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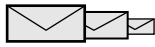
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POINTS FROM THE POST



We welcome your letters and emails – if you are sending an email please give us your full contact details. If you wish to have your name and address published please let me know. Over the years your comments have helped our community.

Parking At Hospitals

You can always tell when there is an Election around the corner – The National Political Parties are falling over themselves suggesting that Parking Fees should be stopped. I have been visiting Queen’s Hospital, Romford on and off since it opened – visiting relatives – part from struggling sometimes to find a parking space – I find the Parking Charges to be grossly unfair and as a regular visitor to the Hospital I know of many patients who do not get the same

number of visits as others because their family could not afford the charges. Often people going into Hospital are often at a low point in their life emotionally or financially – having to pay parking charges is a tax on illness. Parking Fees should be scrapped now – not after a General Election. Frederick King, St Mary’s Lane.

WHEN A FINE IS NOT FINE?

The latest fund raising wheeze from this Labour Government is that motorists found guilty of minor motoring offences will face a £15 surcharge which will go to help victims of domestic violence and other violent crime. For example a £60 fixed penalty for not wearing a seat belt will increase to £75. This deeply flawed concept is nothing more than a stealth tax and has little correlation between the offence

and the penalty. While victims of violent crime need to be properly supported and compensated, I would suggest that those guilty of violent offences should pay the costs and not those who have a tyre with insufficient tread.

Cllr CLARENCE BARRETT

WHAT A SNOW UP

The *Bulletin* has been inundated with many angry letters and emails regarding Havering Council’s reaction, or should we say lack of action, in gritting the Borough’s Roads. There was a general view that the major roads were gritted well, however side roads were treacherous until the ice thawed.

Transport for London gritted around bus stops – however what was an absolute disgrace was that pavements were simply impassable in many roads – making them a no go area and there were a number of nasty

accidents.

Please see below several letters referring to particular areas of concern.

Havering Councils switchboard and in particular staff in StreetCare who normally deal with complaints on broken pavements, rubbish etc took the brunt of residents’ anger and despair at the lack of Council action. Whilst it appears that Havering was not alone – this must not be accepted. Many Councils really got their act together and side roads, shopping centres were cleared of snow in addition to main roads.

RON OWER

Residents should help!

We have just encountered some winter conditions that have caused some disruption around our local area, which seems to be the norm when this happens. What I get annoyed with is the fact residents are not prepared to

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help in this situation. Our footpaths/pavements which we all use end up like skating rinks, a hazard that can be overcome, so I would like to know why residents are not prepared to clean the snow/ice from outside the front of their property.

Is it because:

they can not even be bothered to clean the snow away from their front door?

they pay council tax and think they should do it?

hope it all disperses quickly?

I am all right attitude, why should I worry about other people?

It does not matter how old you are, we could all slip and end up braking a limb. All it takes is a little time to just clean outside, what a difference it would make to all being able to walk along that pavement without being afraid.

Name and address supplied.

DON'T STAND UP THE DOCTOR

The NHS in Havering is asking people who can't attend pre-booked medical appointments to let the doctor, hospital or clinic know, so that other patients can be seen. During cold and icy weather, it is likely that more appointments will be missed.

Wasted appointments cost the health service over £600 million each year. In an average week, 26 patients fail to turn up for appointments with their GP or practice nurse. In hospitals, one out of every eight appointments is wasted.

Chas Hollwey, Chief Executive of NHS Havering, said: "There are often good reasons why people can't keep their medical appointments; during the recent cold weather it has been particularly difficult for older people to go out.

"But we are asking everyone to

call the surgery or hospital to cancel or rearrange if necessary.

Their appointment can then be offered to another patient who needs it, and waiting times will be kept shorter for everyone."

Queen's Hospital in Romford has taken steps to cut the number of missed appointments and reduce waiting times for patients. The hospital is trialling a scheme to remind people about appointments by text message. Patients can also cancel or rearrange their appointments on the hospital website:

www.bhrhospitals.nhs.uk, as well as by telephone on 0845 130 4204.

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By Philip Cockram, Managing Partner at Pinney Talfourd LLP

When somebody dies, certain people can make a claim

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The main focus of the club is of course the appreciation of wine. We pride ourselves on the quality of speakers on the subject and the

quality of wines, which are presented, at our meetings.

As a natural extension of this we have decided to institute a 'WINE WATCH' programme, which hopefully will become a part of our meetings.

The purpose of 'WINE WATCH' is to use our group knowledge on availability of quality wines in our area. It will be an interactive newsletter using information supplied by our members on best (and bad) buys both in terms of quality and price together with members' comments. We expect these comments to be constructive and critical where appropriate. The newsletter will also contain items of general interest.

We are launching 'WINE WATCH' this month, it will take a little time to establish itself but the committee feel this is a project well worth doing. The club meet on the third Thursday of each month at the

Cranham Social Centre, Front Lane – contact Jim Johnson on 01708 224214 for further information.

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to expose companies that damage the environment, and lobby individuals who are in a position to improve things. Greenpeace has no political affiliation, and does not accept any corporate sponsorship. There are many ways to get involved, such as helping with a stall at a green fair, or finding out which shops sell environmentally damaging products. Some of our more experienced campaigners go on to join Greenpeace's high-profile non-violent direct actions, for which training is available (over 18s only). South West Essex Greenpeace meets on the second Tuesday of each month, at 273 South Street, Romford (Saffron House). For more information please see our web page at: www.greenpeace.org.uk/groups/essex-south-west, or phone the local co-ordinator, Steve, on 07708 794665

JOHN ROBINSON

GRITTING

The recent spell of ice and snow caused major disruption to many people and businesses and underlined again the need to ready ourselves for such extremes in our weather. While it may have been a winter playground for some, the treacherous conditions meant that many elderly residents were confined to their homes.

The point raised most frequently was 'Why are our roads and pavements not gritted or salted?', and we do intend to review this whole issue and see where improvements can be made in the future. Another point often raised was what the legal position is when householders clear snow and ice away from the pavement in front of their properties. It is interesting that in Austria, Germany and Switzerland, and some states in America, it is a legal obligation to keep the

pavement outside your property clear from ice and snow. However, in the UK it is Local Authorities who are legally responsible for gritting and salting public roads and pavements. In theory, there is indeed a risk of legal action under the part of law known as 'tort of nuisance' if householders sweep away snow in such a way that it causes injury to someone. However, there would need to be provable malicious intent or a high degree of carelessness for any such action to be pursued. While there does need to be legal frameworks in place to protect the interests and health of people, there also needs to be a reasonable degree of common sense so that individuals can react to adverse situations without being worried about a 'no-win, no-fee' lawyer waiting for a slip up.

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HAYDN'S COLUMN

Valentine's Day



Love is in the air again; well almost anyways, and I've done the hard work so

you don't have to. Donning the scarf and gloves I took to Upminster high street to find the best deals around for your Valentine's night.

Firstly, we have *Flavours* on St. Mary's Lane, which is offering their usual menu, with a few added extra's such as a Lovers Ice Cream Sundae made for sharing with that someone special. Also along the sharing idea, they have platters at various prices to suit everyone's wallet. If you're not into sharing your food then the Lamb Chops are a must. Secondly there is *Azzurri*, which is actually next door to Upminster Station that are running a set menu with three

courses for an amazing £25 a person. You will be spoilt for choice with up to nine options per course. Lastly, down the other end of the high street, just past Upminster Park, we have *Lalo's Mexican*. They will be holding a Valentine themed raffle for all customers that visit there on the 14th of February. The menu will be the usual, delicious, selection. If Valentines isn't your thing then Flavours do a student lunch time deal including burgers, chips and a drink for under £3, or Azzurri offer a large selection of fine Italian foods all year round!

HAYDN SQUIBB

BUDDY

One of the best musicals I have seen a number of times is BUDDY a fantastic musical journey on the life of Buddy Holly who died tragically in a Plane Crash on the 3rd February in 1959. The show is often on in the West End. Shirley Ward is

organising a Coach Trip to Upstairs at The Gatehouse Theatre in Highgate Village for a Matinee Performance on Sunday 21st March at 4 pm. Coach will leave midday, therefore giving free time to eat in Highgate. Tickets are Adults £22, Seniors/Children £20, covers show and coach - Excellent Value. Please phone Shirley on 01708 227884 to book.

LOCAL MUSIC EXPLOSION

Over the years some fantastic singers and musicians have come from our area and the East of London- legendary bands like the Small Faces, The Dave Clarke Five, Brian Poole and The Tremeloes – Eurovision Winner Singer Sandie Shaw, who achieved World Wide fame on our doorstep. Tony Rivers, who recently moved abroad, toured regularly with Cliff Richard and still performs in the UK. Last

month saw the release of the fantastic film "Sex, Drugs and Rock N Roll" based on the life of Ian Dury who lived locally for some time. Ian is featured in the mural in Upminster Library. Local Soloist Joanne Skillet sings a variety of music for all tastes, wonderfully. In Haydn Squibb's first column, she gave details last December of a whole number of up and coming local bands and we featured an article last month on Hope Murphy who studies at Coopers – I have heard a CD of hers – she has a wonderful voice. I recently met up with two students from Coopers who confirmed that there is a real music explosion happening locally and that we should also look out for three girls at Hall Mead School called, I believe, "Dolls Face" who are very talented. If you are aware of anyone on the local music scene let me know- they should get our support.

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THAMES CHASE COMMUNITY FOREST

I was really pleased to read in the January *Bulletin* the decision by the Residents Association Social Committee that organises the fantastic Coach Outings have given a £500 donation to Thames Chase towards the refurbishment of their shop in Pike Lane, Cranham.

I believe the huge Community Forest that Thames Chase has created in our area is a wonderful achievement and a superb asset for our local environment – their headquarters at Broadfield Farm, Park Lane is well worth a visit.

The Residents Association regularly supports Thames Chase – I have attended several of their presentations over the years at Association Ward Meetings and found them to be very interesting. It is always

nice to see in the *Bulletin* details of Thames Chase events, these are well worth a visit.

SUSAN TAYLOR
Corbets Tey Road

WHIST DRIVES

These are held throughout the year at the Cranham Community Centre, on Wednesdays and Fridays, both commencing at 7.30p.m.

We are happy to teach beginners to play whist as it is very easy to learn, unlike Bridge, which takes for ever. New players are always welcome and further information can be obtained from:

Linda (01708 458328) or Harry (01708 227457).

“HI DIDDLE DE DEE”... A BIT MORE!

Further to the announcement in the January issue, The Oglethorpe Players have reported that they are moving the

performance dates of their new production:

THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO to Friday 19th March @ 8pm and matinee @ 2pm and evening on Saturday 20th. @ 7pm

The Players have been overwhelmed by the reaction to this new project and they are expecting sell out performances so book early. It is a family show suitable for all ages from 3years old upwards. As ever, there will be plenty of opportunity for participation including a chance for audience members to confess to the biggest lie they have ever told!!! (Worth the price of a ticket in itself)

The Players are also launching a competition for *Bulletin* readers to come up with a funny, ingenious or just plain daft idea on how to make Pinocchio's nose grow! Please send entries to gerrysweeney@sky.com or phone the box office and

information telephone number **01708 221923**. Don't forget to leave name and contact number. The winner will receive free tickets to the show and the idea will be published in the March issue. Please forward entries by the 1st March.

If anyone is interested in helping out in staging this exciting show whether shifting scenery, assisting in the make-up and costume or lighting departments or front of house they will be most welcome. The Players enjoy a brilliant social life including meals out together at our local restaurants, parties, even weekends away as part of the Shirley's Tours crowd. So if you are looking for a new hobby and a new set of friends please contact the telephone number above. Rehearsals take place Friday evenings from 8pm at Brandon Groves Community club in South Ockendon, RM15 6SB.

HI DIDDLE DE DEE....

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singing and would like more information call 01708 732480.

COLD WEATHER PAYMENTS - FOR SOME!

The recent spell of very cold weather has unsurprisingly triggered extra £25 'cold weather payments' for pensioners living in Havering, but in an extraordinary twist of postcode lotteries, only those living in Havering-atte-Bower and Noak Hill (RM4) are entitled to the payment! Payment is made when the average temperature is recorded as zero degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days during the period 1 November to 31st March. However, temperatures recorded for the RM4 area are taken at the weather station at Andrewsfield, Stansted, while temperatures for the rest of Havering are taken at the weather station at Gravesend, Kent. This bizarre arrangement has led to pensioners receiving cold weather

payments despite living next to pensioners who do not - yet they share the same weather! It also transpires that pensioners living in Ilford and Barking have received the cold weather payment. The Met Office advises the Government which weather stations cover which postcodes and it is reviewed annually. We have written to the relevant government department to rectify this iniquitous arrangement.

Cllr CLARENCE BARRETT

LOCAL EVENTS FEBRUARY

- Tuesday Oglethorpe Women's Institute at Cranham Social Hall at 7.45 featuring **Havering Samaritans** by Mo Harvey and **Items for George Mills (Chenobyl) Appeal**. Potential members and visitors welcome @ £3, incl refreshment.
- Saturday East of London Family History Society at Trinity Church at 2 (doors open 12.30) with **Migration - When We Get Stuck** by Laurie Page. Visitors welcome.
- Saturday British Sugarcraft

Guild, Hornchurch Library at 1.30 with presentation **Scabious in Cold Porcelain**. Admission £6 incl tea and cake. Visitors welcome.

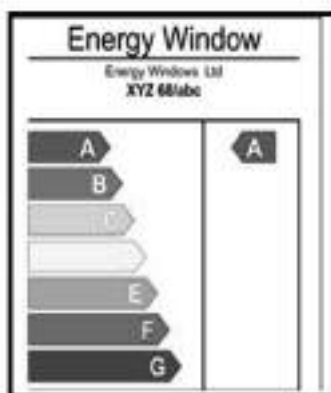
- Saturday WEA Saturday Talk at Roope Hall, Trinity Church at 2 with **Plato's Cave : Philosophy in the World** by Mark Fielding. Tickets £5, incl refreshment, from Mrs Bland (227 774).
- Friday Havering Antiques Club Members Night, Neighbourhood Centre Harold Wood, 7.30 for 8, with **Members on their Own Collections**. Guests welcome @ £4, incl refreshment.
- Sunday **The Band of HM Royal Marines Commando Training Centre Lymington** at The Queen's Theatre at 7.30. Tickets £16 (Seniors, Children & Groups of Ten £15) from Paul Burton (020 8550 2532).
- Monday Breathe Easy - Havering at St Andrews Church, 1.30 - 3.30, with a local Pharmacist giving **Advice on Inhalers & Medication**. A support group for those with COPD, Asthma or other Breathing Difficulties. Visitors welcome, suggested donation £1.50 for British Lung Foundation. Light refreshments.

continued on page 20



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TERENCE SPEAKS

Local Actor/Writer Terence Mustoo, will be giving a Talk at Upminster Library on Wednesday 10th February 6pm to 7pm Entrance £2.50. Should be excellent.



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 www.haveringra.org.uk

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24 Wednesday Havering Transport Circle at New Windmill Hall at 8 with **The Thames Sailing Barge - a History and a Future** by **Dave Gibson**. Initial meeting free - annual subs £25. Parking and refreshments available. Details from John Rayment (01376 561 778) or Geoff Hutton (444 226). In aid of East Anglian Railway Museum.

27 Saturday Cranham Park Friends of Guiding **Quiz Night** at Cranham Community Centre, Marlborough Gardens, 7.15 for 7.30. Tables 10 max. Tickets £6.50, incl Ploughman's, from Barbara Levis (250 941) or Doris Harding (226 725). In aid of Guides, Brownies & Rainbows.

27 Saturday **Quiz Night** (in aid of St Andrew's Church Organ Restoration Fund) at North Street Hall, Hornchurch. 7.30pm start. £6.00pp. Tables of 8 - 10 people. Please contact Mrs Terry Keens 01708 473408 to book or leave a message for her with the Parish Office on 01708 441571.

MARCH

2 Tuesday Oglethorpe Women's Institute at Cranham Social Hall at 7.45, with **Holiday Humour** by Ann Newmeir. Potential members and visitors welcome @ £3 incl refreshment.

21 Sunday **Buddy Holly Musical** at Highgate Gatehouse Theatre with Shirley Tours. Coach leaves at 12

for 4pm show. - lunch obtainable at Wetherspoons downstairs. Tickets £22 (Seniors/Children £20) on 227 884.

27 Saturday Havering Singers will be performing **Handel's Messiah** at St Peter's Church, Harold Wood at 7.30pm. Tickets £10.00, can be purchased at the door or in advance from Ann Stent on 341 265.

APRIL

27 Tuesday **Phantom of the Opera**. Coach leaves at 8.30 for visit to London Aquarium and Fish/Chip Lunch prior to 2.30 matinee. **Adults only** tickets £55 on 227 884.

ASSOCIATION DIARY FEBRUARY

3 Wednesday **Upminster Ward Meeting** at St Joseph's Social Centre at 8.

11 Thursday **Cranham Ward Meeting** at Cranham Community Centre at 7.45, featuring a **Councillors' Question Time** and with the **Police** on hand to provide community updates and advice.

17 Wednesday **Association AGM**, including Adoption of Candidates for Havering Council, at St Joseph's Hall at 7.30, and featuring Peter Caton on **Essex Coast Walk**.

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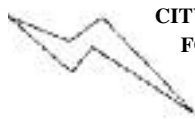
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