



Village Bulletin

Issue 162 Special Edition 2020



*Our
Village
in
Lockdown*

www.westbergholt.net

I have never felt so proud to be a resident of West Bergholt.

Our village pulled together during the Covid-19 pandemic in tremendous ways of kindness, generosity, sharing & innovation that shows what a great village we are.

There have been Bears, Cakes, Rainbows, dancing Co-op staff, singing, clapping & free items left on driveways to name a few.

Ensuring those in need were looked after was my first priority & the professional Care Network responded quickly to establish a group of volunteers to help with an amazing 90 people, offering their support.

This edition of the Bulletin is about you sharing some of those special things that have taken place during the crisis, along with pictures that capture the exceptional spring we had.

Thank you to everyone in the village for your support.

Chris Stevenson
Parish Council Chairman



Lockdown hit most people hard at the beginning, so we at the Co-Op decided that one day after work a few of us would get together, have a laugh and try to make others smile, too, with a little video dance.

We even made the BBC Look East news, too, which was very exciting!

We also received a lovely home made cake from local village member, Debra Hornigold, which was very much appreciated!



Well that didn't go to plan...!

2020 certainly hasn't been the year many of us planned, with lockdowns, cancelled holidays, home schooling, difficulty getting hold of packs of loo roll...

Still, I hope everyone has been able to stay safe and well in such difficult times. It's been lovely to read about all the ways in which people have kept in touch with each other, checking on neighbours and those most vulnerable. We really did pull together as a village, which is why we decided to create this special edition of the Bulletin, to share some of those amazing, fun and touching things residents have done to lift our spirits and bring a smile to our faces despite the gloom of what has been a very unprecedented year!

Jacqui

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Copy for the Winter edition should be received by no later than the
1st November 2020

Late additions cannot be guaranteed entry and are accepted on the condition that they may be edited.

Printed on paper from a sustainable source by

Atlas Signs, Media House, Wormingford Road,
Fordham, Colchester CO6 3NS
01206 242415

Hall Booking Information

Orpen Hall (108 – 150 people) & **John Lampon Hall** (30 – 50 people). Contact hall-admin@westbergholt.net

Social Club Room (during the day only). Contact hall-admin@westbergholt.net

St Marys Church (60 persons) & **Church Hall** (20 – 40 persons). Contact Nicole Long 01206 240443

Methodist Church Hall (20 – 60 persons). Contact David Kay 01206 243 574



Nature was certainly a large focus during the lockdown, with many people enjoying the numerous walks and nature trails surrounding our village.

They made for some amazing nature photos, as seen here by Ian Rowing of West Bergholt.



From top to bottom:

*A Ringlet Butterfly outside Hillhouse Wood, 30th June 2020

*A male Banded Demoiselle damselfly displays at another as it flies past. Taken beside the River Colne, 27th May 2020

*A Common Blue Butterfly found near the Essex Way, 27th May 2020



First West Bergholt Guides have continued to thrive during this unusual time. We have met via the zoom platform every week of Lockdown, including through the school holidays in an attempt to give our girls something social, fun and regular to break up the monotony and isolation.

We have been amazed at the variety of things you can do virtually, and we've enjoyed quizzes, VE day history of guiding in WW2, Talent show, Cook-along, and our last week of term featured Michael J Fitch doing a close up magic show for us.

We also welcomed 5 new girls into our group after Easter and are excited to find out when we can meet them in real life, when it becomes safe for Guiding to return to meetings. We now have 20 girls in our unit and 2 young leaders, with more girls on the waiting list for September.

Visit girlguiding.org.uk to register your interest in joining guides or speak to your Brownie leader.

West Bergholt Open Gardens 2020

The West Bergholt Open Gardens has been a biennial event since 2014 and has raised thousands of pounds for local charities. This year it had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but the plan is it will return next year.

We wish to thank the owners of the gardens for providing an interesting assortment of pictures of their lovely gardens around the planned Open weekend in June, as well as Steve for providing the pictures of the West Bergholt allotments which looked really good as a result of the hard work and watering by the allotment holders during lockdown. They are sorry that the charity stall has not been able to open this year. Finally we would like to thank Peter for putting together the photo collages, and hope you find them uplifting. We hope you can join us next year.

David Withnall, Chairman of the West Bergholt Gard



West Bergholt Allotments

When you read this Bulletin, the Allotments will be in harvest season, after a difficult year with the very dry spring and then the virus. We have been very lucky to keep the site open, thanks to the majority of plot holders following the rules.

One casualty was the Charity stall, which will remain closed until spring 2021. Any surplus veg, fruit or flowers can be found on the small garden stall in New Church road, just opposite the Allotment gate.

It was also decided that we will have no bonfires this year, and would ask plot holders in future to consider composting their allotment rubbish.

Hopefully we will return to some normality next year. In the meantime, stay safe and follow the latest Government advice.

Terry
Chair - West Bergholt Allotment Association
wballotments@gmail.com 01206 241256

I started baking as a personal thank you to our Co-op/pharmacy/posties/Drs and NHS.

15 weeks later, I'm still baking - carried along by generous donations of ingredients from villagers. I post pictures on FB and ask who would like a box of goodies. It grew and grew!

To date, I have sent out over 1,000 pieces of cake to so many different areas of our NHS and front line workers - too many to mention - from many departments at CGH to Chelmsford & Ipswich hospitals, to Fire brigade/vets/care homes/nurseries/funeral directors/schools// police/carers/hospice and many more, including, of course, The Bearman of Bergholt!

Its been lovely sprinkling a bit of sugar over a lockdown society!



1st West Bergholt & 3rd West Bergholt Brownies

Brownies

Face to face meetings ceased in March due to lockdown, and Brownies began working on badges at home.

In June we began weekly zoom meetings. The girls and leaders were very pleased to see in each other again! Not all the leaders were as confident with their IT skills so it was more of a challenge for them!

The girls enjoyed a scavenger hunt, bingo, and for the last meeting the girls made a den, where they also enjoyed hot chocolate and cookies. During this last zoom meeting two girls made their promise, which is a first in the unit's history!

Hopefully the girls continue to work on more badges over the summer break and we look forward to hopefully returning to normal meetings again soon.

Diana and Amber



If you go down To the Woods today, you're in for a big surprise.

During lockdown you may have seen bears dressed up in different themes each day on Lexden Road. When the government announced the lockdown and you were only allowed out once a day for exercise, I felt this could have a serious effect on people's mental health - so I thought " how can I make these unusual times fun and make people smile?"

My daughter had a 5ft teddy bear which really just got in the way, so I stood him in the front garden pushing a lawn mower as a bit of fun. The reaction from young and old was fantastic. I continued to set up the big bear and a few other bears in different themes each day - in fact, for the next 68 days.

The bears did everything, from celebrating VE Day to sliding down a zip wire, creating much interest on people's daily walks around the village. It became the talk of the village and was mentioned on Radio 2, BBC Look East and Essex Radio.

I only put it on the village hub but from here it was shared on social media all around the world. I even received bear mail, (fan mail) and became known as - The Bear-man of Bergholt.

It was a sad day when it came to an end, but the bears had to return to their home, Colchester Zoo, on its reopening on 18th June.

But it's not over yet! We are in the process of producing a book showing the bears story during lockdown. The book has now gone to print and will be on sale in the next couple of weeks, raising money for the Zoo and MSUK - information to follow on West Bergholt hub site on Face book.

Keith Wood (The Bear-man of Bergholt)





A big thank you goes out to the entire village community and all those involved with the help and support of Rebecca Hartley fundraising to buy two new Turtle Buses for Bluebells Pre-school.

Rebecca initially set out to raise enough money to replace just one of the buses. However, WOW! The support, along with the cake sales from Debra Hornigold, the Allotment Committee and the kind donations from parents old, current, and new, means that Rebecca has now informed me that we will have enough for two Turtle Buses!

Myself and the Bluebell Team are overwhelmed with the kind support from the community. We will be going on our adventures around the village in our new Turtle Buses from September.

Jackie Leach
Manager, Bluebell Pre-school

This summer, villagers may have noticed an increase in the numbers of swifts wheeling about, with their unmistakable scythe-shaped wings and forked tail. Thanks to funding received last year, we are now in the process of installing a total of 32 nest boxes at various sites around the village. Despite the lockdown, we've been able to move the project along. This is mainly due to the incredible generosity of Ian Hodgson and Anne Hughes of IH Building Services, who have given their time and expertise for free to install the boxes!

At least one nest box has been occupied by a pair of swifts this summer. By the time you read this article, the two chicks, along with their parents, will have left the nest and be well on their way to South Africa for their winter migration.

This is a wonderful conservation story for the village, Essex and beyond, as a lack of nest sites for swifts has been affecting their numbers significantly in recent years. Thank you to everyone in the village who has opened up their hearts to these amazing birds. Please search 'West Bergholt Swift Project' on Facebook or Twitter if you would like to follow the project's progress.



West Bergholt Gardeners

Sadly, as a result of the current times, we had to cancel our April and May meetings and all the planned garden visits for June, August and September.

In addition, after consideration of the uncertainty around the current situation, the Garden Committee decided that future meetings of the Club would not resume until February 2021, all being well, although a possible ZOOM Christmas Quiz is under consideration.

Lockdown Lifeline

As the country faced the prospect of being sent into lockdown, one neighbour collected the phone numbers of others and the Lodge Court/Armoury Road WhatsApp group was formed.

It's become part of our daily routine where we share news, jokes, recipes, arrange shopping trips, collect medication for vulnerable neighbours and just check in with everybody each day. We even used it to arrange VE day celebrations. This modern-day technology has brought back good old-fashioned community spirit and I know I speak on behalf of many neighbours when I say it has helped us all through this difficult time.

Teresa Williams



West Bergholt Covid-19 Volunteer Response Team

Our village has a wonderful community of volunteers, so it was no surprise that when the call went out from the joint initiative of the Care Network and local Parish Councillors to form a Response Team, it generated nearly 90 volunteers in a week.

Some 80% of the Volunteer's activity comprised of food shopping, collecting prescriptions and taking parcels to the Post Office. People were given assistance to shop online, the opportunity to be supported with phone buddies to provide company, and, more importantly, provided contact and the chance to chat with those who were unable to get out and about to engage with other people. Although not all volunteers had the chance to actively participate, just their being available gave much comfort to all in the community.

Whilst isolation has been lifted by the Government, the Volunteer Response Team will remain available should an expected second spike occur. So if you have need of assistance during this time, you can contact us on 0300 777 3100.

West Bergholt Concert Band

Lockdown arrived just before our first concert of the year, but the disappointment of cancellation quickly became a determination to keep playing.

The band insisted on meeting up to chat and play each Friday via Zoom, and after some initial amusement watching our conductor hit all the right Zoom buttons but not necessarily in the right order, our Zoom rehearsals became a fun way to end the week.

Friday nights are kept fresh by playing from over 50 pieces of great music as well as having different themes each week – from request nights to themed evenings. The band plays on!



This is an Echium Pininana Tower of Jewels which has been much admired on our allotment for most of the miserable lockdown period. It all started when our allotment neighbour, John Easey, planted one next to us a few years ago.

They were bought as white plug plants and turned out blue and pink. The plant has been hiding behind the fence but once it decided to produce flowers it shot up like a rocket. I have bought 6 more plug plants this year and 50% have died once planted. Only 6 seedlings have come up, so, as my Mother would have said, "A plant will grow where it wants to grow."

These magnificent plants will die this year but I will be collecting the seeds, when ready, and you are welcome to take a few from the charity stall, if open, or my front drive at 50 New Church Road. So many people have said I should have charged an entry fee to view it! If I had, I think it would have generated thousands of pounds!

Annie and Michael Neish

St Mary's Church

We are very grateful for the technology which has enabled us to stay connected whilst the church has been closed and many people have been glad of the opportunity to take part in online Sunday services via the Zoom meeting application. Recordings of the services have also been uploaded to the church website each week, which people have also found a blessing.

At the time of writing, Rev. Mandy Elmes is hoping to resume services in church in September, but please see our website stmaryswestbergholt.co.uk for up to date information, or contact lwb.wb.gh.parishes@gmail.com.

God Bless from all at St Mary's.



Village pharmacy's response to COVID-19

As we begin to see lockdown eased and life getting back to a 'new normal', the staff at the West Bergholt Pharmacy would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone for their patience & cooperation

We know these are unprecedented times and as a pharmacy we are here to support you & are continuing to abide by the rules and regulations set out by the government.

To keep both our customers and our staff safe during this period of time, we have set up a one-way system in the shop, with only four people allowed in at one time and so we would appreciate everyone following the system in place.

Thank you again from Nik and the team.

Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) is currently suspended.

We hope that we can restart in September 2020, but we are unable to confirm at the moment as it will depend on social distancing guidelines issued by the Government.

Please watch out for updates that will be posted on our Facebook page. In meantime, please stay safe and well.

Thanks, David Bowden



