



GOOD EASTER **VILLAGE NEWS**

SPRING 2011

ISSUE NUMBER 29

FUNDED BY GOOD EASTER PARISH
COUNCIL

Last Spring I wrote that it had been a hard winter with intense cold weather and that we would all count the cost when the bills came in for heating, lighting and cooking. Well, things can only get worse – as indeed they did this year! Counting the additional cost of the cold weather that we experienced in December, January and February is, to say the least, frightening. Add in the ever rising cost of fuel oil at the pumps the costs of living in the country are escalating out of control with very few signs of an improvement.....

However all is not doom and gloom – once again we know that Spring is just around the corner, the hedges are starting to blossom and once again ‘Conrad’s Daffs’ are blooming along Souther Cross Road and the Daffs and Crocus bulbs at the Star cross roads and on Tye Green did indeed multiply.

Our Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday May 19th at 8.00pm in the Village Hall – please come along and join in if you have any questions to ask. Local Council elections are on Thursday May 5th together with the National Referendum on whether or not our current voting system fits the bill. No doubt we will be bombarded with leaflets promising a wonderful future, election promises do seem to be, in the main, soon forgotten!

Alan Hall – Chairman Good Easter Parish Council.

MOBILE CUSTOMER INFORMATION SERVICE

On the second Monday of each month the Borough Council Information Service will be at the Village Hall 2.00pm to 2.30pm to help with bus pass and rail concession applications – free replacement recycling sacks – dog waste bags – information re housing and benefits and much more.

TODDLER GROUP OPEN MORNING
Wednesday 27th April from 10am to 12noon
Good Easter Village Hall

We are a small group of mums, dads and carers who meet every Wednesday morning in Good Easter Village Hall. The children play, have a craft activity and a healthy snack. For adults it's an opportunity to talk to others over tea, coffee and cake. If you have pre-school children why not come along any Wednesday, or on our open morning, April 27th, where we especially welcome new members.

The Rt. Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst MP Interviews 2011

Our Member of Parliament Sir Alan Haselhurst will be available on Friday 8th April at the Village Hall, Boreham 5.45 – 6.30pm and at Foakes House, Town Council Office, Great Dunmow 7.00 – 7.45pm. No appointment necessary but if you require assistance please ring 01799 506349.

DIGITAL TV SWITCHOVER IS COMING AND HELP IS AT HAND

If you receive your TV signal from the East Anglian transmitters you will be affected by the switch to digital signal. If you are over 75 years, eligible disabled, blind or partially sighted you can get help to switch one TV set to digital. Most people will be asked to pay £40 towards the equipment installed by an authorised installer, an aerial upgrade if needed and a 12 month after care service. If you, or anyone you know, need help please contact Jo Metson our Village Agent on 07540 720 609 or the help line on 0800 40 85 900.

MASSIVE Second Hand Booksale for Stop Stansted Expansion

Stop Stansted Expansion will be holding another giant sale of good quality second hand books at the Campaign Office in the Old School House by the Four Ashes Crossroads, Takely, on Saturday April 2nd between 9am and 1pm. Most of the books will be priced at 50p for paperbacks and £1 for hardbacks. Call 01279 870558 for further information.

SAFETY AT HOME

Essex County Council has joined with the Fire and Rescue Service to give free electrical testing on domestic appliances to residents over the age of 65, in a scheme funded by the Electrical Safety Council. These tests are used to make sure that small appliances such as toasters, kettles and hairdryers are in good, safe working order. They even offer free on-the-spot repairs. Call 0845 603 7626 if you need help.

RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PANEL

The next meeting will be on Wednesday June 8th at 7.00pm in Roxwell Primary School. If you wish to discuss any issues or raise any concerns with the Neighbourhood Policing Team please come along - you will be very welcome.

Good Easter Village Hall Committee invites you to celebrate

THE ROYAL WEDDING

BETWEEN

HRH Prince William and Kate Middleton

On Saturday April 16th 2011

At 7.30pm in the Village Hall

A Right Royal Quiz – Food Fit for a King or Queen – Regal Wines

Royalty Stand Up Bingo and a Raffle to please a Prince

Wedding Attire Optional but worth a try!!

RSVP = Tickets £10 from Di Hall 01245 231280

ONE FROM THE HISTORY BOOKS

I came across a copy of the Women's Land Army Song which may stir a few memories among our War Time Generation!

**Back to the land, we must all lend a hand.
To the farms and the fields we must go.
There's a job to be done,
Though we can't fire a gun
We can still do our bit with the hoe....
Back to the land, with its clay and its sand,
Its granite and gravel and grit,
You grow barley and wheat
And potatoes to eat
To make sure that the nation keeps fit...
We will tell you once more
You can help win the war
If you come with us – back to the land**

I look forward to hearing our allotment holders in good voice as they wheel their wheelbarrows up the road!!

HOW DO WE SPEND YOUR MONEY?

The Parish Council applies each year for a sum of money which is collected by the Borough Council through the Council Tax. Our bid for the new financial year 2011/12 was the same as last year and stands at £5996.

30% of our precept is spent on grass cutting – the Playing Field, Tye Green and other areas are cut by a contractor. 60% is spent on necessary administration such as audit fees, insurance, upkeep of the churchyard, Clerk's salary etc leaving just 10% to cover donations, subscriptions etc. A small budget such as this demands careful control – our books are audited by an internal examination and an external audit by auditors appointed by the Government.

All expenditure is minuted at each Parish Council Meeting – incidentally our Councillors give of their time freely in the hours that they work and no expenditure or expenses are claimed. We may be the lowest level of government but we are the cheapest!

GOOD EASTER SHOPPER BUS

The new Shopper Bus has been up and running since December of last year. This new service was arranged by the Parish Council working in partnership with the Monday Club and Essex County Council. The service operates every Wednesday picking up from Old Croft Close at 10.30am and then Souther Cross. Sainsburys at Springfield is the current destination giving residents around two hours to spend in the store including the NHS drop in centre. The fare is £2 each way or free for concessionary pass holders. Children 5-16 are half fare.

Residents who wish to use this service must be a member of the bus user group which is free and must hold a membership pass obtainable from Mrs Sally Willsher.

PROPOSED GRAVEL EXTRACTION SITE AT SHELOW CROSS

A proposal by Essex County Council to permit a major gravel extraction site at Shellow Cross Roxwell has been robustly opposed by Roxwell Council and many others including Good Easter. We would be adversely affected by noise, pollution, smell and many additional heavy vehicle movements on the A1060 which is already a dangerous stretch of road.

The proposal document fails to meet the basic requirements of a robust and credible evidence base and therefore carries little or no weight.

Roxwell Council has produced a professional opposition document which rejects some 90% of the case made by Essex County Council.

The next round of consultation is later this year and we shall be keeping a close eye on how our opposition is dealt with.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEWS

Good Easter is, in the main, relatively crime free however there have been incidents reported in the early part of the year. On January 25th a house in Souther Cross was broken into in the early hours of the morning with tools and equipment valued at £650 being stolen. There was also damage caused to the rear door.

Earlier in January a number plate was stolen from a car in the Endway and feed bins and a mucking out fork taken from Wares Road.

Ducks, Chickens and a Cockerel were taken from Souther Cross.

A reminder to everyone – keep your own property under lock and key, particularly where you have an external oil tank, the high cost of heating oil makes this theft attractive. Keep garage doors closed when not in use – you never know who is eyeing up your property ready to commit theft!

Keep an eye out for your neighbour's property – he will be doing the same for you.

SERVICES UPDATE

Writtle Library will re-open on March 29th and in May it is hoped that the Post Office will transfer to Writtle Library building when the Post Office closes down at the current site by Writtle Green.

There is a reduction in the number of mobile libraries from twelve to eleven although no services will be affected. No static libraries in Essex will close but there may well be reductions in opening hours.

Central government has announced that an extra £100 million will be allocated for highway repairs – in the past Essex County Council, as a large county, has received a fair share of this money – we hope that some of our worst potholes can now be cleared.

With the forthcoming evictions from Dale Farm traveller site at Basildon there is the possibility that land in the countryside could be vulnerable to illegal settlement by evicted residents - lock field gates where possible.

Essex Police has been looking at ways and means to live within their new and reduced budgets without reducing their standard of service – this will lead to a reduction in Police Officers, PCSOs and support staff. Buildings which are not heavily used will be sold. Transport and travel expenses will be closely looked at. Certain police officer jobs have been identified as potentially capable of being civilianised. It is worth noting that the Police budget which we pay for has not increased – the central government grants have been cut leading to the need for close scrutiny on all costs.

POINT TO POINT RACES AT HIGH EASTER

POINT TO POINT RACES WILL BE HELD AT HIGH EASTER RACE COURSE ON SATURDAY APRIL 16TH 2011.

DON'T FORGET THAT WE HAVE A VILLAGE AGENT

Jo Metson is our village agent – she is here to give advice and information to older and more vulnerable people in rural areas or anyone who may need her help. She is a trained advisor, fully checked by Criminal Records Bureau and works for the Rural Communities Council for Essex.

She can come and visit you in your home to support you and help you access the services you may need in as uncomplicated a way as possible.

In the past few weeks help has been given to local people in getting a housing transfer, installing emergency pendant alarm systems and adapting homes with grab rails, ramps and easily accessible baths.

Free smoke alarms, applying for benefits and help to stop smoking are among the very wide range of help that Jo can offer.

Contact: Jo Metson 07540 720 609

Village Agent Office – Freephone 0800 977 5858

And finally.....

The long awaited Council Tax demands arrived this morning and it is comforting to note that there has been no increase in the amount charged – living in a rural community it is important that there is no cut backs in the front line services which we receive such as refuse and recycling collections, policing, maintenance of our roads, fire and ambulance and many others which are essential to our health and wellbeing.

If I was asked to look in a crystal ball and foresee what the future holds for us all I would have to say ‘It is impossible to tell’ – The Middle East is in a disruptive state which will inevitably lead to increased costs in fuel oil and petrol, this in turn will lead to price increases for a great variety of goods. The one constant is that we can see that Spring time is around the corner and that Summer will follow on – this makes our village of Good Easter a good place to live in and to be able to forget the rotten winter.

Alan Hall