

The Resident

Billericay District Residents' Association



"Help us to help you"



February 2023

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BDRA Vacant Roles • BDRA Vacant Roles • BDRA Vacant Roles

We are looking for two new people to join us as **Membership Secretaries**. If you can spare a few hours a month of your time to volunteer for us and become the main point of contact for the successful delivery of our magazine, *please contact us resident@bdra.org for more information.*

Relief Road Representative in all areas of Billericay

Can you spare a few hours a month delivering our magazine? Without the support of our volunteer Road Reps we would not be able to get our magazine to your doors. A Road Representative usually covers the same roads each month. A Relief Road Rep. will provide cover for any Road Rep. who might be on holiday or unwell and will cover different roads as needed. You will be responsible for delivering between 25 and 70 magazines. *To apply contact Sheilascottage@talktalk.net or 01277 657776 / 07971534464.*

BDRA NEWS



Local plan updates

Whilst we are not likely to see any details of the new Basildon Local Plan until the middle of this year when a public consultation is expected, matters are unlikely to be so quiet when it comes to planning applications and threats to our Green Belt.

As was expected when the last version of the emerging Local Plan was withdrawn nearly a year ago, we have started to see a number of speculative planning applications for sites that were being proposed in that plan. Disappointingly, and despite our borough councillors rejecting the applications initially, the planning inspectorate have upheld appeals against those rejections and we are going to see 47 houses built at Maitland Lodge on Southend Road, with a further 200 houses off Kennel Lane, both sites being Green Belt.

However, we need to put this into context. If the Local Plan had not been withdrawn it was very likely to have been approved and adopted by now resulting in 12 sites and over 2,700 houses being given the green light to proceed. So whilst 2 sites and 247 houses might seem like scant consolation, the situation could have been a lot worse as we start this year.

But we cannot be complacent as further planning applications for Green Belt development exist with more expected. The first of these is for up to 150 houses and a 50 bed care home off Potash Road. A local action group was formed and a good number of objections have been submitted. The decision by the borough planning committee will be made later this year but we are expecting them to reject leading to yet another developer appeal. A further planning application for 170 houses on Southend Road is likely to follow and we would expect the same outcome.

These delays as the planning applications go through the rejection and appeal cycle could be to our advantage as in parallel the Government is proposing significant changes to the planning system that will make it harder for speculative Green Belt development to be approved. Also, Basildon council should be in a better position to fight these appeals now by demonstrating that they have a supply of future building in place, and that they are positively working on the new Local Plan. That said, nothing is guaranteed and we might see some further development being approved, but not to the scale of the withdrawn Local Plan.

It remains important to get a new Local Plan in place to provide more assurances about where building can, and cannot, take place. We fully support the need for a new plan and accept that we need more house building. But the plan needs to be built on a much lower housing target that meets the true evidence based local need not wild and excessive projections as before, and as a result is more sustainable within our environment and existing communities. We strongly believe that the borough can deliver the right number and types of houses for local people without the loss of the Green Belt. We will continue to do all we can to that aim through engagement with our borough councillors. That work has already started.

Billericay High Street 2022 Annual Report

An independent research of Billericay High Street was carried out in 2022 by Lesley Cartwright and Susannah Hervey of the BDRA to monitor the changes and demands of our evolving High St. The findings will be followed by a survey to explore what the people of Billericay would like to see on their High St and how they use it.

Overall, 2022 was a successful year for food outlets with an increase of 6 new shops on our High St bringing the total to 52. Food Hospitality now counts for over a quarter of the High St. Whilst independent retail decreased by 3 to 38. Banks are moving out with Santander the last standing. Empty shops

have increased by 3 to 18 caused by loss of Independent Retail and the 3 empty banks.

Food Hospitality

Miss Millie's (No 106) closed (shortly after KFC arrived) and Bean Away in Western Rd. Loyalina (No 18), Hackers (No 34-36) (Argos), Wenzels (No

80-82), Gail's (No 84), Rumours (Old Barn 104), KFC (No 126), Boba & Pear (Waitrose arcade) and Billericay Bagel & Co (station) all opened.

Independent Retail

A few new places have opened but Billericay Blinds @ 105 and Coleby's @ 103C. Clintons (No 87), Picturesque (No 85) and VPZ (No 81) have either closed or moved, while the offices upstairs are being converted into flats. A gallery opened at No 74 for a while.

Chain Retail remains the same



at 20, Salons have decreased by 2 to 28 and Health is the same at 10.

Banks have decreased by 3 from 5, after NatWest, Barclays, Lloyd and HSBC all closed leaving Santander as the only bank left in the High St.

Agents increased by 1 to 11. Stanton Hockett (No 24) opened.

Offices increased by 1 to 6 and Residential same at 5.

Letters...

Dear BDRA,

On behalf all the guests who attended the Christmas Day lunch in Billericay, I'm writing to say a huge THANK YOU for your generous donation!

With your help we cooked a meal for 80 people, bringing together volunteers and guests for a fun and relaxed event. All the volunteers pulled together to make this day happen and your generous donation allowed us to reach some of the most vulnerable and lonely people in the local area.

I have received the following feedback which I wanted to share with you:

"We really don't know what to say - completely at a loss for words. Every one of your volunteers simply threw themselves into it and there was a tremendous buzz about the whole day! Besides being amazed at it, we felt very moved at the spirit shown and the dedication of every volunteer. And how so many were able to give up the whole day on Christmas Day of all days, I don't know!"

"The welcome party was excellent and no guest got past them without a cheery word and a helping hand."

"The meal was splendid and I wouldn't have expected any better in a 5 star restaurant. Haven't enjoyed such a feast for many years."

"Enjoyed chatting and laughing with our table and joining in the Quiz."

"Thank you for allowing us to be part of this."

"My passenger was so happy to have been able to attend. She enjoyed it so much, commented on how good the food was and how kind everyone was. She had a wonderful time and made a new friend."

The event brought a lot joy to all our guests & we all thank you so much for your support.

Thank you all for your help! Best wishes & have a lovely New Year.

Anna Laughland



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Well done Billericay!

CHRISTMAS IN BILLERICAY

With the help of the good people of Billericay, The Billericay Round-Table helped raise enough money to fill a van and a car full of toys which were successfully delivered to the children's ward at Basildon Hospital.

Special thanks goes out to Argosy Toys – Toymaster Westcliff on Sea for their support and variety of amazing gifts, the Billericay food bank and Richlee Motor Company for getting Santa safely all over Billericay in his shiny new sleigh.

It was also great to see the Lakeside Harley-Davidson guys continue their annual support for this cause and to

help give everyone a boost!

With our biggest thanks going out to everyone in Billericay who came out to donate anything big or small to make this happen! You have helped give a much-needed festive boost to so many local families in a time of need.

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



Billericay Memory Café Friendship across the generations

Children from Quilters Infants School, together with Mr Wade their headteacher and Maureen Lee, volunteer at the school and Chair of the Billericay Dementia Friendly Community, were invited to the Forget me Not Memory Cafe Christmas Party at the Mayflower Hall in December and a fantastic time was had by all.



The Billericay Memory Café is a well-established group run by dedicated volunteers for those living with Dementia, their loved ones, and caregivers.

Over the course of the school year, year 2 children at Quilters will visit the Cafe for afternoon tea. The joy of intergenerational friendships, showing kindness

to people in the wider community and being true dementia friends are well established values within the school. It is a true highlight of their year – such a natural friendship opportunity for older and younger people, who together enjoy a happy, relaxed afternoon, which is the hallmark of the Memory Café, established by Tracy Godden.

If you would like to join the Billericay Dementia Friendly Community, contact **maureen.lee@btinternet.com**. Follow us on Facebook Billericay DAA.

Join the Memory Café every Thursday between 1pm - 3pm at Mayflower Hall, Billericay, CM12 9LR for a mix of activities, quizzes and fun! Plenty of tea and cake to go around too.

Booking is essential!



Contact Lisa: 07595 893843 Contact Kelly: 07588 623684
Email: billericaymemorycafe@gmail.com

ABF War Charity Walker

Paul Sansom, 54, who grew up in Billericay, has taken part in five charity walks across France and Belgium in aid of the ABF – the soldier's charity – helping to raise £210,000.

Paul said: "The ABF is the army's main charity. They help soldiers and their families in many ways. My interest in WW1 has grown from taking part in these walks after I saw an advert on Facebook and the amazing people I have met doing so who have now become close friends. There are 2 walks each year in France. Normandy and the western front. I've met several recipients of their help on the walks including a triple amputee, Andy Reid MBE."

Paul lives in Little Burstead with his partner Dawn who has also done three of the walks and has a Great Uncle buried in France who was killed in 1917.

He continues: "I did have a great grandad who was a vet in the war looking after horses and mules – he survived the war. I have visited several of the soldiers on the Billericay war memorial including several who have names on the Thiepval memorial to the missing and have no known grave."

Paul is pictured with Andy Reid on the Normandy walk 2019. Along with the grave of Silas Chapman, a Billericay lad, along with Dawn and her great uncle Harry's grave.

For more information visit www.soldierscharity.org Who will you be walking for in 2023? Send us your stories resident@bdra.org



Billericay Choral Society

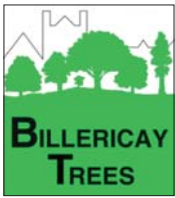
Singing is good for you

If you are thinking of joining a choir, look no further than your local Choral Society. We are about 40 strong and perform three concerts a year. Our repertoire ranges from classical choral works to more modern pieces and popular songs.

Our next concert will be "Elijah" on 1st April at Christ Church Chelmsford. Details to follow. All singers receive a warm welcome. We provide your music and audio tracks to help learning parts. No audition needed. Rehearsals are on Tuesdays 7.30pm (termtime) at Billericay Methodist Church, Western Road.

For further information, email billericaychoral@gmail.com





Billericay Tree Wardens (BTW)

Tree-ific start to the New Year!

The Essex County Council (ECC) and the Basildon Borough Council (BBC) joined forces to undertake two major tree planting projects in Billericay to combat the Climate Crisis ably assisted by the dedicated volunteers from the Billericay Tree Wardens (BTW) and the Friends of Lake Meadows (FoLM).

Approximately 400 native trees were planted at the recreational area at Pleasant Drive and another 400 native trees at Lake Meadows the following day.

woodland. It is intended to take annual photographs from the same location on each site to illustrate the greening up.

The leading lights organizing were the ECC's Tom Moat, 3rd in from the left, the Senior Forestry & Woodland Officer and BBC's Joshua Childs, 4th in from the left, the Parks & Countryside Biodiversity Officer. Meanwhile, ecologist and BTW member Nathan Hume, 7th in from the left, liaised with both authorities on local issues.

Each tree is protected by a plastic free, biodegradable and compostable tree guard secured by a wooden stake and a cane. The base was then surrounded by a barrowed in mulch to resist moisture evaporation and also provides stability in high winds.

Native tree species opted for at each site were Beech / Cherry / English Oak / Field Maple / Hazel / Hornbeam and Rowan with Holly and Yew additionally planted at Lake Meadows. They have been randomly placed. The idea is to speed up the natural generation of a

In a town planning context, the town's centrally placed Lake Meadows combines a popular recreational area with a mix of habitats that hosts a variety of wildlife that unobtrusively thrives in the heart of an urban environment. The FoLM constantly keep on top of maintenance issues and ways to improve the Park.

Local residents at Pleasant Drive (off the Mountnessing Road) have recently formed a

"community group" to take care of the recreation area in terms of recording its wildlife, litter picking and being the "ears & eyes" with respect security issues. To that end it has been arranged for a daily visit at two random times by the Police Support Community Officers and Park Rangers.

Thanks must go to the ECC staff and to the BBC staff for arranging two efficient and well organized events. Luckily, the weather favoured our endeavours!

The BTW is a subgroup of the Billericay Town Council.

By John Smart

The Tree Warden volunteers and Council staff at the Pleasant Drive recreation area.



The tree planted landscape at Lake Meadows after the Friends of Lake Meadows volunteers and the Tree Warden volunteers had completed their task!

PROTECT OUR TREES

Presumably motivated by the need to address the Climate Crisis in combination with how large scale development is now threatening woodlands and trees generally, a legislative revision to tree felling is thus well timed.



The Forestry Act of 1967 is to be revised to increase fines for illegal tree felling. The incentive to fell trees in modern times is to do with the cost of land for development rather than the sale value of felled timber as it was in the past. Unscrupulous Developers want land cleared so they can maximize the number of houses they can build. So as a deterrent, unlimited fines could be issued when flagrant clear-felling has occurred. This may not just be relevant to trees that are TPO designated but to non-TPO trees as few trees away from towns in the wider landscape are legally protected. If a landowner or Developer wants to fell trees, he will need to seek permission from the Forestry Commission as a minimum.

across the country where new build development is proposed, there is a need to safeguard against unwarranted tree felling and the profiteering from land sale. There is an anomaly at present, flagged up by the BTW, whereby there is the risk that landowners and Developers sometimes fell trees before a Planning Application has been submitted. Apart from a hefty fine, it would further deter such actions if the Planning Application were then automatically refused. We await the detail of the changes to the Forestry Act of 1967 and how Local Authorities will be guided by it. Present law does not protect mature trees in private gardens.

Now we have the Local Plan whereby there are many sites

Source: *Illegal Tree Felling in England to be Addressed – Guardian Article*
<https://www.theguardian.com>

MONEY MATTERS



Grey divorce – divorce on the rise in over 65s

The number of people getting married and divorced aged 65 and over is on the up. For those ending their marriage, this demographic trend is often referred to as “grey divorce”.

What should older couples consider when getting divorced?

1. Financial provision on divorce for the over 65s

Regardless of their age, spouses and former spouses have financial claims against one another for a share of the capital and pension assets and for income provision, otherwise known as spousal maintenance.

Where the marriage has lasted a long time the court will start from the assumption of equality. This will encompass all assets held in their joint names and individually, including things such as the family home, other property, money in the bank, and pensions.

2. Wills and inheritance planning for the over 65s

It is important for anyone contemplating or going through a divorce to make a will or review their current will and update it. This is because, under the normal rules of intestacy, your spouse will be considered your legal next of kin for inheritance purposes and will automatically inherit the bulk of your estate on death unless you have a will that says otherwise.

3. Pre-nuptial and cohabitation agreements for the over 65s

Older couples who wish to remarry should consider having a **pre-nuptial agreement** drawn



up to protect the assets and wealth they have brought into the new marriage by reason of their earlier divorce.

For those who wish to simply live with their new partner outside of a married relationship, a **cohabitation agreement** will set out the terms of their

arrangements.

I offer a free 15-minute preliminary chat over the phone to explore how I can best help you. There is no obligation, and you can decide how you would like to proceed once you have learnt a little more about the legal process.

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TIn early December, over 400 small whips were planted at Lake Meadows to extend the area of woodland to the north-east boundary of the park. Volunteers from the Friends and the Billericay Tree Wardens braved the freezing temperature and spent a morning planting the young trees. Hopefully, in another twenty or thirty years' time, these trees will have grown to provide additional habitats for a whole range of birds and insects, as well as reducing the effects of climate change. Trees are vital to us all, they help clean the air, absorb carbon dioxide and other pollutant gases from the air and release oxygen.

Other recent additions to the park have been four green Bee Boxes. These provide superior residential homes for solitary bees, which normally enjoy excavating nesting tunnels in the ground, especially in sandy soils. Solitary bees make up the largest percentage of the bee population, with 90% of bees being in that category. There are thousands of species worldwide, including mason bees, leafcutters, mining bees, white faced bees, carder bees, digger bees and many more. As the name suggests, they are lone bees, which means they do not belong to a colony. Only the female

solitary bee has a sting, which is very feeble compared to other bees and will only ever sting you if you handle them roughly or pose a threat to them.

New playground equipment, with the theme of the wizard and dragon, is currently being installed at the park. Lake Meadows is one of the first parks to receive funding under the Council's Play Review, in which a proposed programme of play upgrades is scheduled throughout the Basildon Borough. A public consultation took place last summer, when members of the public were able to comment



on the planned proposals. The concept design features a multitude of exciting and varied

equipment, with lots of elements suitable for wheelchair users, and children of all ages and abilities, creating a network of the highest-quality play facilities for children across the borough.

The winners of the 2022 FoLM Photography Competition will have been announced by time you read this and they are posted on our website. An exhibition of the finalists and winners will take place at Billericay Library throughout March.

This year's competition has now been launched and details are also on www.lakemeadows.org.uk Closing date October 31st. We hope that you will be inspired to take part!

Photos by Peter Williams



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Dates for your Diary!



BDRA and Town Council Meetings

- **Billericay Town Council Meetings** Finance and General Purposes – **12th January, 10th**; Planning, **24th January, 7th and 24th February**; Town Council – **26th January**; Health, Wellbeing and Environment – **28th February**
- **BDRA Meetings** All members welcome. Contact us on resident@bdra.org. Next meeting: 7.30pm at the Reading Rooms on **Thursday 9th February**



Clubs and Societies

- **Billericay Archaeological and Historical Society** meet at The Fold, Laindon Road, **Monday 13th February** Children at War Viv Newman. Non-Members £2, Raffle £1, refreshments 50p per person. Contact alantaylor8@btopenworld.com
- **Billericay Flower Arranging Group** meet on the **first Wednesday of each month** at 7.30pm for 8pm start in the W.I. Hall, St. Edith's Lane, Billericay. Visitors welcome at £7 each. Contact Linda Gilbey on 01277 656217 or email ljgilbey@oal.com
- **Billericay Horticultural Society** meet at the Chantry Centre from 8pm-10pm, visitors welcome £3.00. Refreshments available. **Monday 20th February** Gardening the World Commonwealth War Graves Alun Murdey Contact 43trouble@gmail.com
- **Billericay Men's Shed** Generally fortnightly – **Mondays** – Coffee n chat, **Tuesdays** – Woodworking, **Wednesdays** – Volunteer supported sessions for those with dementia and their carers. Lake Meadows to the front of the bowls building, just beyond the bowling green. Contact billericaymensshed@gmail.com or phone 07544 752686
- **Billericay WEA** Two Great Spanish Masters – Velazquez and Sorolla **Fridays** 2pm-4pm from **24th February** enrolonline.wea.uk; phone 0300 303 3464 or 01277 659286

- **Carers Peer Support Group** Meet at 2pm in Education Room of Billericay Medical Centre on **last Monday of the month**. To book contact Jenny. Goodson@carersfirst.org.uk

- **Gone Too Soon** Bereavement support group for Parents who have lost a Son or Daughter in any circumstances and if recent or a while ago. Meet at The Chantry Centre, Chantry Way **Monday 13th February** at 7pm Parents are given a warm and friendly welcome in a safe environment. Contact Lyn on 07387805406/01268 490045 or e-mail lyn-currie@hotmail.co.uk

- **Photofold Camera Club** meet at The Chantry Centre, Chantry Way on **Tuesdays** 8-10pm, doors open at 7.30pm. Info at www.photofold.org.uk

- **Probus Retired Men's Club** Join other retired professional and businessmen at our monthly lunch, usually with a Speaker. Contact Steve on 07817 694980 or stevejk88@outlook.com for more details.

- **South Green Memorial Hall** CM11 2PR – **29th January** 10am-12 noon. Village Halls Week – come and find out what happens in your Village Hall. Coffee Morning – free admission. Refreshments from South Green WI, children's activities by Grenfell Preschool; information on groups to join for adults and children.

- **Spike's Place Jazz Club** Bardswell Social Club, Weald Rd Brentwood CM14 4TJ 8pm **Tuesday 7th February** Simon Spillett Quartet; **Tuesday 14th February** Valentine's Special – Sarah Moule Quartet. Phone 01245 420475. www.spikesplace.co.uk

- **Stock Brook Ladies Probus Group** meets on the **3rd Wednesday of each month** to listen to a speaker and take lunch together at Stock Brook Manor. All are welcome. Please contact stockbrookladiesprobus@talktalk.net for more details.

The WI

- **Billericay WI** meet at the WI Hall, St. Edith's Lane at 2pm on the **first and third Wednesday** of each month. Contact 01277 624255.

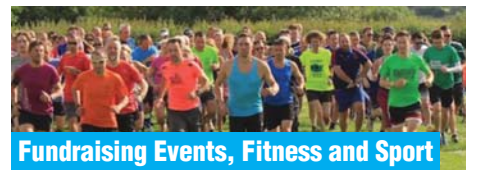
- **Buttsbury (Billericay) WI** meet on the **2nd Tuesday** of the month at Canon Roche Hall 8pm-10pm. New members welcome. For more details contact Jan Nash on 01277 630147

- **Little Burstead WI** meet on the **second Thursday** of the month from 2pm-4pm at Little Burstead Village Hall. Contact 01268 491396

- **South Green WI** meet on the **third Thursday** of the month at South Green Memorial Hall, Southend Road. CM11 2PR. Contact 01277 652739

- **APPLE Bridge** Friendly EBU affiliated Club meets at Hannakins Farm, Rosebay Avenue on **Wednesdays** for duplicate sessions at 9.30. Sessions cost £3. Bring own refreshments. Contact 07552 753075

- **Venturers' Bridge Club** meet on Thursdays 1.15pm at Hannakins Farm, Rosebay Avenue for social bridge in a friendly environment. £4.00 per session. Contact graham@forsythe.co.uk



Fundraising Events, Fitness and Sport

- **Billericay Striders** 10K Road Race. This annual event will be held on **6th November 2023**.

- **Billericay parkrun** Every **Saturday** 8.45am at Lake Meadows, parkrun provides a free, timed 5k run, jog or walk for all standards from 4years+ Visit www.parkrun.org.uk/billericay or visit our Facebook page.

- **Lake Meadows junior parkrun** Every **Sunday** at 8.45am at Lake Meadows, parkrun provides a free, timed 2k run, jog or walk for all standards from 4-14 years. Visit www.parkrun.org.uk/lakemeadows-juniors/ or visit our Facebook page: Lake Meadows junior parkrun

- **Billericay Town Walking Football** We train at Billericay Town on **Mondays** 8pm-9,30pm and **Thursdays** 10am-12pm for Men 50+ and **Mondays** 7pm-8pm for Ladies 40+- £5 per session. E-mail Bill at btfcwf@gmail.com

To advertise your event here, please email resident@bdra.org

Deadline for the next issue is 10th February for events taking place between 11th February and 10th March 2023

