



ESSEX THAMESIDE NEWS

N° 231, July 2026





Chairman's Message

Steve Rider
srider@live.co.uk

Hello Essex Thameside members,

It was only four weeks ago that I opened the last Chairman's Message with a comment about the remarkably warm weather. Little did we know that a month later we would be experiencing record breaking temperatures across the country. In the short term, I am sure that not only the keen gardeners amongst us will welcome some rain. But for the sun worshippers among us it certainly bodes well with the bulk of the summer still to come.

Unfortunately, our summer club barbecue on 6th June wasn't blessed with such favourable conditions, but that did not deter our members and guests. Nearly 100% hall capacity was achieved, with all attendees refusing to be put off by the intermittent showers. Once gain, our regular caterer Andy Beck provided an excellent fare and we are also grateful to all of the attendees who were prepared to risk their prized possessions and show their cars in the area adjacent to the club house. The rosette this year for best or most interesting car in show was awarded deservedly to a car from our near neighbours, Area 33 of the Jaguar Drivers Club.

We have previously reported on having a full diary with numerous shows and events coming up during the summer. This weekend just past, the club attended in force at the Hatfield Heath show and we are also expecting a good turnout for the Orsett Classic Car and Family Festival on Sunday 12th July.

Thanks are due to Neil Shanley and Lester Magness respectively for organising our attendance at these very popular shows.

We do try to publicise, in the newsletter and on our website (<https://jcessexthameside.uk>), details of every event that we are attending or putting on. However, I would also respectfully remind you to keep an eye on the club WhatsApp site, where events are also advertised, especially where we have only received short notice and haven't had much time to publish details more formally.

Plans are currently being hatched for one or two club trips in 2027. If you weren't able to join us on this year's successful spring tour of East Anglia, you can at least enjoy the 2nd part of the tour report prepared by our Neil Shanley and provided later in this Newsletter.

Finally I can report that our efforts to recruit new members are still bearing fruit and I am especially pleased to welcome the return of Ron Ansell to our ranks. Ron was one of the first three inaugural members when the club was formed some thirty seven years ago.

I would ask you to join me and provide a warm welcome to Ron and to all new members.

Best wishes and Happy motoring.

Steve

Committee Members

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

For Your 2026 Diary

Club Nights <i>(Tuesdays at 7.00pm, Essex Police Sports & Social Club, St Margarets Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DT)</i>					
28 July	5 August	29 September	27 October	24 November	22 December

Shows, Events and Trips		<i>Contact:</i>
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	Lester
Sun 2 August	JDC Area 33 Car & Bike Show in aid of Essex Air Ambulance, William de Ferrers School, Trinity Row, South Woodham Ferrers CM3 5JU	Lester
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]
Sun 4 October	[Coffee & Cars with the JEC, at Brooklands Museum]	[Ian]
Sat 12 December	Christmas Dinner Dance at the Ivy Hill Hotel, Margaretting CM4 0EH	Neil

Contact Details:

Lester Magness	07739 263330	lestermagness1@gmail.com
Ian Croxson	07477 785005	ian@thecroxsons.com
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

Orsett Classic & Vintage Show 12th July 2026



Don't forget that one of our most popular shows is again on for this year. For a great family day out, and a must for all classic car lovers, this show is hard to beat. There are hundreds of classic, custom and vintage vehicles, bikes, scooters and trucks mixed with stalls, food outlets, trade stands, auto jumble, live music, kids' fairground, a licensed bar and much more to make this a memorable day for everyone.

Set in the borough of Thurrock, it lies 3 miles northeast of Grays. For those interested in spending a little time in the village of Orsett, it has a variety of interesting and listed buildings including Victorian workmen's cottages and Grade II-listed, timber-framed and thatched houses and grand houses dating from Charles II's reign. Oh, and two pubs have survived in the village centre: the Whitmore Arms and the Foxhound.

We have reserved spaces for our club, so contact **Lester Magness** for further details.



JAGUAR DRIVERS CLUB AREA 33
PRESENTS

CLASSIC • VINTAGE • MODERN

CAR & BIKE SHOW

2026

**SUNDAY
2nd
AUGUST 2026
10AM**

**SHOW CARS
INVITATION ONLY**

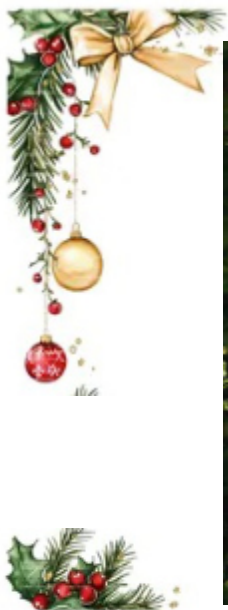
**ENTRY £5
PER ADULT
KIDS GO FREE**

**WILLIAM DE FERRERS
SCHOOL**
TRINITY ROW SOUTH WOODHAM
FERRERS ESSEX CM3 5JU

CLASSIC CARS • MOTORBIKES • FOOD STALLS
CAR COMPETITION • CHARITY RAFFLE

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance

**← SCAN TO BUY
YOUR TICKETS!**



JEC Essex Thameside Christmas Dinner & Dance

It seems a little early to discuss our annual Christmas Bash, but you have to book early these days to ensure you can obtain a suitable venue for the event. So, we are pleased to announce that we have secured a new venue at the Ivy Hill Hotel, Chelmsford on Saturday 12th December 2026, starting at 19.00 hrs. We have booked four tables of ten making it available for 40 members and partners. We may be able to increase that number if there is sufficient interest from members.

The arrangements are similar to our previous events at Pontlands Park. We will be met with a drink upon entry, before a three course meal with a half bottle of wine per person followed by tea/coffee. There will be a bar and disco. Dress is smart for partying or black tie whichever you prefer. Whilst we have not yet received the exact menu, it will be very similar to last year's. The cost will be £69.50 per person which is the same as last year. Drinks bought at the bar must be paid for. The Disco is free, with cabs at midnight.

The hotel can be accessed from the A12 or by several other routes and has a large car park. There are rooms available if you wish to spend the night there with prices from around £130 per night including breakfast. The Ivy is a Best Western Hotel and its address is The Ivy Hill Hotel, Writtle Road, Margaretting, Chelmsford CM4 0EH.

If you wish to attend please advise Neil Shanley by emailing neilshanley360@gmail.com or phoning 07973 874022. A deposit of £25 per person is payable immediately, with the balance (£44.50 per person) due by 16th November. If you participate in our region's direct debit scheme, the monies will be taken from your account automatically. Otherwise, please transfer the money to the region's bank account:

Jaguar Enthusiasts Club Essex Thameside

Account Number 54186439

Sort Code 60-11-15

Please mark the payment 'XMAS BASH'



JEC Essex Thameside BBQ 6th June, 2026

This was our third BBQ at the Police Sports and Social Club in Chelmsford. Andy Beck and his wife of Beck & Call, provided the excellent food – all at a very reasonable price. It was attended by around 65 people including members from the local Porsche Club and Area 33 of the Jaguar Drivers Club. We thank both clubs for helping support the event. A display of over 25 cars gathered on the playing grounds and the prize for the best in show was won by a JDC member with his MK IX.

Unfortunately, the weather was not on our side resulting in rain most of the afternoon but we were able to escape into the spacious surroundings of the Club House. Spirits were not dampened, but mainly drunk. Everyone thought the afternoon to be a great success and made better by working with other local Car Clubs.

Neil Shanley with photos by Liz Crosson







— CLASSIC & VINTAGE CAR CRAFTSMEN —

Family run restoration business with over 30 years' experience



Specialising in Jaguar, Bentley, Rolls Royce & Aston Martin

We offer a full, one stop shop for all aspects of maintenance & repair for your classic

Mechanical rebuilds, bespoke car upgrades & conversion, full engine & transmission rebuilds, body work/coachwork restoration, standard servicing, vehicle alignment, rust removal & repair, full body off restorations, performance & comfort upgrades, paint matching & application



TOLLESHUNT MAJOR, ESSEX

+44 (0)1621 869345 | info@ptclassics.co.uk | www.ptclassics.co.uk

Grand East Anglian Tour part 2: Steam, Ghosts and City



On Wednesday 29th May we left King's Lynn and headed for Sheringham, about 40 miles away, to experience the North Norfolk Steam Railway, known as the 'Poppy Line', which is based in this pretty seaside town.

Sheringham's main industry was fishing for whelks, crabs, lobsters, cod and herring. The coming of the railway in the late 19th century helped to transport the fish to market quicker and more efficiently. At its peak there were over 200 fishing boats in the harbour, but now there are only around eight. Sheringham has a wide variety of specialist shops, a theatre, pubs, a museum, restaurants and a lifeboat. Its Saturday Market is held in the large car park opposite the Poppy Line station, our destination. This original station and the line beyond has been preserved and the trains using it travel to a new station at Holt via Weybourne. The railway uses steam and diesel-powered locomotives. We caught the 11.50 departure, hauled by steam, which was great fun, stopping at stations for the odd snack. There was even a model railway to see. Some members enjoyed

lunch at one or two of the town's excellent pub/restaurants. Needless to say the fish and chips proved popular.

It was then onto our hotel, the Premier Inn Norwich East, some 30 miles from Sheringham where, at 18.30 hrs, taxis arrived—taxi services must do well in Norwich as the owner came in a Ferrari!—to take us to The Adam and Eve pub in the Bishopsgate area of Norwich, thought to be the oldest pub in the county. Dating back about 750 years, I suppose it doesn't have too much competition. It was here that our Ghost Walk was to start and our spirits (and Vaughn) were High! Dr M (I can't remember what the "M"





stood for) was in full costume and waiting for us outside the pub to take us round Elm Hill, Tombland, Norwich Cathedral and any other spooky parts of Norwich that you can think of. Our host related tales of the many lost souls and poltergeists who “can still be seen and heard to this day”.

Established in 1998, the tour is the longest running show in East Anglia. So, if you want to see a ghost, you know who to call! The first port of call was the park opposite the pub where, in a former terrace of houses, a small man and his domineering large wife once lived. At that time, body parts kept being found in the area and his wife was nowhere to be seen. The police were baffled because her head was never found. Many years later, her former husband, racked with remorse, confessed. They say her ghost can still be seen walking in the park.



Elm Hill is an historic cobbled lane with buildings dating back to the Tudor period. Probably its most famous ghost is that of Father Ignatius, a street preacher who built a monastery/church at Number 16 in the 1860's. He was known for cursing those who didn't join him in prayer and they subsequently died. He attracted Roman Catholic and Anglican priests, particularly if they liked alcohol a little too much, and he created scandal and much gossip in the process. Tales of brutality in the monastery angered the locals so much that they hounded him out of the city. It is said that his ghost still walks the street cursing passers-by with eternal damnation. In Tombland Alley, at the time of an outbreak of the Plague in 1578, families were forcibly bricked into their houses for 28 days to slow the spread of the disease. One young girl was trapped with her dead family. She then resorted to cannibalism to survive, but choked to death on the flesh. Her ghost now wanders Tombland. It does bring a new meaning to the phrase “family meal”.

As the Plague gathered pace, bodies were quickly buried in the area one on top of the other—the raised section of the burial pit can still be seen today. Unfortunately some were not quite dead yet and it is said that in the dead of night, you can still hear their sounds of agony as more bodies were piled on top of them, crushing what life was left out of them. The crooked house towards the end of the alley has another ghost, again tied into the Plague lockdown. This 16th century building “houses” one of the several “Grey Lady” ghosts that prowl Norwich. In this case an uninfected girl was accidentally locked in the house and died of starvation forever leaving scratch marks on the door. She is often reported as a gliding figure clothed in ragged grey garments. Another such



monochrome ghost inhabits the nearby Maid's Head Hotel. In fact this hotel is renowned for its spectral figures with the Grey Lady being the most notable as she wanders through the corridors. Possibly a former maid, her ethereal presence is said to be accompanied by a chilling drop in temperature, a smell of lavender and an overwhelming sense of sadness. Other ghostly events have been reported over the years including the sound of footsteps in the empty corridors, creaking doors opening by themselves, sudden cold drafts, shadowy figures passing through walls and the laughter and apparition of a young child. Well, you can expect that from such an old building. When Sue and I stayed there a few years back I put it down to faulty heating, poorly fitting doors and too much wine with the dinner.

Probably the most outlandish of the ghost tales was that of the underground passages used by traders to exit safely from the Cathedral. These "monk's tunnels" enabled traders to be hidden from robbers and went to many parts of the city. It is said that Oliver Cromwell's forces were pursued by the Royalists on horseback into the tunnel system. As the Royalist soldiers raced through the darkened tunnels they were beheaded by the low ceilings and ropes pulled across the tunnels. It is said that you can still hear the sound of the horses galloping hooves near the Cathedral Close.

Unfortunately, Mandy Smedley tripped over a small wall near the Cathedral at this point. An ambulance was called and luckily she suffered only bruises and

left the hospital about 04.00 am.

Finally, the Adam and Eve pub, our starting and finishing point, has a ghost of its own—none other than that of Lord Sheffield, affectionately known as "Sam". He was mortally wounded during the Robert Ketts rebellion and taken to the pub where he died. He makes his presence known by hot and cold spots, moving articles around in the cellar, ringing the pub bell, tapping customers on the shoulder and, more worryingly, running his fingers through their hair. Well, that's the ghost bit done – luckily "I ain't afraid of no ghosts!"

Thursday was a day of choice – a look round the shops, sample the Castle, visit the Cathedral or fit in a little of everything. But the first priority was our City Walking Tour with Paul Dickson, booked by our resident Norwich natives – Julie and Vaughn. We met Paul at the Forum in the city centre, familiar to us as the home of the BBC Eastern Region. Paul informed us that it was completed in 2001 as a replacement for the Norwich Central Library which burned down in 1994. According to our guide, around 170,000 books, the American Library, most of the Colman Collection, the 18th century Rye Collection and many more items were lost including photographs, newspapers, negatives, historic documents and orchestral scores. However, the Records Office containing two to three million documents exceeded its two-hour fire rating and withstood the fire, thus saving all the documents. I am told that no ghosts were harmed by the fire!





We visited Elm Hill, this time in daylight which showed it to be a photographer's utopia with its cobbled lane and Tudor buildings. Needless to say that Paul "rubbished" the ghost stories, instead pointing out some of the fascinating buildings including Briton's Arms coffee house and the Strangers Club, both of which still function today. The former is a Grade II listed timber-framed building dating back to the 13th century, and was the only building on Elm Hill to survive the Great Fire of 1507. After many changes of hands, and uses, it was bought by the Council after WWII. Richard Ellis, a renowned chef is the most recent custodian. You may have seen the building featured in the film "Stardust". St Peter Hungate church sits at the bottom of the Hill where the first Elm tree was planted. Sadly the tree today is not an Elm due to Dutch Elm disease.

Just a stone's throw away is the Maid's Head Hotel. It dates from the 13th century and was frequented by guests as diverse as Horatio Nelson and Edith Cavell. A statue of the latter was erected outside the hotel and later moved to the outside entranceway to the Cathedral. As a First World War nurse, she treated soldiers from both sides and helped more than 200 allied soldiers escape from Belgium. Because of this, she was arrested by the Germans and executed by firing squad.

During the tour we visited something almost modern by Norwich standards – the Art Nouveau Royal Arcade of 1899 – a Grade II listed building. (What isn't in Norwich?) Here you can see Parson Woodford's Angel on the East entrance. George Skipper was the architect whose name you can see on a plaque on the right of the entrance. The Angel represents a pub /coffee house which once stood close by and where clergyman James Woodford often stopped. Do visit the Arcade, it is a ceramic delight.



A tour of Norwich would not be complete without visiting its famous market. It mixes street food with vintage fashion via fresh local produce and unique gifts. Vaughn particularly liked the wheelks. It is one of the UK's oldest open-air markets with over 190 stalls and a great atmosphere. It dates back to the 11th century. Looming imposingly above its colourful rooftops is Norwich City Hall. Completed in 1938, (so really new then!) this building is the home of the City Council and is designed in the Art Deco style with great attention to detail. The bricks are two inches longer than standard to better reflect and enhance the building's proportions. Two imposing lions guard the entrance which has tall, detailed bronze doors. Impressive!

We did visit several other places, not least the first public loo in the UK, but you're probably comatose by now, so we will leave it there.

Before we end our trip and head back home the following day, a story from Vaughn...

During the City Walk, we looked at walls built with flint. Standing outside, I think, an old library enabled us to see this first-hand. Basically, the flint was cut into cubes and used like bricks to build the structure. The technique is called knapping and must have been extremely hard to do. Flint is bound in lime mortar and there were many excavations around Norwich where the lime was extracted. Most of these are now buried or filled in, but occasionally one comes to light. In 1988 a double decker bus fell into an 8 metre deep hole on Earlham Road caused by the medieval chalk mine roof giving way. We also talked about Norwich being a leader in Council Housing after WWII. Vaughn's Grandfather worked for "Start Right" a shoe maker in Norwich, as a "Clicker" which meant he shaped the leather for the shoes over a marble slab with a knife which made a "clicking" noise as it hit the hard slab after slicing the leather. They made shoes for children and counted Royalty on their customer list. He and his family lived in a council house and, although he eventually became a senior manager even entertaining clients from abroad, he did it in the council house! He was a staunch Labour supporter and never bought a house for his family to live in, despite his wife's protests. He may have gone further within the company but for his politics – we shall never know. The price of principles!

Thanks must go to Vaughn and Julie for this fascinating and entertaining few days which seemed to easily fly by both effortlessly and seamlessly. It takes a lot of hard work to achieve that!

Neil Shanley with photos by Liz Croxson



Left: Britain's first public convenience



Right: church built with knapped flint walls





SERVICING WITHOUT ANY HIDDEN DANGERS

JAGUAR

AUTHORISED SERVICE

**SERVICING FROM £299 FOR VEHICLES
OVER 3 YEARS OLD**

A Jaguar service should never come with any unexpected surprises. That's why we only use Jaguar Trained Technicians and Jaguar Genuine Parts at a fixed and competitive price. Because when it comes to Jaguar servicing and maintenance, we believe our customers deserve nothing less than 100% Jaguar.

Matthew Overall, Head of Business at Grange Jaguar Brentwood has offered the following to all fully paid up members of JEC Essex Thameside.

- 50% off normal labour rates for cars over 5 years old.
- Basic Oil Service with wash - £199. Collection of vehicle is chargeable but most can be completed while you wait.
- 10% off spares

Please mention your membership of JEC Essex Thameside when booking.

Grange Brentwood - Jaguar Authorised Service

2 Brook Street, Brentwood, Essex CM14 5LU
01277 249500

grange.co.uk/jaguar

Exclusions apply.

100% JAGUAR

SERVICING FOR VEHICLES
OVER 3 YEARS OLD



FIXED PRICE FROM £299



JAGUAR TRAINED TECHNICIANS



JAGUAR GENUINE PARTS



2 YEAR PARTS WARRANTY

