

THE NORTH ESSEX CENTRE



Winter Oyster 2017/2018

Welcome to the winter edition of the Oyster, this season saw fireworks, entertainment, festivities and the end of our Chairman's Charity Year. Thank you to all of you that run, attended or helped on a rally, so great to see so many of you out on the rallies, even in the winter! Your dedication to the club is what helps to give North Essex such a varied and all year round programme.

Chairman's Charity Year

The chairman's charity year ended in October and was yet again a huge success, many elements, organised events and hard work went into raising the total fund of a whopping £5000.01! (why the 1p? I hear you ask) Well as part of the fundraising Andy organised the 20k W.W.W walk (Wadies Wamble Walk) and on the way round found 1p that went into the ever growing fund. Thank you to all of you for your generosity and support that made this chairman's charity year yet another success.



Both Maz and I were emotionally moved by an Autism documentary called 'Employable Me' this demonstrated the difficulty a person with Autism had in finding employment. The programme followed the life of several people who have neurological conditions such as Autism and the challenges they face in life. The issue holding many back is that Autism is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them. Our charity year for Autism Anglia has provided desperately needed funds to help equip a sensory unit at the Doucecroft School in Colchester. This will go a small way to help young people overcome some of these challenges and help realise their potential. If we manage to improve the life of just one person it will have been a worthwhile exercise.

Rob Rice
North Essex Chairman

Autism Anglia's Response

I never imagined it would be so much – thank you, thank you!!

We are going to use the money to make a start on refurbishing the sensory rooms at Doucecroft School. This is such a fantastic start to the £13k needed to get the relaxation room done at least – with a few grant funders that I have made applications to we should have this up and running this academic year at least.

Thank you again for your commitment to raising funds throughout the year – we really appreciate the hard work that goes into raising such a fabulous amount of money.

*With kindest regards
Anna Rogers, Head of Fundraising & Communications
Autism Anglia*



End Of Season



A yearly event, that is always well attended and this year was no different. Over 40 vans attended the rally at East Bergholt School, which offered a chance for members to catch up with their fellow caravanners, whilst enjoying a variety of day and evening entertainment for all the family.

The committee worked tirelessly to put on a great weekend, there was a Santa's Grotto, with a visit from the big man himself! The Mad Science team came along to entertain the children with fun scientific facts, explosions and games, which the children loved.

The hall was decorated and the stage was set to welcome our members in for an evening of food and entertainment, a raffle was held with the top prize being a Kindle Fire. All danced into the night.

We also saw the unveiling of our final charity figure of £5000.01 which was presented to the representatives of Autism Anglia on the night.

Report given By Leanne Newman



Flash & Splash

Friday vans arrived during the evening there was a general get together in the event tents.

Saturday the fishing started in the dry, but soon the drizzle started. Surprisingly, this seemed to bring out people to have a look. Before long Andy was helping set up rods and bait lines for children, ladies and one particular person, who thought fishing was a waste of time. In no time, he was hooked. Along with his wife who caught a lovely carp and was very pleased with herself. We had children who had never fished before catching and thoroughly enjoying themselves. This included a set of just turned 3 year old twins, one even had to stroke her catch! Their smiles said it all!

At lunchtime, an array of hot homemade soups was served for everyone. Fishing continued until nearly dusk.

Families and some big kids, wrapped up warm to go into Saffron Walden to watch the spectacular fireworks. On their return the marshals had lit the BBQ's and cooked sausages and onions, hot dogs for all! Hot chocolate was on hand to warm you through as well as a pint or few! The children all enjoyed some sparklers (after a safety talk). The evening continued in the warmth of the event tents with lots of laughter and chatter.

Marshals for the weekend were Sally & Andy Wade and Dave & Elisa Edney

Report given By Sally Wade



A Fairy Merry Christmas

Saturday 23rd most of the vans arrived, settled in we have a get together in the hall during the evening.

Christmas Eve - The rest of the vans arrived and hot home made soup and rolls were served for lunch. The hall was decorated the tree put up as well as Santa's Grotto in hope that 'he' would pay us a visit. The children made a gingerbread house. Their excitement was growing by the hour. After dinner we sang Christmas songs and Rob read the poem ' 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'.

Christmas Day – A continental breakfast was served and then the hall was 'out of bounds' for the tables to be dressed with handmade crackers, mitten shaped cutlery holders, pom-pom drink markers and knitted 'fairies'. Before dinner Bucks Fizz was served by the marshals dressed as fairies! A 3 course traditional Christmas dinner and wine followed. Then a hush descended over the hall, a sound of sleigh bells could be heard. Yes! Santa had arrived and he had gifts for all. We were then entertained by Kevin Flexman and his merry helpers to play 'Kev's Generation Game'. So much encouragement and laughter we even had a conveyor belt (well the children running past). The evening finished with laughter and chatter.

Boxing Day – Andy took many for a ramble around the countryside, there was a stop for hot chocolate laced with Whisky and cake to help bet the winter chill. The tables has been dressed with a Snowman theme. Boxing Day cold meats, mash with bubble and squeak was ready for when the walkers returned. The afternoon was spent catching up with the day visitors and. Dinner was served and followed by Rob's quiz, which made us think, we were given clues to the answers. The fewer clues you used for the correct answer the more points you gained. Unfortunately the evening came to an early end, as we had a power cut.

Tuesday 27th – Time to take down the tree and decorations, we had plenty of help clearing up. Thank you to all of those who did. The snow came down thick and fast (2 days late) and a lot made a quick departure.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped with peeling vegetables, washing up and clearing up the hall.

Marshals were Dave & Marion Kemp, Rob & Maz Rice and Andy & Sally Wade

Report given By Sally Wade



Children on the rally enjoying the sight of snow at Christmas

New Year Rally at The Best Western Hotel, Ipswich

Jeff and Chris Wren put on a fabulous rally with the theme of beside the seaside. John and Chris Simpson were helping to assist the weekend. They had 17 vans attend and 4 hotel rooms booked with members wishing to attend without their caravans.

The weekend began with cocktails and sausage rolls these were delivered to our caravans due to the weather and were most welcoming. The first night's entertainment started with a delicious three course meal followed by a Sea Shanty Group which caused laughter and singing. During the evening we had a judging of fancy dress. On the second night there was another three course meal which was very good again followed by Jeff and Chris's surprise santa parcels causing laughter and a lot of swapping about between ralliers.

New Years Eve saw an excellent five course meal followed by an enjoyable band, lots of dancing was had by all. A fantastic start to 2018!

The following morning we had flagpole headed by Jackie and Les. Jeff and Chris gave out the fancy dress results and first prize went to a South Essex visitor, second prize went to Kath Murton and third prize went to Denise Hardy and Marion Ford. We had visitors from South Essex, Suffolk and we had a first rallier who were Peter and Sandra Way.

Report given By Jackie Youngs



Just some of the entertainment offered at this year's New Year Rally

Sea In The New Year Rally

Another fantastic rally at Trinity park, Ipswich. Over 40 vans attended the event and 14 of those were from visiting centre's.

This years theme was 'Sea' and the marshals made a fabulous job of decorating the venue to suit. They had an organised craft making event that allowed all of the ralliers to help decorate the hall and got the children involved making fish out of paper plates and light up octopus.

We had a curry cooked by the marshals and 'Wesley Presley' entertaining us on the night before New Years Eve, the curry was lovely and 'Wesley Presley' was brilliant, getting the room up and dancing, a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

New Years Eve there was a ramble for those feeling energetic and a family movie afternoon, where the film showing was Nemo. The film was played on a projector screen and the children all had popcorn and sweets.

The entertainment on New Years Eve was a disco, along with a very extensive buffet. Members were asked to come along in fancy dress with a 'sea' theme, there were some very inventive ideas. We counted down into the new year and was all suprised when the Bagpipers appeared , many thanks to the members involved for making this possible.

On New Years Day the marshals were up early again to make us bacon and egg rolls, very much appriciated after two nights of music and dancing. Later that afternoon there was tea, coffee and cakes whilst Ken and Lynda Levett held a Tea Dance, where members could get involved learning the steps to a variety of dances.

All round a fantastic New Year rally, many thanks to Barry and Debbie Bridges, Greg and Tina Potter and Dave and Elisa Edney for all of your hard work in making it another unforgettable New Year celebration.

Report given By Leanne Newman



Toddies and Chips

We welcomed a full house of 14 vans to Toddies and Chips rally at The Room in the Rodings in January. The weather was cold and bright, so the hot toddies were just what the doctor ordered on the friday night. Was a great night and some late night revellers stayed up dancing till late in the hall.

Saturday saw some more arrivals and Gavin took some of the members on a very muddy ramble across country to the local pub, where we had lunch and a pint before rambling back to the caravans for the afternoon.

On saturday evening we had Fish and Chips from the local chippy all organised and delivered by the marshals, to follow was an evening of caravan drive, bingo and drinks with friends.

Sunday morning after flag the marshals put on tea, coffee and a variety of homemade cakes. The children even helped tidy up!

Marshals for the weekend were Leanne and Gavin Newman, Les and Jackie Youngs.

Report given By Leanne Newman



Presenting this year's Colchester Bowl Competition....



Tell us about your experiences on a rally... *(please)*

If you attend a rally and would like to do a piece for the Oyster, or take any photos whilst on a rally please send them to:

leannenewman@uwclub.net

or hand them to a member of committee.

