



# CHURCHGATE AREA ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER No 68 CHRISTMAS 2020.

*The Association promotes the interests of all residents and businesses, not only in Churchgate Street, but also in the general area of all those streets that lead off it.*

[www.churchgateassoc.org.uk](http://www.churchgateassoc.org.uk)

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*The CAA Committee wishes all residents the happiest possible Christmas and an optimistic New Year. We look forward to seeing you in 2021.* 🎄

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## ☆ Help during and after lockdown ☆

By the time you read this, Lockdown 2 may have ended, been extended, or other restrictions may still be in force. The local councils have two helpline numbers which are for people who have questions or need assistance during the pandemic.

**Suffolk Advice and Support Service** will direct you to free professional advice about debt, housing, grants and can refer you to food banks if you are in need of a food parcel and are waiting for a benefit payment and/or have run out of money. The number to call is 0800 068 3131, open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. This helpline should continue to be active after lockdown ends.

This service works in conjunction with the local councils as well as Citizens Advice, who can also be called directly on 0300 330 1151. Search online for "suffolk advice support"

The **Home, But Not Alone** free helpline is available to support vulnerable people in our communities who do not have a network of family or friends to call upon, to access emergency support such as food and medicine deliveries and befriending schemes or who need support with their basic care needs. This is a service predominately for those who are classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV), but as before, advice can be given to those who are vulnerable in other ways. People who are CEV should have received a letter directly from the government.

The telephone number is freephone 0800 876 6926 and will be staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Calls are taken by staff from Suffolk County Council and from each of the district councils to ensure that people are connected to support in their local area. Search for "suffolk home alone". This service may not continue after lockdown ends.

Another useful service is **NHS Responders**, which was set up to help people who have to self-isolate or cannot leave the house. They can help with shopping, give lifts to medical appointments, or

just make regular phone calls to stay in touch. The number to call is 0808 196 3646, open every day from 8am to 8pm. This service is funded to run until March 2021. JB

### ☆ Traffic and Parking Update ☆

It is four years since the Alpha Parking report recommended an additional 30 residents' parking spaces in Zone D and, although long promised, they have still to become a reality. And of course there are still other issues to be considered.



This sign is found in Guildhall Street (South) and is used for residents of Guildhall and other streets as well as people willing to pay for a ticket. But it is not found in the north of Guildhall Street where parking is only pay-and-display. Extending dual parking to the whole of the street would give 20 more residents parking spaces. Unlike the 30 Alpha Parking spaces, no promise can yet be obtained from West Suffolk or Suffolk County Council. A similar request has been made for Zone F alongside St Mary's church where parking is limited to one hour, not much use to residents, visitors or church-goers.

This sign could be updated to include residents' parking. This sign is found at the entrance to College Street from Westgate Street and is designed to keep out heavy lorries. But the additional 'Except for

access' can be taken to mean that access to the town centre is allowed. And this does happen, resulting in damage to buildings at the following corner when the large, heavy lorries fail to make the sharp left turn into Churchgate Street. We have asked Suffolk Highways that the 'Except for access' sign be removed.

There are several more signs in our area we would like changing. An example is the sign at the entrance to the Great Churchyard, to prohibit entrance to all those without designated parking spaces. The maps used by the Civil Enforcement Officers need to be updated to reflect this change.



All these issues have been raised with our town, district and county councils together with our desire to see the Town Centre Masterplan aim of pedestrianisation of Cornhill/Buttermarket realised. AB

### ☆ A New Collection Box for the Abbey Gardens ☆

When the collection box for the Abbey Gardens was vandalised, a new one was required, but none of the commercially available models seemed to match the ambience of the gardens.

It was decided that a new and more solid one, fabricated to a special design in stainless steel would be appropriate and this has been constructed over the last few months, providing some activity during lockdown for one of the Abbey Gardens Friends' members.



A hexagonal column in stainless steel was chosen for durability and strength, with added decoration in the form of bronze roundels showing the crown and arrow motif of St Edmund. As a first step, the roundels were cast, following which, a solid core of welded stainless steel was constructed, and then clad with panels carrying a gothic design and the roundels. A thick steel door and lock provided security.



Once the basic box was complete, a stainless faceplate carrying an invitation to donate was added, and as a final step, the roundels were gilded.

The box's foundation, also in stainless steel will be sunk in concrete, after which the box will be fixed to the foundation slab with security bolts, hopefully providing a long lasting feature of the gardens.

Steve Jones (the artist)



*The Abbey Gardens Friends provide practical and financial support towards the upkeep of the gardens. For more information regarding their activities visit <http://www.abbeygardensfriends-burystedmunds.com>, or contact the Friends Membership Secretary, Eric Davey, 27 Church Walks; [ericanneinbste@talktalk.net](mailto:ericanneinbste@talktalk.net).*

## ☆ The Guildhall looks forward to a much happier New Year. ☆

“Where is the Guildhall?” is a question the Guildhall team hears a lot. As readers of this newsletter, we assume you already know the answer! (Just in case you’re not sure, the Guildhall is the large building with the strange tower-like entrance, on Guildhall Street, next to the Constitutional Club).

As a venue, the Guildhall has had a tough year, but there have been bright sparks. Couples have celebrated their socially-distanced weddings in our panelled Court Room and lovely gardens, organisations have used our Banqueting Hall for meetings to discuss their own strategies for coping with Covid-19, and the Guildhall team have been making plans to share the Guildhall’s hidden history

(even if those plans keep getting tweaked as guidance changes!) One big positive that has come from lockdown is how much the town has come together. The Guildhall has received a huge amount of support, for which we are incredibly grateful. Through this period, the team has been forming links with a wide variety of groups and individuals, and that’s something we will be continuing in the New Year. For example, we are delighted to say



*Photo: David Carpenter*

that the Guildhall is now a member of the Churchgate Area Association. Next year, we are looking forward to welcoming visitors through the Guildhall’s doors again, but we do need continued support to make that happen.

If you would like to get involved and help make 2021 a positive year for the Guildhall - by hiring our rooms or garden, volunteering with us, or just sharing your ideas for this special place - we’d be very happy to hear from you. Please get in touch with us at [admin@burystedmundsguildhall.org.uk](mailto:admin@burystedmundsguildhall.org.uk), phone 01284 247037, or visit our website [www.burystedmundsguildhall.org.uk](http://www.burystedmundsguildhall.org.uk). Louisa Beattie





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On a cold, dark winter night Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his former business partner, Jacob Marley. Marley's ghost warns the old miser that he will be visited by three spirits: the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. Scrooge has one night to learn the true value of Christmas or be doomed to suffer Marley's fate.

This winter, Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds brings you a brand-new adaptation of one of the country's best-loved Christmas stories. Set against the beautiful backdrop of The Angel Hotel this outdoor production will bring the streets of Victorian London right to the heart of Bury St Edmunds. So wrap up tight and prepare for cold toes but a very warm heart.

### ☆ The Unitarian Meeting House ☆

Any visitor to Bury might drive, or hopefully walk, up Churchgate Street to perhaps visit the Guildhall. Towards the top of the hill they could not help but notice a most fine, mellow, brick building on the right hand side. Maybe it is an old house or a public hall of some kind? Those of us who are fortunate to live here will know it as a meeting house built in 1711 for public worship by Protestant dissenters from the Church of England.

There was a time in the nineteenth century when prosperous non-conformist congregations would demolish their old meeting houses and replace them with more fashionable Gothic buildings. This nearly happened in Bury. The United Reform church in Whiting Street was given a Gothic facade on one side but, fortunately, the Presbyterians (who became known as the Unitarians) were too poor in Bury, so the building was saved.



Throughout the centuries the building received little maintenance and by the 1950s it was obviously in grave danger. Fortunately, it was given a new roof at this time thus saving the interior from any further decay. However, funds for a complete restoration were slow in materialising and it was not until the early 1990s that the work was completed displaying the finest craftsmanship of today. A re-opening and rededication service was held on 30th October 1991 followed by an official reopening by HRH the Duke of Gloucester in September 1992.

Today, the meeting house is open (in normal times) for concerts, plays, exhibitions, lectures, craft fairs, banquets and educational work with young people. It is the home for Bury Theatre Workshop's four annual studio productions. *NL with considerable help from the 'Guide and Brief History' by Frank Walker*

### ☆ 'Bones' & Andrea Walsh at the Apex pre-Covid ☆

Alexander Technique helps you regain the poise, balance and alertness needed to tackle the business of living your life. It improves posture and pain and stiffness in the body which are often caused by habitual ways of bending, sitting, standing, walking, running etc. Once those habits are addressed and 'unlearned', everyday movement become easier and lighter.

#### **What is the Alexander Technique?**

- It's a 'User Manual' for the human body and mind;
- It's educational, which results in lifelong skills in self-care;
- It's taught in one to one or in groups (during the Pandemic, lessons are online by Zoom);
- It's verbal instruction and demonstrations to help people to recognise how they are using themselves;
- It is very safe for participants. Risk of injury is extremely low;
- People do not have to undress, apart from to remove shoes.



- Quote from Jack Stern, Spinal Neurosurgeon: *'97% of people with back pain could benefit from learning the AT – it is only a very small minority that require medical intervention such as surgery'*.

### **How might learning the AT ameliorate back, joint pain and other musculo skeletal issues?**

- It has helped millions of people world-wide to overcome back, neck and joint pain, muscle tension and stiffness, poor posture, breathing and vocal problems, anxiety and stress-related conditions,
- Allows lengthening and decompression in the spine and joints,
- Strengthens postural muscle support, which is invaluable for all, but in particular those with desk-bound occupations,
- Improves coordination and flexibility.

### **How does learning the AT help people in their daily lives?**

- It is practical. You use it all the time alongside your daily life; it's not a discreet activity,
- Extremely useful in performing activities both at work and at play,
- Applying the AT to activities means people can use themselves effectively and often are able to perform tasks which they had previously thought were either difficult, or beyond them,
- It is a great form of mindfulness in activity, thereby teaching people how to re-connect the mind and body and establish a feeling of wellbeing and quiet,
- People unlearn harmful habits which are putting strain on the body,
- The AT is not treatment, it's educational, so it becomes part of their skills set. It is empowering for people to be able to do things to help themselves and effectively put them back in the 'driving seat'.



### **About me**

I live and work in Bury St Edmunds. I teach the Alexander Technique both one-to-one and in groups. I undertook a full time, 3-year training course, in order to qualify. I have been teaching the AT for 10 years. It is my sole occupation. I am a member of STAT (Society for Teachers of the Alexander Technique) and registered with the CNHC (Complementary & Natural Healthcare Council). I am fully insured.

Andrea Walsh MSTAT

Sessions available by Zoom. Gift vouchers available.

Tel: 01284 736807 07949 083629

[www.alexandertechniqueworks.co.uk](http://www.alexandertechniqueworks.co.uk) [www.facebook.com/alexandertechniqueworks/](https://www.facebook.com/alexandertechniqueworks/)

## ☆ Before and After - Our Telephone Boxes transformed ☆

Believe it or not but the two red phone boxes in our area are quite old. They are both K6 designs dating from 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V. They are based on a design by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, the famous architect who was also known for his work on Cambridge University Library, Liverpool Cathedral and Battersea Power Station amongst others.

The two remaining boxes in our area, one at the bottom of Churchgate Street and the other on the corner of Guildhall Street and Westgate Street were getting very tatty. Thanks to the investigative work of our Chairman, BT were persuaded to refurbish them.

*BEFORE:*



*AFTER:*



Our thanks go to Vivien for her relentless pursuit of BT to arrange the repainting of our classic telephone boxes.

## ☆ YOUR COMMITTEE 2020/21 ☆

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