

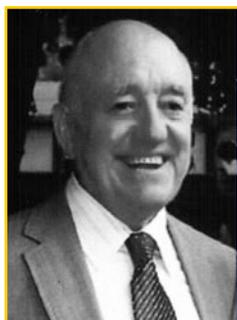


## LITTLE BADDOW PARISH COUNCIL

# Annual Report & Newsletter 2008

## From the Chairman...

This has been another year that has stirred emotions for us all with the sad loss of our Parish Correspondent Kenneth Stebbings early in the year and more recently the sad loss of John and Liz Sheriff's son Jack.



Following the retirement of Bob Shepherd we advertised for a new Parish Clerk, interviewed 6 applicants for the post, and appointed Roger Upward in the

spring of 2008. Many of you will already have had contact with Roger and have seen what a really good job he is doing for us.

As a consequence of two members of the Council resigning in 2007 we advertised the vacancies and then secured the services of our retired Parish Clerk, Bob Shepherd, who has agreed to sit on the Parish Council as well as continuing as Borough Councillor. In addition we have managed to attract a new member, Laurence Jones, to join us as a Councillor. This now brings us up to full membership on the Council.

Now that our website contractors, Radical Logic, have withdrawn their services the Parish Council have engaged Stormwave to maintain and redesign our website. The site went live in December

and I hope all residents will take the time to visit the site.

The Core Strategies and Development Control Policies adopted by the Chelmsford Borough Council in February 2008 have resulted in the Village Design Statement carrying less weight on planning matters than previously, and it now needs to be revised so it can be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. A small group of Parish Council members and others from other local organisations has been formed to pursue the changes necessary.

The Parish Council have supported the Joint Parishes Transportation Group in pressing for improving links to the A12 and improvements to the A12 itself, and recent statements have indicated that funds may be available to carry out some of this work in the future.

May I take this opportunity to thank my fellow Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk for all the support they have given me this year. I really do appreciate the time and effort they put in. My thanks also go to John Sheriff for his continued hard work in keeping the Memorial Hall functioning well and to Margaret Jarvis for keeping a watchful eye on the Wickhay Green Play Area.

## Neighbourhood Watch

This year has been very quiet. The Police always ask me not to use the 'Q' word, because they consider it is tempting providence.



There are two things to mention. First, there was the damage to the scarecrows before the village fete, but thanks to the efforts of Graham Day this was sorted.

Secondly, the Police conducted two speed checks through the village. One on the Ridge did not catch many doing over the speed limit; but the second one on which I helped, caught 47 drivers out of 200 doing over 36 mph. The fastest car was measured at 49 mph; with the fastest push bike doing 34 mph, ably pedalled by one of our co-ordinators who shall remain nameless but known to me!

Simon Johnson.

### Parish Council Meetings

Diary Dates 2009 - 10

2nd April	5th November
7th May	10th December
11th June	7th January
16th July	4th February
3rd September	4th March
1st October	1st April
Parish Assembly	2009 - 18th March
	2010 - 17th March

All Little Baddow Residents are invited to attend the

**Parish Assembly**  
on Wednesday 18th March 2009

Arrive at 7.15pm

7.30pm

8.15pm

8.30pm

Parish Council Presentation

Refreshments

Presentation and Valuation of Antiques by James Grinter

## Parish Council Reports

### PLANNING REPORT 2008



Over the past couple of years we have been disappointed at the number of planning applications that have been approved despite the strong objections put forward by the Parish Council using the Village Design Statement as the prime document for objection. In an attempt to obtain some explanation from the Borough Council on its current approach to planning in Little Baddow, we have submitted for review a number of planning applications that we felt should not have been approved, and have asked for a meeting with David Green the Director of Sustainable Communities and his Planning Officers to discuss the current approach adopted to planning in the village. Hopefully this will take place in the New Year.

In an attempt to strengthen the objections put forward by the Parish Council it is necessary to transform the Village Design Statement into a "Supplementary Planning Document". This requires discussion with the Borough Council as well as consultation with the village, and to achieve this a small working group has been formed to carry this forward.

During the year the Parish Council considered 41 planning applications. The Council objected to 19, but regrettably our objections were only supported in 4 cases by Chelmsford Borough Council.

### SPORTS CLUB REPORT 2008

Two years ago we installed a CCTV camera on the Sports Field Car Park in an attempt to reduce the amount of litter left on the car park overnight. This appeared to have some effect in one area of the car park and this year it was agreed to install an additional camera to cover



the remainder of the car park, and to put a notice at the entrance indicating the area is covered by CCTV. It is hoped that this will improve security and reduce litter.

This year the Sports Club has been hit with two major problems. The gang mower had to have an overhaul and tyres were required on the tractor. In addition, it was a particularly wet year which has increased the amount of moss on the cricket outfield.

As you can imagine this has been quite an expensive year for the member clubs.

We have also had problems with the shutters at the Pavilion. They are increasingly hard to raise manually and the locks are proving ever more difficult to open. It has been recommended that they are replaced by electric shutters and this hopefully will occur in the not too distant future.

## Parish Council Meetings

**The Parish Council meets at 7.30pm at the Memorial Hall, usually on the first Thursday of each month (see diary dates). Members of the public are very welcome to attend, and can address the Council on any issues relevant to Little Baddow.**

**Further information is available from the Parish Clerk, e.mail [littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk) or from our website at [www.littlebaddow.org.uk](http://www.littlebaddow.org.uk)**

### AMENITIES



This year we made some inroads in helping with the rubbish situation down at Paper Mill Lock with the installation of new bins which are larger and will not spill over as before. As Paper Mill Lock gets busier each year we will need to keep on top of this. A new bin was erected at the Memorial Hall on North Hill for the same reasons.

Among the highlights of this wonderful village are our woodlands and our ease of access into real beauty spots at various times of the year, such as bluebells in Blake's Wood in the spring. Work is carried out to maintain these in conjunction with Essex Wildlife Trust and the National Trust.

Visitors to Heather Hills may have noticed changes to one of the view point benches. We were aware that uneven concrete at the base could have been a health and safety risk and with help from Tim Thorogood this was redone with little disturbance to what is an important archeological site in the area.

Clearance of parts of the mixed woodland has been carried out in order to encourage more biodiversity in the area, with a focus on trying to get the original heather of Heather Hills to come back to its former glory. This will in turn encourage a range of insects and butterflies that may not have been seen for some years.

We are looking at making the Village Hall more friendly to recycling and have plans for a litter campaign in conjunction with the Best Kept Village competition in Spring next year. Watch out for a village activity that should include young and old alike and will be fun.

Other tasks have been to maintain and remind people of common verges needing to be kept clear, and to encourage residents not to dump garden waste such as grass cuttings in public areas. This is always a more sensitive role to take on, but people are always very supportive and happy to make changes.

I am looking forward to next year and the role of helping in whatever small way to keep the village special and rich in people, green spaces and nature.

### PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY



The main happening has been the publication of the Parish Footpaths Map which we launched on the bank holiday May 5th by re-walking the Admiral McHardy Way: over 70 walkers set off with at least 30 finishing.

The excellence of the map was very largely due to two people, Councillor Claire Hodgson and John McCrindle. They were great proof readers and John also supplied the photographs. We had 3000 copies of the map printed and have only 600 left, which we plan to distribute round the village. A reprint is being considered.

The bridleway from Postman's Lane through to Twitty Fee was resurfaced at vast expense by the County Council. When it was in the planning stage we did tell them that the proposed surface was not suitable for horses: now due to many complaints they are having to resurface it.

Otherwise, apart from undergrowth needing trimming back, there has been very little happening.

## Parish Council Reports

### FINANCE



My message this year is that at Parish level we are coping financially. We face inflation in our outgoings, which this year have risen by well more than RPI inflation, but I am pleased to be able to report that for the financial year from April 2009, we are holding the precept rise below the latest available figure in November for RPI.

The services provided by the Parish Council are paid for mainly by a "Precept", a levy charged as part of the Council Tax taken by Chelmsford Borough Council. For many years, the precept has been made up of a charge directly to householders and a support grant provided by Chelmsford Borough Council. This year the Borough Council faced a significant budget deficit arising from the recession, which both increased their costs and reduced their income, and they have found it necessary to withdraw the grant. As a result, the charge directly to householders for the Parish precept must rise sharply. The *average* increase across all Little Baddow households for the Parish Precept for 2009/10 is £7.26 per household, but of this only £1.90 is the increase actually requested by the Parish Council, which was below the rate of inflation at the time it was set.

For anyone new to the Village, the Parish Council is financially responsible for the Memorial Hall, Wickhay Green (formerly the Spring Close play area), the Sports Field and Pavilion, Holybred Wood, Heather Hills, and certain other activities like grass-cutting of public areas.

We have now repaid the whole of the loan taken to support an extension and other improvements to the Memorial Hall. We have also replaced the oven (with a new warming oven to come too), and most of the windows, whose frames were rotten. Bookings at the Hall have gone from strength to strength, and now form an important part of our income. We have reserved £10,000 to kick start the fund for the Wickhay Green Play Area. And we are now beginning to put money aside to ensure we can cope with major maintenance requirements that we can see in the years ahead.

### MEMORIAL HALL REPORT 2008



Hall bookings remain steady with regular use through the week for local organisations and additional occasional bookings for private functions and parties. The hall continues to be a regular source of income for the Parish Council but costs are also rising. Energy costs have risen sharply through 2008.

The window frames were replaced at the beginning of the year with double glazed panels and low maintenance frames, and the hall frontage was given a 'face lift' with replacement panels either side of the main door. A maintenance schedule has been designed for the regular routine work that is needed for any building of the same age. This includes cleaning of the high ceiling and stage area, repainting of all interior and exterior paintwork, and repairs to the car park surface. New radiators were installed in the main hall and the old noisy blower heaters removed. Some of the long tables have been replaced.

At the request of the Water Authority we have installed a stop tap on the rising main, which should make access for plumbing repairs easier. The drains are showing signs of wear and tear and will need replacing with modern materials. Once this has been completed we can then level and improve the footpath from the hall through the arch to North Hill.

Once again the User Group Meeting proved helpful and informative, and some minor improvements have been made following suggestions from this meeting. The User Group meets once or twice a year. It provides an opportunity for the Hall management group to give updates on what we are doing to the hall and gives regular users a chance to put forward any suggestions of ways that the hall can be improved.

A new warming oven is to be bought, and when funds are available we hope to further improve the kitchen facilities, though in a difficult economic climate no definite timetable has been agreed for this.

Publicity leaflets will soon be available, and information and contact details for hall enquiries will be on the new Parish Website. Eventually, we plan to have the hall diary shown on the website but this is still at a trial stage.

Our thanks to John Sheriff, who in addition to his role as caretaker also undertakes regular repairs and maintenance work when needed. Thank you also to the relief caretaker, Lynn May, who stepped in at very short notice at a difficult time for John.

We hope that you will continue to support the Memorial Hall. Remember, it is your Hall, and substantial discounts are available for Little Baddow Residents. Please consider this when you are planning any special celebrations.

### LITTLE BADDOW CRICKET CLUB

The Cricket Club had a successful summer in 2008, despite the best efforts of the weather. With two senior Saturday teams, two senior Sunday teams and three junior teams playing matches at the weekends, plus training sessions three evenings each week, it is perhaps inevitable that some cricket will be lost, but it was unfortunate that the juniors suffered more than the adults this year.

Nevertheless, the junior section continues to thrive, with boys and girls aged from 7 to 15 benefiting from a structured coaching programme delivered by a professional coach from the County. Thanks must go to the group of volunteers in the club who support the junior training and organise the matches for their continued dedication and hard work.

In senior cricket, the Saturday second eleven finished runners-up in its division to gain promotion and the Sunday league team finished third so narrowly missed out on a fourth consecutive promotion. To accommodate the growth in membership, the club is planning to field an additional league team in the future and welcomes new members of all ages.

For information about membership and club activities, please visit the club website at [www.ltbaddowcc.hitscricket.com](http://www.ltbaddowcc.hitscricket.com)

### Who's Who and What They Do...

#### Parish Councillors' responsibilities

John Robinson	Chairman/Planning/Sports Facilities/Website Content
Mary Buckley	Hall/Wickhay Green/Community Care/EALC
Keith Ferguson	Vice Chairman/Finance/Planning/Emergency Planning/Website Technology
Claire Hodgson	Hall/Wickhay Green/Holybred Wood
Simon Johnson	Neighbourhood Watch/Public Rights of Way
Laurence Jones	Chelmer Valley Association/Transport
Jo Roberts	Amenities/Home & Safety/North Essex Health Authority/Website Content

Bob Shepherd MBE Newsletter/Planning/Sports Field/Website Content/Borough Councillor

Tim Thorogood Newsletter/Planning/ACD Parish Councils

#### Parish Council delegated responsibilities

Margaret Martin Butler Educational Trust/Pledger Trust/Almshouses

#### To contact the Parish Council

Parish Clerk Mr Roger Upward  
Office/Fax Tel: 01245 226740  
E.Mail: [littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk)

## Parish Council Reports

### HOLYBRED WOOD



The final stage of the planned coppicing was completed at the beginning of March. This coincided with a period of heavy rain prolonging the removal of the felled wood and as a result the route taken by the dumper truck was rutted and very muddy. Chippings were spread and the paths have now recovered well. The completion of the coppicing also saw the retirement of John Hooson, warden for many years. I would like to thank John for his enthusiasm, dedication and hard work. He has handed over the wardenship to Peter Hodgson. Peter is working on a 15 year plan for the wood with the help of forestry experts.

The first two coppiced areas have developed dense undergrowth around the coppiced stools providing perfect habitat for small mammals and birds with almost 100% re-growth.

During late summer and autumn the last area to be coppiced has delivered a lovely surprise – a thick covering of cat's ear (dandelion like plants) flowering for over 2-3 months. The seeds must have laid dormant in the soil for many years.

It will be interesting for all regular visitors to the Holybred Wood to see how these opened areas and the wood evolve and change over the coming year. Please come and see for yourselves and enjoy one of our best village amenities.

### WICKHAY GREEN PLAY AREA



Well no-one said it would be easy!

The 'Friends of Wickhay Green Play Area' fund raising committee have spent the year applying for numerous local and national grant schemes with limited success. Many funding bodies have cut back their budgets or frozen their funds. We shall, however, not be defeated and will continue to apply.

There have been some very successful fundraising events in the village including a film afternoon for the children. A crammed Memorial Hall enjoyed "Ratatouille", served with popcorn, hotdogs and sweets. A showing of the film "Mamma Mia" was an equal success and great fun. Other events included a cake and cards sale, a Brownies' entertainment show and a winter party held by the Mums and Toddlers group.

We have received many donations from very kind and generous members of the village and would like to thank everyone for your continued support. We are planning many more events coming soon so keep an eye on the notice boards.

### LITTLE BADDOW VILLAGE FÊTE

At the end of June last year Little Baddow became home to a host of scarecrows who popped up in many village gardens.

The very handy Gary the Scarecrow at Coleraines heralded the start of their visit and by the day of the Village Fête on July 7th there were scarecrows everywhere. 40 paraded from the Church to Chapel Field to take part in the Village Fête, to join 36 already lined up on the field.

Despite the coldest and windiest weekend last summer, the day could not have been more successful. Every village organisation was involved and it was literally a matter of the village pulling together as we all held onto each others' gazebos and stalls against the unseasonal elements.

The weather did not deter the crowds. Over 3,000 came to see the scarecrows and enjoy traditional games and stalls, and to watch displays by Elm Green School, St Johns School, the Kick Boxing Club,

Scottish dancers and Little Baddow Drama club who all performed valiantly despite wind and rain. The strong men of the village competed in a tug of war and despite the weather the beer tent was nearly drunk dry, 3 hog roasts were consumed in record time as were never ending amounts of delicious tea and cakes from the WI tent.

It was not originally intended to be a fund raising event but more of a fun day for the entire village. Thanks to the generosity of those who participated a good sum of money was raised and this has been divided equally amongst all the clubs, schools and organisations that helped to make it such a successful day.

Mary Klaber

### LITTLE BADDOW SCARECROWS

Many Villagers joined in the fun theme of the fête and made and displayed scarecrows around our village. Most of us found our journey around the village fun, by trying to spot the new and ever imaginative scarecrows as they took up their places in their creators' gardens. They were extremely diverse, ranging from Bishops and Chefs to Spider-man! Several of us changed the route of our journey to pass Coleraines, where 'Gary Scarecrow' would be carrying out a different task each week, set by the Brinzer Family. Eventually Gary was spotted by a passing female scarecrow and a romance ensued, culminating in their wedding just before Fête day. Traffic was actually slowed to within the 30 mile an hour speed limit, by 'Bob the Bobby', along The Ridge, with his hairdryer!



The scarecrow parade was well attended by over 40 scarecrows, despite the windy weather. They marched up Church Road with their owners, led by Kieran Thorpe, Cedric the donkey and Pedro, joining the other 36

scarecrows waiting patiently in the Fête field to be judged by the public. The judging raised £512.00 making an overall total from the scarecrows of £720.00. The Group winners were: 1st Danbury Village Hall with their Pearly King and Queen, 2nd Little Baddow Brownies with 'Brownies through time', 3rd Little Baddow Tennis Club with John McEnroe. Family winners were: 1st The Neal family with their Buttercup family, 2nd The Enderby family with Jarvis the bubble blowing robot, 3rd The Brinzer family with Gary, who also won a special prize for the entertainment he provided. The Children's category winners were: 1st Kieran Thorpe for Pedro on the donkey, 2nd Annabel and Joshua Lee for their two St. John School pupils, 3rd Michael Wilkinson for spider-man. The scarecrows were of such a high standard that all who participated should have been winners.



To celebrate the scarecrow and fête success a scarecrow calendar 2009 has been produced. Veronica Rice, supported by husband Frank, managed to match the scarecrows to a location around our village, raising further funds to be shared out, once again, to our village groups and clubs after our next fête. Thank you everyone! See you next time, when once again we shall be asking you to create your own unique scarecrows that only the villagers of Little Baddow can produce!

Christine Day

# Borough & County Councillors



## Robert Shepherd MBE Borough Councillor

A Planning Inspector examined our Core Strategy and with minor amendments the plan was adopted in February 2008. We are currently consulting on our proposals at releasing land for development in order to fulfil our housing demands across the Borough. We are proposing up to 800 houses in the Broomfield area and a minimum of 3200 houses in North Springfield. There is no proposal to build any major development in Little Baddow.

Following a Comprehensive Performance Assessment in March 2008 we received an 'Excellent' rating from the Audit Commission – the Government's Independent Body that ensures the effective use of public money. Excellent is the highest possible rating and this puts Chelmsford in the top 15% performing Councils in both England and Wales. The Council's work is driven by five key themes: (i) Excellent Customer Services, (ii) Social Inclusion, (iii) Value for Money, (iv) Renaissance and (v) the Environment. The Council's vision is for Chelmsford to become the economic, cultural and retail heart of Essex and a regional centre in the East of England.

*Chelmsford Town Centre* – a Planning Inspector examined our Town Centre Action Plan at a number of public hearings; with minor amendments the plan was adopted. I am pleased to say that the Marconi Plaza has been completed – with further development potential – and in addition we have installed 14 new lighting columns in Chelmsford High Street – part of the upgrade to modernise the High Street – to make it a brighter place and of course to reduce crime during the hours of darkness. New parking machines (which are solar powered) have been installed and which will accept credit/debit cards – plus supplying much needed management information. We have had a number of meetings with the Post Office in an effort to improve the facilities now housed in W H Smith. It is hoped that the service will become better and a number of suggestions put forward by the Council have been accepted. We are monitoring the situation.

*Recycling* – steps have been taken to recycle garden waste the whole year round and we continue to press residents to recycle all they can. Currently we save the equivalent of about 22000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year.

*Danbury Medical Centre* – this has now been approved on land adjacent to Danbury Mission and I look forward to its completion, as this will save many parishioners having to travel to Broomfield Hospital for minor examinations. In addition of course our overworked and stretched medical staff will be able to work in much better surroundings.

*Swimming* – free swimming for the over 60s will come in at the commencement of the 2009 financial year. We have addressed how the system should be administered to ensure that only residents of the Borough will obtain this service.

*Budgetary Control* – we are currently endeavouring to balance the budget and to look at the rates required for 2009/10. We still have a considerable shortfall imposed on us by Central Government in respect of concessionary fares.

*Olympics 2012* – two of Chelmsford's Sports facilities, Riverside Ice and Leisure Centre and Chelmsford Sports & Athletics Centre, have been selected as potential Paralympic training venues.



## Peter Martin County Councillor

The main issue as far as the County Council is concerned in 2008 has once again been the state of roads in Little Baddow.

Following the resurfacing of North Hill and the introduction of the 30 mph limit along the Ridge, the current issues are the resurfacing of Colam Lane and The Ridge and repairing the potholes on Holybread Lane.

The Ridge is due to be resurfaced in the summer of 2009. This will involve some drainage works and improvement to pavements. In order to carry out the works efficiently the road will have to be closed for a period of time so I will liaise with the Parish Council in order to ensure that residents in Little Baddow are informed of the arrangements in good time.

I have no information on when Colam Lane will be resurfaced. The potholes on Holybread Lane will be repaired when priorities have been set and when funding allows. The County Council is allocating extra funds for this purpose in 2009.

The county Council is in the process of setting the budget for the financial year 2009/10. In spite of increasing demands on our services the Conservative Administration is determined to keep the increase in Council Tax down to a minimum. We have a programme of taking some £200m out of our costs over 4 years and we are aiming to keep the increase in Council Tax down to inflation. We are also able to invest extra funds into the services we deliver. For example we will be investing an extra £50m over the next 4 years into looking after vulnerable children in Essex and in improving education standards.

I have been working with the Danbury Flyer, the Co-op and the County Council to open the gap between the Library and the Co-op in Danbury. At last this is agreed and a gate should be installed shortly to allow the Flyer passengers to pass through.

The County Council has been working towards some sub post offices being reopened particularly in rural areas. The first one has already been reopened.

The Council is also working towards opening an Essex Bank in order to provide much needed funds for small companies operating in Essex. This is part of the actions the Council is taking to mitigate the effect of the "credit crunch" on the residents of Essex.



**POLICE**

**EMERGENCY – 999**

**NON-URGENT INCIDENTS:  
0300 333 4444**

# LITTLE BADDOW WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Registered Charity Number 281238-R

## ANNUAL REPORT 2008

2008 was the 90th Anniversary Year of Little Baddow W.I. We have celebrated this special Anniversary in several ways through the Year including a special lunch at the Three Rivers Golf and Country Club at Cold Norton, an exhibition at the History Centre (see below), and the planting of a Catherine Petre Rose, donated by Margaret Smith, by Essex Federation Vice-Chairman Liz Buxton in the United Reformed Church garden. The planting followed the Annual Charity Coffee Morning in support of the Essex Air Ambulance Service, where, with additional donations, over £500 was raised. Thanks to Brenda Hooson who allowed us to use the Garden and meeting room for this occasion. Our exhibition held at the History Centre was entitled 'Not Just Jam and Jerusalem' to illustrate the changing interests of women through the long life of the Women's Institute and the contribution made by these women to many of the improvements in our lives that we take for granted today – perhaps early examples of what 'Women Power' can achieve.

The Refreshment marquee at the Village Fête in July was a buzz of activity all through the day. Homemade cakes and a cup of tea or coffee proved very popular, added to the fact that our marquee was one of the few sheltered areas on site on a very cold, rainy day.

We have enjoyed listening to a wide range of speakers on topics including: Memoirs of a Driving Instructor, Cooking with Honey, Lets Draw Cartoons, and the Fun of Fundraising. We have been on a shopping trip to Bluewater in Kent, and enjoyed a day out at the Christmas Craft Fair at Audley End. In addition Essex Federation organised a trip to the Tower of London, followed by a boat ride along the Thames to Greenwich and the Tutankhamen exhibition in the O2 arena. In December 2007, 70 members and guests enjoyed a Christmas Buffet Lunch and were entertained by Katie Griffiths with Music from the Shows.

We have had representatives at the Essex Federation Meeting at the King Edward VII School in Chelmsford where the principal speaker was Jen Green on 'The Secret Life of Aunty May'. The details of Aunty May's interesting life were gradually revealed including being a nude model for Lowry's paintings. Look out for the book and the film, I promise you won't be bored; it could rival the Calendar Girls.

Our President and Secretary travelled to Liverpool for the National W.I. Annual Meeting where the main business part of the meeting was followed by the speaker Sandy Toksvig who was well worth the journey to see – the hall echoed with laughter.

At our November Annual Meeting Mary Buckley was voted in as President for a third year. We were sorry to lose Doreen Shepherd and Ena Dent who resigned because of other commitments, but pleased to welcome 3 new members on the committee. Sadly, we lost two good friends of our W.I. when Betty Grace and June Willis both passed away this year. They had both been members of Little Baddow W.I. for several years and we will miss them. They have left us with many fond memories.

We meet on the 1st Thursday of each month, most months of the year, at 2pm in the Memorial Hall.

New members are always welcome.

MCB

# FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

2008 proved to be another successful year for the Little Baddow Family History Group, meeting at St. Andrews Room most Tuesday afternoons. Each week new historical subjects were discussed relating to the past lives of our ancestors. Talks were enjoyed on a wide range of topics by some very talented and knowledgeable speakers. Included in our timetable were day trips, amongst which were a tour of Highgate Cemetery, the Docklands, Abbey Mills Pumping Station and Colchester.

We are now busily preparing an exhibition for The History Centre, highlighting some of our more infamous and interesting ancestors. We will also be lending a guiding hand to anyone starting or progressing with their family tree. The exhibition runs from the 1st of February until the 3rd of May. Do come along and meet us!

For more details contact Chris Day on 224094 or Dorrie and Alan Ridgway on 222394.

## HISTORY CENTRE



At the start of 2008 a corner of the History centre was transformed into Miss Sorrell's Sweet Shop as it had been in the 1950s. This was the highlight of an exhibition showing the varied trades and businesses that had flourished in Little Baddow in the last Century. The summer exhibition was a celebration of 90 years of the WI in Little Baddow and the year concluded with a colourful and varied exhibition of contents of the Parish Chest including a reconstruction of Jessie Berridge's study. The current exhibition is based on family history and discovering your roots.

Visitor numbers have continued to rise and the History Centre is now open 4 half days a week. There have been several visits from local groups, 2 from the University of the 3rd Age, local WIs, and a visiting group from America.

The History Centre hosted 2 tea parties for older members of the village to exchange memories, a Christmas party with the local hand bell ringers and an art morning as part of the Essex Big Draw. The Historical Society has held its summer meetings at the History Centre and there are plans for further events with speakers.

The collection of Chapel China is continuing to grow under the guidance of Sir Alastair Stewart and now has permanent rotating exhibits.

As well as exhibitions the History Centre offers research facilities for family history and a collection of folders of past exhibitions if you missed them. The internet is now available and the History Centre has its own website [www.thehistorycentre.org.uk](http://www.thehistorycentre.org.uk) which is hoped to be up and running this year.

The newly refurbished shop sells a variety of gifts, cards, local publications and second-hand books.

If you haven't discovered it yet please make a visit to the History Centre – you will be in for a good surprise.

Opening times – Sunday and Wednesday 2-4pm  
Tuesday and Thursday 12-2pm.

Mary Klaber

## LITTLE BADDOW CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Our year started after the Annual General Meeting in March 2008 during which Derek Stebbing, Planning Policy Manager of the Chelmsford Borough Council gave an update on the effect that recent changes to the planning laws would have on Little Baddow. Luckily, there are no major development plans but we were warned of likely traffic increases as motorists make use of rat-runs through the village.

In June, we held a guided walk around the Sandford Mill conservation area. This hidden gem is Borough Council owned and the warden gave a highly informative description as we toured the site. In September, we held the first stage of our taking part in the Woodland Trust's nationwide "Ancient Tree" campaign. This survey is taking place over four years and aims to map the oldest trees in the UK. The Society is keen that Little Baddow's arboreal heritage is included and we are now identifying suitable trees for assessment. Our December meeting charted progress and showed many photographs of potential candidates for inclusion. This is an on-going exercise and all members and their friends are cordially invited to take part.

Plans for 2009 are taking shape and will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on 4 March 2009. During the year, we will be starting a joint exercise with the local branch of the British Naturalists Association to carry out a wildlife survey of flora and fauna in the parish of Little Baddow and, again, members, families and friends will be invited to take part. We will also be joined by the Parish Council in an anti-litter campaign throughout the year by seeking residents to adopt an area or road to keep tidy.

In the meantime, the Society continues to give advice and guidance on the environmental aspects of all planning matters and applications and to watch carefully developments in the village to ensure that the natural beauty is conserved. Residents of Little Baddow are encouraged to join the Society to add their voice to preserving and enhancing the local habitat of the village. Further information can be obtained from the Membership Secretary, Malcolm Breeze, on 01245 225089 and the Secretary, Gillian Foulkes, on 01245 227572.

*For Hire at Reasonable Rates*

### LITTLE BADDOW MEMORIAL HALL



Large Hall with stage and polished floor, bar and well equipped kitchen

Smaller room can be hired separately if required

On site parking

*Discounts for Little Baddow Residents*

**Enquiries to the Caretaker – 01245 223444**

## HEATHER HILLS

Progress with the management plan is still up to schedule thanks to our dedicated warden, Steve Furnell, and increased input from the Trust Reserve Officers. A comprehensive tree programme included major surgery to trees overhanging footpaths and boundaries, together with work to sustain the valuable Elm group. Eradication of invasive sycamore continued in order to reduce shading and the spread of seedlings. Bracken spraying again proved successful on the heather colonies, and a further phase will be carried out this summer. Particular attention has been paid to enhance public use of Heather Hills. In this connection permission was obtained to upgrade the seating located on the important Iron Age pillow barrow (believed to be one of only two in the county).

## POORS PIECE

Considerable work has been undertaken on the tree stock, particularly to conserve the ancient pollarded Oak. Where these have been lost because of past neglect, young replacement specimens have been selected to provide continuity for the future. The reserve is relatively small (8 acres) and therefore cannot be subject to anything like an annual coppice regime. However, it is very much part of a major woodland complex – immediately adjacent is Little Baddow Heath Reserve where a full acre has been cleared of Turkey Oak to favour the native specie. This in turn will directly benefit Poors Piece, representing a small example of joined-up landscape (now termed "Living Landscape"). Looking further beyond the Poors Piece boundary, it is in fact largely linked in both ecological and physical terms with Heather Hills, via the Trust-owned Pheasanthouse Farm and Wood.

*Geoff Ford*

## LITTLE BADDOW OPEN GARDENS

What a wonderful day was it was for all those attending a record year for Open Gardens.

Over 20 gardens were open to the public ranging from the wild and naturally wooded to the lovingly tended and manicured. Many other attractions were on hand, with Vintage/Classic Cars, Mayflower Morris Dancers and the King Edward Grammar School Drum Corps. Many thanks to all the garden owners who kindly opened their gardens, and to everyone else who helped.

**Open Gardens 2009**

is on

**Saturday 9th May**

## Directory

### Bell Ringers

Wendy Godden – 223873

### Bridge Circle (Danbury)

Yvonne Dagwell – 224675  
(Mondays 7.15pm)

### Brownies

Jo Mackin – 361262  
Katherine Wilkinson – 227845

### Butler Educational Trust

Margaret Martin – 223624

### Carpet Bowls

Doreen Shepherd – 223709

### Community Bus

Colin Budgey – 225434  
Eddie Wright – 225509

### Community Care

Joan Atkinson – 226241  
(Tuesday 12.15pm St Andrews)  
Lunch for the elderly

### Conservation Society

Gillian Foulkes – 227572

### Cricket Club

Martin Higgins – 222933

### Drama Club

Sally Lowe – 223733

### Edward Bear Club & Eden Café

Ann Poulard – 224221  
(2nd Fri 10am St Andrews)

### Essex Wildlife Trust

Geoff Ford – 222328

### Historical Society

Ann Greenslade – 224261

### History Centre

Andy Coppel – 224986  
Mary Klaber – 222910  
Jane Rigler – 223429

### Horticultural Society

Jenny Shaw – 01621 843459

### Kick Boxing

Julie Nisbett – 226315  
(Thurs, u16 6.30-7.30pm,  
16+ 7.30-8.30pm, Mem. Hall)

### Mother Baby & Toddler

Diane Mason – 222853  
Tuesdays 10.00am-11.30am

### Neighbourhood Watch

Simon Johnson – 227338

### Open Group

Joy Bloxham – 223196

### Prayer Fellowship

Elizabeth Bourne – 223183  
Ann Poulard – 224221  
(Ecumenical, Weds 2pm at  
St. Andrews)

### Ridge Runners

Andrew Ritchings – 01621  
828056

### St. Andrews Room

Sally Lowe – 223733

### Scottish Dancing

Jan Yule – 222117

### Scouts, Cubs, Beavers

Clive Pretty – 224209

### Sunday Luncheon Club

Barbara Staines – 226417  
(2nd Sun – Mem. Hall)

### Tennis Club

Paul Hibbert – 222002

### W.E.A.

Lawrence O'Brien – 223818

### Women's Institute

Mary Buckley – 224613

### Walkers

John McCrindle – 225270

### Schools:

Danbury Park – 224994  
Elm Green – 225230  
Heathcote – 223131  
St. John's – 222173  
Sandon – 473611

### Churches:

St Mary the Virgin  
Vicky Briggs – 222486

### Roman Catholic Church

Father Paul Fox – 324138

### United Reformed Church

Rev. Dr Michael Powell –  
422781  
Brenda Hooson – 222836  
John Gibson – 222148

### Clerk to the Parish Council:

Roger Upward – 226740  
littlebaddow@yahoo.co.uk

### Parish Council Website:

www.littlebaddow.org.uk

### Mobile Library –

Tuesdays only  
Memorial Hall 1.45pm-  
2.05pm  
Spring Close 2.10pm-2.30pm



## Little Baddow Drama Club

*We are a fun and friendly club, putting on productions, and enjoying regular members' events such as play-readings, quizzes, parties and guest speakers throughout the intervening months in St Andrew's Rooms on North Hill. Our twice-yearly productions are presented from Wednesday to Saturday in April and November in the Memorial Hall, with auditions and rehearsals held in St Andrew's Room. We are always delighted to welcome anyone who is interested in acting or helping backstage. So don't be shy – come along to a members' evening and find out more!*

**Subscriptions** are only £15 per person (£25 for a couple) or £5 for junior members. This includes a newsletter every other month as well as the members' evenings, full insurance during club activities and the chance to make new friends in this renowned and friendly group, helping backstage or front of house, acting or any combination of these.

*"Shadowlands" – April 2006*



### Our Spring Production in

2009 will be Jane Austen's

**Pride & Prejudice**, adapted by Lindsay Lloyd and Jane Hunt and directed by Jane Hunt, which was first presented to great acclaim at Hylands House in 2003.

**Phone Caroline Ogden on 225246** for full details or visit [www.littlebaddow.org.uk](http://www.littlebaddow.org.uk) and follow the link for the Drama Club

## Almshouses

The trustees were saddened to learn at the beginning of the year news of the death of Betty Grace. Betty was a trustee for over twenty years and chairman for most of that time.

One of the beneficiaries resigned in the Summer and this vacancy enabled the trustees to refurbish bathrooms in three of the houses with the minimum of disruption. A new beneficiary was welcomed to the almshouses in December.

The maintenance contributions were increased in October. Routine repairs and maintenance were carried out throughout the year.

## Butler Educational Foundation

The Butler Trust has continued to meet three times a year to fit in with the academic year. Small grants are made for educational purposes to school age pupils and to students in further education.

Application forms are available from Pat Breeze on 225089, Wendy Godden on 223873, Margaret Martin on 223624, Fiona Walker 224580 and John MacAllister.

Forms are also available from the clerk at Duffields, Duke Street, Chelmsford