



ESSEX THAMESIDE NEWS

Nº 234, October 2026



Introduction

Hello Essex Thameside members,

As those who were at yesterday's September club night meeting will now be aware, Steve Rider and Bev Warren are stepping down from the committee and from their roles as Chairman and Membership Secretary respectively.

We would like to offer sincere thanks to them both for everything they have contributed and achieved for us, and for the considerable work they have put into the club over the past three years since they took on their roles in July 2023 and, in Steve's case, since he first joined the committee some years before that.

As Chairman, Steve has steered the club effectively during the least three years, overseeing the move of our club HQ from Langdon Hills Golf Club to our present arrangements with Essex Police, deepening our relationship as a region with the national JEC, and guiding our annual programme of events, contributing hugely to our 35th anniversary barbecue in particular. Both Steve and Bev have been tireless in supporting our monthly club night meetings with welcome innovations such as occasional spud nights, the Halloween and Christmas festivities and, of course, printing out copies of the newsletters and ensuring a regular supply of teas, coffees and snacks. And that is not to forget Nick welcoming everyone and maintaining the register of attendees. We offer our grateful thanks to each of them.

With regard to the future, Vice-Chairman Lester Magness will now step up to take on the Chairman's responsibilities and we extend our best wishes to him in that role. With regard to the Membership Secretary's duties, Richard Gibby already maintains

the database of Essex Thameside members and also links to the main JEC database; we will, however, need some help in handling our membership renewals (for those who pay in person) next March/April. And we hope that at least one more person will be willing to join the committee.

As this year's season is coming towards an end, we can look back on an excellent programme of events, shows and trips during 2026. Starting with January's talk by Ken McConomy, JLR's Global Head of PR, we learned a great deal about JLR's thinking and we are all looking forward to the full launch of the new Jaguar Type 00. We also had a first joint breakfast meet with the Porsche Enthusiasts Club - an event we shall repeat in January 2027. A special highlight was the 'Grand East Anglia Tour' attended by some 40 people in 20 cars and organised by Vaughn High following on from his Cotswolds tour in 2025. Working together, Vaughn and Geoff Monk also organised the trip to the Isle of Wight just a couple of weeks ago - by all accounts another really successful trip that was much enjoyed by everyone.

Of course, we can still look forward to three more highlights this year in the visit to Brooklands this coming weekend, a breakfast meet with the Porsche Club at the Galvin Green Man in Great Waltham on 17th October and, of course, the Christmas bash at the Ivy Hill Hotel in December. The first event of 2027, on Sunday 3 January, will be a repeat of this year's breakfast meet with the Porsche Club in Summerhills Garden Centre.

Happy motoring.

Committee Members

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

For Your Diary

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

Shows, Events and Trips		<i>Contact:</i>
Sun 4 October	Coffee & Cars with the JEC, at Brooklands Museum	Ian
Sat 17 October	Breakfast Meet with Porsche Club at Galvin Green Man, Chelmsford CM3 1BG	Ian
Sat 12 December	Christmas Dinner Dance at the Ivy Hill Hotel, Margareting CM4 0EH	Neil
Sun 3 Jan 2027	Breakfast with Porsche Club at Summerhill Garden Centre, Billericay CM11 2UJ	Ian

Contact Details:

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Richard Gibby	07866 268522	rwgibby@gmail.com
Steve Rider	07969 572010	srider@live.co.uk
Vaughn High	07910 787411	vaughn.high@sky.com



"Tram Lines" 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 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'



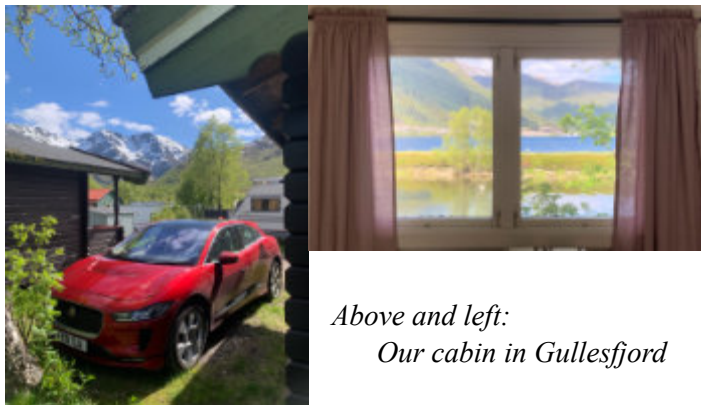
Keith Schofield: Around Norway in an EV

Part 3 – Lofoten Islands

Our previous two episodes covered the long journey to the Arctic Circle in our seven year-old electric Jaguar I-Pace. We had experienced stunningly good weather throughout the journey north, enjoying capital city breaks in Copenhagen and Stockholm. However, Part 2 ended with low cloud and dour forecasts for bad weather as we arrived at what was intended to be the culmination (and half-way point) of our road trip to Norway's Lofoten Islands, now well beyond the Arctic Circle. We pick up the account on our trip from Evenes to Gulletfjord.

As we arrived in Gulletfjord, the predicted poor weather 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 Gulletfjord, we wondered how we might endure 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.

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?



*Above and left:
Our cabin in Gulletfjord*

Happily, on arrival the actual weather confounded the forecast, and what we were very fortunate to experience was fine weather the like of which we've never experienced before in North Norway, with bright, sunny, warm nights and sunny (sometimes hot) days ranging from 15°C to 23°C. Accompanying this fine weather on the many road trips we undertook during the week were fine views around almost every corner of every road trip, with picturesque and working harbours, good food, creative art, crafts and characterful villages to satisfy our every wish (at a price!). In the near and far distance, we were treated to white sandy beaches the like of which a seasoned traveller might expect to see in the Caribbean, azure blue waters that would challenge any Pacific beach, mountain views that would charm the Swiss, and clear air with fifty mile views that would satisfy even the most discerning of clear air enthusiasts in New Zealand.

Our journey from Evenes to Gulletfjord had been just 25 miles as the crow flies but 55 miles by road, but as we arrived at our cabin it was as if we had entered another world, with the brackish water of the tidal river spilling into the peaceful sea waters of Gulletfjord.

Day 12 presented an opportunity to drive the 50 or so miles to Henningsvaer, a fishing village much beloved by cruise ships, tourists and, latterly, adventurer Simon Reeve in his excellent programme on journeying through Scandinavia. The journey and the destination views were nothing short of stunning! One of the hardest tasks is to capture for this report the 3D wonder in a 2D photograph, so what you see here is a pale reflection of what we experienced while travelling the quiet roads of the Norwegian Arctic.

Below: the road approaching Henningsvaer



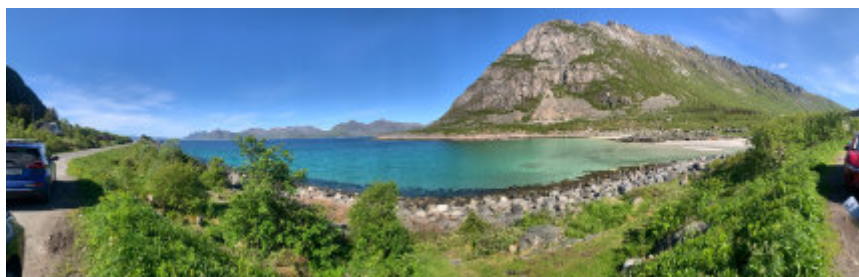
As we approached Henningsvaer, the smooth roads clung to the coastline like a charcoal-grey tape, and boldly traversed man-made causeways and bridges surrounded by deep blue seas, tracing views edged with Lofoten and mainland mountains in the far distance: each turn of the road revealing yet another postcard vista.

Our destination did not disappoint.

The village itself presented, clinging to the shoreline and protected by a stone causeway barrier, an intoxicating combination of artisan fishing warehouses and boats, artsy shops, cafés and restaurants, homes of well-to-do Norwegians with their marine cruisers, and small workshops of makers and creatives. It shouldn't work but it just does.



The village of Henningsvaer



Above: the beach near Kabelvåg

One of our favourite stopping points was to view the azure sea giving way to a sheltered, white, sandy beach. How could such a place that should rightly have belonged in the waters of the Caribbean be at a place so far north? We'll never know but there it is!

But the excitement of day 12 wasn't yet over. The site of the cabin was located in a national park, and as the daylight remained but the clock ticked towards midnight, we were greeted by the sight of wild deer grazing on the green grass dividing river from sea, and as the daylight refused to be dispatched to night, the sunlight clung to the mountaintops.

What a day!





Above: Gullesfjord camping

My diary continues:

"A check on the weather predicted dour clouds and heavy rain the day after tomorrow. In less than 24 hours, despite the 24 hour light, would the islands reveal a colder, darker side? Only time would tell...."

"But before that, as daylight challenged the dusk, a collection of wild deer munched the rich green grass on the other bank of the river as it wended its lazy way to the still waters of the fjord. In the shallows just off the near bank of the delta, a gull stamped the sandy lakebed in an attempt to lure its favourite foods upwards through the riverbed and within pecking distance. As the daylight and sunlight lingered atop the mountains surrounding Gullesfjord, tiredness took over and our vision dulled by the eyepatches: a necessity for sleep, we wondered what visual treats tomorrow might hold in the last of the predicted sunny days to come."

"On Day 13 we awoke to bright sunshine, a crisp mountain view, clear air, and the sounds of known and unknown birdsong. Not being a twitcher, I would give a name to sources of the unknown calls. Today's newly heard sound was from a bird I christened a woodwarbler."

"We headed down to Vestvagoya island to Stamsund (just beyond Solvaer on the map). On the way every new vista could have graced a postcard, with the blue sky reflected in the deep blue sea punctuated by small islands, with the pale mainland mountains acting as a distant stage backdrop to the interface between land and sea. At last, the almost empty windy roads presented an opportunity really to drive the Jag rather than teasing it along the smooth main highways. The old coast road hugged every turn of the land as it gave way to the sea, making it an opportunity to open up, corner, brake and accelerate with consummate ease."



Back at Gullesjord we began to think about the places we might visit on the journey back south. Perhaps the Atlantic Road, perhaps the Trollstigen pass, Geirangerfjord and others. But of more immediate concern was how we would spend the rest of the week here, as the weather was due to break tomorrow afternoon. As we'd already experienced near Narvik, the weather here changes everything, and we didn't want to miss out on a thing.

The weather again defied the dour predictions! We awoke to clear blue skies. We decided to head north to a tiny place called Nyksund (near Stø on the map). Ten years ago

"Soon the coast road gave way to wider vistas, and as we headed back to the cabin, the fifty-mile ride along the main road rewarded with sweeping bends, opening up new mountains, plains, fields, coastlines, lakes and sea views to punctuate the journey back to our temporary home at Gullesjord. We put the car on charge at the site: £34p per kWh (equivalent to less than 9p per mile), the lowest rate so far."

we had visited it for no other reason than the name sounded like my wife's maiden name, and we wanted to return to see how the years had treated it. We crossed over a marvellous bridge to its island and headed north. Eventually the metalled road gave out to an unmade up road, which when passing oncoming traffic gave us an opportunity to exercise the Jag's air suspension capability to raise the ride height to travers the roadside pits without troubling

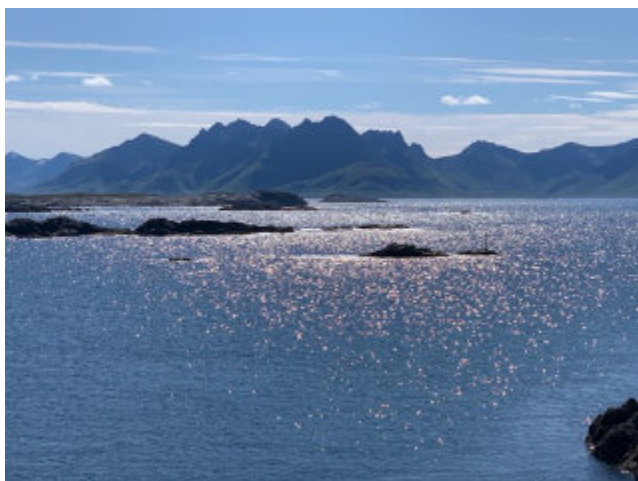
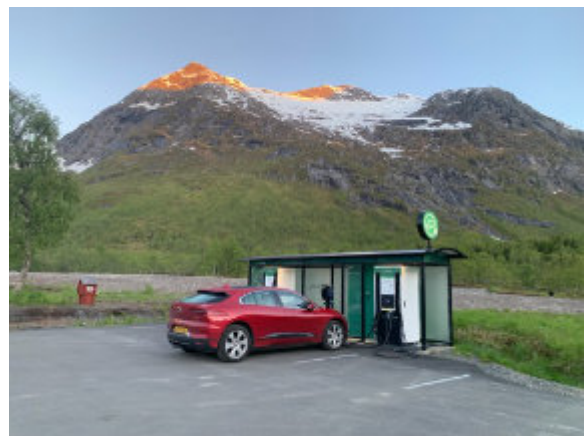


the I-Pace's underside. The road only emphasised the feeling that we were travelling to a far away place at the very edge of civilisation, yet along the way the route was punctuated by tiny settlements. On arrival, unburdened by cloud or wind, the sun cut through and we had to duck inside a café where a chat with the owner revealed two additional sights to see on the same island. Nyksund, an ancient tiny fishing settlement that had trodden the familiar path of more recent developments in art, tourism and eating lay defiantly jutting into the sea with its own protected port, so before heading on to view the island's other beauties we looked around and enjoyed a simple meal. As if locked onto any man-made ledge on the side of the tin warehouses, hundreds of young gulls called out like eerie, ghostly human babies seeking attention from their mothers returning to feed them with their latest catch. As we headed away, the sunlight glistening on the gentle waves on the sea appeared like ten thousand diamonds. Truly this felt like a magical place at the gateway to nowhere.

This account necessarily misses out some of the journeys, but the time came for us to make the decision whether to head south or purchase an extra

night's stay at our little cabin in Gullesfjord. We had two problems. Firstly, the weather was forecast to break badly, and secondly, we had never actually ventured into the 'real' Lofoten islands over seventy miles to the west of Gullesfjord (and much further by road). It was decision time. Would we risk a 260km round trip to Reine in the far west, or would we escape into better weather further south on the mainland? Find out what happened in the next part of our epic Norway road trip!

To be continued....





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Coffee & Cars with the JEC at Bridge Classic Cars

By Neil Shanley



This event, held on 12th July, unfortunately clashed with one of our regulars, the Orsett Classic & Vintage Show. Therefore, we chose deliberately not to advertise this Coffee & Cars heavily to our members. As a result, just four members made the trip: Vaughn and Julie High with myself as your writer and my wife, Sue.

Bridge Classic Cars is a restoration, repairs and servicing business set in Pettistree, a small village near Woodbridge in the county of sleepy Suffolk. You can almost feel your heart rate slowing as you enter the county from Essex. When we arrived, there were already a few cars present – mainly Jaguars from the members of our neighbours, the Essex & Suffolk Borders Region, although slightly later an Aston Martin Vanquish Volante II made an appearance. This 2014 example featured Amethyst Red bodywork (one of only four made, in that colour and the only one in



the UK), a 6.0 quad cam V12 with a top speed of 183 mph and an economy listed as “not really”. Its Winter Wheat interior colour makes this car unique.



JEC's Jake Harvey and girlfriend were manning the JEC tent and gave us a warm welcome despite the tent blowing over from time to time. Attendance was disappointing, despite the glorious weather, although this did allow us to gain a more individual tour of the facilities. The tours did feel a little haphazard and not particularly well planned. There were some lovely cars to see in various stages of restoration: Bristols, Aston Martins and Porsches were with an MG YT only driven to obtain an MOT, a Fraser Nash, a BMW 319 and a Bentley MK VI Drophead in for restoration. An MGB GT owned by the previous CEO of Stellantis was being built from a Heritage shell with no expense spared – estimated cost to be over £100,000!! I doubt he will ever get his money back.

I was surprised to learn that the business runs a weekly competition in which anyone in the UK can win a classic car from around £7 to £10 per ticket. Cars currently available to win included a Jaguar XKR, an Aston Martin DB7 and a Jaguar XJS. The prize draws are live on line. Good luck!

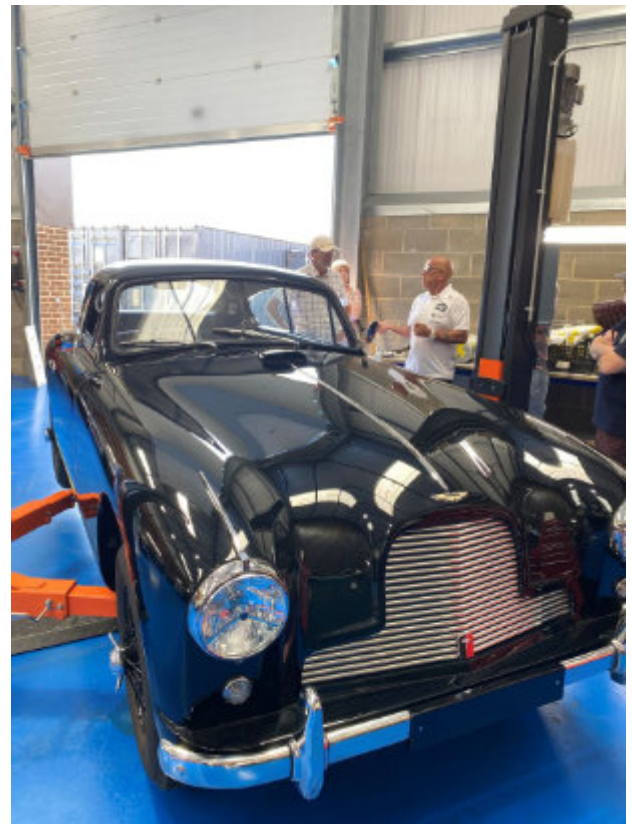
The premises have a licensed bar which also sold our morning coffee.

An interesting place but this scribe did feel that the staff, apart from "the boss", could have engaged more with the visitors and that some food should have been on offer together with free coffee. as has

been the case at similar venues.

Not to waste the rest of the lovely Sunday, Vaughn, Julie, Sue and I drove down the road to Woodbridge where Vaughn had booked Sunday lunch in The Cherry Tree Inn. This 17th century pub serves excellent food in generous proportions in a well-cared for outside garden area and also offers accommodation. Having spent a couple of hours there we headed home – roof down all the way!

Neil Shanley



Clacton Classic Car Club Show, 30th August

By Ian Croxson

The last Sunday in August and 20 JEC Essex Thameside region members and their cars took part in the Clacton Classic Car Club Show. A lovely mix of all marques included classics, modern day classics, trucks and bikes, with a variety of trade stalls. Organised by David Souter and the Clacton Classic Car Club on a fine but blustery sunny day, as befitting the Essex Riviera, a great time was had by all.

The show attracted some 450 vehicles and is part of a collection of three annual events with the August Bank Holiday weekend one being the last of the current year.

Despite a breakdown en route at Boreham Services there were no major catastrophes and some truly wonderful exhibits in very relaxed surroundings. See the photos below of some of the cars and trucks on display.

This is one event that we cannot miss for 2027 and provided there is sufficient interest from our members, we will be back again next year.



Above: 1955 Cadillac series 62 convertible

Left: Elsie, a 1987 Bedford MJP 4-ton, second-last off the production line with just 14,500 miles - last seen in active service in Ulster

Left above: Superb 1976/77 XJC in Avocado Green with 34,000 miles

Left below: One of only three remaining Singer 111B's from 1961 - price when new £575 + purchase tax





Above: Whose Chopper?

Right: 'On yer bike' - a few of the Birmingham Small Arms finest



Left: 1957 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz convertible



Above: Rolls Royce Silver Wraith - the company's first post-war model (1946-1958). Yours for just £39,500



Left: Bedford Dormobile - best quality coachwork from Folkestone - Carry On Camping!

A day with JDC Area 33 at William de Ferrers School

By Neil Shanley



William de Ferrers was the 4th Earl of Derby (1168 – 1247) and a favourite of King John. He was head of a large family which controlled much of Derby. He later switched his allegiance to King Richard after the latter's return from the 3rd Crusade. There is lots more history to his story involving King John, the Pope, the nine-year old King Henry III, King Edward II, the Earl of Chester and many more, but does anyone care now? Suffice it to say that, in later years, William suffered from severe attacks of gout, a disease which finally killed him.

And, what about the school which proudly bears his name? Well, it is a "foundation comprehensive", state-funded and non-selective, but with some control of its allocated running costs and budget and, of course, resides in South Woodham Ferrers, a rural town in Essex which was given to Henry de Ferrers, an ancestor of William, by William the Conqueror after the Norman Conquest. (Too many Williams!)

Now onto the Show held under a scorching sun on



the school's ample playing fields. This is the local JDC's new site and their first show here following the cancellation of the Hyde Hall venue. Rumour has it that the RHS thought that the yearly car event did not make enough money to be worth the effort in staging it – who knows? This first outing was reasonably well attended but the spacious grounds swallowed it with space to spare and this writer thought that the public attendance was thin on the ground, together with just a few trade stalls. Still, not a bad start and perhaps next year, as word gets around, it will be busier. Congratulations go to Area 33 for a splendid effort. Our club fielded a good number of cars – and we won Car of the Show for Steve Sexton's Superb XJS FVX 447Y! The award was given by the Mayor. All in all, a good day out.





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