



N° 228, April 2026



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## Chairman’s Message

**Steve Rider**  
srider@live.co.uk

Hello Essex Thameside members,

Well here we are again. Sorry for the delay but this issue of our club newsletter has been deliberately held for a couple of days to allow us to report on the results of our Annual General Meeting, which took place at our Tuesday Club night.

Essentially the report from our Treasurer, Richard Gibby, as to the condition of the club's finances was favourable enough for him to propose deferring any increase in membership fees for another year. Despite a general increase in costs across the board, managing to hold the same level of fees for fifteen years is no mean achievement, so thank you Richard.

In addition the club membership unanimously agreed to the re-election of the committee in its entirety, so thank you one and all and we hope to live up to your expectations.

The only black spot on the horizon is that our membership levels have again dropped from the previous year. Whilst there is always a reduction in numbers at time of renewal we would look to existing members to help with our recruitment drive for new members. It's only the solid bedrock of the membership numbers that continues to allow us to provide services and support the various shows and events.

Looking forward, although we are now into the fourth

month of the year, in reality we are just about to start our show season. We have our traditional season opener with a visit to the Museum of Power this coming Sunday. I understand that all tickets have been allocated for our stand, but you could still come along and enjoy the day by parking in the general public car park. This month we also have the Grand Tour of East Anglia to look forward to apart from other personal favourites including the Goodwood Members Meeting.

Beyond that, our planned calendar of events is rapidly filling up. There is also a noticeable increase in the number of 'eating'-related events with breakfast meets, Sunday lunches and of course our own club barbecue now booked for Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June.

Correspondingly, the date of our next club night has been brought forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> of April to avoid a clash with our East Anglian Tour; we hope to see you then.

On a more sombre note, there is the sad news of the death of the XKEC owner and chairman Mark Gregory. Mark had endured extensive treatment for brain cancer but eventually succumbed and our thoughts and prayers go out to his friends and relatives at this sad time. Whilst undeniably controversial at times, the fraternity of Jaguar Enthusiasts will be the poorer with his passing.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to my fellow committee members for all of their hard work and contributions during the last year, and in particular for their support in my earlier enforced temporary absence.

Safe and happy motoring!

Steve

## Committee Members

	<p><b>Richard Gibby</b> Treasurer, Editor &amp; Webmaster rwgibby@gmail.com</p>		<p><b>Ian Croxson</b> Secretary ian@thecroxsons.com</p>		<p><b>Lester Magness</b> Vice Chairman and Social Secretary lestermagness1@gmail.com</p>
	<p><b>Beverly Warren</b> Membership Secretary beverlyrlwarren@gmail.com</p>		<p><b>Neil Shanley</b> Committee member and Chief Correspondent neilshanley360@gmail.com</p>		<p><b>Vaughn High</b> Committee Member vaughn.high@sky.com</p>

# For Your 2026 Diary

<b>Club Nights</b> <i>(Tuesdays at 7.00pm, Essex Police Sports &amp; Social Club, St Margarets Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DT)</i>					
21 April	26 May	30 June	28 July	25 August	29 September
27 October	24 November	22 December			

<b>Shows, Events and Trips</b>		<i>Contact:</i>
Sat 5 April	5 <sup>th</sup> Transport Fest at the Museum of Power, Langford, Maldon CM9 6QA	Lester
Sun 19 April	Drive-it Day with Mayflower Rotary Club; Hunts Farm, Brentwood CM13 1UR	Ian
27 Apr – 1 May	Grand East Anglia Tour	Vaughn
Sun 17 May	Rickinghall Classic Car Show, IP22 1HD	Neil
Sat 6 June	Summer Barbecue at the Essex Police Sports & Social Club	Steve
Sun 28 June	Hatfield Heath Festival, Hatfield Heath CM22 7EB	Neil
Sun 12 July	Orsett Classic & Vintage Show, Orsett Showground, Rectory Road RM16 3JU	Lester
	[also: Coffee & Cars with the JEC, Bridge Classic Cars, Pettistree IP13 0HH]	[Vaughn]
Sat 25 July	Essex Police Family Day, Sports & Social Club, Chelmsford CM2 6DT	Steve
Sun 9 August	Cambridgeshire Signature & Performance Motor Show, Duxford CB22 4QR	Ian
Sun 16 August	Lodges Coaches Car Show & Autojumble, High Easter CM1 4QR	Lester
	[also: J.E.C. 'Simply Jaguar' at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu]	[Ian]
Sun 30 August	Clacton Classic Car Show, Parish Fields, Little Clacton CO16 9ND	Ian
11–14 Sept	Isle of Wight trip	Vaughn
Sun 27 Sept	[Jaguars at Gaydon]	[Ian]
Sat 4 October	[Coffee & Cars with the JEC, at Brooklands Museum]	[Ian]
Date t.b.a.	Christmas Dinner Dance	Neil

## Contact Details:

Lester Magness	07739 263330	lestermagness1@gmail.com
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Neil Shanley	07973 874022	neilshanley360@gmail.com
Richard Gibby	07866 268522	rwgibby@gmail.com
Steve Rider	07969 572010	s rider@live.co.uk
Vaughn High	07910 787411	vaughn.high@sky.com

# Drive-it Day

JEC Essex Thameside Region, the Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower and the Rotary Club of Billericay Town are collaborating to support the annual Federation of British Historic Vehicle Club's Drive-it-Day. Applications have just opened and we invite you to participate in the upcoming Drive-it-Day on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

The event will begin at Hunts Farm, Old Church Lane, Brentwood CM13 1UR. Refreshments will be available to buy before setting out on a 40+ mile drive through the Essex countryside to a destination

venue north east of Chelmsford.

All proceeds from this year's event will be shared between Parkinson's UK, Motor Neurone Disease and other Rotary-supported charities.

Entries will be limited to 150 vehicles in total. Applications as per the attached Registration Form with your payment of £20.00 per vehicle must be made directly to the e mail address as follows ClassicCarRotaryMayflower@gmail.com

Additionally, please confirm your attendance to me directly at ian@thecroxsons.com or via mobile phone to 07477 785005.



## a charity fund-raising National Drive-it-Day event on Sunday 19th April 2026

Starting from Hunts Farm, Old Church Ln, Brentwood CM13 1UR. Refreshments will be available to buy before setting out on a 40+ mile journey through the Essex countryside. The destination is a venue north east of Chelmsford.

### Rules of the Event: -

1. The event is open to Vintage/Classic vehicles registered before 1984 & Thoroughbred cars. No Modern substitute allowed if entered car fails to proceed or due to inclement weather! Entry is at the discretion of the organisers.
2. The entrant must be the legal owner of the vehicle or be authorised by the owner to be using the vehicle.
3. Entries should only be on this form: please use a separate form for each vehicle. Photocopies of this form are acceptable. No change of vehicle can be made without prior notification and acceptance of the organisers.
4. All vehicles must be licensed and have a valid MOT certificate where required at the time of the event.
5. The use of the vehicle entered must be covered by appropriate insurance as required by law and entry warrants by signing this form that any person in charge of the vehicle on the event is so covered.
6. Entry may be refused if satisfactory evidence of valid insurance cannot be produced upon request.
7. Car Clubs Welcome.

**DATA PROTECTION ACT:** We will advise you of next year's event. (Please let us know if this is not acceptable to you).

From time to time we receive flyers from other car organisations, please advise us if you'd rather not be kept in touch.

**Registration Form PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS TO FILL IN THE FORM**

Name ..... Phone contact .....

Address .....

Post Code .....

Vehicle Make and Model ..... Year ..... REG No.....

Email .....  
(Please use uppercase so that it can be easily read)

Closing date for entries is **Thursday 2nd April 2026**  
I have read and accept the rules of this event. Signature of entrant .....

**Send this Registration form via email to: ClassicCarRotaryMayflower@gmail.com**

**ENTRY FEE PAYMENT OF £20.00** can be made by bank transfer to:-

Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower Charitable Trust CIO

**Bank: Co op      Sort Code: 08-92-99      Account No: 67249383      Payment Ref: DID25**

*Postal alternative: Send an A5 postage paid SAE to: Rotary Classic Car, 76 Porchester Road, Billericay CM12 0UQ  
cheque payable to "Rotary Club of Billericay Mayflower Charitable Trust CIO" sent to address above.*

### Charities benefitting from this year's event are:-



Charity No. 1186535

## Two Shows this Spring and Early Summer

There are so many shows and events in this region that choosing which ones to officially attend is a difficult task; the Committee has highlighted those chosen on page 3 of the Newsletter. The list is a live document since some members may wish to attend something not listed and new shows may appear during the year.

Looking at the early part of the season, we have April outings to the Transport Fest at The Museum of Power, Langford (5<sup>th</sup> April) and Drive It Day with the Rotary Club (19<sup>th</sup> April) which have been extensively covered in previous newsletters and on the group WhatsApp. Please contact Lester Magness and Ian Croxson respectively for information about these shows. Looking beyond April, we have....

### Rickinghall Classic Car Show

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May, we will be joining our neighbouring region, Essex & Suffolk Borders, for their annual show in the attractive village of Rickinghall. Please contact either Ian Croxson or Neil Shanley to book your place. To quote Essex & Suffolk Borders flyer: "Set against the backdrop of the village hall and green, this is a show that is as much about atmosphere as it is about cars. Expect a varied and interesting mix of vehicles, plenty of time to chat with fellow enthusiasts and an enjoyable day out for visitors of all ages".

The village used to support 13 pubs. Most have now sadly gone but you need not go thirsty, since the Bell Inn and the Greyhound still survive. Famous people who lived in the village include: Mackenzie Bowell, Prime Minister of Canada for some years in the 1890s, Basil Brown the archaeologist who discovered the Anglo-Saxon burial ship in Sutton Hoo and Deborah Kerr, Hollywood actress.



### Hatfield Heath Festival and Show

Held on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June on the extensive green in Hatfield Heath, this free-to-enter show has something for everyone, including craft stalls, food outlets, fairground attractions, nearby pubs and much more. The event attracts a large and varied contingent of classic vehicles and car clubs and is very popular with our members. If you have never attended, it is well worth a visit. We have booked 16 places but it may be possible to take a couple more. Please contact Neil Shanley via the group WhatsApp or by Email on [neilshanley360@gmail.com](mailto:neilshanley360@gmail.com).



# Sunday Lunch at the Six Bells

by Neil Shanley & Lester Magness  
Photos by Liz Croxson



On 1<sup>st</sup> March, Lester Magness continued his tradition of organising the first Sunday Lunch of the year at the Six Bells, Boreham, Chelmsford. As is usual, many club members attended; in fact, we welcomed 33 members and guests, considerably more than the 20+ we would normally expect. This is not surprising, as more members of our club become aware of this inviting little old pub set in the outskirts of Chelmsford.

These lunches are proving to be increasingly popular and so the Committee are looking to organise more towards the end of the season, perhaps at an alternative venue. Watch this space.

A bit of history... The pub was originally a pair of cottages built around 1750 which were relatively recently knocked together. A third adjoining building, dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was also incorporated into the enlarged establishment. You can still see the original timber framing in the pub. In Victorian times the pub offered cream teas and accommodation for cyclists. It became a "Beer House" in the 1830s and was licensed to sell beer, but not spirits. That excise licence would cost the licensee 2 guineas.

The pub was named by the then landlord, Joseph Young, after the number of bells in the nearby church. Having been installed in 1746, they were then still new to the villagers. In 1913, two more bells were added to the church, but not to the name of the pub. In 1905, the property was sold to Greene King, who still own it today.

For our members, the most popular course on the menu was the Sunday Roast with a choice of beef, lamb or pork with all the trimmings. (I hope they still do the short crust steak pie, which is to die for!) The cost for the Roast and two other courses plus tea or coffee was a reasonable £29.95, representing good value.





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## East Anglian Grand Tour Itinerary

### Monday 27th April

9.30am meet at the Birchhanger Services Junction 8A (M11).

10.00am Depart in the usual chaotic fashion heading in the general direction of the City of Ely (44miles). Should you survive this journey our central parking location is in Barton Road car park CB7 4DE. (any parking issues feel free to blame Joe as he sorted it).

Visit "The protector" 1649 -1660 Oliver Cromwell's house and consider a tour of Ely Cathedral, or relax with a stroll around the historic area. Consider a river walk pub lunch, or take a look at the pumping station museum.

15.00 - Depart Ely for Kings Lynn (29miles) and the Premier Inn Hotel, evening meal and blame game for who got lost in the convoy based at the hotel restaurant.

### Tuesday 28th April

09.15 - Following the morning briefing the Jaguar Squadron hopefully refreshed, will depart the hotel airfield in a diamond formation heading for the bomber Command Memorial Centre (59miles) located in Canwick Ave, Lincoln LN4 2HQ

Approx 12.30 - we will depart the centre to visit the Petwood Hotel Woodhall Spa, Stixwoud Road, Woodhall Spa LN10 6QG (the home of 617 Squadron Dambusters), where an area has been reserved for drinks and light lunch.

Departing the Petwood hotel we will travel to the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre East Kirkby, Spilsby PE23 4DE. The location is based on a WW2 airfield with original control tower, and a hangar museum. A guided tour of an original Lancaster bomber based at the location has also been arranged. The centre has a NAFFI on site where we can take a breather and sample afternoon tea and cakes.

We depart the centre and return to the Kings Lynn Hotel (45miles) evening de brief and food optional.

### Wednesday 29th April

9.00 hrs Depart Kings Lynn for North Norfolk (approx 40 miles) heading for the Sheringham and the Poppy Line Steam Railway based at the Sheringham Station NR26 8RA. Our booking departs Sheringham at 11.50hrs and runs a return trip via Holt.

On our return to Sheringham a suggested late lunch at possibly the two lifeboats, Fishmongers Tavern, The Lobster or one of the other pubs in the area.

Other options for the afternoon from the group are welcome.

Leave Sheringham to arrive at the Premier Inn Norwich East hotel (30miles).

18.30 hrs depart Hotel for 4.5 mile drive into central Norwich near the Cathedral in an area known as Bishopsgate where after parking near the location at 19.00 hrs we meet in the Adam and Eve Pub 17 Bishopgate, Norwich, NR3 1RZ. (possible consideration of a mini bus or taxi into town). This is one of the oldest pubs in Norwich, some 750 years old where we will commence the Ghost Walk at 19.30hrs, the rest of the evening is ours to decide.

### Thursday 30th

Today is a day of choice, visit medieval Norwich seeking out the Cathedral, the Castle (construction ordered by William the Conqueror after the Norman conquest) and a visit to the Castle shopping mall located closeby. Consider Strangers hall or the market area for a bit of retail therapy. A walking tour of Norwich which lasts for about 1.45 hours giving an insight into the history of Norwich has been booked for a maximum of 20 people. The tour starts promptly at 11.00am (Hillary thats 10.45am) on the steps in front of The Forum [www.theforumnorwich.co.uk](http://www.theforumnorwich.co.uk) and finishes outside Norwich Cathedral.

What could possibly go wrong ?

*Indifference* - a painting by Neil Shanley:



# Lodges Coaches Classic Car Show, High Easter

by Neil Shanley



Ian Croxson posted a notice on our group WhatsApp regarding a Car Show at Lodges Coaches depot being held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. I have been to several of the August shows but never in March so, with a sunny start to the Sunday morning, I thought: what better way to spend a Sunday than to take the XJS with the roof down and look at some classic cars?

It always amazes me how simple and casual attending this show is. No filling in forms, no paying fees up front, no internet-based booking, no third parties – just turn up and pay your fiver in cash on entry. How good is that??? (Although it is best to book for the August show as it gets crowded. I do it by phone.)

When I arrived at around 11.00 am, I paid my £5.00 entry fee (it goes to charity) and was ushered to a decent spot near to the entrance and alongside a white E-Type.



I was pleasantly surprised by the large attendance from the car owners and public alike. The place was very busy, but the large grounds swallowed the

crowds and cars with ease. Not being the summer show, there were no Spitfire fly-pasts or Derek Matthewson, but there was an expansive autojumble in and around the bus sheds – an increasingly rare sight these days.



As usual, the cars were a varied mix of British, European and American machines. A large contingent of US muscle cars was present – all parked in a row and possibly from a club since they all left early and at the same time. I did manage to take a few photographs, however, including Mustangs, Corvettes and Camaros. I was particularly impressed by a '69 Chevrolet Camaro SS. The Super Sport package included a 300hp V8 with various upgrades and this model had the optional four dials on the centre console. It did have the black tail light surround panel which would indicate it possessed a Big Block 396 V8 under the bonnet unleashing 325, 350 or 375 horses depending on which option was chosen. It's one of my favourites but, sadly, I didn't have time to chat with the owners before they left.

On a smaller scale, a beautifully customised Mini stood out from the crowd. Apart from the body, I'm not sure how much original Mini was left, but the red metallic paintwork combined with a bespoke interior was one of the best custom jobs I've seen. And the Honda badge on the boot lid promised something interesting below the bonnet.



There is always an early American car present at this show and today was no exception. Looking like it came off the set of "Bonnie and Clyde", this all-white 1930 Buick convertible was complete with a machine gun in a violin case on the rear seat.



Another red car close by was a 1978 Ferrari Dino 308 GT4. It looked typical of the '70s, with its wedge styling by Bertone (not by Pininfarina, who were pretty miffed). Instead of sexy curves, this model featured angular lines and pop-up headlights, but it was the first Ferrari to feature a mid-engine V8. Ferrari later returned to its regular stylist for its other models. The Dino name was dropped in 1976 but the boot badge script was never changed and later cars wore the Ferrari Prancing Horse badges. The lines of this delicate little Grand Tourer have grown on me over time and, to my eyes, it looks very desirable.



Plenty of Jags were on display including an original 2.4 litre Mark II, also in white, recently bought from a Matthews auction. A rare metallic green Series III XJS Cabriolet V12 came along and was looking good, although the petrol consumption did not impress its owner's wife.

A rare site and a late comer to the ball was a 1939 Jowett Eight packed with six or seven people including the driver and with an engine capacity of only 946 cc; how did it do it?



Finally, a mention of the auto-jumble which was quite extensive, selling everything from tools and spares to unused '50s picnic sets, model cars and so on for really reasonable prices. Bring more to classic car shows!

Enjoy the photos and see you at the August show.



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