

A pdf version will be on the village website at www.hempstead-essex.org.uk and a hard copy is available on the Parish Council Noticeboard.

Parish Council

Following our AMBO notice for additional Parish Councillors, the Council is about to promote the vacant positions through a village leaflet drop which will come through your door shortly. Parish Councils form an important role in looking after the local area infrastructure and parish assets. Having a wide range of knowledge and experience within the Council makes for a diverse Council, well equipped to serve the community. All approaches should be made to the Clerk, Rebecca Cox, in the first instance at parishclerkhempstead@gmail.com.

Budget for 2026

The Budget for 2026/27 has been approved with a 3.7% increase primarily due to inclusion of a sum to replace a speed indicator device for the village where neither of the existing ones work.

Elections

Essex will be holding elections on the 7th May for County Councillors.

Highways

Cllr Martin Foley has again offered to undertake pursual of our poor road conditions to see what further work can be done in the near future. A report of current issues will be sent to him. Hill Road is due for micro-surfacing in the Spring.

Bus Consultation

The consultation so far is recommending the loss of our 320/321 service as it costs considerably more than the budget allows to run the service. They say it "has been identified as a Category D service in the recently published *Outcome of Consultation on Supported Local Bus Services (Contracts ending July 2026)*.

Category D services are those that do not meet the Supported Local Bus Priority Policy and where no feasible redesign option has been identified. Essex County Council is therefore proposing the withdrawal of this service, subject to a final stage of consultation with current users".

The Council will be discussing a response at the next meeting to be submitted by the deadline of the 17th February in the extended consultation for on-bus users.

Consultation Dates:

29 January 2026 – 19 February 2026

Passenger Information

Proposed removal of services 59 / 590 / 320 / 321 Haverhill – Saffron Walden – Newport operated by Stephenson's of Essex

Consultation dates: 29 January 2026 - 19 February 2026

In 2025, Essex County Council (ECC) consulted on changes to bus routes that would result in the withdrawal of services **59 / 590 / 320 / 321 on Monday to Saturdays**.

The decision has now been made to formally propose the withdrawal of those services. ECC would appreciate your views on this proposal. To complete the consultation and find more information **please scan the QR Code** below where you will be directed to the **TravelEssex** website, or you can view the information here:

<https://www.travelessex.co.uk/local-bus-supported-services-consultations>



Scan me!



Stansted Airport

With the planning application for increased passenger numbers approved, we are again requesting noise monitoring for Hempstead from the Advisory Panel.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on the **12th March at 7.30pm** in the village hall.

Members of the pubic are always welcome to attend Parish Council meetings to raise issues with the council but can't speak during the formal proceedings.

Nick Turkentine - Chairman

New – join and post on the new village WhatsApp group



Hello everyone,

We think that further increasing the community engagement would be a good idea and therefore Simon Davis has set up a WhatsApp "community" for us all - which is essentially a large group forum whereby people can chat / create topics / events / ask for help etc. This will also be good from a safety perspective as WhatsApp is a bit more instantaneous than email or Facebook communication which we have historically relied upon. We hope everyone agrees that this is a good idea and that you want to be part of it!

All you have to do is make sure you have WhatsApp downloaded on your phone and click on the below link whilst on your phone. This will take you to the group. It should be fairly self-explanatory from there. Everyone can contribute to making sub-groups / topics should they wish to! I'm sure there will be some trial and error and testing and that is totally fine!

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/DtDQposzIRn7Nso2hxtc4Y>

If anyone encounters any difficulties or issues, they can reach Simon directly using sbdavis40@yahoo.co.uk or 07729530761. We can offer Fridays - Sundays for a short tutorial from Simon or Ellis. *Simon Davis and Ellis Williams*

Some dates for your diary for 2026

Feb 6th and 27th and March 13th and 27th knitting group in the village hall.

Feb 7th - Ukraine collection

Feb 16th – hall closed all week for re-painting

March 1st – Bluebell 2 from 12 noon to 6pm

March 8th – Table-Top Sale 10-12 noon

April 24th – Bric-a-brac sale, Thaxted Guildhall

May 23rd – Annual Parish Mtg – all invited

Bluebell 2

Yippee! Russ Wide & Dave Boreham bring Bluebell 2 back on St. David's Day, **Sunday 1st March** offering a bar and roast potatoes from 12 noon until 6pm in the village hall. Bring friends and family and catch up with all your buddies. All proceeds to the village hall. This date is also St. David's Day



Knitting Group

We are delighted to report that sessions of the knitting group are being extended from 1 to 1.5 hours due to popular request. Fees per session remain at £2 including refreshments. Beginner or experienced, you are all welcome.

The forthcoming dates are Feb 6th and 27th and March 13th and 27th 10-11.30am in the village hall.



Table-Top Sale

Elspeth Butterworth has organised a Table-Top sale in the village hall on **Sunday 8th March** from 10am to 12 noon where you can rent a table for just £10 to sell whatever you wish. Perhaps you have possessions and clothes children have outgrown; a hobby you've given up or just having a clear-out. This is a great chance to move on items you no longer need. Email Elspeth at simonandelspeth@hotmail.com to book.



As a customer, you can expect a selection of lovely plants and Diana's bric-a-brac (Easter selection) alongside the other tables, plus refreshments. **Mothering Sunday is the following week.** No entry fee, but bring plenty of shopping bags with you please, and park away from the hall around the village, so the car park is available for pick-ups and drop-offs only and accessible parking. *Thank you*

Snowdrops

If you love snowdrops you may want to visit Anglesey Abbey now: [Snowdrops: The Specialist Collection Tours 2026 | National Trust](#). There are over 500 varieties and visits are from 26 Jan to 27 Feb. Booking is essential and you can also explore the Winter Garden.

From the ROBINN group:

Rescue Our Bluebell INN

Our goal is to secure the Bluebell Inn for the community and bring it back into use as a welcoming, sustainable village pub and hub.

We would like to keep everyone up to date with developments and events, so if you haven't already, please **Sign up to the ROBINN newsletter**. Simply drop us an email at admin@robinn.org

Leave us your name, address and the email address you would like any news sent to.

Thanks to everyone who is a supporter of this project, together we hope to be able to enjoy our village pub once more! *ROBINN group*

Fabric Books

Sandy Turkentine has a number of discontinued Fabric Pattern Books **free** to anyone who might like them.

The Books are of a good size and are made up from top end fabric Houses such as Jane Churchill, Colefax & Fowler, together with Manuel Canovas. The fabric samples themselves are of a good size and would be ideal for making such items as bunting, quilting, or even making a colourful tablecloth. If you're interested, please contact Sandy on 07770 647 111.

The Village Hall

The hall remains the only community building in Hempstead over which we have control and so its success is paramount to our village and keeping us as a community. It receives no funding other than the income from hirers using the building and in 2025 the basic operating costs of the hall exceeded income by almost £1,300, excluding any additional maintenance or repair costs, meaning that without significant fundraising, we cannot maintain this building and surrounds.



We need more hirers and urge you to use the hall as much as possible.

It has wonderful facilities and if you start a group, you can hire the committee room with all the facilities without the main hall for just £8 per hour or hire the main hall for £15 an hour (£23 for the whole building and exterior). These are the rates from Jan 1st 2026 and compared to facilities at many other halls, this is good value.

Contact Julie Dalton, Booking Secretary, via villagehall2023@gmail.com or via the village website: [Hempstead Village Hall - Hempstead in Essex.](#)

Ukraine collection

You may have seen on the news that it will be down to -20C in Kiev this week and that over 1 million people are without electricity. Money is needed to buy generators, fuel and equipment that allows people to stay warm and in touch, even from temporary hubs. Many are sleeping under canvas together for warmth and security.



Our next collection for Ukraine will be on **Saturday 7th February** with the village hall open to receive donations from 10-11am or contact me if you wish to donate in advance:

Priority : FOOD and MONEY

1. Tinned or dried food, including some gluten free, tea, coffee.

2. Any money is donated is used to purchase large pallets of food, (so obtaining good bulk discounts) and/or generators. Generators are particularly useful as Putin has been deliberately targeting energy generating sources in Ukraine.

OTHER:

Warm clothing and new/nearly new footwear for Winter.

Sheets and blankets. (*Neither duvets nor used pillows please*).

All types of cleaning materials including washing powder, dish cleaning gel and wet wipes

Cold and flu medicine, First Aid kits, bandages, wound plasters, antibacterial gel and any pain killers.

Toiletries, including shampoo, soap, flannels, towels and toothpaste/brushes.

Wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, walking sticks, shower chairs, fracture boots. Incontinence pads for men and women.

For babies: nappies, baby food, cot beds and bedding, hats, clothes and small soft toys. *Thank you.*

Radwinter WI (includes Hempstead) 2026

Radwinter WI meets on the last Wednesday of each month (except December).

Venue unless otherwise stated: Radwinter Village Hall

2026 - our Centenary Year!

28 Jan at 7.30pm - The Life of May Morris, a remarkable woman - Fiona Rose

25 Feb at 7.30pm - Women at War, including display of WWII artefacts - Paul Hunt

25 Mar at 7.30pm - The British Country House Revival - Ben Cowell

29 Apr at 7.30pm - Scottish Country Dancing - Alison Truet

27 May at 7.30pm - Annual Meeting and Resolutions - discussion of current matters highlighted by and often affecting the wider WI membership. Bring & share food.

(We are planning to have a local foods tasting at this meeting).

24 Jun at 7.30pm - Solo 2 Darwin - in the footsteps of Amy Johnson - Amanda Harrison, pilot

29 Jul time & details TBC - Radwinter WI annual outing

26 Aug at 7.30pm - Crafting evening

30 Sept at 7.30pm - The benefits of Tai Chi - Paul Goddard

28 Oct at 7.30pm - City of Silk - Glennis Virgo, author

25 Nov at 7.30pm - CENTENARY PARTY and Christmas social

Other key dates throughout the year include:

4 June - AGM, held virtually this year

20 May - Essex County Annual Meeting, Brentwood Centre (speaker: Patrick Grant)

16 Sept - WI Day

15 Oct - International Day of Rural Women

Plenty of other opportunities arise between meetings, for talks, activities and trips.

Walking, a book group and show or cinema visits may be organised.

Want to find out more and perhaps join us? You can come as a visitor for up to 3 meetings after which we hope you will join. We invite a donation of £5 from anyone who is not a member. Once you have joined, there's no further charge. Refreshments are included at each meeting.

The 2025/6 subscription is £51, rising to £54 in 2026/7. The year runs from April to April. Pro-rata rates are available if you join part-way through the year.

Email radwinterwi@gmail.com to let us know you're thinking of coming and we'll look out for you! WI is an inclusive organisation and welcomes all women.

See also www.facebook.com/RadwinterWI . Please note the information given above may be subject to change.

TV opportunity – message from the BBC

BBC One's Sort Your Life Out is returning in 2026 and is looking for households across the UK where clutter has taken over daily life.

The show sees Stacey Solomon and her team help families declutter, reorganise, and transform their homes in just one week.

Has life made your home harder to manage? Do you feel your home needs to change but don't know where to start?

We're looking for families and long-term shared households living in houses, flats and all kinds of other homes.

If your home is in desperate need of a declutter, Stacey & the team would love to hear from you.

Apply now: www.optomen.com/Sort-Your-Life-Out 🏠🧼🌟

Best wishes

Anthony (Senior Casting Producer, BBC One's Sort Your Life Out)

T&C: Newsletter entries must be received by diana_frost@lineone.net by the 24th of each month. Only village events will be promoted. No advertisements or personal profit promotions will be featured. To unsubscribe, email Diana Frost.