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Happy New Year

I hope you have all had a great Christmas and wish you a very Happy New Year. The Association would also like to extend a very warm welcome to all the new households that joined us in 2023. We are looking forward to working with and representing you in 2024. I would like to thank all our volunteers, who over the past year have continued to help produce and deliver The Bulletin, as well as collecting the 2023 subscriptions. The Bulletin will continue to support local organisations and provide our residents with details regarding ongoing community and charity events. Again, it has been a busy and challenging year for the Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association (UCRA) Councillors, this included working with Council Officers and residents in reducing Anti-Social Behaviour in the Hoppy Hall car park. We installed CCTV, new lighting, as well as a new robust barrier. Your Local Councillors again worked with the Council in organising the Upminster Christmas event, as well as financially supporting the children's rides that were held in Upminster Junior School. We would also like to thank all our residents for supporting UCRA in the by-election in August, and for voting in our new Councillor Jacqueline Williams with a large majority. Finally, please do not hesitate to get in touch with ideas or issues you would like us to take up on your behalf, or tell us about anything you would like to celebrate. Please all keep safe, and I hope you all have a productive and great New Year.

Cllr CHRIS WILKINS - Chairman Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association

Update on kerbside glass recycling

New recycling sacks will be delivered in the first distribution round of 2024, by which time it is expected existing stocks of orange sacks will be depleted. It can take some weeks for the distribution team to get around the Borough, therefore residents can expect the new sacks to arrive at their homes between January and March. Please remember not to overfill existing sacks, as well as the new thicker sacks when introduced, as glass weight can cause a risk when operatives are carrying these loads. The Council are planning to remove existing recycling banks across the Borough by the end of March 2024, where materials previously deposited at the banks can now be collected at the kerbside, including glass. Finally, can we encourage residents to use the kerbside recycling services, therefore assisting Havering Council to continue to meet their recycling and net zero targets.

Cllr CHRIS WILKINS

continued on page 2

Your help needed

If you could assist with delivering The Bulletin to around 40 households in Upminster each month please contact me. Help us to help you. If you can assist please contact me via email gjo.anastasi@hotmail.com or bulletinra@yahoo.co.uk.

Public funding for defibrillators

The Department for Health and Social Care has launched a fund to help fund public accessible defibrillators. Applications are now open for the £1 million Defibrillator Community Automated External Defibrillators (AED) fund. This will provide 2,000 new public access defibrillators for communities across England. Anyone can apply and 1,900 applications will receive match funding of £750, with the applicants being required to raise £750 themselves. 100 applications will be fully funded. For further details visit www.defibrgrant.co.uk In support of this initiative, the Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association (UCRA) Executive Committee has agreed to provide up to £2,000 in total, to assist local groups applying to the fund, by part-funding the £750 they need to raise. Please contact any of our UCRA Councillors (details on page 2) or fill out a contact form on our ucra.co.uk website, if you wish to apply to




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CRANHAM WARD

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@CllrTyler

JohnTylerUCResidents@outlook.com

Phil Ruck 07858 188939



philruckucra@yahoo.com

receive UCRA assistance. In addition, we are encouraging groups and businesses who have already installed a defibrillator in our area, to register its location with the British Heart Foundation's national register. To do this visit bhf.org.uk and enter National Defibrillator Network in the search box.

Cllr JOHN TYLER

Subscriptions

Have you paid your £2 annual subscription for the UC&RA? Whilst we hope to cover the cost of The Bulletin through advertising, which we generally do, we need funds to cover any legal bills to fight any problems on your behalf. If you are out we will leave an envelope. Please return this to the address on the front. A number of residents have indicated they are happy to pay by cheque and increase their donation. Any cheques should be made to Upminster & Cranham Residents' Association. We take an active interest in

supporting you and will continue to do so. We are active all the time, not just election times.

Foodbank

With the rising cost of living the Foodbank remains under strain with increased requests for assistance and especially so at this time of year. If you can donate via one of the supermarkets, that's great, but not everything clients need is donated in sufficient quantity so it is helpful for them to have monetary donations as well so they can stock up on items donated less often. And they have to meet the costs associated with running a warehouse; it all adds up. You could send a cheque, payable to Kingdom Storehouse Ltd, to the Harold Hill Food Bank, Unit 1, Guardian Business Centre, Faringdon Avenue, Romford, RM3 8FD, or you could go online to <https://haroldhill.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/> Please consider donating - it could make so much difference to a family in need.

ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

| | |
|---|--|
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The other side of Christmas

With the festivities behind us, let's stop and think about how we are inundated with advertisements on television, social media, leaflets, brochures and full page ads in newspapers in the build up to Christmas. It has been estimated that over £9 billion will have been spent over the 5 week period prior to Christmas. The competition between supermarkets, especially at Christmas, is enormous and a huge amount of effort goes into the ads to keep us guessing right up to the very end who the ad is actually for. Whilst Christmas is a wonderful time of the year and many look forward to the festive season, it's equally a difficult time for lots of people struggling to make ends meet through rising food and energy costs. It must be very depressing not being able to go out and buy the huge amount of food and gifts on sale. Could some of the substantial amount targeted to be spent on the ads have been clawed back and spent on reducing prices or assisting the various charities who help the homeless and others, acknowledging that charity income is severely reduced at this time of year as donation levels drop whilst everyone is feeling the squeeze. We regularly advertise in The Bulletin the

Foodbank in Harold Hill who do an excellent job. Wouldn't it be great if the Christmas advertising budgets could be shared with more worthwhile causes. In recognition of this, we have made a donation to the Harold Hill Foodbank.

Havering Green Streets crowdfunding appeal

Havering Green Streets is a community volunteer group who try to clean up and green up as much of Havering as possible. They have asked us to publicise a crowdfunding appeal that they are currently undertaking: 'Some of you will know my group Havering Green Streets and what we do around the Borough - we clean up and green up as many green spaces as possible for residents and wildlife, and we apply for as much funding as we can to do that. We are currently applying for a fund so that we can clean up and green up our Havering rivers in Summer 2024. The fund is run by Aviva, and is part of the 'Save

our Wild Isles' fund. The rules of this fund are that we need to crowdfund part of the money ourselves, and for every £1 donated, Aviva give us another £2. If you support what we want to do, and if you want to see our rivers in Havering cleaner, and planted up with native plants please support us - you can get physically involved next year, you can support with a donation, or by sharing what we are doing with others, everything helps - avivacommunityfund.co.uk/p/rewildrivers#start.'

Hopefully see you soon - Gina (Havering Green Streets)

Housing - local Government

We have addressed the severe pressure on local Government finance in several articles recently, recognising that Havering is under pressure to reduce costs and is looking at savings. This is not unique to Havering Council and sadly a wide range of Councils are in similar or worse situations with Nottingham City Council declaring bankruptcy at the end of last year. On top of this the National Political Parties with

this year's General Election in mind are trying to gain support in a wide range of areas. I was very interested to see the announcements by the Leader of The Labour Party and their Shadow Finance Minister that they wish to build 1.5 million homes by the end of its five-years in power. What really concerned me was that whilst they wish to return to a system of house building targets for local authorities, there could be penalties if these were not fulfilled. The right to decide where homes could be built could also be taken away. Also of particular interest to us locally, the promise of a review of building in the Green Belt where currently building is not allowed unless there are exceptional circumstances. I noted that they would allow Councils to identify "Grey Belt" land suitable for development. I saw a quote in the national media that they would "bulldoze" applications through the planning system. Havering Council recently spent several years producing a "Local Plan" on this and a wide range of sites were earmarked as being in the Green Belt and housing developments would not be allowed. As part

continued on page 5

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of the process developers could comment and naturally they wished to build on these, however their proposals were rejected. The Local Plan was examined by an Independent Inspector. Labour's proposals look to me very similar to that of the Tories who dropped them like a lead balloon when they were punished in several Government By Elections. Perhaps the National Parties could encourage building companies to build on the many brownfield sites where planning permission has been given to build around a million or so dwellings. We need to be vigilant.
RON OWER

Hi Mum/Hey Mum scam – police advice

Our local police Safer Neighbourhood Teams have sent out a warning about a scam that is very common at the moment. 'The "Hi Mum" or "Hey Mum" scam has become a significant issue in the UK over the past

year. If you haven't received a text with a message like: "Hi Mum, smashed my phone, please contact me on this number: 07..." you're among the minority.

This scam typically begins with a simple request for contact on a new number and quickly escalates into a distressing hard-luck story. It often involves a child's allegedly broken or lost phone and a supposed kind-hearted friend who has covered the cost of a new one. Scammers then ask parents to reimburse this friend until the child's new phone is set up with banking apps, claiming an urgent need for the money.

It's crucial to be highly sceptical of any unsolicited contact. Additionally, you can establish secret code questions that only your real family members can answer, or use code words when engaging in financial discussions over the phone or online. These precautions can significantly reduce the risk of falling victim to this deceptive scheme.

If you need to reply regarding this message email upminster.snt@met.police.uk.

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An update from Cranham's Oglethorpe Players

It been an incredibly busy year for members of the Players since their last Murder Mystery evenings in January 2023. To date our members have appeared in stage productions such as Queen's Theatre and The National Theatre collaboration, Queen's Theatre foyer stage and the Brentwood theatre. Also writing new scripts and filming for films, TIKTOK campaigns, TV series and adverts. So, coming back to our roots has been a fantastic opportunity to show off our newly honed talents for our loyal, regular and local audiences.

Up next and following our now highly acclaimed Murder Mystery plays and Quiz nights, the Players have begun rehearsing their new production, entitled

'Murder at the Panto Rehearsals.' This promises to be a hilarious 'whodunnit' with all the usual

red herrings, intrigue and dodgy characters. The murder is even committed on stage. Due to the busy schedules mentioned above, the new production is due to open in the New Year at venues around Cranham, Hornchurch and Rainham. Details will follow. Meanwhile, if you are of adult years and you fancy joining the Players in any capacity Contact Chairman and Artistic Director, Gerry Sweeney on 07931 520420 or email gerrysweeney@sky.com

The Proper Blokes Club

The Proper Blokes Club is a community project for men's mental health. It provides a way for ordinary blokes across London to meet up in a non-judgemental environment and 'walk and talk' to share their experiences. Members of the group go on weekly walks at different locations across London. The aim is to break the stigma of men's mental health and start talking openly about it.

The club was started in September 2020 by Scott Johnson, a football

continued on page 7

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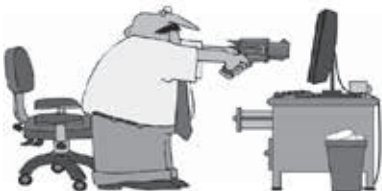
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coach from Bermondsey, who went through two relationship breakups followed by two custody battles in short succession. Struggling with his mental health, he started going on walks around his favourite spots and posting videos on Facebook of himself talking about his issues. He wanted to see if any local lads could resonate with how he was feeling. Other men started joining him on his walk and talks and it's been growing every week. Now there are 11 walking groups across London, which includes Upminster and Romford.

<https://theproperblokesclub.co.uk/>

Tithe barn National Highways funding application

Havering Council have applied for £650,000 of funding from National Highways, to make repairs and improvements to Upminster's historic tithe barn. The funding is part of money allocated by

the Department of Transport for projects in the vicinity of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing (LTC).

Following discussions between the Council's Parks team, Historic England and LTC Heritage Advisor regarding the condition of the Tithe Barn, the following improvements have been proposed:

- Repairs to structural timbers, sole plates and brickwork
- Replacement of the Norfolk Reed thatch roof
- Replacement and/or repairs to the external weatherboard cladded walls, ground level drainage works to restore the French drain, works to steps and ground levels to ensure water doesn't pool against the building
- Installation of a WC

For further details visit havering.gov.uk and enter Tithe Barn in the search box.

Financial help from the Council and others

Despite an ease in inflation, sadly many people are still finding it hard to make ends meet. The Council can help and offer advice, which is available on its website under the title "Financial help and advice". This looks at ways you could boost your income, provide emergency assistance and reduce your energy bills and other elements. If your problems are large debts then the charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP) can and will help, they can be found at www.capuk.org. This charity is also preferred by the money guru Martin Lewis. You might be fortunate in that you don't need such assistance but perhaps you know somebody who does?

Cllr PHILIP RUCK

Dick Whittington Review

When I first think of a pantomime, I imagine an uplifting show where I can sit back and relax, safe in the knowledge that there will be a happy ending - the Queen's Theatre Christmas pantomime, Dick Whittington, definitely fulfils this!

This pantomime is a classic: the extremely talented performers play instruments as well as act; the 'tense' scenes prompt shouts of "it's behind you!" and the humour is witty and appeals to all age groups. I think it's a welcome twist that this panto has some very recognisable songs, which will have you tapping your feet.

It was heart-warming to see children dancing in the aisles and participating as much as possible. Naturally I would highly recommend this pantomime to anyone with young children. But don't worry, the fun isn't all for them as there are some risqué and political jokes for the adults too!

The storyline is engaging and the characters are lovable - particularly the dame who does an amazing job to provide lots of laughs.

This pantomime was a fun-filled, festive, family night out and the wonderful Queen's Theatre has many other shows which you can see - Back Into Hell, The Rocket Man and a Matilda Singalong, to name but a few.

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Mother Goose

All Saints' Players, Ardleigh Green Road, Hornchurch, RM11 2LG, are pleased to announce their forthcoming production of 'Mother Goose', a Pantomime by Alan Frayn. Evening performances: Thursday, 18th; Friday, 19th; Saturday, 20th January 2024. Doors open at 7.30pm for 8pm start. Matinee: Saturday, 20th January - doors open 2pm for 2.30pm start. Tickets: Adult £8.50 - Child £5.00 pp (Including refreshments). If you would like to purchase tickets, please contact our Box Office on 01708 456683 or email boxoffice@allsaintsplayers.org.uk.

Hornchurch Football Club

We regularly give the home fixtures for the Urchins at The Stadium, Bridge Avenue in The Bulletin. Unfortunately games can be changed which was the case with the home game with Lewes on Saturday, 30th December. This was bought forward to Friday at 7.45pm on the 29th. Note this month The Urchins are home to

Horsham on Saturday, 6th, home to Concord Rangers on 20th and on Saturday 3rd February to Cheshunt. **Go along and support your local football team at The Stadium, Bridge Avenue. Please keep an eye on the club's excellent website for any changes to the above.**

New Dawn Chorus

New Dawn Chorus are delighted to share that after our first year as a Community Choir, we have donated £1,000 to Saint Francis Hospice, and £100 to First Step. We have given 12 performances, including two sell-out concerts at Queen's Theatre, and the remainder at Care Homes, Nursing Homes, Friendship Clubs, Day Centres and Lunch Clubs. We recommence on Sunday, 14th January, at 10.30am at HAD, which is on the junction of Wingletye Lane and Woodhall Crescent. The hall is within the car park. Our first taster session is free, and we rehearse from 10.30am till 1pm, including a tea/coffee/chatter break, every Sunday. We charge £5, pay as you go, per session.

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If you are interested in joining our friendly group, please contact us for further details. The choir has a capacity of 30 members, and we have a limited number of spaces available. At the present time, our male singers are in the minority and feel lonely. If you require any further information, please contact either Sandra or Paul, details below.

Best wishes to all and a Happy, Peaceful and Healthy 2024
Sandra - bw53Sandra@aol.com
Paul - p.s.chapman@btinternet.com

Council emergency number

Kindly note the Council's out of hours emergency number is 01708 433999. Please try and give the post code for where the problem is or as much information as possible. The office hours number is 01708 434343.

New Homes

I have just been advised that there are about 2 million (yes 2 million)

homes in the UK that are in line to be built, many of which have planning permission. This would indicate that our housing crisis is not a result of a localised poor planning system*, but reluctance by major developers to build.

As a consequence, Councils such as Havering are under pressure to fill the gap by large borrowing and building to meet the required need. As an example, over the next 4 years, Havering will have to borrow at least £1.4 billion to provide much needed housing and even this will fall short of the demand as developers hesitate due to market conditions.

All this at a time when the Council is under severe financial pressure.

Yet another example of Central Government's dereliction of duty, alongside funding of adult social care and children's work. Whatever your views, it highlights yet again the increased pressures and demands facing local Government.

*however planning systems can always be improved.

Cllr PHILIP RUCK



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New way of reporting litter, fly-tipping and noise etc

A reminder that Havering Council have simplified the way people can report litter, fly-tipping, problems with trees and noise and several other issues online. These can all now be done via the Council's Environment webpage haverling.gov.uk/info/20013/environment.

Christmas Tree Recycling

We are pleased to confirm Saint Francis Hospice will collect and recycle your Christmas Tree for a voluntary donation. For more information and to register your tree please visit sfh.org.uk/tree-recycling. Register your tree by 9am on the 8th January. Email community@sfh.org.uk or Call 01708 753 319.

Bins and Foxes

A reminder to be considerate and to plan ahead when you put your bins out for collection. Where possible avoid putting them out the night before. This is to help curb the impact of the foxes who can often tear open bags left on the ground in search of food. The refuse crew will help pick up any mess, but are not expected to do so and it can result in any spillages being in place for a while attracting vermin as well as creating an eye sore.

The Wesley Players present UPMONSTRA

A family pantomime by Ken and Jon Holland. Long ago, many monsters roamed the lands, some had black hearts, but some wished to live their lives peacefully. Heroes, Villagers, Kings and Queens vanquished evil monsters and this became the stuff of legend and Fairy tales. Very little is told about the good hearted monsters and what

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became of them. This is one of those tales. Can Roland rescue them from the evil Circus Dark? Who is the mysterious Marvo? Will Professor Googlethorpe and DW40 help in time? Or will the Circus Mistress and her evil Ginn sell the Monsters to the highest bidder?

To find out come and see UPMONSTRA. Performances: Thursday, 25th January & Friday, 26th January at 8pm. Saturday, 27th January at 1pm, 3.30pm & 7pm. Tickets: Online: £9 Adults (16+), £7 Conc and £5 Children / On door: £10 Adults (16+), £8 Conc and £6 Children / Senior Citizens FREE on Thursday and Friday.

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Local Government

Havering Council has changed dramatically since 1978 when I was first elected as a Councillor. Until around 2002, there was a 'Committee System' on the Council which would meet every six weeks or so and decisions would be agreed at a Council meeting where all Councillors attended. Whilst we still have a number of committees ie Planning, Licensing, Highways Advisory, Scrutiny, the main business is now decided through

a 'Cabinet System' where the Leader of the Council appoints 6/7 Cabinet members with specific responsibility portfolios ie Housing, Adult Care etc.

Being a member of Havering Council is an honour and a privilege. It is very rewarding and fulfilling and with the huge advancements in technology, what used to take several weeks when I was first elected, can now be covered in hours. The amount of information available is incredible. If you have ever considered standing for the Upminster & Cranham Residents' Association please contact us for further information.

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Brookside Theatre

The 194 seat theatre at 21A Eastern Road, Romford has a number of shows planned for this year. Take a look at their website. On Friday, 26th of this month Johnny Cash Revisited, Saturday, 3rd February The Freddie & Queen Experience. From Wednesday 14th to Sunday 18th February Stepping Out. Call the Box Office on 01708 755775.

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Random act of kindness

In December, Upminster Baptist Church nativity asked for all to join in and make someone's day. To Be a Christmas Angel and do an act of kindness and take time to be kind to another person.

Research shows that helping others can be good for our mental health. It reduces stress, improves our emotional well-being, and even benefits our physical health. In short, doing good does you good. It's essential to look out for each other in and around our communities. This is how we protect and maintain good mental health for all. **If you do nothing else today, keep an eye out for an opportunity to help someone with a random act of kindness or hold onto that warm feeling when someone helps you.** Ephesians 4:32: Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Cridders Swim School

On Saturday the 18th of

November Cridders Swim School were awarded Swim England's Swim School of the year at Swim England's National Awards Ceremony held at Aston Webb Great Hall, University of Birmingham.

Cridders were recognised for their education plan when returning to swimming after Covid and for giving its profits raised through providing swim lessons at Corbets Tey School Pool to Corbets Tey School during the recent fuel crisis.

Cridders has been operating in Upminster since 2001 at local school pools offering swimming lessons and Swimfit sessions. Trevor Cridland owner and founder said.

"This is the second occasion that Cridders has been named swim school of the year since we started and I am extremely proud of our teachers, school pool operators, parents, swimmers and assistants who have contributed so much in helping us achieve this award. Havering has many top-quality swim schools and I hope our achievement encourages more youngsters in to the sport"

Congratulations to Cridders Swim School.

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OUT AND ABOUT – CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

9th January 2024 Upminster & District Horticultural Society presents a lecture on Growing vegetables plus their Annual General Meeting

Our first lecture of the new year is a talk given by Mike Jervis on growing vegetables, something that many of us have taken up since lockdown.

Mike is a qualified judge for vegetables and daffodils and has been an EGHJ (Essex Guild of Horticultural Judges) since the mid 1990's. Mike will share

with us his first-hand gardening knowledge about growing vegetables, starting with some examples of prize specimens.

Mike will then answer any questions and give us some tips to help us improve our vegetable growing. This talk will be preceded by the Society's Annual General Meeting. The lecture is in the Windmill Hall. Doors open at 7.15 pm.

The evening will start at 7.45 pm. There are refreshments during the interval and a raffle at the end of the evening closing at 9.45pm. Entrance is free to members and is £3 for non-members.

You can find out more about our society by visiting our website www.upminsterhorticulturalsociety.co.uk

Music at Hornchurch Library

We restart our programmes on **Wednesday, 17th January** at 2pm with **The Music Returns** - Our five presenters, Stephen, Harry, Brian, Mike and Graham welcome the New Year with a preview of the programmes they will be offering during the coming season so musically there will be something for everyone during this varied afternoon. The least you can expect to hear will be classics, jazz, dance bands, folk plus music from the stage and maybe the big screen. This is our only programme in January so the next will be on 7th February.

Hornchurch Library (2pm-

4pm). Admission £2 - interval refreshments available at nominal cost. No need to book, just turn up. For further details contact Stephen Raindle on 01708 470670 or email sraindle@aol.com

Pats Pottery Club

For over 40 years, pottery classes have been taking place every Wednesday in Ardleigh Green and new members are welcome to come along and have a go. Whether you are a seasoned potter or complete novice, the friendly club at Ardleigh House on Ardleigh Green Road will help you learn, develop or simply have a go at making pots, bowls or figurines. Membership fees are

continued on page 17

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Havering Astronomical Society

Wednesday, 17th January, 7.15 for 7.30pm. Jamie Carter - reporter and reviewer for a number of news outlets and publications, including BBC 'Sky At Night' magazine - will present (via Zoom): 'Why smart telescopes will take over the universe'. **Young Astronomers** (aged 8-16) Thursday, 25th January, 7 to 8pm. A mix of space news, talks and observing when possible. Contact young.astronomers@havastro.co.uk for more details. Meetings held at Thames Chase Forest Centre, Pike Lane, Upminster. If you are interested in joining the society, please email enquiries@havastro.co.uk or look at our website www.havastro.co.uk.

Friends of the Old Chapel - Tea and Talks

Wednesday, 10th January - Havering Amazing Eccentrics. Havering seems to have attracted

strange and eccentric characters over the years dating back to Shakespeare's time right up to the latter half of the 20th century. Stephen Raindle will talk about them and their sometimes almost unbelievable lifestyles. Venue: Roope Hall, Trinity Church, Station Road, Upminster. Doors open at 10am for 10.30am start. £2 supplement for members. £4 admission for non-members. Teas and coffee served at the end of the meeting. Email: friendsoldchapel@mary.havering.sch.uk

Upminster Park Townswomen's Guild

We are a friendly group of ladies enjoying a chat over tea and biscuits, listening to a good speaker or entertainer, going on outings/theatre trips and promoting friendships and wellbeing. We meet at St Laurence Church, main hall Upminster on the third Monday of each month at 1.45pm until 4pm. For further information contact Anne Monk 01708 226305 or simply come along.

Badminton

If you are interested in playing badminton join us on Thursday mornings 9.30am - 12.30pm at the Trinity United Reform Church (next to Rooms). All abilities welcome. Email susanmayes@hotmail.co.uk if you require more details.

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continued on page 19



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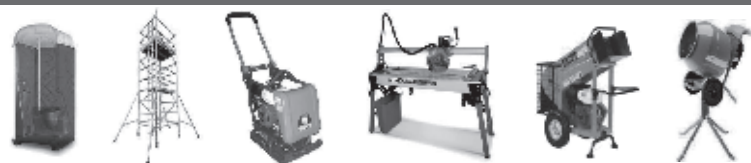
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Cop Corner

Speed Check: Our Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) undertook a speed check in Clay Tye Road on 15 November. This is a road often raised by residents, but one that is difficult to check as there are few safe places for officers to stand. The check was on the 40MPH stretch and officers stood near the Power Grid entrance. Of the 120 vehicles checked, the average speed was 34 MPH, but 3 vehicles were checked at 46 MPH and 1 at 51 MPH. These 4 registered owners will receive a warning letter. Officers aim to carry out a speed check every month as resources allow.

Upminster Police update: We held a very well attended Upminster ward panel recently with a number of new members. A presentation on the Police use of Tasers was given and we had the opportunity to handle deactivated Tasers, many questions were raised. It is important that communities are made aware of the range of police tactics available and the controls in place for safety of officers and the public. There was some good news in terms of crime statistics, shop lifting has reduced slightly compared to the same 3 month period in 2022, from 43 to 41, high end shops are the main target. Burglary has reduced from 9 to 8, theft of vehicles has increased from 15 to 16 but theft from vehicles has reduced from 13 to 8. Robbery,

which includes violence against the person has reduced from 12 to 11. The priorities for the next 3 month period will remain as vehicle crime, robbery and burglary. Residents are reminded to ensure doors and windows are secure when the house is empty. Our SNT run regular crime prevention community information sessions, dates for which can be found on the Met website. Our Team strength is 2 PC, and 1 PCSO with a 25% share of a Sergeant. It is hoped that during 2024 an additional PCSO will be added. Remember to call 999 if there is an emergency, where a crime is in progress or 101 for non-emergencies.

LINDA VAN DEN HENDE.

Clockhouse Gardens

We are lucky to have such a wonderful variety of parks and open spaces in the area and it's great to see residents enjoying them. The gardens at the rear of the Clockhouse apartments, the Grade 2 Listed Building off St Mary's Lane is a real pleasure to visit. The 3 acre ornamental garden with its splendid lake is also home to the Clockhouse Gardens Bowling Club. The lake is home to a variety of fish, ducks and geese (please do not feed them bread) and around half a dozen large turtles. It is believed the turtles arrived over thirty years ago when it was popular to own them and of course they outgrew their tanks with a number ending up in the lake. There are also

turtles in the lake at Langton Gardens, Hornchurch. On sunny days the turtles like to sunbathe on the logs at the Clockhouse Gardens. Wild turtles are carnivorous and appear to be doing well.

RON OWER.

Cranham Community Centre, Marlborough Gardens

Pop up shops - We started our "pop up" shops last year and they are proving very popular. It was started with a view that there must be lots of local people that make/bake/sew/sell but don't always have an outlet in which to do so ... we provide the space for them. If anyone is interested in having a stall please let us know. Cost £10. **Rooms/halls for hire** - the centre has lots of lovely rooms to hire for clubs/meetings etc. We also hire for private functions including children's parties. If anyone is interested in starting a new group etc we would love to hear from you. Tel: 01708 220941.

Edie Bell

It is with great sadness we announce that Edie Bell has passed away after a short illness. Edie is someone many of you will know through a variety of different

forums. Edie was a key player in the establishment of the Cranham Community Association and she was part of the Ludwigshafen Twinning Association. Edie was also an organiser at the Front Lane Community Centre earning herself the title of 'the party girl' as she was the contact for the events and parties, including the opening and closing of the centre. Another notable role was organising street parties for the different Queen's Jubilee celebrations, which saw families come together and even when the children had left the family home they returned for these parties. Edie's family would like to thank neighbours and friends for their kind generosity in donating in her memory. Over £1,000 will now be going to the British Heart Foundation.

Cranston Park Community

The residents of the Cranston Park Community once again held their annual Christmas party at The Cranston Park Tennis Club on Saturday, 2nd December. There were over 100 local residents, friends and family in attendance who danced the night away to the amazing sounds of professional DJ Elizmi Haze who was controlling the decks. This is a self-funded event entirely supported by local residents. With a free welcoming drink, free buffet and free raffle all included in the ticket price.

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The residents would like to thank the following local businesses and some not so local that kindly donated prizes for the Christmas raffle: Studio Florists, Crumpled Horn, Brewdog, Jobbers Rest, The Plough (Cranham), Thatched House, Infitness Gym, Hot Shots (Gentlemen's barbers), Sara's Scent Box, Zoe Bailey (Personal Fitness Instructor) and The Brown Bear (Leman Street, Aldgate). All excess profits this year will be donated to The Essex Wildlife Trust. The community spirit is certainly present in this part of Upminster and the adage support your local community is certainly evident.

Upminster town centre

It was nice to hear from a number of local residents who had visitors over the Christmas and New Year period giving compliments on our town centre. The Christmas lights, Christmas tree and in particular the wide range of shops including Roomes Department Store and Roomes Furnishing Store, Independent shops and coffee shops and Aldi, Waitrose and Marks & Spencers plus a butchers and fishmongers in Corbets Tey Road. With excellent public transport links into the West End we really do have a great town - let's continue to support it.

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Ardleigh House

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Wednesday, 6 March 2024. Pete George, an Essex lad, is a talented musician who will bring you an afternoon of the best music ever. He is a fabulous entertainer, guitarist and keyboard player and will have everyone up and dancing to those tunes we all remember so well. A 2 course lunch with tea/coffee and a bar if you require something stronger. This all takes place at the Tereza Joanne in London Docklands. **Price £67.**

Arundel Castle Tulip Festival

- Wednesday, 17 April 2024.

Arundel Castle becomes a sea of colour as the grounds abound with thousands of tulips of many colours and varieties for their Tulip Festival. Arundel Castle and town goes Tulip Mania in April. Your ticket will include entry into the Castle as well as the grounds. **Price £53.**

See the website for more details <https://www.ardleighhouse.org/> or telephone the office 01708 440660.

UCRA website via QR code

If you haven't visited the Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association website ucra.co.uk recently, it is well worth taking a look. The website is updated regularly with local news



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and information, including links to recent planning applications, plus events from various clubs and societies. For those using a phone, below is a QR code to take a look



Havering Friends of the Earth

Havering Friends of the Earth (FoE) is a non-political group of local people who campaign to improve the environment in our Borough. As a national organisation, Friends of the Earth have been campaigning for people and planet since 1971. There are some 350 local groups across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, of which Havering FoE is one. We aim to increase public awareness of the value of our green spaces and monitor development plans so we can campaign against destruction of Green Belt. The group have produced leaflets on several issues including bees and pollinators, and air pollution, which we distribute when we hold stalls in the area. We're pushing for more recycling, better air quality and a halt to the erosion of green spaces by overdevelopment. We have regular meetings with the Council and often feature in local press and media. The group contributes a monthly column to the Romford Recorder, covering a wide range of

environmental issues and these articles can be seen on our website. We hold monthly meetings, either in person or on Zoom, to which new members or those with an interest in getting involved are very welcome. Why not come along and share your ideas to help the planet? Please contact us through our Facebook page, website, or phone our local coordinator Ian Pirie, at ian_michael_pirie@btinternet.com, 01708 641718.

PETER CATON

Stewart Avenue allotments

On Saturday, 2nd December Stewart Avenue allotments held its Christmas Fair. It was very well attended as Upminster and Cranham residents braved the elements. Guests were able to enjoy homemade bakes and a cup of hot chocolate or mulled wine while they listened to 6th Upminster Brownies singing carols and Christmas songs. Stalls offered plants and produce, bakes, jams and chutneys, crafts, a raffle and a festive tombola. Lots of children visited Father Christmas in his grotto and enjoyed a craft activity. Stewart Avenue allotments would like to thank local businesses for their support including Waitrose and Choc Pops. It was a wonderful afternoon in spite of the cold and we are already looking forward to next year. Half of all proceeds from the day will be donated to Little Havens Children's Hospice.



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