

Bengeo Magazine

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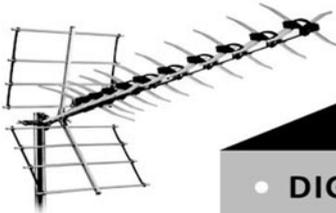


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Bengeo Parish Magazine and Community News



We extend our sympathy to the Queen and the royal family on the death of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Bengeo opening up again

In the last month we have been heartened by the opening up of shops, outside hospitality and outdoor sports. The cover shows the delight of premises opening again in Bengeo as life gradually gets back to normal.

In this issue, Carrie Bone takes a look at dogs in lockdown – how they have kept up our spirits and been in great demand. John Howson sets out the problems with the Bengeo Rat Run and invites people to join his campaign. We can make a difference so please vote in the Referendum on the Bengeo Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that our voice is heard in community planning policies.

Our Vicar, Robert Thompson, tells of the extraordinary life of Princess Alice of Battenberg, Prince Philip's mother, touching on Prince Philip's nomadic childhood.

The Editorial Team

Front cover photographs:

Opening again in Bengeo, clockwise from top left: Secret Garden Cafe, Co-op Stores, White Lion, Headlines Hairdressers.

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Editorial Team

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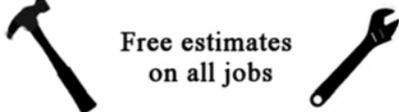
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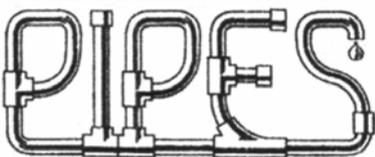


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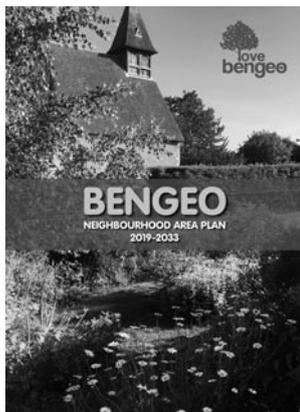
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Referendum on the Bengoe Neighbourhood Area Plan



The referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan will take place on **Thursday 6th May**. Polling cards have been delivered to registered voters and voting will be at local polling stations, or by post for those who have registered for postal voting. Referendum flyers have been delivered through letterboxes.

Reaching this pivotal point has been achieved through incredible input and support from residents. Many attended drop-in events and exhibitions at Bengoe and Mill Mead Primary Schools and Bengoe Parish Church Hall, others joined Working Groups and developed the Plan's policies. The photographs in the Plan were taken by residents, including those of the wonderful views across Bengoe Field and Hartham Common, and the view towards St Leonard's Church. A resident set up the Neighbourhood Plan website, another produced videos of events, others produced the detailed maps and wrote the text, and our planning consultant, who gave invaluable support, is a resident. Distribution of thousands of leaflets was managed by

a resident, and many residents delivered them. The Neighbourhood Plan is very much a product *'of the community, for the community'*.

If the Neighbourhood Plan receives a majority 'YES' vote at the referendum, its policies will give additional protection to special green spaces, important views, community facilities, and local buildings of architectural or historical merit. The policies will also help protect natural habitats, increase opportunities for walking and cycling, and support sustainable development.

The Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed here www.lovebengoe.org.uk. The referendum flyer and other information on the Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed here www.lovebengoe.org.uk/blog.

Please use your referendum vote on the 6th May. This is our opportunity to decide whether we want community-driven planning policies to help determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan Area up to 2033. The outcome from the referendum will be made public as soon as known and an update will be published in the next edition of the Bengoe Magazine.

Brenda Heninghem





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The Bengoe Rat Run – why I am campaigning for safer streets in Lower Bengoe



Cars driving along the pavement on Wellington Street.

In 1990 when we moved to Bengoe I discovered the so called “Bengoe rat run”. This is a route from Bengoe to Hertford North Railway Station via Byde Street, Wellington Street and Nelson Street. This route has been used as a short-cut to the Station, the A119 and the A414 (via Sele Farm) and to get to Welwyn Garden City for many years. Apparently once upon a time people used to take driving tests on those streets, precisely because they require skill to navigate. The campaign to ease traffic on these streets is something I am personally backing because I think it is important and I will explain why.

When I first encountered the “rat run”, I thought that this short cut to Hertford North would be short lived. Surely the council would block it off – as has happened throughout the country in similar situations. Built in Victorian times, these streets were never designed for the volume or type of traffic that now uses them.

I used to cycle to the station daily using that route in the 1990s and I had many close encounters with cars going in the opposite direction – it has always been pretty scary going down there on a bike.

Since those days these streets have become far worse. Residents have to cope with daily incidents of road rage, parked cars being hit, pedestrians being hit by cars and even schoolchildren run into. Residents have even been punched and threatened by irrational, angry motorists. The problem has got so bad that there is now a serious safety issue that needs urgently addressing, which includes cars driving along pavements at speed.

Frankly, no one should have to put up with this on a daily basis on residential streets.

It is important to remember that this route is supposed to be access only, a policy that has clearly failed miserably. Many of the vehicles using that route shouldn't be there in the first place.

The people living on Byde Street, Wellington Street and Nelson Street are our friends and neighbours, and I am compelled to think that it is everyone's duty to make Bengoe a pleasant and safer place to live and work. Therefore we need to do something about this anomaly, which I am told is one of the worst bottlenecks in Hertfordshire.

In 2001, 20 years ago, a questionnaire was sent by the District Council to everyone living in the affected area setting out a number of options. 49% of respondents voted for a barrier in Byde Street. However, in the end the Council did nothing – basically because agreement could not be reached on the best way forward. In 2008 a trial closure of Byde Street was proposed. This ran into local opposition and eventually the trial was abandoned. The level of inaction over many years is frankly stunning – and I believe that it is only through the constant pressure of residents that change will happen.

When we discussed this matter in the Bengoe Neighbourhood Plan, Lower Bengoe traffic came up time after time in public consultation. However, as the Plan is a planning document directly addressing this issue is difficult. Nevertheless, we promote improvements to pavements, cycleways and footpaths in the plan and encourage sustainable transport measures.

Why parking is not the problem

When I discussed this issue on Facebook there were some posts that kept coming up time after time.

“It is parking and not traffic that is the real issue” was one of the most prevalent. It would be nice to think that parking cars on those streets could be banned and then the issues would go away. Unfortunately, nothing is farther from the truth and it is my view that removing the parked cars may make things even worse.

There are a number of reasons why I think this. These are some of the main ones:

- a) Many people avoid those streets because of the difficulty of navigating them; if the parked cars were removed access would become easier so more people would use the route making it even worse – those parked cars actually deter traffic.
- b) Without parked cars, the problems of cars speeding along those streets would be even worse. On streets crowded with cars, pedestrians and cyclists, speeding cars is a recipe for disaster. The 20mph zone is too often simply ignored.
- c) The streets are too narrow for the traffic using them, even without the parked vehicles as the photographs below illustrates.



A lorry collides with a wall despite the absence of parked vehicles in the vicinity.

The truth is these streets cannot cope with modern traffic and haven't coped with it for 30 years. All this is not to say that it is not a parking issue, it certainly is, but parked vehicles are not in themselves worsening the traffic congestion problem. Local people have a right to own cars and unless there is an alternative provided the roadside is the only place to park.

When considering the Bengeo Rat Run public safety should be the first consideration. Serious injury has already happened due to overcrowding and death or further serious injury is very highly likely if something is not done.

Hertfordshire County Council need to take urgent action to stop through traffic and return these streets to the people who live on them. There could be a

range of measures used to achieve this, and that is something that would come out of an analysis of the problem.

If we are truly serious about promoting and living healthy lifestyles then we should look to sustainability and walking and cycling more. The streets of the lower part of Bengeo is a fantastic place to start.

Won't the traffic just move somewhere else?

Yes! A lot of it certainly will – we must be realistic. Some people may choose to walk or cycle, but when Byde Street was blocked by road works recently we saw a huge increase in traffic on Sacombe Road – going to the A119 via Bulls Mill or Vicarage Lane. We also saw much more traffic on the already overcrowded Bengeo Street. But that doesn't make stopping the through traffic the wrong thing to do. It just means that Hertfordshire County Council has to come up with solutions to the systemic overcrowding – something they have put off doing for a generation.

I would like to see all of our residential streets used for residential purposes only and safe places for people to live and children to play and grow up. Surely this is something worth fighting for. Frankly, it would be good to see traffic on Bengeo Street calmed too. But Bengeo Street is an official B road and a through route. Nelson Street and Wellington Street aren't! In fact, they are in an access only area – many people who drive along them shouldn't be there.

People such as those who live on the "Nelson Street/Wellington Street" junction are a forgotten minority. They are people who our obsession in getting faster from a to b puts at daily risk. At risk from pollution, from accidents. A risk from not able to let their children out of the house due to safety concerns. Is this really satisfactory? Is this really the way we think our neighbours should live? I support safer streets in Lower Bengeo and will continue to campaign for them until we are successful which we will eventually be. You can support our campaign by joining our Facebook group – **Lower Bengeo Living Streets**, and writing to the County Council at **County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8QD.** www.facebook.com/groups/221057629590027

John Howson

Bengeo Co-op has re-launched



Enfield Co-op sign.

Bengeo Co-op food store has relaunched following a £650,000 major makeover which has not only transformed the store but re-discovered a long lost piece of community history.

The convenience store, which supports 17 local jobs, re-opened on Thursday, 11th March, and above the new sign over the door welcoming shoppers, customers will now see a stone plaque relating to the 'Enfield Highway Co-operative Society Limited' – a society whose history dates back to the 1870s. The historic plaque was discovered during the works when the front of the store was being renovated.

Co-op's community Member Pioneer in Bengeo, Kim Hale, explained: "This long-lost piece of history has been restored and framed as part of the works. The sign denotes a proud past, and now the store has an exciting future following these improvements. We think there must be lots of memories and old photos out there in the community of the store

from down the decades, which we would love to see!"

The refurbished 2,200sqft store runs

on 100% renewable electricity, and includes Post Office services, a bakery and an increased range and choice of fresh, healthy produce, ready meals and pizzas, award-winning wines, free-from and vegan products, Fairtrade, food-to-go and everyday essentials.

The store also has new self-service tills for added speed, ease and convenience, and offers John Lewis parcel collection. Groceries from the store are also available through the Deliveroo App.

Co-op provides a funding boost locally and saves shoppers money through its Membership scheme. In addition to in-store offers, Members are rewarded with 2p in every pound they spend on Co-op branded products. The Co-op also donates a further 2p in every pound to community causes.

Students in Hertfordshire who are TOTUM cardholders – the new name for NUS extra – can pocket a 10% discount off groceries at the Co-op.

Hazel Rudulph, Co-op Store Manager, said: "The store has a great new look – we have had a great response. It has been a fantastic opportunity to carry out such a significant investment to enhance and improve our store for the Bengeo community. We are looking forward to welcoming customers into their new-look store – we have worked to develop the range, choice, products and services locally that will create a really compelling offer in the community."



Co-op volunteers: Ian Turner, Kim Hale (Organiser), Florina Popa, Nicole Fenton.

During lockdown Kim Hale and volunteers have been delivering essentials to housebound people in Bengeo using the Co-op's Community Shopping Card. These cards can be purchased or topped-up by calling **0800 029 4592**, enabling friends, families, neighbours or volunteers to shop on their behalf in the store.



Co-op opening: Maddie, Sophie, Lucy Crane (Area Manager), Rachel, Hazel Rudulph (Store Manager), Megan.



Herts and
Middlesex

Hertford shows more love for new Nature Reserve

Beane Marsh Nature Reserve in Hertford is set to thrive thanks to another successful fundraising drive by the local community.

Over £8,300 have been raised by the joint fundraising efforts of local community group *Save Beane Marshes* and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

Local wildlife lovers responded to the call for help to improve the Trust's newest nature reserve for wildlife by donating over £5,000, with additional support being given by East Herts District Council and County Cllr Andrew Stevenson. The funding will help pay for the site to be fenced after the summer, allowing cattle grazing later in the season.

Emma Norrington, the Trust's Head of Fundraising and Communications, said: "The residents of Hertford have once again shown an incredible amount of generosity for Beane Marsh. We are very grateful to all those who have contributed and the effort put in by *Save Beane Marshes*."

Save Beane Marshes sincerely thanks everyone, in Hertford and beyond, who supported this latest campaign and is excited to see the gradual transformation of Beane Marsh once the fencing is installed.

Save Beane Marshes, local donors and Hertford Town Council had helped to raise vital funds that supported the Trust to buy the site in summer 2020. Beane Marsh has not been managed for wildlife for many years, but with the right care it could provide shelter and food for a wide variety of insects, birds and mammals.

The fencing work is planned to take place at the very end of the summer – this timing will allow the Trust to minimise impact on nesting birds and other

wildlife along the boundary of the site during the works.

Introducing cattle grazing for a couple of months each year will help to create a diverse grassland structure of benefit to a wide range of wildlife. Wetland wildflowers will flourish, benefiting insects such as bees and butterflies. This in turn will benefit other species such as birds and bats. Cattle grazing will also open up small wetland ponds helping dragonflies and amphibians.

The site lies adjacent to the River Beane, not far from Hertford Station, and can be seen from Beane Road. Find out more about this nature reserve at www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/beanemarsh.

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust –
www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust is the leading voice for wildlife conservation in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

Save Beane Marshes –
www.savebeanemarshes.org.uk

Save Beane Marshes is a charity set up by a group of local residents to raise funding for Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust to buy and look after Beane Marsh Nature Reserve.

Bengeo Open Gardens

If anyone would like to open their garden during the Summer months, please contact Janet Guilbride **01992 558966**. We can arrange the details and make sure it is advertised. Any money made will be given to the River Beane Restoration Association.

www.riverbeane.org.uk

Pooches in Lockdown



Bengeo resident Lucy took the plunge as a first-time dog owner, just as the March 2020 lockdown came into place, through the luck of good timing. She is just one of the 3.2 million households who adopted a dog in lockdown, according to the RSPCA.

With a furry friend needing regularly walks, the new addition was the perfect way to get out of the house each day, when little else was permitted.

"It was now or never. It was perfect as we had something to do every day, you're meant to take them out for socialising, but there was no one around on any of our walks, she didn't see anybody or any cars. You're meant to get them used to life in the first few weeks, although our neighbour has a dog, which she met, and we've seen them down the park," Lucy says.

Challenges of lockdown dog ownership include not being able to go into the vets with the dog, having to hand her over on the doorstep for vaccinations, as well as a lack of training classes, which have been paused due to the restrictions, although she is well behaved, luckily.

"I don't think there's any downside to having a dog, a lot of people get dogs and don't think it through, but our jobs are dog-friendly and we also have a dog walker every few weeks so she joins other local dogs," she adds.

Dog ownership has brought a new community to the families' lives, seeing regular faces, furry or human.

"You see the same people who have dogs and are by themselves and you can have a chat, get out and about. It has a positive impact on others' lives, lockdown has been hard on everyone."

"Winter is hard having a dog, she gets so muddy, and it's dark, so we had to get a light for her collar and there's not much time to walk them [in the evenings]," she says.

Despite these challenges, the dog is firmly part of the family, and a source of comfort for the children.

"She is like having another child, it's nice to see them when you come in, she loves the kids. Dogs give unconditional love, she has been with us 24/7 so she hasn't ever really been left alone, but it's made [lockdown] bearable for the kids."

Commenting on the recent dog thefts she says that some parks such as Hartham Common can be extremely busy, and therefore don't feel as safe an option, preferring to go to smaller, quieter parks where you recognise the people or dog walkers.

"She's so friendly, she'll go up to anybody for a stroke and attention, I've heard stories, it's scary, sometimes there's people and dogs everywhere and

she looks like a puppy so I don't take any chances and keep an eye out."

Dog thefts have soared recently following a large rise in prices, with some dog breeds now costing more than double compared to pre-lockdown.

The RSPCA gave tips on how to keep your pet safe –

- ▶▶▶ Don't leave your dog outside a shop on their own or in a car alone.
- ▶▶▶ Teach your dog a reliable recall for when you are out walking.
- ▶▶▶ Check your garden to make sure it is secure and if you have a gate then fit with a lock.
- ▶▶▶ Neuter your pet as this can reduce the likelihood of roaming.
- ▶▶▶ Make sure your pet is wearing a collar with an ID tag and that it is up to date. It is a legal requirement for a dog to have an ID tag with your name and address on it. The RSPCA also recommends including your mobile phone number on any ID tag as this can help reunite you with your pet quickly should he ever get lost or stolen.
- ▶▶▶ Microchip your pet and keep the details up to date so that if your pet does go missing or is stolen then there is a higher chance they can be reunited. It is a legal requirement to have your dog microchipped in England and Wales.

Dog Behaviourist, Adem Fehmi has created a series of videos on Instagram to help owners tackle separation anxiety with their pets. This may be a problem leaving a dog when owners go back to work again. The videos can be found at [@dogtoradem](https://www.instagram.com/dogtoradem).

On socialising young dogs, Adem says it is best not to just throw a young puppy into the mix of other dogs as things open up again, as it's likely they have been at home for long periods during the lockdown restrictions, and this could overwhelm them.

Instead, he suggests owners take it slowly and go at the puppy's pace, adding in positive re-enforcements, such as treats, toys and affection to create good experiences.

"Go at the puppy's pace, understanding if you have a bold or shy puppy, check the puppy's body language. Don't throw them in at the deep end as they come out the home, which may be all they know. Take it slowly with other dogs, moving objects such as bikes, or town environments so as not to overwhelm the puppy."

It's important to take your time when socialising a young dog.

"Experiences such as a trip to the vets, where an owner may not have been able to accompany and reassure their dog due to the lockdown restrictions, might leave your dog feeling worried. Consider your dog's perspective, they have been in a safe bubble, with you around for reassurance, and then to be taken by a stranger in a carpark into a new environment can be daunting. Try to build positive associations in advance where possible."

He adds that dog classes are starting to open up now, but a qualified behaviourist is best to tackle behaviour issues, if issues persist.

He also gives his top five tips for preventing and overcoming separation anxiety.

- 1) Exercise your dog before leaving them. A well exercised dog is also more likely to settle and rest in your absence than one who is raring to go!
- 2) Give your dog something to do. Just like us humans, dogs can and will get bored when left alone with nothing to do. A food dispensing toy is perfect for this activity. Start by making the food easy to remove and, as your dog's interest builds and they become more expert at reaching the food, you can up the challenge!
- 3) Create a calm environment for your dog to relax in. Music helps to drown out any external noises that might otherwise cause your dog to worry. A nice comfortable and inviting bed can help your dog to relax in your absence.
- 4) Set and practice 'the scene' when you are in. Practise asking your dog to be physically away from you when you are at home together. Practise little and often and build up the time and distance that you are asking them to be away from you slowly, teaching your dog there is nothing to worry about if you are not by their side 100% of the time.
- 5) Be calm on your return to your dog. We want our dogs to learn that us coming and going throughout the day is normal and not a big deal or to be feared. By not making a big deal out of leaving them or returning to them we can help them to understand this.

Carrie Bone

St Leonard's Church, Bengoe Calendar of Events for 2021

Opening times for visitors - Sundays only 18th July to Sunday 26th September
From 2.30pm to 5pm
Teas from 2.30pm to 4.30pm

QUIET TIME - every Tuesday Evening at 8pm for one hour from 6th July to 21st September

June

Saturday 26th Concert – Iuno Connolly (Soprano) David Perez (Piano) 7.30pm
N.B. in Holy Trinity church

July

Sunday 4th Annual Bengoe Pet Service – 4pm – followed by refreshments
Sunday 18th **Start of Visitor Season and Teas (last orders 4.30pm)**
Saturday 24th Concert - Halcyon Quartet – 7.30pm
Tuesday 27th 'Celtic Service' followed by refreshments - 8pm

August

Saturday 21st Concert - Simon Mayor (mandolin) & Hilary James (singer, musician) 7.30pm

September

Saturday 11th Herts and Beds Historic Church Trust 'Bike and Hike' 9am-5pm
TBC and Heritage Open Day
Sunday 12th Heritage Open Day – 2.30pm to 5pm
Sunday 26th Harvest Festival Songs of Praise, 6.30pm
Followed by the Friends of St. Leonard's AGM

December

Friday 17th 'A Christmas Wassail' with Folk Band Magpie Lane- 7.30pm

Further information



Concert bookings : £15 (£10 FOSL members) contact
Mary Crane on 01992/314003 or email
boxoffice@parishofbengoe.com

For latest information e.g. cancellations due to Covid visit our website
www.parishofbengoe.com

Outdoor Sport in Beng eo

Bengeo Cricket Club

Bengeo Cricket Club was established in 1875 and the ground is at the Recreational Field off New Road in Beng eo.

We currently play in the Herts & Essex Border League Division 2 on Saturdays and play local friendly Sunday fixtures throughout the summer.

As a family friendly club, we are always on the lookout for new players and we are currently looking to start up a Sunday 2nd XI if there is enough demand.

Please feel free to contact us if you wish for more information. Telephone **07881 934340** or email ianruskin5579@hotmail.com.

Bowls Open Days at the Beng eo Club
Saturday 29 May and Monday 31 May
 Any time between 10.30 and 16.00

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 Joan 01992 583564
 Christina 07961 529226

or email bengeobowls@btinternet.com



Bowling in Beng eo

Some of you may be unaware that, hidden away behind the Beng eo Club on Beng eo Street, there is a bowls green. This is the home of the Beng eo Bowlers and also the u3a Outdoor Bowls Group. The Beng eo Club offers its members not only the opportunity to bowl but also comfortable surroundings for socialising.

The Bowls section is a friendly group and we play socially on Monday afternoons in the summer months as well as running our own competitions, competing in a local mixed league and playing friendly games against local clubs.

Are you interested in playing bowls but, as a beginner, don't know where to start? We have the answer as we will be having Open Days on 29th and 31st May, 10.30am–4.00pm. Do come along whether you are a beginner or have played before. We have bowls you may borrow and we just ask that you wear trainers or similar flat shoes to prevent damage to the green. Alternatively come along on a Monday afternoon at 2.30pm. You will get a warm welcome.

We fully expect that COVID restrictions will allow us to play and we will, of course, follow government guidelines and advice provided by Bowls England to safeguard your health and wellbeing.

Interested? Do give Joan (**01992 583564**) or Christina (**07961 529226**) a ring for more information. Alternatively, email bengeo.bowls@btinternet.com.

Courtyard Arts



Courtyard will soon be open for in-person classes and we have a small amount of availability remaining for the upcoming 5-week term. Please see our website for more information.

Classes

Children's classes resume from the 24th April.
Adult's classes resume from the 17th May.

In the meantime, we also have the following online sessions available. Look on the website for up to date information about all our classes.

- ▶▶▶ Drawing Group with Julie Arnall – Fridays
- ▶▶▶ Online Acrylic Painting – Tuesdays
- ▶▶▶ Online Mixed Media – Tuesdays
- ▶▶▶ Online introduction to drawing – Thursday evenings

Gallery

Our website for opening times and occasions when you can meet the artists.

www.courtyardarts.org.uk

Second Collectors and Hobbies Fayre

Holy Trinity Church

Saturday 4th September, 10.30am–4.30pm

Sunday 5th September, 11.30am–4.00pm

We are optimistically pressing ahead with preparations for the above and letters have been sent to numerous organisations within Bengeo 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, including hobbies and memorabilia, retro and vintage in 2019 and let's see if we can match it or do even better this year.

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

We will be delighted to hear from you.

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Visit our website
citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk



The Children's Society

Children's Society Afternoon Tea

We are very much hoping to have an Afternoon Tea at 1 The Orchard, Bengeo, on Saturday 10th July from 3–5pm to raise money for the Children's Society. Tickets will be available at £5 from Libby and Peter Shillito. There will also be a Bring and Buy stall and a Raffle. Peter will also have his model railway on display for any enthusiasts!

We really need your support as we were unable to fund raise last year so we very much hope to be able to do well this summer for this deserving charity.

Please make a note of this date, lifts can be arranged if required.

Any further details please contact us on **01992 583979**.

Libby and Peter Shillito



Pet Service at St Leonard's Church

We now have high hopes that we will be able to hold our Pet Service this summer on Sunday 4th July at 4pm.

The Service will be taken by our Lay Reader Bob Kelly who will be accompanied by Barney his Labrador. We do hope that you and your pets (any teddies, etc as well) will join us especially as our pets have meant so much to us throughout the lockdowns. Come and tell us how your pet has helped you.

Reg Newman and Duke, his pony, will be coming along. There will be refreshments after the Service and we will be raising money for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

For any further details please contact me on **01992 583979**.

Libby Shillito

Bengeo Lives – SALLY PEARSON



Mrs Sally Pearson (née Dickinson) lived at Warrenfield from 1904 to her death in 1911. She was the widow of George Pearson who had purchased the Brickendonbury estate in 1893.

Both George and their son Sir Edward were associated with the major civil engineering contractors S. Pearson and Sons, who built the Great Northern and City underground railway. This line forms the City end of the present railway line from Moorgate to Hertford North; the line from Hertford cuts across land which used to form the western side of the Brickendonbury estate.

The media company Pearson plc, publisher of the Financial Times, is a direct descendent of the original Pearson civil engineering company. On George Pearson's death in 1899 the Brickendonbury estate passed to Sir Edward, a civil engineer who was also a Justice of the Peace of Hertfordshire and High Sheriff for the County in 1909. He was Mayor of

Hertford for three years and donated the War Memorial to the town.

When Sir Edward married, his mother moved to Warrenfield and it became in effect the dower house to Brickendonbury. At that time the house was still one single residence, not two as it is now. She would have lived there with several servants. On the 1911 census just a few weeks after her death there were still a footman, cook, housemaid and under-housemaid living there. No doubt several others would have worked there on a daily basis, including gardeners, as at that time the house had extensive grounds alongside Warren Park Road.

The Pearsons had come from Yorkshire and had a total of 8 children, 3 boys and 5 girls. Some had married before they moved to Hertfordshire.

The oldest son was also knighted, Sir Weetman Dickinson Pearson.

Marilyn Taylor

Sources:

www.ancestry.co.uk, www.findmypast.co.uk,

www.brickendonbury.co.uk

Family photographs from Ancestry.co.uk

Warrenfield photograph from Mrs Tric Clark



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- 30 hour offer in our nursery class;
- A recent very positive Ofsted monitoring report on our website;
- Talented staff that are committed to supporting every individual.

COVID SECURE VISITS WARMLY WELCOMED



Bengeo Primary School



We were very excited to welcome all of our children back to school after lockdown, on 8th March 2021. Staff and children went back into the swing of normal school life and we all enjoyed a celebration day on Friday 12th March for World Book Day...

It was wonderful to see so many fantastic costumes and props. Throughout the day, the children thoroughly enjoyed a range of activities to promote the love of books and reading, including turning potatoes into much loved booked characters! The finished 'potato characters' were a brilliant display of our children's creativity – well done all and thank you to the White Lion for kindly donating the potatoes.

The day was a huge success and brought smiles to all our faces.

Another 'Thank you' to Co-op

Many thanks to Co-op who not only donated some new tennis nets and balls for the children to use at lunchtimes, but also donated some dinner hampers and class hampers for children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1. In the hampers were everything that was needed to make 'cress heads'.

Bengeo Charities

We have received a very generous donation from Bengeo Charities of just over £10,000. This money will be used to completely refurbish our Chestnut class garden. We will be developing a small garden with a sensory theme – a calm oasis with herbs, a water feature, and 'garden rooms' for nurture provision to be carried out in. This will involve some major restructuring, including adding patio areas, raised flowerbeds and furniture. This restructuring will commence in the Easter holidays. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the trustees of the charity for this incredible donation, without which the project could not go ahead.





Mill Mead Primary School

A Midsummer Night's Dream at Mill Mead

To welcome all of our children back to school, we held a 'World Book Fortnight' within which all children, from nursery to Year 6, studied Shakespeare's *'A Midsummer Night's Dream'*.

The project included many exciting activities such as art challenges whereby children were asked to represent scenes from the play in the style of different artists. In addition, each year group was set a writing challenge related to the text and we are so proud of the way our children were able to change their style of writing for the challenges set.

There were also lots of competitions including recitals and performances of extracts from the play.

One parent commented, 'The way the whole school has been involved with the *'Midsummers night's theme'* has been one of the best things I have seen for a long time. To have ALL four of our children, from three different year groups, all discussing a Shakespeare play around the dinner table, or on the journeys to and from school, is amazing.'



The project was a resounding success and the perfect way to welcome back our whole community to school site once more.

Based on the success of the project, we are planning to host similar whole-school based projects every term and can't wait to share the results with the community!

Our New Library

After months of preparation and lots of hard work, we are thrilled to say that our new library is open and ready for use. The space is multi-functional: allowing children to browse and read books, enabling whole classes to read stories together and even providing a space for small group work too.



Do you want to make a difference?

We are currently looking to expand our Governing Body and are particularly keen to recruit governors from the local community. If you would like to know more about this exciting opportunity to make a difference to lives of young children in the area, please email our Headteacher, Mrs Walsh on head@millmead.herts.sch.uk.





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Team Duncombe

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Duncombe School

An Independent Preparatory School and Nursery

Duncombe School

Hello from Team Duncombe!

The buildings and grounds of Duncombe School are once again filled with the sounds of children’s laughter and giggles. As you walk past the classrooms you can hear our teachers sharing their passion for learning, whilst seeing the excitement on the children’s faces at being back in the classroom with their friends and learning together as a class. It is wonderful to be back!

We are delighted that once again, every Year 6 pupil sitting examinations for Independent Senior Schools have been offered a place, including offers at Haileybury, St Albans High School for Girls, Bishop’s Stortford College, St Edmund’s College, Sherrardswood School and Queenswood School; where a pupil gained an Art Scholarship. In addition, places were offered for the prestigious state boarding school, Hockerill Anglo European under the languages and music aptitude assessments. This year Duncombe pupils in Year 6 have once again been offered more 11+ places than any other prep school in the area and we continue, as a school, to be the largest feeder school to Haileybury, St Edmund’s College and Bishop’s Stortford College. It is fair to say that we could not be any prouder of the children’s achievements and the excellent level of provision which a Duncombe Education gives all of our pupils.



Team Duncombe love reading and so traditionally we celebrate World Book Day across a whole week, with a variety of inspiring activities and competitions. This year we had the challenge of delivering the event virtually, but Miss Cartwright, Head of English, was not going to let anything get in the way of delivering a totally unique event for the children. We had everything from a ‘Book Nook’ competition and parents getting involved in our ‘Mystery Reader’ competitions to Year 5 building their own ‘Story Forts’ to virtually read to their Reception buddies and a grand finale whole school Kitchen



Catwalk. It was lovely to have our parents more involved this year and we’ve had amazing support and feedback from the wider Team Duncombe community.

Earlier in the term, Year 5 and 6 submitted several entries to the Cognita Global Science Expo, hosted by St. Andrews International School in Thailand. The Science Fair consisted of an independent scientific investigation or STEM project on the theme of ‘Earth Matters’ and the children chose which of the 4 areas they wanted to enter. Mrs Ferguson, Head of Science, was extremely impressed with the enthusiasm shown



and the work produced by the children. The judges were obviously impressed as well, as across the 4 areas, they awarded Team Duncombe a 1st place, two 2nd places and 2 Highly Commended awards.

As we move into the Summer Term, we look forward to sunnier brighter days and the return of some annual events (fingers crossed), including welcoming onsite children due to start Reception in September for a visit.

We look forward to sharing more tales of our adventures with you in the next edition.

Until then keep safe and well,

Team Duncombe

Follow us on social media to keep up to date with all our news. If you would like to know more about Duncombe School and Treetops Pre-School or would like a virtual chat with our Headmaster, please visit our website at www.duncombe-school.co.uk for more details.

A Word from The Rectory

From The Vicar, The Revd Robert Thompson

A Mother Superior



If you are one of those many people whose history of the royal family has been learned from episodes of the Netflix TV series *The Crown*, the portrayal of HRH Prince Philip's mother picks a peculiar line between fact and fantasy. One moment she is depicted as a

Woodbine-toting nun struggling with severe mental health problems; the next she is a national treasure, lauded in the press for her selfless charity work.

In reality, the mother of Prince Philip was scarcely remembered for anything at the end of her life. And despite the mass of media coverage at the end of his, it seems to me that there is still a piece missing from the picture. The Duke of Edinburgh was the son of a hero.

Born at Windsor Castle on 25th February 1885, and christened with the title 'Her Serene Highness,' Princess Alice of Battenberg had an extraordinary childhood, carted by her parents Prince Louis of

Battenberg and Princess Victoria of Hesse and the Rhine around a hugely complex network of inter-marriages that constituted the extended family of Queen Victoria.

Very early it became apparent that the toddler Princess was deaf, and having received advanced medical care and special tutoring, Alice learnt to lip-read and speak fluently in English, French and German by the time she was a teenager.

At the age of seventeen she could add Greek to that list, when it was announced she was to be married to Prince Andrew, a Danish prince who had been invited to become King by the Greeks in 1863 when their previous monarch proved to be less than satisfactory.

It was not a very happy marriage. Although the couple were united by their shared love of Greece and its people, their temperaments differed sharply. Prince Andrew was a dashing cavalry officer famed for throwing himself into the arms of anyone, male or female, he fancied for sexual adventures. Alice, by contrast, threw herself into charity work and motherhood, raising 4 daughters and one boy, Philip, whose marriage to the heir to the British throne lasted 73 years.

Political upheaval shook Europe in the early years of the twentieth century and Greece had more than its fair share of unrest. In 1917, and with half of her family pitched into mechanised slaughter of the other during the First World War, Alice found herself in a humdrum suburb of Paris, the first of many exiles, spending afternoons doing shifts at a second-hand shop raising money for refugees.

Her Christian faith grew, and, inspired largely by her Aunt Elizabeth, a former Grand Duchess who became a nun, she traded her tiara for a grey nun's habit and entered the Orthodox Church.

Not long after, she experienced a set of dramatic religious visions and announced her intention to proclaim God's healing to the poor and marginalised. Her family listened, coughed politely and made arrangements: her daughters were dispersed into suitable marriages across Europe, her



Photograph © GETTY IMAGES

son sent to boarding school in England and Princess Alice was pronounced 'mad' and packed off to a sanatorium in Switzerland.

Sigmund Freud was one of the doctors who examined her case, and, unsurprisingly given his own obsessions, diagnosed sexual frustration as the cause of her problems and subjected her to a torturous series of X-rays designed to radiate her libido out of existence.

If the treatment was intended to 'cure' her of religious delirium it failed. Protesting her sanity and steeled by faith, she was released from the sanatorium. Years of restless wandering followed, until the carousel of Greek politics finally came to a stop. The Greek monarchy was restored and Alice moved back to one of the few places she could ever call home.

Her new residence was a poky two-bedroomed flat in the Kolonaki district of Athens where she gave herself over to prayer and good works. When German troops arrived in the capital in 1941, that's where she was, a daughter of the crowned heads of Europe, dressed as a nun, nursing the sick and injured, setting up soup kitchens and caring for those orphaned as a result of the fighting.

The Crown has a selective approach to Prince Philip's mother, and sadly, given the acting skills of Jane Laportaire put to use on the subject, it overlooks the crowning moment of them all.

In 1943, the surviving members of the Jewish family of Haimaki Cohen, a former member of Parliament, were smuggled into the back of the Princess' house: two terrified Jewish women, joined later by a brother. The ever-watchful Gestapo detected unusual activity at the residence of the Princess of Greece and Denmark and decided to pay a visit.

The interview must have been interesting. Questioning her again and again on her links to social and racial undesirables, the secret police employed every intimidation strategy they knew, short of physical violence.

Imagine it: they couldn't threaten the great-granddaughter of an Empress. They couldn't hope to break the iron-will of a penniless nun and political exile. And she had survived years of torture before.

The interrogators asked their questions only to be met by a unique blend of aristocratic sangfroid and stony silence.

'I am deaf,' said the Princess of Greek and Denmark. 'I can't hear you.'

Hands-tied, dumbstruck, the Gestapo officers rose and left. Alice, and the Cohens, were never bothered again.

With my prayers,

Robert Thompson

Hugo Vickers's biography is well worth a read, Alice: Princess Andrew of Greece (St Martin's Griffin, 2003).



A very special proposal

I wanted to make the marriage proposal as special as possible; and given the current difficulties, it was not easy to arrange. St Leonard's Church is a beautiful place in Hertford and happened to be a place we visited on a walk during our first date around Hertford. I couldn't think of a more perfect place to propose. I contacted Robert who very kindly allowed me to make use of the church. I organised a cryptic clue walk that ended at St Leonard's. Once we arrived, Milly waited outside whilst I went and setup the church with a couple of candles and some cards – Robert very gracefully had already set the scene with some candles. I led Milly to the altar and then read the last clue, a card with a large Question Mark in the middle. I then dropped to one knee and the rest is history.

Thank you ever so much to Robert for making our day so special.

Michael Cooper

Parish Prayers

Daily Prayers for May

1. Local sports teams
2. Our Church websites and podcasts
3. Farquhar Street
4. Christian Aid Head Office staff in London
5. Christian Aid Community Health
6. HMP Chelmsford
7. Local Bengeo shops and businesses
8. All who use the Church Hall
9. Christian Aid Week fundraising events
10. Garratts Close
11. Christian Aid in Africa
12. Christian Aid, Resilience and Climate Change
13. Ascension Day
14. 10 days of prayer and preparation for Pentecost
15. Hertford Town Centre shops and businesses
16. NHS Chaplaincy Service
17. Garden Terrace
18. Our quiet time at home or in Church
19. Christian Aid Against Discrimination
20. HMP Coldingley, Surrey
21. Local clubs and pubs
22. Prison Chaplains
23. The Holy Spirit in Holy Trinity
24. George Street
25. Our memorial garden
26. Amnesty International
27. HMP Cookham Wood, Kent
28. Chelmsford Cathedral
29. Give thanks for the gifts in nature
30. Holy Trinity
31. Glebe Road

Daily Prayers for June

1. Hertford and Ware foodbank
2. Christian Churches in India
3. Holy Communion
4. Local clubs and societies looking to restart
5. Those who are anxious
6. Our PCC
7. Glebe Close
8. NHS Mental Health Services
9. Doctors working in refugee camps
10. HMP Dartmoor, Devon
11. Bengeo residents groups
12. HM The Queen
13. Hertford Team Ministry
14. Globe Court
15. The Children's Society
16. HMP Deerbolt, County Durham
17. The Bengeo Coffee Pot
18. Age UK working with the housebound
19. Hertfordshire Young Carers
20. Our Fathers
21. Gosselin Road
22. St Alban's Diocese staff
23. The Refugee Council UK
24. HMP Doncaster, South Yorkshire
25. Coventry Cathedral
26. The Lullaby Trust.org.uk
27. The Bengeo Magazine
28. Grange Court
29. The Samaritans
30. Child Poverty in the UK

Holy Trinity Church is open for services

Sunday services:

9am Holy Communion (30 mins) and 10am Holy Communion (30 mins)

Numbers are limited because of Government guidelines. To book a place at any service visit www.parishofbengeo.com, email info@parishofbengeo.com or call us on **01992 413691**.

The church is open for private prayer during the week from 10am until 3pm and for a Quiet Time prayer service on Tuesday evenings at 8pm.

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**

Back cover photograph:

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