASE

**THE AGGREGATE IS EMBEDDED INTO THE HOT BITUMEN &
THE STONES STAY IN PLACE UNLIKE A GRAVEL DRIVE**

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- **PRESURE WASHING**
- **TARMAC**
- **TAR & CHIP**
- **POT HOLES**
- **DRAINAGE**

FREE ESTIMATES



SEE OUR WORK & REVIEWS ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM



www.countryside driveways.co.uk

01787 860045 OR 07393 989560

Shalford Village Fete 2026

By: Terry Savage

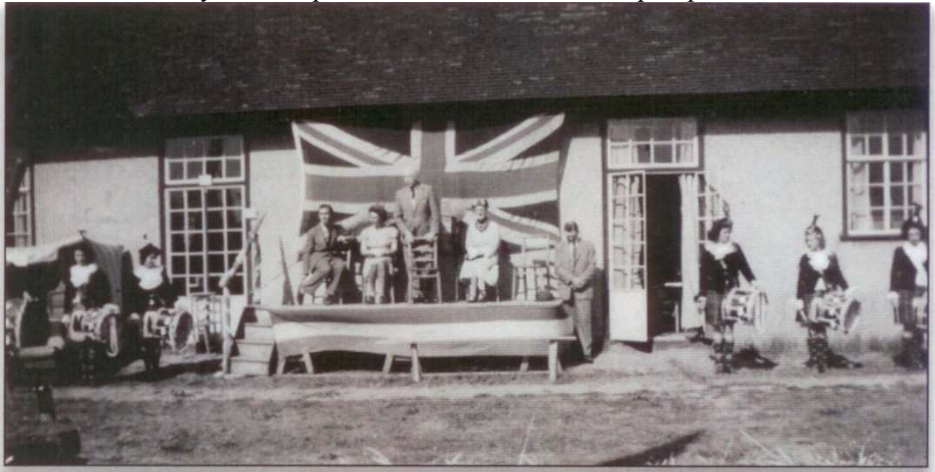
A Village Tradition Through the Years

Long before social media, before television, and even before most homes had telephones, the village fete was the heartbeat of rural life.



In Shalford, as in many Essex villages, these gatherings were more than just entertainment — they were a vital part of community life, bringing neighbours together in celebration, fundraising, and shared identity.

In the years before the First World War, village fetes were often tied to the church calendar or harvest celebrations. They were simple but joyful affairs: trestle tables laid out on the green, home-baked cakes, produce from local gardens, and games organised by volunteers. Children raced across fields, brass bands sometimes played, and prizes might include anything from a tin of biscuits to a bunch of flowers. In small communities like Shalford, everyone took part — farmers, labourers, shopkeepers, and families alike.



The outbreak of the First World War inevitably changed village life. Many fetes paused during those difficult years, but when they returned in the early 1920s, they often carried a renewed sense of purpose. Post-war fetes frequently raised funds for village memorials, church repairs, and community causes, becoming both celebrations and acts of remembrance. They offered a chance for communities to reconnect after years of hardship.

By the 1930s, village fetes had grown in popularity. Fancy dress competitions, coconut shies, tea tents, raffles, and sports races became familiar features. These were the golden summer afternoons remembered in local stories — bunting strung between posts, laughter across the field, and the whole village turning out.



The Second World War once again disrupted these traditions. Yet even during wartime, communities often organised modest gatherings, sometimes to support war charities, the Red Cross, or local families. After 1945, the return of peace brought a revival of village life. Post-war fetes became symbols of optimism and rebuilding. Homemade signs, borrowed tables, and volunteer-run stalls created events that felt all the more meaningful after years of rationing and uncertainty.

Through the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the Shalford fete — like many village fetes — evolved with the times. Schoolchildren performed, local groups ran stalls, and new attractions appeared alongside traditional favourites. The tea tent remained a constant, as did the tombola, games for children, and the friendly competition that defines village life. These events raised funds for the village hall, church, clubs, and community improvements, helping shape Shalford as it is today. Like many long-standing traditions, the fete has ebbed and flowed over the decades. Some years were larger than others, and at times the event paused, only to be revived by enthusiastic residents determined to keep the spirit alive. Each revival has added another chapter to the story — proof that the Shalford fete is not just an event, but a living tradition.

Today, the Shalford Village Fete 2026 continues that legacy. It brings together old and new residents, long-standing traditions and fresh ideas, all rooted in the same community spirit that has sustained the village for generations.

From the pre-war gatherings on summer grass, through post-war celebrations of renewal, to today's vibrant community event, the Shalford fete remains what it has always been — a day when the village comes together

and in doing so, creates history once again





For all general comments or queries please contact:
clerk@shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk



DigiGo (North Bus User Group) Meeting:

May 20th, 5.30pm - 7.00pm at Shalford Village Hall

Shalford Parish Council on behalf of the DigiGo NORTH ZONE were awarded a £48,000+ grant to help improve the existing transport service for our village.

We are keen to see a North Bus User Group (NBUG) created and would love to have appropriate representation across 3 Fields with a Shalford Division.

Can you help?? We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to:

- Attend virtual monthly meetings (45mins)
- Develop local events (2 per year)
- Help locals and groups to 'get on the bus'
- Help identify service needs
- Help roll-out / explain new features
- Verify /scrutinise bus data and sentiment about the service

If this is you, then please come and join us on May 20th at 5.30pm in Shalford Village Hall and help us to make a difference!

We are also looking for feedback from our residents about the DigiGo Bus Service and have set up the following email address solely for this use:

digigo@shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk

100th Birthday Celebrations:

It was our pleasure to present Joan with a beautiful bouquet of flowers to celebrate her 100th Birthday.



Joan was in great spirits on her birthday and looked exceptionally well and youthful, and shared with us some wonderful stories about Shalford over the years.

She remembers fondly how she used to pick the peas and other farm produce in Shalford and when asked about the secret of reaching 100 years replied, "Just keep going!"

Many congratulations Joan, and here's to many more.

Please let us know if you know of any other residents that will be reaching this amazing milestone during 2026/27.

Speed Watch Group:

We all love the peace and quiet of Shalford, but lately, some drivers seem to think our village lanes are the final qualifying lap at Silverstone.

Our Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) have been doing a stellar job—flashing their grumpy red faces at lead-footed motorists—but they can't do it alone. While the units have helped, speeding remains a persistent issue, and it's time for a more "human" touch.

We are looking for a few community-minded souls to step forward and help run a Community Speed Watch group.

Why join?

- High-tech toys: You get to use a radar gun. Enough said.
- High-vis fashion: Stand out in the latest neon yellow safety couture.
- Make a difference: Help keep our children, pets, and walkers safe.
- Community spirit: It's a great way to meet neighbours (and perhaps give a stern look to a few speeders).

No experience is necessary, and full training is provided. If you have a spare hour or two and want to help keep Shalford safe and slow, we want to hear from you!

Ready to join the squad?

Please contact the Parish Clerk to register your interest. Let's work together to make sure the only thing fast in Shalford is how quickly we can get to the pub!

Dates for your Diaries:

DigiGo User Group Meeting – Wednesday 20th May, 5.30-7pm:

Pop along to the village hall and share your DigiGo travel experiences with Cllr Gould, Cllr Staines and the Parish Clerk.

Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 27 May, 6.30pm-9pm:

Save the date for our annual parish meeting. This is a meeting for our parish residents and hosted by the Parish Council but is an informal event where there will be presentations from local groups and Societies followed by soft drinks, wine and nibbles. All residents are welcome.

Christmas Lights Switch-On – Saturday 5th December, 5pm-8pm:

Shalford Parish Council will be holding the annual Shalford Christmas Light Switch-On on Saturday 5th December 5 to 8pm. Further information will appear in the magazine over the coming months.

Fix IT:



a reminder to please email fix it for any issues or problems you see around the parish. We'll get the ranger, Lol onto it or we'll report it to someone who can fix it!

fix.it@shalford-esssex-pc.gov.uk

Our next regular Parish Council meetings will be held on Wednesday 20th May at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. We look forward to seeing you there.

Neil, Peter M, Mandy, Andrew, Peter H, Martin, Frankie & Jill

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Succulents for the Summer Garden

Succulents are among the most rewarding plants for the summer garden, thriving in any sunny position provided the soil is extremely well drained. If you have a corner of the garden that bakes in the heat and where the soil is poor or stony, it may be the ideal spot to establish a collection of outdoor succulents.

These plants perform particularly well in raised beds and rockeries, where drainage is naturally improved. They are also perfectly suited to container gardening; grouped together in pots of varying sizes, succulents create striking displays that bring

structure and sculptural beauty to patios and terraces.

Planting and Watering

Succulents prefer to dry out between waterings, making terracotta pots the best choice. Terracotta allows moisture to evaporate more freely than plastic, helping to prevent waterlogging while also offering a more attractive, natural look for your arrangements.

The extraordinary variety of shapes, textures and colours available has made succulents a favourite in contemporary garden design. For dramatic focal points, choose varieties known for reliable flowering or bold architectural foliage.

Winter Care

Although many succulents can tolerate frost, it is the persistent damp of British winters that poses the greatest threat. To protect your plants, move them under cover or into an unheated greenhouse from late autumn, keeping them completely dry until April or May. If a plant begins to shrivel due to lack of water, give it only the lightest drink to sustain it.

For succulents that cannot be moved, provide protection with a garden cloche or a sheet of glass or Perspex raised on four stakes to keep excess rain off the crown.

Reliable Outdoor Varieties

Many gardeners will be familiar with the common houseleek (*Sempervivum*), a rosette-forming succulent capable of thriving in exceptionally dry conditions. Traditionally grown on rooftops—where rainwater drains away quickly—houseleeks remain one of the most dependable hardy succulents.

Lewisia is another charming option, producing glossy rosettes of green foliage and exquisite sprays of brightly coloured flowers. To prevent rot, plant *Lewisia* on its side in a rockery or wall crevice so that rain cannot settle in the crown.

Outdoor Hardy Succulents

Hardy succulents detest wet roots but can withstand temperatures as low as -12°C . In their native arid habitats, some experience even colder conditions - down to -18°C - yet survive because moisture levels are extremely low. To grow them successfully, replicate these dry conditions by providing a sharply drained planting medium, whether in the ground or in containers.



Hardy succulents include:

Agave (some species), *Aloe* (some species), *Sedum*, *Sempervivum*, and *Yucca*.

Outdoor Tender Succulents

Tender succulents dislike frost and are best grown in pots or containers placed outdoors from May to September in a sunny, sheltered position. They may also be planted in the ground if the soil is very well drained. Many house and greenhouse succulents enjoy a “summer holiday” outdoors; introduce them gradually by placing them against a warm wall during the day and bringing them in at night for a week or so to harden them off.

Aeoniums are particularly effective in summer borders. *Aeonium ‘Schwartzkopf’* (commonly known as Black Rose) adds dramatic, exotic depth, while green varieties provide height and contrast among herbaceous planting.

Tender succulents include:

Aeonium, *Agave* (some species), *Aloe* (some species), *Crassula*, *Echeveria*, and *Haworthia*.

Propagation

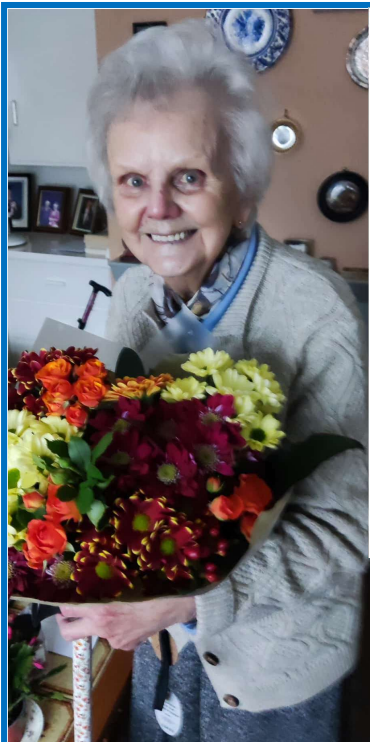
Succulents produce offshoots commonly called pups or offsets. These miniature versions of the parent plant offer a free and easy way to increase your collection. Gently tease the offsets from the parent plant - ideally with a small root system attached - and place them in a small pot filled with gritty compost. Water lightly to settle the roots, then allow the pot to drain thoroughly.

Aeoniums require a different method of propagation. These plants often become tall, leggy, and top heavy. When this happens, cut off the top with around 10 cm (4 inches) of stem and allow the cutting to callous over for a couple of days. Place the cutting into a pot of gritty compost, water it in, and then allow it to dry out. The “mother” plant will produce several



new rosettes at the top of the cut stem. This method also works well for *Crassula* and *Kalanchoe* by selecting the top of a shoot and potting it up as a ready-made plant.

Echeveria and many other succulents may be propagated by gently twisting a leaf from the mother plant. Allow the leaf to callous for 2–5 days before planting it in gritty compost.



Joan received a bouquet of flowers from Shalford Carpet Bowls

This was at a time when most of the side roads had no Tarmac Surface; water was drawn from Wells by hand pumps and milk was collected from the milk maids at Abbots Farm.

William South worked as Groom to the horses of Major Guy Gilbey who then owned Killhogs Farm and had the cottages where Joan's family lived.

Joan remembers water was heated by a wood-fired copper and one of the children's jobs was to go out after a storm or high wind and gather "Crackers", that was branches and twigs broken from the trees in the local area as children were part of the labour force.

100

1926

YEARS YOUNG

SENDING CONGRATULATIONS AND
BELATED BIRTHDAY WISHES
TO OUR

JOAN

Joan Talbot Born to Minnie and William South 20th March 1926, in Water Lane, Shalford where Joan grew up and attended Shalford School.



Joan received a bouquet of flowers presented by Neil Birks on behalf of Shalford Parish Council

When Joan reached the ripe old age of twelve she was obliged to attend Panfield Lane School, which later became Tabor School which is remembered by a good many people today. Unfortunately, Joan had to wait an extra year due to Infantile Paralysis which closed the Schools. Her time was well spent picking beans with Andrew Overall and others for the Goodchilds near Iron Bridge Lane.

Joan remembers an Aunty who ran a sweet shop in Jaspers Green from her home adjacent to the Blacksmith's workshop selling toffee at five for a halfpenny.

Joan's first marriage to her first Fred in 1950 lasted fifty five years during which time the couple moved to Panfield. During the 1990's Joan joined the Shalford Village Hall Carpet Bowls Club and played regularly.

In 2008 Joan married her second husband, another Fred, also a Carpet Bowls player and came to live in Clifffield. Joan was one of the first villagers to support William Bendlowe Charity when the Charity restarted in 2016 attending an afternoon tea at The Bell, Panfield and Meet & Greet at Shalford. Bill Askew wrote a wonderful article articulating Joan's School days for Bendlowe's Bugle Dec 2021.



***Shalford is fortunate to have Joan;
she is now a Centenarian, a very special lady.
It is a pleasure and honour to know Joan.***

Vic Goodey

REMEMBRANCE LILIES 2026 – St Andrew's Church



REMEMBRANCE LILIES 2026 – St Andrew's Church



REMEMBRANCE LILIES 2026 – St Andrew's Church



REMEMBRANCE LILIES 2026 – St Andrew's Church



Another breathtaking Lily display by St Andrew's flower arrangers.
The arrangers were: Gillian, Sue Morton, Hazel, Angela, Diana,
Jan, Sue Martin, Caroline, Jenny & Heather



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



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

From the Vicarage...

One of the delights of living in this part of the world is how lovely it is to be outside. Those of us who live here are understandably keen to talk about the beauty of our local countryside. And while we are blessed to have beautiful church buildings in our villages, it is worth remembering that there is an honourable history of taking the life of the church out into the countryside too. In the past, as soon as spring began to arrive, out people would go in procession, taking prayers and blessings out into the life of the land around the church. As Easter approached, Palm Sunday would be the first such opportunity, but then, as spring took root, other occasions were also traditionally celebrated with church processions.

In this month of May, we will be looking back into this treasury of tradition to revive two such opportunities to take our prayers out into the outside. The first of these is in recognition of the long-standing traditional association of the month of May with the celebration of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We are joining together with our friends in Thaxted Parish Church to honour this custom on the evening of **Sunday 3 May at 5pm**, with a procession of the statue of Mary with music and dancing, preceded and followed by a service in Thaxted Parish Church. As the signs of spring surround us, we remember how Mary's consent to her part in God's plan was a beginning of the coming into the world of the divine life we see in the earthly life of Jesus.

The second of these traditions is that of the Rogationtide Procession, also known as 'Beating the Bounds'. Historically, this involved walking around the boundary of the parish, and literally beating with sticks the boundary markers. The procession would include prayers for the fruitfulness of work on the land, effectively enclosing the parish in a net of prayers. With our collection of six parishes, walking around the entire boundary is not possible, but on the afternoon of Rogation Sunday (which is always the fifth Sunday after Easter, this year on **Sunday 10 May**) we will be reviving the tradition of walking prayerfully, taking a route which follows part of the course of the River Pant, from which our group of parishes takes its name, and which symbolically and geographically connects them together. Our walk will begin at The George in Shalford, setting off at 2pm and returning by 4pm to St Andrew's, with services there in the morning and evening that day. If you are someone who likes walking, or has a particular appreciation or care for the land on which we live, this is a wonderful opportunity for you to join us – all are welcome, as is always the case to all our services and other events.

Rev'd/Fr Alex

SERVICES FOR MAY IN THE PANT VALLEY CHURCHES

Sunday 3 May – Fifth Sunday of Easter

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

9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford

10.30am Sung Eucharist – Great Bardfield

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

5pm May Devotion (Evening Prayer, Procession and Benediction in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary) – Thaxted
(joint service)

Sunday 10 May – Rogation Sunday

10.30am Benefice Eucharist – Shalford *followed by lunch at The George*

2pm Rogation Walk – setting off from the George, returning to St Andrew's by 4pm

5pm Sung Evensong – Shalford

Thursday 14 May – ASCENSION DAY

10.30am Sung Eucharist – Little Bardfield

8pm Said Eucharist – Finchingfield

Sunday 17 May – Sunday after Ascension Day

9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Finchingfield

9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford

10.30am Sung Eucharist – Great Bardfield

11am Community Celebration Service – Wethersfield

Sunday 24 May – PENTECOST

9.30am Parish Communion – Shalford

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

11am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Wethersfield

5pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

Sunday 31 May – Trinity Sunday

10.30am Benefice Eucharist – Finchingfield

Regular Services and Events during the week

Monday

8.45am Morning Prayer – Finchingfield

1.30pm 'Faithful Fiction' book club (this month will be the second Monday because of the Bank Holiday) – 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**

After all the wonderful services held in Holy Week and on Easter Sunday in St Andrew's and throughout the benefice we are now awaiting Pentecost and then the long period, in the church's year, of the Trinity season. It seems to me that the church's seasons are coming round ever more quickly but that's maybe just my age! However, I do hope that you had an opportunity to visit St Andrew's to enjoy the floral decorations of Easter and my thanks go to everyone who contributed in any way.

We have just had (as I write this) our Pets' Service led by the Revd Sheila Coughtrey, accompanied by Katie, her greyhound. It was a delight to have a number of dogs ranging in size from German Shepherd to miniature dachshund in the congregation, with their owners in tow, all very well behaved. (The dogs that is, and I'm sure the owners were too). The dogs all received a blessing from Revd Sheila and even joined in singing the hymns! Dogs are welcome in St Andrew's at any time, of course, either at a service or just when you are having a look around.

I hope to be able to tell you in next month's magazine that the scheduled work to the bells has been carried out and if it goes ahead as planned there will have been an opportunity for those on the spot to have a look at one of the smaller bells before it goes off to Newmarket to be re-welded. It is the 2nd bell, one of the smallest, weighing just over 4cwt with a diameter of 29.5 inches, cast in 1690 in Norwich. Our band of ringers will not be totally idle over the summer as there are plenty of opportunities for ringing in the other churches of the benefice, but Shalford will be bell-less until mid-September.

I mentioned in last month's report that the APCM (Annual Parochial Church Meeting) will be held in St Andrew's on Sunday, 10th May at 9.30am and all parishioners – i.e. anyone who lives in the parish of Shalford - are welcome to attend to get an overview of the church's year. You are also eligible to be on the Electoral Roll of St Andrew's, and if you live outside the parish boundaries but still worship in St Andrew's you are also entitled to join the Electoral Roll. If you are on the Electoral Roll of the parish you are entitled to stand for election to the Parochial Church Council and any other synodical councils, such as the Deanery, Diocesan and General Synods. You are also able to participate in any vote at the APCM. Electoral Roll application forms that include notes on all requirements for membership are available in the church or from Mr John Burrow at Acorns, Church End.

FOSTAC's programme of events will be well underway by the time you read this so do keep an eye out for their adverts and come and support their endeavours; every penny they raise goes to the maintenance of the church building or the provision of anything that is necessary or desirable within the church. As churchwarden, I'm very grateful indeed for everything the FOSTAC members contribute to St Andrew's well-being. The FOSTAC AGM is on Thursday, 14th May at 7pm in the church so do come and support the committee and enjoy the refreshments on offer.

Hilary Penney

SHALFORD CHURCH OF ST ANDREW'S CONTACTS

Vicar, Revd Dr Alex Shannon, The Vicarage, Finchingfield, Tel: 01371 810309
Email: rev.alex.shannon@gmail.com

Associate Minister, Revd Canon Janet Nicholls, Park House, Braintree Road, Shalford, CM7 5HQ, Tel: 01371 851317, Email: jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

Treasurer & Reader, Peter Havelock, Tel: 07721 371017,
Email: peter_havelock@hotmail.com

Churchwarden, Hilary Penney, Orchard View, The Chase, Shalford, CM7 5HH
Tel: 01371 851762, Email: spsware@copper12.co.uk

Safeguarding Representative, Sarah Pilgrim, Fieldside, Lombard Street
Finchingfield, Tel: 01371 850781 Email: pilgrim511@btinternet.com

Ringling Master, Roy Threadgold, Plumley, Braintree Road, Wethersfield
Tel: 01371 850481 Email: roy@boydellsdairy.co.uk

Captain of the Bell Tower, Michael Mason, 6 Clifffield, Shalford, CM7 5HP
Tel: 01371 850125

Friends of St Andrew's Church (FOSTAC), Chairman Sue Morton 42 Hereward
Way, Wethersfield CM7 4EG Tel: 01371 850626 Email: suebeazleyend@gmail.com

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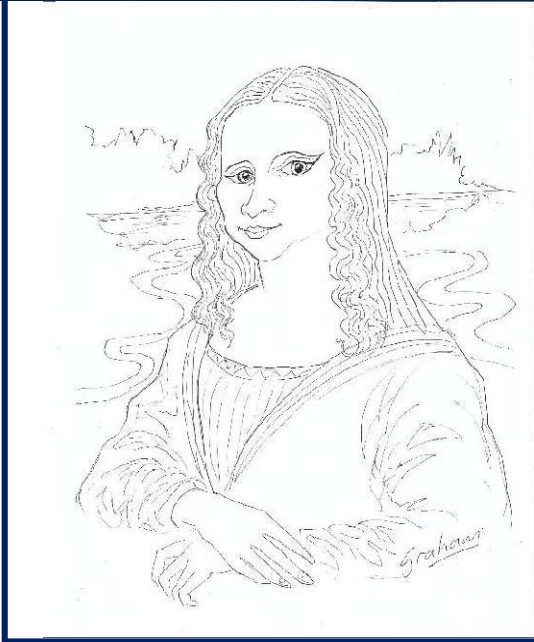
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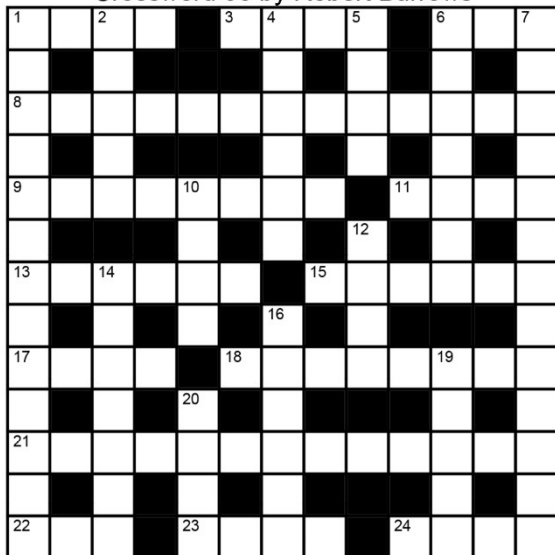
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Crossword 96 by Robert Burrows



Across

- 1 Rub gently (4)
- 3 Ship's breadth (4)
- 6 Conveyance (3)
- 8 Essex hamlet (9-4)
- 9 Emotional eruption (8)
- 11 After others (4)
- 13 Spiritual respect (6)
- 15 Spanish dance (6)
- 17 Amorous glance (4)
- 18 Send (8)
- 21 Essex hamlet (8-5)
- 22 Groove (3)
- 23 Between black and white (4)
- 24 Piece of work (4)

Down

- 1 High Street browser (6-7)
- 2 Turn (5)

- 4 Selfish act (6)

- 5 Create (4)
- 6 Army group (7)
- 7 Sentimental endearments (5,8)
- 10 Not new (4)
- 12 Circular band (4)
- 14 Short prayer (7)
- 16 Remove from office (6)
- 19 Asocial relationship (3-2)
- 20 Excited (4)

Cryptic Across

- 1 Dirty pew I rub over (4)
- 3 Big smile across the ship (4)
- 6 It goes backwards under water (3)
- 8 Dave's sick note lost in this hamlet (13)
- 9 Rub stout to heal

eruption (8)

- 11 The first shall be ... (4)
- 13 Scared about what's holy (6)
- 15 Dance, Rob, Ole! (6)
- 17 Stare rudely at broken Lego (4)
- 18 Chaps Ted arranged to send off (8)
- 21 Maybe a pond legend, Reg, here? (8,5)
- 22 Not good to be stuck in one (3)
- 23 Ill-defined legal area (4)
- 24 Boiling soup - a major work (4)

Cryptic Down


- 1 Lookers never buyers (6,7)
- 2 VIP to turn on a point (5)
- 4 Sadly Meg, so I show selfishness (6)
- 5 Some create Ma Kettle picture (4)
- 6 A broken bridge for army unit (7)
- 7 Sugary but empty endearments (5,8)
- 10 Some bus Edward caught, not new (4)
- 12 Ring for some echo optics (4)
- 14 Pick up poor colt cell (7)
- 16 So deep, unfortunately, but unseat (6)
- 19 Fix loose ends (3-2)
- 20 Very keen to cook some sago grounds (4)



AMANDA'S ADVENTURE



A Children's story
Written by: Susan Brunskill



Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Amanda who lived with her Mummy, Daddy and little brother, in a house which had a back gate leading into a little park. One day, she was playing in the little park, where her Mummy could still see her as she was hanging out the washing, when she heard her Mummy's voice calling to her. She looked up and saw her Mummy standing at the gate.

"Mandy, please come in straight away, I want to go to the Supermarket to get the shopping, because Nanny and Grandad are coming to stay for a few days, and we want to spend as much time as possible with them when they are here."

Amanda stopped playing immediately and came to the gate where her Mummy was waiting and smiling at her. Amanda was not too pleased that her Mummy wanted her to go shopping. It was such a lovely day, and she was having such a good game, pretending that she was alone in a Jungle, and being very brave. Her cat, Charlie, was playing the game too, pretending to be a tiger. Charlie would jump out at her from behind the lupins and hollyhocks and pat her when she crawled by. He always managed to give her a little fright, and she loved it, even though she knew he was really very gentle. Mummy gave her daughter a big hug. "I know how much you enjoy listening to Grandad's stories darling, so don't you think it is a good idea to do as much as we can today?"

Amanda ran upstairs to get her coat and the little bag which carried her treasures. She took it everywhere with her just in case she might need the magic shell her Grandad had given her. He told her a mermaid had given it to him once when he was in a bad storm at sea. Grandad used to be a sailor, and had been to lots of other countries and seen all sorts of exciting things that her friend's Grandads had never seen. Amanda was very proud of him. Amanda never really minded going with her Mummy to the Supermarket, because if she had been a good girl, her Mummy usually allowed her to have a ride on one of the machines which were parked outside. There was a large squirrel, but Amanda never chose to ride on him, because she imagined he wouldn't really like little boys and girls on his back. She always chose to ride on the space ship. After they had finished the shopping, and she had

helped her Mummy load it into the big shopping tray which was under her baby brother's pram, she somehow felt that she MIGHT be going to have an adventure. Her Mummy was talking to a neighbour whose children were both already at school, and Amanda could hear them talking about her. It wouldn't be long now, they were saying before Amanda would be going to school. She didn't really like that idea too much. She wouldn't be able to play in the park if the weather was sunny, she would have to sit in a classroom with a teacher. Perhaps the teacher might be nice but it still wouldn't be the same as being at home.

Amanda climbed into the space ship and put the 20 pence piece her Mummy had given her into the slot. Suddenly, she realised that she wasn't on her own in the space ship. Sitting beside her was the squirrel. "Thank you for being so considerate", he said, "Not many children seem to understand that squirrels like to be free and climb trees and play in the branches. We were not made to give children rides. I thought I would take you on a special trip today, as you are obviously a kind girl."

Amanda who, after her adventure with the white mouse, wasn't surprised to hear an animal speak to her, smiled and thanked him. "What are we going to do?" she asked. The squirrel smiled back at her. Amanda noticed that he had very white teeth, and thought it must be all the nuts he chewed which made them so sparkly. "I thought we would visit the seaside today, but to make it special, you must close your eyes and not open them until I tell you."

“Ready, Steady, Go!”



Amanda felt a funny sensation and the space ship started to take off. She kept her eyes tightly closed until – suddenly, she felt warm and the space ship stopped moving. "Open up" said the squirrel, whose name was Sandy.

Amanda opened her eyes, and said "Oh" because the space ship had landed on a beautiful sandy beach and the sea was just a few steps away.

Amanda looked down at her clothes, which were not at all suitable for playing on the beach, and wondered what she should do. Mummy would not be pleased if she got her shiny black

shoes sandy and wet. The squirrel seemed to know what she was thinking. “What a good job you brought your Grandad’s magic pebble with you” he said.

“Feel inside your little bag, and see what you will find.” Amanda put her hand in the bag and there to her surprise was her very own swimsuit, and a nice fluffy beach towel too.

“Why don’t you change into your swimsuit, while I go and find my friends and relations who are all looking forward to meeting you.” Said Sandy. Amanda quickly changed and started to walk towards the edge of the sea when she heard a strange chattering noise coming from the green trees which lined the shore. Several large squirrels with sweet little babies were coming down to meet her. One very large squirrel who was wearing a very shady straw hat called out to her. “Don’t go into the sea until we are close to you dear, you know your own Mummy wouldn’t let you.” “Oh dear.” thought Amanda. “She’s right!” and she hesitated until the party of squirrels came nearer. It was only then that she realised that, somehow, she was now only the same size as the baby squirrels, and the Mummy squirrel and the other grown up squirrels were really rather like her own uncles and aunts. There was even a much older squirrel who seemed to be wearing a cravat, just like her Grandad wore.



“Alright dears” said the Mummy squirrel whose name was Auntie Betty, “You can all go in and paddle now. We have had a word with the Dolphins and they are going to send their children up to the shallow water so that you can all have rides.” What an exciting time Amanda was having. Soon the dolphin children arrived and played “tag and hide and seek” with Amanda and the little squirrels. The little dolphins then let the squirrel children and Amanda climb



on their backs and took them for short rides to where the rocks had made little pools and there were crabs and shell fish playing “hide and seek”. The crabs were trying to catch the shell fish before they snapped tight. They were all enjoying themselves and Amanda was fascinated to see how even the smallest shell fish was quicker than the quickest crab. “I

suppose it’s because the crabs walk sideways” she thought. “It must be really difficult to catch your friends if you can’t run straight towards them”.

Meanwhile, on the beach, Auntie Betty had spread out a clean rug, and brought out lots of delicious fruit and nuts for everyone to eat. Amanda was looking forward to having the nuts cracked for her by



the squirrels, because even the smallest squirrel could do it perfectly, without ever damaging the kernel inside. Amanda remembered at Christmas-time how sometimes NOBODY could break into some of the nuts, and then Mummy would throw them away.

Auntie Betty handed Amanda a half coconut which was full of something that looked like milk. “I don’t think I will like it” thought Amanda, but when she tasted it, it was cool and delicious and she drank every last drop. Auntie Betty now told all the squirrel children, who by now seemed to include Amanda, that it was time to have a sleep as the afternoon sun was too hot. They all moved into the shade of the palm trees, and Amanda lay looking up through the branches of the trees with their fronds of green. They look rather like a frilly skirt, she thought. With that, she suddenly heard some music, and from along the beach came several monkeys dressed in grass skirts, all doing a wonderful dance. They were swaying to and fro in time with the music which was very gentle and soothing. They



wore garlands round their necks and smiled and hummed as the music played. “Where is the music coming from?” thought Amanda, and then she noticed a band of parrots in the palm tree above her head. They all had guitars and were playing with their beaks on the strings. “How clever” thought Amanda. “But of course” she said to herself. “Parrots ARE clever, because they can imitate our voices, and other noises.” She remembered talking to the one in the pet shop near to the Supermarket. With that, it suddenly seemed to her that she had been away a very long time and her Mummy would be getting worried about her. She politely asked Sandy if it was not time that she should be going home. “Not yet”. He said. “Just close your eyes and have a little sleep. We will go home after that”. Amanda was beginning to feel really sleepy after her meal and the music was just like a lullaby that her Grandad used to sing to her. Her eyes closed and she fell asleep. A little while later, she heard her Mummy’s voice speaking to her. “Amanda! Amanda! Wake up dear! You are in a dream today!” To her amazement, she was sitting in the space ship outside the supermarket, and her Mummy was still talking to her neighbour. Mummy looked at her and smiled and said to her “Come on Amanda, you have had an extra-long ride today, but you must get out now, because the squirrel isn’t working and perhaps another boy or girl would like a ride”. Amanda looked at the squirrel. Was it really Sandy? She was sure that he smiled and winked at her. Amanda felt in her little bag to see if her magic shell was still there. It was, and not only was there her shell, but there was also a little handful of nuts!

Amanda started to tell her Mummy all about her adventure, until her Mummy laughed and said “Really Amanda what an imagination you have. Come on now, because we must get home to start getting everything ready for Nanny and Grandad’s visit”.

Amanda was really looking forward to Grandad’s visit, because he had promised to tell her about one of his adventures. This visit he had promised to tell her all about sea horses and mermaids.

But that is another story . . .



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NATURE NOTES

HISTORY OF DEER

By: Mac Beanland



Most people who know me are aware that I started life in the city of Nottingham but very few people are aware of the fact that there are herds of deer living in the city. Three miles from the city centre is Wollaton Park. A 500-acre (sorry 202 hectare) walled park with the 16th century hall, a lake, a walled garden and two herds of wild deer – one of Red deer and the other Fallow deer. The park was set up and the hall built by the Willaby family who made all their money from the local coal mines. The hall is built using Ancaster lime stone which was brought by barges returning from delivering coal. The estate was bought by the Nottingham corporation in 1925 for £200,000 valued at £14.4 million in 2023. The park was about three miles from my home and I could cycle there from home on a footpath through the houses known as Colliers Pad, the way the old miners used to walk to Wollaton Collery. I think I was about 8 when I got my first two-wheeled bike and used to go there, although the deer have always been there, they are still wild but used to having lots of people a safe distance away. The park is a public place, open from dawn to dusk, free of charge even free parking but lots of warning notices, the deer are dangerous especially during the rutting season. We know Fallow deer are not native but by the time the park was enclosed they had been about for some 500 years and as Nottingham was part of Sherwood Forest, they were probably the dominant breed. As the Midlands became more industrialised the Red deer moved on going both north and south. They like big open spaces with some forest, so they are now concentrated mainly in Scotland and the New Forest although we do see a few but they are mostly young stags who have been driven away from the herds by dominant stags. I once had four of them at Frenches Farm digging my potatoes up with their antlers to get moisture in a dry time. To me, the Red deer is King among deer, they live up to their title Monarch of the Glen. I feel it is such a shame that they are being driven away by lack of habitat and now they have another threat in the form of the Sika deer which were imported from Japan and escaped into the wild. They are a bit smaller than the Red and don't have the same magnificent stature. Sika stags get driven away by Red stags during the rutting season but they will cross breed given half a chance causing hybridisation which could well result in hybrid vigour but would create mongrels and result in loss of pure breeds. None of the other deer will cross breed. Roe and Fallow have lived together for hundreds of years and remained pure. I can't understand why but then I am not an animal Geneticist, I am just an old retired farmer who happens to like wild life and tries to write nature notes.





Buzzing News from the Hives of Gill Powell



Now that May has arrived in all its glory, I hope most of you have been able to enjoy some much-needed sun and fine weather. This month is my most favourite time of year as the garden and the bees are in full swing benefiting from the abundance of blossom and early flowers.

The ageing fruit trees in our orchard surprise us every year with their display of delicate sweet-smelling blossom not only do the honeybees love it, so do many other pollinators such as butterflies, ladybirds and a host of other flying insects.



Back in 1987 (the year of the famous hurricane), one of our pear trees was blown down much to our

dismay, so together with some friends we managed to right it with a truck and a rope! Not knowing if it would survive this treatment, but it seemed a shame to leave it on the ground, to this day 39 years later it still gives us an amazing crop of pears each year. This tree must be at least 60 years old.



Fun and games has been had in the apiary lately; I have two new beekeepers who are keen to learn the practical side of the art through watching someone who has done it before but not necessarily knows all the answers! It's great to have help when lifting hefty brood boxes and other hive parts, this is a valuable way to begin to learn the skill of beekeeping. After our



last visit to the apiary the ladies decided to become very defensive, stinging my other half who was in the garden at the time.

It's always a bit of a mystery why bees suddenly turn on you, who a few days before would have taken no notice of a body near the apiary. Saying that,



I am sure they do take note of who is about so, for now, I am leaving them to their own devices. They have all had a good check over for disease and luckily no swarm or queen cells were found, we added a super (honey box) to each hive to ensure there will be plenty of room for the coming weeks.

Till then I am busy getting a couple of bait hives set up on the shed roof, a bait hive is a small box with frames in it to attract a swarm that might be passing and looking for a new home. We put these hives up high to mimic a cavity in a tree which is what they are looking for, into the box we put some frames and an attractant that they like the smell of encouraging the scout bees to look at this new nesting place. If they are happy with it, they will go back and guide the swarm to the new site saving us beekeepers a lot of work!



Swarm season has started so if you do see a swarm of bees don't be alarmed just contact Braintree beekeepers online there is a number to call but we are only allowed to collect swarms from the height of a step ladder as we are not insured to go climbing on roofs etc. Also keep an eye out for the Asian (Yellow legged Hornet) familiarise yourself with what they look like by going on the Asian hornet watch website. This will benefit us all in the long run.

Bee Fact: Honeybees have 170 odorant receptors, making their sense of smell 50 times more powerful than a dog's.



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THE NOTLEYS' GOLF & PADEL CLUB



The Notleys' Golf & Padel Club is only a short drive (*pun intended!*) from Shalford and we have a lot of outdoor activities to keep the family entertained so don't sit around wondering what to do, why not pay us a visit?

For starters, we have a great value 18-Hole, par 71 golf course, accessible 7 days a week to green fees and members alike, so anyone can come and hit a ball and watch it fly. If you're looking to practice your golf swing, improve your chipping shots or refine your putts we have all the practice options you'll need. Driving Range ball prices start at £2.50 for 20.

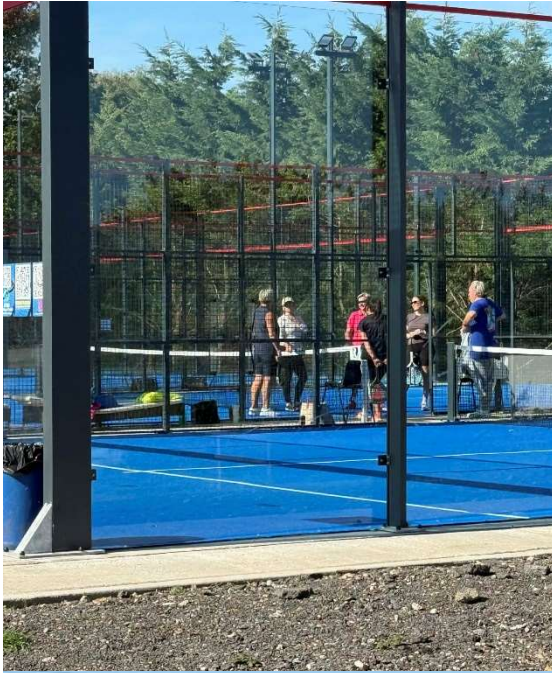


There are spectacular views over the River Brain valley, so if playing golf isn't floating your boat you could always relax on the decking, enjoy a drink and watch the golfers going by.

For the more energetic there are 4 panoramic Padel courts to whack a ball of a different variety. It's the fastest growing sport in the UK that everyone is talking about. No particular skills are necessary, as long as you can swing a bat at a ball. There's not a lot of ground to cover as the court is enclosed and balls can be played off the glass surrounds. It's fun, very social, great for all ages, so it is something that the family can do together, as it's best played in a 4 (doubles). We have tuition available with our on-site coach, who can explain the rules and the simple scoring if you'd like to get started.



Perhaps you prefer to kick your balls for fun? We have a 9-Hole Footgolf course open every day (think golf, but with your feet, no clubs and considerably bigger balls).



Balls aren't your thing? Try the Personal Training gym (enquire at The Cabin).

If you need instruction in any of these activities we have tuition available from the following experts:

Wendy Daden (Tour Pro on the European Golf Tour for 14 years)

Sharpshooters (making golf accessible to children)

Michael Rodway (Padel Coach)

Harry The Cabin (Personal Trainer)

Our spacious, welcoming clubhouse can cater for all manner of functions, so if you're looking for a venue for your next social event please consider The Notleys' Golf & Padel Club - we're a friendly and inclusive Club - *it's our USP.*

For details on any of the above please contact the club on **01376 329 328**

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THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

By: Ken McDonald, Secretary

The Romans introduced wine making to the UK and vines were cultivated to some extent until World War I when land was needed for growing food.

Viticulture (the process of growing grapes) began to revive in the 1970s with warmer summers and the development of grape varieties suited to English conditions. Today, we have several successful vineyards in The Hundred Parishes.

One of the first was Chilford Hall in Linton parish. It was run by the Alper family for 50 years before changing hands in 2024. The new owners continue to manage the 20-acre vineyard alongside their Grillo Outdoor Kitchen business.

In Great Bardfield, Great Lodge produces its own wines from six different grape varieties. The vineyard is open to visitors midweek from May to September and there is also a wedding venue on site. Website:

<https://www.greatlodge.co.uk/vineyard/>

In Farnham, Hazel End Farm has been growing grapes for over thirty years. Their sparkling white wine is sold as Three Squirrels. This celebrates the fact that the Gosling family who own the land once had a bank in Fleet Street where a sign above the door read “Ye Three Squirrels”. Website: <https://www.corylet.com/>

In Saffron Walden, the first vines were planted at Saffron Grange in 2008. The family business is now well established, producing white sparkling wines and offering vineyard tours for small groups from mid-April. Website: <https://www.saffrongrange.com/>

In Stansted Mountfitchet, a new vineyard was planted in 2021 on a south-facing slope. The first grapes were harvested in 2023 and wine from the Gunyah Vineyard is now on sale. Website:

<https://www.thegunyahvineyard.com/>. This vineyard can be seen across the valley from Hundred Parishes walk number 137.

Another vineyard has appeared in recent years in Henham – and there may be others. Please email hundredparishes@btinternet.com if you find any more.

Photos: 1 - Hazel End vineyard, Farnham in June 2 - Grapes in Henham vineyard in August
3 – Gunyah vineyard, Stansted Mountfitchet in September 4 - The Vine pub in Great Bardfield
5 - Vine Cottage, Much Hadham.



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GARAGE AND SHED SECURITY



Whilst most houses have adequate security, what is often neglected is the shed or garage, “nothing much in there” I hear you say, “Just a garden spade and fork”, but these are perfect tools for a burglar to use to get into your house. Adds insult to injury when the tool used to break into your house is your own, so give it some attention.

Garages and sheds by the nature of their construction and position especially when away from the house are always going to be vulnerable. Quite often the supplied locks provide just the barest minimum security and are easily overcome so always consider supplementing the existing locks with further locking systems both for the doors and items within.

On garage doors this could be by adding locking bolts to both sides of the “up and over door” or a garage door defender in the ground in front of the door, if you have a side door don’t forget the security on this too.

With sheds coach-bolt and plate the padlock hasp sections to the frame and door, use a good quality “Close Shackle” padlock or a key-operated mortice lock; don’t forget the hinges ensure they cannot be unscrewed.

Consider using “Ground Anchors” or “Shed Shackles” to chain larger items such as ladders, mowers and pedal cycles to (again good quality padlock and chain); keep chains tight so that it is not in contact with a surface it can be struck against. Protect windows with a wire mesh and fit a curtain or white wash the windows to prevent prying eyes.

Visibly security mark your property with your post code and house number as this reduces the value to the thief; you can register serial numbers free of charge at www.immobilise.com. There are also a number of commercially available security marking systems that are suitable for a wide range of products and others for specific products.

It is also worth adding security lighting and a shed alarm to the shed or garage, there are even alarms available that, when activated, call your mobile phone, these are relatively inexpensive and available from most DIY/hardware stores. If siting a new shed, where possible position it within sight of rooms in the house routinely occupied.

Products that are fit for purpose can be found by looking for the "Secured by Design" or "Sold Secure" logos, or on their websites <http://www.securedbydesign.com/> or <http://www.soldsecure.com/>.

For further crime prevention advice see www.essex.police.uk/advice or www.thecrimepreventionwebsite.com. There is also some good garden specific security advice from the RHS at: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=606#section-2>

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There have been big changes within The CREAMER Fund's Executive Team! At our AGM in March, Dr Andrew Hildrey stood down as Chair having led the charity for over 30 years, to be replaced by Sarah McCarthy. New Trustee, Helen Fisher, has stepped into Sarah's shoes as Secretary. Dr Hildrey will continue to play a key role as he takes on the position of Vice-Chair, and both he and Chris Blewitt will remain valued Trustees. We owe them a HUGE THANK YOU for their years of valued service. They brought enormous experience into their roles and we're very grateful. We now look forward to a new team at the helm, supported by the incredibly experienced Treasurer, Debbie Rogers, who together will guide The CREAMER Fund into an exciting new future

The following report was given by Dr Hildrey at the **AGM 2026**

This year The CREAMER Fund is embracing evolving technologies. I must credit Alex Cox and Sarah McCarthy who are dragging me into a new technological era!

CREAMER is now focusing mainly on helping to provide diagnostic services at Freshwell Health Centre. It has already provided funding for 24 defibrillators and 7 bleed management kits in the community. The Charity is happy to provide funds for more if needs are identified.

The diagnostic services (X-rays, ultrasound scans, heart echocardiograms, "osteoporosis" bone scans and heart/blood pressure monitoring devices) enable patients within the community to be investigated and managed closer to home and more quickly. The cost is considerable (£50,000) but inestimable.

Income from various fundraising activities are greatly appreciated and I must thank Chris and Jane Blewett, Ines Warner and Debbie Rogers for their help with the books; Rosalie Wyatt, Sylvia Gould and her helpers with raffles and Glenis Ashby, Brian and Lorraine Patient and Anni Woodcock with the collecting tins. These fundraising activities all promote CREAMER throughout the community involving many people.

Several very generous legacies have been received for which we are extremely grateful. These legacies are enabling CREAMER to continue its activities. CREAMER continues to evolve and we hope will enable improving health care for this community for years to come.

We must give credit to all the staff at the Health Centre: all the doctors, nurses and other health care professionals as well as David Shedden's ancillary staff backing them up. The practice is consistently voted in the top echelon in the county and country.

I would like to thank all my fellow trustees for all their help - in particular our secretary, Sarah McCarthy, treasurer, Debbie Rogers, and vice chair Chris Blewett.

Dr Andrew Hildrey, Outgoing Chairman



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GOVERNMENT CONFIRMS FIVE NEW COUNCILS FOR GREATER ESSEX

The government has announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Greater Essex, confirming the county will move to five new unitary councils, subject to parliamentary approval.

The creation of five unitary councils - West Essex Council, North East Essex Council, Mid Essex Council, South West Essex Council and South East Essex Council - means that from **April 2028**, these unitary authorities will replace the current 15 councils across Greater Essex, who will have responsibility for delivering all services in one area including waste collections, planning, adult social care, highways, children's services and more.

LGR aims to simplify council structures by creating new, more streamlined local councils that work better, making it easier for residents to access and navigate services.

Government has also confirmed their commitment to repayment in-principle of £200m of Thurrock Council debt.

Cllr Graham Butland, Leader of Braintree District Council and Chair of the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives group, made up of all 15 councils, said: "We welcome the government's decision to create five new unitary councils for Greater Essex."

"There were strong options for how local government reorganisation could be shaped across the county, and now a decision has been made our focus is firmly on working together to deliver it. Councils across Greater Essex have worked closely to prepare for this next phase, and that collaboration will continue."

"Local Government Reorganisation gives us the opportunity to save money, simplify how people access services and strengthen local communities, delivering better outcomes for residents and businesses."

"We will now work collectively to develop a clear and robust plan until spring 2028. The people of Essex deserve the best possible councils, and we are committed to delivering a future that makes Essex an even better place to live and work."

Cllr David King, Leader of Colchester City Council and Vice-Chair of the Essex Leaders and Chief Executive's Group, said: "It is important to be clear that nothing will change until the new unitary authorities go live in April 2028. Until then, local councils will continue to deliver vital services and support residents, particularly those who need us most."

"We have one of the largest and most complex local government systems in the country, so a safe, smooth and well managed transition is essential. We are committed to minimising

disruption and ensuring that, on day one of the new councils, residents experience no difference in the services they receive.”

“We will communicate openly and clearly as plans develop, keeping people informed at every stage as we move towards the new authorities.”

Elections for the new shadow unitary authorities in Greater Essex are scheduled for May 2027, with new authorities expected to become operational in April 2028.

The latest updates and information about local government reorganisation in Greater Essex is available on the council’s joint [LGR Hub](#).



Braintree District Council to improve its Bulky Waste Collection Service

Braintree District Council will introduce improvements to its Bulky Waste Collection Service from **1 April 2026**.

As part of the council’s new waste policy, the bulky waste collection service has been reviewed to ensure it provides residents with a cost effective and efficient service that aligns with the ambitions of the council’s waste policy.

From 1st April, the changes will see improvements to the pricing schedule based on how many items are booked for collection and an update to what items can be collected.

Launching later in April, a new digital booking form will make it quicker and more accessible for residents to book and pay for a collection. The changes also mean that more collections will be available for residents each week and offer more budget-friendly options for those who have fewer items that require collection. The service remains available to those without digital access through the council’s Customer Service Centre who will utilise the same new digital process whilst supporting residents through the booking over the phone.

A spokesperson at Braintree District Council said: “It is imperative that this service remains reliable, sustainable, and fit for purpose. The review has ensured the service offers value for money for residents and can recover its operational costs.”

More detailed information will be published soon, and residents can stay informed through the council’s usual communication channels.

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