



Billericay Town Crier

September 2020

www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCIL



THE CHANTRY CENTRE NEARS COMPLETION

THE TOWN COUNCIL has decided and is delighted to announce the name of the new building: The Chantry Centre. The name reflects the history of the area and the multitude of community uses that will take place there.

It's mid-August and construction work of the Chantry Centre has entered its last few weeks. Inside most of the construction fit out is complete and we'll soon be in a position where the floor and carpeting can be laid. Final work on the audio-visual equipment for the hall is underway which will ensure that it will be a very flexible space able to hold a wide variety of events. Externally work has started on the levelling of the land, the installation of the bike shed and the preparation for the landscaping and fencing. Soon the construction hoardings will be coming down and then the bench that provides a welcome resting point for those climbing Chantry Way will be returned. The focus of the Council is now on the furniture required (around 230 chairs are needed for the meeting rooms and hall for example) and preparing all the documentation needed to run the building which covers everything from booking terms and conditions and hiring rates to fire risk assessments and security access control.

Although COVID-19 caused a 7 week delay to the schedule we only have one outstanding related issue: the building's lift was originally delayed because it had to come from Italy. Once released it then became stuck in Spain when lockdown was re-implemented, although we are hopeful that it

is now on its way again.

Having seen the plans evolve on paper over many months it has been exciting to enter the building and compare how we imagined it to be with the reality. As the construction has progressed we've really felt the sense of space change. Certainly we can now get a really good feel for the size of the hall with its tall windows, 4 metre high ceiling and are able to imagine 162 people attending a presentation or concert (COVID permitting!)

Once complete we will have a number of meeting rooms that can be laid out in conference or theatre style ranging in size from 20 to 52 square metres and we're confident that these will prove of great use to both community groups and commercial businesses. The main hall can be configured in theatre format with rows of seats or with people seated around tables and our storage will allow the floor to be completely cleared of furniture if required. The connected kitchen can be used for meals or refreshments and features a large working space, double oven, 6 ring hob and plate warming facilities.

If you think you might be interested in hiring the hall or the rooms on a one-off or regular basis please email our Clerk (townclerk@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk) and we'll contact you as soon as we are able to start showing people around the building.



For further information and general enquiries contact: Town Clerk
Billericay Town Council • The Loft • Crown Yard • High Street • Billericay CM12 9BX
T: 01277 625732 • E: townclerk@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk • W: www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk

Official Office Opening times 9.30am - 12.30pm Mon-Fri. Outside these hours please ring as there may well be office staff present.





COMBINED LITTER PICK

DURING LOCKDOWN THERE was a collaboration between the Rotary Clubs of Billericay Mayflower and Billericay Town and the Facebook group of Billericay Litter Pickers who held a monthly litter pick in Lake Meadows. It is hoped that this will become a regular monthly event.

TOWN COUNCIL COVID-19 EMERGENCY GRANTS

WHEN THE UK went into lockdown the Town Council wanted to try and help local groups that were offering ways of keeping the community going during these difficult times. An emergency grant scheme for up to £100 was implemented and the monies went to the following organisations:

- Billericay Community Cinema – £75 to fund sponsoring prizes for an online community competition.
- Forget Me Not Memory Café – £100 to send out activity packs for people living with dementia to help with anxiety and agitation caused by isolation.
- Basis (Blind and Sight Impaired Charity) – £100 towards door step drop

offs for food and essentials, a telephone befriending service and a keep fit instructor to provide online fitness classes for the visually impaired in Billericay.

- Hypo Hounds – £100 to contribute towards the trainer’s fees. They support 3 local families with assistance dogs which are specially trained to recognise the onset of hypoglycaemia.
- Billericay Food Bank – £100 to purchase PPE equipment for drivers and volunteers so the Foodbank could safely make deliveries to local families in need.

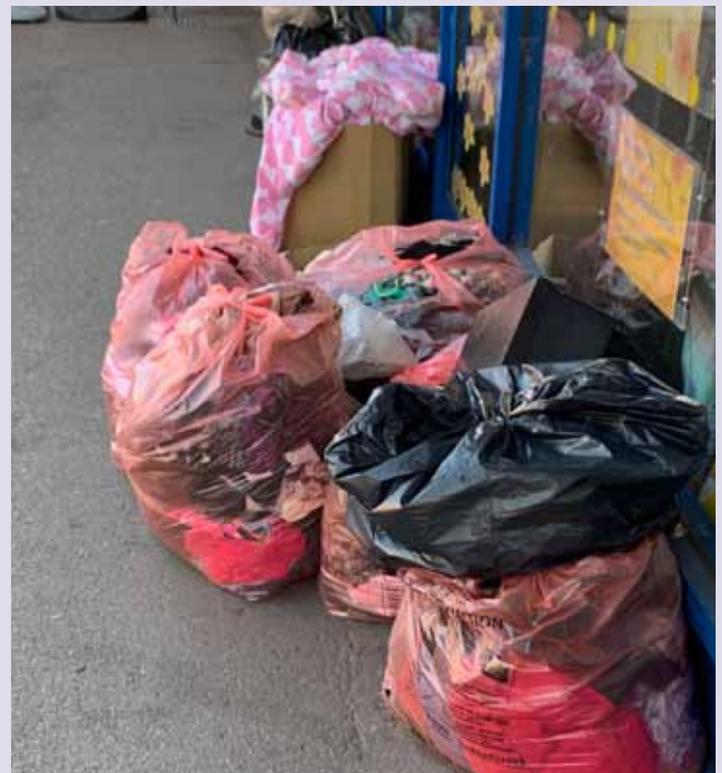


Steve – Basildon Council Refuse Operative

EXCELLENT REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE DURING LOCKDOWN

MANY RESIDENTS HAVE commented on the high standard of refuse collection maintained during the lockdown. At times like these its even more important our refuse is collected and our streets are kept clean. Not only have the collectors had to cope with the Coronavirus pandemic but also with a stifling heat wave, so let’s say a big thank you. They do a great job rain or shine.

Residents might also like to know that you can report overflowing litter bins which require emptying online at www.basildon.gov.uk under Street Scene Reporting.



FLY TIPPING AT CHARITY SHOPS

DURING THE LOCKDOWN many residents took the opportunity to clear out unwanted items from the home. Good quality items are usually welcomed by charity shops, however, due to the pandemic these shops can only take a limited amount. Some charity shops are also opening for limited times. Items have to be held in quarantine for 72 hours before they can be assessed and sorted.

Before donating items why not consider if they are of a good enough quality to be resold by a charity shop, or whether they should go to recycling at Barleylands or alternatively into a pink or black sack for the normal kerbside refuse collection. If you have items that are suitable for a charity shop ring the shop first and ask what is the best time to deliver donations and what they are accepting in the present climate.

Leaving unwanted items outside charity shops is not only unsightly but it is also fly tipping. Charity shop workers, many of whom are volunteers, are arriving to work hardly able to open shop doors due to the piles of items dumped outside. Please be considerate and make arrangements in advance to give to these shops.



CHAIRMAN'S DIARY

THE PAST FEW months have been a strange time for me as Chairman. A couple of days before lockdown started I attended an Essex County Council event which had handshaking banned, a very odd sensation at such an event, nobody there could have anticipated what was to befall us only a couple of days later. It is hard to recall now how fast things changed in those early days

and how fast we had to adapt. The main change for me as Chairman of the Council was that I was no longer travelling to events across the Town and the County and things very quickly went online.

Naturally the number of public events has diminished to zero but in place many meetings have taken place to mitigate the impact that the Covid virus is having on the community. Hence I have been involved in many meetings with Basildon Council and shopkeepers of Billericay High Street on the best ways of maintain a safe environment whilst allowing normal business to return within Government guidelines. I hope you will have seen this as successful.

My work on the Basildon Standards Committee has continued with online meetings which have been live streamed to YouTube, so that everyone can view what is happening. This may be the way of the future for all meetings, it depends on the demand from the public so have your say.

Also the work of local and County Associations have continued with meetings being held online, with the associated savings in travel. Billericay Town Council has also continued to work online although our staff have returned to the office so that we can use our phones, but the office remains closed to visitors.

As we look forward to our new building in Chantry Way, which is now progressing, it remains to be seen when this can open to the public and we will follow guidance from the Government.

WHAT YOUR TOWN COUNCIL HAS BEEN UP TO

THE PAST FEW months have possibly been the strangest we have known and have certainly been the most unusual in the Town Council's history. The Covid 19 virus and the restrictions that it has caused meant that the Town Council had to rapidly adapt the way that it was operating.

The most obvious effect that many residents will have noticed immediately was that we had to close the office. Unfortunately as a relatively small Council we do not have a sophisticated phone system and this meant that we were not able to transfer calls to our staff working at home. However the townclerk@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk email address was working and all councillors' telephone numbers are published. With staff working from home we were able to continue with the day to day running of the Council's work ensuring that all the functions that we carry out continued, at least those that were permitted within the new regulations.

Very early on in the crisis we looked at what the Town Council could do with the limited resources we have. Bearing in mind that there was going to be a need for volunteer organisations to step up and help those in need we were able to make a number of grants to enable these organisations to expand their operations in the town. As the Government tightened the lockdown Council meetings were suspended and later so were the elections scheduled for this year. Very shortly afterwards the Government passed legislation which made it legal for us to hold meeting remotely using video conferencing software and this is how we have proceeded since and will do so until the Government permits us to hold meetings normally again.

The Council has still scrutinised every planning application that has been filed in the town and made our views known to Basildon Council; we have progressed with the new Chantry Centre, although of course work stopped for a couple of months, and all the other work of the Council has been covered as normal. The Council has been very active working with Basildon Council to ensure that we try to get the High Street up and running as fast as possible in a safe and secure way. The 20m.p.h. speed limit in the High Street looks to be a good idea and it will take time for people to recognize that it is there, but hopefully it will become a permanent feature.

Although the cancellation of some activities has reduced workload this has been replaced by Covid related work.



FREE PARKING IN BILLERICAY

PARKING AT THE following Basildon Council managed car parks will be free until the end of this year to boost high street recovery.

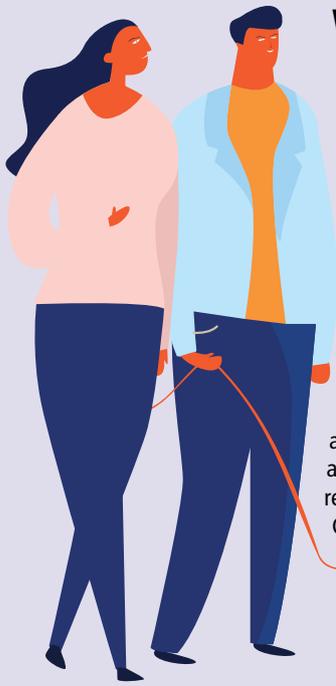
- High Street, Billericay
- Radford Crescent, Billericay
- Lake Meadows, Billericay

Users may be required to collect free tickets for the time of their stay to avoid car parks filling up if vehicles are left for long periods. Free parking aims to encourage shoppers to support their local high street and support shopkeepers reopening in a safe manner.



TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

LEGALLY TOWN COUNCIL meetings have to occur at a 'place' and decisions are taken by the majority of members present and voting. When the Covid-19 restrictions came into being face to face meetings were no longer permitted, so provision was made via new legislation to allow virtual meetings. The Town Council has successfully been using the Zoom platform and as a critical element of local council meetings is that the public and press are able to attend and observe, there is also the ability for interested parties to remotely attend the meeting. The meeting log in details are published on the agenda(s) and can also be obtained from the Town Clerk.



WALKING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE NEAR BILLERICAY

ARE YOU ONE of the many who have been walking for exercise more than usual during the lockdown period in the last few months? If so, you have probably realised that regular walking is an excellent way to improve both your physical and mental health. We are lucky to have some surprisingly attractive countryside around Billericay and you will hopefully wish to continue, and perhaps extend, your walks once life returns to something like normal. The Town Council has three leaflets describing local walks available which you may find useful.



"Billericay Circular Walks" was first published in 2008 and describes four

walks which all start in the High St. They head through the town in different directions, into the local countryside, before completing a circuit to the starting point. Distances vary from 4 to 5.75 miles (6.5 to 9 kms) and highlights include Norsey Wood and Mill Meadows Nature Reserves and Queen's Park Country Park. There are two series of "Billericay Countryside Walks", produced with support from the Essex Wildlife Trust in 2014 and 2015, and these encourage you to explore areas further from the town. The Series 1 walks start from the car park at Norsey Wood, off Outwood Common Road, while the Series 2 walks are based on the Queen's Park Country Park car park in Rosebay Avenue. Each leaflet includes three circular routes, varying in length from 5 to 11 miles (8 to 17.5 kms), some with short-cuts or extensions. The walks in Series 1 allow you to reach pubs in South Green, Ramsden Heath or Stock for refreshment while Series 2 walks give access to Stock (by a different route) and Ingatestone. All the leaflets include detailed descriptions of the routes and a map. The Countryside Walks leaflets also include information on historical and environmental features of the areas you walk through and the wildlife you may see. All the leaflets are available from the Town Council Offices and Billericay Library. Both Countryside Walks leaflets are also available from the Ranger's Office at Norsey Wood.

THE BILLERICAY TREE WARDENS

MUCH OF OUR work is behind the scenes enquiries carried out by email and mobile phone so in these pandemic times we have been able to continue operating. One of our crucial roles is to check through the monthly Planning Applications lodged on the Basildon Planning Portal to see if any trees are at an unnecessary risk. Those with a TPO are automatically safeguarded but it's the other trees, mature and younger that can sometimes be under threat. Trees and tall hedges along a frontage often act as a "Street Scene" amenity, helping to present our roads pleasing to the eye by softening the harsh lines of rooftops, garden walls and our paved-over driveways.



Hide-and-Seek!

An example of how a very tall mature tree can mainly hide from the public view in the town is demonstrated by a splendid Sycamore tree adjacent the BT Hub off Chapel Street. One can get a hint of it whilst in the Waitrose car park and from a few other angles but roof tiles and brick walls mainly mask its presence. There are other trees in the town that are likewise partially hidden from view and only by exploring side roads or alleyways do they reveal themselves!

Email: billericaytreewardens@gmail.com

(The BTW is subgroup of the Billericay Town Council).

TWO SPECIAL CONSTABLES VACANCIES

HELPING TO KEEP OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFE

ESSEX POLICE
Protecting and serving Essex

SPECIAL CONSTABULARY
NOW RECRUITING
BILLERICAY

my Other life

Billericay Town Council now has two Special Constable vacancies.

The Town Council encourages people who wish to serve the community to volunteer in these important roles as voluntary Police Officers.

Do you want to be at the heart of the community of Billericay working to keep safe the people living, working and visiting our town, and being recognised as a local peace keeper?

Then visit:

essex.police.uk/specials or
twitter: #MyOtherLife.

PLAQUE TO MARK THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAYFLOWER SAILING

ON WEDNESDAY, 15th July 2020 exactly four hundred years to the day that Christopher Martin and his family left Billericay for America, a plaque commemorating their departure was unveiled at Slipped Discs, 59 High Street, Billericay, part of the house occupied by them at the time.

The plaque was produced by the Billericay Mayflower Twinning Association in conjunction with the Mayflower 2020 Committee as part of the programme of events and activities planned for this year. It is located on the left hand wall of the entrance for everyone to see.

Christopher Martin was Church Warden of St Mary Magdalene Church, Great Burstead. He and his family were the first to leave Billericay for what they thought would be a better life in the New World. It was a bold step for them to take because they had little idea of what lay ahead of them.

Although they did indeed reach America on the Mayflower, sadly they did not survive the first winter. But Christopher Martin was a signatory to the Mayflower Compact which is considered one of three documents underpinning the Constitution of the United States and he is consequently



regarded as one of the Founding Fathers of the Country.

A book telling the fascinating story of Christopher Martin, his family and their connection with the Mayflower is available from the Cater Museum at 74 High Street, Billericay.

MAYFLOWER THEMED EVENTS POSTPONED OR CANCELLED

AS YOU ARE probably aware this should have been a special year for events in the Town as 2020 marks the 400th Anniversary of the Mayflower sailing. However due to the Coronavirus pandemic the following events are postponed or cancelled:

- **5 September** – Billericay Horticultural Society North American Plant display is postponed to 5 June 2021.
- **5 September** – Mayflower Morris Men's Merrie England 1620's Barn Dance is cancelled.
- **6 September** – St. Mary Magdalene Church, Great Burstead Commemorative service is cancelled.
- **13 September** – Mill Meadows Country Fayre is postponed to 12 September 2021.
- **15 September-3rd October** – Billericay Art Trail is postponed to September 2021.
- **5-24 October** – Photofold display is cancelled.



An up to date list of events that are happening, and those that are cancelled, can be found at billericaytwinning.org.uk/mayflower-2020

BILLERICAY FOODBANK DURING COVID-19

THE COVID-19 VIRUS has had an enormous impact on the emotional and economic wellbeing of families and individuals across our town. For the Billericay Foodbank this has meant a dramatic increase in numbers; we now support around 60 households each week and do not expect things to get easier as the further ramifications of the pandemic hit home.

The increase in demand has necessitated more volunteers and the response has been terrific. People have come forward from our town churches, Billericay Street Pastors and their associates, and members of the public, responding to the current crisis and wanting to offer help.

Around 25 people now help each week. Organised into 3 teams, there are those who work inside as sorters and packers, those who arrange the delivery schedules and the drivers, who often do more than just drop off the provisions by checking out that people are alright and seeing if they have any specific needs.

Looking ahead, larger premises are needed and with the Billericay Rotary Clubs and others we are actively looking at possible sites; importantly, we want to build on the community links and relationships established during the present crisis, which have been so positive in furthering the work of the Foodbank.



BILLERICAY LIONS CLUB is alive and functioning despite the lockdown. Instead of club and committee meetings members are communicating by email, phone and online Zoom meetings. Our activities are suspended until it is safe for them to be resumed. You won't see our bookstall in the High Street for a while, our Senior Citizens' concert has been cancelled for 2020 and our

International Swimming Gala between clubs in Billericay, Germany and Belgium, due to be held this year in Brussels, has been postponed.

Fund raising activities involve social contact so activities such as quizzes are postponed. It is too early to say what may happen with our Christmas Sleigh this year. As a voluntary organisation, we have no running costs, other than a small annual rent to garage the sleigh and other equipment; our fundraising is entirely for the benefit of the community. Whilst not knowing when fund raising activities will resume, we have reserve funds which can be used for local needs.

We have made donations to Billericay Food Bank, the local branch of the Samaritans, Anvil House for equipment to help the residents cope through the lockdown and a local Womens' Refuge. We are always happy to consider requests for support from local causes to help those in need in our community. We can be contacted either through our website www.billericaylions.com, our answerphone 0345 833 9849 or by email to lions@billericaylions.com.

MAYFLOWER ROTARY SPONSORS BILLERICAY OUTREACH SERVICE

BILLERICAY IS AN affluent town, but one which also has people who need help and never more so than now. To support the excellent work undertaken by Citizen's Advice South Essex, Mayflower Rotary Club sponsored a part time Outreach Adviser, a social councillor. They provide advice and guidance to Billericay residents requiring help to tackle problems they face. Issues include work, income, housing as well as family matters. The response has grown with the publicity, as people have become aware of the service and the dedicated phone 01277 358080.

The lack of face-to-face meetings has not stopped a range of issues being raised, many centred on employment, relationships and Universal Credit. An important aspect is listening to people and guiding them to, and through, social, DWP, and housing services to resolve their problems and give them direction. With the downturn in the economy and the on-going pandemic, the number of people requiring help and support is expected to increase dramatically over the next few months and the Outreach Service will be well positioned to help locally and guide other charities and services to provide support. By associating this assistance with Billericay Food Bank and other support, help is easier to access and more effective for local residents.

WEARING FACE MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Government guidelines on wearing face masks and social distancing can be found at:
www.gov.uk/coronavirus



SOURCES OF CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION

GOVERNMENT

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

NHS

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

www.essex.gov.uk/topic/coronavirus

BASILDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

www.basildon.gov.uk/coronavirus

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE AND TOWN COUNCIL CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EVENT ON HOLD

IT IS HOPED that these regular annual events will still take place, but of course that is dependent upon Government guidance regarding gatherings. As soon as the Town Council has more information we will inform residents via social media and our website
www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk.

FIREWORKS CANCELLED CHRISTMAS MARKET ON HOLD

THESE TWO POPULAR events have been affected by the pandemic. The fireworks are cancelled and the Christmas Market is on hold for the time being. Keep an eye on the Christmas Market website to check out if it is going ahead.

VACANCIES ON THE TOWN COUNCIL

THERE ARE CURRENTLY two vacancies on the Town Council, which are in the East and West wards. Anyone who is over 18 and lives or works in Billericay is eligible to apply to become a Town Councillor. If you are interested in making a difference to your community then please email or telephone the Town Clerk for more information. It is hoped to select the new members in mid-September so make sure you express your interest as soon as possible.

BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCILLORS

Name	Address	Phone No.	E-Mail	Ward
Cllr A Adshead	29 The Meadow Way CM11 2HL	01277 632104	adam.adshead@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr J Clark	33 Carson Road CM11 1SA	01277 659842	jo.clark@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr R Clark	1 Wick Glen CM12 0HS	07802 425842	richard.clark@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr M Dear	12 Redwing Drive CM11 2PG	01277 622499	marie.dear@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr J Devlin	231 Perry Street CM12 0NZ	01277 656937	jim.devlin@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr C Dyer	6 Montpelier Close CM12 0UH	01277 625732	colin.dyer@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr J Henshaw	46 The Avenue CM12 9HG	07544 499272	james.henshaw@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr K Herlock	11 Cranmer Close CM12 0YQ	07776 212968	kathryn.herlock@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	SW
Cllr L Mitchelmore	The Loft Crown Yard High Street CM12 9BX	01277 625732	lesley.mitchelmore@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr M Moore	47 Laindon Road CM12 9LG	01277 627266	moira.moore@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	SW
Cllr Kim Mordecai	18 Hilary Mount CM12 9JS	01277 659717	kim.mordecai@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr C Roberts	77 Tyelands CM12 9PB	07568 346 055	carl.roberts@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr M Roessler	9 Second Avenue CM12 9PR	07760 373070	martin.roessler@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr D Spencer	Fir Tree Lodge 16 Back Lane CM4 9DG	01277 829750	daphne.spencer@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr G Talbot	185 Perry Street CM12 0NX	07983 421686	gareth.talbot@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	SW
Cllr A Talboys	8 Wren Close CM11 2YU	01277 657576	alan.talboys@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	E
Cllr M Thomas	39 Chestwood Close CM12 0PB	01277 650453	mark.thomas@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
Cllr J Tutton	11 Bluebell Wood CM12 0ES	01277 655443	james.tutton@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	W
CHAIRMAN	Cllr Jim Devlin	Telephone:	01277 625732	
TOWN CLERK	Deborah Tonkiss Billericay Town Council The Loft, Crown Yard, High Street Billericay, Essex CM12 9BX	Email: Website:	townclerk@billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk www.billericaytowncouncil.gov.uk	

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