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Harold Wood Station Update

Local Councillors Darren Wise, Brian Eagling, Alex Donald and action team member Martin Goode met with representatives of Network Rail and Crossrail to discuss ongoing delays and issues with Harold Wood Station. The delay in opening the ticket hall has been caused by a large void being found under the floor and currently they are waiting for the planners to decide the next steps.

As soon as a decision has been made on the floor, the ticket hall will be revamped. The electrical power for the lifts will be installed and linked to the ticket hall and both will be fully operational at the same time. Unfortunately it is not anticipated to be complete until around end of June 2018. Crossrail are aware of travellers annoyance at this delay and do apologise for the delays.

CLlr DARREN WISE



A great Community Spirit



We would like to thank the following for making a donation towards the Christmas Lights on the lamp columns in Station Road this year as without them this would not have been possible:

Bamboo Gardens, Bombay Palace, Co-op, Coral's, Delaney's Properties, Haart Estate Agent, Harold Wood Funeral Services, Harold Wood Neighbourhood Centre, Harold Wood Post Office, Harold Wood Travel, Ladies' Beauty and Gentlemen's Barber Shop, Nicky's Newsagent, Redden Court School, Residents' Association, Rainbow Trust Charity Shop, St Peter's Church, Station Tuck Shop, The Chippy (Fish & Chips), Williams Bakery and Station Café.

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Potholes

Cllr BRIAN EAGLING

We are still receiving complaints on the number of potholes in our area. We recently pursued the Council to support residents in getting repairs to a number of potholes in Beltinge Road. If you are aware of any problems that have not been marked please let us know. Contact details are on page 22.



Community Spirit

I was only too pleased to join six of McDonald's staff at the Harold Wood McDonalds Restaurant with their quarterly litter pick scheme in the local area. We picked up and filled six black sacks which included beer cans, paper bags, bottles, etc. scattered in bushes and along the streets and I must say there was very little actually from McDonalds. Please Note: if you wish to have your McDonalds delivered to your home download the UBER EATS APP to order.

Budget Challenge 2018

As we approach the challenging task of setting a budget and council tax for next year, the undertaking has been made even more difficult by reduced levels of funding from central government while demand for services continues to grow. For example:

- Havering grant reduces from £55.3m in 2010 to £1.4m in 2019 before disappearing thereafter
- Demand continues to grow, particularly in social care, children's services and housing
- Waste disposal costs set to

increase substantially from £15m
•Reduction in Public Health and Education Services Grant

The situation is not helped by the way grant funding is distributed, for example a council such as Westminster receives funding of £124 per head while here in Havering we receive just £40 per head! Having made savings of over £40m since 2014, for 2018/19 the budget shortfall currently stands at £5.6m - but we are working hard to bridge that gap while keeping council tax at reasonable levels. Our focus is always to place the interests of our residents' first and foremost and to provide the best services we can within the budget available. I shall keep you updated on this important matter over the coming months.

Cllr CLARENCE BARRETT

Happy Christmas from the Men's Lunch Team

St. Peter's 'Men's Lunch' in Harold Wood are planning their

very popular festive lunch on Tuesday, 5th December from 11.30am. Harold Court School Choir will entertain us with carols and Christmas songs! Please book your place on 01708 342080, or email: welcome.desk@stpetersharoldwood.org.

Wingletye Lane Bridge

I would like to thank Laurance John and David of the Emerson Park Residents Team for continuously pushing for the road over the Wingletye Lane Rail Bridge to be resurfaced. The work has taken place and is a vast improvement. Many thanks,

Peter King

Residents Beware

When leaving B&Q near Gallows Corner please make sure you turn left and not right as there is now a camera installed and you will receive a penalty fine.

Cllr BRIAN EAGLING

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Santa Is On His Way

Our traditional float with Father Christmas will be touring the area from Wednesday 6th December. We will again be collecting for the Rainbow Children's Charity who have shops in Station Road and in Corbets Tey Road, Upminster. The charity does a fantastic job. Santa looks forward to meeting you all.

Countdown to Christmas

Friday, December 1 - Advent Calendars begin

- Do you count down to Christmas - 25 days to go, 24 ?
- Or do you count up to Christmas - Dec 1, Dec 2 ?

COUNTDOWN to CHRISTMAS for Harold Wood begins with Lights Up at St Peter's Church and down Station Road on December 1. 5.00pm at St Peter's, Gubbins Lane Christmas Lights will be switched on by a competition-successful

pupil from one of our two local Primary Schools, Harold Wood or Harold Court. Come and join the crowd at 5pm for a couple of lusty carols and the Lights On, before carol-singing down Gubbins Lane into the newest parts of King's Park and climaxing at 6.00pm at the top of Station Road for a final sing-song and Lights to match the Christmas street lights. We'll end, if they'll have us (!), with the best chips ever at The Chippy.


Be Aware

Due to a recent incident that has taken place I would like to take this opportunity to warn you all. Please make sure that before you open your front door to callers that your security chain is on or check through a window first before asking them what they require. If they ask for your help tell them to phone the Police themselves on their mobile. Most people carry mobiles these days.

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Do not let strangers into your house and do not ever go with them. This could be a scam to get you to leave your premises. If you are suspicious call the police on 101 or 999.

Cllr BRIAN EAGLING

Residents in the Ewan Road area with regards to parking issues that are being experienced in the area.

Cllr DARREN WISE

Parking Schemes

It has been agreed by the Council following a consultation exercise with residents to implement a parking permit scheme Monday to Friday 10.30 to 11.30am within the Wednesbury and Camborne/Melksham areas to prevent commuter parking. This should be in place possibly around December/January time.

The Council are also consulting with

No More Police Cuts

A big thank you to all the residents we met on Saturday at Station Road, Harold Wood who signed our petition regarding police cuts. Thank you to all our local shops who encouraged their customers to also sign our petition.

Cllr DARREN WISE, Cllr BRIAN EAGLING, and Martin Goode

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Lower Thames Crossing Update

Please see below news we have received from Highways England.

Earlier this year the government announced the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing. This new crossing of the Thames comprises a tunnel located east of Gravesend and Tilbury and link roads to the M25 and A2.

Since the announcement, we have been gathering information and carrying out a range of assessments and surveys to help us better understand the area. The feedback given during the consultation in 2016 continues to help us to develop the design of the route and as a result, we have made some changes.

One of the areas we've been looking at particularly closely has been the junction with the M25. We would like to thank all residents and representatives who have given their feedback on this proposed junction, which has helped our design team develop their proposals.

Below is a summary of our current thinking on the for the design of our route:

- New junction design to cross under the M25 to reduce the visual impact
- Widening of a section of the M25, including Junction 29 to improve traffic flow
- There will be 3 lanes, rather than 2, for the route between the A13 and A2

There is still a lot of work to be done on the design. We are gathering information and carrying out a range of assessments and surveys to help us better understand the area and provide the basis for our designs. These will help us to minimise community and environmental impacts and continue to ensure that the preferred route remains the best solution. Please note Highways England have set up the following Website www.LowerThamesCrossing.Co.Uk

We will keep you up to date on this very important project.

Clearing Paths

With the colder months now upon

us the paths outside our homes can become very slippery if rain freezes over or snow starts to melt. As someone who once slipped over badly on an icy footway I really appreciate householders who clear ice from the paths in front of their homes. Official Government advice is that if you clear snow and ice:

- Don't use water to melt ice as it might refreeze and turn to black ice.
- Use salt if possible but don't use the salt from salting bins as this is used to keep roads clear.
- You can use sand if you don't have enough salt - it will provide grip underfoot.
- Pay extra attention when clearing steps and steep pathways - using more salt may help.

John Tyler

All Saints Players

The All Saints Players present 'The Pied Piper' a Pantomime by Alan P Frayn by arrangement with Stage Right Creative Ltd. Thursday 11th January 2018, Friday 12th January 2018, Saturday 13th January 2018 8.00pm (doors open 7.30pm). Matinee Saturday 2.30pm (doors open 2pm) at All Saints Church Hall, Ardleigh

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Wednesday Music Evenings

Wednesday 13th December 2017 - A Programme of Seasonal Music & Readings. The programme contains a diverse mix of seasonal items from this and other countries, a variety of music, poetry and prose. There will be an extended interval, during which hot punch and mince pies will be available. Following our Christmas and New Year break our recitals will begin again on Wednesday 17th January 2018 and continue on a fortnightly basis until Wednesday 6th June. The Music Evenings take place in the 1st Floor Meeting Room at Hornchurch Library, North Street commencing at 7.30pm and ending at 9.30pm. Admission is free of charge but we do request a nominal donation for the interval refreshments. No need to pre-book - just turn up. For more information call Stephen Raindle 01708 470670 or email sraindle@aol.com

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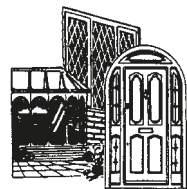
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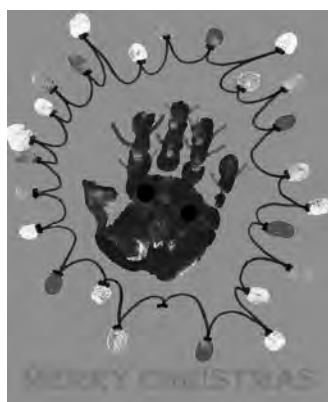
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'Design a Christmas Card' Competition at Corbets Tey School

Pinney Talfourd teamed up with local special needs school Corbets Tey School for their 'Design a Christmas Card 2017' Competition this month. Arham Pervin, aged 4, won first prize with a cute design of Rudolph surrounded by festive fairy lights. It will now be used for Pinney Talfourd's Christmas card and Arham will receive a toy of his choice at a special school assembly.

The Bulletin were also delighted to offer a prize to the runner up Sammy Ksaveriev, aged 8 for his jolly Santa. Client Services Partner, Catherine Polli, said "Thank you to everyone at the school for your time and effort. The designs we have received from the children are always fantastic and this year's entries were no different. We are also delighted that The Bulletin

has donated a prize again this year as there were so many wonderful cards. It was hard to pick just one." Pinney Talfourd will also give a donation to the school for their help in organising this annual event.



Christmas in Cranham

Cranham will be celebrating Christmas this year with two Christmas Trees donated by the Residents Association, one in Avon Road the other at the

junction of Moor Lane and Front Lane, kindly decorated by the Cranham Friends Association. The Plough in Front Lane will be holding the big Christmas light up on Saturday 2nd at 6pm in preparation for the arrival of Father Christmas who will be found in his Grotto at 3pm-7pm on Saturday 9th and 16th and from 2pm-6pm on Sunday 10th, 17th. Other events will be taking place with proceeds going to The Rainbow Trust. Frank Rivett and Sons will be providing mulled wine and mince pies in aid of Little Havens Hospice, on Friday 8th December with the help of 'Tommy' the pony. The judging of the 2017 best decorated shop interior or window display, in Avon Road and Cranham Village will also be taking place on the 8th. We hope you all enjoy Christmas in Cranham and all that is left for me to say on behalf of the Cranham Friends Association is, Happy Christmas to you all.

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Havering Singers Christmas Concert

A concert of short, festive pieces of music by the likes of John Rutter and harmonic arrangements of some more famous carols, all given the Havering Singers magic touch including the St Mary's Junior School Choir. St Michael's Church, Main Road, Gidea Park. RM2 5EL. Saturday 16th December, 7:30pm. Ticket/Info: £10 Adults, £5 Children. Available on the door or via Hotline 01708 341265 / 079519 31131 or www.haveringsingers.org.uk up to Wednesday 13th December.

Cranham Over 60s Club

We meet every Thursday between 1.00pm till 3.00pm in the Cranham Social Centre (over the Cafe 4 you). There is tea, and biscuits, an entertainer, or sometimes Bingo. Entry is only £3.00 and all are very welcome.

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Cranham Parking Review

Residents in Cranham may recall the Cranham Parking Review which was carried out earlier this year and was progressed through the Highways Advisory Committee in July. The report contained over 30 amendments to parking control measures across the ward, including Dury Falls and some roads off Hall Lane, Moor Lane, Avon Road and Front Lane. Progress in implementing the schemes has not progressed as quickly as we anticipated owing to capacity issues, but we are now assured of advancement and, subject to resident consultation, will now see progress in implementing these measures.

Your Cranham Councillors

Christmas Tree Festival

Upminster Methodist Church, Hall Lane, RM14 1AE will be holding its annual Christmas Tree Festival between the 3rd and 11th of December. Local schools and organisations from the church and community have been invited

to decorate trees for this event. The Residents' Association has sponsored a tree which has been decorated by the pupils of The Corbets Tey School. The opening times are Saturdays 10-5pm, Sundays 12-5pm and Weekdays 2-6pm. The Festival opens on Saturday 3rd December at 10am and there will be refreshments available all day. Entrance is free: donations to our chosen charities. For more details, please contact the Church Office 01708 222278 or email upminstermc@gmail.com

Hornchurch Football Club

Kindly note following fixtures at the Stadium, Bridge Avenue: Tuesday 12th Barking Kick off 7.45pm, Saturdays 16th Cheshunt 23rd Bury Town. Monday 1st January Brentwood Town Kick off for these three matches 3pm.

Free Hearing Assessment

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Mayor's Charity Variety Show

I have organised a variety show at the Queens Theatre on Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 7pm with all proceeds going to

my three nominated charities, First Step, Dementia UK and Havering Volunteer Centre. Acts will be a mixture of dance, singers, musicians and the Royal British Legion Band. This is an opportunity to showcase local talent, mainly young people and I hope you will be able to support me. Tickets are £15 and available now from the Queens Box office. www.queens-theatre.co.uk

Cllr LINDA VAN DEN HENDE
Mayor of Havering

Lennox Productions Christmas Concert

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continued on page 11

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haveringcab.org

Beauty and the Beast

This year's Panto "Beauty and the Beast" at the Queens Theatre has started and runs to the 7th January. Box Office number 01708 443 333.

Citizens Advice Havering

In December 2017, Citizens Advice Havering will be moving from its current location at Victoria Road, Romford to Romford Central Library, St Edwards Way. The service will close at Victoria Road on 7 December and will reopen at Romford Central Library at 9am on 2 January 2018. Additional sessions will be run at existing outreach locations at Hornchurch and Harold Hill libraries between 11 and 22 December. The service will close for Christmas on 22 December. See the website for details <https://>

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Christmas is the busiest time of the year for our High Streets and shopping parades and a crucial time for local businesses to tap into the extra demand. I was interested to read of an initiative in Preston where the Council launched a scheme promoting the use, where possible, of local suppliers. This is something I would like to see rolled out more extensively, providing that it also demonstrates good value for money, as it will help keep the local pound in the local economy.

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GHISPMas Concert

Celebrate the great side of local young people at this free concert by coming to the Trinity United Reformed Church (next to Roomes Stores), Station Road, Upminster on Saturday 9th December Starting at 7.30pm. Enjoy a mixture of songs including a chance to sing along with a few songs and all for a great cause. Gambia Hornchurch International Scout Project, also known as GHISP, has been working with young people for over 8 years to help them develop their social, physical and spiritual selves. If you want more details

contact us at ghispinfo@gmail.com or www.ghisp.org.uk.

Christmas Table Centrepiece Workshop

A local florist, Victoria from Harrington's, will be coming to Upminster Windmill Visitor Centre, The Mill Field, Saint Marys Lane, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2QR to run a Christmas Themed Table Centrepiece workshop on Wed 6 Dec, 10:30am-12:30pm. This workshop costs £17 and includes refreshments. Materials for the centrepiece will be provided. To book please contact Charlotte Coombes on 01708 642919 or charlottethemiller@gmail.com

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Addup Drama Group

The Addup Drama Group proudly presents Insanity Island on Sunday 10th December at the New Windmill Hall, St Mary's Lane, Upminster, RM14 2QH. Matinee - 2:30pm, Evening 6:00pm. No charge, however a donation is always welcome. Addup supports, nurtures and educates families living with and professionals working with ADHD. For tickets contact Tel: 01708 454040, email: addup@addup.co.uk, web: www.addup.co.uk

Christmas Market

Trinity Church in Station Road, Upminster will be holding a Christmas Market on Saturday 9th December from 10am to 2pm. Admission is free and all proceeds will be divided between Trinity Church and Great Ormond Street Hospital. Coffee and Cakes will be served from 10 to 12 and ploughman's lunches from 12 to 2. All the usual stalls, including beautiful handmade crafts and gifts.

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Kingsley Choral Christmas Concert

The Kingsley Choral Group's Christmas concert will be on Friday, 15th December at 7.30pm at Trinity Church, Station Road, Upminster. Christmas music both traditional and modern will be performed by the choir, and 12 year old Rejus Jakas will play some violin solos. Tickets are still only £7-50, which includes seasonal refreshments, and there will be a raffle. All proceeds divided equally between Trinity Church and Little Legs Coady, a charity set up to help 3-year old twins Lennon and Layla Coady, who have severe health problems, to be able to walk.

Christmas Concert

The Cappella Singers of Upminster are presenting their Christmas Concert on Friday 8th December 2017, at 8.00 p.m., at Trinity United Reformed Church, Station Road, Upminster. The programme includes Britten's Ceremony of Carols and Carols for the congregation. Tickets at £10 inclusive of light refreshments may be purchased

on the door or in advance from Mr. Ian Pirie (01708 641718).

Carol Service

Sunday 10th December 4pm. Grace Community Church welcomes you to join us for our Christmas Carol Service with mince pie refreshments at The Old Chapel, St Marys Lane, RM14 2QR on the grounds of Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School. A Christmas Day service will also be held at 10am at The Old Chapel. All are welcome.

Christmas Charity Fair

Friday 8th December 5pm-8pm, hosted by Grace Community Church. Free entry. Free glass of mulled wine on arrival. Come and enjoy Santa's Grotto and many stalls for crafts, gifts, food, drink, raffle, tombola and Christmas carols. Money raised at this event will be given to The Children's Society to fight child poverty in the UK. The Old Chapel, St Marys Lane, RM14 2QR on the grounds of Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School.



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Sunday 10th Dec - Christmas Traditions between 10.30am and 3.30pm. Sing carols and songs to celebrate the time of the shortest day. Welcome the New Year & the promise of the return of the Sun and warmth which will feed us and bring new life.

Friday 15th Dec - Christmas Cream tea with seasonal music 2.30 and 4.30pm. Why not treat someone special. £9 - booking essential. Gift vouchers available.

Sunday 17th Dec - Christmas Market 10am - 3pm. The Forest Centre will be closed on Christmas Day. For more details please call 01708 642970.

Saturday Talks Club

Wagner and the Pre Raphaelites. The speaker is Andrew Rothwell on Saturday December 9th at 2.15pm (Doors open 1.45pm). Venue: Roope Hall, United Reform Church, Station Road, Upminster. Cost £4.00 including tea and biscuits.

Contact Mrs Blake: 01708 227512 or Mrs Bland: 01689 858701 for further information.

Thanks Mike

Mike Robins has played a significant role in the production of the Bulletin for the past 35 years. When I became Editor, he helped me turn the 4 page single edition into 3 editions of 24 pages each. The print run during that period also quadrupled.

Mike has been the invaluable link between the Association, the artwork studio and printers and has ensured that the Bulletin has been delivered on time every month.

Now their children have flown the nest, Mike and his wife are retiring to Dorset- we wish them well.

Cllr RON OWE

LOCAL FUTURE EVENTS DECEMBER

- 2-10 Upminster Christmas Tree Festival at Upminster Methodist church, Hall Lane RM14 1AE. Come and see the church filled with beautifully decorated trees. Saturdays 10-5pm, Sunday 12-5pm, Weekdays 2-6pm. Free entry.
- 3 Sunday - OASIS - A 'disability-friendly' meeting for adults at Cranham Baptist Church, Severn Drive. A traditional Sunday Service is not for everyone! Come and join us for our Christmas Carol Service. Oasis meetings are accessible, friendly and informal. If you are interested in coming please contact the Oasis Team on: 01708 223551 or 07714 853545.

- 5 Tuesday - Oglethorpe Women's Institute Christmas Celebration. Members only for this meeting. Our meetings are held at Cranham Social Hall, 103 Front Lane, RM14 1XL on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.45 pm. Contact Secretary Mrs. E. Bell on 01708 251161 or just come along on the evening.
- 8 Friday - RSPB Havering Local Group Indoor Meeting - Christmas Social. Our annual get-together before the Christmas rush, a time for exchanging Christmas cards, chatting, a quiz, a raffle and of course the buffet supplied by all of our members. Do come, it's a fun evening - entrance is free. 7.30pm - 9.45pm. All meetings take place upstairs in the Meeting Room at Hornchurch Library, Hornchurch.
- 9 Saturday - RSPB Havering Local Group Christmas Ramble - RSPB Rainham Marshes NR. Come and join us for a gentle stroll around our local RSPB reserve to enjoy the views, fresh air and see some good birds at the same time. Our local reserve with its modern visitor centre which has a café, gift shop and toilets. We meet in the reserve car-park, off the New Tankhill Road, Purfleet at 10:00am.
- 11 Monday - Havering Branch Essex Wildlife Trust Meetings are held in the 1st floor meeting room in Hornchurch Library from 8.00 pm to 9.45 pm. An illustrated talk by Andrew Sidders (Education Officer at Chafford Gorges) will talk about the history, geology, wildlife and orchids to be found at Chafford Gorges. Donation of £2.50 to help cover hall hire, this includes tea, coffee and biscuits. For more information contact the Secretary Joy Emerson on 01708 440297.
- 12 Tuesday - Upminster and District Horticultural Society - Are you interested in gardening? Whether you are a new or not so new gardener why not come along to the lectures run by The Upminster and District Horticultural Society at the New Windmill Hall, St Mary's Lane,

Upminster. Lectures are from 7.45pm until 9.45pm. 'Growing Organic Vegetables' by Brian Carline. Admission is normally free to members and £2 to non-members.

- 12 Tuesday - NADFAS (Havering) welcomes Dr Janet Robson with a Christmas talk 'Will the real Santa Claus please stand up!'. Lecture 10.45am Coffee from 10.00am. Visitors welcome at £8. Meetings are held at The New Windmill Hall, St Mary's Lane, Upminster RM14 2QH. Further details of forthcoming lectures and events can be found at www.haveringdfas.org.uk
- 12 Tuesday - Upminster Camera Club - Christmas Social Evening. Cranham Community Association, 115a Marlborough Gardens, Upminster, RM14 1SR. 7.45pm. www.upminstercameraclub.org.uk
- 13 Wednesday - Nelmes Women's Institute meet on the 2nd Wednesday of every month and welcome new members of all ages. Meetings are held at Nelmes United Reformed Church Hall (corner of Nelmes Road and Burntwood Avenue, Hornchurch, RM11 3JA). Meetings start at 2 pm promptly. Please contact Ruth McDougall on 01708 448431 or Ruth.wellwisher@gmail.com for further details.
- 13 Wednesday - Upminster and District Probud Club meet at The Cranleigh, 84 Station Road, Hornchurch, RM12 6LX. Brian Carline "Tripe and Trotters". Contact Barry on 01708 703783 and leave a message or send an email secretary@upminsterprobud.com.
- 14 Thursday - Upminster and Cranham W.I. are looking for new members. We meet in the St. Laurence Hall (next to the Library) in Upminster on the second Thursday in the month. Doors open at 1.30 pm for a 2 pm start till 4 pm. We have talks on a wide range of subjects. We have lunches, afternoon teas, Outings and more. Why not come along and give us a try and meet new friends. For more

continued on page 19

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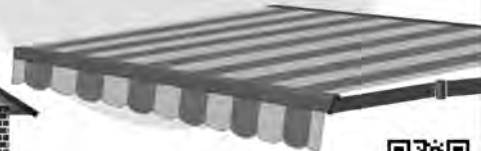
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Sat/Sun Dec 16/17 - Carols by
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Mon Dec 18 - Dementia-Friendly
Carol Service 2.00 - 2.45pm (a
first for us)

Christmas Eve - 3.00pm Family
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Sun Dec 24 - 3pm for
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5.00pm Youth Service (new)for
8-14s and their families)

Christmas Day - 10.30am The
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Mon Dec 25 - c11.45am The
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New Year's Eve - 10.30pm
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News Flash

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Cllr BRIAN EAGLING

Dementia Friends

A Dementia Friends Information
Session was held at Harold Wood
Library for a group of 'Young at
Heart' who meet on the second
Wednesday of the month. The
group learnt a little bit more
about what it is like to live with
dementia and the small ways they
can help in creating 'Dementia-
Friendly Communities'. From
telling friends and others about
the Dementia Friends programme
to visiting someone living with
dementia, every action counts.
Why not become a Dementia
Friend and attend a session at the
Library to learn a little bit more? If
you are interested please contact
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434975 or visit: <https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk>

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Harold Wood, Hill, Park Residents Councillors

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Brian Eagling 01708 373027
Darren Wise 01708 342369
hwhpra@btinternet.com
www.hwhpra.org.uk

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Chasing Elves 10k

Haven House Children's Hospice is encouraging the public to have fun and get fit in the run up to Christmas with its Chasing Elves 10k at Hainault Forest Country Park on Sunday 10 December in partnership with The Only Way Is Crossfit and SV Sports Therapy. The event starts at 10am and entry

will include an elf hat, medal, refreshments and the route will be officially chip timed. The Chasing Elves 10k is open to all abilities aged over 15 years old. Registration Fee is £15 and we encourage participants to aim to raise £50 per person in sponsorship. Please be aware that the registration fee only covers the cost of running the event so we do rely on sponsorship to help support our vital work. To find out more please visit havenhouse.org.uk/chasing-elves

Oh Mr Postie

"Does your post arrive at times not in the pristine condition that you expect it to, or perhaps wet and crumpled? If so, do you blame the postie, or could the blame lie elsewhere? Look at your letter box: - Is it at comfortable average chest height or 6 inches from the ground such that the postie half strangles

himself with his bag when stooping or kneeling down to use it? It is wide enough to accommodate a reasonably sized envelope without folding? Is the flap on a really strong spring that will damage a postie's knuckles? Is it packed with insulation on the inside making it almost impossible for anything but the slimmest of envelopes to go through without crushing? Do you have a dog that snaps at the post and the postie's fingers? Finally does the postie have to play hunt the letter box? For example:

- It may be a special box bolted to a section of your railings painted with the same colour making it difficult to spot - then is it to the left or right?
 - Perhaps it is just a slot in your outer brick wall again painted to match the brickwork
 - Or do you hide it for instance in your open porch behind a large geranium or similar plant?
- There are in Emerson Park some splendid homes with beautiful front doors. If your letter box fits one of these categories why not on a wet day try posting a blank large envelope to yourself and check what it looks like when you retrieve it. And then decide whether any alterations are required to the site, height, width etc. Remember - it's for your benefit!"

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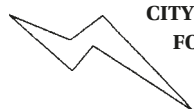
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