
Merry Christmas from
The Three Colnes Parish Magazine
Dec 2025 - Jan 2026

HERITAGE

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LAND & NEW HOMES
MORTGAGES



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Contents

4. Welcome from the Editor
5. The Three Colnes Churches Contacts; Pastoral Care
6. Thoughts for the month;
7. Christmas Services
8. Earls Colne Village History
9. Gift a Cream Tea Success
10. Services for December
11. Services for January
12. From The Four Colnes Magazine Free Baby Group
13. Christmas Midnight Communion Men's Breakfast Group
17-20. Gardening
18. Rise n' Pray; Open Garden Event
19. Games Club
23. Colne Engaine Dramatic Society
24. Essex Local Nature Partnership Braintree Area Foodbank
25. CEDS: Aladdin Performances
26. Film Club; Family Crib Service
27-29. Security Advice
29. Colne Engaine FunFun 2026
30-31 Millennium Green Trust
37-39. Earls Colne Heritage Museum
40-41. Four Colne Horticultural Society
43. Halstead Choral
47-49. Twinning With Nonancourt
50. St Andrew's Art Exhibition
52. Christmas Eve Family Service
53. Dedicate A Star; Parish Council News
55. Recipe Corner
56. White Colne Bridge Club; Your Mental Health Matters St. Andrew's Book Club
57. The Mankind Project
59. Arctic Run
60. The Atlas Social Club Earls Colne Parish Council
62-63. Parish Councillors
64. Earls Colne Christmas Calendar
65-67. Going walk About
68. Useful Numbers; Advertisers' Index

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Advertising

All advertising enquires to be sent to Catherine.

Readers, please remember to mention this magazine if you answer any of the advertisements.

We welcome advertising in our magazine, the income from which helps to cover production costs. This does not imply any endorsement or approval of the products and services mentioned in the advertising.

This magazine is produced for the villagers of the Three Colnes, consisting of White Colne, Colne Engaine and Earls Colne, by St. Andrew's Parish Churches.

Website Addresses

www.colnechurches.com
www.colne-engaine.org.uk
www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk
www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

FOR THE FEBRUARY '26 ISSUE PLEASE PROVIDE

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Welcome



Every month when I go back through the previous month's magazine, I am blown away at how wonderful a publication we have. So many of you write copy for us, provide little snippets of info, run events, look after our open spaces – and shout about it. We wouldn't be so interesting and well read if it wasn't for all our wonderful contributors (and advertisers!) So, a big thank you from all of us on the team here, for helping make this publication a fabulous resource for our community. Here's to a very interesting and exciting 2026!!

The Earls Colne Rec hosted the fireworks this year. What a great evening it was too! We were blown away by the organisation, and how well it ran. There may have been long queues for some things, but they went down fast, and everyone was polite and unconcerned. The raffle for setting the fireworks off was a genius fundraiser; sadly, we didn't win, but my son stayed silent for the first time in forever, waiting for the number to be called!

We have such little available space this month, that I have popped my favourite photo of the night here. There was a funny piece on Radio 2 this week asking people to send in their videos of firework events, so that at least someone would watch them back. How true is this: I have so many videos of previous firework displays, and don't think I have ever watched them after! So, this year I made a concerted effort to keep my phone in my pocket and just soak up the awesomeness of the evening. (Photo supplied by Ms R Caruso).



Now onto the season at hand; yay, it is Christmas, quite possibly my most favourite time of year. In the magazine, we have so many events going on: Earls Colne Parish Council have popped together a little calendar of what's on where in Earls Colne (page 64), there is a list of Christmas Services in the Three Colne Churches on page 7 and throughout the magazine you will find other events being held in the villages. Hopefully these will help to make sure you don't miss the service, or the carols, or the activity that you wanted to go to.

Here is to a fabulous Christmas, and an exciting 2026. How can the millennium be over 25 years ago??

Sue
Editor

The Three Colnes Churches

For baptisms, weddings and funerals: please contact The Reverend Mark Payne on 01787 220347 or colnesvicar@gmail.com 20 Swallowfield, Earls Colne, CO6 2SW. Reverend Sharon Quilter (Associate Priest) revdsdq@gmail.com

For all other matters: please contact the Church Wardens of the Church in question:

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ecchurchwardens@gmail.com

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Pastoral Care

Having a Tough Time?

In our three parishes, we believe it's part of our calling to look out for one another and for our neighbours too, whatever their background or beliefs.

A small but dedicated group from our churches helps to put this care into action. They head out into our villages to visit, chat, and offer a listening ear to anyone who might need a bit of support.

We're here for anyone who needs someone to talk to or feels weighed down by life's ups and downs. Whether young or old, well-off or struggling, strong or weary, we're all part of the same family, and no one has to face things alone.

If you would like to chat – in confidence - please call or e-mail one of our team, or contact Rev Mark, our Team Vicar. We are:

Helen Sherfield 07908 138853 colnechurches@gmail.com
Beryl Amy 07772 080504 berylamy@hotmail.com
Terry Hawthorn 07970 147516 terryhawthorn43@gmail.com
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Thoughts for the month

Dear friends,

Well, here we are again: tinsel in the shops before the pumpkins have even wilted, mince pies stacked higher than the church tower, and that annual debate about when it's officially acceptable to start playing Christmas music. I'll admit it, I'm guilty of putting on Mariah Carey's All I Want for Christmas Is You sometime in November. I told myself it was just to "test the sound system for the carol service" but one thing led to another and, before I knew it, I was giving it full volume in the nave. I can only hope the angels were in good humour that day.

It's so easy to get swept up in all the festive busyness — the adverts, the lists, the wrapping paper avalanche — that we risk forgetting what Christmas is actually about. The very first Christmas wasn't about glitter or grandeur. It happened quietly, in a draughty stable, to an ordinary young couple far from home. Yet in that humble moment, God came close, not in power or luxury, but in love.

That's the real miracle of Christmas: that light, hope, and peace can arrive right in the middle of our ordinary, messy lives. And here in the Three Colnes — Earls Colne, Colne Engaine, and White Colne — that truth shines through every time neighbours look out for one another, when a card or a call arrives at just the right moment, or when someone takes the trouble to pop round and check how a friend is doing.

The first Christmas was full of visitors — shepherds and wise men who simply turned up. Perhaps that's a good reminder for us: sometimes the best gift we can offer is our presence. There are folk in every village who find this season difficult, those who are lonely, grieving, or simply overwhelmed. A quick visit, a shared cup of tea, or an invitation to something cheerful can make all the difference.

This year, the Church of England is inviting us all to rediscover The Twelve Joys of Christmas, twelve simple ways to find joy in what really matters: giving, resting, sharing, and reaching out. None of them require a credit card, just an open heart and a willingness to pause amid the sparkle. You'll see these themes reflected in our services and gatherings across the Three Colnes this season and I'd love to see you at one (or several!).

So, as we head towards Christmas and the start of a new year, may your days be filled with kindness, laughter, and perhaps just a reasonable amount of Mariah Carey. May we all know the peace and joy that Christ brings, not just for a season, but for all the days to come.

With every blessing (and a plateful of mince pies),

Mark

CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE THREE COLNES CHURCHES

SATURDAY 13th -

Carols on the Green - Colne Engaine Village Green at 4.30pm

(Procession from Church at 4.15pm)

SUNDAY 14th -

Traditional Carols & Readings with Community Choir

Colne Engaine Church at 5pm

WEDNESDAY 17th -

Carols in the Lion from 7.30pm

SATURDAY 20th -

Carols on the Green, White Colne Village Green at 6pm

SUNDAY 21st -

Family Carol Service - White Colne Church at 10am

Traditional Choral Candlelit Carols & Readings -

Earls Colne Church at 5pm

CHRISTMAS EVE

Crib Service - 3pm at Colne Engaine Church

Family Christmas Service - 5pm at Earls Colne Church

Midnight Communion - 11.15pm at Colne Engaine Church

CHRISTMAS DAY

10am at Earls Colne, Colne Engaine & White Colne

Christmas Morning Service

Village History
EARLS COLNE

A Suspicious Visitor

As Lord of the Manor, Roger Harlackenden usually knew the background of any Earls Colne people brought before him in his capacity as a Justice of the Peace. But in 1594 a visitor to the village who was arrested for digging in the hedgerows after dark left him very puzzled. Henry Wright claimed to be an unemployed Vicar travelling from Banbury to a new appointment elsewhere. To finance his journey, he was collecting herbs and other ingredients for potions which he intended to sell as health cures. Roger Harlackenden suspected another explanation for Wright's nocturnal activities and referred the case to the Quarter Sessions in Chelmsford on a charge of “Digging in the ground at night for money”, adding the personal comment “I do consider him a very suspicious person”. By the time the case came for trial, it was discovered that there was a warrant out for Wright's arrest in another county, so the Essex court could (probably with some relief) hand him over without needing to solve the mystery of his strange behaviour.

David Brown

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Gift a Cream Tea

St Andrew's Earls Colne Gift a Cream Tea this November was a heartwarming success.

We delivered 67 cream teas to friends in the Three Colnes parishes. The delicious home-made scones were kindly made and donated by June Jemmett and the clotted cream was also supplied by The Drapers - a great village collaboration.



This event is always well received, and we hope that it brought great pleasure to all the recipients. Our thanks also to all our delivery drivers, who took time out on a Sunday afternoon to have a chat and convey the teas to all corners of the Parishes.

It is a wonderful thing to be involved with and if you would like to participate next year, either as a helper or as a donator please get in touch with Kirsten kpt1607@icloud.com

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Services for December

Date	Time	Church	Service
Wednesday 3rd	9.45am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion
	3.30pm	Colne Engaine	3:30 Express
Saturday 6th	2pm	Earls Colne	Carols in the War Memorial
Sunday 7th	10am	Earls Colne #	Three Colnes Christmas Tree Festival Service
Wednesday 10th	9.30am	Colne Engaine	BCP Holy Communion
Saturday 13th	4.15pm	Colne Engaine	Carol Procession to the Village Green from Church
Sunday 14th	10am	Earls Colne #	Space for Grace
	10am	Colne Engaine	Morning Worship
	5pm	Colne Engaine	Traditional Carols & Readings
Wednesday 17th	9.45am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion
	7.30pm	The Lion	Carols in the Lion
Saturday 20th	6pm	White Colne	Carols on the village green
Sunday 21st	10am	Earls Colne #	Holy Communion
	10am	Colne Engaine	Mattins
	10am	White Colne	Family Carols
	5pm	Earls Colne #	Traditional Carols & Readings
Wednesday 24th	9.45am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion
	3pm	Colne Engaine	Crib Service
	5pm	Earls Colne#	Family Carols
	11.15pm	Colne Engaine	Midnight Communion
Thursday 25th	10am	Earls Colne#	Communion
	10am	Colne Engaine	Communion
	10am	White Colne	Morning Worship
Sunday 28th	10am	Gt Maplestead	Halstead Team Churches Holy Communion – all welcome
Wednesday 31st	9.45am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion

Services for January

Date	Time	Church	Service
Sunday 4th	10am	Earls Colne#	Morning Worship
	10am	Colne Engaine	Morning Worship
	10am	White Colne	Holy Communion
Wednesday 8th	9.30am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion
Sunday 11th	10am	Earls Colne #	Space for Grace
	10am	Colne Engaine	Morning Worship
Wednesday 15th	9.30am	Colne Engaine	BCP Holy Communion
Sunday 18th	10am	Earls Colne #	Holy Communion
	10am	Colne Engaine	Mattins
	10am	White Colne	Morning Worship
	5pm	Earls Colne	Christingle
Wednesday 22nd	9.30am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion
Sunday 25th	10am	Earls Colne #	Morning Worship
	10am	Colne Engaine	Holy Communion
Wednesday 29th	9.30am	Earls Colne	Holy Communion

#These services are live streamed via our Facebook page 'The Three Colnes'.

Further service and event details can be found on our website: www.colnechurches.com/pew-news

The Three Colnes Churches Fundraising Events		
Earls Colne	6th December 10am - 4pm 7th December 11.30am – 4pm	Christmas Tree Festival
Earls Colne	31st January 2026 4pm	Colne Engaine Community Choir concert

DECEMBER 1925

IN MEMORIAM - ARTHUR FREDERICK SUTTON, Priest, Vicar. Aug. 1st 1924 - Nov. 18th 1925. R.I.P.

It is with very great regret that we record the death of our beloved Vicar. During his short incumbency he had endeared himself to us all by his unfailing courtesy and earnest desire for the welfare of all sections of his parishioners.

The beautiful decorations to the Chancel of our Church will be a constant reminder of his taste and generosity.

A few days before his death, he requested that special thanks should be recorded in the Magazine, to those who contributed to the cost of the work to the Side Walls, and thus joined with him in completing the whole to the Glory of God and to his and our satisfaction.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

This day, falling as it does early in November, prevents any outdoor Service at the Memorial, but a few brave ones assembled for the "Silence" in the enclosure and afterwards attended the celebration of Holy Communion in the Church. On the Sunday following, a Service in the Church brought the observance to a fitting close and added £2 6s 5d (14.1/2p) to the Poppy Day collection for Lord Haig's Fund.

Liz Pottinger

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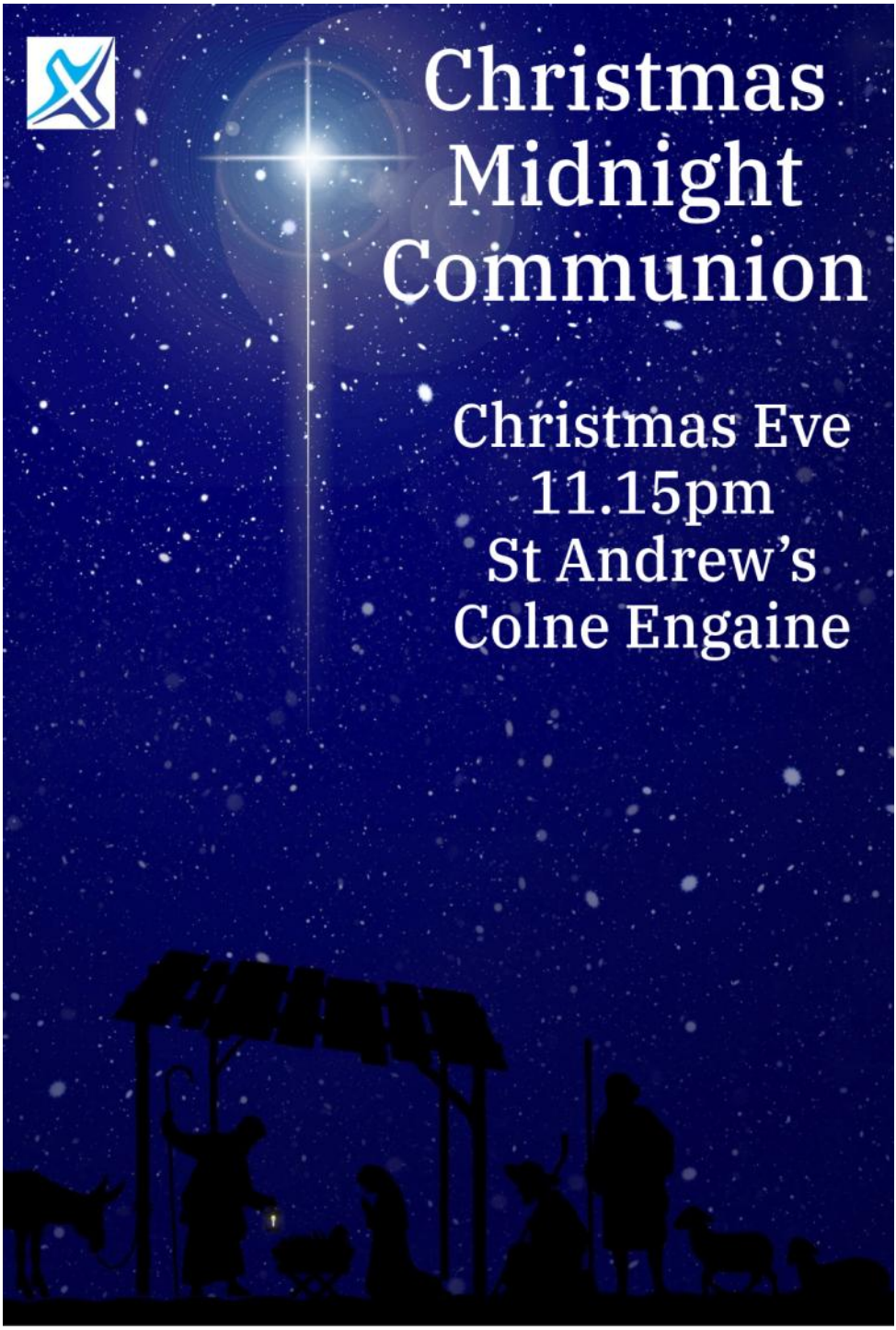


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Gardening



IT'S BEEN A TOUGH YEAR FOR THE PLANTS

Last winter and then spring were cold and wet. Let's face it, there were times when we thought we would not have a decent summer but, oh, how that changed. Plants that went in at the ultimate planting time last autumn had barely had a chance to get their feet in the ground when they faced biting cold winds and lashing rain. It's true, snow and ice wasn't a problem but even so it was harsh; momentarily we had a short spell of warmth and sunshine before the wind returned from the north. It was relentless. Then the change: before we knew it, months with little or no rain and temperatures soaring into the early 30s. Can we wonder that our poor gardens don't know what to do; at a time (spring) when plants should have been putting on new growth, they stood still. Then as things took a turn for the better, they were away, only to be halted in their tracks with extreme temperatures and lack of water. On the plus side the more established plants and shrubs, especially, gave amazing shows of flowers, but this was due only to stress and the need to produce seed for the future survival of the plants should the parent plant fail. Eventually autumn brought us rain and temperatures that were still above normal. Now the plants are really confused. They think its spring/early summer and they are growing when they should be thinking about sleeping.

I have taken photos of witch hazel (Hamamellis) and rhododendron flowering **…..Cont'd /**





Gardening (Cont'd)

in September, I mean what the flamin eck. In my opinion I don't think we can follow the rules anymore; we have to be led by our gardens. If we have perennial geraniums in full flower when they should be dying back and cut to the ground, let's just wait. If we get a cold spell with frost that will do the job for us anyway. Lets enjoy the flowers while we have them.

So what if its December? If the soil is warm and the atmosphere moist, carry on planting. If the weeds are growing, the plants will be growing. Talking of weeds, keep pulling them: every one you pull now will be three that you won't be pulling in Spring.

So what can we do, to still garden successfully in our changing climate? First off, look at your garden, what coped well with the extremes, what has struggled and what have you lost. Go to any garden centre and they will have displays of drought tolerant, sun loving plants, plants that work well in shade, plants for damp areas; it's a great guide to help you choose the right plants. Drought tolerance is great in the summer, but what about the cold wet winter and spring, will they cope with that? The answer could be yes if the soil drains away readily and the roots don't get waterlogged. What about damp areas: are they still damp in August at thirty four degrees centigrade? What we need is a one size fits all plant. Easier said than done, but not completely out of the question. I have a few





Gardening (Cont'd)

examples if you fancy giving them a try.

Let's start with a small to medium sized tree, evergreen to give us the structure, flowers to add interest and how about some colourful fruit thrown in. Let's not go edible, (there is a limit you know). I've got it, the strawberry tree (Arbutus unedo) fairly slow growing but worth waiting for, with glossy green leaves, attractive bark, as well as bell shaped creamy white flowers in September (normally) alongside bright red mini strawberry fruits. This tree has no problem with the heat and shrugs off cold wet weather, like water off a duck's back. It's a no brainer for all but the tiniest of gardens.

Another one for height and structure, evergreen again, and with age come some freaky alien like flowers and seed heads. The Chusan palm, some say windmill palm, (Trachycarpus fortunei) okay, is very slow growing but, depending on your budget, starting big is an option. Again, this palm laughs in the face of high temperatures, and will stand strong in prolonged spells of minus twenty degrees centigrade; what a guy!

Getting back down to ground level shrubs I really love a salvia. Another one that seems to cope well with our winter and then, in the summer, what a show. Some will flower for up to nine months of the year, little beauties. Salvia michropylla and greggii are favourites of mine, 'Hot lips' and 'Amethyst lips' respectively: they grow up to 6' (1.8m) high and wide in time, but regular trimming keeps them in check and hard pruning in late **…..Cont'd /**

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Gardening (Cont'd)



winter does no harm at all. I haven't found a spot yet where they won't grow, but I would avoid deep shade as they are sun lovers. Still with the salvias, look for Nemerosa and Amistad; both cope well in our weird climate. Don't know if it's of interest but salvia (Sage) has healing properties which is how it got its name, as in Latin salvia means 'to heal' or 'save'.

Getting down to the ground level with herbaceous perennials, let's have a look at Erigeron. There are two varieties commonly available, and both work well in the sun.

Firstly, American fleabane (Erigeron karvinskianus), a low growing bushy plant smothered with little pink and white daisies, will self-seed readily, growing in cracks in paving and gaps in brick walls, but a little beauty. Similar is the beach aster (Erigeron glaucus) another sun loving ground cover with big pink daisies with yellow/orange centres; both come back year on year, no problem.



I think we need to crack on with stuff that works and don't sweat about the stuff that don't.

'Laters taters'

Keep calm and carry on de-weeding

Happy Christmas, **Gary**

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Dramatic Society

ITS PANTO TIME AGAIN!

I can't believe a year has passed since we were performing Cinderella for you last January, and here we are starting our rehearsals for Aladdin.

I'm so excited for this Panto; it's set to be an absolute cracker. We have some old faces back on the stage (Oh no you don't…Oh yes, we do!) and some brand-new ones too.

We have our orchestra back with some absolutely fabulous songs. You will be singing along I assure you.

January is always a long month, so please come along to have the most amount of fun you can have in a village hall.

Our brilliant audiences are the best, and I just know you will support us again this time. I hope you all know just how much we appreciate each and every one of you that always buy tickets and come along. It really does help us get bigger and better every year!!

Tickets are probably already for sale as this goes out, and we look forward to seeing you there. (Oh yes we do!).

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Essex Local Nature Partnership

Small actions, big impact for nature recovery

Nature recovery begins with all of us. The Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has now launched and outlines how everyone in Essex can play a role in reversing biodiversity decline. Whether it's creating a wild patch in your garden, volunteering at a local habitat project or contributing your ideas to your town council, the LNRS makes it easy to get involved.

At the heart of the LNRS is an interactive map that shows opportunities for wildlife enhancement across the county. Even small changes in your neighbourhood can add up to big gains for nature. You can explore actions, get involved, and find your local area's priorities on the Essex Nature Partnership website.

Start your journey to support nature recovery:
www.essexnaturepartnership.com



Christmas Shopping List 2025

Braintree Area Foodbank
Together with Trussell

Items we need: Tinned Fruit; Shampoo; Tinned Rice Pudding; Coffee (small jars) Tinned Ravioli; Tea bags (40's); Pasta (500g bags); Jam; Soap (bars); Tinned Fish; Packet Custard; Breakfast Cereal; Tinned tomatoes; Instant Mash; Tinned cold meat (Spam/chopped ham); Packet/cup soups; Shower gel; Chocolate; Deodorant; UHT/Long life milk; Sponge Puddings; Toothbrushes; Squash (750ml); Rice (1kg bags); and Biscuits.

www.braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/collection-points/
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Colne Engaine Dramatic Society presents

Aladdin



28th - 31st January

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Performances on Wednesday 28th, Thursday 29th, Friday 30th & Saturday 31st January.
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Film Club

It's been another bumper year for The Film Club and we continue to be hugely grateful to all who have attended the discussions, suggested films and to Team Drapers for hosting us. Even if you are not able to join the discussions, we hope you have liked our choice of films throughout the year. As we like to challenge ourselves, we are tackling two films for December and entering 2026 with a heartwarming tale of chasing one's dreams despite the odds!

For December, it's another classic Christmas story

The Film - A Christmas Carol (the 1984 version with George C Scott) AND Scrooge: A Christmas Carol (the 1951 version with Alistair Sim)

The Discussion - Wednesday 10th December 2025 gather at 6.45pm for a 7.00pm start

The Where - The Drapers, Earls Colne

For January, it's all about how to make a dream come true

The Film - The Peanut Butter Falcon (2019 starring Zac Gottsagen)

The Discussion - Wednesday 14th January 2026 gather at 6.45pm for a 7.00pm start

The Where - The Drapers, Earls Colne

Happy Christmas with best wishes for a film-filled New Year from our Film Club Admins, Sharon (revdsdq@gmail.com), Kirsten (kpt1607@icloud.com) and Ray (rawood@me.com).



Security Advice

Money Muling -What you Need to Know, by Stuart Pugh on behalf of Barclays Bank

New data from the latest Barclays Scams Bulletin shows scammers are turning to SMS and messaging apps to target Gen Z (18-24 year old) victims, as 71 per cent of students say scams are on the rise. Two of the biggest threats are fake job offers and "money mule" recruitment schemes, which are often closely linked. The Bank is sharing advice to help students protect their money and stay safe online as the new university term gets underway.

The growing threat of job scams

New research from Barclays shows that almost half (48 per cent) of Gen Z adults (aged 18-24) have been targeted by a job scam or know someone who has, making this the most cited scam type for this age group alongside identity impersonation.

Job scammers often promise high pay for minimal effort, before asking victims for upfront payments for "training" or "equipment", stealing personal details, or tricking them into laundering money.

As scammers make use of text, mobile and social channels, students believe tech companies have a vital role to play in shutting down criminal activity online. Seven in 10 believe these companies should be doing more to prevent scammers exploiting their platforms.

Kirsty Adams, Fraud & Scams Expert at Barclays, says: "Students are facing real financial pressure, and criminals exploit that anxiety with offers that look professional and promise quick cash. If you're asked to pay upfront, share personal details, or the job sounds too good to be true, there's a good chance it's a scam. Always take time to check before you respond."

Money mule misunderstanding

In some cases, fake job offers can be a front for "money mule" recruitment schemes, where criminals target individuals – often younger generations – with offers of easy money to "process payments" or "transfer funds" through their bank account. Adverts for roles like "online reviewer", 'too good to be true' offers from cool companies, or direct messages disguised as requests for help should all raise red flags.

Such approaches can appear harmless to students balancing rent, bills and part-time work in a cost-of-living squeeze, but the risks must not be underestimated. Many young people are unaware that acting as a money mule could lead to a criminal record, with many not knowing their bank account could be closed as a result.

Of the Gen Z respondents at risk of unwittingly becoming a money mule, a quarter (23 per cent) say they wouldn't tell anyone what had happened due to **…..Cont'd /**

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Security Advice (Cont'd)

embarrassment. This suggests that the stigma around falling victim to fraud and scams and under-reporting remains a major challenge.

Kirsty Adams adds: "Acting as a money mule isn't a harmless favour – it's a serious crime that can lead to a criminal record, frozen bank accounts and long-term financial damage. My advice to any young person who receives an approach of this nature is to think carefully before agreeing to move money for someone else. It's simply not worth the consequence."

Kirsty Adams shares her **SAFE** guidelines to help job seekers stay alert and avoid falling victim to employment scams.

S – Stop and research
Pause before applying or sharing personal details. Check the company's official website, verify the recruiter's email address, and look for reviews or warnings online. A few minutes of research can save you from identity theft or financial loss.

A – Ask someone you trust
Before sending documents or paying any fees, speak to a friend, family member, or career adviser. They might spot red flags you missed.

F – Flag unrealistic offers
Be cautious of jobs that promise very high pay for little work, or roles that don't require experience but offer big rewards. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

E – Ensure secure processes
Legitimate employers will never ask for upfront payments for training, equipment, or background checks. Always use official application portals and avoid sharing sensitive information like bank details until you're certain the job is genuine.

For more information and advice on how to stay protected from fraud and scams, visit: barclays.co.uk/scams.



Millennium Green Trust

Earls Colne Millennium Green in Winter

As the crisp air of winter settles over the village, Earls Colne Millennium Green transforms into a peaceful sanctuary, inviting parishioners and visitors alike to experience its unique charm during the colder months. While the Green is often associated with springtime blossoms and summer picnics, winter offers its own seasonal magic, making it a delightful destination for a brisk walk, quiet reflection, or to simply enjoy the sights and sounds of nature at rest.

With its swathes of grass, mature trees, and winding pathways, Millennium Green takes on a new character in winter. Frost glistens in the morning sunlight, dancing on the spirographs of spider webs, while the trees' bare branches create silhouettes against pale grey skies. Occasionally, a dusting of snow will blanket the ground, muffling footsteps and turning the Green into a winter wonderland, perfect for children's play or a contemplative stroll.

Although many of the Green's residents are less visible in winter, there is still much to see for the keen observer. Robins, with their bright red breasts, flit amongst the hedgerows,

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bringing a welcome splash of colour. Blackbirds and thrushes can be spotted searching the ground for berries and fallen seeds, while squirrels dart among the trees, busying themselves with their winter stores. If you tread quietly, you may even catch a glimpse of a fox or a shy rabbit venturing out from cover.

The colder season on Millennium Green is a time for gentle community activity. Villagers venture out snugly wrapped in scarves and hats for a winter wander or to walk their dogs, while children enjoy the novelty of a frosty swing, icy puddles and the occasional snowball fight. The benches, though chilly, provide a place for reflection or conversation, and the wild open space is ideal for a breath of fresh air away from the bustle of daily life.

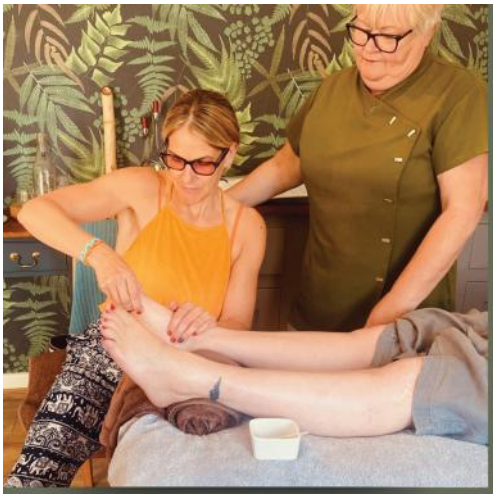
The winter months are also a time when the dedicated team of volunteers continue their work, clearing fallen branches, maintaining pathways, and preparing for the return of warmer weather. Their efforts ensure that the Green remains welcoming and accessible all year round and they are always grateful for new helping hands if you would like to join them.

Though winter may seem long and the days short, the Green quietly readies itself for the coming of spring. Snowdrops and early daffodils begin to push through the cold earth, promising a burst of colour just around the corner. Until then, Earls Colne Millennium Green remains a place of calm and natural beauty, reminding us all of the enduring spirit of our village, whatever the season. So, as you don your coat and step out into the brisk winter air, consider a visit to Millennium Green. Whether you seek solitude, a moment with nature, or a chance to greet a neighbour, the Green awaits – serene, beautiful, and ever welcoming, a truly special corner of Earls Colne.

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EARLS COLNE

EARLS COLNE HERITAGE MUSEUM

EARLS COLNE'S FIRST BLUE PLAQUE

On 29th October 2025 at Colne House, the Museum was pleased to unveil the first blue plaque to be erected in the Village commemorating 19th century philanthropist Mary Gee. An invited guest list of over 70 people from around the county witnessed the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst, unveil the plaque. Our thanks to Colne House, Kingsley Healthcare, and Colne Valley Golf Club for their kind hospitality, which made this event so memorable.



This tribute forms part of the Essex Women Commemoration Project, which continues to shine a light on remarkable women whose contributions within the County have too often gone unrecognised.

Colne House (now a care home) was built for Mary Gee about 1840. She lived there till she died in 1864. Mary was a wealthy young widow who had tragically also lost both her children at a young age. She was moved by the poverty

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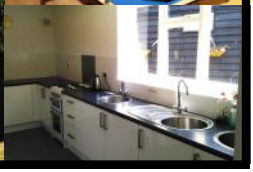
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Heritage Museum (Cont'd)

she witnessed in Earls Colne, Halstead, Greenstead Green and Great Maplestead. She channelled her wealth into transformative community projects. Her philanthropy was both strategic and heartfelt, targeting education, housing and spiritual life.

One project, she financed and still highly visible at Pound Green, the roundabout junction of Colchester & Coggeshall Road - is the pump "digged" in 1853 to commemorate the absence of cholera in the village – a disease that killed over 100,000 in England in the Victorian period.





Find out more about Mary Gee on the museum's website. (https://echm.org.uk/mary-gee-1795-1864-philanthropist/)

www.echm.org.uk

https://www.facebook.com/earlscolneheritagemuseum



Heritage Museum (Cont'd)

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY. Following the church service and gathering at the War Memorial, Gordon Brown gave an illustrated talk at the Con Club that included recent research uncovering the story of a further tragic loss of WW2. Two civilian war casualties associated with the village, Mrs Phyllis Jameson of Mill Brooks and her daughter-in-law, Mary, were killed on the 18th June 1944 when The Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks in London, was hit by a V1 rocket, killing 121 servicemen and civilians and seriously injuring 141 others during a Church service.

CHRISTMAS MARKET/CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL. The museum will be present at both events on December 6th. Come and talk to us there.

OUT AND ABOUT TOURS. The guided walks with John Stedman have concluded for 2025. He'll be back with some new tours next year, conducted in his own inimitable style. However, the "Ask John" sessions continue every Friday in the Library – do visit!

More information about the museum can be found on Facebook, on our website, or by joining our mailing list. Thank you for your continued support.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



Four Colnes Horticultural Society

December, the final month of 2025 and to start off on a high note we have, on **Saturday December 6th, a Christmas Fayre**.

Held in Earls Colne Village Hall the Fayre has refreshments, a WI stall selling home-made cakes, jams & savouries (get in quickly because many sell out early) and a range of stalls selling the products of local craftspeople. Sure there will be some good ideas for stocking fillers or presents and your support in "keeping things local" often makes a huge difference to these craftspeople and their skills. Of course we cannot forget a raffle run by the society which raises funds to cover expenses and, if possible, donations to local causes. Again we must extend our grateful thanks to all the local businesses and individuals who, willingly, donate prizes.

The hall will be suitably decorated by the Parish Council, there will representation from Olivers Plants and child friendly, Christmas themed events in the back hall courtesy of the Primary School PTA.

At 2pm on the same day there will be carols around the Christmas Tree in St. Andrew's Church as well as a Christmas Tree Festival with an entry by the society, so please show your support for these and all other village activities.

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Four Colnes Horticultural Society

If you were unable to attend the Society AGM and renew your membership there will be the opportunity to do so at the Fayre. Annual membership of £5 goes a long way to supporting the society and, importantly, towards keeping the long-running Four Colnes Show as a highlight of the village's summer schedule. There is some "gentle" competition within the wide-ranging exhibition classes with entry costs included within the membership package www.fourcolneshorticulturalsociety.com . The society circulates, via e-mail to members, updates of activities planned which often includes garden visits and talks.

The committee is keen to reach out to gain an increase in members outside of Earls Colne and in doing this consideration would certainly be given to using other villages' facilities to host meetings.

Schedules for the show on August 16th 2026 are now available at www.fourcolneshorticulturalsociety.com . Check out the title headings as the winter months are ideal opportunities to gather prize winning photographs to enter into the photographic section.

There is still a great need for willing gardeners to put their names forward to take part in an Earls Colne open garden event on June 14th 2026. Please put your name forward to a committee member and help to make this plan a reality.

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We're fortunate to have two outstanding professional musicians who lead us, encourage us, and make us laugh. James Davey is one of the UK's most distinguished and respected choral directors, in demand for his work as conductor, choral education practitioner, arranger and adjudicator. Our rehearsal accompanist is Fran Jefferies, an MA Piano Accompaniment graduate from the Royal Academy of Music. She is also a first study harpsichordist, known for her sensitive accompanying skills, performing with instrumentalists, groups and singers. With their guidance we develop our own voices, our power as a choir and our confidence. There are plenty of entertaining anecdotes and a limitless supply of enthusiasm. Monday evenings are a balm that set me up for the week.

We generally perform a different musical style each term, from the classical choral tradition to musicals, Gilbert and Sullivan, Folk, a Christmas Concert and more. There is something for everyone. It is always a delight to sing and perform music with others and we work to collaborate with other local musical groups too.

Whether you've never sung in a group, haven't been able to sing with others for a while or sing regularly, everyone is welcome to our free 'Fun Sing' session on Monday 26 January 2026!

No need to book but if you would like more information about this or the choir, please contact us: info.halsteadchoral@gmail.com
Do also please keep an eye on the choir's website for concerts and up to date events information https://www.halsteadchoral.co.uk



Best wishes to you from all at Halstead Choir. We hope you have a wonderful time this festive season, however you choose to spend it, and a happy and music filled 2026. Just remember to keep singing!

Karen

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Short Says

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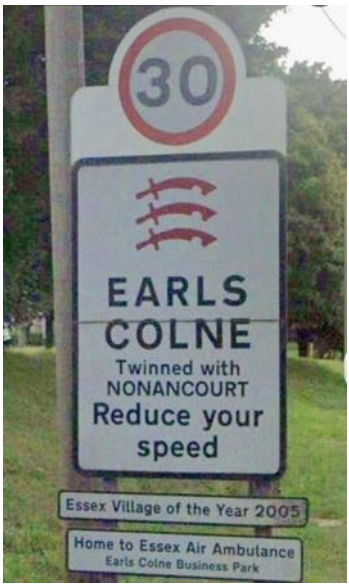
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Twinning With Nonancourt



Earls Colne/Nonancourt Twinning Organisation

How many times have you driven into Earls Colne and passed the speed restriction signs saying "Twinned with Nonancourt" and wondered what the twinning is about?

In 1920, Keighley in West Yorkshire made history as the first UK town to twin with another. Keighley soldiers who'd been stationed in Poix-du-Nord, France, during WWI saw the devastation wrought on the battle-scarred town and asked Keighley council to draw up a town twinning agreement as an official gesture of solidarity.

Twinning got a boost in 1945, when mayors and citizens alike were determined more than ever to prevent Europe from being torn apart by war. A twinning organisation serves as the bridge that connects two communities, enabling them to work together for shared goals. The UK has **…..Cont'd /**

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Twinning With Nonancourt (Cont'd)

approximately 2,000 formal twinning agreements.

Our Twinning Association



Since 1975, Earls Colne has been twinned with Nonancourt, a medieval market town in Normandy. It is situated on the banks of the River Avre and is surrounded by the green Normandy countryside.

Every year we get together, hosting alternate years. When our French friends visit us, we usually host a dinner-dance and arrange a trip to a place of local interest. Whilst in France in previous years, we have enjoyed trips to Versailles, Paris and Honfleur.

But a trip to France is not just about visiting cathedrals and ancient towns; there are opportunities to have loads of fun too with picnics and games. Our children have particularly benefitted from the opportunity to learn about another culture. In many cases, the trips have led to lasting friendships between families where nationality and language have proved to be no barrier.

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Twinning With Nonancourt (Cont'd)

How to Get Involved

We always welcome new members, either to take part in the hosting or just to get involved in the social activities. We have a few events where you can find out more about the organisation and how you can get involved. You will find us at the Earls Colne Horticultural Show Christmas Fayre on 6th December at Earls Colne Village Hall. Information can also be found at the Christmas Tree Festival on 6th and 7th December at St Andrews Church in Earls Colne.

We are hoping to hold a quiz night, a bingo night, a group walk and other activities in 2026, so if you want to join us and make some new friends, please contact Ruth Cornell, Chair - rccornell@outlook.com, Katherine Burns, Secretary - katherineburns1962@gmail.com), Yasmin Preston, Membership Secretary - yasminpreston@outlook.com

Readers, please remember to mention this magazine if you answer any of the advertisements.

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Art Exhibition at St. Andrew's Church

The Art Exhibition which took place at St. Andrew's Church, Earls Colne, on 25th & 26th October proved to be a great success. The artwork on show was wide-ranging and included semi-abstract to traditional pieces worked in either oils, acrylics or watercolours. There was also a fine display of art photography. Over 100 works were on show and over 21 pieces were sold. 200 people plus passed through the doors during the weekend. Tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits were available as well as Tower Tours and many visitors made donations. The commission from the sold artworks goes to the Church Fund.

Many thanks to all the people who helped to make this event a success.

Liz Pottinger



EARLS COLNE & HALSTEAD
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Formed in 1975, the Charity is an Educational Trust that administers funds from investments, in the form of grants to local young people.

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The Earls Colne and Halstead Educational Charity offers Resource Grants to young people studying undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses (excluding one or two year Foundation courses and including recognised level 4 courses).

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- be aged between 18 and 25
- have attended school *or* have lived, for at least one year, within the Charity's area of benefit (catchment area).



Note: Grants are not means-tested and anyone can apply as long as you meet the above criteria.

Find out more:

More information about the Charity and application forms can be found on our website – www.echec.org.uk.
Alternatively email - earlscolnehalstead.edcharity@yahoo.co.uk .

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Sponsor a Star
St. Andrew's Colne Engaine

If you missed the order form for the Sponsor a Star this year (it was in the November edition of the magazine), please email Rita: ritaprior31@gmail.com to obtain one. Or, visit the online version of the magazine to download.

All stars need to be ordered before the **11th December.**

Pat Taylor has stepped down from the Parish Council after many years as a Councillor and we have Mary Ashby joining us as a new councillor.

Mary was co-opted at our Parish Council meeting on 11th September 2025.

The Chairman, Alan Barnard and the Parish Councillors would like to thank Pat Taylor for all her hard work and years of service to the local community of Colne Engaine.

Grahame Walkingshaw

Parish Clerk for Colne Engaine

Mindful Self-Compassion Coaching and Teaching for Wellbeing

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None of us can change our story, though I can help you change the way you tell your story.

I can also work with students and/or parents and carers as individuals or in groups.

John Quill

I also teach an eight-week Mindful Self-Compassion course, normally online, but if there's interest, I could provide a course here in the Three Colnes.

Please see the website for more information about all of this and contact information.

https://www.johnquill.co.uk/



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Recipe Corner



Slow-Cooker Christmas Pudding

Christmas pudding, like Christmas cake, can be prepared well in advance. Preparing and mixing Christmas pudding is easy, especially if you are using suet instead of butter, but cooking takes a long time and, if you are steaming it on the stove, you need to keep close watch to make sure the pan doesn't run dry. Using the slow cooker doesn't reduce the cooking time, but, at least, you can safely walk away and allow the slow cooker to do its thing. The result is soft and generally delicious.

Ingredients

300g Mixture of raisins, sultanas and currants.

80ml Cooking brandy (optional)

200g Grated vegetable suet

75g Soft dark brown sugar

50g Plain flour

1/2 tsp Cinnamon

1/4 tsp Cloves

1/2 tsp Baking powder

60g Fresh breadcrumbs

2 large Eggs

1 medium Apple (coarsely grated)

1 tbsp Black treacle

Method: If you have time, soak the dried fruits in cooking brandy, for 2-3 days. (If you don't have time, don't worry – you'll still end up with a decent pudding.)

-Make breadcrumbs by tearing a slice of bread into pieces, then whizzing the pieces around in a liquidiser.

-Beat the sugar, eggs and treacle together in a large mixing bowl.

-Add the suet, flour, spices and baking powder, then stir in the breadcrumbs.

-Mix in dried fruits and grated apple (and any left-over brandy, if you soaked your fruit).

-Spray a largish pudding basin (about 6 inches diameter at the top) with squirty oil.

-Scrape the mixture into the pudding basin.

-Cut a piece of greaseproof paper about 6 inches wider than the diameter of your pudding basin. Fold a couple of pleats into the paper (so your pudding can rise as it cooks). Spray one side of the greaseproof paper with squirty oil.

-Cover the top of the pudding basin with the pleated greaseproof paper, with the squirty oil side down (touching the pudding mixture). Secure the greaseproof paper with a large rubber band about 1 inch down from the top of the basin.

-Place the pudding in your slow cooker. Fill slow cooker with boiling water to about 1 inch from the rim of the basin.

-Put the lid on the slow cooker and cook on low for 8 hours.

-Your pudding will rise when it is 'done'. Using an oven cloth, take it out the slow cooker and allow to cool.



If you intend to eat your pudding in a few weeks' time - this coming Christmas - store it, covered, in a cool place. If you intend to keep the pudding longer – say, next Christmas, or Easter – put it in the freezer.

Rosemary Johnson

Bridge Club
WHITE COLNE

DO YOU PLAY BRIDGE? If so ,we would love to see you at White Colne Village Hall for an afternoon of duplicate bridge. We meet on Fridays at 1.15pm.



The club was founded three years ago; we have a lovely venue, plenty of parking, and we include tea/coffee and the best biscuits! £3 p.p. table money. A friendly club, competitive, but in a good way... usually! It is bridge after all, and to be enjoyed! DO come and meet us, and hopefully join us.
Further information contact::
Jenny 01376 562088 or 07507 658842
Simon 01206 242444 or 07952 381802



St. Andrew's Book Club
EARLS COLNE

St. Andrew's Book Club meets on the second Tuesday of the month: 2.00 pm at 8 Coggeshall Road, Earls Colne.

Our Next Two Meetings:

Tuesday 9th December 2025—Our December book is Raising Hare by Chloe Dalton.

When Chloe, a city-dwelling professional with a high-pressure job, finds a newly-born hare, endangered, alone and no bigger than her palm, she is compelled to give it a chance at survival – despite being the least likely caregiver to this wild animal . . .

Tuesday 13th January 2026 - Our January book is The Word is Murder by Anthony Horowitz.

A woman is strangled six hours after organising her own funeral. Did she know she was going to die? Did she recognise her killer? Recalcitrant detective Daniel Hawthorne and his reluctant side-kick set out to solve this puzzling mystery . . .

New members are always welcome.

For further details, please contact me on 01787 223843, **Margaret Hill.**

The ManKind Project

Men Matters

If you're a man reading this, it could be for you. If you're a woman, please pass it on to the man in your life.

What's this about?

I meet many men who feel lost or as if something is missing, unsure where to turn for support. It can affect work, relationships, and how emotions are handled. Some men take on a "macho/don't care" attitude; others retreat into doubt, despair, or isolation.

I live in Earls Colne and, if any of this feels familiar, I'm offering to set up and facilitate a men's group within the Three Colnes. I'll bring my experience with the Mankind Project (MKP) and my skills in **Mindful Self-Compassion** (see my advert on page 53).

What will we do?

Initially, we'll keep it simple:

- **Check-in:** brief introductions and how we are using PIES – Physically, Intellectually, Emotionally, and Spiritually/socially
- **Sharing:** a chance to speak more deeply while others simply listen – no obligation
- **Check-out:** reflections and recognitions

Is there discussion?

Not during sharing. In MKP, this model creates a safe space to speak truth without advice or fixing. It's powerful to be witnessed just as we are. At the end, we'll briefly discuss the process and how the group might develop. Over time, we may draw on MKP, mindfulness, and coaching practices.

When, where, and cost?

We'll meet fortnightly. Depending on interest, there may be day and evening options. I'll arrange a suitable room; costs will simply cover hire, shared among attendees. A small voluntary donation for my time would be appreciated.

What next?

If you're interested, email **john@johnquill.co.uk** with your availability and a few words about why you'd like to join. This is appearing in the December magazine, and if there's enough interest, we'll begin in January.

Thanks for reading,

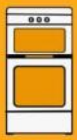
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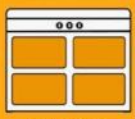
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Arctic Run

From Colne Engaine to the Arctic Circle: James East's Challenge for Mental Health



While most of us will be wrapping up warm and avoiding the frosty mornings this winter, James East, a military veteran of Colne Engaine, will be doing quite the opposite. In February 2026, he'll be heading to Arctic Sweden to take on the Beyond Ultimate Ice Ultra — a 230km self-sufficient foot race across snowfields, frozen lakes and tundra, in temperatures that can plummet to -40°C.

It's a gruelling five-day test of endurance, but for James, seen opposite during a deployment to Afghanistan in 2013, the challenge is about far more than physical fitness. James is running to raise money for Head Up, a charity dedicated to improving mental health support for those who have served, or are still serving, in the UK Armed Forces.

James has seen first-hand the impact that service life — and life after the military — can have on mental health. "The race will be a serious challenge," he says, "but it's nothing compared to what many face when they leave the military without the right help. Head Up is working hard to change that."

Before he faces the Arctic, James's training is taking place right here in Colne Engaine and the surrounding countryside. Many will have spotted him running through the lanes, tackling the hills towards Pebmarsh, or clocking up long miles on frosty mornings when most of us are still nursing our first cup of tea. The quiet fields and familiar roads have become his training ground for one of the most extreme environments on Earth.

Every run brings him closer to the start line — and every donation or wave from a passing neighbour helps keep his motivation high. "It's a big adventure and a huge test, but every bit of encouragement and sponsorship will help get me across that finish line — and make a real difference for Head Up." says James.

To support James and the work of Head Up, please visit his JustGiving page – at https://www.justgiving.com/team/iceultra2026, or via this QR code. Your donation, however small, will help make a lasting difference to those who've served our country — and remind James that Colne Engaine is cheering him on every step of the way.

The Atlas Social Club

EARLS COLNE

The Atlas Social Club 4 Foundry Lane

Many within the Village will have no knowledge of the Atlas Club and, of those that do know, many will not be aware of where it is or what it is for.

Built in 1888 as a reading room for foundry workers, the Atlas Club is sited to the southern end of Foundry Lane squeezed tightly between an adjoining house and the pedestrian access to the Foundry development, formally the site of Hunt's Foundry & Works. As its use as a reading room declined it became a drinking and social club for the workers. Since the closing of Hunts the club has become The Atlas Social Club run by a committee of volunteers and, also run by volunteers, an extensively stocked bar for club members.

For a modest membership fee of £15 per calendar year, members can enjoy a quiet relaxed area of friendship for chat, cards or board games with occasional Quiz nights and other events as they occur. The quiz night of October saw the walls bursting with attendees and, as a result, £50 is to be donated to the Church Bell fund. **New members are always welcome.** If you have a fancy for finding out what is on offer then call in, speak to the volunteer behind the bar and see how you fit in; you have nothing to lose. Opening hours are Thursday, Friday and Sunday from 7.30pm.

Parish Council

EARLS COLNE

Your newly elected Parish Councillors have been busy working behind the scenes and are looking forward to serving the community in the months ahead.

We are also pleased to confirm that Sarah Gaeta, who has been acting as Interim Clerk, has now been appointed as the permanent Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). Sarah works part-time and is very much looking forward to continuing her work with both the Council and the wider community.

Earls Colne Parish Council is delighted to be busy planning a range of festive events for the village!
There are lots of other wonderful events taking place in Earls Colne to celebrate Christmas, and full details will be shared soon in our **Earls Colne Christmas Calendar.** We hope these events and activities will bring plenty of festive cheer, help us celebrate the season together, and strengthen the community spirit that makes our village so special.

Parish Council
EARLS COLNE

Here's what the Parish Council Events Team has been working on to bring some Christmas sparkle to Earls Colne:

LETTER TO SANTA. You may have seen the posters across the Village, explaining how you can receive a personalised letter from Santa. All you have to do is request a form from Ziel, The Refillery, Kofi or the Parish Council Office. Complete the form and post it in Santa's Letterbox outside the Parish Council Village Hall. The last day to return the completed form is Friday 12th December. "Letters From Santa" will be delivered by Santa in the days leading up to Christmas.

DECORATE A CHRISTMAS TREE POSTER. Hopefully, you have also seen the poster on the noticeboards and Facebook explaining how you may request a "Christmas Tree Poster" for you to decorate, however you choose. All decorated Christmas Tree Posters that are returned to the Parish Council by Wednesday 3rd December will be displayed in the Village Hall.

CANAPES & CAROLS. On 6th December from 5.30pm until 7pm the Parish Council will host carols and canapes in the main hall, everyone is welcome so please join us to start your Christmas Celebrations. Mulled wine, with or without an extra festive shot of liqueur, will be on sale!

CHRISTMAS FILM SCREENING. Also, on 6th December from 5.45pm until approx. 7pm in the small Village Hall the Parish Council will be screening the Christmas film "Elf". Everyone is welcome. Popcorn, ice cream and soft drinks will also be on sale.

COMMUNITY STARS AWARD. Residents were invited to nominate someone they felt deserved recognition and a special Christmas Afternoon Tea. The nomination period for the Community Stars Award has now closed; thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate someone!

This award was created to recognise and celebrate individuals in Earls Colne who make a positive difference through acts of kindness, outstanding service, or true community spirit.

The Parish Council has now invited all **Community Stars Award** winners, and a full list of this year's recipients will be published soon. We look forward to celebrating our Stars on **Sunday, 14th December,** and thanking them for their wonderful contributions to making Earls Colne such a special place to live.

It would be wonderful if this could become an annual event, continuing to shine a light on those who make our village such a caring and connected community.

WISHING EVERYONE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ALL AT EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL!

Parish Council

Members of the villages' Parish Councils work hard to ensure that the Three Colnes remains a beautiful and tranquil place to live. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact them.

COLNE ENGAINE

Download Parish Council Notes: www.colne-engaine.org.uk/meetings

CLLR ALAN BARNARD
(Chairman) alan@colne-engaine.org.uk
EALC representative; Townlands Trust; Burches meadow liaison; Sexton's Field Trustee; funding for village projects, defibrillator warden

CLLR TERRY FLOYD
terry@colne-engaine.org.uk
Tree warden; footpaths; Townlands Trust; Sexton's Field Trustee

HELEN BISCOE-DAVIS
helen@colne-engaine.org.uk
Community engagement

GRAHAME WALKINGSHAW - 01206 240772
Parish Clerk & Financial Officer
clerk@colne-engaine.org.uk

CLLR SARAH DIGNASSE
(Vice Chair) sarah@colne-engaine.org.uk
Recreation ground; village school; village hall liaison

CLLR NIGEL WARWICK
nigel@colne-engaine.org.uk
Finance committee; Burches Meadow liaison; festival liaison

CLLR IAN MESSENGER
ian@colne-engaine.org.uk
Finance committee; funding for village projects; website; I.T.; and archive liaison

CLLR PAT TAYLOR
pat@colne-engaine.org.uk
EALC representative; tree warden

WHITE COLNE

www.whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk
https://www.facebook.com/groups/whitecolnepc/

Cllr. JANE TAYLOR— 07521 312778
chairman@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cllr. JAMES BOND is Vice chair .
Cllr.jbond@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cllr. PAUL BATCHFORD
Cllr.pbatchford@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cllr. JOHN WILSON
Cllr.jwilson@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cllr. JASON PRYKE
Cllr.jpryke@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

JIM MORRIS is Parish Clerk
clerk@whitecolneparishcouncil.gov.uk

Responsibilities as yet have not been assigned.

Parish Council

EARLS COLNE

For all Parish Council news visit: https://www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk/

CLLR BOB COOK (Chairman)
bob.cook@earlscolne-pc.gov.uk

CLLR MARTYN JACKSON (Vice-Chairman)
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CLLR LORRAINE BAUCKHAM-LEYS
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CLLR PHIL WALL
phil.wall@earlscolne-pc.gov.uk

SARAH GAETA is the Clerk and RFO
clerk@earlscolne-pc.gov.uk

TERRY BENNETT is the
Village Hall Caretaker

COMMUNITY WORKER TEAM:
Dean Cudmore, Dave Newbery and
Paul Southgate

To find out more about your Councillors and their areas of expertise, or to get in touch, please visit www.earlscolne-pc.gov.uk. The **Parish Office** is located at the **Village Hall**, and the Clerk can be contacted on **01787 224370**. If there is no reply, please do leave a message and your call will be returned.

Parish Council Meetings – Please note change of day Meetings are now held on the **third Tuesday of every month** at the **Village Hall**, starting at **7:00pm**. A notice of each meeting will be displayed in advance on all Village Notice Boards. Members of the public are warmly invited to attend. There is a **15-minute public session** at the start of each meeting, with individual speakers limited to **3 minutes**. The Council also welcomes opportunities to meet with residents at other times by prior arrangement, either through the Clerk or directly via your Councillor's email.

OTHER COUNCILLORS AND MEMBER OFPARLIAMENT

County Councillor **Chris Siddall**
cllr.chris.siddall@essex.gov.uk

District Councillor **Gabrielle Spray**
cllr.gspray@braintree.gov.uk

District Councillor **George Courtauld**
cllr.gcourtauld@braintree.gov.uk

MP for Witham **The Rt. Hon Priti Patel**
withammp@parliament.uk

EARLS COLNE CHRISTMAS CALENDAR 2025

SATURDAY
7 November

ECPC Christmas Tree Poster 'ready for decoration!' is available starting today

Ziel, EC Refillery, EC Library, KOH & EC Parish Council

SATURDAY
7 November

The ECPC "Community Stars Nomination Form" is available from the following

Ziel, EC Refillery, EC Library, KOH & EC Parish Council

WEDNESDAY
19 November

The ECPC form to request a hand-delivered letter from Santa is available starting today

Ziel, EC Refillery, EC Library, KOH & EC Parish Council

WEDNESDAY
26 November

Completed "Community Stars Nomination Forms" must be returned to the Parish Council by today.

Parish Council Office

FRIDAY
28 November

SWITCHING ON OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Dusk
Earls Colne High Street

SUNDAY
30 November

Lighting the Star & Blessing of the Crib With carols, mulled wine, and mince pies – all are welcome!

St Andrews Church
5pm

WEDNESDAY
4 December

All decorated "Christmas Tree Posters" must be returned by the end of today

Parish Council Office

FRIDAY
5 December

Village Hall It's Christmas – let's make the hall shine!

Village Hall

SATURDAY
6 December

Christmas Tree Festival including arts & crafts for the children and refreshments

St Andrews Church
10am-4pm

SATURDAY
6 December

Christmas Trail

High Street Businesses
11am-4.30pm

SATURDAY
6 December

FCHS Christmas Faire Free Entry. A variety of food & craft stalls from local producers.

Large Village Hill
11am-4pm

SATURDAY
6 December

Primary School PTA Christmas crafts,games, Santas story and refreshments

Smal Village Hall
11am-4pm

SATURDAY
6 December

Join us in the Memorial Garden for festive carols and Christmas cheer!

Memorial Garden
2pm

SATURDAY
6 December

ECPC - Savoury Canapes, Christmas Treats & Festive Music & Santa

Village Hall
5.30pm - 7pm

SATURDAY
6 December

ECPC screening of the Family Christmas film "ELF"

Village Hall
5.45pm to 7pm

SUNDAY
7 December

Service

St Andrews Church
10am

SUNDAY
7 December

Christmas Tree Festival including arts & crafts for the children and refreshments.

St Andrews Church
11.30am-4pm

FRIDAY
12 December

NATIONAL CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

EC Primary School & High Street Businesses invite everyone to join in the fun – wear your festive jumper!

SUNDAY
14 December

Community Stars Afternoon Tea

Village Hall
3pm-6pm

WEDNESDAY
17 December

Christmas Carols

The Lion
7.30PM

FRIDAY
19 December

Late Night Shopping

Ziel &
It Takes a Village & Kofi
6pm-8pm

SUNDAY
21 December

Holy Communion

St Andrews Church
10am

SUNDAY
21 December

Traditional Carols and Readings

St Andrews Church
5pm

WEDNESDAY
24 December

Family Carol Services

St Andrews Church
5pm

FRIDAY
12 December

LAST DAY TO REQUEST YOUR LETTER FROM SANTA !

Santas ECPC helpers will soon be delivering Santas letters across the village!

WEDNESDAY
24 December

Midnight service for the 3 Parishes

Colne Engaine Church
11.15 pm

Going Walk About

Two Swans!

Our first October walk followed one of the best loved, local routes, along the river meadows to Chappel, returning via Chalkney Woods. It was great to have eighteen walkers join us for the first leg to Chappel, where some returned by bus and others stayed for lunch at The Swan. Eight walkers and two dogs completed the return leg, enjoying fantastic views back to Chappel and across to Wakes Colne, before kicking through the crunchy leaves of an autumnal Chalkney Woods. This is a great post-Christmas walk to revive you after over-indulging during the festive season – but take care in case the meadows are flooded.

Our second walk that month started from the Henny Swan. This 4.3-mile walk in the beautiful Stour Valley was complemented by a lovely lunch at the pub. The slowly rising path to Middleton revealed panoramic views across the Stour valley, while further on we found the folly archway dedicated to the birth of the Prince of Wales in 1841 (later King Edward VII) made from re-used stones from Earls Cone Priory, clearly showing the De Vere star!

We will revisit this area for further walks in the coming months. If you are interested in joining us, (pub lunch optional!) please let me know on goingwalkabout.colne@gmail.com or by phone/text on 07734450221.

Details of the Chappel walk follow, while details of the Henny walk are available on request.

1. We started from St Andrew's Church Earls Colne, but other initial routes **…..Cont'd /**







are possible. Walk down Church Hill, to the mini roundabout. Cross Coggeshall Road with care and continue along Upper Holt Street. Just before the sharp bend, by the Priory entrance, turn right through the car park for Oxford House, then cross Tey Road and continue along Lower Holt Street.

2. Cross the river and continue up Colneford Hill. Take the footpath between numbers 20 and 22, ensure that the gate is closed before continuing along the path between the properties. Further on, the path joins the left bank of the River Colne and follows it through the next few fields, later moving away and passing under some blackthorn bushes. After a metal gate the path continues between a fishing lake on the left and a field on the right. Two more gates, in quick succession, bring you out onto Chalkney Mill Lane near a pylon. Turn right and follow the lane past the mill.

3. Just before the kennels and the lower entrance into Chalkney Woods turn sharp left, passing through the yard and then beside the mill stream. After some more gates/stiles the path runs beside the boundary fence of Swanscombe Farmhouse. At the front of the house turn right up Swanscombe Road for a short distance and then turn left through the gate into the river meadows.

4. After the first field the path gets closer to the righthand hedge and then passes through a gate where a short boardwalk passes another fishing lake. Further on the path is bordered by a tall hedge on the left and a hilly field rising to your right. After passing a barn the last gate takes you onto a road, where in a short distance you pass the beautiful St Barnabas church. Continue to the junction with Chappel Hill; you'll find the Swan and Railway Museum to your left, and the Millenium Green, viaduct and play area straight ahead.



Image courtesy of: https://chappel.org

5. For the return to Earls Colne turn right up Chappel Hill, after crossing Swan Grove look to your right to find a stile in the hedge opposite. Carefully cross the road and climb the stile into a field. The path runs alongside the hedge on your left to a gate. Turn left through the gate and follow the path diagonally across the field and up the hill. If the path is unclear climb the hill a short distance and look for the chimney of a house on the horizon and walk towards this. As you reach the top of the hill do stop to look back at the view to Chappel and the viaduct.

6. Leave the field by the gate in front of the house and turn right on to Oak Road. Follow

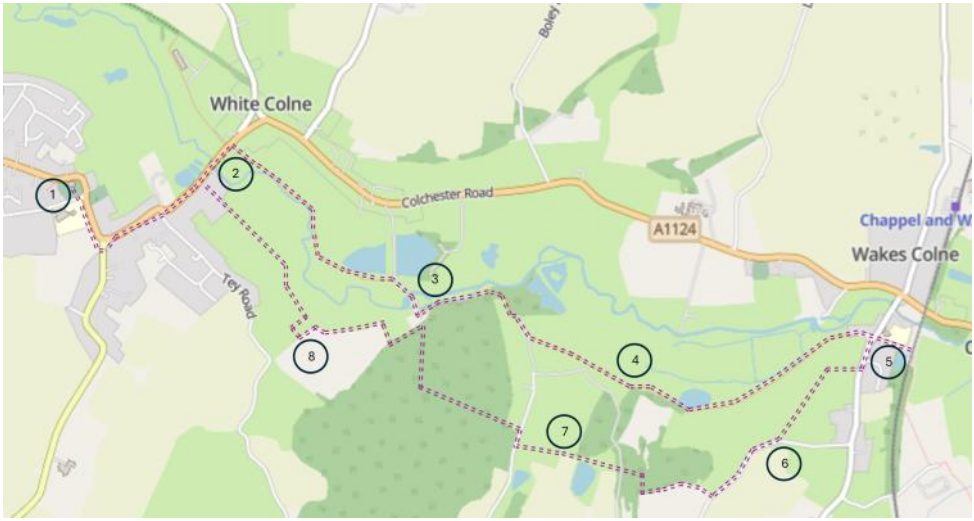
the road to some steps on your right that take you up the bank into a field. Turn right and follow the field edge path to the far corner where more steps take you down into Hickmore Fen. The path turns left and down to a bridge over a ditch, before rising to cross another path, then into a field. Follow the path across the field and pass the reservoir, keeping it on your left, to reach a gate, with views to Chalkney Woods ahead, and across to Wakes Hall to the right.

7. Go down the steep hill to the gate opposite and then up the footpath to Lamberts Lane, turn right and then quickly left into Chalkney Woods. Follow the path straight ahead until you reach a junction of five paths, take the right turning and continue downhill towards the Kennels at Chalkney Mill. Just before the exit from the woods turn left across a ditch and follow the path along the perimeter of the woods. Cross the narrow bridge over the ditch on your right, then turn right and follow the field edge path as it turns left and passes under a pylon. Continue past a large gate on your right and look for a stile a little further along.

8. Climb the stile and turn right to follow the path round the field edge. Stay by the righthand fence as the path becomes a track and passes through a gate into a large field. Keep close by the lefthand field edge to reach a gate that takes you down a passage between two gardens, exiting onto Lower Holt Street. Turn left and continue to your required destination in Earls Colne.

Stay safe and enjoy your walkabouts wherever they may take you.

Ray Wood



Useful Numbers

Councils
Braintree District Council 01376 552525
Colchester Borough Council 01206 282222

Doctors
The Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery, Halstead 01787 475944
The Pump House Surgery, Earls Colne 01787 222022

Schools
Colne Engaine C of E (Aided) Primary School 01787 222717
Earls Colne Primary School & Nursery 01787 222205
Honywood Community Science School, Coggeshall 01376 561231
The Ramsey Academy 01787 472481

Essex Police
Braintree Police Station 0300 333 4444

Village Amenities
Colne Engaine Village Hall 01787 223668
Earls Colne Village Hall 01787 224370
White Colne Village Hall 07585 558047
Colne Engaine Village Shop and Post Office: 01787 220163
White Colne Village Market 07870 652321

Village Groups
Colne Engaine Village Archive 01787 222080

Youth Groups
1st Earls Colne Brownies 01787 224175
1st Earls Colne Girl Guides 01787 220065
1st Earls Colne Rainbows 01787 224913
Scouts www.scouts.org.uk
1stearlscolnescoutgroup@gmail.com

If you are an officer of a club or group in one of the Three Colne Villages and would like to place information about the group's activities and events in the magazine for free, please contact the Editor (pg. 2).

Advertisers Index

Accountants	70
Bed & Breakfast	12
Building Company	20, 49
Chimney Sweep	21
Computer Services	46
Courtauld Hall	37
Double Glazing	23, 42
Drainage	22
Dry Cleaners	8
Ear Health	17
Electrician	28, 31
Estate / Letting Agent	2, 44
Fencing & Gates	35
Forestry Contractor / log delivery	52
Funeral Directors	16, 48
Garden Services	47
Hairdressing	19
Holistic Training Courses	32
Interior Design	15
Lawn Care Specialist	38
Locksmith	33
Luxury Mobile Toilet Hire	9
Magazine Sponsors	15, 21
Mobile Foot Care	54
Mobile Phone Repairs	46
Nursery School	36
Oven Cleaning	58
Painting and Decorating	40
Physiotherapy	30
Plumbing / Heating	30, 36
Printing Company	51
Public House	54
Quaker Meeting House Hire	30
Residential Care & Nursing Home	45
Self Catering Accommodation	33
Signage & Digital Print	34
Swimming Pool Private Hire	33
Tablet Repairs	46
Taxi & Private Hire Vehicles	41
Tearoom	17
Tree Surgeon	69
Wedding Photographer	21
Wellbeing Coaching	53
Yoga Classes	42

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