



# ESSEX THAMESIDE NEWS

Nº 233, September 2026





## Chairman's Message

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

Hello Essex Thameside members,

We are now coming into autumn and it seems appropriate to take time to reflect on the year so far. As we enjoy a cooler period in the run up to Christmas it seems hard to accept the current risk of floods after the repeated heatwaves and subsequent water shortages throughout the summer. Either way, it has now provided some relief for the gardeners amongst us.

However, the up side of the prolonged hot weather over summer, sunburn aside, did mean that very few shows and events were cancelled or curtailed during the season. Consequently, the efforts of the committee members who worked hard in publicising and arranging our access to the various events was invariably rewarded with a good turnout by members.

As it stands, we still have a number of events to look forward to, including the Jaguars at Gaydon, Coffee & Cars combined with Brooklands and, of course, the club trip to the Isle of Wight. Similarly, the Goodwood Revival commencing on 18th September and the NEC Classic Motor Show on 13th November, whilst perhaps not the cheapest to attend, are certainly events to include on a bucket list.

Closer to home we are arranging several presentations and talks at club nights in the run up to Christmas, details of which will be communicated by email and advertised in our newsletters.

With regards to our newsletters, we are fortunate in the quality of the regular articles provided by our scribes with the details of shows that we have attended.

We are also indebted to one of our members, Keith Schofield, for providing Part 2 of his Artic adventure in a seven year old electric I-Pace. Certainly not a trip for the faint hearted, and we look forward to hearing more about his 4,500-mile round trip in part 3 and 4 of his story and at a future club night.

Finally, I am pleased to confirm that our membership numbers are still increasing, and am happy that Andrew Bennett and Peter Bayley have joined the ranks of Essex Thameside.

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Andrew, Peter and all new members.

Best wishes and happy motoring.

Steve

## Committee Members

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

## For Your Diary

| <b>Club Nights</b> <i>(Tuesdays at 7.00pm, Essex Police Sports &amp; Social Club, St Margarets Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DT)</i> |            |             |             |  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--|--|
| 29 September                                                                                                                 | 27 October | 24 November | 22 December |  |  |

| <b>Shows, Events and Trips</b> |                                                                    | <i>Contact:</i> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 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:

|                |              |                          |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
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| Neil Shanley   | 07973 874022 | neilshanley360@gmail.com |
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| Steve Rider    | 07969 572010 | srider@live.co.uk        |
| Vaughn High    | 07910 787411 | vaughn.high@sky.com      |



*'Follow Him' by Neil Shanley*



## 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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 16<sup>th</sup> 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'



## Keith Schofield - Around Norway in an EV

### Part 2 – Arctic Circle in Sweden to Evenes (gateway to the Lofoten Islands) and Gullefsfjord via Narvik

Part 1 covered the 2,000 miles trip north in a seven year-old Jaguar i-Pace, travelling from Essex via the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark to the Arctic Circle in Sweden, taking in city stops along the way in Copenhagen and Stockholm. This second part is about our experiences in the north of Sweden and Norway, before returning south again.

Since our return, many people have asked us why we would attempt a 4500-mile trip in an electric car; surely range would be a problem? Those who've driven electric will know that it's not range anxiety but charger anxiety that can be the issue. Fortunately, there are readily available apps that exist which enable you to roll up to an ultra-rapid charge station, knowing ahead of time that places will be available, and synchronise those stops with planned stops for rest breaks and meals. We've been doing that for over 7 years since we bought the car and, by now, it's second nature. However, as you'll recall from the end of Part 1, on the way north in Sweden just before reaching the Arctic Circle, we stopped at a charging point and found that none of the chargers were working, even though the app said they were. Would our trip end in the frozen wastes of the Arctic as quickly as it had begun in balmy Essex?

Arriving in the Northlands, we found that online advice to keep the car's traction battery topped up a little more often had been absolutely right. Throughout the whole month of the trip, this was the only place where we were let down. Fortunately, there were two more charging hubs with multiple available chargers within a fifty-mile range and we had plenty to spare, so it was no problem.

This experience reminded me of a 2008 road trip in a hire car that we had taken from East to West across the sparsely populated North Island of New Zealand. The advice there had also been to keep half a tank in reserve, and how right they were. The petrol station halfway across the island was closed and we arrived on the West coast seemingly running on fumes! Good preparation eclipses range anxiety, petrol or electric.



When we got to the Arctic Circle in Sweden's northern region (or the place that claimed to be it — the actual place changes with the tottering of the earth's axis) we found a car park, a few old signs and a closed restaurant. Clearly, this was not a place prepared for hordes of summer tourists! Which is a shame because, within a few tens of miles, the beautiful lakes and forests of Sweden began to give way to the Arctic tundra and signs of a change of people and culture that (at one time at least) had known no boundaries — the land of the Sami.

The Sami were, and in some cases remain, the resilient folk who had herded reindeer. Every part of a reindeer was used to support their existence in the once unbounded lands that we now call the northlands

of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Some still follow the old ways. Others have modernised, but proudly keep their Sami traditions alive.

Even the summer sunshine could not hide the change in landscape towards a more austere climate comprising lakes, rocks, declining trees, snow-clad hills and big—very big—skies swathed with air so clear that mere distance apparently held no barriers to total visual clarity. No haze here.

We stopped at a random place between Kiruna and



*Left: North of the Arctic Circle, on the road from Karuna to Narvik in Norway.*

the Norwegian border, got out of the car, paused to look at the scene and attempted the flawed process of photographing the view in the forlorn hope of capturing some kind of memory of its austere uniqueness. In truth, no mere photograph could fully catch its stunning, hard, remote, crisp beauty. We marvelled that anything or anyone could exist here in the winter months, and we were grateful that our road had punctured its remoteness to make this place accessible to unfamiliar tourists attempting to experience its otherworldly charm, where nature, vegetation and climate seemed to be in a constant battle for supremacy.



*Above: view towards the mainland from Evenes*

Sweden had been bathed in sunlight. As we neared the border along the pass between Sweden and Norway, we became increasingly and depressingly aware of a significant change in the weather. Like the Pennines splitting Lancashire and Yorkshire, the mountains between Norway and Sweden had acted as a barrier to the low cloud and rain that marked the descent towards Narvik, a strategic port of the Norwegian Northlands, the airport of which (near Evenes) would be close to our next stop for a couple of nights.

On arriving at Evenes, near the airport—gateway to the Lofoten Islands—we checked the weather forecast for the next few days. Rain. Cloud. Cold. All the time. For nine days. For the whole week that we were booked to stay, and more.

We'd already written off one day to allow for doing and drying our laundry at the flat where we stayed. Low clouds masked the mountains we were hoping to see. Next day, while the clothes dried, we ventured to Evenes village to get provisions and have a short, wet, dreary walk along the coastline. The cloud had lifted slightly to reveal a hint of the mountaintops back on the mainland and somehow, despite the damp, grey conditions, this land's end-of-world beauty could still be seen as the grey sea met the neat iron-ore red painted traditional houses. Old tractors, old cars and old roads seemed to speak of a resilient population who had, against all odds, made a good life for

themselves in this highly challenging environment. Yet the low clouds still hung close to the hills and sat over us like a dull, grey blanket, and we wondered if, in coming all this way, we had made a terrible mistake.

We decided to drive to a point west of Evenes that had been highly significant following the Second World War battles of Narvik. Between April and May 1940, the British, Polish and Norwegians had fought the Nazis at Narvik, a strategic port whose sea temperature is warmed by the Gulf Stream. This is the most northerly port facing the Norwegian Sea that stays free of sea ice in winter. Narvik had been a critical access point for the Nazis to buy and transport raw materials such as iron ore from neutral Sweden, a strategic resource that had to be protected to support the Nazi war effort.

The Allies fought a co-ordinated, two-pronged set of attacks from both land and sea that resulted in significant casualties and loss of ships for both sides, but the Allies prevailed and drove out the Nazis. Their victory was short-lived; within a month, the Allies had to turn their attention southwards to matters closer to home—the battle for France. So, the Allies abandoned Narvik to its Nazi fate. At Evenes, a strategic village that could protect the entrance to the port of Narvik, the Nazi army installed 150 soldiers on a seemingly god-forsaken promontory along with significant ammunition and a Very Big Gun. Quiet echoes of that occupation remain to this day, with crumbling evidence of the Nazi buildings, lodging, gun emplacement and the ruins of an ammunition store (see photos below).



*Above: The ruins of German communications and power rooms, gun emplacements and living quarters*

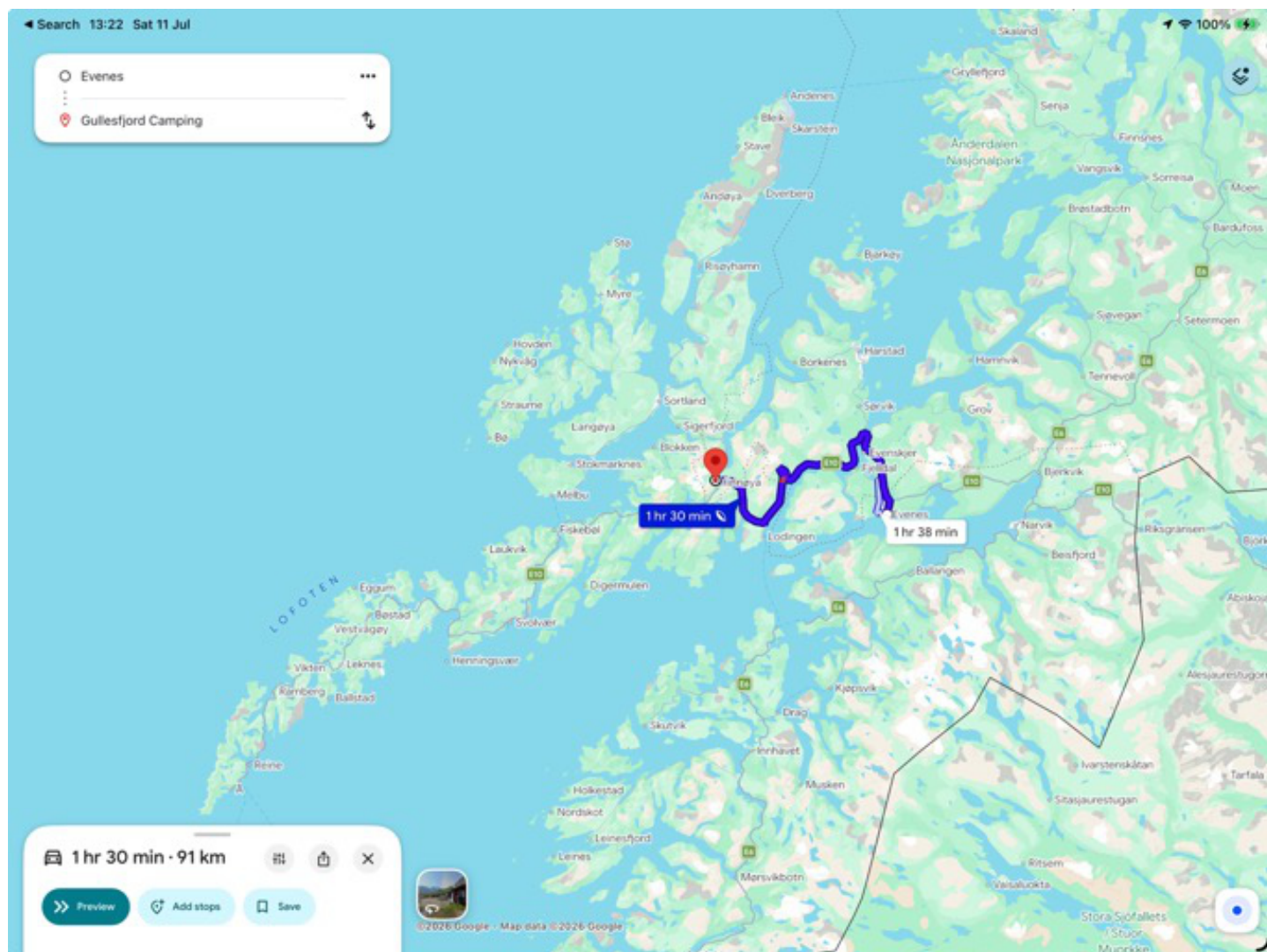
The Allies never returned. The Very Big Gun was never actually fired. After the war, the Norwegians erected a modest monument in memory of these events and those who died in the battles; a monument that, today, speaks of the utter madness of war and, perhaps, how quickly we forget its lessons.

The following morning, we awoke to slightly higher cloud and no rain. With our washing now dry, we were able to make our way westwards towards our cabin at Gullsfjord Camping, our intended base for the next six nights while, during the daytime, we intended to travel to and fro across and between the Lofoten Islands.

At this point, I should probably mention that I've been referring to the Lofoten Islands as the whole chain of islands that spread nearly 200 miles into the Norwegian Sea west-south-west of Narvik. However,

strictly speaking, that's not correct as the Lofoten Islands are only truly to the west of the chain. However, the tourist authorities are happy to describe and bunch them together with the islands nearer the Norwegian coast and, for the purposes of this account, so will we.

The islands were not always considered a tourist paradise. Its early inhabitants scratched a living from the sea and many lived in abject poverty. Things had got worse before they got better. With the advent of big oil, the diminishing need for whale products drastically reduced the population's opportunity to sell its ocean harvest and opportunities narrowed for the local people. However, Norway's oil and gas revenues also opened up opportunities to invest in improved communications and physical connectivity via bridges and tunnels to connect the islands directly with the mainland. Small villages that were falling into dereliction by the 1960s and 1970s began to be



occupied by artists and artisans. This coincided with the advent of far north tourism and returning wealth from local people who had made their fortune in big oil. The villages were saved. Now, international tourism, visiting cruise liners, motorhome adventurers, cyclists, hikers and enthusiasts like us have brought money and promotion to islands whose enduring and unerring beauty have brought pleasure to thousands – on a good day....

....And as we arrived at Gullesfjord, this was the metaphorical elephant in the room. Ardent searches of the online weather apps had yielded nothing but disappointment. Faced with six days already booked at Gullesfjord, we wondered how we might spend the predicted wet, grey, view-free low cloud that was apparently going to be our only reward for more than

2000 miles and over a week of road travel to get here to the high Norwegian Arctic. Anticipating this possibility, I'd brought on holiday a very long book, but I was hoping to see views and experience a road trip adventure, not read books.

The lack of photos in this part tells you all you need to know.

What were we thinking? We must have been nuts to have even thought this would be worth doing. Would we have to lose our accommodation deposit and head south in search of less inclement weather? Find out what happened next in Part 3...

Keith Schofield



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## Buses, Coaches and Cars at High Easter

Lodge Coaches Meet, Sunday 16th August 2026

by Ian Croxson

Lodges Coaches' headquarters in the village of High Easter, just a few miles outside Chelmsford, hosted one of JEC Essex Thameside Region's latest summer meets on a bright August morning. The shows are becoming increasingly popular, with three events held each year in March, May and August. They are consistently well attended and well managed, although advance information is often limited.



Through family connections, Derek Mathewson of Bangers and Cash fame generally makes an appearance as a 'Guest of Honour'. This August's

gathering was no different; Derek was to be found at the entrance gate working as a Traffic Marshall as well as Judge and Compere using the public address system.

Due to pre-event information not being made available on the website until late July, and with regular support from other car clubs, our slots were not confirmed until the start of August. Disappointingly, this resulted in us being granted just eight places. With over 400 cars being displayed both

privately and through other car, bus and coach clubs, we will need to act sooner if we are to support this event again. That is if they will have us!

Generally, before the show, not much interest was expressed by our members; a shame, because it is a splendid day out, even in a field with lots of concessions. Entertainment included dancing ladies of a certain age re-enacting the 1930s and 1940s and an auction that all can bid on. Both Neil Shanley and I had been to this show in previous years as spectators and were impressed by the format; suffice to say, we put it on this year's calendar.

Having said that, those JEC members who did take part were impressed, leaning towards 'We would definitely come again'. The event is charity-led, with proceeds going to Farleighs Hospice.

A 1938 Austin 10 Cambridge was auctioned by Derek and Sheldon from the TV programme and sold for £6,000.

Separately, a further £1,500 was bid for its registration plate, FAE 66.

Various awards were given to Best of Show





Commercial and Buses. Derek Mathewson's worthy winner of the 'Car I'd most like to drive home in' was a 1953 Humber Hawk estate car. A barn find and a complete nut and bolt

restoration which took 37 years to finish. A properly detailed finish it was too, with a well equipped picnic basket set and period radio amongst the props.

An early, immaculately turned out Ford Transit pickup got one of the Commercial vehicle accolades and various buses too. A particular favourite of mine, apart from Neil Wylie's Jaguar SS Drop Head Coupe, was a red Ferrari Dino GT4 of between 1974 and 1978 vintage. Not sure whether this was a replica.



A 1938 5.7-litre Super Eight Packard convertible once owned by Andy Stewart also tickled my fancy. For everyday use I quite fancied the 1961, 16,000-miles-from-new

Riley One-Point-Five. The white 1977 Austin Allegro without its rectangular steering wheel, parked behind my car got my vote for car I'd most like to be driving home in.



Towards the end of the day, and for the second time in a week, we were treated to a flying display featuring a Mustang P51 WW2 plane. It did a great impression of a crop sprayer, skimming the overgrown hedgerows. I expect that the pilot was wearing his brown trousers as it did come down very low in its quest to read registration plates!

All for a good cause and in an almost perfect setting, a nice day out. I'll be checking when bookings are due to open for 2027, but be assured that we will get in early, at the front of the queue this time. Thanks to Graham Cook, Sean Landy, Neil & Elaine Wylie, Steve Sexton, Bob & Gill Cain and Peter Shaw in being part of this special event. Definitely worthy of repeating.

Ian Croxson



# Club Clothing

## Polo Shirt: UCC Heavyweight Polo 240g/m2 50% cotton 50% polyester

|       |    |    |       |       |    |     |       |       |     |
|-------|----|----|-------|-------|----|-----|-------|-------|-----|
| SIZE  | XS | S  | M     | L     | XL | 2XL | 3XL   | 4XL   | 5XL |
| CHEST | 34 | 36 | 38-40 | 42-44 | 46 | 48  | 50-52 | 54-56 | 58  |

COLOURS Black, White, Bottle Green, Burgundy, Charcoal, Heather Grey, Navy, Red, Royal Blue



## Polo Shirt: Printer Prime 200g/m2 60% cotton, 40% polyester

|       |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |
|-------|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| SIZE  | S  | M  | L  | XL | 2XL | 3XL | 4XL | 5XL |
| CHEST | 40 | 42 | 45 | 48 | 51  | 54  | 58  | 61  |

COLOURS Anthracite/Black, Black/Anthracite, Cobalt/Navy, Navy Cobalt, Black/Red,



## Polo Shirt: Gildan Softstyle Ladies Double Pique 170g/m2 100% cotton

|            |     |      |    |    |     |
|------------|-----|------|----|----|-----|
| SIZE       | S   | M    | L  | XL | 2XL |
| DRESS SIZE | 6-8 | 8-10 | 12 | 14 | 16  |

COLOURS Black, Cherry Red, Navy, Red, Royal, Sapphire, RS Sport Grey



### NOTES:

The UCC Polos are Unisex,

Price incl Vat £14.00

The Printer is available in Ladies Sizes.

Price incl Vat £25.00 (Mens)

The Gildans are available in Men's Sizes

Price incl Vat £13.50 (Ladies)

**SweatShirt: Gildan Heavy Blend Adult Crewneck 280g/m2 50% cotton 50% polyester Price £16.50**

SIZE        S        M        L        XL        2XL        3XL        4XL        5XL

CHEST 34/36 38/40 42/44 46/48 50/55 54/56 58/60 62/64

COLOURS Black, White, Charcoal, Dark Heather, Navy, Forest Green, Indigo Blue, Red, Cherry Red, Garnet, Dark Chocolate (not all available colours shown)



**Quarter Zip; Result Polartherm Fleece 330g/m2 100% polyester Price £25.00**

SIZE        S        M        L        XL 2XL

CHEST 37 41 44 48 52

COLOURS Black, Forest Green, Navy, Oxford Grey, Red, Royal Blue



**Quarter Zip; Stormtech Men's/Ladies Pure Earth Treeline Performance 1/4 Zip**

88% polyester (44% recycled, 44% regular), 12% spandex **Price £49.00**

IZE        S        M        L        XL        2XL        3XL        4XL        5XL

CHEST 35-38 38-41 41-44 44-47 47-50 50-53 53-55 56-59

COLOURS (Black Heather, Dark Navy Heather) men, (Black Heather) Ladies



## T- Shirts

T-Shirt; Tee-Jays Men's Sof-Tee 185g/m2 100% ring spun combed cotton **Price £14.50**

SIZE      S    M    L    XL   2XL   3XL   4XL   5XL

CHEST 40 42 44 47    50    53    55    57

COLOURS   Black, White, Forrest Green, Navy, Dark Grey, Heather Grey, Powder Grey, Red, Misty Blue, Royal Blue



T-Shirt Russell Athletic 180g/m2 100% ring spun cotton **Price £7.80**

SIZE      XS      S      M      L      XL      2XL      3XL      4XL

CHEST 34-36 36-38 38-40 40-42 42-44 44-46 46-48 48-50

COLOURS Azure Blue, Black, Bottle Green, Bright Red, Bright Royal, Burgundy, Classic Red, Convoy Grey, French Navy, Indigo Blue, Light Oxford, Mineral Blue, Mocha, Natural, Olive, Powder Rose, Purple, Sky, Tan, White, Yellow. (Below is only a selection of colours)



## Caps and Badges

**Baseball Caps** Beechfield 77g 100% cotton twill

**Price £7.80**

**COLOUR** Black, Bottle Green, Burgundy, Red, French Navy, Graphite Grey, White



**Please contact Neil Shanley** if you would like to purchase any item or require any clarification. The Club does not make a profit on any item. The cost of postage is spread across all items and will amount to a few pence per article. All prices quoted include VAT. Not all colours available are shown.

There is a choice of logos; the "Wings" logo is the same as previously used and the Jaguar Enthusiast Club "Green Lozenge" is also available with "ESSEX THAMESIDE REGION" written below it. All logos are stitched.

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