

Letter to the parish from Kathryn Alford, Curate



It was fantastic to finally arrive at St Etheldreda's and St Luke's at the end of June after visiting last year. Thank you to everyone who has given me such a warm welcome.

Hatfield is a town I knew well growing up, as I'm originally from Welwyn Garden City. The pointy roofed swimming pool was a regular haunt of my teenage years, and I even roller-skated through the Hatfield A1(M) tunnel the day before that stretch of motorway opened!

Lovely as Welwyn Hatfield is, I was desperate to move to a city by the end of school, and I therefore chose to study History at Manchester University. After university, Daniel (my now husband) and I moved to Bristol. It was there that I started a 23-year career as a civil servant in the Ministry of Defence and other Government Departments.

Daniel and I returned to Welwyn in 2004 to raise our children Bill (16) and Lena (14).

The latest addition to the family is Molly – a 6-year-old Labrador. She enjoys coming on long runs with me, and taking up too much room in our ancient VW Campervan.

Although some people know from an early age that they are being called to priesthood, my journey to ordination came as more of a surprise! As a child I went to church with my parents; however, I drifted away in my teens and declared myself an atheist in my 20s.

By my 30s, I sensed something was missing in my life, but I just couldn't work out what that was. Eventually the penny dropped, and I connected this feeling with a spiritual longing. After a lengthy period of exploration, an old school friend invited me to attend St Mary's church, Welwyn in 2007. I instantly felt like I'd 'come home' and it was then that I became a Christian.

Kathryn's letter continues on page 3

Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke

St Etheldreda's Church Services

SUNDAY: 9.30^{am} Holy Communion

WEDNESDAY: 10^{am} Holy Communion

THURSDAY: 7^{pm} Holy Communion,
or Compline

St Luke's Church Service

SUNDAY: 11.30^{am} Holy Communion,
with Hymns

Online Services

Tune in at the following times to join us:

SUNDAY: 9.30^{am} Parish Eucharist

MON-FRI: 7.30^{am} Morning Prayer

MON-FRI: 9^{pm} Compline

www.facebook.com/StEthHat/

St Eth's & St Lukes' churches will be open for private prayer—see back page for details

Please contact Fr Darren to book your Wedding or Baptism

t: 01707 256638 e: frdarren@yahoo.co.uk

Parish of Bishop's Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke : Registered Charity No.1152011
St Etheldreda's Church, Fore Street, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL9 5AN

A few words from the Rector

After a long time of uncertainty, I welcome you back to worship with us in our two churches.

Assuming no government interventions occur between the time of my writing (mid August), and you reading this, both St Etheldreda's and St Luke's churches are open again for public worship with a full range of 'in church' services (as shown above).

However, as we live in such strange times, these plans may well be overruled by government regulations at any time. Our Website and Facebook page will update you with any such changes.

Full social-distancing measures (including face masks) will be in place at both churches and we are required to ask those attending for contact details for 'track and trace' purposes.

Our online services, including the Online Parish Eucharist on Sundays at 9.30am, will continue as usual until further notice, and both churches offer quiet time for prayer in the week. Timing details for these can be found above and on the back page.



**Team Rector
Father Darren Collins**

Letter to the Parish from Kathryn Alford continued from front page

I'll save the full story of my high-speed journey from newbie Christian to ordination for another time, but the turning point came in 2014 when I found myself taking a year long career break to work for the Diocese of St Albans. My role included listening to vicars' experiences, and it was during these conversations that I began to sense some sort of calling to ministry.

After trying (and failing) to ignore this seemingly ridiculous notion, I eventually entered 18 months of official exploration, followed by 3 years of training part-time for ordination on the Eastern Region Ministry Course. Due to Covid-19, I've started my curacy with you as a licensed lay minister. This hopefully means I'll have the chance to share with you my happiness at being ordained a deacon in late September.

It's been wonderful to meet lots of you over the last few months and to start to join in with what God's doing in St Etheldreda's, St Luke's, and Hatfield.

If we haven't yet met or spoken, please do get in touch. As my family and friends will confirm, I love chatting and getting to know people!

With love Kathryn

Kathryn Alford—Curate

E: alfordkathryn@gmail.com T: 01707 327031



What's On at Hatfield House in September



In early August the Chamber Music Festival come to Hatfield House to film some performances for the 2020 festival in the House.

Because, rather than abandoning this year's festival (due to COVID restrictions), it was felt important to keep the musicians seen and heard, and above all employed.

So, 2020 performances will be broadcast live on Friday evenings through the month of September as well as being available to view afterwards.

4, 11, 18 & 25 SEPTEMBER

**HATFIELD HOUSE CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL –
ONLINE STREAMED CONCERTS**

The 9th Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival will take place with four chamber concerts to be made available as free online streams.

**6 SEPTEMBER @ 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM—TUDOR
LEGACIES- MEET THE SIX WIVES OF HENRY VIII**

17 SEPTEMBER @ 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

BLOOMING BUBBLES

Join our Head Gardener Andrew Turvey for an enlightening evening tour of our Historic Gardens.

22 SEPT @ 6:00 PM - 27 SEPT @ 10:00 PM

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A farewell message from Rev Penny ...

Everything is changing. The days are getting shorter and cooler. The leaves on the trees are mellowing into shades of russet, cinnamon, and golden yellow. Hanging like jewels amongst the leaves, purple and red berries are swelling, a generous source of food for insects and birds, who are busily preparing for harsher months to come.

We have seen so much unprecedented change in the last six months. Sadly, many have lost loved ones, many have fallen ill; some have lost their means of supporting themselves and some have lost their direction. Children have had their schooling disrupted and along with many adults have been isolated from friends and beloved family members.

But in amongst the tragedies and sorrows, many lovely things have happened. Camaraderie reignited, as neighbours stood in the streets every Thursday evening and clapped in gratitude of the NHS and Care Workers. The thousands of people who rushed to sign up and help deliver shopping, medicines, and keep a watchful eye on those shielding, the elderly, the infirm. The amazing and heart-warming achievements of Captain Tom who engaged in a simple daily walk around his garden, to raise money for NHS charities. Capturing the imagination of so many, he raised £32 million by the morning of his 100th birthday, money donated through the generosity of people inspired by his story.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed God's message of encouragement saying: *"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."*

The difficulties we face with the Corona virus will still be heavily influencing how we act and feel for some time, but this new way of living can open up new possibilities for us to do some new things. This is a new opportunity for us to remember Jesus' teaching to love our neighbour and resolve to help our neighbours and our neighbourhood, in fresh ways - ways which might be as radical and, as seemingly impossible, as trying to make rivers run through the desert.

In his letter to the Galatian church, St Paul tried to encourage the new believers saying: *"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."*



The Rev. Dr. Penny Thomson

So, changing times and challenging times, but times in which we should feel encouraged and can try to do something good, that for us might be new: little acts of kindness.

In Psalm 100 we are reminded that: **"the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."** Even in seasons of change and times of uncertainty, God is our perpetual friend, always ready to hear us and to comfort us when we ask him for help.

Three years ago, I introduced myself to the Refocused readers as the new Curate to St Eth's and St Luke's. Well, we now have a lovely new Curate – Kathryn Alford who will shortly be ordained and licenced to the Bishop's Hatfield Team. And it is time for me to move on – time for a change. I am not going far – to St Mary's Church in North Mymms, where I am looking forward to a new season, with different opportunities, as an Associate priest, helping the vicar: the Rev Ruth Barr, and joining a new fellowship of Christian believers.

I have loved being your Curate at St Eth's and St Luke's – thank you for praying for me and caring for me. I will miss meeting in our worship, and at other times too, so many kind and generous, warm-hearted and good-natured people.

God bless you—Penny

School Starts! by Jo roscoe

Yes, school starts a new year on 1st September.

But before we think about the year ahead, let us give some thought to the year ended in July. The usual rite of passage which Year Six would undergo: its emotional farewells, its sense of achievement, the close relationships forged between fellow pupils and staff.

How could the usual ceremonies take place within the limits set by COVID-19? I know that the staff felt an element of grief about this and possibly the children also had a feeling of regret and of things unfinished.

But in fact the children were brought together by the miracle of technology and produced a most beautiful YouTube presentation “Blessing“, singing a blessing of farewell and amen. It has been viewed by 1000 people and more already including in

India, China, Africa and Australia and is still being accessed. Do watch it if you are able. No matter how many times I view it, I am moved to tears.

The link is <https://youtu.be/IRpcf2IkuFw>

Please pass it on, especially to former pupils of the school. I have spoken to many and they speak of their affection and gratitude for their time at Countess Anne and for the happy healthy base it provided to their lives.

And now a new school year and a new set of children will be starting their journey (Covid allowing!).

As a church and as a community we have much to be thankful for in our church school and its staff. Let us be mindful of them in our formal and informal prayers.

Give us this day our daily bread: by Irena from Falcon Kitchens

A little over two years ago, I was lucky enough to open Falcons Kitchens in Salisbury Square.

I loved it from the very first day. The local community has welcomed me with open arms. I have met many kind, gentle and wonderful people, and I have very much enjoyed the coffee and chats we have had. I have also listened to many stories, past and present, and heard about people’s hopes for the future.

From the very start I noticed that this community is something special and unique; I lived in Barnet and now I live in Welwyn Garden City, but I never encountered such a strong community spirit as I have in Old Hatfield.

People simply care about each other, and if somebody is unwell or has a problem, people will try to help - it might be a small thing such as simply knocking on somebody’s door to check on them.

When the lockdown happened, and I had to close the shop, due to being non-essential as a kitchen showroom; I was upset. When I realised that I could open the shop if I was selling food, I set up to do so. People started to order and come to collect their shopping. We were all scared and anxious, however yet again this community pulled together. People were buying food for their neighbours and looking after one another.

With the flour and fresh yeast I was selling, people started to bake bread and pizza and to put pictures of what they had baked on the Facebook page. When I saw this for the first time I was so happy. We shared recipes for bread. A few people came to the shop and brought their bread with them, either some slices or whole loaves

for me to taste. We had a few laughs about our experiments with baking bread, as for many of us, it was for the very first time.

In this square there are not many businesses, but the local people are trying their best to support the ones that are here.

In all of this confusion, fear and anxiety, people are strong and beautiful, and I am very proud to be part of this wonderful community.



Hertfordshire Wildlife in Lockdown

by Richard Morton

Ok, so it's not the Rockies or the Serengeti but, 110 days since lockdown and after about 500 miles of walking in the fields around Hatfield, I can confirm that the Hertfordshire countryside is superb and its wildlife splendidly varied.

This morning for instance, beyond Wild Hill, looking south east over a spreading landscape, dotted with thousands of oak trees, I was amazed to see Canary Wharf and the Shard glinting in the far distance, while only a little later the footpath took me through a more secluded valley as unspoiled and beautiful as Constable's Dedham Vale.

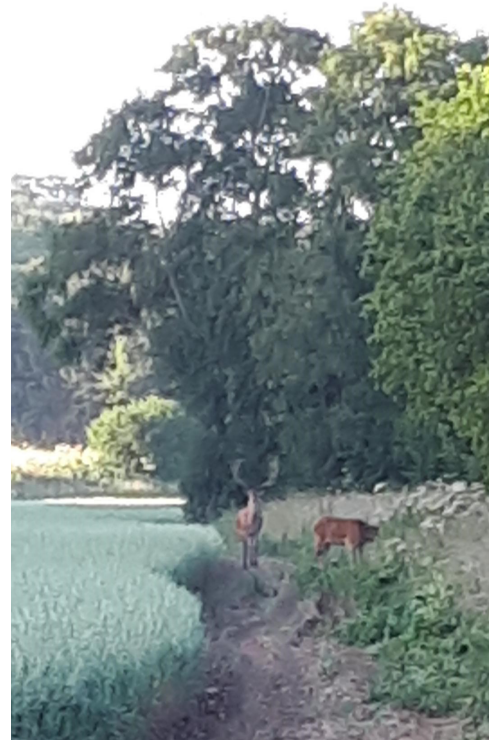
Birds have always been an interest of mine and during the lockdown I have seen and/or heard over 60 species very close to here, some very common but others, like the cuckoos which have been calling competitively around the Candlestick, now getting very rare. Other rare sightings include ravens which only a few years ago would not have been found within

100 miles of here, and a pair of Mandarin ducks nesting in Larkhill Grove, close to Essendon. Mandarins are one of the only tree-nesting ducks and to suddenly see a blaze of exotic orange, as they flew fast into the trees, was a real surprise.

Also spectacular, though commonplace now in Hatfield, are the red kites and parakeets which have arrived here in the last few years. The kites particularly, wheeling effortlessly over the cornfields, never cease to astonish me. For the smaller and more secretive birds I have been helped by Birdnet, an excellent App which has taught me how to distinguish the songs of the blackcap, white-throat and many others from the marvelous dawn chorus along the Lea footpath. And best of all, the song of the skylarks.

Mammals are also abundant, and it is a rare morning when I don't see hares hurtling across my path and muntjac bouncing away into the long grass. Others include stoats and foxes, the latter now

easily seen in central London, but less often here. Much the most special though, are the occasional sightings of red deer. The picture below, I'm afraid, is poor but to see a wild, fully grown stag leaping across the track in front of you is a magnificent sight and astonishing quite so close to London.



And there is much, much more: the trees the wildflowers and the butterflies, all so varied and all so beautiful.

And lastly; one rare and special creature, unseen on most of my walks, is Hilary, unable to accompany me until recently, but now finally, I'm delighted to say, free to join me in the fresh exploration of our beautiful surroundings.

Closure of local social clubs & pubs and the effect this had on the community

a letter from John Brindle ... continues on page 7

Over the past ten years or so we constantly read that pubs have been closing at an alarming rate, with the Telegraph newspaper reporting last year that one pub was closing every 12 hours!

Factors causing the demise of pubs include: the smoking ban which began in 2007; the cut price booze sold in supermarkets; heightened drink-driving awareness, and the increasing use of social media platforms which lessen the need for us to socialize or meet in person.

Therefore, pubs had to adapt, and many became more family friendly with set menus offering hot food throughout the week - and the term 'gastro pub' was coined. Many could no longer rely on wet sales only, and those which could not adapt closed and were sold, often for conversion to residential use. And these changes have proved detrimental to the social cohesion of our communities.

One noticeable casualty is the decline in local football. The Welwyn Hatfield Sunday League was formed in 1961 and proved extremely popular for decades and, for example, during the 1992-93 season it boasted five divisions and a total of 55 teams - almost all from the Borough - and this amount continued for several years more. Of those 55 teams, at least 25 played under the name of a pub or social club and most would have received some modest sponsorship in

return for their custom at the bar. A further 14 bore the name of a company who no doubt also offered modest sponsorship. But by 2017 barely a handful of those clubs were left, and the Sunday League folded.

The Division 3 table (pictured) from 1993 is a typical example of the above. Of the twelve football teams in it, represented were: eight pubs, two companies and one trade union.

Pubs which have closed in the immediate Hatfield area since then are: The Cat & Fiddle; Green Man; Robin Hood (aka Legends), The Bull; The Cock; Chalkdrawers and Queens Head. The Water Board social club closed as did the bars at the Leisure Centres at Birchwood and Travellers Lane.

Many of the larger local companies used to provide social clubs which supported a plethora of activities from darts to football teams - some even had their own pitches. Gone steadily from Hatfield since the mid-1980s are BAe Aviation, BAe Dynamics, Mowlems and MacMillan Bloedell; all significant local employers with a good sense of pastoral care for their employees. Many of the new companies who eventually replaced them came from outside the area and brought their workforce with them.

John's letter continues on page 8 ...

11/92

WGC & Hatfield Sunday League Tables

PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
S & N Fairway	7	5	1	0	32	6	16
Peartree	6	4	1	1	21	20	13
Hollybush Characters	5	4	0	1	32	12	12
Arctic Lites	6	2	1	3	26	16	7
Welwyn Arsenal	3	2	1	0	12	5	7
Q.E.II	4	2	0	2	10	8	6
Shamrock Rovers	3	1	0	2	10	15	3
Bengeo Tigers	4	1	0	3	6	14	3
White Hart	6	1	0	5	11	24	3
Tavern	5	0	0	5	4	44	0

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arctic Lites Reserves	8	6	0	2	34	10	18
Waggoners	6	5	0	1	20	2	15
Welwyn Garden Utd SFC	5	5	0	0	15	5	15
Hatfield Sports	6	4	0	2	20	14	12
County Hall Rangers	6	4	0	2	14	8	12
Wrights	6	3	0	2	16	13	9
Rogar	6	3	0	3	25	14	9
Essenden	7	3	0	4	15	14	9
SB Welwyn	5	1	1	3	8	24	4
Diamond Hog	5	0	1	4	12	34	1
Welwyn Sports	5	0	0	5	4	18	0
Oaklands College	5	0	0	5	5	22	0

DIVISION TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shredded Wheat	5	5	0	0	25	6	15
Ludwick Arms	6	4	0	2	28	16	12
Marcoe Electrical	6	3	1	2	19	15	10
Welwyn Campus	4	3	0	1	18	9	9
Chieftain	4	3	0	1	15	6	9
Sellers	4	3	0	1	13	10	9
Onslow Flyers	6	2	0	4	10	17	6
Lemsford	1	1	0	0	4	2	3
The Hedgehog	5	0	1	4	12	24	1
Avdel Sports	3	0	0	3	3	12	0
Safeway	6	0	0	6	8	47	0

DIVISION THREE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mayflower '92	7	6	1	0	28	12	19
Birchwood	6	5	1	0	27	7	16
Tewin Sunday	6	4	1	1	18	8	13
S & N Fairway Reserves	7	4	1	2	27	12	13
Fountain	6	4	0	2	22	14	12
Saracens Head	6	4	0	2	15	11	12
F.C. Rangers	7	2	2	3	15	20	8
Old Guinea	6	2	0	4	18	21	6
Vulcathene	6	1	1	4	11	16	4
Nalgo	7	1	0	6	15	28	3
Hopfield Hoppits	5	0	1	4	4	17	1
Sun Lemsford	5	0	0	5	3	27	0

DIVISION FOUR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Baron of Beef	6	4	2	0	20	5	14
Inter '91	6	4	0	2	22	14	12
Hale United	4	3	1	0	18	9	10
Cowper Arms	6	3	1	2	14	12	10
Hatfield Sports Res	3	3	0	0	17	5	9
Hilltop Taxis	5	3	0	2	19	11	9
Lineside Engineering	6	2	0	4	21	36	6
Chalkdrawers Arms	4	1	0	3	8	16	3
Tesco Knights	6	1	0	5	15	31	3
The Old Barge	6	0	0	6	13	28	0



The Old Hatfield Residents' Association

We live in a special place. The Old Hatfield Residents' Association (OHRA) is a group of volunteers working to improve the area further through, for example, our Blooming Old Hatfield work on the plants and planters in the area.

We inform residents about developments in our community and relay their views to developers and councillors. We organise events to bring people together.

If you would like to receive our regular updates, please contact us on oldhatfieldra@hotmail.co.uk or phone Jonathan Fisher on 01707 264377.

We have leads on areas such as development, parking, monitoring Hatfield House events, and keeping Old Hatfield tidy and "blooming". We welcome new members wanting to take the lead on specific matters.

Recent developments and activities include:

<p>The community has responded well to the Covid crisis. So we now have a network of people caring for those needing support due to Covid concerns.</p>	<p>We provide a welcome pack for new residents with information on the area and its attractions, facilities and businesses.</p>
<p>We publicised our local businesses' work to reopen and remain as viable as possible in the wake of Covid 19 difficulties. Please support them.</p>	<p>We circulated crime prevention advice from the police in response to the recent (attempted) burglaries.</p>
<p>Our sing along carols in the square at Christmas raised £200 for Resolve – the charity helping the homeless in Hatfield.</p>	<p>Due to Covid, we had to cancel this summer's events that would normally have included a lovely summer's evening of cricket and BBQ in the grounds of Hatfield House.</p>

John Brindle's letter continued from page 7...

Accordingly, few seem to have any affinity with the town and it appears doubtful any provide so much as a football team let alone a social club. Add to this the decline in local High Street shopping; a once thriving market, and the lack of a flagship football ground and the effect has contrived to keep people apart where once there was a sense of belonging and familiarity – especially so for people on their own. The Hatfield Polytechnic (now a

University) used to provide a lot of social interaction with locals, especially with its weekly discos and top live bands. The fun Rag Week shenanigans for charity has ceased too.

Hatfield even lost its 700 seat Forum Theatre in 1997 due to structural problems. But it was not repaired or rebuilt. Are we becoming strangers in our own town?

It is said that a community is not a community unless it can meet. One wonders where that could be nowadays!



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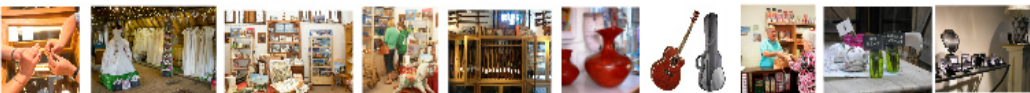
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Refocused September 2020—Page 9

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Please contact—maryrathbone@icloud.com if you have any editorial contributions.



PRIVATE PRAYER

The Salisbury Chapel at St Etheldreda's is open for private prayer and contemplation:

Tuesday-Sunday from 8am-4pm.

St Luke's is likewise open:

between the hours of 10am and midday each Saturday and Sunday.

Social distancing measures will be observed at both churches

ONLINE SERVICES

Tune in at the following times to join us:

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