



HAPPY 91st BIRTHDAY TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

Colin's Blog- A new beginning

colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk 21.4.2017

Dear all,

I hope that you have all managed to take some time off during the Easter Break, and that, like me, you have managed to recharge your batteries, ready to face whatever challenges that are lurking around the corner.

Accompanied by my wife, sister-in-law and brother-in-law, I enjoyed a brilliant cruise, evening meal and entertainment on the showboat, along the River Thames. With songs from the golden years of Abba, Motown and Dirty Dancing, I found myself well and truly **'In the Zone!'** I even attempted to dance the Twist (not a pretty sight), then half way down, I suddenly realised, that it wasn't compatible with my Osteoarthritis.

It did bring to mind words from a song originally sung by Celine Dion, and now in the score of the latest Disney Beauty and the Beast film: -

How does a moment last forever?

How can a story never die?

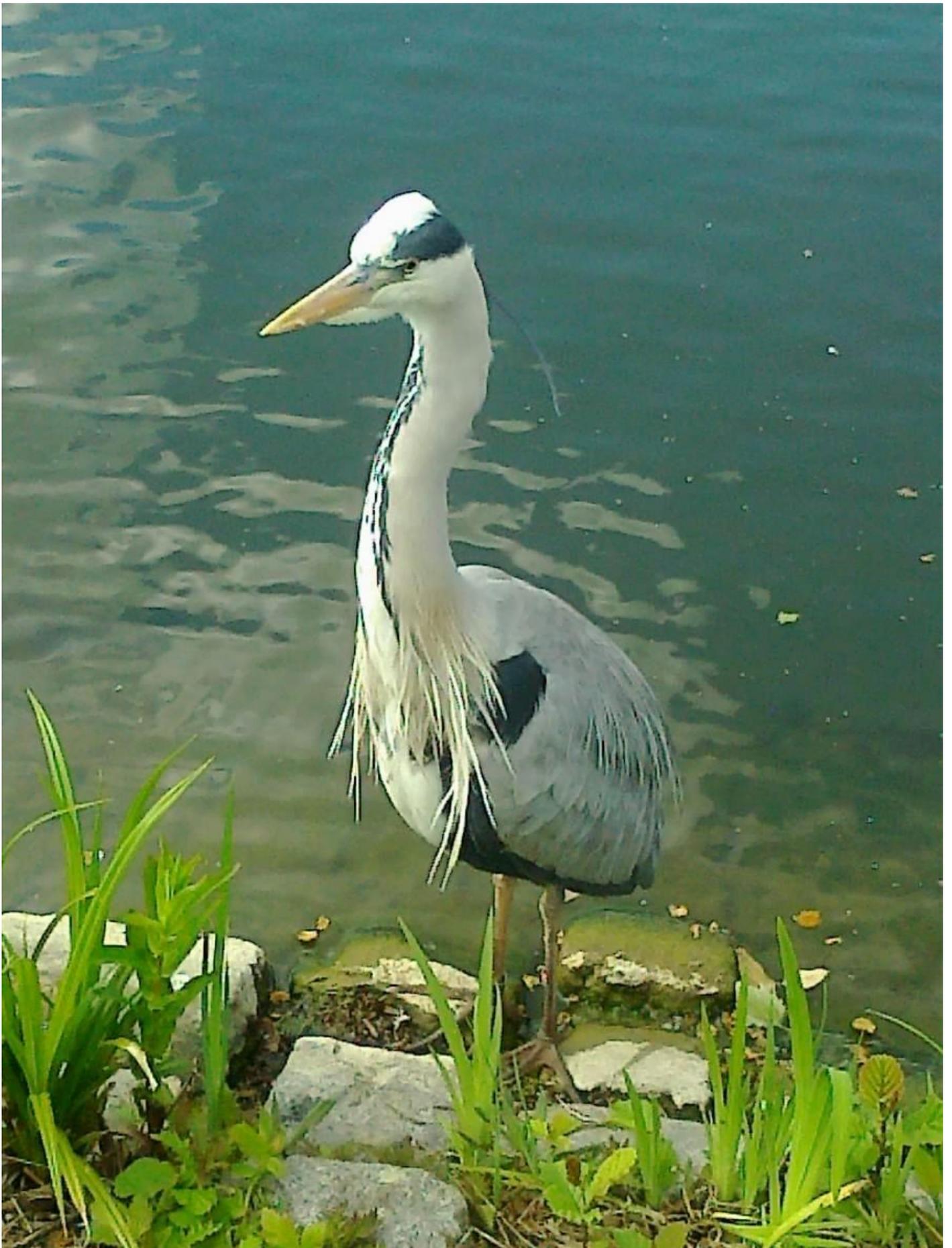
How does a moment last forever?

Answer: When our song lives on!

If you haven't managed to see the film, might I suggest that, you really should see this inspirational film!

For someone, who cannot read music, or play a musical instrument, music has always played an important role in my life, and has helped me through the up's and down's and challenges that one faces on a regular basis!

Changing the tempo, we visited Battersea Park yesterday, somewhere that I haven't visited since my days at prep school in Walthamstow. We were all very impressed at the way the park has been developed over the years, into a wonderful open space with excellent amenities. A fantastic display of flowers, bushes and trees, almost convincing the visitor that it is a rural park in the countryside. After a very energetic evening, it was great to feel that this is a place of peace and tranquility in the heart of the throbbing and vibrant, London scene. My day was enhanced even more when I came face to face with a magnificent Heron, watching me, watching him, just a couple of feet away, on the bank of a beautifully landscaped lake.



WATCHING ME, WATCHING YOU!

As you know, I am winding down towards my impending retirement, when I will be able to pick and choose what I want to undertake to support, without having to worry if I have sufficient annual leave left!

It has long been my objective to try to rekindle Neighbourhood Watch in Harlow. Following a meeting held on Monday 10th April, this is now coming to fruition, and I am delighted to say that we now have an enthusiastic committee, ready to take Neighbourhood Watch forward. Helped by Roger Passfield, the NhW County co-ordinator, I have vowed to continue to mentor the new committee and to support them whilst they gain their footing, and spread their wings throughout Harlow!

You will be aware that I will continue to be actively involved with both Epping Forest and Brentwood Neighbourhood Watch, and as a Trustee of Essex County NhW Association, so I cannot see myself getting bored.

Harlow NhW are holding their first information and recruitment stall in the Harvey Centre, Harlow, between 9am – 1pm on Friday 28th April 2017. So, if you happen to be in Harlow Town Centre at the time, please come across and say 'Hello!'

As I am not in the best of condition, I am refraining from dancing around the Maypole on Bank Holiday Monday, however, I will be at the Community evening which is being held between 10am – 3pm in the Budworth Hall, Ongar.

You will find me hovering between the Ongar Rotary stall, and the Neighbourhood Watch stall, hoping to entice people to join one or both of these very worthy organisations!

I understand that it is hoped to appoint someone to take over my Essex Watch Liaison Offer's role soon, and I will keep everyone informed as to the progress of this. Meanwhile, as the NhW database controller / administrator, I will continue my weekly blog, which still seems to be well received by my subscribers.

KEEP ALERT, KEEP SECURE, KEEP SAFE AND HAVE A GOOD WEEKEND!

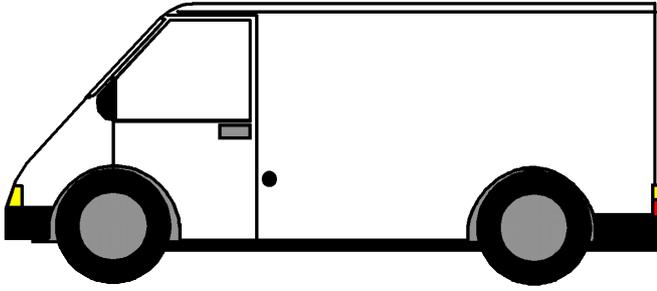


NEIGHBOURHOOD MATTERS

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**THE ESSENCE OF COMMUNITY
COHESION THROUGHOUT ESSEX**



Theft from Vans

Vans have been entered and tools have been removed, if you own or know a neighbour, friend or workmate who owns a van make them aware.

Think about security, especially when working away from home and parking at a hotel.

If you have tools on board think about removing them overnight if possible and add signage to your vehicle to indicate you have done so. Also make a point of property marking your equipment both overtly and covertly.

Please also take on board the following advice: -

- **DON'T** tempt thieves by leaving any items on display.
- **DO CLEAN THE SAT NAV RING** off the windscreen.
- **DO TURN BLUETOOTH OFF** anything left in the car – it can be detected when on.
- **DO** lock your vehicle at all times, close windows, and set the alarm, even when parked on your driveway or when carrying out any work.
- **DO PARK REAR DOORS ON VANS up against garage doors or other to prevent access where possible.**
- **DO NOT** just press the button on your fob to lock it – Look at your car to see the lights flash etc to confirm locking; someone may be nearby with a “remote blocker” and stop your car from locking.
- **DO** try to park in a secure, well lit area were possible, if parking at a hotel try and park within view of reception, CCTV cameras or your room.
- **Do** mark tools and property visibly with your post code and house number, and consider products such as CRE Mark, Selecta DNA and Smart Water.
- **Do** register serial numbers of your property on www.immobilise.com this is completely free service. Please visit the website for more information.
- **Do** consider having additional security door locks fitted, they make it harder for the thief and are a great visual deterrent.
- **Do** consider having a safe box secured within the vehicle and keep it locked.

- **Do** consider a PIR alarm that calls you on the mobile phone when activated, intended for sheds work just as well in a van.
- If using a public car park – Try to use a “Parkmark” approved car park Copy and paste: www.parkmark.co.uk

Empty your van or car before someone else does.

For further crime prevention advice, copy and paste: - <https://www.essex.police.uk/advice/your-property/vehicles/> or dial 101 and ask for your local Crime Prevention Officer. If you know who is committing crime call 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111



Wonga has confirmed a data breach where up to 250,000 accounts have been compromised. The incident is now being investigated by the police and has been reported to the Financial Conduct Authority. Wonga has **updated their website with further information** and confirmed that they

are contacting all those affected and are taking steps to protect them, but there are also some things you can do to keep your information secure.

Here's what you can do to make yourself safer:-

If any of your financial details were compromised, notify your bank or card company as soon as possible. Review your financial statements regularly for any unusual activity.

Criminals can use personal data obtained from a data breach to commit identity fraud. Consider using credit reference agencies, such as Experian or Equifax, to regularly monitor your credit file for unusual activity.

Be suspicious of any unsolicited calls, emails or texts, even if it appears to be from a company you know of. Don't open the attachments or click on links within unsolicited emails, and never disclose any personal or financial details during a cold call.

If you have been a victim of fraud or cyber crime, please report it to us: Copy and Paste: http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

ActionFraud
 Report Fraud & Internet Crime
0300 123 2040

Stop press

On the news last night, a report of another terrorist attack, this time in France, and as the Country prepares for their Presidential Election!

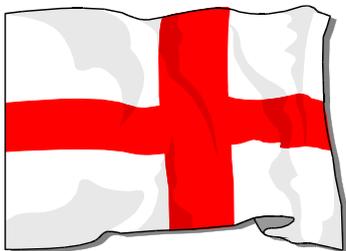
As we too, enter a period of 'Election Fury,' first with the local elections on the 4th May, then the General Election on the 8th June, this is a timely reminder to us all to

KEEP ALERT, KEEP SECURE AND KEEP SAFE, making sure that we report any crime or suspicious activities to the Police, RIGHT AWAY.

In the case of suspected Terrorist activity, please use the Terrorist Hotline:-



In times of crisis, our British answer is often: 'Let's make a cup of tea!' Well it would be appropriate to do so today, as apparently Friday 21st April is, would you believe: NATIONAL TEA DAY. With this in mind, I've just put the kettle on! Damn, I've just realised that I have eaten the last Hot Cross Bun!



On Sunday 23rd April, many people, especially, those who are involved with Scouts and Girl Guides movements, will be preparing to celebrate St. George's Day.

If only he was still around, he could help us fight the dragons and obstacles that will probably emerge as we go through the

Brexit process! **Rule Britannia!!!!**



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Go forward - Through life, Wasting not a moment.

Use your time attempting to achieve your Goals and fulfil your ambitions.

Allocate time to give something back, Through helping others less fortunate than Yourself.

Take Care,
Colin