

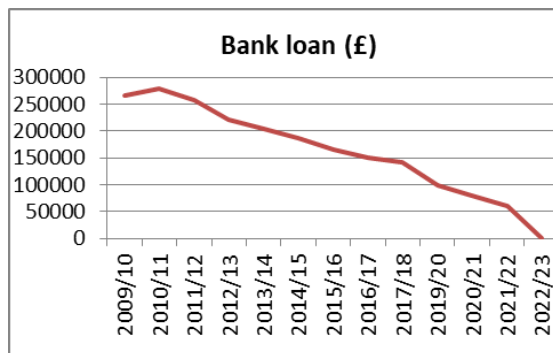


Established 1862

## CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2023

Dear Members.

Well, we've done it. In 2010 the Community Centre was threatened with closure with a bank loan and other debts of around £278,000. Finally, in February 2023 the last of the loan was paid off.



IFCA Chairman, Lilian Hunter said at the time – “who would have thought we would see this day. It’s a remarkable testimony to all those involved over the last 12 years that we now have a thriving asset”. The money saved will help fund much needed maintenance and improvement throughout the Centre and stave off the impact of high energy prices.

### Membership 2024

We are extremely pleased to see that membership numbers have steadily climbed since we reduced subscriptions in 2019. This year reached 936, an increase of 147 compared with last year.

We are pleased to announce a further

reduction to membership fees for 2024, although additional donations are welcome from those that are able.

Please renew your membership by the end of January to continue benefiting from discounted prices in the bar and for tickets for the *Community Cinema* and other IFCA events.

### Chairman receives award

IFCA Chairman, Lilian Hunter was awarded the British Empire Medal in the King’s Birthday Honours 2023 for services to the community of Ingatestone. This is in recognition of Lilian’s tireless efforts over many years as IFCA Chairman. Lilian received her medal from the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Jennifer Tolhurst at a ceremony on 26<sup>th</sup> October at County Hall, Chelmsford.



### Lilian Hunter receives her BEM

In the many accolades Lilian has received since the announcement, the common theme was how ‘deserving’ she is for this award. Well done Lilian!

### Behind the scenes

The trustees' focus this year has been to commission a building and an energy survey to identify priorities for repair and improvement, reduce energy costs and increase comfort. A number of works are being assessed including repair to the front roof and cupola.

We have also set out new membership rules which cover membership benefits, membership cards and behaviour. The rules are available at <https://www.ifcc.org.uk/join-us>.

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### Those we have lost - RIP

In March, Bowling Club member and former IFCA trustee, **Josephine Razzell**, died aged 83.

In May, popular member and bowler **Tony Collins** sadly died just shy of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Ken Hunter**, husband of our Chairman Lilian died in August, aged 92. In the past Ken had been a volunteer collecting and banking money from the car park and advising on insurance.

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### Coffee mornings

In February the contractors who had operated our weekly Tuesday coffee mornings had to withdraw. For a few weeks it was a case of 'all hands to the pump' to make sure we kept this popular event afloat. We're pleased we now have Liz Clark on board to run these sessions for us, along with some new (and some

old) volunteers to support her. The feedback has been very positive and the coffee mornings continue to be a success. Liz is in her element here and has also started monthly bingo sessions on a Thursday afternoon.

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### Ingatestone Community Cinema

Our monthly films continue to attract a regular appreciative audience. The best attended screening this year was 52 for *Rabbit-Proof Fence*. The last film of 2023 is *Phantom of the Open* (14<sup>th</sup> December) and the first film of 2024 will be *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* on 18 January.

The cost of a licence to show a film is now over £100, for a single screening. So reluctantly tickets will rise from £4 to £5 for members and £6 to £7 for non-members from January to help our fund-raising. We are also hoping to start hiring out past films for a small donation. Look out for details.

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### Other news in brief

- There will be 'free parking' from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> December inclusive.
  - The Christmas Market in association with Ingatestone Rotary Club takes place on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December.
  - Tickets are available for the Christmas afternoon tea on 13<sup>th</sup> December.
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**The IFCA Trustees and staff wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**