

The Chappel & Wakes Colne

Village Reporter



March to May 2026 Issue no. 128

Your free magazine for local news, information and forthcoming events in the Parishes of Wakes Colne & Chappel



Wine Tasting Evening
at the Village Hall
Saturday 23rd May

See Page 7 for details

Easter Church
Services

See page 3 & 4

Village Hall Spring Fair
Saturday 28th March

See page 6

SAS in Wartime Essex
Friday 10th April
at the Village Hall
See page 2 for details

Classic and Vintage Vehicle
Show at EARM

Bank Holiday Monday
25th May

See page 7 for details

The Village Reporter is compiled, edited and delivered by volunteers and is wholly funded through revenue from advertisers.

Anyone wishing to submit an article for publication can contact Mandy Sexton on 07729236253 or

email: mandymsexton@hotmail.co.uk Press date for the June to August 2026 issue - Friday 22nd May 2026

LOCAL INFORMATION

Earls Colne Surgery: appointments 01787 222022
Bures Surgery: appointments 01787 227529
County Councillor: Lewis Barber 0787 6237137
Police Colchester: 01245 491491 non emerg.101 emerg.999
Chappel C of E School: Head: Sarah Griffiths 01787 222296
Churches: COE: Christine Maskell 01206 241261
Chappel URC: Anthony Percival 01206 240442
Wakes Colne Post Office: 01787 222449
National Rail Enquiries: 03457 4849 50
Citizens Advice Bureau: 0800 144 8848
Childline: 0800 1111
Samaritans: 116 123
Chappel Parish Council Clerk: Ms. Helen Cook 01206 589095
Chappel Website: www.chappel.org
Chappel Chair: Cllr. Sue Chamley sue.chamley@chappel.org
Wakes Colne PC Clerk: clerk@wakescolne-pc.gov.uk
Wakes Colne PC Website: www.wakescolne-pc.gov.uk
Wakes Colne PC Chairman: Cllr. Peter Chillingworth
East Anglian Railway Museum: Peter Martin 01206 242524
Royal British Legion (Ladies): Val Sayer 01206 240328
Women's Institute: Neris Roberts 01787 223855
Village Hall: Chairperson Denise Stocker
denise.stocker@woodbre.co.uk
Village Hall Bookings: Glynis Parker 07761 120948
Earls Colne & District Dog Training Club (Mon 7pm)
Val Sayer 07972 252987



TREATMENTS OFFERED:

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FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK, CONTACT:

Angie Chester RGN
Telephone: 07801 365741
Email: angie.rgn@outlook.com

MOBILE LIBRARY

Visits Swan Grove, Chappel 1.45 to 2.15pm.
(Note: sometimes the van arrives early)

Next dates: Tuesday 18th March, 8th and 29th April and 20th May



STOP - PRESS

We are delighted to announce a brand new event coming to the Village Hall this Spring.

The SAS in wartime Essex

Discover the untold story of the SAS beyond *Rogue Heroes*.

From a 60-man desert unit to a 2,500-strong brigade based in Essex, their final WWII missions helped defeat Nazi Germany.

Learn how secret "behind the lines" operations were launched from the heart of Essex. Join **Gordon Brown** from the **Earls Colne Heritage Museum**, for a powerful, illustrated talk revealing this hidden chapter of history.



Friday 10th April at 7.30pm. Tickets £7.50
Scan QR code or call Paul 07967 000280 to book

Chappel & Wakes Colne Village Hall
Wakes Colne, CO6 2BX

Chappel & Wakes Colne Speed Watch Team Working Together to Keep our Villages Safe

Speed Indicator Devices

Our SID's continue to have a positive impact on slowing traffic in and around our villages. Encouragingly, many (not all) drivers are keeping to 30mph or below. The most frequent offenders are vehicles leaving the village westbound.

Only 1 in 4 vehicles in this direction are travelling below 30mph and three vehicles were recorded at an alarming 80 +

Of course, there is no way of knowing whether these were emergency vehicles or not.

If you would like to see the full data and analysis, please visit www.chappel.org or www.wakescolne-pc.gov.uk

ATTENTION!

Are you, or someone you know, aged 70+ looking to maintain your independence and confidence on the road?

The Safer Essex Road Partnership offers a free service for:

- Drivers who haven't driven recently
- Infrequent drivers
- Anyone seeking advice, reassurance or a confidence boost

You will find full details on parish notice boards or visit www.safessexroads.org/road-users/mature-drivers

We are always looking for volunteers to join our Speed Watch team. Even a small amount of time can make a big difference!!!
Call Patrick 01787 220147 for a chat



Please follow our facebook page, Chappel & Wakes Colne Road Safety & CSW

Chappel and Wakes Colne Community Speed Watch.
Helping our village roads become safer.

Villages in Bloom

Hi Everyone,

The weather isn't very good for the gardens (or anyone else) but at least we should all be able to catch up as soon as the season starts.

As for Villages in Bloom, not too much to report as we are still waiting for the Highways Authority to approve our proposed sites, but hopefully we will receive a positive answer in the next couple of weeks.

Once that has happened it will be all systems go, collecting the plants from the nursery, siting the planters and planting the flowers to bring joy and colour to our villages. Many thanks must go out to all those who are supporting us, without them this would still be a pipe dream.

If anyone wishes to join our small but enthusiastic group, please either email me.

Look forward to seeing you Email address: nigel.lippiatt@yahoo.com



Working towards the Kingdom of God, through faith in Jesus and love for the world



Chappel URC website via: www.lionwalkchurch.org/chappel-urc/

Rose Green, Colchester Road (A1124)
Chappel, Nr. Colchester, Essex CO6 2AB

MINISTER: Vacant

SECRETARY: Anthony R Percival
Peace Villa, Colchester Road, Chappel, Colchester,
Essex CO6 2DE. Tel (01206) 240442
E-mail: arpchapel@btinternet.com

TREASURER: Valerie Dent
Watch House Cottage, Station Road, Wakes Colne,
Colchester, Essex CO6 2DS. Tel: 01787 220147
E-mail: valeriedent1947@gmail.com

Preachers in March, April and May

On Sundays at 6.30pm

URC unless indicated

MARCH

- 1 Rev'd Andrew Royal
- 8 Ian Hardie
- 15 Sam Brown
- 22 Rev'd Dr Martin Camroux
- 29 William Glasse

APRIL

- 3 11am Good Friday Service
- 5 William Glasse Easter Sunday
- 12 Rev'd Jenny Martin
- 19 Carol Nicholson
- 26 Rev'd Dr Robert Pope

MAY

- 3 Rev'd Sharon Quilter *Anglican*
- 10 William Glasse
- 17 Rev'd Dr Martin Camroux
- 24 Ian Hardie
- 31 Alan Macnaught

Springtime and New Life

It does not require a time machine to know that the next 3 months will bring a considerable transformation of the world around us. Darkness is in retreat. Cold will give way to relative warmth. Bleakness will be replaced by brightness. Monotone gardens will be bathed in blooms of daffodil; crocus; rhododendron; apple blossom; then, if one takes a risk, the glorious first flowering of summer bedding plants. Lambs will be born and early vegetables will sprout.

In some cases, winter slumber is being succeeded by a renewed burst of energetic growth. Elsewhere, the cycle of life brings new birth to replace that which is dying.

Where I grew up there was a tradition of gardeners always planting their seed potatoes on Good Friday. Many convinced themselves that planting on that day above any other would yield a more abundant harvest. But there was also a practical reason for that day – for many it would have been the

Ian Hardie – Interim Moderator for Lion Walk and Chappel U R Churches

first guaranteed day off work in the year where conditions would be suitable to get into one's own garden.

Most people in those days had been told that Jesus' death provided the way to a new, better, life for humanity. They had also heard that, when he spoke about his approaching death, he had likened it to a grain of wheat which had to die to bear lots of fruit (John, chapter 12, verse 24). Gardeners knew that their seed potatoes had to die too, if they were to produce a large crop.

Nowadays fewer people know those stories about Jesus. But they still know that Spring is a season of hope and new possibilities. I pray that you will be able to experience its joy to the full during the next 3 months.

News in brief . . .

Looking back . . . The Advent and Christmas Carol Service saw the largest congregation in attendance in recent years.

Pause for thought and prayer . . .

Jesus – In dying, you conquered death, your love giving purpose to our living, and the promise of life beyond. Your words echo through the realms of eternity 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.'

From a prayer by Hazel McCorriskien

'Kindly Spring again is here' . . . 'Lord afford a Spring to me, Let me feel like what I see.'

'On Thy garden, deign to smile, Raise the plants, enrich the soil; Soon Thy presence will restore Life to what seemed dead before.'

Selected lines from a hymn by John Newton 1725-1807

125th Anniversary Celebrations



Saturday, 22nd August

3pm Buffet Tea at the Village Hall

5.30pm at the Chapel - Hymn singing and talk by the Rev'd Dr Robert Pope entitled 'Christian Dissent Past and Present'

NB: Parking at the Village Hall for both functions

Please make a note of the date. We hope You will join in the celebrations

Easter at Chappel URC

3 April 11am Good Friday Service
Tea/coffee and Hot Cross Buns afterwards

5 April Easter Sunday Service
Both services led by William Glasse

All welcome

Coffee and Chat

First Saturday morning of each month at 10.30-11.30am

No charge – just drop in

Enjoy a 'cuppa', cake and a chat



St. Barnabas Church, Chappel



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



All Saints Church, Wakes Colne

Church Warden - Chappel: Mrs Christine Maskell, tel 01206 241261, email: lbriar@aol.com
Treasurer: Richard Bareham, tel 07977 111817, email: wccpcctreasurer@gmail.com

Dear Readers,

I believe Spring is round the corner after a very long grey winter of grey skies, shorter days, rain and more rain with inevitable flooding. Evidence of this are the lush carpets of snowdrops everywhere and the four daffodils kindly gracing my garden. I love the season of Spring when the world comes to life after a sleepy Winter, shoots from the ground, leaves on the trees, the weak sunshine and more daylight making our days seem so much longer. We are so grateful to God for the beautiful world he entrusted us to care for.

The church was very busy over advent and Christmas, we had a wonderful school Carol service as well as a Carol and Readings one in Chappel church, a Christingle led by the wonderful Rev Em at the school. The Church was beautifully decorated by the congregation, the usual massive tree, holly and lit candles all lent itself to the magic of Christmas. On February 18th we had our Ash Wednesday service signing the start of Lent. We now have forty days and nights until Easter Day. There will be a Lent service with compline every Wednesday night at Little Tey church at 7.30 pm, all are welcome. Lent is a time for reflection, a quiet time leading up to Good Friday when Jesus died on the cross for each and everyone of us, he gave up his life for us, so this is a time to give thanks to him for the sacrifice he made for us all. Chappel church had the joy of another wedding on Valentine's Day, the sun shone brightly on the occasion to



add to Kirsten and Alexis' special day. It was a beautiful service led by Reverend Mark from Earls Colne and we all wish them every happiness in their joined future life together.

On a practical note I am well aware that the roadworks at Earls Colne will have had quite an effect on our two villages with no buses running to Halstead. Many people rely on public transport to get their shopping and attend the surgery, picking up their prescriptions etc. Please if anyone needs help ring me on 07748968083. I am happy to pick up medication or take anyone to appointments during this difficult time for many of our community.

You will find a list of all our services on this page for both Chappel and Wakes Colne churches for the months of March, April and May. We would love to see and welcome you to them.

Blessings to you all

Christine (Maskell) Churchwarden

CHURCH SERVICES

- March 1st Wakes Colne Morning Worship 10 am
- March 15th Chappel MOTHER'S DAY 10 am (plants for all ladies)
- March 22nd Wakes Colne Benefice Communion 2 pm (later time)
- April 3rd Chappel GOOD FRIDAY Devotional Service 10 am
- April 5th Great Tey EASTER DAY Benefice service 10 am
- April 26th Chappel Benefice Communion 2pm (later time)
- May 3rd Wakes Colne Morning Worship 10 am
- May 24th Wakes Colne Benefice Communion 10 am



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eZe Call us on 07980 314998



Tina's Pet Dog Training

Tina Jones - 07968 725424
Email: tinadogtraining@gmail.com



Check out my reviews on Facebook page @Tina's Pet Dog Training

Outdoor Group Classes (Mount Bures)
- mixed class of puppies, adolescent and adult dogs

1-2-1 Training
- all ages - at owner's home, Mount Bures or mutually agreed venue

Puppy advice
- pre and post puppy arrival - advice and tips especially for 1st time owners

Life Skills, learning boundaries, good manners

Tina is amazing! She came round today for a first introduction and wow within a few minutes she had my 16 month old puppy doing things she hasn't done since I got her. Not only that she's given me lots of pointers to work on, advice with my new pup, we have booked a 1-2-1 session and the puppy training class.



Tina has been amazing with our reactive dog Tilda. I was dreading taking Tilda to her first training session, but Tina took control and settled her in so well, I can see improvements in her training every week. It's such a lovely, friendly environment. I would recommend Tina always! Her classes are fun and relaxed, we really enjoy going. Tina loves the dogs and they all love her. She explains

CHAPPEL AND WAKES COLNE WOMENS INSTITUTE

December 2025 – that now seems ages ago – but we had a lovely evening with all nearly all members in attendance. The spread was as always delicious – don't worry about the diet that night. We had silly games and a generally good catch up and social evening.

The first meeting of the New Year saw a full village hall – what a terrific evening it turned out to be – with our speaker of the night - Lucy Lewis. Lucy was the first female bomb disposal officer to operate in the armed forces. What a life she has had with travels all over the world. Lucy regaled us with tales of her experiences at Sandhurst back in the day and what hilarious anecdotes they turned out to be. Competing in a mans world she had to be strong and able to take everything thrown at her in order to gain respect. Places visited, hardships endured but seemingly taken with a touch of humour or so it seemed to us in the audience.

Lucy now lives in Cambridge having secured another first in her career that of being the first female University Marshall at Cambridge University for 809 years. Her role is to make ceremonial events safe and also any student occasions as well as welcoming visiting VIP's.

Dates for your Diary:

March 18th Storytelling through textiles -Tabatha Mitchel-Simons

April 15th Royal Mistresses with Katie Cole

May 20th Annual General Meeting

June 17th Stunts: Highs and Lows with Lucy Allen

Meetings at the Village Hall at 7.30. Visitors fee is £5 which includes tea/coffee and homemade cakes.

Dorothyb.crees@googlemail.com

Remembering Tony Langley

Tony Langley sadly passed away just before Christmas and will be missed by so many in Chappel and Wakes Colne. Tony served on Chappel Parish Council for many years and supported many clubs and organisations in the villages including the Millennium Green. His knowledge of the villages over the years was deep and he could recall many an event. We will miss his input greatly.



It has been a wonderfully busy and creative time across our primary school, with children across the school enjoying a range of exciting learning experiences.

Our Early Years children are thriving and settling in beautifully. They are particularly enjoying their special time with their Year 6 buddies, with weekly sessions that help build confidence, friendships and a strong sense of belonging within our school community. It has been lovely to see these relationships grow.

Outdoor play and learning is also taking an exciting step forward with the roll-out of OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning). This initiative is already underway and is transforming playtimes by encouraging creativity, teamwork and problem-solving outdoors. We are especially looking forward to the imminent construction of a large sandpit, which will provide new opportunities for imaginative and collaborative play for all ages. Our older pupils in Fallow class have also been out and about, making the most of learning beyond the classroom. They recently enjoyed a memorable train journey over the viaduct to



Sudbury, which was an adventure in itself. The trip included a visit to Gainsborough's House, where pupils deepened their understanding of local history and art while experiencing a real gallery setting. As always, we are incredibly proud of our pupils for their enthusiasm, behaviour and willingness to embrace new experiences. Thank you to our staff, families and the wider parish community for your continued support – it truly helps make school life so rich and rewarding.

As always if you would like to arrange a tour of the school or for any further information, please contact the school office 01787 222296, admin@chappel.essex.sch.uk or visit chappel.essex.sch.uk.
Mrs Sarah Griffiths Head of School

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Chappel Millennium Green

If you walk around the boardwalk towards the river edge and the lower pond, you will see mature trees that are clinging to the river bank. Their roots like tendrils, embed themselves deep into the river bank for stability and nourishment. For most of the year, these roots are fully exposed whilst the river flows past at its normal level. Sandwiched between the tree line and the lower pond, is a large bed of Snowdrops which faithfully appear at this time of year.



The rhythm of nature is astonishing and a wonder to behold. Almost regardless of the weather conditions at this time of year, including snow, frosts, excessive rain etc, this modest native flower never disappoints but returns in abundance to brighten our winter days.



With the levels of rainfall over recent weeks, the lower water meadow has been very wet with occasional signs of flooding. A few days ago, a short section of the boardwalk in this area,

was underwater and I watched visitors have to turn back and retrace their steps. The river has responded to the levels of rainfall in the valley and doubled in depth. The exposed tree roots are no longer there to be seen, as ducks enjoy travelling at speed assisted by the fast flowing currents.

New buds are appearing as the days gradually grow longer. Song birds are tuning up their voices and the Rooks have been visiting the tall tree canopy near the lower pond, surveying the prime nesting sites together with any necessary repairs to last year's nests.

The 200 Club continues to generate essential funding towards the upkeep of The Green and I am pleased to announce we now draw two winners every month. A first prize of £50.00 and a second prize of £20.00. Recent prize winners are as follows:

December 2025 Draw: Ticket no. 26 – Sue Howard £50.00

December 2025 Draw: Ticket no. 89 – Michael & Julie Shepherd £20.00

January 2026 Draw: Ticket no. 9 – Sarah Dunn £50.00

January 2026 Draw: Ticket no. 40 – Glynis Parker £20.00

February 2026 Draw: Ticket no. 52 – Denise Ingram £50.00

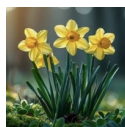
February 2026 Draw: Ticket no. 39 – Christine Underwood £20.00

The Draw takes place every month, usually at the Chappel Parish Council Meeting.

Do remember, a donation of £24.00 a year will now give you 24 opportunities of winning. This prize money is likely to increase again as more members join the 200 Club. Our Treasurer, Nick Ingram, has contacted the lucky winners and delivered their prizes. Please note: It is now 'renewal time' for membership of the 200 Club. Please continue to support us as the ongoing maintenance of the Green is funded by your generous commitment to the 200 Club. Do continue to visit and enjoy The Green and all it has to offer our community.

With Every Good Wish, Peter Neubauer, Chairman.
Chappel Millennium Green Trust.

Email: chappelmillenniumgreen@gmail.com



Remembering Village History

In 1995 the residence of Chappel and Wakes Colne celebrated 50 years of peace since VE Day. The government granted a Bank Holiday to enable these celebrations to take place.

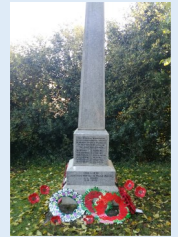
On the Sunday, a well-attended service took place in Chappel Church. The Brownies also attended after which there was a procession to Chappel Corner, opposite the Post Office.



Planning approval was granted for an oak tree to be planted on Chappel Corner. The oak tree was planted by the parishioners of Chappel and Wakes Colne in commemoration of the sacrifices made by the people of our villages during World War II and to celebrate 50 years of peace.

As a matter of interest, each village has its own war memorial. Chappel's is situated in the

cemetery and Wakes Colne's is in Wakes Colne Church. These were installed in the 1920s and additional names were added in 1945.



As part of the celebrations in 1995, the villagers held a great event on the school field where all kinds of activities took place including 'It's a Knockout'. There was a delicious tea for everyone and a dance in the evening. We have a video of the whole day of events, but it is on a cassette. We would be grateful for any offers to transfer the video to a digital format.

Please contact:
mandymsexton@hotmail.co.uk

Marion Cordingley



Chappel & Wakes Colne
Village Hall

Spring FAIR

Saturday 28th March

10am - 2pm

A huge selection of crafts will be on sale

with Pop-up cafe

THERE ARE STILL A FEW TABLES AVAILABLE

please call Glynis 07754 758961

£10



Chappel and Wakes Colne Station Adopters

2026 has started off very wet and cold, yet there is still much of interest in the planters on the platform. Trailing rosemary is in full bloom ready for any early bees venturing out when the sun shines. Wallflowers are budding up, and there is a lot of colours from the evergreen plants. In the garden by the entrance. The skimmia and sarcococca shrubs are in flower, while ferns and cornus stems provide additional interest. The bright colours of the polyanthus in the hedgehog house planter made by Al and Flo have brought much cheer throughout the longer winter days. The leaves of the daffodils, and allium are well up meaning Spring is not too far away. As the weather improves, we will be filling the gaps in the planters with colourful flowers.



In a recent visit to the station, you may have noticed that work on putting the living roof over the bicycle rack is underway. The main structure is in place. The roof, and the water feature have been



installed. The roof is due to be planted with sedum plants which are drought resistant. The finishing touches including the setting up of the insect houses mean the living roof ought to be completed by the time this article is published.

The Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership (ESSCRP) are manging the project overall. Our thanks go to the National Community Rail Partnership, ESSCRP, the Local Nature Recovery Fund, and Councillor Sunnucks for providing the grants and additional funds to support this project. One of the aims is to make the railway station a haven for natural wildlife by improving the range of habitats. In addition, we are aiming to provide a pleasant location in the village for all to visit, a safe place for children and families to observe small creatures and encourage more people to ride a bicycle to the station. Bicycles will be protected from the wet weather! Soon we will display pictures that will help to identify bees and butterflies that visitors observe.

We continue to try and obtain the resources to make a stag beetle pyramid. If anyone has access to leafy tree wood, such as oak or beech, please let me know. (teyfields@gmail.com) We have installed a second bird nesting box and are constructing small piles of twigs in different areas of the station to give shelter to small living things. We have been advised to leave an untidy area at the base of the slope in the right-hand corner as you face the station, as a home for small creatures. Alex Stevenson has recently obtained, free, a number of shrubs to fill the gaps in the hedge on the station approach. We will be planting those shortly. Overtime, the hedge will thicken up and provide more nesting places for different kinds of birds. Thanks Alex and Colchester City Council.

We also need to thank a kind villager who donated £30 for plants at the end of last year. We have purchased three shrubs that will provide scent and flowers in the winter. They are winter flowering honeysuckle, sarcococca, and viburnum. They are rather small at present, so are in tubs, protected from the worst of the weather, until large enough to go in the garden at the entrance.

Well done to the children at Chappel Primary who painted some delightful pictures about nature on ceramic tiles. We are working with the ESSCRP to have the tiles mounted attractively to put on show at the station.

Finally, the East Anglian Railway Museum has included an amazing event in its programme for the coming year. It is the **2026 Classic and Vintage Vehicle Show Spring Bank Holiday Monday May 25th**. There is something for all the family. Many vintage and classic car owners will be pleased to show you and talk to you about their much-loved vehicles. Fun activities include unlimited, diesel, steam, and mini rail. Vintage buses will be offering a free return trip to Bures. The new Exhibition Hall and restoration shed bring the history of railways over time to life. Come and see replica farm animals and find out how the real ones were transported in days gone by. The Braintree and Halstead model railway club rooms will be open. In the Goods Shed, there will be trade stalls for you to peruse model vehicles and craft items. The British Transport Police will be in attendance sharing many aspects of their work. Delicious refreshments will be available from Platform Two Café, The Viaduct Pub and Molly Moos ice cream van. You can find out more at <https://earm.co.uk/events/classic-vehicle-show/>. This page enables anyone with a classic or vintage vehicle to book a space, and for visitors to book advance tickets at a reduced cost.



Kath Beck and Al Cochram Station Adopters.



WINE

Tasting

with
Colne Valley Wines

Saturday 23rd May 2026

at 7pm

tickets £25.00
includes cheeseboard

Call Steve on 07787 436815
steve@colnevalleywines.co.uk

CHAPPEL & WAKES COLNE VILLAGE HALL,
COLCHESTER ROAD, WAKES COLNE CO6 2BX

www.echm.org.uk

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



ATLAS COMMUNITY GARDENS INFORMATION BOARDS: If you haven't been to the park (close to The Pump House Surgery) to read the boards and listen to the audio post's 'Voices from the Past' please do. They are full of information about Earls Colne's historical past. You can also find this information on the museum's website. Just Click on the 'Atlas Gardens' tab or visit <https://echm.org.uk/the-story-of-the-atlas-works/>

Also, on the website you can find out more about Mary Gee, subject of the first Blue Plaque in Earls Colne situated at Colne House, Station Road, that was unveiled in October by Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst, Lord Lieutenant of Essex.

<https://echm.org.uk/mary-gee-1795-1864-philanthropist/>

ECHM are repeating the presentation on Friday 13th March 2026 2pm-4pm on Robert Aitken DSO – his role in the story of HMS X7, the midget submarine which took part in the 1943 attack on the Tirpitz battleship. Guest speaker Gary Washbrook. Robert was the last managing director of the Hunts Atlas Works.

All tickets £7.50 online <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/GAGR> or available from the museum during opening hours.

MUSEUM @ THE LIBRARY: The museum will be at Earls Colne Library every Friday from 3.30 – 4.30pm. Come and say hello.

OUT AND ABOUT TOURS: The guided walks with John Stedman will recommence on Saturday 18 Apr 2026. His first tour takes in Lower Holt St and Colneford Hill. Meet at St Andrews Churchyard, Earls Colne for a 2pm start. Each tour lasts about two hours. We have audio equipment available, so you won't miss a word. The full programme of walks takes you through to October. The tour for Saturday May 16th will be on Halstead Road.

More information about the museum and any of our planned events can be found on Facebook, on our website, or by joining our mailing list.

Coping with Climate Change and Biodiversity loss in Chapel and Wakes Colne

Spring is here! Maybe not yet the temperatures we crave, but masses of spring flowers, not just snowdrops, aconites and primroses, but daffodils and hellebores are opening up weeks earlier than 30 years ago when we moved to Wakes Colne and had to wait till April for those.

As we splash through the puddles and squelch through the mud of another, mild, wet Essex winter, and look forward to the hot, dry, and hopefully sunny days we can expect in summer, it seems the scientists who predicted we would get milder, wetter winters with more violent storms, and hotter, drier summers did get it right, and their advice to find ways to mitigate the effects of climate change, and the biodiversity loss it brings, seems worth taking.

It's hard to imagine water shortages just now, but they are likely this summer. This is the ideal time to mulch our gardens, to stop the weeds growing and to hold all that moisture in the soil to delay the need to water in a few weeks' time. Certainly, the cardboard boxes I spread over bare ground in the autumn have done a good job of suppressing weeds. The cardboard has mostly disappeared now so I'm replacing it to discourage the bindweed already popping back up again.

Speaking of bindweed, I've found a cheap convenient way to kill weeds I can't pull out of gravel and paving is to pour a kettle of boiling water on them. Works as well as weedkiller but doesn't require a trip to the shops, buying more plastic or putting more chemicals in our gardens.

This is a good time to check you have water butts to collect all the rainwater from your roofs. We have 3 water butts, an old bath and a tank, so even though last summer was the hottest and sunniest on record for the UK, we never ran out of free water. When the rain did come, just in time each time, it was heavy enough to refill everything. I have cut down on the number of pots I plant up with bedding in the spring now, so that nightly watering is manageable, and I'll be choosing drought tolerant plants like geraniums again to increase bedding plant survival rates.

Fortunately, making our small contribution to encouraging biodiversity mostly involves taking it easy! It's best not to start tidying the garden, cutting down last year's herbaceous perennials etc, until it's pleasantly warm outside, to avoid disturbing the tiny wildlife sheltering in hollow stems before they can safely venture out. Nature is very resilient, if we give her a chance by leaving parts of our gardens unmown while the wildflowers bloom, we could still return to those days when we needed to clean bugs off our windscreens on a regular basis. OK, that wasn't much fun, but I do miss the masses of swallows who practiced their aerobatics around us as we walked our dogs here 30 years ago.

jillbruce321@gmail.com

Chappel & Wakes Colne Cricket Club Celebrate 40 Years at The Hobbies

This summer sees CWCCC reach the milestone of 40 years of cricket on Inworth Lane, four decades of family, friends, and community coming together around the game we love. From our humble beginnings playing in sight of the viaduct back in 1846, cricket has always been about more than runs and wickets, it's about community spirit, friendships, and families.

What's happening at The Hobbies this summer?

Two competitive Saturday League teams
Ladies' softball & new ladies' hardball squads
Social Sunday & League team
Busy junior section including ECB Allstars and Dynamos programme
Cricket all week, hardball & softball - All abilities welcome

We're a small village club with big ambitions, competing at the top of our leagues and attracting nationally recognised sponsors.

To mark 40 years, we've got special events all season:

T20 sponsors' evenings & showcase games
Ladies' softball festivals
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And more surprises to come!

Everyone's welcome whether you're a player, parent, volunteer, or just curious about trying cricket.

Find us at:

The Hobbies, Inworth Lane, Chappel, CO6 2BE

want to know more call:

Joyce 07530 545204

Your local club, your community, your cricket



VILLAGE REPORTER NEWS

If you are interested in being added to the Village Reporter mailing list, please sign up on the website, where you can also view past issues of the magazine, find local information and forthcoming events, view the gallery of photographs taken by villagers and have an opportunity to send in your stories and questions to share. <https://www.chappelandwakescolnevillagereporter.com/>

The website has been kindly produced and will be regularly updated by Charlie Sexton

Chappel & Wakes Colne Village Hall

Annual Update 2025

With over a century of history, Chappel and Wakes Colne Village Hall remains a much-loved and well-used building at the heart of our community. We are extremely pleased to report that 2025 has been another positive year.

Hall hire continues to be our main source of income and has grown again this year. Despite increasing running costs, the hall achieved an overall financial improvement on 2024. A modest increase in hire fees was introduced during the year, which was necessary to ensure we can continue to meet maintenance and operating costs.

Several improvements were made to the hall during 2025. New, comfortable chairs were purchased with support from Essex County Council's Community Initiative Fund and S106 contributions from Wakes Colne Parish Council. Chappel Parish Council kindly funded the installation of Bluetooth connectivity, improving flexibility for events and activities.

A new remote-controlled thermostat has also been installed, allowing heating to be managed off-site and helping to reduce unnecessary electricity use. For added winter safety, a grit bin and supply of grit were purchased, gratefully funded through Councillor Lewis Barber's Essex County Council locality budget.

Looking ahead, we hope to add more folding tables, along with outdoor benches and planters, to further enhance the hall for hirers and visitors and compliment the 200 spring bulbs which were planted by a few of our volunteers & trustees last Autumn.

A major grant application is currently being considered by Colchester City Council's Community Asset Fund. If successful, this would enable important improvements including car park upgrades with disabled bays, a new roof over the kitchen and facilities extension, solar panels with battery storage, replacement heaters, and the addition of a projector and screen. These upgrades would improve accessibility, safety and energy efficiency. A professional tree survey has also been commissioned, and we are awaiting the report.

The hall continues to be well used by local groups and residents. Regular weekly bookings include art classes, Tai Chi, yoga, band rehearsals and our much-valued Women's Institute. Parish Council meetings are also held at the hall. Throughout the year, the hall hosted a wide range of celebrations, social events and community activities.

Fundraising events remain an important part of hall life. Our Spring and Autumn Craft Fairs were once again well attended, and we were delighted to welcome back the Common Ground Theatre Company. A wine tasting evening with Colne Valley Wines was held for the first time and proved very popular. All events were organised by the volunteer committee and raised valuable funds.

As we look ahead to 2026, energy efficiency and ongoing maintenance remain key priorities. We would like to thank both Parish Councils, our trustees, volunteers, hirers and residents for their continued support. We look forward to welcoming you to the hall throughout the year.

Denise Stocker, Chairperson



Nature Notes

Did you see Hamza Yassin on the telly a few weeks ago, his *Hidden Wild Isles* BBC & OU series, the winter episode when he was out at night catching and ringing a Woodcock? For me it was an 'I've been there' moment as a year ago I was out one night with a ringer doing exactly the same thing, catching and ringing (and then releasing...) a Woodcock. This would have been very hard a few years ago, but technology has made all the difference to ringing birds at night. In the old days it was a powerful lamp and lots of misses; now its affordable night vision optics to locate the birds and get close before a final dazzle with the torch and netting.

That particular evening was more memorable though from the fifth Snipe we caught that night. This one was a re-trap (a bird already caught and ringed on some previous occasion), ringed not a hundred yards away in the same wet field five years previously. As the winter population of Snipe in that part of Devon is thought to be mainly birds from Iceland, this little 120-gram bird had probably done that return trip five times at least. After weighing, measuring the wing and bill length and finally ringing, it was released. One thing this helped confirm is that Snipe are very faithful to territory. And we know that many other birds are too.

Ringers have to be careful these days because of instances of unwanted trolling on social media, because some people believe the practice is cruel. But this is not a bunch of people wanting to get up close to birds; this is science in action. And it is heavily regulated.

Ringing started out in the early nineteen hundreds, and administration was taken over by the British Trust for Ornithology in the 1930s. Each ring has a unique number, and the BTO collects and collates the numbers and all the data about the bird caught. After approaching a hundred years of doing this, a vast body of info now exists. The BTO also is the licensing authority; ringers have to be rigorously trained and licenced before they can practise.

One huge commitment is the 'constant effort sites' scheme (CES) running since 1983 whereby ringers operate the same nets in the same location over the same period throughout the breeding season at some 120 UK sites. Such standardised work gives the BTO a very accurate picture of change (or continuity) in bird populations over a long period.

While the UK led the way in ringing, it's done throughout Europe now. For instance, I was in Bulgaria a couple of months ago and came across a group of ringers at a reed bed near the Black Sea coast. A Great Reed Warbler in the hand is a big memory from that trip.

What's the purpose though: what have we gained; what's the why for catching and ringing birds? Environmental impact studies supporting investments (construction, building nuclear power stations or wind farms, laying power cables) always require a section in the planning application for effects on the natural environment, from plants to micro bugs, from mammals to birds big and small. Then there's climate change: what's the impact on bird movement and populations; how is the natural world adapting – or not? Where do our summer birds go in the winter, and where do our winter birds come from?

Ringing gives us many answers to these complex questions. The massive body of data accumulated on bird migration, health, population trends and so on can be deployed to give answers. Why has the population of our summer migrants such as Turtle Doves, Wood Warblers, Spotted Flycatchers and so on done so badly? The answer in this case seems to be it's not just the breeding environment here but equally, or more so, deforestation in their winter quarters. If you're spending a pound, then it might be better spent planting a tree in West Africa than doing a bit more coppicing in Essex.

As you're out and about then, if you see ringers go and have a quiet chat. It should be an interesting conversation. And as for the secretive well camouflaged Woodcock, last winter I saw one flying over Chappel school one early morning. It's not a rare bird; just very rarely seen.

Tony Witcher

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Thank you for supporting your local community

Patricia Jean Almond 'Pat'

11th July 1944 — 2nd November 2025



Pat was a British Legion member and supporter. She was often seen collecting for the Poppy Appeal outside the Post Office. Pats husband Dave, had lived in Chappel for nearly 45 years. He passed away in 1980. Pat and Dave were publicans running The Cambridge Arms, Colchester and The Wivenhoe Lodge, near Wivenhoe station. Pat loved to dance and spend time with her daughter and grandchildren.

Housing Needs Survey: Chappel & Wakes Colne

Dear Resident, Thank you to all those who completed our local Housing Needs Survey. A hundred responses were received. The results are being collated and the results and an analyses will be published in the next issue of the magazine.

Chappel Parish Council and Wakes Colne Parish Council

Wakes Colne Parish Council Report



Local Plan Consultation Update

The Local Plan Consultation has now closed, and all responses are available to view via the link on the Wakes Colne Parish Council website. A big thank you to everyone who took the time to respond online and share their views – your input really does matter.

Wakes Colne Parish Council submitted responses to the two proposed developments:

West of Station Road and Wakes Hall Business Centre. The responses reflected residents' views gathered at the drop-in consultation event last December, as well as comments received by email. Thank you to everyone who came along, wrote in, or shared their thoughts.

In addition, the seven parishes of Aldham, Eight Ash Green, Chappel, Great Tey, Marks Tey, Copford with Eastthorpe and Wakes Colne joined forces to submit a joint statement to Colchester Planning Department. This highlighted concerns about the cumulative impact of multiple development proposals along the A1124 corridor. Many thanks to Mike Lambert, Chair of Aldham Parish Council, for leading on this work and for speaking at the CCC local plan meeting held on the 11th February 2026. You can view both our Regulation 18 responses and the seven parishes' joint statement on the Wakes Colne Parish Council website.

A Few Village Updates

Our Speed Indicator Device on the A1124 has been suffering a touch of "winter blues"! With limited sunshine, it occasionally takes a little rest until brighter days return. Please be assured – it is not broken, just solar-powered.

By the time you read this edition of the Village Reporter, we're hoping the long-awaited Community Noticeboard will be in place. Kandee and Jamini have very kindly given permission for it to be installed outside their shop. This will be a great spot to advertise local events and keep up to date with what's going on in our villages.

Date for Your Diary

Our Parish Assembly, held jointly with Chappel PC, will be held on 29th April at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. This is a relaxed and friendly evening where representatives from local clubs and groups are invited to share what they have been up to over the past year. All members of the public are very welcome too – in fact the aim of the Assembly is to showcase to everyone what is happening in the Village.

Our guest speaker this year will be Alex Stevenson from Jordan's Farm, who will be talking about how we can attract wildlife into our gardens, feed and protect it – along with some fascinating insights into our countryside creatures.

Could You Join the Parish Council?

Talking of countryside creatures... we do currently have vacancies on Wakes Colne Parish Council. It's important that the council reflects a wide mix of skills, experience and perspectives from across the village. If you're even a little curious, we'd love you to come along to a meeting or two, see what we do, and ask questions. Alternatively, have a chat with any of the current councillor's – we're always happy to talk.

Useful Information

Next Parish Council Meeting: 4th March 7.15pm, Village Hall

Website: www.wakescolne-pc.gov.uk

Please do take a look – there's lots of helpful information there about the Local Plan and village matters.

I finish on a sad note. Cllr Barry Walsh recently lost Jane, his wife of 60 years, to cancer. We offer him our sincere condolences.

Peter Chillingworth



Elizabeth Marjorie Bubar
2nd April 1939—24th October 2025

Elizabeth lived in Chappel with her husband Brian, who passed away in 2016. She worked at Colchester hospital as a secretary and then run hotels in Yorkshire, Suffolk and Essex with Brian. Elizabeth always kept a dog, a few sheep and loved horses. Her granddaughter influenced by Elizabeth, loves riding and being involved in show jumping.

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**EXTRAORDINARY LIVES:
THE LOVE OF MY LIFE MY HUSBAND
MICHAEL SHERGOLD BAKER
07.04.1935 - 10.10.2025**



First and foremost Husband of Kate, father of Stephen and Christian, grandfather of James, Alice and Oliver and Great Grandfather of Mylae Mae, Vinny Rae and Colby Charlie. They were his pride and joy: his family.

Michael's funeral took place on the 10th November. The service was conducted by the Reverend Emma Barr at three Counties. Michael would have been very proud to know that over a thousand tributes had been written to him on the internet, from those who knew him as 'Mr Deltic'. An article in the Deltic Preservation Society Magazine entitled 'the Passing of a Deltic Legend, Mike Baker', noted: "His knowledge of Napier power units was nothing short of extraordinary and he came to the rescue of the DPS engineering volunteers on countless occasions.

Michael would have been especially proud to have known that the Blues and Royals of the Household Cavalry sent a wreath to his funeral. On it was printed the inscription: 'In Memory of Trooper Mike Baker, The Royal Horse Guards from All Members of the blues and Royals Association' bearing on the bottom the inscription 'Lest we Forget.'

Michael served in Cyprus during the troubles in the 1950's and was seconded to Government House as Bodyguard to Sir Hugh Foot and his family. As well as his duties at Government House he was required to partake in patrol duties seeking Eoka terrorists. He often joked that those tours of duty did not involve either a cavalry horse or Saracen tank but instead he was required to negotiate the hills and byways of Cyprus on a donkey. (But not the same experience as that of Robert Louis Stephenson in his 'Travels with a Donkey in France.)

On his return to England Michael completed his apprenticeship with Napiers at Acton where he became involved with his beloved Deltics which were being trialled for the navy in order to replace the use of inflammatory petrol with Diesel to power naval vessels in particular minesweepers. When on sea trials Michael met Prince Charles, now King, and Prince Andrew.

Kate was to learn later that on one such sea trial Michael nearly drowned. It was a dark stormy night with a surging sea and he had been put ashore in a dinghy which immediately was ravaged by the mountainous seas. The crew were forced to retreat but not before Michael had saved one of the crew who had put his life jacket on inside out. All Kate ever knew was that Michael's suit was ruined by salt water and had to be replaced.

A lifetime of hard work and toil in overseas locations such as Somalia, South Africa, India, USA, Greece and Philippines, on government defence contracts, which inevitably took a toll on his health. In 2012 he suffered a heart attack while on holiday in our caravan with the three grandchildren. A bypass and pacemaker followed but that was only the beginning as he subsequently suffered various other conditions including an enlarged prostate – not cancer- but later skin cancer and a knee operation all without anaesthetic as his pacemaker was not compatible with the MRI scanners.

Inevitably his brain became subject to mini strokes which led to vascular dementia. But he never complained. On the contrary he always endorsed the fact that he had lived a happy life throughout which he had loved his work and during his last weeks he was even attempting to write a book of his historic and vivid experiences.

He was thrilled at the support he received from his sons and close family but a day did not pass without him expressing his undying love for them and his wife.

Dr Kate Baker, 07760545488, katecbaker@aol.com



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