

Editorial Information Dates for the next edition - Easter 2026

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Committee: Peter Archibald Julie Barnard Yvonne Baccush

Sue Collins Michael Culkin Andy Frater Stephanie Hughes Jill Jones Dena Oxley

Glyn Pritchard Richard Till.

Committee Members: We would welcome more members on the magazine's editorial team. In particular we are looking for people to help with editorial and layout design aspects. If you have an interest in creating articles or other aspects of this magazine why not contact us to discuss the ways you could help.

Articles: We are always pleased to receive articles for inclusion. Write about what matters to you in Thaxted. We also want to include items such as births, weddings, etc. We do need to be told about events and interesting happenings, as we do not always know of them.

Advertising Information

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Latest 3 editions on the website: www.abc-u.co.uk

Thaxted Community Magazine Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and United Reformed Churches of Thaxted Editorial

Creating an edition of this magazine is a bit like going on a journey: while you know where you are starting, you don't know where you're going to end up. Some of the route is familiar, such as the adverts and regular items. The rest of the journey is always a surprise. We start with a deadline date and with a list of possible contributors. Some contribute; some don't, some contribute by the deadline date, some don't. Fortunately, they give me a clue as to whether they want to contribute and space therefore is allocated. Then I don't know how long their article is going to be; again always a surprise. We are always looking for new contributors.

This time I had hoped that we would be able to include tributes to Janet Walker and Brian Harris, two valued members of this community who we have recently lost. This has not yet been possible. We hope to include these in the next edition. Meanwhile...

The British Press Photographers' Association, of which Brian was a founding member, wrote an obituary which was fascinating to read.

"When the British Press Photographers' Association held its first meeting in a pub off Fleet Street in 1984, Brian was the youngest staff photographer at The Times. He went on to be the first staff photographer when The Independent launched in 1986. During his 55 year career he covered the famine in Ethiopia, the civil war in Rhodesia, the aftermath of the Falklands war and the fall of the Berlin Wall which was documented in his book "...and then the Prime Minister hit me", published in 2016. Brian passed away peacefully surrounded by his family at home in Thaxted on Saturday 4th October at the age of 73 after a short battle with cancer."

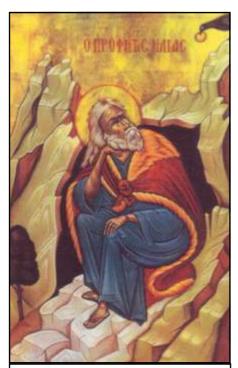
Thanks to Lowie of lowredphoto.com for providing the photo of Joe Hobbs on page 48.

Dear Friends

I have felt so grateful here that I can look out from the vicarage garden to the other side of a valley, the Chelmer valley. Since moving here in June I have often thought this; it's a really beautiful view. Today, though, it has been the buzzard, the red kite, and the kestrel, these fly pasts and fly arounds, impressive acrobatics, that have been the main attraction. It's been a blowy morning and I think the wind's direction and strength have made for flying that's been exciting to watch.

The wind has died down now and, I note, none of the birds are circling, wheeling around, hovering, gliding, and swooping anymore. So I can write without worrying that I'm missing out. When I lived in Saffron Walden some years ago, I saw occasionally buzzards around woodland, but in recent years, whilst not living in Essex, not one. In the neighbouring woodland of my last place (interesting neighbours) sometimes saw a sparrowhawk fly from tree to tree, however, which made up for it. In the last few years, I've seen lots of red kites. Before that they were a bird I saw very occasionally when camping in Wales; love seeing them for the last few years in England, amazing to watch, and so big!

Of the Corvid family of birds, since moving here in June I've seen the odd crow, no crowds of rooks, yet, I don't think I've seen any jackdaws. A magpie or two flew past earlier today, and I have definitely seen no ravens. It was a raven, though, that I have been thinking about today, since watching the buzzard, kestrel, and red kite. In the bible there is a good account of a raven that fed a man called Elijah in a place called the Wadi Cherith (a brook probably in the valley of the river Jordan). Elijah was a prophet for the Lord God, and God had much work for him to do. God sent ravens to feed him when he was in need and hungry, and on the 'Ravens brought bread and meat to the prophet Elijah in the morning and evening, and he drank from the Wadi Cherith' 1 Kings 17:6 At times we are in need and cry out to God. God hears us - not always giving the answer we want - and answers us. God had great plans for Elijah. We can be fed by God and we can also, by loving our neighbour (whether they seek asylum, or a hand crossing the road) be part of God's economy. We can be part of his plan to help others, our part in answering the prayers of those who call on him. Friends of mine once invited me to stay at their house for a few days in



Elijah, fed by ravens, a Greek Orthodox icon.

France, a few days' rest and retreat before my life changed (I was shortly to be ordained). The name of their house: Cherith. They knew that God wanted them, for a season, to show hospitality to those who needed to rest and be fed, before setting out. God does sustain and feed us. This morning was overcast, and those birds stood out against the grey clouds. Now, as I write, the sun is in a blue sky. There is so much to do all the time, but on Saturday mornings like this, I can't help but think that sometimes God is just telling us to stop. I am glad I did.

Ever yours, with love,

Fr David

The Revd David Sheppard, rector of Thaxted, the Sampfords, Radwinter and Hempstead.

URC CELEBRATES ITS 90th BIRTHDAY AND REFURBISHED KITCHEN!

Thaxted United Reformed Church has recently completed the refurbishment of its kitchen, and Church member Bernard Ward helped mark the event by cutting the ribbon as part of his 90th birthday celebrations.

The kitchen is part of a programme of maintenance and improvement works that

have been undertaken by the church over the last few months. By providing improved facilities the church can better support its own activities and other organisations using the church premises.



Photograph: Bernard Ward in on the right watched by other church members.



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Parish Council News

Cllr. Andy Frater - Chairman

Dear Residents,

Unbelievably, the festive season has arrived so quickly, and another year is coming to a close. Again, Thaxted will soon begin to glow with twinkling lights on the traditional tree, warm gatherings, and the unmistakable spirit of community. On behalf of the Parish Council, I'm delighted to share a seasonal update and extend huge thanks to all who made 2025 another memorable year for Thaxted.

Celebrating Community Spirit

This year has brought many moments to celebrate. Two amazing achievements of late are, **Martin Tritton** (below) from Thaxted

Rangers has been for nominated Community Achievement Award. recognising his outstanding service to our town. Meanwhile, Thaxted Youth Club has been shortlisted for the World Youth Promise Awards 2025. A remarkable honour that reflects the

dedication of Councillor **Ray Williams, Rita Williams,** and their team. Well done all!

Clarance House Gardens – A Quiet Triumph

investigation, Following much planning and surveying, we're really pleased that the garden wall is now fully repaired. Thanks to Cllr Frostick for his efforts in getting the work completed. We'd also like to offer special thanks to the Clarance House volunteers. whose care and commitment over the years have kept the gardens looking beautiful. They've handed future upkeep to the Council but their work brought real

joy to residents and visitors alike. We are deeply grateful for their efforts and guidance; we'll miss them.

Festive Traditions and Local Cheer

Thaxted's Christmas Markets return this Winter bringing



festive stalls. handmade gifts, seasonal treats, in and around the Town. It's a perfect opportunity to support local traders, find unique presents, and enjoy the magic of the season with friends and neighbours. And of course, no Thaxted Christmas would be complete without the traditional Christmas tree outside the Guildhall — a much-loved symbol of the season. We again give thanks to the Christmas Tree Committee for their hard work in organising and decorating beautiful centrepiece, which brings festive pleasure to all who pass by.

Looking After Thaxted

The Neighbourhood Plan continues to progress, with resident feedback helping shape future development.

A new drinking water fountain will soon be installed at the Recreation Ground, thanks to a generous donation from Hunts Charity.

The red phone box on Town Street has been adopted by the Council, preserving a cherished piece of our heritage.

Our Speed Watch campaign has seen excellent volunteer engagement, helping improve road safety, but we are always looking for more volunteers!

Double yellow lines and parking bay lining will be refreshed shortly, we've been assured, improving visibility



and traffic flow.

We're still lobbying and pushing for a fix from Highways for the VAS Speed repeater signs and we are as frustrated as no doubt you are!

Council Meetings and Community Involvement

Council meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month, during the winter months, at the Community Hall by the Rec. Residents are always welcome to attend.

As we wrap up 2025, we do so with gratitude — for the volunteers, residents and organisations who make Thaxted a place of warmth, resilience and joy. Whether you're lighting a candle, hanging a wreath or simply enjoying a quiet moment, we wish you peace and happiness this Christmas.

From all Thaxted Parish Councillors and officers — Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Cllr. Andy Frater - Chairman.

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Thaxted - NEWS - Society

SECRET ROADS - A BOTTOM OF THE BAG WORLD

Taken from the French for 'bottom of the bag', the cul-desac is everywhere in Thaxted, in fact there are eleven such roads not including the in and out roads. Whilst these provide peace and quiet, security and relief from through traffic they do produce a larger problem for Thaxted: congestion on feeder roads. Our tranquillity in a 'cul-desac' comes at a traffic cost. No one can escape the scourge of through traffic at Thaxted. The majority of B184 traffic is going somewhere else, BUT, when you add to this all the internal traffic from our closes, places, chases, and cul-de-sacs, that traffic mixture can be frustrating.

When you mix a pop down to the chippy with someone in a hurry to get somewhere else, that's like oil and water, they don't mix! The historic centre of town is where all this traffic confusion occurs. Living here, and driving through, are not the same journey

An overriding reason for this muddle is quite simple, a lack of planning, and in this case, we are talking 'spatial planning'. Place

building and wellbeing have more recently become bywords for planning and the layout of even a small place like Thaxted. This change is in part due to the work of HM the King. Many

of his initiatives as Prince of Wales have become universally accepted as leading to better place building, benefiting our quality of life. Many of these roads are private. Unadopted by ECC Highways. Entirely built by the developer. Whilst the day folk moved in they appeared dream homes being near Thaxted shops but are quietly away from the main roads. Bliss! However, over the years these roads have deteriorated and many now are in a sad state and their repair now falls to the roads' freeholders. Your Society has long had both policy and robust lobbying against dead-end developments and fought for joined up roadways. If we may all agree about joined up thinking and the chaos caused when it's missing, surely, we can also see the sense in joined up roads. There are secret opportunities hidden in plain sight in Thaxted's layout today, unseen, unmade, but opportunities none the less... Your Society is

engaged in this hopeful future.

NO PARKING OR TURNING

THAXTED COMMUNITY LAND TRUST NEWS

MUDDY BOOTS AND FAST FINGERS

As we trudge towards Christmas, mud now clinging to our soles, Brickhill Construction continue to build the four dwellings on the Bardfield Road. With the support of Homes England and English Rural we are the **first** Community Land Trust in Essex.

The curiosities of Thaxted are well recorded in history so it's perhaps no surprise that these four homes are a first. Thaxted has often been at the forefront of 'change'.

OPPORTUNITIES SOUGHT

We remain committed to our work to provide amenities and community housing for the future. We are constantly on the lookout for opportunities and land. To affect our plans for the future we need spades in the ground and a talented 'someone' at a desk, with boots at the ready.

NOTICE

Are you as effective on the ground, as at a desk? Can you do both?

If you love our countryside, are you ready to take action!

ADMINISTRATOR WANTED

We need to appoint an Administrator to assist in our work. Although this is a voluntary position some hours may be paid. Would like to play a key role in helping our trust run smoothly and supporting our team with essential administrative tasks that keep our vital work on track for Thaxted?

If you are interested, please contact the:
secretarytclt@gmail.com. With your name and contact
details. OR you can drop a note with your details to:
The Secretary. TCLT. 10 Stoney Lane Thaxted CM6 2PF.

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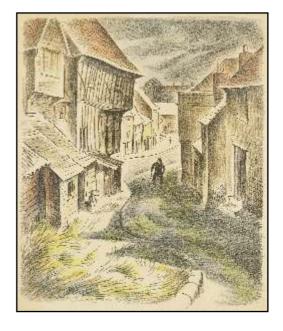
ISABEL ALEXANDER

Artist 1910 - 1996 and sometime Thaxted resident Yvonne Baccush

In 1982 my father moved from our family home, a cottage in the Bardfield Road, to No. 17 Bolford Street opposite the URC church. The terraced cottage was in a reasonably good condition, in need of modernising but alterations were restricted owing to the fact that four of the cottages are Grade 2 Listed.

The extension at the rear comprised a galley kitchen/dining room with a corrugated tin roof and a wooden shed/studio at the end of the garden. There was an upstairs bathroom and a very small second bedroom. A gas fireplace was in the centre of the lounge.

In October 2022 I met perchance Professor Robin Alexander and his wife whilst they were on a fleeting visit to Thaxted. He told me that as a young boy he and his mother lived from 1949 until 1964 in 17 Bolford Street. His mother, Isabel Alexander (1910 - 1996) was an artist who built the shed as her studio and she had a permanent gallery exhibiting her art in Church House, the home of Arthur Caton and Kate Butters. Alexander went on to become a trainer of art teachers at Saffron Walden Teachers'



Training College in Saffron Walden and over many years exhibited her own art, including documenting the lives and work of Welsh coalminers, Irish fishermen and English farmworkers, landscapes and seascapes.

At the time of Alexander purchasing 17 Bolford Street it had no electricity or bathroom and services consisted of an external tap and WC. She had electricity connected and a onestorey extension built to provide a kitchen/dining room and creating space for a small bathroom, though the WC remained outside. To the left, at the back of the kitchen, there was a small gate into the neighbour's property next door and a right-of-way along the rear of the three other cottages for delivery of coal, refuse collection, building works, etc. Sometime after my father bought the cottage, he acquiesced to his neighbour's request to block up the

gate and, thereby, lost the right-ofway, which I have found very inconvenient when undergoing building and garden works.

More can be found on Isabel Alexander's work in a book written by Janet McKenzie (2017) *Isabel Alexander, artist and illustrator,* Isart/Parthian and also B.L. Coombes (text) and Isabel Alexander (images), edited by Peter Wakelin (2021) *Miner's Day,* Parthian Press.

Thaxted Singers

Maggi Griffiths

As Christmas fast approaches Thaxted Singers are in full swing with rehearsals going well for our upcoming concert in December. We have been working on pieces by Holst, Handel and Elgar as well as some well-known seasonal songs. Entitled 'Winter Harmonies' the concert will take place in Thaxted Parish Church on **Thursday December 11**th at **7p.m**. Tickets are always available on the door.

Singing is widely known to have many health benefits as well as opportunities to meet new people and socialise within the community. Thaxted Singers is a very warm, friendly and welcoming choir and we are always happy to open our doors to new members, even if you haven't sung for many years. Please contact Maggi Griffiths for more information maggigriffiths@gmail.com





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THAXTED COMMUNITY SPEED

This **Speed Watch** project relies on trained volunteers from our Thaxted folks and has been set up through the Thaxted Parish Council and the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and Essex Police, Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator.

We are doing this because so many residents are concerned about the number of vehicles that do not respect the 30 mph through and around our historic town and the possibility of one day there being more serious accidents!

We have a great group of volunteers but could do with more! This would enable The **Community Speed Watch** group to increase the days we are able to commit to monitoring. It does not require each volunteer to be available for every session. We let everyone know which days, times and road are selected so volunteers can indicate when they are available. The average commitment is one session of about an hour or a bit longer every two weeks.

New prospective volunteers simply have to contact us and then they will be given a date for an online training session using a 'Teams meeting', which is about 45 minutes.

If you would like to help and become a volunteer for **Thaxted Community Speed Watch**, Please Contact: Theresa@thaxted-pc.gov.uk



Thaxted Country Dance Club

Thaxted Country Dance Club has returned, and can now be found at the Church Hall, Margaret Street on the **first and third Tuesdays** of the month! Whether you're an experienced dancer or completely new to it, we'd love to welcome you - you might call it social dancing, country dancing, or ceilidh dancing, but whatever name you give it, it's a great way to keep active and sociable through the winter months. We have a brilliant live band, and a friendly caller who'll talk you through every step. You're welcome to come with a partner, a friend or two, or solo - we have plenty of people with whom you can dance.

Look out for country dancing at Morris events in Thaxted throughout the year, where you will be able to have a go at a few of the dances. Next occasion Boxing Day in the Church Hall.

When the Morris dancing started in 1911, it was found that Country Dances had been very popular in Thaxted in living memory. Conrad Noel's curate, George Chambers, wrote "In the days when fairs were held by the Market Cross the old time dances formed a very prominent feature of these shows. Many of the Inns had their dancing rooms where old and young folk constantly met and all danced as friends together." The revival of Morris and Country dancing grew over the years and, in 1926, the tradition of dancing in the Bull Ring began. Thankfully this has continued ever since, moving in recent years to the Church Yard.

Thanks to Peter and Mike for the historical context.

Cost: £3 cash
Time: 8-10pm
Next dates:
December 2nd & 16th
January 6th & 20th
February 3rd & 17th
Find us on Facebook









THAXTED FESTIVAL 2026: SEASON LAUNCH!

You may be fooled into thinking we are currently resting after our inspirational summer season, but no, we're working hard on our Launch event which will be held in Thaxted Parish Church at 3.00 pm on 22 February 2026. We can't wait to share all the details of our full programme, present our full-colour brochure which will be hot off the press and enjoy some suitably warming music from one of the world's leading guitar quartets – Aquarelle – to get us into the summer spirit. There'll be refreshments so that we can raise a glass to our 2026 season!

After Craig Ogden's success this summer when he performed with the London Tango Quintet, he was the perfect choice to launch our 2026 season with the dynamic and innovative guitar quartet Aquarelle. extraordinary performance and an expansive repertoire. Don't miss the opportunity to hear their arrangements of music from various genres and works from major international composers. Our new Artistic Director, Christopher Weston has been curating our 40th anniversary Festival season and he and our Chair, Peter Donovan look forward to talking through the highlights with you during the afternoon. Tickets for our Launch event **Aquarelle** with on 22 **February** will be on sale via www.thaxtedfestival.co.uk from 5 January.

Thaxted Festival has and will always attract the very best of British and international talent and our 2026 season is no exception. Expect Thaxted favourites with our Resident Orchestra, the London Mozart Players, returning as well as an afternoon with the ever-popular Wild Arts Opera. Our patron Zeb Soanes



will be appearing with the exceptional St Martin's Voices in a programme that will combine music and spoken word. But also, expect new artists, new ideas and new formats for you to explore and enjoy; you'll hear about these at our Launch. Our summer season runs from 19 June – 12 July. Be sure to put the dates in your 2026 diaries!

General booking will open for the summer season on 16 March 2026 (Thaxted Music Lovers members enjoy priority booking – to join, visit our website).

And if your New Year's resolution is to get involved in some local activity, we are always on the lookout for **volunteers to join our friendly team**: from lighting to box office, drop us an email on **music@thaxtedfestival.co.uk** if you'd like more information.

Lorna Burkle - Festival Manager



Sue Collins, Chair

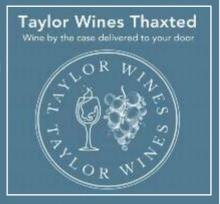
As I write we have come to the end of the first half of our Autumn season. We have enjoyed a variety of talks: learning more about our windmill, our local river wardens and Kate Butters - a well-known Thaxted character - as well as how to self-publish books. By Christmas we will have learnt something about the SAS, the Essex Voluntary Blood Service, Talliston House and Gardens and the Thaxted Chronicle Players. We will end the year with a Christmas talk (and food) about Twelfth Night customs. A wide range of topics! Plans for the Spring sessions are still in progress, We will be ending our season on March 28th with a talk by David Caulfield, who has entertained us in the past, entitled "Travelling Light – 60 Years of Stories and Music".

Lectures take place at 7:30 on Wednesdays at Pam's Place. There is a charge of £5 per lecture to include light refreshments. For more information look out for posters, and news on our Facebook page. If you wish to be included on our mailing list contact **simmons.peter@btinternet.com**.

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Update from Thaxted Fayre Trust

2024 COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME.

It was a proud February day for the Thaxted Fayre Trust as we presented cheques totalling £3,800 to local community projects. Awards were granted to:

Pam's Place,

Vicarage Mead,
Thaxted Festival,
Thaxted Morris Men
Thaxted Tennis Club,
Thaxted Guides & Beavers,
Thaxted Garden & Craft Show.

and more recently to the Thaxted Christmas Tree Committee.

OUR 2025 COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME

This is now open for applications! Are you a community group looking for financial support? If you are a non-profit making local community-based project or group, you can apply for a community grant.

To apply, simply click on the downloadable PDF Community Grant Application Form on our website (www.thaxtedfayretrust.com) and complete your submission.

Applications must be received by 2 pm on **31st December 2025**, by e-mail to **thaxtedfayretrust@outlook.com** or by post to the Trust's Secretary at 4 Watling Street, Thaxted, Essex CM6 2PE. These are reviewed by our

committee in early January, with awards granted based on the project benefits to the residents of the Thaxted community.

Our grant scheme is principally funded from money raised at the Summer Fayre & Fun Dog Show. This annual event is organised by our 5 committee members and a handful of mainly willing volunteers, without whom this event simply wouldn't be possible. Thank you!

THE FAYRE AND FUN DOG SHOW

Next year's fayre is planned for **Saturday, 30th May 2026** - yes, Morris weekend. Due to our limited resources, we have made the decision to reduce the hours for the event to run 11 am to 3 pm (instead of 4 pm).

The fun dog show will still take centre stage once again from 12pm with lots of different classes and a few games. There will be food vendors, stallholders, inflatable fun and fairground rides for the children, plus much more.

STALLHOLDER OR FOOD VENDORS

If you are interested in being a stallholder or Food Vendor at this event, please complete our Pitch application Form on our website and return via email thaxtedfayretrust@outlook.com or write to the TFT Secretary, 4 Watling Street, Thaxted CM6 2PE.

BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are looking for volunteers to help us on the day:

- Event set-up and break-down
- Manning the kids pedal go-karts
- Car parking supervision

If you can offer any time and help to support us, please do get in touch.

Thank you for your ongoing support for your local charity trust, and we look forward to seeing you all next year.

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Baptist Church News Peter Archibald

Community Outreach.

As part of our activities we continue holding a service at Humphrey Lodge on the 1st Monday of every month at 10.30 am and a service at Craftability on the second Thursday of the month at 11.30 am

Our Church Hall Activities

Men's Breakfast

The Men's Community Breakfast is held on the second Saturday of each month. A full English offering is followed by a speaker, a wide spectrum of topics being covered.

For further details please contact Paul Tingey on 07494 757114.

Coffee & Company

If you have experienced the loss of a loved one and would like to chat and have mutual support with people who understand, please come and join us for coffee/tea and cake. We meet on the last Saturday of every month between 10.00 and 12.00.

For details visit www. thaxtedbaptistchurch.com: or ring Debbie on 01371831548

Community Choir

The Thaxted Ladies Community Choir continue to meet regularly. If you enjoy singing come along and join us. For more details please ring Jill Jones on 01371 830 104.

Exercise Classes

Starting at 11.00 a.m, armchair exercises are held every Thursday. All very welcome.

Friday Coffee Morning

We have a Coffee Morning every Friday between 10 and 11.30 am. Come and enjoy a good beverage and company after your market shopping.

Deal or no deal Jim Ford - Baptist Minister

Imagine the following scenario if you will. A young single woman in difficult circumstances decides that she must give up her child for adoption. This is an incredibly difficult decision for her, but reluctantly decides that it is the best outcome for her little one. She approaches an adoption agency and eventually she is told that a couple have been found. At a meeting with the agency, she is told that the husband and wife are a truly loving couple who have not been able to have a child of their own. Casually she is then informed that the couple don't have their own home at the moment. That's because it has been bombed. The couple actually live in Gaza and are sheltering in a bombed-out apartment. There is no electricity, no running water and not a lot of food. Also there is a very real chance that their building will get bombed again.

A bizarre scenario and we can all guess what the young mother will say. A lousy deal indeed for the little one. Yet it is not too far removed from the deal that God offered to his only Son. He would have to leave the beauty of Heaven to come down to a far from beautiful earth. He would live with a poor carpenter and his wife. His birth would take place in a stable at the back of a pub. A murderous king would try to take his young life and he would be a refugee in Egypt for two years. As a man he would spend three years on the road with nowhere to call home. His own hometown would try to kill him and he would be frequently misunderstood by most people around him. Finally he would encounter hatred from the religious leaders which in the end would lead to a violent death.

Some deal!

Yet Jesus took it. All of it. He willingly entered into the deal and saw it through to the end. Why? The answer is found in a verse of the bible that is very dear to Christians. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever should believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God made us human beings to love him and have a relationship with him. Yet we chose to reject that offer and instead incurred God's condemnation. We also created a fairly miserable world in the process. Yet God does not want to condemn us but instead wants to bring us back to him. Therefore he sent Jesus to die in our place; to pay the penalty for our disobedience and bring us back to God; to give us a new vibrant life with him now and a future eternity with him as well.

Now that's what I call a Christmas gift. Merry Christmas to all of you.

Church of St. John The Baptist, Our Lady and St. Laurence

www.thaxtedparishchurch.co.uk

Contact: Benefice Administrator, Maryanne Fleming admin@ttsrh.org or 07958 629506.

Sundays 8 am Said Mass on the first Sunday of the month

11am Sung Mass except on the first Sunday

1st Sunday 10am **Open Doors** - an All Ages service.

Wednesday 10 am Low Mass followed by Coffee Corner – All

welcome to join us for coffee, pastries and

friendly chat!

December 24th 3.30pm – 4.30pm Procession to the Crib

December 24th 11.30pm Midnight Mass

December 25th 10am Christmas Mass

Welcome

Cecily Sarah Minet and **Bonnie Bridie Minet**, daughters of Eleanor O'Malley and Jordan Minet, baptised at Thaxted Parish Church on 10thAugust 2025.

Cleo Lily Hirse Peirson, daughter of Sheri and James Peirson, baptised at Thaxted Parish Church on 17th August 2025

Ruby Alicia Lambdon, daughter of Shari and Josh Lambdon, baptised at Thaxted Parish Church on 19th October 2025.

The Baptist Church, Park Street

www.thaxtedbaptistchurch.com

or facebook.com/thaxtedbaptists/

Contact: Minister Jim Ford Tel 07889758285

Sunday 21st Dec 5.00 pm Carol Service

Christmas Day 9.30 am Morning Service

Sundays 10.30 am Morning Service

Communion the first Sunday in the month

Thursday 7.30 pm Bible Study
Friday 10 - 11.30 amCoffee Morning

For details of our other activities and events please see page 30.

United Reformed Church Bolford Street

Contact our minister, Revd Mark Hayes.

Phone 01799 524944 or email markhayes@hotmail.co.uk

Sundays 9.30 am Morning Worship - (Details on page 34)

Breakfast Church on Sunday 14th Dec and 18th Jan.

Sunday 21st Dec 9.30am Traditional Christmas Carol Service. **Wed 24th Dec 10.00am Christmas Eve Family Service**. There

will be activities for children at this family friendly

celebration of Christmas.

Sunday 28th Dec 9.30am Reflective Service. Looking back at 2025

and forward to 2026

For our other activities and events please see page 34.

The Catholic Church

For information contact: Patrick O'Brien 01371 830 480

Regular Thaxted Services SATURDAYS 5 pm in Parish Church All other Services will be in Bardfield.

In Memoriam - Brian Harris, Janet Walker

Thaxted Singers Concert Thursday December 11th at 7 p.m.

Thaxted Carol Service at the Parish Church 14th December at 6.00 pm. All are welcome to come and celebrate Christmas with traditional carols.'

Christmas Tree events:

Countdown and lighting up Saturday December 6th at 4.30 pm

Carols under the tree and the blessing of the tree, with mulled wine and mince pies Sunday December 21st 8.00 pm

Christmas Eve programme starts at 3.30 pm in the church, come and celebrate the Christmas story followed by carols and **Father Christmas** under the tree at 4.30 pm.

The cost of staging the tree and the events is rising every year. If anyone wishes to make a donation head to our **Thaxted Christmas Tree Facebook** page or **scan the QR code** or look out for the donation boxes around the town.



Regular activities at Thaxted United Reformed Church, Bolford Street www.thaxtedurc.com

Sundays

We usually meet for **Morning Worship on Sundays at 9.30am**, sharing coffee after the service. On the first Sunday of the month our service includes Communion. A warm welcome awaits you at all our services.

Breakfast Church

On the **second Sunday** each month, "Breakfast Church" at 9.30am starts with a light breakfast followed by an informal service which is especially suitable for families with children.

Messy Church

"Messy Church" meets on the **second Tuesday each month from 4.00pm to 5.30pm.** Ideal for families, we have fun exploring stories through craft, songs and sharing tea together.

Second Saturday Coffee Mornings

We meet for tea, coffee, cake and chat on the **second Saturday** each month from **10.00am to 12.30.** Everybody welcome.

The Story

We also have occasional informal Sunday afternoon services at 3pm exploring "the Story", focussing on seasonal themes or a book from the Bible.

Our Garden

We are working on a "wild garden": a space to sit, reflect and also provide a home for birds, insects and other wildlife.

Recorded Service

We offer a recorded service each week. If you would like to receive the link to this, please email **ThaxtedURCMinister@outlook.com**

For more information about all our activities, please contact our minister, Revd Mark Hayes.

Email ThaxtedURCMinister@outlook.com

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' Revd. Mark Hayes. Thaxted United Reformed Church.

I never feel it is really Christmas without these wonderful words from John's Gospel in the King James Bible. There have been many other translations since, but few have matched its language. No other have their roots in a simple purpose, to remove the mystery of the Bible, previously read in a language that many would not have understood, and to provide an English text that could be read in Church and understood by those that listened.

Nowhere is the mystery of faith so beautifully captured than in those words.

The Word? 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

The Word is the force that brought about creation; is the big bang; is the emergence of life; is evolution. At Christmas we celebrate because 'the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'. Through generations God had been moving towards the coming of the Messiah. The story of the People of God in the Hebrew Scriptures is a story of light and dark, of new initiatives by God and new failures by God's people. There were moments of glory – the reign of King David was to be remembered as such – and long years of gloom. But the biblical witness is that God never ceased to work to bring the divine purpose to fruition.

Then the Messiah came as God's initiative, but in a vulnerable form. The Son of God had to work within the real political and social world in which he grew up. Mary and Joseph and the disciples all had free will; they didn't have to do what God asked of them. God depended on them making the right choices.

Today God has to deal with the political, economic and environmental mess humankind has made. It's in the midst of this that He is working His divine purpose out. And because everything He is doing depends on the response of sinful human beings, because it all reacts to what short-sighted humans are doing, there will be long periods when God's purpose appears to go underground, before a new set of events will reveal what God has been up to.

Christmas reminds us that God's Providence has a human face. The most important way He chose to work in the real world was through a real baby. God is in the mess with us. No matter how difficult things get, God is here alongside us. He is always our Friend.

'And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us' Very best wishes for Christmas.



After our Christmas Concert at the beginning of December, Dunmow u3a takes a break until the New Year when we will be welcoming more speakers to our monthly meetings.

On Wednesday 28 January, the Rev'd Canon Chris Bishop will be entertaining us with "Short Songs and Tall Tales" - a mixture of traditional folk songs, not so old songs and his own lyrics to wellknown tunes, blended with stories and banter. "Short Songs and Tall Tales"



Wednesday 28 January - 1.30pm for 2pm start

On Wednesday 25 February, Lindsey Barrell will offer "An Introduction to Mindfulness". Lindsey will discuss both informal



and formal mindfulness, the benefits of mindfulness, handy hints and tips for everyday mindfulness and will end with a relaxing and calming guided meditation.

"An Introduction to Mindfulness"
Wednesday 25 February - 1.30pm for 2pm start

A month later, on 25 March, Ken Lodge will be teaching us how "Body Language Speaks Volumes". A humorous exploration of

Body Language and Voice Tone. We are good at recognising when things don't seem quite right in others - but are we so aware of the signals we might be giving out? It's near impossible to communicate nothing, our feelings will reveal themselves!



"Body Language Speaks Volumes"
Wednesday 25 March - 1.30pm for 2pm start

All our monthly meetings take place at Foakes Hall, Dunmow CM6 1DG.

Are you new to the area and want to meet local people? Maybe you are looking for a new hobby. Are you are also no longer in fultime employment? If so, now is the time to make the most of life

in your 'third age'. Dunmow u3a gives you the chance to develop your interests, make new friends and enjoy yourself.

We are part of the UK-wide u3a movement and offer opportunities for members to learn a new skill, expand existing interests and share knowledge with other members in a friendly and informal environment.



To find out more, email membership@dunmowu3a.org.uk or visit Du3a's website https://dunmow.u3asite.uk/

Registered charity number: 1168310





Guildhall Girls Thaxted WI Hannah Arrowsmith, President

Our meetings at Guildhall Girls Thaxted WI this quarter have included such diverse topics as The Titanic, Wellbeing and The Witches of Essex. We have a Christmas Craft evening in November, and a sing-along Rock Choir night planned for December. We have also enjoyed outings to Audley End, Chelmsford Theatre to see Little Women and a pottery painting workshop with our sister group, Great and Little Sampford WI.

We meet the first Thursday of every month, 7.30-9.30pm at Pam's Place in Thaxted and new members are always welcome. We are a friendly, fun group of women. If you fancy joining your local WI or maybe just coming along for a taster session to see how you like it, please contact us at quildhallgirls@gmail.com



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Use Less – Recycle More!

Simple ideas for a more sustainable Christmas!

Minimise your Food Waste

Buy only what you need, compost, or make stock with your vegetable peelings, be creative with leftovers! During the festive season there is an increase in food waste. Plan your menus in advance to avoid over buying!

Buy Local

Buying locally can help reduce the amount of packaging and plastic wrapping. Butchers, bakers, grocers, and markets will wrap their goods in paper bags or grease proof paper. Or you could take your own storage boxes!

Paper & Plastic

Use recycled wrapping paper, and eco-friendly crackers! Be inventive with your present wrapping - use plain brown paper and reusable ribbon. If you are having a party, try

to avoid disposable plates, cups, paper napkins, paper tablecloths, and cutlery.

Glitter & Tinsel

Try to avoid glitter as it is difficult to recycle. Even biodegradable glitter needs special treatment to break it down. Tinsel has elements of plastic so think of alternative ideas to decorate your tree.

Need new Lights?

If you need to replace your lights, consider solar powered or LED lights to minimise the energy needed to keep them sparkling!

Christmas Trees

Buy local and make sure it is FSC certified (responsibly sourced). A potted tree can be reused for future Christmases. If buying an artificial tree, make sure you keep it for many years.

How to have a

👍 green Christmas

Buy an FSC approved tree.

Turn off lights when not in use.

Use plain paper and ditch the glitter when wrapping.

Buy ethical: Local, independent and charity shops.

Waste less: Freeze and use up leftovers. Stick to your shopping list.

Have a wonderful sustainable Christmas!

Update from Thaxted Girlguiding

The Thaxted Rainbows, Brownies and Guides have had an incredibly active and fulfilling year in 2025, engaging in a variety of fun and enriching activities that foster camaraderie and community spirit. From thrilling adventures at an Escape Room, Hertfordshire Zoo, Junior Jailbreak and Chessington World of Adventures to unleashing their creativity at the Splatter Rooms in Saffron Walden. The girls have embraced every opportunity to explore and learn together and making lasting memories with friends.



Their commitment to community service shone brightly through their participation in the Trick or Eat scheme, where they collected food donations for the local food bank this Halloween. Additionally, they proudly represented their group at the Remembrance Day parade at the Parish Church. A huge thank you goes out to all our volunteers whose unwavering support makes Girlguiding in Thaxted so special. Their dedication ensures that the girls not only have lots of fun but also embrace numerous opportunities. From planning and organizing to buying supplies and cleaning up afterwards, our volunteers are the backbone of our activities. A special shout-out is deserved for Leanne Kell, our Brown Owl and Girlguiding leader for Thaxted, whose leadership and commitment are the cornerstones of every event.

It's heartwarming to witness the Thaxted girls thriving in the great outdoors, building friendships, and embodying the true spirit of Girl Guiding. Their enthusiasm and dedication to both fun and community involvement serve as an inspiration to us all.

If you would like to enrol you daughter, please register via the Gilrguiding website. Thank you.

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News from the Gardens – and a plea for help

Clarance House Conservation Gardens, hiding behind the flint walls in Margaret Street, belong to the Parish Council (and by default, the residents of Thaxted). They came into this ownership when Essex County Council no longer had a use for them and sold them to the Parish for, I believe, £1.

After a while of indecision, a group formed to turn the overgrown and unmanaged plot into a conservation garden. Areas were cleared, fruit trees planted, a survey commissioned and implemented on suitable planting. The result is a lovely, peaceful and relaxed garden.

Up until now the garden has been maintained by volunteers – dwindling in numbers and increasing in age – supported by the Parish Council employing contractors for some of the 'big' jobs like tree surgery and hedge cutting. This year we have taken the decision to step down from almost all the tasks, leaving the Council to employ contractors for more maintenance, working to a list we have compiled. However, what the Council cannot do is open and close the garden. If this doesn't happen, there will be no point in any maintenance as no-one will be able to use the gardens unless they book them....no-one will want to book as the gardens will be unkempt...and ultimately (though this is purely my speculation) there will be no rationale for

A few of the existing volunteers are willing to keep on with the open/close routine, but we need more. Can you help? The gardens need to be unlocked at 10.00 and locked up at 5.00 on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays (being behind walls, they are too vulnerable to misuse to allow free access at all times). I have an on-line calendar where volunteers can 'claim' the days that they can cover. The more of us, the less time we all need to commit. What do you think? Could you help out? If you think you can, please email me—thejillpalmer@yahoo.co.uk.

the Council to keep possession of the land.

Wassail

Clarance House Conservation Garden, Margaret Street Saturday 17th January. 5.45pm for 6.00pm

CLARANCE

INSERVATION

GARDEN

Our Wassail 2026 will be on Saturday 17th January. 5.45pm for 6.00pm start. There will be music, singing, blessing of the trees and rousing of the Winter Spirits. Free apple cake,

merrymaking. drink and We'd love to see you there, bringing some old pots and pans to make noise! а Remember to wrap up warm, bring a torch and wear your It is free wellies entry but we will have a retiring collection for

the upkeep of the garden.

The last time we celebrated the Wassail we did a really good job of pleasing the spirits as there has been a bumper crop of apples. Those

cynics amongst you might remark that it has been an excellent year for apple crops, Wassail or not, but why spoil the fun?

This will be the tenth anniversary of the very first Wassail in

Clarance House
Conservation Garden.
We cannot say that
it is the tenth time it
happened....Covid
put paid to
that....but it may be
the last time it
happens. The current
volunteers are stepping

down so if you would like to take on the event, please speak to us either at the event or any time – email me at thejillpalmer@yahoo.co.uk.



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A'spire'ation - Joe Hobbs

When, *en route* home, I walked around the tower of our parish church, I met a group of men who, from the equipment they wore and had about them, were to me climbers.

I had fallen in love with the mountains when travelling through Austria to the International Scout Jamboree when I was sixteen, so, for five consecutive Easters, I hiked and scrambled over most of the Lake District. Then after a disastrous first climb on (and off)

Tryfan in the Ogwen valley
I graduated from
Mountaineering
Association courses. I
had no fear of
heights; the greater
the exposure the better
the experience. But when

married, aged 24, I gave up my climbing rope. I did continue, as regularly as possible, to visit wild country with my family; and with Mario, my fellow architectural student and dear lifelong friend. In my late 50s I turned to climbing in snow and on ice, ice-wall climbing giving no less satisfaction.

I chatted about climbing to the steeplejacks, who had come to inspect the lightning conductor, and then saw that they had erected a ladder to the top of the spire for that purpose. When I said I had intended to climb the spire

since coming to Thaxted Jake said, "come on then". I had to desist as I thought I should do it for charity, which would require some organising. We agreed I would get in touch when I would be 90 to put my idea into action. Since aged 65, every 5 years, I had asked my family for an auspicious birthday's present and to sponsor me for some charitable event. I decided that now the charity should be the Royal British Legion because when 85,

a proposed abseil from a Cornish cliff had been nullified by Covid.

So it wasn't bravery that got me to the spire's top but the expertise, preparatory

work hard and cooperation of Jake, his brother and father. The most dangerous moment was 'potentially' striking my helmeted head when crawling out from the Bell Chamber to the tower parapet! I was permitted to go ahead after great concern and imposition of conditions by the churchwardens. The incoming startled incumbent Fr David, gave his blessing in the tradition of Sherpas before an Everest assault. With the co-operation in the planning by many friends and organisations, contributions on the day by TV crews, drone operators and, particularly, the

Morris, the event transpired to be a truly happy community afternoon with many I could see from aloft in attendance, on *terra firma*.

It was all over too quickly and the one silly thing about it was that I didn't take in the view as one always did on reaching a summit. My target sum

was £2,000, which will be exceeded by about £500 by closure on Remembrance Sunday.

So my thanks to all who contributed in time, effort and encouragement, as well as monetarily, for enabling me, in the process, to achieve my a'spire'ation.

Work Experience* with the Three Steepleteers

after (precisely after) Alfred, Lord Tennyson's The Charge of the Light Brigade

I. Half the task accomplished Tower and spire climbed At the parish church, Thaxted Adventure sublime:

"Upward and onward but In your good time," Jake said Up through the grim Bell Chamber Hazard to bare head II. To the ladder they went First rung of many more Nonogenarian

Narrow ladder to grip
Side rails, or steps' tube strips?
Between the two no slip
But safe trip ensure
III. Space to the right of them
Space to the left of them
Challenge confronting the
Rooky steepleteer
His arthritic fingers

And expert mentor

Even severe deafness
Could cost either dear
IV. Two thirds of the ascent
Pain across the shoulders rent

(Mild) double hernias

Plantar fasciitis

Pause. Then onward he went Now it should be made clear Knew not any fear.

Amazed how far he had got
Facing the stone ball-top
Time to locate drone
Promised dramatic shot
But it to his rear
So holding with one hand
Turned, waved, to raise cheer
V. Descent side-by-side
One not now behind
Thus nowhere to hide.
Faith in climbing gear
For joy of free abseil—

The venture cannot fail
Support for RBL
Yes target sum achieved
But now to quake and quail?
Stonework gone! so around
Shaped gaping hole must veer
VI. Too soon reach tower top
End of exciting drop
Then four spireteeers
Unite with unshed tears
But there's much gear to clear;

For Joe no new career.

^{*} Insurance covered the aspirant as engaged in Work experience charity climbs'.



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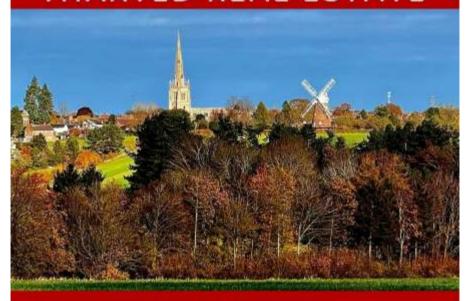


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Thaxted Garden & Craft Show - The Results!

Thank you to all the entrants and visitors to this years Thaxted Garden & Craft Show. It was a difficult year for the growers, which was reflected in the number of exhibits in those sections. However, we had a bumper year in the domestic section and will plan for a bit more room there next year! We would really like to encourage anyone who appreciates the show to have a go at entering something next year. The display of everyone's effort is really something special — and a great opportunity to come together as a community. Next year's entry forms will be available in the spring.

Congratulations to all the 2025 winners who were as follows:

Mrs I. Woodley Cup for Section H: Dahlias - Lydia Hodge

MOST POINTS IN A SECTION

2016 Committee Cup for Section A: Children Under 6 years – **Owen Taylor**Peter King Cup for Section B: Children 7-9 years – **Bea Bryant**Philip Leeder Cup for Section C: Children 10-12 Years – **Scout Burkle**Stanbrook Cup for Section D: Teenager 13-15 Years – **Freya Gardener**Jimmy Wright Cup for Section E: Domestic – **Claire Wisbey**Croot Cup for Section F: Wines – **Lydia Hodge**Ian Barnard Cup for Section G: Chrysanthemums – **Richard Saych**



Claire Wisbey: Winner of the Domestic Section.



Freya Gardener: Winner of the Stanbrook Cup.

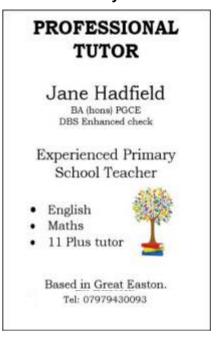
Guildhall Cup for Section J: Floral Art – **Caroline Taylor**Desmond Johnson Cup for Section K: Other Flowers & Plants – **Richard Saych**The Bennet Cup for Section L: Novelty Vegetables – **George Caton**Mick Mansfield Memorial Cup for Section M: Vegetables Novice – **Lydia Hodge**Harry Lowe Cup for Section N: Vegetables – **George Caton**Watling Lane Cup for Section P: Textile Crafts – **Yolanda De Bono**Committee Cup for Section Q: Photography – **Simon Payne**The Chairmans Cup for Section R: Craft & Artwork – **Sally Reeve Arnold**

BEST EXHIBIT IN A SECTION

Yardley Hall Cup for Sections A,B,C & D – **Owen Taylor**1989 Committee Plate for Section E – **Claire Wisbey**Waylett Cup for Sections G,H & K – **George Caton**Daphne Weller Trophy for Section J – **Caroline Taylor**Bill & Ivy Bayley Tankard for Sections L,M & N – **Richard Saych**The Threads Cup for Section P – **Yolanda De Bono**Chris & Chris Kitchin Award for **Best Exhibit in Show – Sally Reeve Arnold**



Sally Reeve Arnold:
Winner of Craft & Art Section and
winner of Best in Show.



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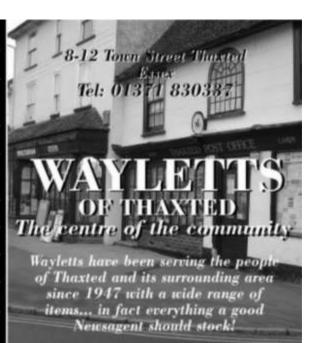
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Available for hire. Website: www.pamsplace.org.uk

Pam's Place is open to all and exists to provide a safe and welcoming space. If you are anxious about coming, why not give Cassy a phone call on 07365 376 899 and she will arrange for one of the team to meet you.

WHAT'S ON WEEKLY

MONDAY Community Café, Beverages & Cakes available all day 11am – 6pm TOUCHPOINT STANSTED FOODSHARE (small amount) 11am – 2pm Soup of the day or Toasties with a choice of fillings.

2pm - 4pm BRIDGE CLUB

4pm – 5.30pm AFTER SCHOOL TEA-TIME, hot meal and dessert EVERYBODY
WELCOME – check notice board for more information.

TUESDAY

10am Pilates for all abilities – must book 073635 376899

11am Chair Pilates

2pm – 4pm Thaxted Threads Sewing Group

WEDNESDAY

12.30pm Two course LUNCH & coffee or tea, £10 per person. Must

book 01371 830094. Check notice board for weekly menu.

THURSDAY Twice monthly

12.30pm Two course LUNCH & coffee or tea, £10 per person. Must book 01371 830094. Check notice board for weekly

menu.

FRIDAY

10am – 1pm DROP IN CAFÉ – homemade sausage rolls, cheese scones &

cakes

2pm - 4pm FRIDAY SEWING GROUP

OTHER GROUPS

MONTHLY GUILDHALL GIRLS W.I. - First Thursday of the Month 7pm - 9.30 pm ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - First Saturday of the month 10am - 12 noon **OCCASIONAL** - LECTURE SOCIETY - Most Wednesdays - October to March

Contact information: Phone: 01371 830094 email: info@pamsplace.org.uk, website: pamsplace.org.uk Cassy - Facilities Manager, Cally - Catering Manager Charity no: 1197612. Charity name: Thaxted Day Centre

Laura's Story

I am a carer for my Dad. One Friday morning in May 2024, I needed a break from the flat and went into Pam's Place for cake and a cuppa. I was given a warm and friendly welcome. I also had a chat with Mike about what other activities went on.

As a result, the next week I started to attend the Friday afternoon sewing group. This is a group of around 10 ladies who all bring in their own projects and sew, embroider, knit, do lace work. Each member has their own skills and everyone is willing to help each other. We take it in turns to bring in tea and cake or biscuits. They are going to teach me to knit and crochet.

Dad and I attended the Wednesday lunch club for the first time in June 2024. The Wednesday lunch is a nutritious main course, delicious dessert and a cup of tea or coffee. We sat next to two other new members. Since meeting these ladies, we have gone out on some coach trips together from Great Dunmow. Dad now sits on the 'men's table' and when I attend, I sit with these ladies and other local ladies from Thaxted. One memory for me was when we attended the Christmas lunch last year. Dad and I had been placed next to each other. Dad picked up his cutlery and place name and took himself off to the men's table.

I have also accessed the Employ-ability services via Pam's Place. This organisation provides additional support to individuals with poor mental health to find employment. You are allocated an employment specialist and meetings are held every fortnight for an hour - this support continues for up to a year. Their advice is tailored to your specific circumstances.

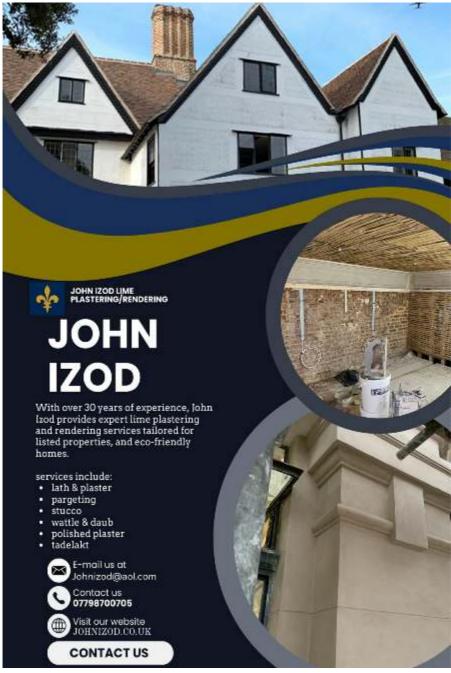
I also plan to attend some of the Wednesday evening lectures starting soon.

Pam's Place has opened both mine and Dad's worlds. When we are out and about in Thaxted, anyone else who attends or volunteers will always say hello. It feels as though we are now very much part of the Pam's Place tribe.

If anyone is unsure about going to Pam's Place for the first time, I am sure a staff member or volunteer would meet you outside. I would say it is so worth it. Give Cassy a call on 07365 376 899.

Ed. For information about Pam's Place see previous page.





Thaxted Windmill - Conserved for its Community.

Thaxted Windmill Trust CIO

Registered Charity No 1199545

By the time you read this work will have started to repair and conserve Thaxted Windmill and its millwrighting machinery. Funding has been secured from Historic England; the National Lottery Heritage Fund; the Pilgrim Trust; Essex Heritage Trust and Hunts and Yardley's Charities. There has also been generous support from all who have attended the fund-raising events and activities we organised. More are planned so please look at our Facebook page for publicity about these events.

The first stages of the capital works include the construction of a temporary access track to allow for the crane and heavy vehicles to reach the site. Hoarding will be erected for safety: the sails will be removed and taken to the millwright's workshop. It will be 2026 and into 2027 when the main repairs will be undertaken, with the use of lime mortar only practical once the possibility of damaging frosts and low temperatures has passed.

The Thaxted Windmill Trust is fortunate to have three very experienced firms involved. Messenger is the main contractor. They offer a wide range of services connected to the built

environment, with specialisation in the conservation and repair of historic Owlsworth buildings. are millwrights. They have been working with mills for many years and over that time have successfully undertaken repair projects both large and small to well over one hundred mills. Morton Partnership fulfils the role of Lead Consultant to the project. structural engineers they have extensive experience of the careful repair of nationally significant historic buildings. All three companies are fully committed to raising awareness of the skills needed to conserve our heritage buildings and promote training opportunities leading to careers in conservation.

There will be 'hard hat' tours of the Windmill whilst work is in progress, explaining the methods and materials used and showcasing the skills required to restore the building and its milling machinery. These tours will be advertised on our social Media pages and our Website. There will also be opportunities for young people starting their careers to learn from these experienced and skilled craftspeople.

With 'Community' at the heart of this project, every month from January 2026 to early 2028, will have activities so that

everyone can be involved, participate and contribute – and all are free. A series of day schools will bring to life the social, agricultural and cultural heritage of the Windmill, the place of mills and milling in Thaxted's history and will explore the importance of grain and milling throughout the ages and across countries and cultures.

You can learn new skills at training workshops and then put them into practice. These will include how to produce educational design and materials for primary and secondary schools and for families visiting the Windmill; how to research and write the content for the information panels for each floor of the Windmill. project's impact extends to the care and conservation and of the Windmill's artefacts and archives, currently in storage. You can volunteer to clean, care for and catalogue these, learning from a professional expert - and then help to choose which objects and documents will be used in the interpretation and for the displays.

The site of the Windmill will be actively managed for biodiversity for the first time. If your particular interest is in nature and the outdoors, you can sign up for training in wildlife identification and survey techniques. You can undertake habitat and micro-habitat improvements and maintenance and help link to the other green spaces in Thaxted to establish a network for nature recovery.

To find out more and to register your interest in any activity, please come to the Launch Event on Saturday 10 January 10am to 3.30pm at the Church Hall, Margaret Street and with guided visits to the Windmill. This is primarily a 'drop-in' day but there will be presentations about the project at 10.30am and at 1.30pm. Please look at our Social Media pages and Website if you would like to be sent more information nearer the time.

Thaxted Windmill Trust CIO is dedicated to saving the Windmill and gaining the financial and community support which will once again see it take its place, along with the Parish Church and the Guildhall, at the heart of Thaxted's rich history. Please support us in ensuring that the Windmill can continue as a precious, unique heritage asset and a distinctive community resource.



Funded by The Thaxted Charities - Hunts and Yardleys
Thanks to National Lottery Players and the Generosity of the Residents of Thaxted

Thaxted Dragons Karate

Thaxted Dragons Karate has had a busy 2025 with our students having had the opportunity to showcase their skills during gradings, demos, local and national competitions. It's inspiring to witness the growth and determination displayed by everyone involved. A highlight of the year was our very successful Summer School, where members enjoyed extended training sessions, built camaraderie and honed their skills, all while boosting their confidence.

We are especially proud of our European squad which saw four members from Thaxted Dragons selected by Karate England to represent the country in Riga, Latvia. Their outstanding efforts resulted in a remarkable achievement, bringing home one silver and one gold medal, earning them the title of European champions. Please join us in celebrating this fantastic accomplishment!

Looking ahead, we have an exciting black belt grading coming up and our annual Christmas party and awards presentation which will be held at Braintree Bowling Alley, which promises to be a fun-filled team-building event. 2026 will see the squad continue to train together and hopefully have

members qualify for the European and World Championships. This is always an exciting and busy time for the Thaxted Dragons Karate club.

For anyone interested in martial arts, particularly karate, we invite you to come along and discover what we're all about. New members are always welcome to join: learn new skills, build confidence, and enhance fitness while being part of something truly special.

Training is every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday at Bolford Street Hall in Thaxted, under the expert guidance of Sensei Barry.

For more information, please get in touch with us. We'd love to hear from you!



THAXTED LIBRARY NEWS

Janet Easterbrook - Senior Customer Services Assistant

Children's Events

We have had a super Autumn at the Library. **Rhymetimes** have been as popular as ever with several new babies joining us. For Hallowe'en children got creative and enjoyed making ghost lanterns, masks and wreaths. Hallowe'en Rhymetime was wonderfully spooky with 24 children dressed in their fabulous scary costumes! Christmas Rhymetime will be on Friday 19th December. Join us for Christmas songs, stories, and dress festively.

Lego Club continues to run on the first Tuesday of the month: 3.30 – 4.30pm. Come along and have fun building a Lego creation! There is lots of Duplo available for younger children.

Adult Events and News

Our volunteer run **coffee and chat sessions** continue to run on the third Saturday of the month from 10.30am – 12.00pm. As the weather cools, we are also resuming our **'Warm Welcomes'**. Refreshments and biscuits will be available every Saturday morning from 10.00am. Pop in to have a cuppa, chat and browse our books and information.

Library membership is free, all you need to join as an adult is some photo ID. Membership gives you access to all 74 Essex Libraries, 6 million books on the library catalogue and a wealth of digital resources and reference material. Membership also provides free access to Ancestry and Find My Past if you are using the computers available in the library.

A new library initiative is the introduction of the 'Blood Pressure Monitor Loan Scheme'. Thaxted Library have several blood pressure monitors available to loan for free.

Library Opening Hours

Tuesday 2.00pm - 5.30pm

Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm (and staffed by volunteers 1-4pm most weeks) Saturday 9.00am – 5.00pm

Facilities and Services

Wi-Fi, Computers, Printing, Photocopying, Tourist and Community Information, Citizen's Advice Bureau Access Point.

Thaxted Library and Information Centre 7 Town Street





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H.LOWE, &CO

Garden supplies: compost, top soil, manure, garden accessories.

Fireside products: coal, kindling, logs, firelighters, charcoal.

Salt: Tablet salt 25kg & 10kg, block salt, granular salt 25kg & loose, rock salt, Hydrosoft brand, & a cheaper alternative.

Equestrian supplies: electric fencing, stable yard equipment..

Animal feeds: horse, sheep, goat, pig feeds.

Animal bedding: shavings, hay, straw, hemp etc.

Levington

Chicken feeds: Marriages, Copdock, etc. Layers pellets, mixed corn, mash, crumbs feeders and drinkers.

Petfood: dog and cat foods, small animal and fish.

Dry and wet foods: top brands: Burns, James Wellbeloved, Go-Cat, Pedigree, Skinners, Lily's Kitchen.

Wild

bird food: seeds, peanuts, Sunflower, Niger, treats, feeders.

Dog and Cat Accessories: litter.

Homeware: Electrical goods,

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Christmas

at the





31 Mill End, Thaxted, CM6 2LT Telephone 01371 831599

FESTIVE DINING

We are now taking bookings for our Christmas menu.

This is available for both our lunch and evening meal sessions and is available from Tuesday 2nd December to Christmas eve lunchtime.

The menu is on our Facebook page and website or available from the pub.

The Christmas menu must be booked and pre-ordered in advance

EVENTS

Sunday 30th Nov - Christmas Bingo raising funds for Cancer Research

Sunday 14th Dec - Christmas Bingo raising funds for Thaxted School PTA

Tuesday 16th Dec **– Christmas Dinner & Bublé**

with Michael Bublé tribute Adam Dean Saturday 21st — Ginny Tonics Christmas Spectacular

Party Night featuring guest singers from 8:00pm

New Years Eve

80s Themed Party Night with Buffet, Disco and entertainment from Ginny Tonic and the amazing

Tanya Taylor with her 80s Show

TICKET ONLY (Further details to follow)

We are not serving food Christmas Day

But will be open for drinks. Join Vince and Leon from

11:00am until 2:30pm

We are open Boxing Day Lunch time for Food

MERRY CHRISTMAS

FROM ALL OF THE TEAM AT THE MAYPOLE

Web: http://www.maypolethaxted.com

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/themaypolethaxted