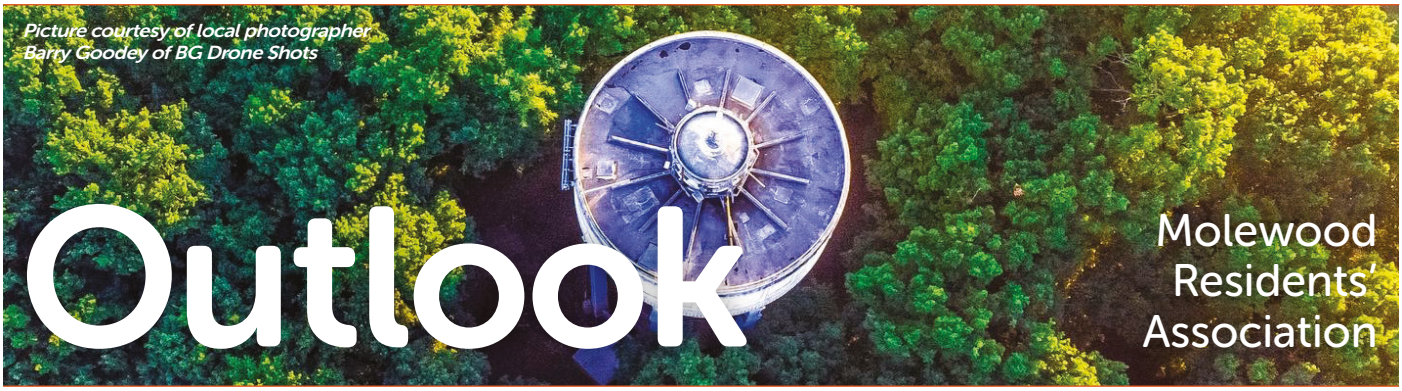


Outlook

Molewood Residents' Association

Spring Edition 2023

Please join us for our AGM on Thursday 25th May at 7pm at Bengeo Primary School. There will be pizza and prosecco and you can meet the MRA members and discuss all the neighbourhood issues. The meeting agenda is on the MRA website and a copy is on the notice board by The Secret Garden cafe on The Avenue.

Chairmans' Report

I am very pleased to be able to announce that we will be holding our AGM in person for the first time since 2019. All are welcome to join us at Bengeo Primary School on Thursday 25 May at 7pm. It is incredible to think that it has been 4 years since our last in-person AGM and to consider all that has happened in those intervening years. Lockdowns, loss of loved ones, home schooling, furlough, vaccinations and so much more, COVID has left all of us with so many memories, good and bad. One thing that has remained constant throughout is the community within Bengeo, the support for each other, and the love for our local area. I really look forward to meeting with you whether you are new to the area or have been a long term resident. We will be repeating our tradition of pizza and prosecco and hope that you will have the opportunity of catching up with your neighbours as well as receiving updates on local issues. All committee members have agreed to stand again. I would like to thank them all for their ongoing support despite the number of other commitments they have to manage. If you have been thinking about joining us please come and have a chat with us at the AGM.

Emily White, Chairman

New Easy Membership Payment

Paying your £3 Molewood Residents' Association annual membership fee is now easier than ever. **Scan the QR code below**, then fill in your details to send your £3 donation. You can still pay £3 through your bank account (Account no 18411010 Sort Code 60-10-39 with your house number and road as reference) or even cash direct to Alan Sewell, the Treasurer or to the person who delivers your Outlook. All funds collected go towards the work of the MRA in supporting local projects.

We thank you for your support from whichever source.



Save Bengeo Field - An Update

The Bengeo Field is springing into life once again with the onset of longer and warmer days. We hope you are all enjoying the views and beautiful green space. At time of writing, we are still waiting on the planning application to build 100 new homes on Bengeo Field. The Save Bengeo Field team continue to work behind the scenes and are ready to leap into action when needed. As soon as the planning application is made they will let everyone know. Remember that every email and letter will count so encourage everyone in your household to be ready to send in their comments.

To keep up to date you can find Save Bengeo Field on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram or you can sign up for email notifications on their website at **www.savebengeofield.org.uk**.

Coronation Parties

The Coronation weekend took place on 6-7 May and a number of residents organised street parties for their roads. The Molewood Residents' Association were able to make donations to support some of these parties. If you and your neighbours have organised a street event, get in touch with the MRA committee and we may also be able to support yours.



Playgrounds

The much-needed Watermill Lane playground improvement work has now been completed and the playground is a much brighter and better space for families to use. In the Sacombe Road playground, there are new steps and surfacing round the slides and swings, new gates. This addresses some of the access and safety concerns about the play area. The wider project of revamping the playground has been put on hold indefinitely. As the play area was overhauled around 10 years ago as part of the Buckwells Field development, the council were reluctant to support it and the cost of living crisis has made it difficult for the local community to finance the improvements.

Cancel out Cancer

Cancel out Cancer is a campaign developed by NHS patient representatives living in East and North Herts and championed by Macmillan Cancer Support. Cancel out Cancer's trained volunteers provide a free 60-minute informative and easy to understand session online or a 90-minute face-to-face session covering cancer screening, symptoms, and prevention. These sessions aim to improve people's awareness and understanding of cancer, encouraging everyone to act in improving their health. Dates and times of online sessions can be found at **https://tinyurl.com/hertscancelcancer**. To enquire about a session for your community group or organisation, just email **hweicbenh.engagement@nhs.net** or call 01707 685 397.

Would you be interested in becoming a volunteer presenter? No previous experience or knowledge of cancer is required! Our team will provide you with a minimum of three training sessions and ongoing support, giving you all the tools and materials to take the awareness sessions out into the community. Email the engagement team at the link above if you would like to become involved.

Bengeo Community Garden

All gardeners know that having a garden is a mix of joy and gloom. And so it is with the project to create a welcoming community garden in Bengeo. Although progress has been slow the group have successfully applied for grants, worked with Mudlarks on a garden design, benefited from work by East Herts District Council to get the overgrown trees pruned or removed where needed, and held several community 'weed ins' to get rid of the entrenched weeds. Following some wonderful work by Mudlarks and volunteers the ground is largely weed free and should be ready for planting.

BUT. The weeding has revealed that the concrete under a few inches of soil is far more extensive than was thought and all the plans now have to be revised. The team are still determined to turn the space into an attractive, restful, wildlife friendly spot that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. There are a few challenges - lack of soil depth, access to water, creating a scheme that can look good all year round and the group are looking at how others have resolved these issues and considering options for the type of 'garden' that can best be created here. For the latest news see **https://www.facebook.com/BengeoCommunityGarden**.



Bus driver Christina

Many of you will know Christina, the popular bus driver on the 333 bus between Molewood and the town centre. Her smile and friendly nature brightens many a Bengeo day, so we decided to find out a bit more about her for this edition of Outlook.

Christina is from Romania and worked as a bus driver there until Covid hit, work dried up overnight and no Government support was provided. She had heard good things about working for the bus companies here and decided to make the move to the UK. She was initially worried about coming to Britain as she'd heard that the people here were "very cold" and some even predicted she'd be back in Romania within a week. She says actually the opposite was true and she has been helped and supported so much that she really feels like this is her home now. She is a keen

gardener in her spare time and particularly loves begonias. Christina has two daughters, aged 13 and 23, and is very excited as she has just found out that she is going to be a grandmother – her eldest daughter's first baby is due to be born in late October in Romania.

The 333 bus runs hourly from The Avenue shops into Hertford Bus Station every half-hour to New Road (opp. the church). Taking the bus instead of the car not only reduces traffic congestion and fuel emissions, but on the 333 you get a friendly face too!



Hertfordshire Health Walks

Guided group walks take place every week in Hertford and Ware and all are welcome to come along. All the walks are free and take place whatever the weather (unless there is extreme heat or snow and ice!). Qualified volunteer walk leaders (wearing high vis yellow vests) are ready to welcome you and will keep to a pace that is comfortable for you. Further details are available here - **https://tinyurl.com/hertswalks** or see the noticeboard by the Secret Garden Café on The Avenue.

Health Walk Volunteers

Volunteer as a Health Walk Leader to make new friends, give back to your community and help others get active and reap the health and wellbeing benefits walking has to offer. Linda Pryor a volunteer leader says "It's great being a walk leader as you meet some really interesting people, walk through some of our lovely countryside, keep fit yourself and the volunteer team here in Hertford and Ware is really friendly". Ring the Health Walks Team at County Hall if you are interested on 01992 555888 or email **healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk**.

Voter ID

From 4th May, you will need a valid form of ID to vote in elections. This includes a passport, driving licence, blue badge, older person's bus pass, disabled person's bus pass, a PASS proof of age card, etc. Further information is available here – **www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter** or call the Electoral Registration Team on 01279 655261.

Councillor Ruffles Resigns



Local Councillor Peter Ruffles will not contest this year's local elections for the first time since 1976. He has spent 16 years on Hertfordshire County Council, 47 years on East Herts District Council and 42 years on Hertford Town Council for the Bengeo Ward. Put together, he notes these represent "105 years in local government". Peter has been a great supporter of Bengeo and Hertford and has worked with many local charities over the years. He has been to most of our AGMs and has even given us his talk about local history illustrated with his collection of photos of the town.

Road Improvements in Bengeo

A new smiley-face speed reduction sign has been erected at Wadesmill Road by Wadesmill Lane North, notifying drivers of the 30mph speed limit as they enter Bengeo. This is accompanied by a new pedestrian crossing point from Upper Watermill Lane to Bengeo Field. A new crossing over Sacombe Road is being worked on and should be available soon.

Christmas Lights Winners





Winners of the Christmas Lights overall category were Janet & Alan Bossley of 73 The Wick, who festooned the trees at the end of the Wick with some beautiful lights. The MRA has donated £25 to their chosen charity, Cancer Research. The Children's category winner was Sandra Temple from 23 Buckwells Field who had the lovely Christmas unicorn lights (pictured) and they have also chosen Cancer Research as the charity that received the MRA's donation of £25.

Local events

Bowls Club Open Days: The Bengeo Bowls Club is holding Open Days on 13th & 14th May. Open to all – no booking needed (just wear flat shoes). For more information call Joan on 01992 583564 or Christina on 07961 529226 or email **bengeobowls@btinternet.com**.

Bereavement Café – Drop-in session to meet and chat with others who have been through a bereavement. 1st Wednesday and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Secret Garden Café, Bengeo. Weds – 2.30-4.00pm, Thurs – 6.30-8.30pm. Next dates will be 3rd & 18th May, 7th & 15th June and 5th & 20th July.

Bengeo Coffee Pot: Pop-up café in Duncombe Road Church Hall to raise funds for local charities. Thursdays, 10.30am-12pm.

Bengeo Health Walk: (Grade 3 walk) meeting at the shops on The Avenue, Bengeo on Tuesday mornings at 10am and on Wednesday evenings at 7pm in May – a 1 to 1.5 hour walk

Local businesses – snippets

Wednesday Market: New bakery stall outside the White Lion pub, Wednesdays 9am – 11am.

Good News: 6.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, 7.00am – 5.00pm Saturday and 8.00am – 12.00pm Sunday.

The Secret Garden Café: Open 8:00am- 2pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

Headlines: Open from 7am on Tuesdays – Fridays. Check their website for more details **https://headlineshertford.co.uk/**.

Walton Lodge vets: Open 9am- 5pm Mondays to Fridays.

The Avenue Pharmacy: Open 9am - 6pm every weekday and 9am - 1pm on Saturday. Covid vaccinations available – book online at **www.nhs.uk** or call 119 (free of charge).



MRA Committee meeting

Next meeting is 10th May at 7.30pm at 38 Cowper Crescent, then the AGM on Thursday 25th May at 7pm at Bengeo School.

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Your Association

The Molewood Residents' Association was formed in the late 1960s and represents residents of the Molewood estate, Bengeo. This is the area north from The Drive and west of Bengeo Street and Sacombe Road.

We need an injection - of new members - to keep the residents of Bengeo informed of local news/concerns! Are you Interested in local affairs and want to find out more about what is happening in Bengeo?

Can you spare a few hours every 6-8 weeks to attend a meeting with like-minded residents? We have just the opportunities for you, enquiries@molewood.org.uk.

The aim of the association is to support Molewood residents and enhance their enjoyment of the Molewood neighbourhood. The association contributes to community events arranged by residents and to community projects. The Association issues 2 or 3 Outlook newsletters annually.

Copies of old newsletters are on our website. If you have any old copies, documents or photos of the estate, we'd love you to share them.

Annual membership of Molewood Residents' Association costs £3 per household a year.

How to pay for your subscription

Account name: Molewood Residents Donations Account
Sort Code: 60-10-39 **Account no:** 18411010
Reference: your name and house number

Committee details

Chair: Emily White, 27 The Drive
Treasurer: Alan Sewell, 16 The Avenue
Secretary: Kath Richardson, 38 Cowper Crescent
Editor: Rebecca Novavi, 1 Butterfield Drive

General Members

Nick Gough, 11 Lys Hill Gardens
Marie Archer, 55 The Wick
John Edwards, 8 The Wick
Rachel Ogier, 23 Trinity Grove
Aska Pickering, 168 Sacombe Rd
Jess Chan, 124 Cowper Crescent
Mark Harley, 76 Buckwells Field
Chris Simmons, 6 The Wick
Linda Pryor, Lys Hill Gardens
Catie Geering, 46 Buckwells Field

Website Manager:
Paul Ogier

Outlook Graphics:
Jim Martin

If you want to support MRA complete the slip and put it through the letter box of our treasurer, Alan Sewell, 16 The Avenue.

Please tick appropriate boxes below

☐ I/we want to support the Molewood Residents' Association for 2023.
☐ I/we have paid our subscription by online banking *(details highlighted above)* or
☐ I enclose my £3 per household payment for this year's subscription.

My/our name is.....

and I/we live at.....

I/ we would be happy to be contacted by email about local issues by the residents' association so here is my email address

.....