

SHALFORD

Village Magazine September 2026

showcasing our community

Produced by the People for the People



SHALFORD
A COMMUNITY TO BE PROUD OF

Thankyou

To Terry for writing Shalford's entry so eloquently

To every volunteer & helper because we know

You all make a difference

You all help to enrich lives

The flowers (right) are for you

Apologies it can only be metaphorically speaking



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Page No. INDEX

5	What's On
11	Mobile Library Details
15	A Celebration of Music on our Doorsteps-Roman River Festival
16	Essex Bridleways Association – Mandy French
16	Donate Your Stamps to Farleigh Hospice – Michael Mason
18	Condolences – Janet Bright
19	Local Organisations & Charities
20	William Bendlowe Charity - New Trustees – Alice Cox
22	Bendlowe's Meet & Greet – Alice Cox
23	FOSTAC Summer Newsletter
24	Update from the Village Hall Committee
25	Shalford Horticultural Society Report – Tim Gowers
26	Shalford Local History Society – Sally Welsh
28	Shalford Parish Council
30	From The Vicarage – Rev'd/Fr Alex
31	Pant Valley Church Services For September
32	Church Warden's Report – Hilary Penney
33	Shalford Church of St Andrew's Contacts
34	Shalford's RCCE Award – Terry Savage
35	A Personal Reflection on Shalford's RCCE Award-Terry Savage
37	A Tale of Two Communities! – Terry Savage
38	When There Are Just Two – Terry Savage
40	Wethersfield Community Shop – Julia Broad
42	Crossword 99 – Robert Burrows
43	Tractor Run – Mac Beanland
44	Let's Try Growing Fruit - The Theoretical Gardener
46	Nature Notes – The Barn Owl – Mac Beanland
48	Buzzing News From The Hives of Jillie Woolcock
51	The Hundred Parishes – Ken McDonald
52	Summer Solstice Celebration in Wethersfield - Julia Broad
55	Garden Detectives Lettuce Alone – Graham Silvester
58	Getting to Know Madeline Eversden – Carol Prail
61	Volunteers Needed – Chapel Community Care
62	Shalford Village Speed Checks – Terrie Johnson PCSO 8143
64	Residents thanked for their recycling efforts since new waste and recycling service was introduced – BDC
65	Wethersfield Asylum - BDC
66	Crossword 99 Solution – Robert Burrow
66	Food Bank Details
66	Post Office Details
68	Business Directory

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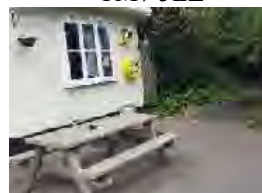
KNOW WHERE YOUR NEAREST DEFIBRILLATOR IS LOCATED



Jaspers Green
CM7 5AU



Shalford Village
Hall Church End
CM7 5EZ



The George Inn The
Street CM7 5HH

FRONT PAGE RCCE AWARD

8th July 2026

Page 34

Michael Banfield * Traditional Lime Plastering, Render & Limewash.

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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 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



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WHAT'S ON



FOSTAC

Friends of St Andrew's Church

President

Sir Roger Singleton OBE

ENGLAND'S FAVOURITE KING

As Told by Tony Harris

SIX WEDDINGS
AND A FUNERAL

THE POWER
AND THE GLORY



Saturday 19th September—7.00pm
St Andrew's Church, Shalford CM7 5HH
Tickets £10

Available from Shalford Village Stores
and on the night

www.fostac.co.uk

Affiliated to Charity No 249805



Pant Valley
Churches

Harvest Celebration

This is a really lovely occasion with an outside service amongst the vines (weather permitting) followed by refreshments and a live band in the barn. The band lead some traditional barn dances too for those of us who enjoy a jiggle (and a giggle!).

**Sunday 20 September from 4pm
at Bardfield Vineyard**

A harvest thanksgiving service followed by refreshments and music to which all are welcome.

Admission is free, but we would welcome donations to cover event costs.

A cash bar will be available.

WHAT'S ON

SAVE THE DATE



Donations of cakes..Raffle Prizes..Bricabrac

Gratefully received

Tel: Caroline Ottley 07734140478

WHAT'S ON

ESSEX COUNTY HARVEST SERVICE

AT

— CHELMSFORD —
CATHEDRAL

SUNDAY
27TH SEPTEMBER 2026
3.30PM



EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO
THE SERVICE AND
REFRESHMENTS AFTERWARDS



CHELMSFORD
CATHEDRAL



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

WHAT'S ON - WETHERSFIELD

Events coming up at Wethersfield Club

Saturday 5 September	Our legendary bingo night returns with John Barker, cash prizes to be won, 8.00pm start
Saturday 12 September	Private Party
Thursday 17 September	Regular Open Mic Night, come and play, sing, or just watch those that do
Saturday 3 October	Live Music with Ian Lane, performer from Great Bardfield (a regular on our Open Mic Nights)
Thursday 22 October	Karaoke with Bob and Austin
Thursday 19 November	Open Mic Night, all welcome to play or sing
Saturday 28 November	Wethersfield Christmas Switch On, Village Hall, the Green and Club, 4 - 7pm Followed by Take Cover from 7pm at the Club
Saturday 5 December	Christmas Bingo night with John Barker, 8.00 pm
Saturday 12 December	Christmas karaoke night with Bob and Austin, Christmas songs at the ready
NYE 2026	Local DJ Richard Lewsey, entertaining us throughout the night into 2027

Mobile Library Further information can be found at libraries.essex.gov.uk



Barryfields, Shalford CM7 5HJ

Time: 11:20 - 11:50

Telephone Kiosk, Jaspers Green CM7 5AU

Time: 12:45 - 13:15

Dates: 8/9, 29/9, 20/10, 10/11, 1/12, 22/12



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Talk by Terry Nunn on Air Ambulance

In July we had a very informative talk by Terry, who is a volunteer with the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance. We learned that it operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each month the expenses amount to £1,000,000 and each mission costs on average £2,800. Last year their critical teams treated 1,904 patients. Mac Beanland, who has organised the Tractor Run each year reported that they had raised over £100,000 over nine years for the Air Ambulance. Mac is now retiring and is looking for someone to take over this organisation. We are hoping to make a trip to the Air Ambulance HQ at North Weald to see them in action.

Upcoming Events

September 12 and 13 Battle of Britain 85th Anniversary Display. Finchingfield Guildhall. 11 am to 4pm each day. **If you have any suitable WW II artifacts you would like us to display, please contact Ivan. SEE POSTER.**

Saturday 12 September A return visit of the fabulous Galaxy Big Band. Finchingfield Village Hall 7.30 to 11. Please bring your own drinks and nibbles. Raffle. Tickets: £20 each or £30 for two. Dressing up welcomed. SEE POSTER

Wednesday 23 September 7.30. Finchingfield Guildhall

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE POPPY APPEAL MONEY? We are privileged to welcome Kirsten Swann, County Poppy Organiser and Gordon Roach, County Chairman who will talk about the RBL and what it does.

18 November 7.30pm Annual General Meeting at Finchingfield Guildhall. All welcome.

Saturday 5 December 3pm We are again hosting our "C" Group Carol Service. Further details later.

Looking ahead

November 9 2028 will be our Branch's Centenary. We'd love you to help us celebrate this momentous occasion. Let us know if you have any ideas about events you would like to see.

Memories Are Made of This

We are hoping to compile a record of people's memories, from the Second World War onwards. Have a think and let us know if there is anything you would like to tell us.

Our Branch would always welcome new members. Membership is £24 per year and anyone can join. RBL Membership Line is 0800-307-7773.

The Crafty Community Group meets every Tuesday from 2 to 4 in Finchingfield Guildhall. Our present project is making knitted or crochet poppies to 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



Finchingfield Guildhall
presents
a performance by SW'ukes
on Friday 2nd October at 7pm.
Tickets £5.00

Go to: finchingfieldguildhall.org.uk
"what's on" page for payment



Another welcome visit from the fabulous SW'ukes from Saffron Walden.

They play big songs on little instruments, and no good song is spared from their attempts to play it! Although most of the repertoire is 60's and 70's popular songs, they strum out a mean Depeche Mode, Miley Cyrus, and David Bowie.

Feel free to bring your Ukulele along and join in.

VOL. XL NGLS

FINCHINGFIELD AND DISTRICT ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

AUGUST 2026

BREAKING NEWS

RBL BATTLE OF BRITAIN EXHIBITION

SEE HISTORY FIRST HAND



WHERE?

FINCHINGFIELD GUILDHALL
SATURDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER
UNTIL
SUNDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER

WHEN?

11-4PM

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE ON OFFER

IF YOU HAVE ANY MEMORABILIA THAT YOU
WOULD LIKE TO SHARE PLEASE CONTACT
EVAN ON 07525751179

FREE ENTRY

SPEAK TO US ABOUT HOW TO JOIN THE RBL

WANT FORCE? TO GET YOUR DANCE T-SHIRTS FREE
SATURDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 11AM - 12PM

*Finchingfield and District Royal
British Legion Proudly Presents*

Battle of Britain Dance

with The Galaxy Big Band



Saturday 12th September
7:30-11:00pm
Finchingfield Village Hall
Tickets £20pp

or

2 for £30

Contact Evan on 07525751179 or
Janet on 07986581442 to get your tickets now

SAVE

the date!

★ WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE ★

Christmas Lights
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★ SATURDAY ★
28TH NOVEMBER

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LIVE MUSIC

AT
WETHERSFIELD CLUB

★ **FROM 8PM** ★

*Come along and
kick off the festive
season together!*

FAMILY FUN ★ FESTIVE SPIRIT ★ COMMUNITY TOGETHER



A Celebration of Music on Our Doorsteps

The Roman River Festival returns this October, bringing its

familiar blend of world-class music and historic architecture to our local parishes. For those who have followed the festival over the years, the 2026 line-up offers an exceptional breadth of repertoire, performed by musicians who regularly grace international stages but are equally at home in local settings.

The festival opens on **Tuesday 20th October** at St Mary the Virgin, Wivenhoe, with a performance of Benjamin Britten's complete *Canticles*. Led by locally-based acclaimed choir master and tenor Ben Vonberg-Clark, this exquisite cycle marks the 50th anniversary of the composer's death. **On Wednesday 21st October**, the action moves to All Saints, Fordham, where the Silvanus Quartet will perform pieces by Beethoven and Britten alongside Nordic dance tunes. Midweek highlights include a lunchtime concert on **Thursday 22nd October** at Colchester's Old Library featuring Mozart and Ravel, followed by an evening of 17th-century British folk and elite music played on period instruments by the Nocturnalia Ensemble at St Andrew's, Fingringhoe. On **Friday 23rd October**, a lunchtime Young Artist Spotlight at Wivenhoe House Hotel showcases violinist Cyrus Yuen and young pianist Bethany Reynolds, leading into an evening of monumental piano trios by Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, and Beethoven at St Mary's, Dedham. The festival reaches its symphonic peak on **Saturday 24th October** at St Peter Ad Vincula, Coggeshall, with chamber orchestrations of Elgar's Cello Concerto and Mahler's Fourth Symphony. It concludes on **Sunday 25th October** at St Michael and All Angels, Copford, where the Bruegel Consort will perform late-medieval Marian polyphony – from the breathtaking moment in musical history when English composers wove independent, overlapping vocal lines into massive, interlocking walls of sound designed to echo through stone churches – under some of the finest surviving early church frescoes in Britain. While the musicianship is of an international standard, the true hallmark of the Roman River Festival remains its absolute lack of formality. Audiences can expect the same warm, down-to-earth atmosphere that has defined the event for years. This welcoming environment is maintained by a dedicated team of front-of-house volunteers—many of whom are familiar faces who have been greeting concertgoers at the door for several seasons. Tickets are available now, with general admission at £30 and standard tickets for young people under 30 priced from £15 across the entire programme: <https://romanrivermusic.co.uk/whats-on>

ESSEX BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

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.

AGM - 10TH SEPTEMBER 2026

Keene Hall, Galleywood, Chelmsford. CM2 8PT Please note this year the AGM is on an earlier date. More details to follow including who the guest speaker will be.

NEW RIDE - 12th September 2026

Pentlow (Essex / Suffolk boarder) Details to be released on website. Pentlow is close to Sudbury/ Long Melford and Cavendish.

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**HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW YOU
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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.



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Janet Bright

(1941 - 2026)



On Wednesday 5th July, at Three Counties Crematorium, we said goodbye to a lady who'd been part of community life in Shalford for 8 decades. Born on the 18th January 1941, Janet was a war-time baby. As a youngster, she was

at the centre of village life, with her parents running Shalford Shop. Her home overlooked Shalford Village Hall and Playing Fields, both of which provided the social centre of Janet's life. Janet married John in May 1970 and they moved into their new home on their wedding day. From that day Barryfields became their life-long home. It was a home full of John's carpentry, as well as Janet's needlework.

Their respect for each other's craftwork was something that bound them together throughout their married life. As of course, did their son, Jeremy, who enjoyed some fine home-made toys and activities.

Janet's sewing skills were known far and wide. Her intricate embroidery won her many prizes. John's gardening skills and Janet's crafting skills ensured that the Shalford Horticultural Society Show silverware was in "Bright" hands for many years. Janet also won coveted awards at the Essex Show.

Janet & John's empathy and love for Shalford was again so generously expressed when they both sponsored Shalford Village Magazine in November 2023 supporting the magazine and helping to ensure its continuity.

Shalford mourns a lady who has been at the heart of village life for many decades. She saw many changes during that time but something that remains, is the sense that our own will not be forgotten. Janet will be remembered by many groups and societies in the village, for all that she gave in life and, of course, very fondly by her son, Jeremy.

We send our heart-felt condolences to Janet's family and friends. John and Janet may no longer be with us but they have left their legacy in Shalford and will never be forgotten.



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>**

WILLIAM BENDLOWE CHARITY – Alice Cox

JOIN

WILLIAM BENDLOWE

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Founded by Deed 20th December 1573



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- **FIGHTING ISOLATION AND LONELINESS**

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WE ARE LOOKING FOR

NEW TRUSTEES & VOLUNTEERS

Could it be you?

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

Rev Alex and I are passionate about the benefits an independent organisation such as Bendlowe's would offer the local community if governed by a sufficient number of community-minded enthusiastic Trustees and are therefore searching for additional trustees and volunteers. To this end, we have prepared, printed and distributed, an 8-page brochure hoping to encourage new trustees and volunteers to come forward.

The brochure is too large to print here but we have distributed 200 copies in Shalford, Wethersfield, Finchingfield, Bardfield and Panfield and emailed local parish councils, district councillors and village halls. You can download a copy from Bendlowe's website www.bendlowe.co.uk or contact me (Alice) on 07850 264518 email alicecox53@btinternet.com.

The brochure contains details of:-

- The Objectives & Purposes Of The Charity
- The Importance Of Social Interaction In Today's World
- A List Of Local Villages Mentioned In William Bendlowe's Will
- Our Vision
- Highlights Of The Past 10 Years
- The Next Steps And Future Goals
- An Introduction To The Existing Trustees
- Testimonials

(People Working For People - Helping To Enrich Lives)

OPEN EVENING

Come Along And Share Our Vision

VENUE: SHALFORD VILLAGE HALL CM7 5EZ

DATE: Friday 18th September 2026 Doors Open 7.15 p.m.

PURPOSE:

- to highlight the need, importance and value, of social interaction within the community today; an aspect which is likely to grow as our way of life changes (ageing population, working from home, transport services shrinking) and to explain the vital and fulfilling role an independent organisation such as Bendlowe's could (and should) play.
- to encourage more people to volunteer to help us bring Bendlowe's vision for the local communities to fruition. From switching the kettle on through to Trustee – there's a place waiting to be filled. It is our wish that all our volunteers have fun and enjoy themselves whilst feeling gratified that they have helped to enrich lives.

ALL INVITED: Local Parish Councils, Local Village Hall Committees, Braintree District Council, District Councillors, Freshwells, HomeInstead, Volunteers, Bendlowe's followers, Villagers from Shalford and other local villages.

AGENDA:

7.30 p.m. Welcome & Introduction by Alice & Rev Alex
8.00 p.m. Speakers – Braintree District Council, HomeInstead, A Social Prescriber
9.00 p.m. Questions & Discussion
9.30 p.m. Light Refreshments
10.00 p.m. Close of Meeting

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Governing Document, Policies & Procedures, Job Descriptions, Our History, Outings, Bendlowe's Bugle, and more, visit: **www.bendlowe.co.uk**
or contact:

Alice: mobile - 07850 264518 email - alicecox53@btinternet.com

BENDLOWE'S MEET & GREET – Alice Cox



I just want to say
THANK YOU
to all those who help at
MEET & GREET
putting tables & chairs out
preparing the food
labelling and laying out the food
donating food
clearing tables & chairs away
washing up
drying up
sweeping up
clearing up
making teas and coffees
serving teas and coffees

**and everything else I have
forgotten to mention**

ALICE

Photos by Mel Fray



FOSTAC

Friends of St Andrew's Church

President
Sir Roger Singleton, CBE.

August 2026

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Hello FOSTAC Members

It seems everyone likes to see the sun – however maybe not quite as much as we have recently seen together with the extraordinary heat -let's hope that the temperature will return to our 'normal' and we can look forward to meeting up again at some of the FOSTAC events

The first one will be on **Saturday 19th September** when actor Tony Harris will portray King **Henry VIII** - his life, his Queens and his Power during his reign - which will be a very interesting talk – Tickets are now on sale at the Village Shop or can be purchased on the night

Other events planned will be **Reminiscences of a Judge** in October a talk by John Woollard; a talk by Sharon Gould featuring her move from the **East End to Essex** on a Saturday afternoon in November followed by a welcome return of **Nancy May** presenting a **Christmas Concert** in December

We do hope you will be able to come along to all of these events and support us and there will be the usual FOSTAC Drinks and Nibbles

We look forward to seeing you there

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Update from the Village Hall Committee

The Village Hall is a registered charity, run entirely by volunteers and **not** funded by the Parish Council or council tax. A small team of Trustees work hard to keep the hall and playing fields in great shape for everyone in the parish.

What's Been Done This Year?

- **Car Park Expansion:** The car park has been enlarged—perfect timing after such a wet winter. Thanks to the generosity of Sanjay and his family, Martin Gould, G & B Finch, and especially Phil Blumfield and his team at Deersbrook Farm, the project was completed at a much lower cost than expected.
- **Play Area Fencing:** Phase one of the new fencing is complete, funded by Section 106 money released by the Parish Council. We aim to fully enclose the area by summer and are applying for grants to cover the remaining cost.
- **Play Equipment Improvements:** Following a professional safety assessment, all issues have been fixed. The play area now has several more years of safe use ahead, a special thank you to Kevin.
- **Fire Alarm Upgrade:** We've installed a new fire alarm system to meet safety requirements. Although essential, it came at a significant cost of £6,000, sadly buildings used by the public are expensive to run.

Finances & Future Planning

Running the hall remains expensive and hire income doesn't fully cover costs—especially heating and electricity. We're exploring solar panels and an air-source heat pump to reduce long-term expenses, though this will require replacing the flat roof. This will be our main focus for the coming year.

We also maintain one year's worth of expenses in reserve to protect the hall from unexpected costs. All hire discounts have now ended to ensure the hall remains financially sustainable.

The Rawlinson Legacy

Lawrence and Pauline Rawlinson's generous legacy must be used to improve the building itself. In honour of their wider wishes, local groups also benefitted. Their legacy will help ensure the hall and grounds thrive for generations.

More about the Village Hall can be found here:-

<https://www.shalfordvillagehall.co.uk/>

Shalford Horticultural Society Report – By: Tim Gowers

My name is Tim Gowers. I have been chairman of the SHS for 9 months following the AGM in Jan 2026. I would at this point thank Heather for her sterling work as Chair of SHS for many years.

My interest started early in life following volunteering to help look after the primary school gardens at Gt Waltham. Little did I realise that this meant there was an added bonus that I was able to miss formal lessons for that time!

I lived in Rayne for 45 years and Wethersfield for 11 years – 56 years of gardening and allotmenting.

SHS is a Society of like-minded people sharing interest in Horticulture. This year SHS is celebrating its 80th Anniversary being formed in July 1946. SHS has a fantastic and interesting legacy and still is a great asset for the village and wider community. The main purpose of SHS is to promote the interest of Horticulture in general within the village and surrounding areas. SHS is affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society which has numerous benefits for our members, one of which is free entry to RHS Gardens. On 20th May we took advantage of that and visited the RHS Wisley. This was kindly arranged by Caroline. A very interesting day was had by all.

The SHS is made of a small but hardworking committee. Several members of the committee also multi-task within other village organisations so well done to all of you.

Our current activities are arranging the Annual Autumn Horticultural Show for the 12th Sept. More generally we have outings, we run quizzes and raffles.

We hold Committee Meetings as necessary throughout the year and a big thank you to the Committee for your ongoing support.

I would like to thank other people behind the scenes who have helped SHS over the years. The names are not known to me at the moment but thank you.

The main aims of the SHS are to keep the SHS going, to widen and increase membership, to promote the key benefits of horticulture, which are well known, being health and general wellbeing, promote the use of allotments and gardens and promote the work of the RHS.

Going forward we will hopefully be looking at gaining affiliation of the National Allotment Society [NAS].

The NAS is a professional organisation promoting allotments as a valuable community asset. Not only are they a valuable part of our UK heritage, but they play an important part in our future too.

His Majesty King Charles III is the Patron of the NAS.

The NAS runs a members seed scheme where Kings Seeds offer a wide range of premium quality seeds and provide huge discounts to NAS members, along with many other valuable benefits.

SHALFORD PEOPLE

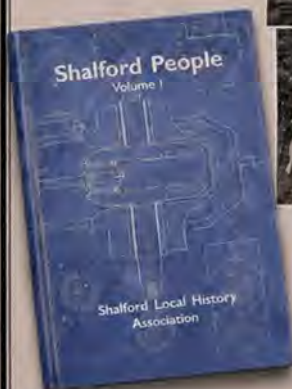
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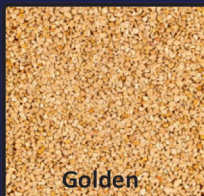
COUNTRYSIDE DRIVEWAYS

**START OF
THE SEASON**

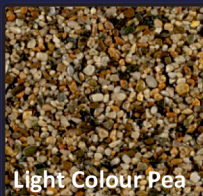
£20 per
sq
mtr

Discount For Larger Areas

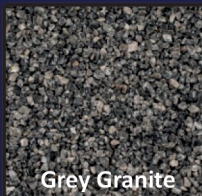
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From the Chair - Wildfell: Looking at the Bigger Picture:

On 4th July, several members of Shalford Parish Council visited "Wildfell," the Centre for Environmental Recovery near Wethersfield. It was a fascinating opportunity to witness one of Essex's most ambitious landscape-scale nature recovery projects and to consider its profound implications for the future of our own parish.

Wildfell is currently transforming almost 300 acres of former arable farmland, situated near Wethersfield Airbase, into a rich mosaic of native woodland, species-rich grassland, restored hedgerows, wetlands, and ponds. Central to this project is the concept of "Biodiversity Net Gain"—the practice of offsetting environmental loss from development in one location by improving nature elsewhere to create a measurable overall gain. Developers invest in "units" of Wildfell, which funds nature enhancement and guarantees its protection for at least 30 years.

This landscape-scale approach demonstrates how restoring nature can improve biodiversity, strengthen watercourses, and store carbon. By reconnecting habitats that have become fragmented over decades of intensive farming, the project creates vital lifelines for wildlife. The River Pant, which runs alongside the site, serves as a primary ecological corridor linking habitats throughout the Pant Valley and stretching well beyond our parish boundaries.

For those involved in preparing Shalford's Neighbourhood Plan, the visit was especially significant. Our Valued Landscape Assessment identifies the Pant Valley, its ancient woodlands, and its historic river corridor as some of our greatest local assets. Wildfell shows what can be achieved when these qualities are enhanced rather than simply protected. This vision aligns perfectly with the work of the North Essex Farm Cluster, where neighbouring landowners collaborate to improve habitat connectivity. Similar to Wildfell, the Cluster has been particularly active in re-establishing neglected ponds and creating new ones, recognizing that these "blue" stepping stones are vital for wildlife that knows no borders.

These landscapes are also deeply rooted in our cultural history. The rolling vistas of the Pant Valley famously inspired the celebrated Great Bardfield Artists, whose work captured the distinctive spirit of this corner of Essex. By supporting nature recovery, we are safeguarding the natural heritage that served as their muse.

Inevitably, our discussions turned to the nearby former RAF Wethersfield site. Currently housing an asylum accommodation centre and still under consideration for future development, the base occupies a critical position in our landscape. Through our work with the Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee (WASC), we continue to collaborate with neighbouring parish councils to ensure any future plans are rigorously scrutinized and that

sustainable alternatives are considered. One compelling possibility discussed was the opportunity for the airbase's vast acreage to contribute to this wider nature recovery effort. This could create a continuous nature corridor stretching potentially from Saffron Walden through to Gosfield, providing a permanent environmental legacy rather than the blight of over-development.

The visit left us with a vital message: protecting our countryside is no longer just about preserving what remains; it is about actively restoring and reconnecting our landscapes through cross-boundary cooperation. Wildfell offers an inspiring example of a resilient future—one from which Shalford has much to learn. Our thanks to Chris Bawtree for his time and for showing us around such a pioneering project.

Further information about Wildfell can be found through the [Evergreen Fund](#) and Ground Control's [Project Wildfell](#). Information regarding the collaborative work on the airbase is available via [WASC](#) and [The Fields Association](#).

North Zone Bus User Group Survey:

We are still looking for feedback from our residents about their experience using the DigiGo Bus Service. If you have 5 minutes to tell us about your recent experience then please complete the survey using either the link or the QR code below.

Passenger Feedback Survey: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/zhiftfZrrb>



Please email the Clerk if you require a paper copy of this survey:
clerk@shalford-essex-pc.gov.uk

Dates for your Diaries:

William Bendlowe Charity Open Evening: Friday 18th September 7.15pm
Christmas Lights Switch-On: Saturday 5th December, 5pm-8pm.

Speed Watch Group:

We are still looking for volunteers to set up a local Speed Watch Group. Please contact the Parish Clerk to register your interest.

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-essex-pc.gov.uk

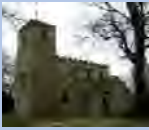


Our next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 16th September at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. We look forward to seeing you there.



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

**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...



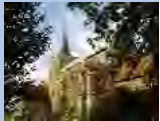
**Wethersfield
St Mary
Magdalene**

It's hot. At least, it is when I'm writing this, and high temperatures have been a (dare I say) hot topic of conversation all through this summer. I think we're all hoping for some respite by September, but whatever the thermometers record between now and the magazine arriving with you, the weather phenomena of this year are likely still to be provoking some conversation – after all, even when the weather is unexceptional, it is one of our favourite topics!



**Finchingfield
St John the
Baptist**

We are told to expect that these high temperatures are likely to occur with a greater frequency, and whilst climate scientists and policymakers try to understand what is behind this, and what might best be done about it, another important question to face is how we should react to the fact of a hospitable environment becoming less so. This isn't a new question: although the longer-term trends of increases in average temperatures are something new, there have been exceptional occasions in the past when sudden temperature shifts have made life a lot less comfortable for people. And there are many parts of the world which have been feeling the destructive effects of human activity on their ecosystems for some years now.



**Gt Bardfield
St Mary The
Virgin**

If we look into prayer books of centuries past, we find many prayers for deliverance from adverse weather and its effects. It is tempting for us to think ourselves so much more enlightened, now that we understand the scientific principles behind what is happening. What these prayers do reveal, though, and what they remind us, is that we cannot take the hospitality of our natural environment for granted. And although not framed in scientific terms, they do recognise that our actions can be destructive, and that we often have limited power in undoing those destructive effects.



**Little
Bardfield
St Katharine**

The power we do have, however, is the power which derives from compassion. If we recognise that more frequent heat waves are going to demand of us more concern for our vulnerable neighbours, perhaps we will also learn to recognise the vulnerability of our whole human condition.



**Cornish Hall
End
St John the
Evangelist**

Rev'd/Fr Alex

SERVICES FOR SEPTEMBER IN THE PANT VALLEY CHURCHES

Sunday 6 September – Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

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

9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford

10.30am Family Eucharist – Great Bardfield

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

Sunday 13 September – Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

8am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Shalford *(with breakfast served afterwards in church)*

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

11am Family Eucharist – Wethersfield

5pm Sung Evensong – Shalford

Sunday 20 September – Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Benefice Eucharist – Finchingfield

4pm Benefice Harvest Celebration – Bardfield Vineyard

Sunday 27 September – Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

9.30am Parish Communion – Shalford

10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield

11am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Wethersfield

5pm Sung Compline – Little Bardfield

Regular Services and Events during the week

Monday

8.45am Morning Prayer – Finchingfield

1.30pm 'Faithful Fiction' book club – Between the Lines, Great Bardfield (not meeting in August)

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 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

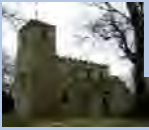
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**SHALFORD CHURCH OF ST ANDREW'S
PANT VALLEY CHURCHES
CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT**



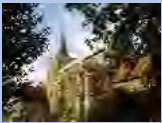
**Shalford
St Andrew's**



**Wethersfield
St Mary
Magdalene**



**Finchingfield
St Mary the
Baptist**



**Gt Bardfield
St Mary The
Virgin**



**Little
Bardfield
St Katharine**



**Cornish Hall
End
St John the
Evangelist**

Well, here we are again, looking forward to a busy autumn season in St Andrew's after what has been, mercifully, a fairly quiet summer. Of course the weather has been a constant presence in everyone's mind and we have never ceased to remember in our prayers all you farmers and growers who are facing such a difficult future. However, we shall still be thanking God (and all those who provide our food) for our good fortune, even in the thrall of this new climate reality, with a Harvest Thanksgiving service on Sunday, 4th October to which everyone is warmly welcomed.

Apart from a few minor problems with the church's roof alarm system, now hopefully repaired by the installers, St Andrew's is in reasonable shape and the one positive outcome of the drought has meant no leaks in the church! The organ, however, cannot cope with the heat and humidity and is sounding rather odd, to put it mildly, but there is no point in trying to have it serviced or re-tuned until the weather returns to "normal".

I am also waiting now for a date from the bellhangers to have our ring of 5 bells and their hangings, newly repaired and refurbished, to be returned to the tower and I'm hoping that this will happen before the Harvest Festival in October. In that respect it has been an unnaturally quiet summer!

Marketa, our church cleaner, has dealt marvelously well these last few months with all the dust and debris, bat droppings and insects blown into the church but there is a limit to what she can achieve in the time available. So I'm hoping that with your help we could have a couple of days for a deep clean – but nothing too ambitious, just a bit of TLC and polish. I'm thinking of Thursday 17th and Friday 18th of September from, say 10am – 12 noon each day, with added refreshments, of course.

I'll divide the church into workable areas so that it's not a daunting task. If you are able to come on one or both days it would be helpful – but not essential - if you could bring your own vacuum cleaner, dusters, bucket, mop, beeswax polish, brass polish, anything else you can think of. We have some of everything on site but maybe not enough to go round. It would just be so lovely to have the church looking its best before the flower arrangers make it even lovelier for the harvest celebrations. And after a hiatus during the summer the Community Payback Team will have been back in action in August to tidy up the churchyard so let's make St Andrew's Beautiful Again (SABA)!

Thank you.

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, 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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SHALFORD'S AWARD

By: Terry Savage

The award of a Certificate of Highly Commended to Shalford by the Rural Community Council of Essex on 8th July 2026 was a tremendous honour for our village and recognition of the remarkable community spirit that exists here.



When preparing our submission, the aim was not to present Shalford as a perfect village, but to describe, honestly, what makes it such a special place to live. The entry focused on the people who give so generously of their time and energy, the organisations that bring residents together, and the facilities that form the heart of village life.

Receiving a Highly Commended certificate confirms that these qualities were recognised by the judges. It acknowledges the dedication of our many volunteers, the work of the Parish Council, Village Organisations, St Andrew's Church, the Village Hall Committee, the Village Stores, the George Inn, Bendlowe's Charity, Sporting Clubs, Community Groups,

and the many residents who quietly contribute to making Shalford such a welcoming community.

Although naturally we would have been delighted to win the overall title, this recognition should be viewed as a significant achievement. Essex has many outstanding villages, each with its own strengths, and to be placed amongst the most highly regarded is something of which everyone in Shalford can be immensely proud.

The judging process also highlighted the importance of accurately recording and celebrating the many activities that take place throughout the year. Preparing the submission brought together information about our clubs, charities, events, history and volunteers, reminding us just how much happens in a village of fewer than 1,000 residents.

Perhaps the greatest value of entering the competition was the opportunity to reflect on what makes Shalford unique. Community spirit cannot be measured solely by buildings or facilities; it is found in neighbours helping one another, volunteers giving their time, local organisations working together, and residents taking pride in where they live.

I would like to thank everyone who offered advice, corrections and encouragement while the submission was being prepared. Their local knowledge helped ensure that the entry reflected the village accurately and fairly.

Finally, my congratulations go to everyone who contributes to village life. This award belongs not to any one individual, but to the whole community. The Certificate of Highly Commended is recognition of the kindness, commitment and sense of belonging that make Shalford such a wonderful place to call home.

--o0o--



A Personal Reflection on Shalford's Highly Commended Award

When I moved to Shalford in January 2021, the country was in lockdown. I had recently survived a life-threatening illness, was beginning semi-retirement, and, like many people at that time, wondered what the future might hold.

I could never have imagined how much this small Essex village would become part of my life.

Like many newcomers, I arrived knowing very few people. It did not take long, however, to discover that Shalford is much more than a collection of houses. It is a community where people genuinely care about one another, where neighbours become friends, and where volunteers quietly work behind the scenes to make village life flourish.

As I became involved with the Village Fete Committee, the Local History Society, and other community activities, I saw first-hand the extraordinary number of people who willingly give their time without expecting recognition. They organise events, look after village facilities,



support local charities, preserve our history, welcome newcomers and ensure that no one feels left behind.

When I volunteered to prepare Shalford's entry for the Essex Village of the Year Awards, I wanted to capture that spirit. The submission was never about claiming to be the biggest or most picturesque village in Essex. It was about celebrating the people who make Shalford what it is.

Writing the entry also became a voyage of discovery. I learned more about the village's remarkable history, the work of Bendlowe's Charity, the many clubs and organisations, and the countless individuals who quietly keep everything running. The more I discovered, the more impressed I became.

To learn that Shalford had been awarded a **Certificate of Highly Commended** by the Rural Community Council of Essex on 8th July 2026 was a moment of immense pride. While every village hopes to win the top award, receiving this recognition is a wonderful achievement and one that reflects the efforts of hundreds of people over many years.

No award belongs to one person. My role was simply to put into words what already existed. The certificate belongs to every volunteer who sets out chairs before a meeting, every

committee member who gives up evenings to organise events, every resident who lends a helping hand, and every organisation that contributes to village life throughout the year.

Personally, I feel privileged to have been entrusted with telling Shalford's story. As someone who arrived here only a few years ago, I have been welcomed with kindness, friendship and encouragement. The village has given me purpose, new friendships and the opportunity to contribute to something much bigger than myself.

I often say that villages are not defined by their buildings but by their people. Shalford proves that every day.

The Highly Commended Award is recognition of something that residents have always known — that this is a very special place to live.

I hope the experience encourages even more people to become involved in village life, because communities like ours only continue to thrive when each generation is willing to play its part.

***For me, moving to Shalford was one of life's unexpected blessings.
Helping to tell its story has been both an honour and a privilege – Terry***



A Tale Of Two Communities!

By: Terry Savage

As some of you are aware, Karen and I moved to Shalford 5 years ago after I became ill with cancer. We both wanted to withdraw from the “rat race” and enjoy the rest of our lives in a peaceful, relaxing environment! And boy we hit the Jackpot! Despite illness we have had the very best time here, thanks to this beautiful Village and its wonderful people.

During my illness I have had setbacks and recovery, I am in the midst of another, I am confident this will be as successful as before and I will still be seen around the Village!

I have a cancer support group which Karen and I are members, and it has become apparent to me the similarities between the two communities!

Mainly

- Both look out and support people going through bad times
- Both either work hard for the community or support those who do
- Both socialise and engage with other villagers/sufferers
- Both communities care

I have experienced some wonderful support here in the village, the Church community, (I am on lots of "Key Chains!") Bendlowe's (Meet and Greet) the Shalford Fete Committee members, the George locals and the many friends whom we meet on the street. But for me, the best thing is the love and support given to my "rock" - "Karen" by the Villagers! It's easy to forget the stress the wife goes through while the husband gets all the attention! So, through the kind offer by Alice for space in the Village mag, I would like to thank the people of Shalford for being so wonderful!

If there is any more room for a very indulgent person, I would like to include a poem I wrote a few months ago for a husband and wife (Abby and Chris) from my cancer group, apart for the fact they are about 30 years younger the similarities between them and us are amazing!



When there are just two

Then there are just two
To stand up to the pain
To go through the trials, and tribulations again
To see each other bear the burden of life
A poorly husband, a loving wife

There is of course help, and friends send their love
And at times like this, you need help from above
But when it all is said and done
The strength will come from your loved one

And together, you will become strong
And help each other carry on
You will find strength to bear the pain
Until you both can live again

The treatment and the suffering is hard
Having to go that extra yard
But the spirit you have
will see you through and
gain the strength to fight anew

And so together,
you will become strong
And help each other carry on
You will find the strength
to bear the pain
Until you both can live again

Love gives strength. Together, you can.
By Terry Savage

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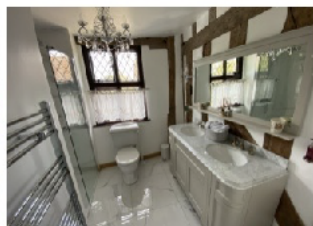
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Those of us involved with the Wethersfield Village Shop were able to make the most of the sunshine in July to be welcomed by Susan and Richard Clubley for an afternoon cream tea so that the volunteers could get a chance for a catch up and chat about things in general. Often one volunteer comes in as one leaves, and we don't always get time to chat. It was a lovely afternoon, and greatly appreciated by all who attended, thanks to Susan and Richard - think there were 24 of us in all!

If a bit of volunteering work is something you would be interested in, we are always looking for more volunteers to man the Shop when it's open these days. The opening hours are listed on the next page, and if you would like further information about what is involved then please do get in touch with one of the team, or by e-mail to broad.julia@yahoo.co.uk. We provide an essential service to Wethersfield and the local community, any help would be greatly appreciated!

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE
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OPENING HOURS**

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FRIDAY	10.00 AM – 4.00 PM
SATURDAY	10.00 AM – 1.00 PM
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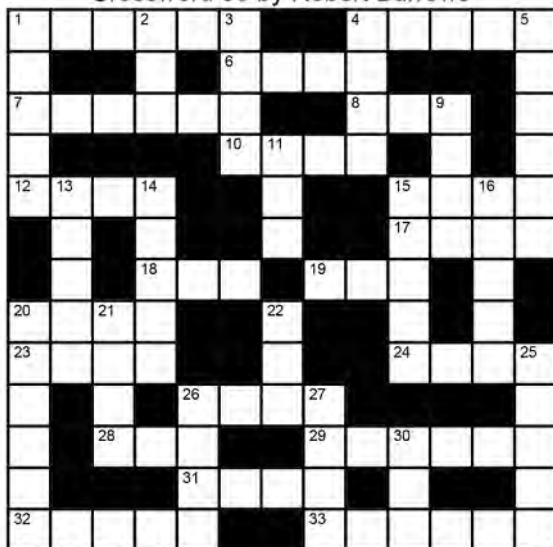


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Crossword 99 by Robert Burrows



DOWN

- 1** Strong liking (5)
2 Small child (3)
3 Unconsciousness (4)
4 Free from bias (4)
5 Filaments from a web (6)
9 Be aware (4)
11 Owed (3)
13 Capital of Japan (5)

ACROSS

- 1** Derived from milk (6)
4 Old French coin (5)
6 Tall African plant (4) (4)
7 Harmed person (6)
8 A class (3)
10 Jewish month (4)
12 Slight movement (4)
15 Top class (1-3)
17 Cleaning implement (4)
18 Pull (3)
19 Something past (3)
20 Conformity (4)
23 Biblical patriarch (4)
24 Short cry of pain
26 Bottle stopper (4)
28 The first woman (3)
29 Greek past tense of verbs (6)
31 Number of ships (4)
32 Agent from the sun canvas (4)
33 Peculiarity (6)
14 Vomit (5)
15 Appraisal (5)
16 Connected with ships (5)
20 Whining tearfully (6)
21 Designation (4)
22 Sailor (3)
25 Inferior (5)
26 Monetary unit (4)
27 Send to the
30 Old land measurement (3)

TRACTOR RUN – By: Mac Beanland



On the 9th of July, we finally managed to present a cheque to the Herts and Essex Air Ambulance for the sum of £10,900. A fantastic amount thanks to all the people who contributed in these difficult times. Sadly, a key member of our team has decided to retire due to ill health so we are looking for someone with computer skills and time to take over the administrative side of the committee.



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LET'S TRY GROWING FRUIT



As our summers become increasingly hot and dry, gardeners may find that traditional, heat-sensitive vegetables struggle to perform. It may be time to rethink our planting plans and turn to fruit trees and shrubs that, once established, are far more resilient in drought conditions.

Below are three excellent options for smaller gardens, patios, and anyone looking to diversify their edible landscape.

The Edible Quince (*Cydonia Oblonga*)

Although quince trees can grow quite large, compact varieties grafted onto dwarfing rootstocks - such as Quince C, Quince Eline, or Quince Adams - make them perfectly suitable for small gardens or even large patio containers. These trees mature at around 8 ft (2.5 m).

Quinces are self-fertile and thrive in any good garden soil. Plant between November and March. Each February apply bonemeal, and in May mulch with compost.

For the first three to four years, prune the one-year-old growths by half during winter. After this, pruning is minimal: simply remove any dead, diseased, or poorly positioned branches. The hard fruits ripen in October. Store them in a cool, dry, frost-free place; they continue to mature after picking and will keep for 6-8 weeks. With their high pectin content, quinces make a beautifully clear, rose-pink jelly - perfect with fatty meats and roast game.



Medlar (*Mespilus germanica*)

Dwarf medlar trees reach 5–10 ft (1.5-3 m) and are ideal for gardens or patio pots. They are usually grafted onto Quince C rootstocks and are self-fertile.

Medlars offer large spring blossoms, attractive autumn foliage, and distinctive fruits that must soften (blet) before eating. The 'Nottingham' cultivar is the most widely grown in the UK, producing medium-sized, richly flavoured fruits on a compact, semi-weeping tree.

Plant in a sheltered position with full sun or partial shade, in moist but well-drained soil, between October and March. Neutral to slightly acidic soil is ideal. Prune the leaders of the main framework branches by half for the first two winters, then by a quarter for the next two. Mature trees require little pruning.

Harvest on a dry day in late October or November, ideally after the first frosts. Store the fruits "eye" downwards in a single layer in a cool, dark place. After 3-4 weeks, once the fruits soften and turn deep brown, they are ready to eat raw or to use in jellies and preserves.

Fig (*Ficus Carica*)

Figs grow well in our region but require more careful management than many fruits. The figs we harvest in summer were formed the previous year and remain on the tree over winter as tiny embryo fruits beside the terminal buds. These must be protected from cold damage.

Choose a south-facing wall or a sunny corner between two walls. Restricting the root system is essential to prevent excessive, unproductive growth. Dig a hole 1 metre square and 1 metre deep (3ft x 3ft), line the sides with bricks or slabs, and place 30 cm (12 in) of compacted brick rubble at the base. Fill with two parts good soil to one part rubble.

Alternatively, figs grow well in 40 cm (15 in) pots. Sink the pot into the ground with the rim just above soil level to reduce moisture loss. Each winter, dig around the pot and remove any roots escaping through the drainage hole.

Plant in March. For the first three winters, train the tree to shape. Each summer, before the end of June, pinch out sideshoots to five leaves.

At the end of September, remove all immature figs larger than peas; they will not survive winter. The smaller fruits at the ends of shoots will ripen the following year. Protect them over winter and remove coverings in April or May once frost danger has passed.

Harvest between mid-August and October. A ripe fig hangs downwards, its stalk softens, and the skin begins to split.

Eat and enjoy.

A Final Thought

Bob Flowerdew once remarked “The way forward is to grow fruit”- and he may well be right. Alongside quince, medlar, and fig, consider planting gooseberries, raspberries, and currants. Strawberries, sadly, stop producing once temperatures exceed 25°C, so diversifying your fruit garden may be the most reliable way to keep your harvests plentiful in our changing climate.





Nature Notes

THE BARN OWL

By: Mac Beanland

Recently my son, Richard, rang me up to say he was topping a grass field and he had come across a sick Barn Owl lying in the grass and he was asking my advice as to what to do with it, so that he could get on with his work. I drove over to meet him to take a look.

There he was driving the tractor nursing the barn owl which was carefully wrapped in a T-shirt. In a lot of cases, we would quickly dispatch a very sick bird to save it suffering but this was a Barn Owl, and it was bright-eyed but not able to fly. I took charge of the owl to let Richard get on with his job. Next move: I rang the Barn Owl Trust for advice and they sent a video to my phone advising me how to examine the owl and a list of things to look for. I completed the examination (not easy on one's own with only one pair of hands) but the conclusion was nothing obviously wrong with it so I reported back. The young lady at the trust said I should take the Barn Owl to a vet and that all vets are legally obliged to treat wild birds free of charge so there would be no cost to myself. I took the owl to Maloney's veterinary clinic at Great Dunmow where I was made welcome. A vet nurse came out and collected the owl from my car and said a vet would examine it as soon as one was free so I left them too it. One hour later they rang me to say they had x-rayed it and there was nothing broken and they would be taking it to the owl lady who looks after owls until they are fit enough to be released back into the wild.

It must be difficult looking after owls in captivity - they are completely carnivore and don't eat any vegetable matter at all. Their diet revolves round voles, rats, mice, bats, and amphibians, such as frogs, toads, lizards, newts. They will also take small birds if food is in short supply. An adult barn owl requires the equivalent of three voles or mice per day, and because of their appetite for rats and mice they have always been known as the Farmers' friend. Most old barns were built with a hole for a Barn Owl nest, they will use holes in trees and readily use man-made nest boxes placed high up on poles.

Barn owls are unique; they are designed for hunting their prey. First and possibly their most important feature is their heart-shaped dished face rather like a satellite disc or should we say a satellite disc is like a Barn Owl's face, one ear has a higher entrance than the other allowing the owl to pinpoint exactly where a sound is coming from. Their hearing is very sensitive, they can hear a vole moving through grass and land on it



with their long legs which can penetrate the grass and grab the prey with sharp long reversible talons which usually kills the prey. If not, a peck to the back of the head will, and then it is swallowed whole. Once digested anything which is not digestible such as bones and fur is regurgitated in a ball known as an owl pellet. These can be found on the ground under a roosting or nesting site, some people collect owl pellets and

dissect them to see what the owl has eaten. I have a report in a Ministry of Agriculture bulletin which states 700 Barn Owl pellets from one site which were dissected contained the remains of 2513 mice, one mole, and 22 birds, 19 of which were house sparrows. And a report states that a half-grown Barn Owl swallowed 9 mice in rapid succession and was hungry again in three hours. Barn Owls breed in April-May they lay 4 to 6 white roundish eggs, unlike most birds eggs they don't have a dormancy so it is not unusual to find young of different ages as well as unhatched eggs in the same nest.



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Buzzing News from the Hives of Jillie Woolcock



Firstly the photos above are from the Asian Hornet Watch app. As some of you may be aware the Asian Hornet is becoming a serious threat in this country, especially in the south as it migrates from continental Europe where in France it is already a massive problem. Sadly, it's only a matter of time before they move further north in this country too. This particular hornet feeds on almost all of our native pollinators including our much-loved honeybees, who are at most threat from it as they are such easy pickings - hives neatly lined up in rows! The Asian Hornet Watch app is very worthwhile down-loading with plenty of photos to help you identify the hornet and also to report any sightings.



Bees using the tunnel
entrance at the front of
the hive

Secondly, a more current threat to our bees are the wasps which are just beginning to make an appearance around my hives (July 9th). There are various methods of helping the bees defend their hives and the photo left shows my favoured method. It's basically a tunnel into the hive which the bees are happy to use but the wasps are too dozy to fathom thus giving the bees a fighting chance of protecting their hive.

And lastly, yet another critter has made itself known in my apiary: a badger has started to make inroads under one of the hives (we have a large sett nearby). If he carries on digging it will undermine the slabs the hives are standing on and I shall have to re-site the hive. So a little research revealed that as badgers have such an acute sense of smell, male human pee can sometimes deter them from further digging. I'll say no more other

than ‘Muscles’ came to the rescue - we’ll see if it does the trick!



You may be able to make out earthworks
under the hive on the left

Finally, a sight to gladden any beekeeper’s heart. The photo below shows a frame hanging vertically in the hive. The biscuit colour is sealed brood. In other words below all those biscuit coloured cells are baby bees waiting to hatch. Around the outer edge of the frame



(top right) you may be able to make out a different colour which is the bees stores of nectar and pollen. The grill at the bottom is where the detritus of the hive falls through and anything too big to go through the mesh the bees will hoosh out manually - clever little beings that they are.

*Until the next time
JW Great Bardfield*

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THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

By: Ken McDonald, Secretary

We always encourage people to visit parish churches; they are usually the oldest building in any community and their interiors have great variety. Here, I will discuss one particular feature – the screen which forms a partition, both physically and symbolically, between the laity or congregation in the nave, the main part of the church, and the clergy in the chancel.

The screen, sometimes referred to as a chancel screen, often has a lattice design to allow people worshipping in the nave to see through into the chancel. Chancel comes from a Latin word meaning lattice.

Several of our churches have finely-carved 15th-century wooden screens including Albury, Finchingfield, Henham, Manuden and Wendens Ambo.

Some screens are called rood screens. Above these screens is a “rood” - a representation of Christ’s crucifixion, usually flanked by two saints, most often Mary and St John. Rood is a Saxon word meaning cross.

The Hundred Parishes has some fine examples of rood screens. They are usually carved in wood but in Stebbing and Great Bardfield parish churches (both dedicated to St. Mary) the 14th-century screens are carved in stone. This is a really rare feature.

Little Canfield’s wooden rood screen is believed to date from the 14th-century.

A carved 15th-century wooden screen can be found in Sawbridgeworth’s Church of Great St Mary with a depiction above it of the risen Christ installed as recently as 2000 AD.

The Church of Holy Trinity at Takeley has a relatively modern rood screen, installed around 1910 and featuring a wooden carving of Christ on the cross with a saint on each side.

I have named just some examples around The Hundred Parishes. Please explore our local churches, perhaps while following one of the walk descriptions that can be downloaded from www.hundredparishes.org.uk



Photos: 1: Albury 2: Finchingfield 3: Henham 4: Great Bardfield 5: Little Canfield 6: Sawbridgeworth



Summer Solstice Celebration in Wethersfield

By: Julia Broad

Well, didn't we do well at the Summer Solstice Celebration in Wethersfield!

The weather for the day was perfect, although a little too hot for our 4-legged friends, so the dog show was cancelled. We had our own Town Cryer

open the event for us, leading the procession up from the Green, thanks to Richard Harris for carrying out those duties for us.

We had so much going on throughout the day, classic cars, bikes, food truck, ice cream, stalls, games for the kids, and much more. We were joined by the crew from the Wethersfield Fire Station, and also by our local PC, Steve Mugridge. The fire station crew had a tug-of-war with some of those in the crowd, and after a long, physical battle, the fire crew won the tug! We were also joined by the Kit Car (from the TV series Knight Rider way back when) and we send our thanks to Anthony Varmey for his support and all those who entered, joined in and took part!

We were entertained brilliantly by all the open mic performers through the afternoon, and then had the wonderful Loran perform for us in the evening, which finished the whole event off perfectly.

The event was arranged by the Village for the Village, and we were delighted to raise £2,595.02 on the day, with a wonderful raffle raising £700, which was a fantastic achievement.

We will look to do something similar for next year so pencil in the longest weekend 2027!

Thanks for supporting us, it made all the work worthwhile!

***The Summer Solstice Team
Wethersfield***



Summer Solstice Celebration in Wethersfield





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Lettuce Alone

In the middle of Sunny Patch Garden lived a lettuce called **Iceberg**. Iceberg stood tall and crisp, with perfectly neat leaves. She liked everything to be tidy, organised and done properly.

"Straight rows," she'd say.

"Clean leaves."

"And absolutely **no silliness**."

The other vegetables tried very hard to behave...most of the time.

Her best friend was **Nedley Carrot**.

Nedley had bright green hair (well, leafy hair) and endless ideas. He loved exploring, asking questions and making everyone laugh. If there was a mysterious tunnel, a shiny pebble or a wobbly bridge, Nedley wanted to investigate it.

"Come on!" he'd grin. "Adventures don't wait!"

Whenever Nedley got himself into a pickle, there was always one vegetable who knew exactly what to do.

That was **Anne Avocado**. Anne was calm, clever and kind. She never rushed. She listened carefully before speaking, and somehow she always seemed to have the perfect answer.

"If we work together," she'd say with a smile, "We'll find a way."

The rest of the gang were never far behind. There was **Barney Beetroot**, who was as strong as an old oak tree. **Gareth Green-Pepper**, who couldn't resist telling terrible jokes. **Martin Mushroom**, who knew almost everything about the garden and its hidden corners. And then there was **Sly the Slug**.

Nobody knew where Sly came from. Nobody knew where he was going.

He simply appeared whenever there was mischief nearby, leaving a shimmering silver trail behind him and wearing the cheekiest grin in the whole garden.



One bright morning, Iceberg blew her tiny leaf whistle.

"Everyone line up!"

Nedley bounced into place. Anne folded her hands politely. Barney stood tall. Gareth stopped halfway through a joke. Martin adjusted his little mushroom cap. Even Sly slowed to a crawl.

"I have an important announcement," declared Iceberg.

"There has been... a disappearance."

The garden fell silent.

"The prize-winning strawberry has vanished!"

The Garden Detectives searched every corner of Sunny Patch Garden. Iceberg marched confidently at the front, inspecting every leaf and every blade of grass. Nedley hurried from one clue to the next, his excitement growing with every discovery. Anne took her time, noticing the little things everyone else overlooked. Barney peered beneath flowerpots, Gareth searched behind watering cans, Martin carefully wrote down everything they found, and Sly quietly followed behind, leaving his familiar silvery trail.

When they reached the empty strawberry patch, Iceberg studied the ground for only a moment before making up her mind.

She noticed Sly's shiny slime trail winding past the missing strawberry and immediately decided that he must be responsible. In Iceberg's eyes, it all seemed far too obvious.

The others weren't so sure. Nedley wondered if there might be another explanation, but Iceberg was determined. She reminded everyone that Sly was always wandering around the garden and that wherever he went, he left a trail behind him. Before long, Barney and Gareth began to wonder whether she was right.

Poor Sly could hardly believe what he was hearing. His cheerful smile faded, and his feelers drooped. He had always thought the vegetables were his friends, yet now they were beginning to suspect him simply because he was different.

Only Anne refused to jump to conclusions. She carefully examined the ground around the strawberry patch. The slime trail was certainly there, but so were other clues. Tiny footprints crossed the soft earth, and a broken leaf pointed towards the old wooden gate. Most importantly,



the slime trail passed the strawberry patch without stopping, as though Sly had simply travelled through on his usual morning wander.

Anne quietly gathered everyone together and encouraged them to look again.

As the others studied the clues more carefully, they began to realise how quickly they had accepted Iceberg's opinion without asking whether it was true. The evidence did not point to Sly at all. In fact, it suggested that someone much smaller and much quicker had carried the strawberry away.

Iceberg felt her leaves droop with embarrassment.

She realised she had decided who was guilty before she had properly examined the facts. Sly had been blamed not because of what he had done, but because of who he was.

Ashamed of her mistake, Iceberg offered Sly a sincere apology. Sly accepted it with a gentle smile, and Anne reminded everyone that good detectives never begin with a suspect. They begin with the evidence.

With the misunderstanding behind them, the Garden Detectives followed the tiny footprints towards the old garden gate, where a brand-new mystery was waiting to be solved.

By Graham Silvester from an original idea of Martin Hinsley





GETTING TO KNOW

Madeline Eversden

By: Carol Prail

Madeline Eversden was born in Walthamstow and had a younger sister and brother. Much of the family's time was spent at their local church, in the choir, bellringing etc.

Then the family moved to Chingford, and when Madeline left school, she joined Walthamstow Library and became an assistant Librarian there. She then worked for the Prudential Assurance Society in Holborn before returning to the

Walthamstow Central Library. She loved ball room dancing and that is where she met David.

Madeline married David in 1964, and they moved to Bristol when David was offered a position there. At this time, jobs were plentiful and Madeline found work as a costing clerk for the SW Electricity Board.

They moved to Shalford in 1971 and for a few years Madeline was busy bringing up their daughter Wendy.

Madeline has always enjoyed working with figures and started to help small businesses mainly in the local areas of Braintree, Felsted and Dunmow, with their accounts. She attended Braintree College evening classes for 2 years and achieved an O Level and A level in the Principle of Accounts. Computer systems started to be used, and Madeline helped to set these up for her clients with the help and support of David. She retired about 10 years ago.

Apart from a love of gardening, one of the main activities Madeline and David (together with friend Jan) enjoyed, was Narrow Boating and





they had great pleasure in seeing the more hidden parts of England and Wales and France. They continued this for many years until Madeline fell and broke her shoulder and decided it was perhaps, reluctantly, time to stop.

In 2005, FOSTAC was formed and, as active members of Shalford village life and because of Madeline's experience in accounts, she was asked to become the Treasurer of FOSTAC. Madeline recalled that the accounts were held in a little black book, so she was soon able to sort out the accounts on computer and produce reports and final accounts

At that time there were 12 committee members who became good friends.

Madeline recalls many fundraising events, talks and choirs coming to the church such as the Braintree Male Choir and the Choral Society (of

which Madeline was a member)

There were suppers at Priory Barn when FOSTAC members would cook supper and people would then listen to live music.

The fundraising over the last 20 years enabled FOSTAC to contribute towards:

the building of the extension at St Andrew's Church, new fencing and gate, chairs for the meeting room, glass frontage for the ringing chamber, curtains in the Church and Meeting Room, Servicing of the Church Organ, gutter repairs, alarm system, repairs to stained glass windows to name but a few.

Overall, over £100,000 had been raised which was a fantastic achievement

Madeline had major heart operations in 2012 and 2021 but still uses her computer for shopping and keeping in touch with her friends.



***It was a pleasure talking
to you Madeline***

Carol Prail

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UPDATE JULY 2026



Some residents do tell me that speeding is a concern through the village so you will be aware that I frequently carry out speed checks along The Street Shalford and that over three consecutive occasions I recorded excess speeds of 38MPH+.

Having submitted these to Essex Police casualty reduction, The Street has now been deemed a TruCam deployment site. **What is TruCam?** Well, it combines a speed-detecting laser with a video recording function that can capture information needed to prosecute drivers speeding without them stopping. TruCam allows both Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's like me) to take enforcement action. The Street, Shalford clearly displays 30MPH signs in both directions before The George (coming from Wethersfield) and by George Tanner's entrance (coming from Shalford Green) with repeater signs so there really is NO excuse.

Below is the most recent speed 100 check carried out and as you will see 6 offending vehicles which may be considered for prosecution.

[illegible]

Terrie Johnson - PCSO 8143



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Residents thanked for their recycling efforts since new waste and recycling service was introduced



Braintree District Council is thanking residents for their continued support of the new recycling and waste collection service, which launched across the district in June.

The changes have been introduced in response to new national legislation, known as Simpler Recycling in England, which requires councils to collect more recycling at kerbside and reduce the amount of general waste.

Since June, residents have made a strong start to using the new recycling arrangements. Early figures show that compared to June 2025, paper, card and mixed recycling tonnages have increased by 127%, food recycling has increased by 37% and garden waste increased by 29%. At the same time, general waste collected by Braintree District Council has decreased by 19%.

The increase in recycling and reduction in general waste is thanks to the efforts of residents who have successfully adapted to the changes.

As households continue to use the new recycling service, there are a number of simple steps that can help make the most of the available recycling capacity and ensure materials can be successfully recycled. Residents are encouraged to put the right item in the right bin, keep recycling clean, dry and loose, and where possible squash or flatten containers, such as plastic bottles and cardboard, to create more space. Rinsing food containers, separating paper and card from mixed recycling, and avoiding placing recycling in bags can also help to reduce contamination.

The council is progressing plans to introduce an additional recycling capacity scheme this autumn, as set out within the Household Waste and Recycling policy. Feedback from residents and evidence from early collection data are helping to inform the detailed design and implementation of the scheme, ensuring it reflects how the service is being used in practice and supports households that need additional capacity. As the new service continues to bed in, we will continue to monitor performance and gather further data to help shape the final arrangements. Full details, including eligibility criteria and the application process, will be communicated ahead of the autumn launch.

Councillor Peter Schwier, Cabinet Member for Operations and Pride in Place at Braintree District Council said: “We would like to thank residents for their support and feedback following the introduction of the new collections system.

“We understand that changes to collection arrangements on such a large scale can take time for everyone to get used to. We appreciate the patience residents have shown so far and remain committed to listening to comments and making improvements.

“The early results are extremely encouraging and show that residents are embracing the change and helping to recycle more from their door.”

Residents can visit Braintree District Council’s website for [up-to-date service changes](#), and find useful information on what items [can or can’t be accepted in their recycling collections](#).

Wethersfield Asylum Accommodation Centre to stay open beyond 2027 and increase by 55 per cent in capacity



**Braintree
District Council**

Braintree District Council has learnt Wethersfield Asylum Accommodation Centre will remain operational beyond 2027 and permanently expand by 55 per cent. The Home Office informed the Council of their plans yesterday evening (25 June).

Cllr Tom Cunningham, Leader of Braintree District Council, said:

"We are bitterly disappointed that, after more than three years of having the UK's largest asylum accommodation centre imposed on this district, it appears it will now stay for an indeterminate amount of time.

To compound this, the site will go from a standard capacity of 800 to 1,245, placing sustained strain on the community.

Since March 2023, when the Home Office first told us of their plans, we have been clear that this disused airbase, in a very rural area, does not have the infrastructure to support a site of this scale."

The latest temporary planning permission the government had given themselves to operate the site, known as the Special Development Order (SDO), was due to expire in April 2027. The site has been operational since June 2023.

Cllr Cunningham continued:

"This decision will be deeply concerning for a community that has responded to an unprecedented situation with patience, dignity and pragmatism.

We have been let down once again by the Home Office, particularly given previous indications from the Prime Minister that Wethersfield would close.

Alongside partners, we have raised more than 1,400 points of discussion with the Home Office in an effort to mitigate the impact of this site.

Much of this work reflects the local level of concern, which has been proliferated by inconsistent and insufficient engagement with the public.

Misinformation and disinformation have been allowed to spread unchecked and it has been left to authorities like ours to pick up the pieces of a situation beyond our control.

We are urgently seeking more details on these proposals and will now carefully scrutinise the legislation the government intends to use to extend the use of this site for the third time.

At the same time, despite being treated with contempt by this government, we will continue to work constructively with the Home Office and partners to support a safe, well-managed site and secure the best possible outcomes for our communities."

Crossword 99 Solution – Robert Burrows



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Glaziers	Capital Glaziers	17
Lashes	LMB Lash Artist	41
Leadworks	Suffolk Leadworks	43
Lock Smith	Christopher The Locksmith	6
Logs	Joe Gray	60
Plastering	Michael Banfield	4
Plumbing & Heating	Phil Burton	67
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Roofing	R Wheeler	54
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