

JULY · AUGUST 2020

Bengeo Magazine

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF BENGEO, CHAPMORE END AND TONWELL





Bengeo Parish Magazine and Community News



More people are out and about in Bengeo, walking in family groups or with a friend, visiting a neighbour's garden, cycling along quieter roads or visiting local shops. You can read in this issue about how the plans for traffic in Bengeo may evolve with fewer cars so that we can enjoy quieter roads in the future. Children are beginning to go back to our local schools and you can see how staff and pupils have been working at home and in the classroom to maintain their education. Even if we cannot visit Bengeo Open Gardens this year, Janet Guilbride has asked participants for the photos of this year's and some of last year's displays so we can have a flavour of what we have missed.

Many essential employees have been working throughout the lockdown, but there are still those who are anxious of venturing out of their homes and into other places. We are glad that Holy Trinity church is now open to offer a safe haven for private prayer and contemplation. Like other public places, there are guidelines to follow to keep everyone well so people should not be worried about going there.

And the magazine is back on the streets (and of course online at www.parishofbengeo.com). Thank you to those who deliver the magazine to your door, to the church and to the Post Office counter.

The Editorial Team

Front cover photograph:

Poppies in Bengeo cornfield – Diana Howarth

Contents

Bengeo Gardens	2, 27–28
BNAP Update, COVID-19 Test and Trace	5
Future Streets in Bengeo	6–7
Local Services Adverts	4, 10, 20
Pandemic from a Musician's perspective	8
Two Musical Anniversaries	9
Local Links	11
Announcements	12
Bengeo Lives – Adèle Carré	13
The story of Symondson's Handbells	14–15
Children's Society, Pet Service	15
Duncombe School News	17
Bengeo School News	18
Mill Mead School News	19
Tonwell School News	21
A word from The Rectory	22–23
Opening our churches	23
Daily Prayers for July and August	24
Contacts Page	25

Editorial Team

Items for the magazine should be sent to magazine@parishofbengeo.com

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Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan

Summer 2020 update



In the March/April 2020 edition of the *Bengeo Magazine*, we said that, later this year, there would be a public referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan. In response to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, the government has introduced

changes to a number of processes, including those associated with neighbourhood planning, and all referendums are now postponed until the 6th May 2021.

In the meantime, the draft Plan will go through its final consultation and then be independently examined.

The Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group will continue to respond to relevant planning applications and public consultations. In recent months, responses have been submitted on planning applications for proposed new dwellings in Fanshawe Street and the Tree Heritage Nursery in North Road, as well as the Bircherley Green development. Comments have also been submitted on the Hertfordshire County Council Rail Consultation and the East Herts District Council Affordable Homes Supplementary Planning Document. These responses, as well as a copy of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, can be viewed on www.lovebengeo.org.uk/blog. Regular updates on the Neighbourhood Plan are posted on the 'Love Bengeo' Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Brenda Heninghem

Bengeo Neighbourhood Area Plan

COVID-19 NHS Test and Trace

If you have symptoms, such as a dry persistent cough or a sustained temperature, or are worried that you have been in contact with someone with coronavirus then you can have a test to check if you have the virus.

Booking a test

You can book either a mail-order or drive-through test if you need one: Either go online to www.gov.uk/coronavirus or ring 119 between 7am and 11pm or 18001 0300 303 2713 if you have hearing or speech difficulties. The coronavirus call centre can help you to book a test, answer enquiries about the testing process and what to do once you have your result, or chase up any delayed results.

Hertfordshire Test Sites

Hertfordshire's mobile test sites are all open between 10am and 4pm. Tests currently take place in Watford, Hertford or Stevenage, depending which day of the week you book. (Hertford is usually open on Saturdays). A new site at Tesco's HQ, Shire Lane, Welwyn Garden City will be open every day for assisted and self-administered tests. You will be asked to bring a phone to the test centre if you have one.

What happens if you have had a positive test

You will be contacted by someone from the NHS Test and Trace team. You will be told that you must self-isolate for seven days from the day that your symptoms first started. You will also be asked to supply the details of anyone you have been in close contact with, from the two days before your symptoms started. Those people will be contacted by the NHS Test and Trace team and told that they need to self-isolate for 14 days. Anyone else in your household must self-isolate for 14 days from when you started having symptoms.

It is very important for your own health and the health of those around you that you self-isolate. This applies even if you feel well and don't have any symptoms. You could still be a carrier of the virus and the people you meet could get the virus from you and be seriously affected.

NHS Test and Trace

Don't fall victim to fraud

Genuine contract tracers will:

- » call you from 0300 013 5000
- » send you text messages from 'NHS'
- » ask you to sign into the NHS test and trace contact-tracing website
- » ask for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity, and postcode to offer support while self-isolating
- » ask about the coronavirus symptoms you have been experiencing
- » ask you to provide the name, telephone number and/or email address of anyone you have had close contact with from the two days before your symptoms started
- » ask if anyone you have been in contact with is under 18 or lives outside of England.

Genuine contact tracers will:

- » **never** ask you for any form of payment or purchase a product
- » **never** ask details about your bank account or social media
- » **never** ask for any passwords or PINs or to download software
- » **never** ask you to ring an expensive phone number beginning with 09 or 087
- » **never** send someone to your home

Stopping COVID-19 from spreading is crucial to prevent more lives from being lost.

Bengeo Futures: our streets in 2030



Photograph Credit: LIVINGSTREETS



Photograph Credit: TACTICAL URBANISTAS

We're living in times of huge change. And though the pandemic should be under control within months, it is likely that in the long term, some aspects of modern living will alter permanently. The way we work and play, the means by which we get about, and how we use our public spaces, are likely to transform. Many changes are unwelcome. But we are

also seeing more positive ones, in some cases accelerating transformations already underway, such as plans to limit road traffic, cut air pollution, and slow the impact of climate change. So what might this all mean for Bengeo?

We probably already agree on many of the challenges we face. Busy roads, air pollution and, in some places, narrow pavements. Not enough buses, or safe space on roads for cycling. Some streets clogged with parked cars. So can we avoid the return of things many of us residents may not like, such as busy roads with fast vehicles racing past, or the limited opportunities for our children to play or exercise safely in the streets?

Let's not forget there are many great things about Bengeo. Walking is generally easy (apart from coming up from town). Young families probably

value the amble to school, laughing and chatting with family and friends. Though not everyone can or wants to walk, both Mill Mead and Bengeo primary schools do what they can to encourage parents out of cars. Walking buses, school travel plans and health campaigns have helped. And as schools reopen after COVID-19, some are adopting staggered drop off and collection times to help with social distancing. This should bring the added bonus of helping to spread the peak in local traffic caused by parents in cars arriving at the same time. Maintaining this approach long term could help reduce peaks in local congestion and air pollution.

Indeed air pollution may not seem like a huge problem in Bengeo. Yet new research shows that even low levels of pollutants from vehicle exhausts create life-long damage to our bodies – from reduced lung capacity to higher risk of heart disease and dementia. Some councils are protecting children from damage by closing off some roads beside schools at peak hours so that children can be kept a safer distance from car engines. Do we want to try this in Bengeo?

Better walking routes are always welcome. Part of the financial package from the Bengeo nursery development is funding to improve pedestrian access from Hertford North up into Bengeo. Things like better pavement surfaces and drop kerbs will help guide pedestrians, but why not go further?

How towns deal with Coronavirus might point to one approach. In Hertford and Ware our councils have borrowed "pavement" from parking spaces and

roads to make social distancing easier. A similar approach could be applied strategically in some places in Bengeio – even on some of our narrow roads – to allow more space for pedestrians and easier, safer, cycling routes. So is that what we want as residents?

Some UK authorities are also experimenting with “mini-Hollands”, copying Dutch ideas to create bike and walker-friendly neighbourhoods. This involves small but significant changes, like making some side-roads access only, or using planters as barriers to brighten streets and create safe through-routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The challenge is to ensure that residents are not overly inconvenienced when they want to drive, yet keep other road users safe. Research shows that after one year, people living in such areas, on average, walk and cycle for 40 minutes a week more than those in other areas. Every measure we take to encourage exercise brings proven benefits to our health – lower rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, depression and much more.

Can we maintain our re-discovered enthusiasm for cycling? One thing that puts many off is speeding vehicles. We know lower speeds mean safer roads and reduced air pollution, so cutting speed limits seems obvious. Although roads to the west of Bengeio Street are now a 20mph zone, many drivers ignore the limit. Our county councillor Andrew Stevenson is calling for a 20mph limit throughout Bengeio – something we surely should all support, along with more encouragement to stop speeding. But we mustn't simply wag fingers at drivers – most

of us drive because it is the most convenient solution. We need to tempt people out of cars, not chase them out. So how do we make alternatives more attractive?

Better public transport is a first step. Our councils can do little to improve the existing 333 bus service as it is privately run. But new transport models are emerging. Residents in Tewin borrow council minibuses at the weekend to make a community-run bus service, so taking control. Some towns are trialling flexible dial-a-ride services which use a smartphone app to “book an appointment” with small, clean buses operating more like public taxis. Tests are underway in Watford, and Sevenoaks, for example. Should we encourage our council to trial this here?

Electric bikes also have a lot to offer – particularly if you want to bring shopping back up the hill from town. And car clubs provide a solution that could help reduce parking problems in Bengeio, as well as saving residents lots of money. The average car is only driven for 4% of the time, so it makes sense to share. With an electric car club nearby, you needn't spend money on insurance, maintenance, cleaning or installing a charging point, and it reduces the need to own a 2nd or 3rd car, potentially freeing up street space in roads clogged with parked vehicles. There is already a small car club at Wallfield's council offices. Why not one in Bengeio?

The good news is that there could be an opportunity to bring some of these ideas together to benefit our area. Work by a group of residents – including one of us, town councillor Alex Daar – in developing the Bengeio Neighbourhood Area Plan has led to an application for Bengeio to become part of a Sustainable Travel Town scheme currently under development by the County Council. If this succeeds, the project could see funding made available to implement these kinds of ideas locally.

For now, we residents should consider what we want for our neighbourhood. What options are out there? Which ones do we like? What advantages do they bring? Only with this knowledge can we make the right decisions about the shape of things to come. We'd be interested to hear your views.

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Pandemic from a Musician's perspective



Musicians are strange creatures – locking themselves away for years on end in solitary confinement in order to master how to communicate emotions, some which haven't even been put into words yet, through bits of wood and metal. It starts at a young age with a gravitational pull towards the ecstasy of beautiful music, you can't ever get music out of your head, you can't stop making noises on your instrument or drumming the fingerings of your newest piece on the dinner table and then, through what feels like no decision of your own, one day you find yourself happily branded a musician – a profession that found you all on its own! You are bound to a life of music making and a channel in which to pour your soul into until... Covid-19 hits and you sit on the sofa with your husband taking phone call after phone call cancelling concert after concert. Some of the red lines being drawn through my diary entries didn't bother me so much, but some of them were devastating. For instance the cancellation of the first time I was ever going to play in the Carnegie Hall in New York in May, the cancellation of the first duo tour with my husband that had taken a year to organise and of course the cancellation of our beloved Hertford International Concert Series.

Enjoyable as it was to plant veggies, revel in quality family time and watch old films it hit me one day when was in Bengeo Co-op. I heard a particularly heartfelt saxophone solo blaring out of the tannoy mid pop song and I burst into tears! (Much to my husband's amusement!) The realisation that we are not actually having a holiday but instead it is an actual impossibility, worldwide, to do what we have been waking up to do every day of our whole lives, in that moment was a stark

reality. There is suddenly no audience, no concert halls and no way of performing live. You physically cannot bring the music you love and cherish to life in the way that you have been doing ever since you couldn't stop drumming your fingers on the dinner table all those years ago. Our world of being surrounded by musicians in sessions and orchestras, making music with them with all its highs and lows, and most importantly our entire audience, which we rely on for our existence, has just evaporated into thin air and suddenly our identity feels void.

As we have watched all music venues and recording studios close, the Guardian published 'a list of major cancellations' which disturbingly goes on forever, it also suggests 70% of theatres will run out of money in 2020. My friend instead of performing a viola concerto last week found himself applying to be a driver for a food courier service. I hope there will be enough jobs for everyone from any profession that needs them in the coming months.

Thankfully musicians are pretty creative by nature and I have no doubt that many glorious new forms of music making will rise from the ashes. After all we are still performing music that was written three hundred years ago that has survived a good few wars and pandemics before this one. Many online options are available for musicians but there is no substitute to performing 'live music' in the Barbican Centre. Obviously the Symphony Orchestra presents the biggest challenge regarding social distancing as it is impossible for wind players to perform and not blow their germs on you and there is no stage big enough to host the amount of people that a full scale orchestra requires if they are to be socially distanced. So symphonic concerts will probably suffer the most.

Does any of this matter? After all, artists were voted the most non essential profession, but when you learn that there are actually more people that go to the theatre than go to football matches in the UK each year, perhaps we will be missed when we have no place to perform. Perhaps, like the positive environmental impact we have had from the lockdown, Covid-19 will show us new, insightful and better ways of approaching our profession. Perhaps there will be an indulgence in the original idea of 'Chamber Music' which meant literally music that was to be performed in an intimate environment or 'chamber' to close friends. I'd like that. However, I'm really looking forward to playing music with anyone to anyone, wherever and whenever I want. I'd like that more!

Rowena Calvert

Two Musical Anniversaries

Neil Dewhurst started organising classical summer concerts at St Leonard's church when he assisted the then Friends of St Leonard's secretary, Wendy Broome.

Neil says: 'I had contacts at the Royal Academy of Music and time on my hands. Wendy and I became a good team working well and happily together. There may have been something musical in my genes as a great aunt sang with the Carl Rosa Opera Company for many years. My headmaster had been a boy chorister at Kings College Cambridge and, although I didn't realise it at the time, instilled a love of music in me. This has proved to have been a great influence in my life as I belonged to many choral societies over the years and attended numerous orchestral concerts, operas and ballets. You could even get a gallery ticket for six shillings (30p) at the Royal Opera House back in the early 1960s. I have greatly enjoyed organising the concerts at St Leonard's over the past 11 years.'

Neil reminds us about two notable anniversaries this July.



Isaac Stern (1920–2001) was born on July 28th in Kremenets in Poland (now Ukraine) into a Jewish family, and was 14 months old when his family moved to San Francisco in 1921. In 1928 he enrolled at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where he studied until 1931 before being privately tutored by Louis Persinger, then with

Naoum Blinder of whom he

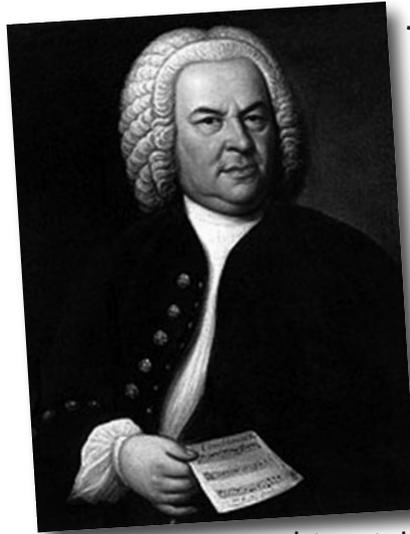
said he owed the most. At his public debut on 18th February 1936, aged 15, he played Saint-Saëns Violin Concerto No 3 in B minor with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Pierre Monteux.

He toured the Soviet Union in 1951, the first American violinist to do so. In 1967, Stern stated his refusal to return to the USSR until the Soviet Regime allowed artists to enter and leave the country freely. His only visit to Germany was in 1999 for a series of master classes but he never performed publicly there.

Maintaining close ties with Israel, he played in the Jerusalem theatre in the 1991 Gulf War. When an air raid siren sounded during his performance it caused the audience to panic whereupon Stern took to the stage and began playing a movement of Bach. The audience

then calmed down, donned gas masks and sat through the rest of his performance.

He achieved many awards and commemorations but was never too proud to turn down the chance of earning dollars by dubbing violinists in Hollywood films, famously in *The Fiddler on the Roof*. The main auditorium in New York's Carnegie Hall is named after him and in Israel a street in Tel Aviv honoured his name in 1992.



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) born at Eisenach in Germany, was held in high repute in his time as an organist, but he achieved major standing as a composer only with posthumous (19th century) revival. We celebrate the 270th anniversary of his death on 28th July. A boy chorister at Lüneberg, Bach went on to

organist posts in Germany, finally becoming Director of Music at St Thomas's Church in Leipzig, in which post he died. He became blind shortly before his death and underwent two unsuccessful eye operations performed by John Taylor, the English quack who numbered Handel among his failures. Bach was twice married and father of twenty children.

A prolific composer, most of his works were written as official duty or with some other definite performance in view. His varied output includes over 200 church cantatas (Lutheran) with orchestral accompaniment, Christmas and Easter Oratorios, St John and St Matthew Passions, the Mass in B minor, the Goldberg Variations, The Well-Tempered Clavier and many other works for harpsichord and or clavichord, the six Brandenburg Concertos, The Musical Offering and The Art of Fugue, both demonstrating prodigious contrapuntal skill, six Partitas and Sonatas for solo violin and massive organ works such as the Toccata and Fugue in F major and the 'Great' Prelude and Fugue in G major.

An ideal way to celebrate both centenaries might be to listen to the YouTube video of Isaac Stern playing Bach's Chaconne in D minor for solo violin from Partita No 2, BWV 1004, with a glass of one's preferred liquid to hand. This may also bring back memories of a St Leonard's concert last summer when Simon Smith played all six of Bach's Partitas.

Neil Dewhurst

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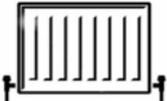
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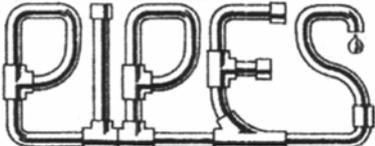
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Molewood Residents Association

www.molewood.org.uk

Facebook Causes/Campaigns Bengeo

Stop Bengeo Quarry

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Local History

www.ourhertfordandware.org.uk/content/category/groups/hertford-and-ware-local-history-society

Parish Group

Holy Trinity Church Bengeo

www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityBengeo

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Local links for deliveries and click-and-collect

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<https://gogetters.co.uk/area/hertford?cat=takeaway>

Just Eat

Go to this site for more takeaways

www.just-eat.co.uk/area/sg14-hertford

Dominos

Online only orders for pizza.

www.dominos.co.uk/hertford

Foxholes Farm Shop

Check out their website for details of ordering.

www.foxholesfarm.com

Thank you to **Walton Vets**, **Good News** and the **Avenue Pharmacy** for providing an excellent service to Bengeo during lockdown.

Simmon's Bakeries and **Pickett's Butchers** have reopened at Sele.

A number of local pubs and restaurants are opening for takeaways. Please check whether for delivery or for collection and for opening times.

Giamborone's Italian Deli (01992 503777), **Hertford**

House (01992 503396), **Il Vino** (01992 550582),

Serendipity (01992 551555), **Mudlarks** (01992 538515),

The Millstream (01992 582755).

Please check locally: there may be others opening by the time of publication.

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www.bridgetbs.co.uk

Lussmans

Click and collect from Lussmans, Hertford on Friday evenings for meals and food packs.

www.lussmanns.com/product-category/food-to-go

and last but not least go to

Happening in Herts

For a comprehensive list of many local services that are currently open.

www.happeninginherts.com

Please tell us about other links you think would be useful to Bengeo residents.

Sunday Afternoon Teas at St Leonard's

Once the current virus pandemic ends the Friends of St Leonard's would like to be able to provide tea, coffee and a delicious slice of cake to visitors on Sunday afternoons during the Open Season which we have pencilled in for August and September this year. If you can help us on just one Sunday by providing cake and/or serving tea or helping with stewarding, welcoming visitors to the church, talking to them about the building and explaining points of interest we will be very pleased to hear from you. All profits will go towards the upkeep of St Leonard's to keep it in tip-top shape as a valued community asset. We will gather together all volunteers before the Open Season commences so that we all know exactly what we are doing!

Mary Crane 01992 314003,
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Saturday 5th September, 10.30am–4.30pm
Sunday 6th September, 11.30am–4.00pm

We are pressing ahead with preparations for the above and letters have been sent to numerous organisations within Bengo seeking contributions. If you have not yet been approached and would like to participate we would be delighted to hear from you. We showcased amazing collections and memorabilia, retro and vintage last year and let's see if we can match it or do even better this year.

Please contact Mary Crane, 01992 314003,
em.crane@virginmedia.com or Penny Andrew,
01992 586028, pennyandrew22@hotmail.com.

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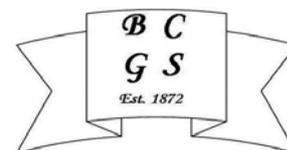
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Bengo Cottage Gardeners' Society

Summer Show CANCELLED



Bengeo Lives – ADÉLE CARRÉ AND THE CARRÉ FAMILY

Following on from EA Brown last month, one of the students of the Hertford School of Art was Miss Adèle Carré. Adèle's father Victor Joseph Carré was born in France in 1831 and came to England to be chef to Lord Dacre around the late 1840s or early 1850s. In 1859 he purchased the fishmongers and fruiterers business of Mr William Baines in Fore Street, Hertford, also selling meat and poultry and developing a catering business. He married Mary Richardson in 1859, but unfortunately she died aged only 51 years. Victor married again to Mary Ann Pratt who was 18 years his junior and Adèle, Victor's only child, was born in 1880. They moved to 'The Cedars' in Bengeo Street.

By 1881 The Cedars was let to Charles Longmore and the family then purchased Holly Lodge on the corner of Trinity Grove. This was the family home at the time of his death on 6th May 1890. Mary and Adèle continued to live at Holly Lodge until Mary's death on 17th March 1913. Mary was buried with Victor in Bengeo.

After her mother's death Adèle, who never married, inherited the family properties but eventually moved away from Bengeo. She sold The Cedars to Dr Dunn around 1926. By the time of her death she had a property in Haverstock Hill which is likely to have been her London home although she spent a lot of time in Rome where she died on 19th May 1927 aged just 47. Her obituary in the Hertfordshire Mercury gives more information on her life and her musical and artistic accomplishments.

Highlights of Adèle's life in Italy from the obituary:
'Friends of Miss Adèle Frances Carré, formerly of Holly Lodge, Bengeo, will sincerely regret to learn that she died somewhat suddenly in Rome from pneumonia. Until a few years ago Miss Carré had lived in Hertford all her life, and was intimately associated with St Andrew's Church. She was one of the numerous students of the Hertford School of Art, which produced many highly skilled craftswomen in art needlework, specimens of whose work are to be found in the National Museum of Art at South Kensington. She worked in silk a part of the altar frontal designed by Sir Edgar Wigram and now at St Alban's Cathedral. The deceased lady was also an accomplished musician and was a violin member of the old East Herts Orchestral Society, conducted by the late Mr J L Gregory. For the last 7 years Miss Carré had resided in Rome at a private hotel in the Via Venti Quattro de Maggio, opposite the Royal Palace. Ever since she had lived in Rome Miss Carré has been a season ticket holder for the famous orchestral concerts given at the Augusteo. Much of her time has been devoted to working for charitable societies making garments and assisting the poor. She was also one of the ladies who volunteered to give lessons in English to Italians who wished to learn the language, but who could not afford to pay for tuition, and there were many eager pupils from the ranks of railway men, tram conductors and hotel assistants in Rome. Only a month ago she was seen by Mr Charles Maffia of Hertford, who has just returned from spending the winter in Rome, and she was then in good health. He describes her just as she was of yore, always having the appearance of a very busy lady, with none of the dolce far niente about her.*

He informs us that she has been buried 'in her beloved Rome' as she fondly called it. Miss Carré, we understand, embraced the Roman faith some years ago, and this led her to take up her residence in the eternal city'

Marilyn Taylor

**dolce far niente – idleness*



The Story of Symondson Handbells



Jackie Downs with the handbells. Click on the image in the online version of the magazine to see and hear the bells: <https://youtu.be/XCC9rRiXT2c>.

In my previous article on the Fuller Bells, I alluded to the fact that Hertford played a prominent part in the history of bells accredited to Henry Symondson and his sons. The link is John Briant, the famous Hertford bell founder and clock maker, who set up his foundry in Parliament Row, behind the Castle walls. Today, the site in Parliament Square is occupied by the Job Centre, with a blue plaque denoting Briant's residence there.

Henry Symondson was at some stage Briant's foreman and bell tuner. When and for how long remains a subject for debate. William Butler in his comprehensive book on the history of bells and founders (on which this article is based), suggests that it is likely that Henry had his own handbell business prior to working for Briant. Symondson's bells are marked H*S. However, although we know quite a bit about Henry's history, some facts elude us, especially where and when he gained experience as a tuner.

The Symondson family lived in London according to various registers and records. Henry was born around 1775 in Middlesex and died in December 1842, with burial at Whitefield Memorial Church,

Camden. His occupation was always listed as Bell Founder, Brass Founder, although he did not cast his own bells. He married Mary Thompson in 1800 at St Leonard's, Shoreditch, and between 1803 and 1820 had eight children, all of whom were baptised at St Giles-in-the-Fields. This suggests that the family always lived within the vicinity of Tottenham Court Road where he produced sets of handbells. It is possible that he learned the art of bell tuning from Warner Founders, which was within walking distance of Tottenham Court Road. However, it is thought, but not verified, that this was a secondary occupation and that Henry was an accomplished violinist, working in orchestras and theatres.

Henry was also an accomplished and keen tower bell ringer (of which more in my next article). Accounts of ringing matches note that Henry produced handbells as early as 1814. One report described how a new ring of 12 bells in Liverpool was opened in June that year, and a set of 12 Symondson handbells was also presented. This tells us that Henry was a founder in his own right more than 10 years before the suggestion that he only set up his own business after leaving John Briant.



**The
Children's
Society**

**Bring & Buy
Coffee Morning**
Saturday 3rd October

Sadly, we think this may not be able to go ahead but please watch this space in the next Magazine for further news.

Also sadly the house collection boxes will not be counted this year so please keep adding to them for another year.

It is with regret that we haven't been able to raise funds for the Children's Society this year, they, like many other Charities have really lost out due to the lockdown. If anyone felt able to send a cheque to the Society, I know it would be very much appreciated. Their worthwhile work with many vulnerable children has been even more necessary during this time.

Many thanks to all our supporters.

Take care and best wishes.

Libby Shillito

Of the eight Symondson children, only four survived into adulthood. Two sons, Phillip and James, joined their father in the handbell business, whilst the eldest, also named Henry (1803–1848), became a piano tuner. Phillip, the third son, (1809–1863) went into partnership with Henry at the foundry as there was a purchase of a set of handbells with the tenor bell engraved 'Symonson (sic) and Son, No1 Tottenham Court Road, London', in 1830.

By the 1830s handbells had become very popular in public houses, not only for practising method ringing* and lapping*, but increasingly for playing tunes, which brought in the punters! The Symondsons were the first handbell makers to pay particular attention to ensuring that the sets were in perfect tune, and so were in great demand in the first half of the 19th century. The business prospered and a large handbell-shaped sign hung, mouth upwards, outside 1 Tottenham Court Road.

After Henry senior died in 1842, Phillip ran the business. His youngest brother James was also involved, as he was listed as bell maker in the 1841 census, and at some stage he made handbells on his own account with J*S engraved. However there are reports of many sets of bells produced by Phillip in

the 1850s with reviews commenting on their perfect tuning.

The story of the Symondsons ends sadly. Henry junior died of consumption in 1848, at the age of 45, and five years later James, at only 33 years old.

Tragically, a few years later, Phillip became mentally ill, was certified insane and sent to St Pancras Workhouse, where he died in 1863 at the age of 54. This was the end of a firm that helped transform handbells from small, ill-tuned sets to production of musical instruments that can be used for concert performances.

The Fuller Bells which we use are an example of the early days of sets produced by Henry Symondson, although the exact date is unknown. A couple of years ago it was a privilege to meet William Butler, the expert on the history of bells. I showed him the tenor bell (size 22D) with H*S on the crown and the engraving (see photo) and he was impressed that it was one he had not seen before. It is therefore particularly special to our team, in the knowledge too, that Hertfordshire is part of the Symondson story.

The next article will consider the production of John Briant's bells, the Symondsons' involvement in tower bell ringing, and the history of Bengo Holy Trinity Church Bells.

Jackie Downs

Information obtained from:

Butler, W. (2000). *Musical Handbells: A Comprehensive History of the Bells and their Founders*. (Phillimore).

Cooper, J. (2007). *Hertford: A History*. (Phillimore).

Page, F.M. (1993, 2nd Ed). *History of Hertford*. (Hertford Town Council).

**Method ringing – bell ringers commit to memory a sequence of changes according to a set pattern.*

**Lapping – handbells are passed between ringers in order to ring a method.*

Pet Service

Unfortunately our Pet Service due to be held this summer at St Leonard's Church has had to be cancelled, we look forward to being able to have one next year when we will support Guide dogs for the Blind.

Libby Shillito



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A big hello from Team Duncombe!

Team Duncombe are all about 'teamwork' and so we would like to start by applauding the wonderful people of Hertford for pulling together as a team over the past 3 months.

The sense of community within our wonderful town has been phenomenal! Parents have supported parents, with schooling and lockdown entertainment ideas and our community has supported not only local businesses, but small businesses that have joined forces to raise money for our wonderful NHS. We have always known Hertford to be a special town, but our sense of community spirit during these challenging times has shown this far and wide. So, from Team Duncombe, thank you, to everyone.

At the time of writing this piece, schools across the country have now been closed for 13 weeks and children have been at home longer than if they were on summer holidays. At Duncombe School and Treetops Pre-School, we pride ourselves that our children thrive in our learning environment and with our physical doors closed, we are committed to ensuring the wellbeing and continuity of our children's education in their home environment. To help our families we are providing a range of support alongside the day-to-day educational provision being led by our teachers. Team Duncombe have put together outstanding online learning resources, for all our children, to help the children stay focused, engaged and calm during this unprecedented time.

Our teachers have continued to deliver an inspiring educational journey, through unique ways via digital

technology. Science lessons have been brought to life with rainbow cake dissections, virtual avatars of the staff dropping into the children's Microsoft Teams lessons and Spanish lessons with our very own Giraffe Torres, for the younger children.

With no sports days this year, we took part in the Cognita Home Games, a global event bringing all the Cognita Schools together. Not only did we contribute to Cognita Europe winning 2 gold medals, Team Duncombe achieved 1st place for the 'Highest Participating School' in the Cognita global group.

But we also wanted to play our part within the community and help families across Hertford during these challenging times. So, Team Duncombe developed and launched the 'Spirit of Duncombe', a fun educational enrichment programme, with over 30 uniquely created masterclasses available to all children via our website. The programme has gone from strength to strength and now includes a series of 'Team Duncombe' Bedtime Stories, resulting in over 1000 YouTube views, a reading from our Library Captain and a VE Day history lesson. More recently we have added our 'Virtual Financial Capability Workshop', with tasks questioning the value of money and the importance of saving and spending.

We hope when we share our news with you next, Team Duncombe will all be together again.

Until then keep safe and well,

Team Duncombe

If you would like to know more about Duncombe School and Treetops Pre-School or arrange virtual chat with our Headmaster, please visit our website at www.duncombe-school.co.uk for more details.



Bengeo Primary School

A few of the events we have celebrated recently at Bengeo Primary School

As you know here at Bengeo Primary we have been open throughout the lockdown for children of keyworkers. From Monday June 1st, following Government guidelines, we opened to our Foundation stage, Year 1 and Year 6 children. The children are coming into school on a part-time basis, enjoying being back at school, learning with their teachers and friends. Here are a few photos of what they have been up to...





Mill Mead Primary School

Lockdown, home learning and returning to school!

It is now 12 weeks since school closed to most pupils – this is the length of 2 summer holidays! It has undoubtedly been a challenge for school and parents alike, but we have faced it together with our strong home/school partnership.



We have continued to open for the children of key workers but since 1st June we have been delighted to welcome some other children back on a part time rota basis. We started with the oldest pupils in Year 6 as they are more self-aware and more able to keep apart. It is also important for them to finish their primary learning journey together and have some closure. Year 1 came back on 8th June and now Reception have returned. Whilst not everybody has wanted their child to return, we have had a good number in school. At present, each child is in a 'bubble' of no more than 8 and attends for 2 full days each week. The staff have been fantastic in supporting those children who are in school as well as continuing to provide home learning.

It has been lovely to have more children on site and they have really enjoyed being back. A year 1 pupil said, "The best day was coming back!" whilst a Year 6 pupil said, "I was excited to see friends, but it is awkward because everything is different and we can't be really near each other." The children have been doing a variety of activities in school and making the most of the outdoor space. We are really lucky that some of the parents have put up two marquees and some gazebos to provide more sheltered/shaded outdoor space to spread into. The

pupils have also loved being back in the school garden doing some much-needed clearing and weeding and harvesting some of the vegetables that have grown.

Although the government has now scrapped its plans for all primary children to be back before the summer, this is something we still aspire to and are planning for. In the interests of their emotional well-being it is important for all children to be offered a 'school experience' however short it might be. It remains a choice at this stage, however, and some parents have very sound reasons for not wishing their child to return just yet.

So many of the children have continued to do some fantastic activities at home – sending examples to their teachers. Some have been very creative to raise valuable funds for charities. A brother and sister decorated little slices of wood with rainbows and messages to sell, and another pupil in Year 6 did 26 somersaults on his trampoline!!! They raised far more than they had set out to do! The pupils' feelings about home learning are mixed eg "Boring!", "Good – I did things I wouldn't normally do", "A nice experience but annoying because I wasn't with my friends" and "Hard to concentrate when not in a school environment." A Year 6 pupil gave an insight



into how difficult it has been for so many families to juggle everything saying "It was a bit of a struggle to keep motivated as my parents had to work from home. I have a 3 year old brother who

needed a lot of attention and a younger sister who needed a lot of help with her work".

Whatever the next few weeks bring we will continue to do our best for the whole school community in the lead up to the actual summer holiday!

Sue Nesbitt-Larking



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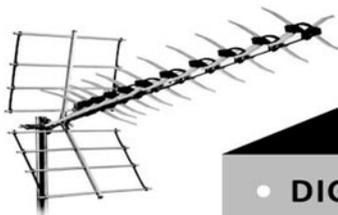
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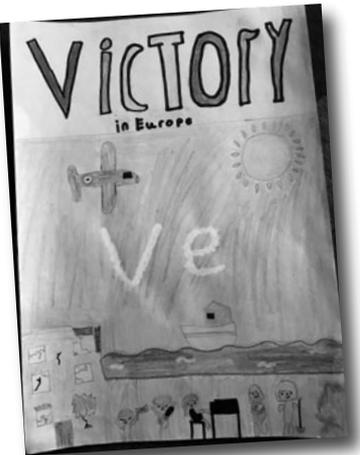
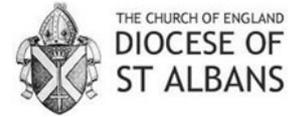
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Tonwell School News



Our children, staff and families have adapted unbelievably well to life in lockdown. Teachers have been sending home weekly timetables of work, 'seeing' their classes online using Microsoft Teams meetings and keeping in touch with telephone calls.

We have been amazed by the commitment and creativity of our pupils. Here are just a few examples of their learning at home from the past few weeks.

As the lockdown eases, we have been welcoming larger groups of children back to school. Despite having lots more handwashing and additional safety measures in place, children have coped very well. Many of them watched videos on our YouTube channel to help them feel prepared for the changes before returning after half term.

We are excited and hopeful to see all of our children before the summer holidays and are beginning to plan what learning will look like for our school community when term begins in September.

Tonwell St Mary's C of E Primary School
Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Bridgman
 We are offering 30 hour places in our Nursery class.
 We also have a Breakfast Club from 8am and After School Club until 5pm daily.
 Visits are warmly welcomed.
 Please speak to Mrs Moorehead on 01920 462894 between 8.30am and 12 noon to arrange a visit or email admin@tonwell.herts.sch.uk

A word from The Rectory

From The Vicar, The Revd Robert Thompson

Life in lockdown – a St Leonard’s story

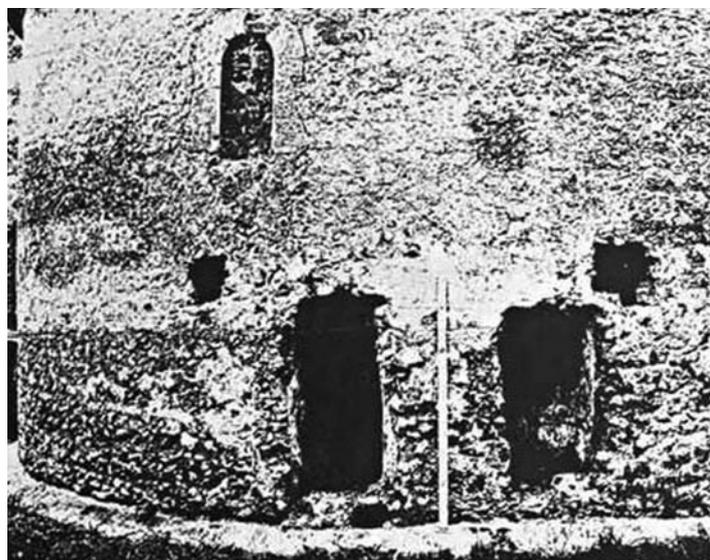


There’s been various stories told recently of heroic endeavour in lockdown – tales told to inspire grit and determination against impending threat. Shakespeare, we were reminded, wrote one of his greatest plays whilst in quarantine at home whilst all the theatres were shut – his desperate drama *King Lear*. The family of Ann Frank, we were told, managed to hide from the Nazis for 25 months in a small

annex, about 450 feet of floor space shared by 8 people in near silence. And it was truly inspiring to hear the remarkable Terry Waite on the radio talking about his 5 years in solitary confinement whilst held hostage by Hezbollah militants, chained to a wall in a dark cell in Beirut.

These stories were only comforting by degrees, however. In times of crisis human beings have always clung to stories that bear meaning, empathy and common understanding – but one story is not like another. We know something of what it is feels like to be isolated and confined, but not everything, enough to provoke respect and sympathy for these exceptional people in extreme situations and thank God we’ve been spared their fate. Our is a survivor’s story, though, one amongst a million others, and future generations will consider it a sign of the times, routine and commonplace, for which we should compare notes with ordinary people, and look closer to home.

St Leonard’s Church, Bengoe is the setting for one such story, where the tale is told of one ordinary person who became very familiar with life in lockdown. At the end of the Middle Ages



An early photograph of the remnants of an Anchorite's Cell on the wall of St Leonard’s.

many hundreds of people chose to live in permanent, solitary enclosure in the middle of England’s bustling communities. They made their home in what was called an anchorhold, a small tomb-like dwelling attached to the side of the local parish church.

The anchorhold’s walls emphasized the anchorite’s renunciation of the world, its three windows – one into the church, one facing the street, another facing a parlour – were reminders of his continued connection with it. Anchorites were considered to be the living dead, their lives physically contained between church and community, spiritually caught between heaven and earth. Socially distanced from others and set apart from the distractions of the world, the anchorite’s cell set its occupants free to devote themselves completely to prayer and contemplation.

Yet medieval guidebooks for anchorites make clear what many of us are learning these days: that finding peace is a struggle. Finding solace for ourselves is difficult even when distractions are put out of sight. And self-distancing has always been difficult, even for those who choose it. It takes a step of faith to enter a space of isolation; it requires even more faith, patience, and resilience to inhabit that space and make a home of it, especially when the advantage of solitude is hard to attain and its value hard to come by. But that is what ordinary people did when they staked a claim to life in the anchorhold: they went there to dig deep into their reserves of solitude and silence, a last ditch effort to emerge from this world with that one priceless treasure life so rarely affords, the lasting gift of peace.

So what kind of experiences do they have to share? Well, ones that are understandably varied, and also eerily familiar. Life in isolation was intolerable from the start for one young woman, Christina Carpenter, who’s said to have yearned for life as a recluse with a passion, until she entered the anchorhold, only to leave soon after. The records don’t reveal why she left, but neighbours reported her to be ‘gadding about’ the countryside, a serious offence given that she had made a vow of stability. Clearly, Christina was not at home with the experience.

But Christina was just one of a small minority of rulebreakers. Most people stuck to their vows and stayed firmly behind closed doors. And the stories told of medieval solitary life ring true to our modern ears. There’s a long list of complaints about impatience, torpor, listlessness, fear and anxiety – afflictions of the soul which we’d call mental health and well-being issues. Restlessness and distraction were a constant problem too. Guidebooks of the day instruct women anchoresses not to be overly fond of their windows, warning that ‘the more a recluse looks outward the less inward light will she have.’ If the same books were updated for today, they’d no doubt advise against paying too much attention to the news or social media – our current window on the world.

And idleness and boredom were a headache then as now. The

12th-century abbot Aelred of Rievaulx warns his sister, an anchoress, on the dangers of having too little to do. Idleness, he writes, 'breeds distaste for quiet and disgust for the cell.' Monastic guides gave the kind of advice to medieval solitaries that psychologists might give us today: structure the day, they said – there should be a regular routine to the day's activities. An anchoress observed a daily cycle of prayer, rest, reading, and light work – such as sewing church vestments or clothes for the poor, tutoring maidservants, or offering spiritual direction to local people.

Indeed, a medieval solitary was counselled against any more stressful activity and told to keep as healthy as possible. Some guidebooks offer dietary advice – cut out meat and fat, they say, but eat as many vegetables as you like. Some anchorholds had gardens so that the recluses could get a little fresh air and exercise, enjoy the rhythm of the seasons and the healing power of nature. So when we moderns laud the blessings of a cup of tea on a spring afternoon in our back gardens, our medieval forebears would approve.

But if the spiritual guidebooks have one particular area of interest it is this: how to bridge the gap between what we expect from lockdown and the reality of how we actually experience it. Our forebears knew as well as we do that peace of heart does not always compliment peace at home, that stillness and serenity can seem far off even when we put ourselves in the way of them. A 13th century guide for women anchoresses, the Ancrene Riwe, advises readers that they might not feel the presence of God, however much they desire it. It says, 'Our Lord sometimes leaves us alone for a while and withdraws his grace, his comfort, and his consolation, so that we find no pleasure in doing things well, and our heart's savour is gone. And yet, at that very moment, our Lord is not loving us any the less.'

'Sometimes... our heart's savour is gone. And yet, at that very moment, our Lord is not loving us any the less.' These are salutary words for those experiencing life in lockdown, and a dazzling reorientation of the meaning of confinement: that we are not held captive, but protected; that what seems like a fallow period in our lives, vacuous and unproductive, can be more formative, more creative and generative than we first imagined. Those times that seem dark, dry and lifeless – times when our heart's savour is gone – clear a space for God to enter in and create new life. Peace is a process, so it seems – what issues from the anchorhold must be willed and patiently waited upon if it is to come to birth. The anchorage is more womb than tomb, it is more playground than prison, it is a place of protection and nurture and maturity – for life to come alive, and grow up.

Visitors to St Leonard's Church can still visit the anchorage at Bengeo today. Stop by when you can. Walk to the east end of the church and notice those holes in the wall that would have received the roof timbers of a little lean-to dwelling. Feel the ground beneath your feet where a solitary knelt to pray. Reach out a hand and trace the invisible walls between which a hermit lived in lockdown.

And having experienced something of that yourself, close your eyes and imagine what took place there. What does this place

teach you? What does this story tell you, veteran of lockdown that you are?

Some will sense only darkness and discomfort. Some will find it unproductive and useless. Some will find this place and this period regrettable and meaningless and sad. But, of course all we will ever really know about a place is what history will tell us – that once upon a time people lived here in isolation, people of whom every ounce of faith and hope was required to get through, people who watched and waited through dark times to see new life emerging, a good place where good things would come along, given time - a place in which they'd choose to live.

They called it 'home.'

With my prayers,

Robert Thompson



Opening our churches again for prayer

Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity church will be open for private prayer during the daytime. However, please observe the hygiene and distancing rules during your visit. Do look at the guidance given on notices in the church to keep yourselves and others safe and well while on the premises.

There will be no services at Holy Trinity at present.

Quiet Time at St Leonard's

For Quiet Time planning we are thinking of being in St Leonard's for our usual Tuesday evenings at 8pm and are planning at the moment with a fair degree of certainty for August dates. These dates will give us the time and opportunity to give the church a clean and prepare accordingly to conform to guidelines.

If the church guidelines say that there is a possibility of meeting for prayer in July, or if there are any changes to the August meetings, then we will put a notice in Holy Trinity church to advise you all.

St Leonard's will not be used for any other meetings in July and August.

David Cramphorn

There may be changes to Government decisions on gathering together for worship in the coming months. Please also look on the Parish of Bengeo website (www.parihofbengeo.com) for up-to-date news.

Parish Prayers

Daily Prayers for July

1. The Church in Brazil.
2. HMP Swaleside, Kent.
3. Thomas the Apostle.
All who have not seen but yet believe.
4. Water Aid.
Engineers and Geologists working in Bangladesh.
5. NHS Sunday, all who work for the NHS.
6. Archers Close.
7. All who face unemployment and who are looking for work.
8. HALO Trust working to remove landmines.
9. HMP Swansea, Wales, first used in 1861.
10. For the homeless and Shelter.
11. Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
12. Sea Sunday and Missions to Seafarers.
13. Aston Grange.
14. Women who serve at sea.
15. Women who are called to Mission Abroad.
16. HMP Swinfen Hall, Staffordshire.
17. Women's refuge centres and action against domestic abuse.
18. Women seeking ordination.
19. Our Choir.
20. Barleycroft.
21. The Wild Chimpanzee Foundation.
22. Medical Evacuation Pilots.
23. HMP The Mount, Bovingdon Herts.
24. The Wetlands Trust.
25. Beane River Marshes.
26. Holy Trinity Bengoe, on-line,
on Facebook and this Magazine.
27. Bartletts Mead.
28. Quiet Time in St Leonards.
29. Friendships Medical Support.
30. All who fight against The Modern Slave Trade.
31. Local Residents' Associations.

Daily Prayers for August

1. Future Hope Hertford.
2. Our local doctors and GP Practice Staff.
3. Balfour Street.
4. All in the Aviation Industry.
5. Christians Working in Bangladesh.
6. God's Glory revealed to us.
7. The bereaved and the lonely and our Bereavement Cafe.
8. For all who are called to preach.
9. Our local Pharmacists.
10. Beane River View,
and those who assist with services there.
11. New Build developments in Bengoe Parish.
12. Christians against Poverty.
13. HMP Thorn Cross, Warrington.
14. All who stand out against a dictatorship state.
15. The Food Bank in Hertford, Ware and Hoddesdon.
16. All who use the Church Hall.
17. Beetham Court.
18. Young Life in Hertford and Hoddesdon,
working with teenagers.
19. Christians working in Ethiopia.
20. The Salvation Army, Head Office Staff.
21. Local Shops and Businesses.
22. Local sports teams and clubs.
23. Friends of St Leonard's.
24. Bengoe House.
25. The PCC and the Standing Committee.
26. Christians working in Chad.
27. HMP Usk, South Wales.
28. HACRO for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders Charity.
29. Amnesty International and the action against the use of the Death Sentence around the world.
30. Those who are seeking baptism in the Parish.
31. Our Memorial Garden.

Church Contacts

Team Vicar

The Reverend Robert Thompson
The Rectory, Byde Street, Bengeo, SG14 3BS
E: info@parishofbengeo.com
T: 01992 413691

Associate Priest

Fr. David Pepper
T: 01992 314012

Reader

Bob Kelly
T: 01763 274653

Churchwardens

Diana Howarth
T: 01992 587292
Graham Squires
T: 01992 553465

Parochial Church Council

Chairman: Rev Robert Thompson
Honorary Secretary: David Greely
T: 01920 412485

Director of Music and Organist

Dr Andrew Sentance

Assistant Organist

William Sarjeant

St Leonard's Church

Friends of St Leonard's
New Member Secretary: Sue Patterson

Addresses

Holy Trinity Church
New Road, Hertford SG14 3JJ
St Leonard's Church
St Leonard's Road, Bengeo, SG14 3JW

Local Contacts for Help and Advice

Bengeo Residents Support Network Against Coronavirus

Many volunteers from Bengeo and the vicinity are offering help and support to vulnerable neighbours. Ring **01992 230155**. Call if you need food or other items, information or just for a chat.

There is a Facebook group to get help or to volunteer: www.facebook.com/groups/bengeo.residents.against.coronavirus

Below are links to local services that Herts CC have sent out about the coronavirus assistance.

Medical and Health Advice

www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

Information about local council services

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

Domestic Abuse

www.sunflower.org

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 808 8088

[Freephone Monday to Friday, 9am–9pm
Saturday/Sunday 9am–4pm]

Financial Advice

Money Advice Unit

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits

Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Service

03444 111 444

National Debtline

www.nationaldebtline.org

0808 808 4000

Advice on avoiding scams

Sign up for scam alerts from trading standards
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updates

Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline

0808 223 1133

If you are interested in volunteering

www.thvolunteering.org.uk

HertsHelp 0300 123 4044

Mental Health Advice and Support

Herts Mind Network

www.hertsmindnetwork.org

020 3727 3600

0300 777 0707 [8am–7pm]

Nightline: 01923 256391

Emotional Support and Practical Help

www.hertshelp.net

info@hertshelp.net

HertsHelp: 0300 123 4044

Bengeo Gardens photograph acknowledgements: Thank you to Janet Guilbride, Pam Thain, Cliff and Margaret Greely, Donna Chamberlain, Stella Siggers and Rosie Freeland for the colourful pictures of their gardens on the inside cover and back pages.

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