

FELSTED

FOCUS

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

SPRING 2024

ISSUE 22

A FREE complimentary magazine or £1 where purchased

QUARTERLY

Photo: Brian Joslin

INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

■ FEATURES

■ PUZZLE

■ PLAN REVIEW

■ RECIPE





Green Homes Grants could make your home more energy efficient and save you money this winter

During the winter months, we use the heating at home more to stay warm.

If you live in Uttlesford, find it hard to heat your home and worry about your energy bills, a Green Homes Grant might be able to help.

You could qualify for help if you live in an energy inefficient home, which is owned or privately rented, and you are in receipt of benefits or are on a low income.

What is the Green Homes Grant?

The Green Homes Grant scheme is a UK Government funded initiative supporting local projects to make energy saving improvements in your home, helping to reduce household fuel bills and make homes warmer.

How does it work?

Warmworks is the Managing Agent delivering this scheme on behalf of Uttlesford District Council. Following a survey of your property by a qualified surveyor at a convenient time, they will recommend a package of improvements that is suitable for your home.



Get in touch today to find out more about Green Homes Grants

 0808 196 8255

 surveys.est.org.uk/s/GreenHomesGrantSchemeLAD



Please note that the repair or replacement of fossil fuel systems such as gas, oil and LPG boilers is not offered as part of this scheme



Note from the Editor

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Focus. Things are certainly greening up now, although the grass won't stop growing! I have some lovely wild violets amongst the first spring flowers that cheer everything up. It's also great to head out in the morning in daylight. Enough on the weather...

Parliamentary boundary changes mean that our parish is now included with Braintree constituency, the Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch is no longer our MP and we are now represented by the Rt Hon James Cleverly MP, the Home Secretary. This does not have any effect on our district council that remains as Uttlesford.

Roy and Richard, two of our parish councillors, have written an article about local planning. They say: 'This year we also need to review our Neighbourhood Plan, to stop unwanted housing development in Felsted and there's a fair bit of important parish news about that. Make sure you know what's happening, drop into the Memorial Hall on March 15 or 16 and have your say. It is worth it!'

I would just like to say a big thank you to those who continue to deliver the magazine and allow us to deliver it free to parish residents. If you see them, smile and say thanks.

The next edition will be the summer one, due to be delivered in June. If you have anything that you wish to add we are always grateful for articles and photos.

Janice

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Felsted Memorial Hall

Hello everyone!

It seems a long time since we chatted, and here we are in March!

I hope you all had a peaceful festive season. Winter is dragging now, isn't it? But there are lovely signs of spring. I've been watching the blue tits in and out of the bird box; such busy little things.

Well, I hope you all came to see the panto. This year was a sellout! We could have filled the hall again for another night. We have had such good feedback from those that came, we obviously did something right! It was great fun to do, but very hard work. We all met on the Sunday morning after the last performance, put all the props and scenery away and closed the curtains with sadness. Then we all had a big breakfast together.

A few weeks off, and the writing group will meet to start the next one. There are already a few ideas knocking around. At time of writing, I do not know the exact amount of money made, but I do know that we made over £700 on the raffle, so half will go to Great Ormond Street Hospital and the other half to a new charity in Braintree called POP Essex. It supports young families in the Braintree area. I will let you all know how much we made for the hall in the summer edition. Whatever we make will go toward the electrics on the stage, as they need some attention and we need to consider energy saving lights.

Did you know that the Memorial Hall is 100 years old this year? We are holding a few events to mark the centenary, such as a Jazz Dance in the summer, so watch out for adverts. I was told by my neighbour that the hall housed families who were bombed out in London during the war. The Army was billeted in Felsted School, and they loaned a large cooker so that meals could be cooked at the hall. This is just one of the many services that the hall has given over the years.

You will notice that the wreaths have been removed from the memorial. Thank you Reg and Wendy Bentall for doing this every year, you never let us down. Now there are plans to give the memorial cross a good clean.

Hazel Fox

Felsted Friendship Club

As we moved towards winter, our speaker in November was Richard Pausey, who gave us such an interesting talk on 'Medical history on the doorstep'. He talked about cowpox, leprosy, smallpox and malaria from the Blackwater area. He told us about many interesting men all linked to the Eastern region: William Harvey, a physician who in the 16th century, was the first person to describe the circulation of blood in the body; Daniel Sutton a clinical scientist who, with his brothers in the 18th century, inoculated 22,000 people against cowpox and only three people died; Edward Jenner, also in the 18th century, invented a vaccine against smallpox; James Barry in the 19th century who did his first caesarean section in Africa where both mother and child survived. We hope Richard will come and speak to us again.

Our annual coffee morning was held in November and we thank those who came out on a very wet day to support us. We raised just over £500 for our Christmas events.

At our Christmas Tea Party on 1 December, we had a delicious tea put together by Diane Denny and her helpers. We were well entertained by members of the Bishops Stortford Ukulele Band, who handed out words for members to sing along.

A few days later we were made very welcome at Leez Priory for a wonderful lunch. Some of the senior classes of Ford End Primary School came to sing for us, which was delightful.

At our January meeting, Karen Wheatley put us through our paces, giving us seated exercises accompanied by gentle music for about ¾ hour. We all felt the benefit..

- 16 February – Lasting Power of Attorney – J Lucas
History of Abbeyfield – Cass Murray
- 14 March – Tea at Felsted School with music
- 19 April – AGM with lunch and speaker
- 17 May – Helen Rollason Cancer Charity

If you are interested in coming along to one of our meetings, please do contact either Alison Moore 01371 821632 or Sue King 01371 821411.

Felsted WI

Once again spring seems to be upon us. "At last, you say!" As we look around we can start to see the spring plants climbing up through the wet ground, showing off their beautiful colours as the crocus and snowdrops appear.

Felsted WI looks forward to a new year of outings and fun gatherings, to beautiful gardens and social occasions as the evenings start to get lighter. A trip is planned to see the Air Ambulance and its workings at Earls Colne, very exciting and interesting. We have already had a WI hyacinth competition, for which there were four happy winners achieving beautiful blooms.

There is a full diary of speakers and quizzes to entertain, as our previous year saw a variety of wonderful wildlife photos taken in Africa by the very talented Tom Way. Also, a very entertaining chap who spoke about the mighty Titanic and the sinking stories of true recollections remembered.

Let's all hope for better and drier weather to cheer us all up. For any further information about the Felsted WI, do please get in touch with Penny Lewis on 07825 312829.



Mill Road, Felsted



WEA
Adult Learning
Within Reach

**Felsted Branch Spring 2024
APRIL COURSE**



**Is Global Warming the Fault of the
Poor Old Cow? with Andrew Notman**

Course Code Q00013712 Fee: £14.70
Felsted British Legion Hall

2 THURSDAY mornings; 10.00 - 12.00 18th & 25th APRIL

Enrolment 03003 033464 option 1

More info. at: wea-essex.org.uk/branches/felsted/

The WEA is a charity registered in England & Wales; number 1112775



www.felstedchurch.org.uk

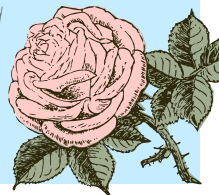
Easter 2024

Full details on the church website

The hope that Easter shows us "brings a joyful expectation of the future, based on true events in the past, that changes everything about the present. With Jesus the worst thing is never the last thing...".

Rico Tice, Hope Explored

MARCH 29-31ST



Dear Friends,

It doesn't seem possible that we have reached March already. The nice thing about this time of year is that you can see all the spring flowers in bloom, the buds beginning to form on the trees and the birds looking for safe places to build their nests. Hopefully, we can look forward to some long sunny warm days (without too much rain).

We at the URC have had a busy time recently, raising and giving a £700 donation to Little Haven's Hospice, plus gifts and money to assist Braintree Mencap to help buy supplies for their parties and coffee mornings.

We are looking forward to our next Church Social on Friday 22 March at 2.00pm, when we will have a few games of bingo, a raffle and will be serving our traditional pancakes. We invite everyone to come and join us for a fun afternoon. Entrance will be £1.00 only.

The next big event will be our church anniversary on 9 June at 10.30am. We will be serving lunch after the service at £10.00 per head. If you are interested in attending the lunch after the service, please contact the number below by 2 June.

We do hope to reinstate our mid-week meetings in the near future; date to be confirmed.

It is with regret that we have to announce the closure of Great Dunmow URC. The final service was held on Saturday 17 February when a number of our congregation attended to give some moral support to those who now, unfortunately, find themselves seeking an alternative place of worship.

The Women's Guild sessions have started once again on Monday afternoons at 2.00pm – we have a very varied programme this year. All ladies are welcome.

Our own little church continues to grow and that is thanks to all who attend every Sunday and the team of volunteers that help from day to day with the general organisation.

Please feel free, to come and join us on a Sunday morning at 10.30am. We would love to see you and you will be made most welcome.

Any queries please contact Diane on 01376 583994.



Felsted Parish Council

Willows Green – Book box

A volunteer is sought to look after the book box located in the old telephone box in Evelyn Road, Willows Green. This much-loved community resource shares its space with a community defibrillator. It is extremely important that the defibrillator is easily accessible. Occasionally the quantity of books donated by generous residents can spill out onto the floor, potentially causing difficulties for someone attempting to access the defibrillator. If any resident would be willing to keep an eye on the book box and give it the occasional tidy up it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the Clerk if you would be willing to take on this role.

Annual Parish Assembly

The Annual Parish Assembly is to be held in the URC Hall on Thursday 18 April, commencing at 7pm. All electors in the parish are welcome to attend.

During the assembly Felsted Parish Council will report on its activities over the last year. Various groups in Felsted will also report on their activities. Organisations that usually report include the Memorial Hall Committee, Felsted United Charities, Crix Green Trust, Botelers Education Trust, The P3 Group (Footpaths), Felsted's Tree Warden and the Nature Area Working Group. An update on the current review of the Felsted Neighbourhood Plan will also be given.

This year an invitation has been extended to the Police Rural Engagement Team. It is hoped that they will be able to attend and address the assembly on current issues.

If any other local groups wish to attend and give an update on their activities please contact the Clerk.

Office opening hours

The parish council office is open on Mondays between 10.00am – 12.30pm. Please feel free to call in, no appointment necessary.

Heather Read Clerk to the Parish Council
clerk@felsted-pc.gov.uk
07719 552174

Keep up to date with all the council news – Visit the PC website and enter your email address to receive automatic notification by email of all news articles as they are posted on the website.

Felsted Pubs

Did you know that in 1899, and probably for a few years either side of that date, Felsted 'boasted' at least 10 pubs, and probably 11. Before you read on, how many can you name?

Let's start with the two that have endured – the Swan and the Chequers. Neither is the original building. The Swan was rebuilt around 1925 at a cost of £6,800, replacing a C15/C16 building. The present Chequers dates from 1901, rebuilt by Ridleys at a more modest cost of £1,790. Both of these were 'inns' offering food and accommodation but my list includes much more humble premises such as beerhouses.

Now here's an old joke – if you started at the Swan and walked round the 'three mile' how many pubs would you pass? The answer, of course, is none because you'd have a drink in each of the Yew Tree at Causeway End, the Three Horseshoes and the Labourer's Arms at Bannister Green, and the White Hart which stood right next to the Chequers where Roslyn House is now. It's not unusual to find two pubs next to each other in a town, slightly more so in a village, but the Swan also had a very near neighbour, the Bell Inn in Station Road. Both sold beer from, and were possibly owned by, Russells Gravesend brewery with their Shrimp Brand Beers. The Bell closed in 1910 but had a long history; along with the Swan and the White Hart it is mentioned in the Return of the Surveyor of Weights and Measures in 1756.

To complete our list we must visit several hamlets where we find the Crooked Billet at Gransmore Green, the Pyes Bridge Tavern near Crix Green, the Sugar Loaves at Willows Green and the Black Horse in Chelmsford Road. Although latterly several pubs were supplied by our local brewer – Ridleys – the Pyes Bridge Tavern was owned by Greene King and was, I believe, still a beerhouse when it closed in the 1960s,

Let's end with a favourite quote from the period 'Let a man walk ten miles steadily on a hot summer's day along a dusty English road and he will soon discover why beer was invented' (GK Chesterton).

NB Any additional information, photos or corrections will be welcomed.

Bryan Grimshaw - Felsted History Recorder

Recipe: Almond and Cherry Slices

This treat is easily adapted to gluten free by using a gluten free pastry.

Makes 14 slices **Prep 15 mins** **Cook time 30-40 minutes**

Ingredients

225g ready-to-roll pastry	1 medium egg, beaten
75g unsalted butter	¼ tsp almond extract
30ml cherry jam	15g flaked almonds
50g ground rice	Additional butter for greasing and flour for rolling pastry (GF if necessary)
50g ground almonds	
125g caster sugar	

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 160C (fan 140C), gas mark 3.
2. Grease a 28 x 18cm baking tray.
3. Lightly dust the surface of your worktop with some plain flour and roll out the pastry to a thickness of 5mm.
4. Place the pastry over the baking tray. Press the pastry into the base and use a knife to trim any excess from the edges.
5. Spread the jam over the pastry.
6. Melt the butter and mix with the ground rice, ground almonds, caster sugar, beaten egg, and almond extract until evenly combined.
7. Pour the mixture into the baking case and scatter the flaked almonds over the top.
8. Bake in the centre of a preheated oven for 30-40 minutes or until golden brown and springy to the touch.
9. Leave in the tin for 10 minutes before cutting into 14 slices

Serve warm with custard or enjoy with a cup of tea



The Gardens of Easton Lodge

In February work progressed fast on the second half of the new path to make sure it was ready for visitors on snowdrop days. Unfortunately, the good weather for pathbuilding also meant the snowdrops coming up fast and being rather ahead of themselves, making us nervous for our snowdrop days. So what March will bring is anyone's guess!

Daffodil season will probably start early, so why not consider a group visit for March? Easton Lodge Gardens don't open on Thursdays until April, so a group visit is the only way to see the daffodils in the Lime Wood at their best.

Last year we welcomed the retired International Daffodil Registrar to the gardens. She found many daffodils that resembled the 17 old varieties that she identified in her 2003 survey. They were probably planted at the time that Peto redesigned the gardens for the Countess of Warwick. The main catalogue available then supplied more than 400 varieties. Now Kew reckons that 36 wild varieties have been identified and there are over 26,000 cultivated varieties. So, open your eyes to daffodils this year! If you want to arrange a



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The advertisement features a circular logo with a camera lens icon and the text 'Plumbing by dodson'. A yellow banner on the left side contains the text 'Plumbing Problem?'. A circular portrait of a man in a dark polo shirt is positioned on the right side of the ad.

The Gardens of Easton Lodge

group visit (more than 10 people) on a Thursday, please contact enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk

This month we will be holding 2 New Volunteers' Days on Saturday 9 March and Thursday 14 March. Our volunteers love spending time at the gardens, whatever the weather (almost). There are tasks suitable for all and the opportunity to make new friends.

For more information go to www.eastonlodge.co.uk/whats-on
Jill Goldsmith
07947 183 439

THE GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE



Felsted Plan review and survey

Background and current position

The Felsted Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is currently undergoing a review to ensure it is completely up to date so that we can maintain the best opportunity to protect ourselves from unwanted development. Following previous Focus articles a number of local people volunteered to support our NP review; a Felsted Neighbourhood Plan Review Group (FNPRG) was formed and has been working on the review.

You cannot fail to notice a lot of development going on around us at present but the majority is outside the parish. There is some development underway within Felsted but this is either supported by the existing Neighbourhood Plan (and brings with it significant community infrastructure benefits) or the application was approved before our existing NP was fully 'made' in February 2020.

Neighbourhood Plans are all about planning. We know there is resistance to any future development but we must be realistic and accept that, as has been notified in various previous publications, Felsted has been allocated around 95 new homes in the current draft Uttlesford District Plan.

However, those 95 homes must be built over a 17 year period (between now and 2041) which averages less than 6 dwellings per year, significantly fewer than the number of dwellings we had imposed on us over recent years and prior to the existence of our current NP.

There are strong relationships and interactions between the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a Local Development Authority (LDA) 'Local Plan' - in our case this is Uttlesford District Council (UDC) - and any fully 'made' NP.

The NPPF provides the framework for all development and includes very strict requirements that must be met if 'unwanted development' is to be successfully challenged.

Unfortunately, UDC does not currently meet many of those NPPF requirements. Their current plan is considered to be out of date (dated 2005) and whilst they are working on a new plan, that's not expected to be effective until mid-2025. In addition, UDC cannot demonstrate the necessary 5 Year Housing Land Supply (YHLS) and the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is below the required 75%. None of this is good news!

Felsted Plan review and survey

There is within the NPPF, what is known as 'a presumption of sustainable development' which is often applied where a LDA is unable to meet the NPPF requirements. Where a developer claims an application to build meets this 'presumption of sustainable development' and the LDA is not able to meet the NPPF requirements, it can be extremely difficult to challenge an unwanted application.

However, there is a critical policy in the NPPF that says that where a community has an 'up to date' NP (that is, one fully 'made' within the last five years) and that plan supported housing towards the LDA's 5 YHLS, the NP is given elevated weight in planning terms. It means a development is, under normal circumstances, deemed unacceptable where it can be demonstrated that it conflicts with policies in that NP. In other words, it does not qualify as sustainable development.

As the Felsted NP was fully 'made' in February 2020 and supported 63 dwellings (which also delivers our new Health Centre and a car park for our Primary School), not only are we able to challenge unwanted development but more importantly many developers do not bring forward development in Felsted parish because they know that where there is a NP that is less than 5 years old there is little chance that it will be approved. The same applies to planning appeals. If a refused application is taken to appeal, the likelihood is that it will be dismissed.

Of the 60 parishes within Uttlesford, Felsted is one of just eight with an up-to-date NP. That's why Felsted is extremely successful in challenging unwanted development and deterring developers from submitting applications.

With any NP it is important to communicate with the community in order to share aspirations, seek input and gain the support of residents.

Therefore, we are planning two community events in March to tell you what's happening and to get your opinions. One event will be in the early evening on Friday 15 March and the other on the morning of Saturday 16 March. Both will be held at the Memorial Hall and further details will be included on the Felsted Parish Council website.

Felsted Plan review and survey

Housing needs survey

It is critically important that any Neighbourhood Plan takes account of local housing needs. This enables the review group to consider the type of housing that is required or preferred by the community. You will know that most developers want to build large 'executive' type of homes but this is not necessarily what the community actually wants or needs.

A housing needs survey will be circulated to every household in Felsted and it is your opportunity to voice your opinion and particularly to advise of any current or future housing need within your own household. This could be low cost housing for a younger person, a couple or family or for a smaller home suitable for downsizing.

The survey will be carried out and the responses analysed by the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE). They are an independent charity that helps communities throughout rural Essex and have a great deal of experience in administering housing needs surveys for local authorities.

All personal details will remain strictly confidential to the RCCE and will not be shared with the review group or Felsted Parish Council.

The purpose of these questionnaires is to help establish if there is any need for alternative or affordable housing within the parish which the revised NP can help, potentially, to deliver. Again, the responses are confidential and only aggregated results will be included in the final report to the NP team.

Please be sure to complete the survey even if you have no immediate housing need.

Roy Ramm & Richard Freeman



Largely through a generous contribution from the parish council and by selling advertising space we have just about been able to deliver our magazine to over 1100 homes in the parish four times a year free of charge. We've asked before for a small contribution but only a handful - a baby-sized handful - make regular donations. So far this year, we've received just £35!

You often tell us how much you enjoy the FOCUS and we have some wonderful volunteers who give their time to write, photograph, layout, proof and even deliver for us but, unless we can generate more income, we may not be able to continue.

So, please help us to continue your magazine and contribute what you can, even just £5 per year per household would help to keep us going. Every penny will be spent on printing and delivery.

Please send your contribution to the Parish Clerk, URC Hall, Stebbing Road, Felsted, CM6 3JD or you can make a direct contribution to the Parish's bank account at the address below.

Barclays Bank
Sort code: 20-97-40 · Acc No: 00393274
Please mark your contribution '**FOCUS**'
Cheques made payable to "Felsted Parish Council"



The Hundred Parishes

We are fortunate today that we have a benefit system to help vulnerable people. In the past, the less fortunate relied on parish relief or the generosity of the better-off. Some wealthy benefactors left money for the provision of almshouses. You can see an article on almshouses on the Hundred Parishes website at www.hundredparishes.org.uk.

Other philanthropists helped the poor by giving money in a variety of ways. Some churches record the benevolence of these donors on large 'benefactor' boards. For example, in St. Peter's, Ugley we are told on one board that Robert Bucke, a draper, in his will of 1620 gave 3 suits of clothes to 3 poor men and 3 suits to 3 poor women with hats, to be given every third year 'for ever'.

Just a few miles away in Manuden's parish church, a board describes three benefactors, one of whom is the same Robert Bucke. Here he gives the same number of suits to the poor of Manuden, with additional hats, shoes and stockings.

In Little Hadham the church of St. Cecilia has a board recording that Miss Ann Scott, in her 1865 will, left dividends to the rector and church wardens to distribute bread on Shrove Sunday each year 'at their discretion' to the poor of the Parish.

Hatfield Broad Oak's Church of St. Mary the Virgin has a brass plaque describing the generosity of John Gobert. He left £600 in his will of 1623 for the purchase of land, the proceeds from which were to be distributed in a variety of ways including £4 per annum to the town of Hatfield Broad Oak. His heir Sir John Barrington subsequently bought the manor of Keeres in Aythorpe Roothing to comply with the will.

Please look out for more proclamations of generosity.

Ken McDonald,
Secretary

www.hundredparishes.org.uk or share a photo with the Hundred Parishes Group on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/groups/562396892237665

The Hundred Parishes



Ugley



Manuden



Little Hadham



Hatfield Broad Oak



You can make a difference!

As an independent, local charity, Uttlesford Citizens Advice couldn't continue to help the people who need us without our incredible team of volunteers. We are currently recruiting for the following roles to help us support people through the cost-of-living crisis.

Giving information and advice - Helping people over the phone, by email or face to face to explore the issues they need help with. You don't need specific experience or qualifications, (although you do need to be non-judgmental, able to talk to people and confident using a computer). All our volunteers receive training and there is a paid member of staff that you can turn to for extra support whenever you feel you need it.

Trustee - Although you don't generally need specific qualifications or skills to be a trustee, we are currently looking for someone with current or recent experience in Human Resources or IT (ideally cloud based) to make sure our board is well balanced. We welcome applications from anyone who is passionate about advice services and can bring innovative ideas, unique perspectives and good judgement - we are particularly keen to increase diversity on our board.

Student interns - If you are an undergraduate or recent graduate in law, social policy or a related discipline and you would like to gain some valuable experience volunteering for us for four weeks or more during the holidays, we would love to hear from you!

Volunteering with us gives you the opportunity to help other people and build skills and confidence as part of an inclusive, friendly team and the wider local community. Here's what one of our volunteers thought about their experience with us:

"Volunteering with Citizens Advice allowed me to do something meaningful with my time whilst learning new skills that would really benefit me in the future. I was able to be a part of an amazing team that helps others every day, and was encouraged to be curious, ask questions, and absorb information. I really valued the responsibility I faced when helping people, and enjoyed the everyday challenges of the experience."

If you would like to learn more about volunteering with us, please get in touch today! You can find information and an application form on our website, www.uttlesfordca.org.uk or call us on 01799 618840.

Our office is open Monday to Friday, 9.30 - 15.30. For information and advice email help@uttlesfordca.org.uk or call 01799 618840.



Word Search - Spring

H	S	L	S	U	C	O	R	C	E	E	O	G	G
H	N	D	B	S	N	C	T	B	L	A	N	N	R
O	E	H	U	U	R	L	W	I	F	S	Y	U	O
H	E	O	B	B	N	E	I	R	R	T	P	O	W
A	R	L	W	S	M	N	L	D	E	E	M	Y	T
H	G	I	A	N	R	T	Y	S	G	R	G	W	H
T	B	D	R	C	I	E	S	R	E	W	O	H	S
N	L	A	M	H	F	H	W	R	L	S	G	B	S
I	O	Y	T	E	G	G	S	O	H	T	M	A	P
C	S	U	H	N	B	N	B	O	L	A	N	H	R
A	S	L	E	N	T	O	G	R	L	F	I	M	I
Y	O	W	R	C	H	I	C	K	S	O	M	O	N
H	M	E	R	P	D	T	U	L	I	P	S	B	G

Word bank

LAMBS	EASTER	BUNNY	HYACINTH
CROCUS	BUDS	HOLIDAY	BIRDS
TULIPS	SHOWERS	APRIL FOOL	SPRING
BLOSSOM	CHICKS	WARMTH	YOUNG
FLOWERS	LENT	GREEN	EGGS

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' CORNER

Refuse Collections

I would like to apologise to our residents over the performance of the UDC refuse service in the past weeks - there was an unacceptable failure. Many will have read the UDC advices as to the reason. It was because of a failure in the UDC office to take steps in time to renew its HGV Operators' Licence, causing the UDC refuse fleet to be temporarily 'grounded'. There were no deficiencies in the vehicles themselves nor of the drivers or loaders.

The licence required renewal in January after the previous Transport Manager left UDC's employment and his successor was awaiting his accreditation. This lapse should never have occurred and understandably, many residents have criticised the service failure. Of course, a detailed enquiry as to the human and administrative errors is underway. Several residents have asked if they are to receive a rebate on their Council Tax to represent the cost to them of the missed/delayed collections. The answer is no – the actual cost per household is about 50p per bin collection/day missed and to reprogramme the invoicing system to make an adjustment for this modest sum would be disproportionate.

Some readers may be interested in some background detail about the refuse service. UDC's budget for it is some £12.22m gross pa or £5.85m net pa, after recovery of fees etc. The district has been served by nine large and one smaller front line refuse vehicles, together with three spare/standby older vehicles. The vehicles are equipped to receive two grades of material at a time ie either the non-recycling (black lids) or recycling (green lids) in alternate weeks, plus food caddy contents every week.

Improvement in the service is required and the UDC budget for 2024/2025 provides for the purchase of three additional refuse vehicles (each costs about £285,000) as well as the recruitment of additional loaders and driving personnel. There will then be an increase in the number of rounds and improved coverage which is needed after Essex County Council closed the waste transfer station in Great Dunmow, where vehicles previously emptied their loads. Currently, vehicles have to travel to Braintree refuse centre to dump, adding an extra 90 minutes per round/day, resulting in slower completion. Further, the 15% population growth experienced in the district over the past decade also has caused greater volumes for processing.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' CORNER

Our district recycling performance is interesting and compared with the other 11 local authorities in Essex, we perform very well regarding our 'green' bin effective recycling rate where we come top of the district at 29%. Our black bin recycling rate is much lower, where we stand in ninth position at 20%; the 'top' authority recorded a rate by comparison of 33%. Food waste collected via the brown caddies shows the district performance being ranked in the middle of the peer group at 8.9%.

Essex county Council is currently publicising a campaign to encourage us all to recycle more effectively. The aim is to reuse, recycle, or compost 70% of all waste produced by residents in the county by 2030. The latest statistics reveal that for England, the rate is 44.4%, while in Wales it is 56.7%. However, already, some 37,000 tonnes of food waste was converted last year via anaerobic digestion into energy (supplying power to the equivalent of 6,310 homes' usage) as well as also providing high quality crop fertiliser. This bio-conversion results in a reduction of in excess of 32,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions pa.

If any resident has any questions or issues to raise on this piece (or of course any other unrelated subject), I will be very pleased to hear from them.

John Evans

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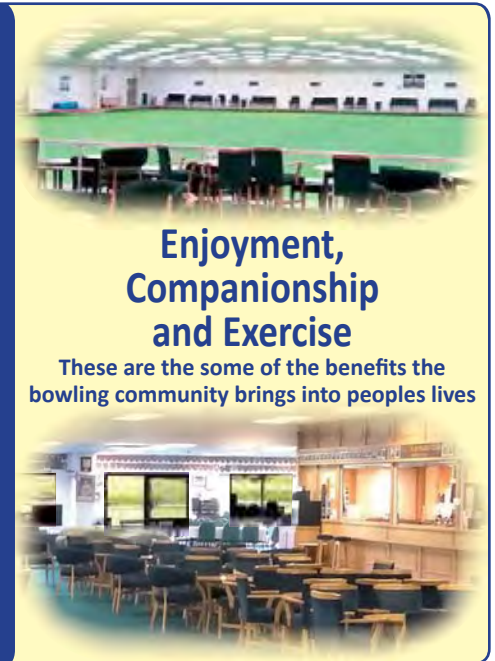
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www.al-anonuk.org.uk/

BUSES

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16 Stephenson: 01376 503050
DigiGo Bus: 03330 137138
www.digigo.uk
Traveline: 0871 200 22 33 or
www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Braintree: 01376 324129
Great Dunmow: 01799 618840

COUNCILS

Essex County Councillor:
Martin Foley: 01799 510510
cllr.martin.foley@essex.gov.uk
Uttlesford District Council: 01799 510510
District Councillors: - Richard silcock
cllrsilcock@uttlesford.gov.uk
John Evans: cllrevans@uttlesford.gov.uk

Felsted Parish Council

Chairman: Graham Harvey
Clerk: Heather Read
Parish Office: United Reformed Church Hall,
Stebbing Road, CM6 3JD
Office Tel: 07719 552174
Office hours: Mondays: 10:00 - 12:30
email: clerk@felsted-pc.gov.uk
www.felsted-pc.gov.uk

DOCTORS

The Surgery, Braintree Rd.
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Out of hours: 01371 872121

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Kemi Badenoch
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