Within Reach



April/May 2022



Our Cricket Club now has a shiny new Pavilion – and here we see the Painting Team in action, or should it be inaction?



More manual labour – this time the reconstruction of the Bench around the Tree



Ron's 'ladies in waiting' their lambs due sometime after April 1st (no joke!) – Spring Picture courtesy of Penny



Spring Picture courtesy of Claire Acklam

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From the Editor



So – all of a sudden we are a quarter of the way through 2022 – and soon it'll be Reach Fair! I personally love the Fair and am looking forward to this one especially after two years of absence. Claire and her team have taken it on and all is well, but please do respond positively to their requests for limited assistance on the day. Its not onerous and is fun!

Since the last issue of this magazine, the situation has improved with regard to Covid-19, we still need to be careful, but all restrictions have been removed and we have moved on to the concept of getting vaccinated and then simply using our common sense.

But just at a time when the countries of the world should be working together and rebuilding, we have the catastrophe of Ukraine. It's truly hideous, with people dying, cities being destroyed and millions fleeing the country. Ukraine needs humanitarian assistance and is getting this from a number of agencies. Understandably Reach villagers are coming up with actions and ideas to provide support and funding. Some I am aware of are **Sarah Keutgen** and friends organised the collection and transport of humanitarian supplies, **Evie de Giorgio-Miller** (aged 7) making and selling bracelets and bookmarks and **Sue Clifton** organising, with help from the Events Team, a **Car Boot Sale** (see pages 9/10).

And there is an initiative in place for villagers to **donate any 1p's** they have, to be used for the penny-throwing opening of Reach Fair that should raise around £100 for the Red Cross. There's been a good response so far with 20 people contributing but if there are any others who have such coins, please give me a call on 07887 563720.

In a happier vein, we have a new landlord and landlady at the **Dyke's End**. To learn more about them please go to **page 3.**

And pleasingly we two more advertisers. Firstly, **Cartwright Bothers Electricians** who I can personally recommend and who have also recently checked and reported upon our electricity power supply on the Green – see **Adverts page 2**.

And secondly the excellent **Quy Mill Hotel and Spa** who have an advert in the **Main Magazine** on **pages 14**.

David Parr

Cover photo courtesy of **Rosanna Moseley-Gore**

About the Magazine

The purpose of *Within Reach* is to serve the whole village by circulating information and interesting articles free to every household. Additional copies are available at a charge of £2.50. Issues are published bi-monthly covering the months of Feb/Mar, Apr/May, June/July, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov and Dec/Jan.

Copies of *Within Reach* magazine and its predecessor *Out of Reach* can be found on the village website www.reach-village.co.uk. This magazine (which is fully funded from advertising) is printed by Burwell Print Centre, an excellent social enterprise which trains and supports adults with learning disabilities and provides high quality design and print capabilities.

The Team

Editor	David Parr
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Cricket	Ross Clark
Events Team	Debbie Quilter
Gardening	Danuta Gibson
Getting to Know You	Karen Carpenter
Neighbourhood Watch	Kevin Evans
Reach Riders Group	Sue Cameron
Rosanna's Ramblings	Rosanna Moseley Gore
Snakehall Farm	Liz Pitt
Then and Now	Chris Patterson
Village Matters	Alex de Giorgio-Miller
Wicken Fen	Julia Hammond
Wildlife	Cath Tayleur

The Dyke's End



Ruth and Daniel

Firstly, we would like to say how delighted we are to be your new publicans at the Dyke's End. We are very excited to be taking over the pub from Matt the present landlord, having enjoyed its drinks and fayre over many years. We both know Reach very well and are big fans of Reach Fair and walks along the lode with the dog.

I'm Daniel Marsh (Bar and Cellar Manager) and I grew up in The Meadow House Guest House, Burwell and from a young age was waiting at table, showing guests to bedrooms. After university, I worked as a Bar Supervisor in Leicester at a busy city centre pub where I obtained my cellar management qualification from Everards Brewery. I currently work as a Digital Copywriter and have lived in London for the last 14 years. I also run my own publishing company that published the 1st edition of Brian Catling's *The Vorrh (*subsequently re-published by Hodder & Stoughton).

I'm Ruth Martindale (Front of House Manager) and I currently work as a Stonemason and Letter Carver, having trained at The Cardozo Kindersley Workshop in Cambridge. I have worked on many memorials now found around Cambridgeshire and neighbouring counties and on the large-scale inscriptions seen at Clare and Downing Colleges. Before that I studied MA Sculpture at Wimbledon College of Arts. I have been working part time for the last 4 years as Front of House at Westside Tennis Club, Wimbledon, serving behind the bar and preparing and making light lunches, cakes and coffee – setting me in good stead for the pub! I am passionate about food, especially vegetarian food and love growing vegetables - and I am very keen to use locally produced ingredients wherever possible.

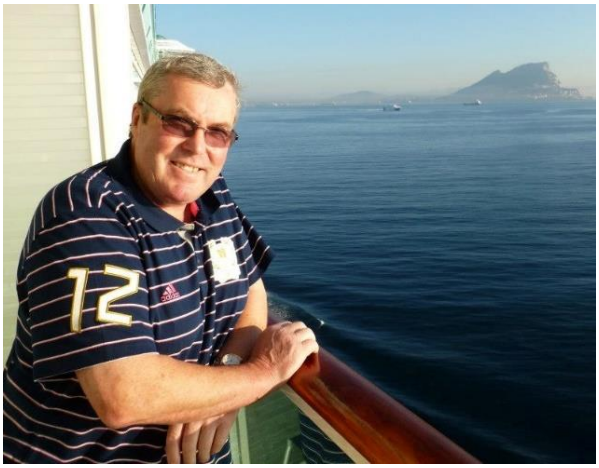
The pub is currently advertising for a chef and will be offering food as soon as the right candidate becomes available. We will also be looking to open up on Saturday and Sunday mornings to offer coffee, teas and cakes.

Daniel's mum Hilary was born in Reach at her grandad's home which was Manor House, Chapel Lane.



Daniel's Mum, Hilary

She has fond memories of big family Christmases at the farmhouse and exciting gatherings on Reach Fair Sunday and Monday when huge teas would be provided and enjoyed.



Daniel's dad, Brian has an engineering workshop in Burwell. Brian made the beacon for Reach village which was first used on the 21st April 2016 to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday and will be used again in May to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Hilary's mum, Jean Housden, met her husband, Eric Day (a D-Day veteran from Swaffham Prior) at The Point in Reach while ice skating, many moons ago. They were married in Reach church.

Jean Housden grew up in Reach at Manor Farm. Jean was about twelve years old when war broke out. She remembered taking three evacuees at Manor Farm, from London (Tooting, Merton and Sutton) - later Manor Farm eggs were being sold to London merchants! The family are still in touch today with one of the evacuees June, who became a lifelong friend of Jean's.

Daniel's sister Rachel and her family live in Swaffham Prior, who will also be keen to lend a helping hand!

We have some refurbishing work to undertake so we cannot open immediately but look forward to welcoming you all to the Dyke's End as soon as possible.

Daniel and Ruth

Lucy Frazer



We recently marked Accession Day, celebrating 70 years since Queen Elizabeth II acceded to the throne in 1952. Whilst a bittersweet day, it marked the beginning of the second Elizabethan Age. For many of us, the Queen has been a constant presence in our lives, a model of dedication and duty.

The Platinum Jubilee will be a special time to mark the Queen's remarkable service to our country and as she said in her message in January, it provides the opportunity to look back at the fantastic achievements and extraordinary progress socially, technologically and culturally that we have seen and experienced as a nation.

For me, the Queen's Golden Jubilee in June 2002 was a special time, not only as I celebrated her Majesty's 60 years on the throne, but also the weekend I got married! I was very fortunate to meet the Queen recently when I was made a Privy Counsellor, and I was struck by her dedication, interest and sense of duty.

I know that many of us will be celebrating and marking the Platinum Jubilee by organising and attending local events, as well as enjoying the bank holiday weekend in June. I look forward to supporting events in the local area that will be taking place and celebrating this special time in our nation's shared history.

Lucy Frazer MP

Village Update



Hurrah for spring!

We're enjoying seeing all of the bulbs popping up and adding some colour to the garden and walks out in the fresh sunshine make an excellent break from work. Roll on the warmer weather!

East Cambs District Council have sent round some information to pass on to the community:

Bin day change

From 28 March our waste collection day will change to a Tuesday. This is to improve service efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

Each year this will help save:

- 5,000 litres of diesel
- 12 tonnes of carbon dioxide

This is equivalent to taking one truck off the road every single day!

The frequency of collections will remain the same, with black sacks collected weekly and blue and green bins collected fortnightly.

Health and Happiness Day

The ECDC health and happiness day took place on Friday 11 February. This virtual event showcases all of the excellent support and help which is on offer from the Council, ranging from the Housing and Community Advice bus, to help with keeping warm this winter. Recordings are available on the East Cambridgeshire District Council YouTube page.

Vaccinations

Coronavirus cases across East Cambridge remain high. ECDC are encouraging everyone to continue to play their part to stop the spread of infections. We can all do our bit by getting vaccinated and boosted, testing regularly and maintaining social distancing.

To find out more about the vaccination programme in Cambridgeshire visit www.thevaccinators.co.uk. For more information and advice on COVID-19, including the support available to those in need, check out the Council's website or social media channels.

Keep well and enjoy the spring sunshine!

Alex de Giorgio-Miller

Reach Fair 2022



Lots to Enjoy

Reach Fair has been cancelled for two years, no prizes for guessing why, but 2022 will see its colourful and happy return. Check out the website at: www.reachfair.org.uk/whats_to_enjoy_new.html to see who will be attending.

Vacancies

So, since autumn of last year the planning of Reach Fair has been underway. Shortly, it will be over to yourselves to make it happen because Reach Fair can only be achieved and be successful, by villagers' efforts. The committee members listed below will be seeking assistance, but you could make their day by contacting them first! What is it, a job shared is a job halved… quartered…. Sorted!

We require cakes (contact Alex de Giorgio-Miller); salads (Cris Fletcher); and bottles (Susan Bailey). We're looking for help on the village stalls and car park and also assistance to set up the Fair and clear away after the event.



Reach Fair Road Closures

Reach Fair will be held on Bank Holiday Monday 2 May 2022. Please remember that on Fair Day Swaffham Road, Fair Green and Burwell Road will be closed to traffic from 10am to 5.30pm. This closure applies to all vehicles except authorised vehicles. If you require a Car Pass please contact a member of the Reach Fair Committee listed below. All cars should be removed from these roads to the car park before 10am for safety reasons. Thank you. A controlled one-way system will operate on Burwell Road giving access to the Reach Fair car park between the above times.

Books Please

Pam King is looking for books to be sold at the Fair, especially children's books. So if you have any, please pop them in the trailer in her garage, 14 The Hythe, 07484 852889.

And don't forget **Quiz Night** on Sunday 1 May at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, with Ross Clark as the Quiz Master.

Claire Halpin
16 Chapel Lane 07834 740881
claire.halpinmcdonald@gmail.com

Alex de Giorgio-Miller
31 Great Lane 07771 348013
a.degiorgiomiller@gmail.com

Cristine Fletcher
48B Great Lane 07763 529886
cristinefletcher@hotmail.com

Burwell and Reach Car Scheme



The Burwell and Reach Car Scheme is up and running again offering those with travel restrictions or mobility issues a drive to the doctor, dentist, hospital, optician, hairdresser, shopping or just a visit to a friend, at a cost of 30p per mile.

Just leave a message on 07399 154913 with your requirements and someone will get back to you. Or contact Pam King in Reach on 07484 852889.

If anyone in Reach would like to volunteer to drive we are always grateful for extra people. Just leave a message on the answerphone 07399 154913. DBS certificates are required but easy to obtain through the scheme.

Rosanna's Ramblings



Even the hardiest optimist wouldn't place much of a bet on there being no frost, or snow, in April … or even May. So my photo, taken in early March, of a patch of vegetation early one morning by the drove, half green and half white with frost that still clung on the shaded leaves, might not be "so last month" after all. On that walk with Charles and Milo, heading towards the meadow, I mentioned that I hadn't yet thought what I would be writing about – and then it came to me. The sad but unavoidable symbolism of the frost holding back the spring.



Clunk clunk the mental cogs whirled and I found myself in an uncomfortable vortex: between the growing hopefulness we'd all been allowing ourselves to feel – Covid seeming finally to be on the wane as far as dangerous variants are concerned, pandemic restrictions being lifted, travel plans being made, restaurant meals being enjoyed (well, not by us yet, but by many), the gradual easing of low level constant anxiety … and the awful news coming from Ukraine.

How is it possible, I ask myself, to maintain the forward-looking momentum, the desire to let life start to re-establish itself in a recognisable form? I don't judge anyone who is somehow able to do it – happily go skiing, for instance, or get away for a snorkelling holiday in Egypt (I know lovely people who have done just those things in the last couple of weeks). It's just that I can't contemplate doing it myself. I feel like someone whose leaves had started to defrost but who's been put back in the freezer.

I love my life divided between Reach and Ely, I love the happiness that washes over strangers' faces when they see a Labrador puppy, I love the community here in the village and the many friends I have in Cambridge and elsewhere. I'm grateful to be able to do my work and to have grown-up children who are in work and relatively secure. But my sister (in France, which still feels as if it might as well be Mars as far as seeing her is concerned) and I and a couple of my closest and oldest friends, share the experience of having had parents and grandparents who were refugees from war in Europe. Educated, middle-class, people who had to pack up and leave their homelands, their homes, their friends, their work, their schools, their expectations, their old folk … get on trains and flee.

We don't have a television and I have a policy of not watching the news on the internet either. I have a visual imagination and memory that finds it painfully difficult to un-remember disturbing pictures. Once seen, forever seared onto my brain. So I only catch the news on the radio. But the stories I hear from Ukraine and the countries over the border have painted themselves into Mind's Eye images anyway and I've found myself experiencing a sort of double-exposure with the family memories I grew up with. And it's not comfortable. It's desperate, to be honest.

I want to be able to help, but I know that there's nothing I can do other than donate to emergency relief charities. I'm fully aware that my putting my life on hold "until things get better" could firstly mean waiting a very long time indeed and secondly would do nothing to relieve the suffering of refugees or influence the way things are unfolding 1,500 miles to the east. I know too that life is a gift and every day is precious, so I'm trying to navigate the thin line between frost and greenness, clunkily.

This is where I've got to so far, in my uncertain inner and outer journey. Whatever happens, Milo pup needs walking twice a day, needs feeding and love and attention (and I try not to dwell too much on the refugees taking their pets with them, or having to abandon them). My acupuncture patients still need me, so for two days a week I'm going out to work and doing my best to make a difference to the lives of a few people (and I try, as I have done daily since choosing my profession more than 30 years ago, not to think of all the multitude of other people around the world struggling and despairing). We still need to cook and eat and start to plant potatoes and nurture tomato seedlings and plan the Reach vegetable garden and Ely allotment (and I try not to think too much about the impending food crisis in Ukraine as farmers can't plant their crops in a war zone and villagers can't grow their cucumbers and beetroot if they are now in a refugee camp in Poland).

Every year I feel nostalgic for the Easter traditions I grew up with, from my Russian grandmother (she who escaped to Manchuria from Siberia during the civil war that followed the Russian Revolution and who never returned to her home and family).

I plan to cook the wonderful Easter food and have friends and family round to enjoy it. But imagine what it's like, if you will, to feel – suddenly – that half of your family heritage has become horribly tainted by association with the actions of a regime more than a century after any family member left that country for ever. My mobile phone has a Russian alphabet keyboard as an option on my screen and I've wondered about deleting it as I can't imagine choosing to use it again any time soon. My daughter had been planning, once the pandemic loosened its grip, to go to Russia to try to meet up with some long lost relatives she's discovered through having her DNA analysed – relatives who share some of the same family photographs from the early 20th century – and she was hoping I'd come with her. Indeed I was hoping to go, though with some trepidation as travel feels so unfamiliar now. But clearly that's not going to happen, perhaps never will happen and I feel for my daughter because there must have been an emotional need in her to have undertaken the search in the first place.

For now, life is going to have to stay rooted here. Milo will be introduced to the hectic excitement of Reach Fair. Now, there's a prospect.

Rosanna Moseley Gore

Village Hall Committee



Andrew Trump (our Treasurer) and his daughter Alice have been spending a long time looking and refining the online booking systems and VH website to make it easier for potential hirers to see what the VH offers and potential dates. A huge thankyou to both as well as other members of the committee who have given their time. Our only income is the bookings so it's important to get this right as there are many other halls in the locality but we believe that Reach VH offers more than most.

We provide a large and open facility, fully fitted kitchen with china, cutlery, tables and chairs and back garden area making it ideal for family gatherings, children's parties as well as exhibitions and classes of all kinds.

We are very grateful to Natasha Bridgeman who as a working mum with 3 young daughters has now taken over the role of VH bookings and has contributed such a lot to the website and dealing with enquiries. Giving her time voluntarily she is making the whole process much easier for the continued success of the VH.

We say a sad farewell to Grahame Radford who has now left the committee after nearly 18 years as a volunteer and one year as interim part time manager on a very small bursary. He served as treasurer and chair organising and running the Reach Hall and the annual Fair with other members of the VH committee and giving his time to promoting and managing the changes to the VH which took place in that time, not least the covid restrictions and loss of income and applications for the grants which East Cambs gave and which helped prevent the permanent closure of the Hall. The whole community owes Grahame a huge thankyou for his outstanding contribution.

The Hall will play its part with the Fair over the Bank Holiday weekend by hosting the Mayoral Party and offering space to a limited number of stalls. Organising the Fair takes hours of planning and effort and would be impossible without huge help from LOTS of people. The last Fair in 2019 was a great success so if everyone pulls together it is a fun day out for the thousands of visitors who come in from Cambridge and other villages and profits are made for Reach Charities.

One of the greatest needs is help with parking the 900 odd cars and thousands of pedestrians and cyclists who arrive during the day. It actually costs over £3,000 for the use of the parking field, Mervyn Lambert who provide traffic management for the one-way road system and Health and Safety signage for the cyclists and pedestrians and the volunteer cadets who help park the cars in the field. The Fair could not operate without help to get that number of cars and motor bikes safely and quickly parked in lines to ensure there is enough space for all to enjoy the Fair. If you can offer that help by giving 2 hours or so please contact the Fair Committee.

Sue Elliott Honorary Secretary 742268

Reach Riders

Whilst things have slowed down with the holidays and the weather, the arena is looking well, with great footing. Thank you to members who have re-joined and we welcome those who are new. The value for money for membership remains great at £25 for the year (Oct-Oct). The committee will be meeting again soon and we hope to be able to some more social type events to raise money.

Sue Cameron

Getting to Know . . . .
Cris Fletcher



Cris and husband Nev

What is your full name and where were you born?

My full name is Cristine Ribeiro Fletcher.

Which school did you attend and did you enjoy school?

I attended schools in Brazil at Rio de Janeiro, an area named Macae and then progressed to University in Belo Horizonte and achieved a degree to become a teacher. That was not for me and I gave it up quite quickly. When I arrived in the UK one of the Companies I worked for, Mamma Amalfi, sponsored me to gain a degree in management at University of London.



Cris and Nev, with Nev's children Charlotte and Tom

How did you come to live in England and Reach?

My family were from the North East of Brazil and we spent all holidays together on my Grandfathers farm of several thousand acres. From this came my passion for our current garden (slightly smaller) where we have our 450 vines, bees, chickens and woodland progressing.

I arrived in the UK in 1995 to visit my sister and the intention was to spend a few weeks with her before travelling on to live in the USA. As with all things, plans changed and I never left!

I have been married to Nev since 2017, we were married in All Saints church in Stamford where he had lived for the previous 30 years. We met via a dating app called Tinder – I had separated some while before and Nev was widowed and we were both looking for romance, we found this in the early part of 2014.

We came to live in Reach as we were looking for a plot of land with the hope of getting planning permission and building our together house. We had viewed and offered on a few but never got any accepted. Nev was working with a Company in Cambridge and a colleague told him of a parcel of land being auctioned at Cheffins. We went along and won the auction.

Following granting of planning permission, we then had the job of building the dwelling. We did 90% of the work ourselves, all the blockwork, roof, wiring, plumbing, internal walls, kitchen and sanitaryware. I think the only work we sub-contracted out was the digging of the foundations, powerfloat floor and plastering. We are very happy with our endeavours and have no plans to move.

Do you have any children and if so what are they now doing?

I have a son, Alex, he is 22 and currently training to be a quantity surveyor and lives in the village with us. Nev has two children, Tom and Charlotte, aged 30 and 28. Charlotte is a teacher at Stamford girl's school and getting married this summer, Tom is a manager of two Anytime Fitness gyms in Peterborough, they both live in the Stamford area.



Cris, Nev, Cris's son Alex and Nev's children Tom and Charlotte



Cris with her son Alex

Where do you work and what do you do?

We have both retired early, however, we always have something to do, working the vineyard, looking after the bees, minding the chickens, walking the dogs or planting trees, we have no idea how we ever had time to go to work!

Before retirement I had a patisserie in Cambridge for 8 years and I worked with several Colleges providing catering for May balls and other events.

Do you have any pets?

We have our coonhound Mocha, who some people will have heard howling. She recently had 11 coonhound puppies and against the odds they all survived. 10 have gone to their forever homes and we have kept the first born and named her Preta.

What hobbies do you have?

Hobbies are cooking, baking, looking after the bees, improving and maintaining our garden. I also enjoy yoga and visiting the gym.

What do you enjoy about living in Reach?

I enjoy the people whom we have befriended - and socialising with them. We enjoy the walks with our dogs in the picturesque landscape, we are very fortunate with the views from our house where we see lovely sunsets, bird murmuration and the sight of wild animals.

What is your philosophy in life?

My philosophy in life is what goes round comes round, be careful how you treat others and what you wish for any kindness will come back with dividends.

Content provided by **Cris** and compiled by **Karen Carpenter**.

Events Team

The Events Team is here to support villagers who have ideas and need some assistance. So we are delighted to be able to support **Sue Clifton** who wants to organize a **Car Boot Sale** with Pitch Fee Income all being donated to the Red Cross to be used for humanitarian efforts in Ukraine.

The event will take place on **Saturday 23rd April**, with Sellers setup starting at 8.00am and Buyers being welcome from 9.00am to midday.

Pitch prices will be £8 if pre-booked and £10 on the day and all these proceeds will go to the Red Cross. In addition, there will be a village table which villagers can donate items with all income going to the Red Cross.

If you are interested in any aspect of this event please email Sue or Tasha at:
reacheventsteam@btinternet.com.

Planning continues for the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June** - you can learn more about the UK's celebration plans by going to:
www.royal.uk/platinum-jubilee-central-weekend.



In Reach, we are planning a **Beacon Lighting Event** starting at 8.30pm on the evening of **Thursday 2nd June**. and a **Tea Party** with fun from 12.30pm on **Sunday 5th June**. Further details to follow.

Sports Day is planned for Sunday 26th June - little ones, get training!!

Debbie Quilter



Reach Fair

By Royal Charter since 1201

Bank Holiday Monday

2 May 2022

12 noon to 5pm

Traditional Fairground * Maypole Dancing
Morris Men * Live Music * Art & Craft Stalls and more

Entrance Free. Parking £7 per vehicle

www.reachfair.org.uk
Fair Green, Reach CB25 0JD

Reach Fair Quiz Night

Bring your brains and your own alcohol

Sunday 1st May 2022

Village Hall 7.30pm start

Quiz Master: Ross Clark

Bring a team of up to six or

if you're not already in a team,

just come along and we'll find a team for you.

All proceeds go to the Macmillan charity

Trees in Reach

The Parish Council has recently approved an inventory of trees for which it is responsible. The inventory captures for the first time just how many trees are involved, identifies trees that could present a safety risk and will help in developing a management regime to maintain and enhance the amenity and environmental value of trees in the village.

The PC has determined its responsibility to be:

- trees on land owned or leased by the PC
- trees planted as a PC or other community initiative

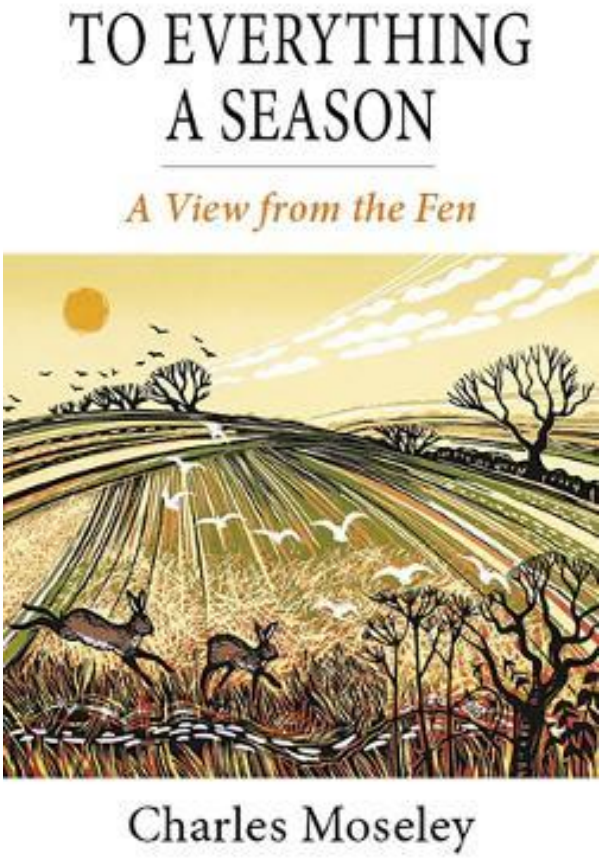
Overall, there are 147 trees in the inventory. Each tree now carries a numbered tag which allows it to be identified and makes reporting of any problems easier. There are 19 different species in the inventory of which two thirds are lime trees, most notably the Tilia cordata 'Greenspire' rows planted on Swaffham Road and on the 24Acres, in 2012. We have identified one tree of particular note - a large and healthy elm on the playing field and have notified groups that have an interest in notable trees of its presence.

We have excluded trees in the 24Acres woodland and orchard in the interests of manageability and because both collections of trees are already subject to their own management regimes. We have also excluded trees on land owned by the PC in the clunch pit because of its current inaccessibility. However, we plan to do a tree survey and develop a management regime there in due course. For the moment, too, we have also excluded the birch and cherry trees from the Drying Ground as there is uncertainty over the ownership of this area. The draft Neighbourhood Plan proposes to designate the Drying Ground as a Local Green Space in the ownership of the village. Should the Plan be approved by the village then we will add these trees to the inventory.

The inventory and an associated map of the trees can be viewed on the Reach website. We would welcome comments from villagers, in particular identification of trees that we may have missed and views on whether there are other trees on the inventory that you consider to be noteworthy. We have lost several trees in the village to disease and old age so your thoughts on what and where we might plant replacements would be welcome.

Finally, I would like to thank Steve Boreham for his significant input to the production of the inventory.

Nick Acklam



I was flattered when Charles asked if I would write a review of this, his most recent book. That it referenced 'our' fen both interested and intrigued and I spent an enjoyable few days with my head down absorbed in his manuscript.

Centred on Reach, the book details the Autumn to Autumn seasons of a fenland country life. Charles uses rich prose to describe the landscape, weather, traditions, wildlife, agriculture and livestock. Familiar characters and well known areas add to the sense of place.

As I read I learnt, about the people in his life, fenland histories, his childhood and academic career. Charles has a deep connection with the home he shares with Rosanna in Great Lane, he planted every tree in the garden! And writes that a decade or so ago their house 'once had a horse in the stable, large veg patch, hens, ducks on the river, geese next door and four beehives'. Amusingly, he continues 'this garden for as long as I have known it is divided between two robins'.

This beautifully written book clearly reflects Charles's love for the countryside and his knowledge and interest in our cherished fen-edge village.

Joss Goodchild

Nature in Reach



Wow, last month's article got some great reactions, it was lovely chatting to you all about the DNA finds in Reach Lode. Nathan Bridgeman recounted some fantastic stories of what the Lode was like when he was growing up and spoke of catching bream the size of dustbin lids.

A shame that we don't seem to have so many of these big fish in there anymore. And as for the poor guinea pig… well, Pam reminded me that there was an empty pet container left down by the Lode at some point last year, let's hope that said individual is happily frolicking away in the long grass down on the Hythe.

As I'm writing on an (unseasonably warm) March day, spring is well and truly here. One of the things I love most about the UK is that transition from winter to spring. In New Zealand most of the trees are evergreen - so you don't get that same loss of colour over the winter, but you also don't get such a dramatic bud burst and flush of green come the Spring. What I particularly enjoy is the natural rhythm to the season: first come the winter aconites and snowdrops, then the crocuses, followed by daffodils then bluebells. In the trees the plums and blackthorn blossom early, then hawthorn and apples a little later. Chestnuts unfurl their lovely green leaves early, oaks are one of the last.



Yellow brimstones are usually the first butterflies to make an appearance - a bit like swallows and swifts in summer, signalling that Spring is really here. It's lovely to hear the first Chiffchaffs (you can identify them by the fact that they sing 'chiff chaff'), who are resting their tired wings have flown over the Saharan desert to nest here and raise young. Soon on walks over the fen you might be lucky enough to hear the distinctive 'cuckoo'.

The challenge of course is that this is all a rather beautifully orchestrated and finely balanced dance, with things timed to perfection. Migrant birds only arrive once it is warm enough and there is enough to eat. Blossom appears mostly after the threat of frost has receded. However, the reason behind our (very lovely, but not-at-all normal) warm spring weather - climate change, puts a spanner into the works by throwing things out of sync.

Buds burst earlier, insects emerge and poor old migrant birds arrive to find they've missed the main course of the buffet. Research has shown that plants in the UK are flowering a month earlier and birds are following suit and nesting earlier. Even some of those migratory birds from Africa are now over-wintering here. Of course, nature finds a way, but we are likely to see the rhythms of nature around Reach continuing to change with the climate.

As always there have been some lovely wildlife sightings contributed from villagers. Joss's collection in particular highlights the growing thrum of activity that picks up as Spring establishes whilst Nick highlights some more unusual sightings. My personal highlights have been watching the buzzards ride the thermals high in the sky, several pairs of green woodpeckers, a muntjac fawn on the Hythe and 'mad march' Hares out in the fields.

Joss's list of sightings:

8.2: Starlings, jackdaws, blackbirds in the garden, raucous.

10.2: Heron (or fen-termed "Frankie") on Little Fen Drove.

12.2: First sound of the day, a woodpecker drumming. From the direction of Glen and Janet's walnut tree? Unseen but it's usually great-spotted woodpeckers that drum.

22.2: Green woodpecker in Gareth and Lesley's field.

24.2: Wren nesting in our shed once again. Cock pheasant on the Great Lane track.

25.2: Pied wagtails on the muckheap.

26.2: Strong, healthy rabbits, Reach Wood margins.

1.3: Barn owl, Great Lane.

5.3: A buzzard flew right over Pam's and my head, field off Great Lane.

8.3: Yellowhammers in and out of Aves' farm hedge.

10.3: Bumblebees (2) in the garden.

12.3: Native flowering violets in Great Lane.

14.3: 2 yellow brimstone butterflies on the 24Acres. Group of 4 roe deer in nearby field

15.3: Kestrel near Reach Wood. Goldfinches along Great Lane.

18.3: Skylarks, Canada geese, mute swan, pair of mallard, moorhens, Tubney Fen.

19.3: Counted 18 noisy house sparrows in the garden, 2 robins, dunnock, 3 woodpigeon, 3 collared doves, a starling, pair of blackbirds, 2 chaffinch, a wood mouse.

19.3. Ali Kohlman mentioned she saw a group of roe deer lying down in the sun in the field beside Alderson's.

19.3. Ron mentioned that in addition to the usual garden birds, three pairs of greenfinches and a great spotted woodpecker used his feeders, the latter can be heard drumming in the nearby tree. Two male frogs use his garden pond, no female has yet been spotted.

Nick Acklam reports

Whooper swans have been a wonderful, daylight presence on the fields either side of Split Drove throughout the period. They were drawn there to feed on remains of a sugar beet crop and emerging winter wheat. Their numbers peaked at 106 on 10 February but had declined to 14 by mid-March. All will have returned to their breeding grounds in Iceland by April. The Whoopers assembled in distinct social groups rather than as a single flock. For much of the time the swans were accompanied by Greylag geese, sometimes numbering 60 or so birds. The Greylags were difficult to count as, hunkered down, they blended into the bare earth. A few Canada geese were sometimes present too. The geese were far more skittish than the swans and it was an impressive sight when they occasionally took to the air.



Oystercatcher

Two and sometimes three Oystercatchers have been seen and heard around the shallow ponds on either side of the Lode close to the cycle bridge which have also seen the consistent presence of Wigeon. A flock of over 100 Black-headed gulls has been present on Tubney Fen for the winter months especially around the shallow pond between Straight Drove and the lode.

25 January: eleven Roe deer were seen browsing on the left hand side of Little Fen Drove. The Roe deer in our neighbourhood form larger groups in the winter months. There have been up to 20 on Hurdle Hall on occasions but this is the largest grouping seen at this location. On the same day, a flock of well over 100 Lapwing was seen moving aerobatically over Burwell Fen, seemingly in a search for a suitable landing place. The flock spiralled close to the ground on two occasions before apparently rejecting the options and flying on.

3 February: an unusual, mixed flock of Jackdaws and Starlings over Hurdle Hall.

10 February: two Cranes on the bank surrounding Tubney Mere. They were calling for some time before flying north, low over the fen.



A Barn Owl with quite distinctive light brown plumage was regularly seen hunting along the banks of Reach Lode throughout the period and sometimes in broad daylight.

1 March: a pair of Egyptian Geese flew over Burwell Road. This may be the same pair spotted in previous years although I suspect there are quite a few of these exotic escapees in the area.

Based on the number of sightings, our garden appears to have been added to the feeding route of a Sparrowhawk this winter. Our bird-feeders have been abandoned apart from a pair of robins. We may need to reposition them.

Cath Tayleur
cathtayleur@gmail.com

Anglesey Abbey



Anglesey Abbey in the Spring

Spring is in full swing at Anglesey Abbey, the bulbs are in bloom and the garden is buzzing with busy wildlife giving us plenty of seasonal delights. Blossom watch has begun and we have a display of 24 new flowering Cherry trees along Olympian Way, funded by the National Trust Blossom Project.

We have lots on offer, in the house we are highlighting some of the more significant paintings in the collection, you can find out more about this by visiting our website. The Hoe Fen Discovery Area is once again open and we can't wait to welcome families back to explore the new play equipment and wildlife discovery areas. From 2nd-18th April families can pick up an Easter adventures in nature trail and head out to explore wildlife across the gardens and Hoe fen, completing 10 nature inspired activities along the way. Don't forget to collect your Rainforest Alliance chocolate egg reward! Pre-booking is essential for our Easter adventures in nature trail, book now to secure your chosen day and time slot!

Easter adventures in natures trail
2-18 April
£3

Head to our website for the latest information and to pre-book an Easter adventures in nature trail:
nationaltrust.org.uk/Anglesey-abbey-gardens-and -lode-mill

Meghan Curteis
Programming and Partnerships Officer
Anglesey Abbey, Gardens & Lode Mill
Quy Road, Lode, Cambridgeshire, CB25 9EJ

The Outside Inn at the Quy Mill Hotel and Spa



The Outside Inn is Cambridgeshire's biggest outdoor bar located in the beautiful grounds of the Quy Mill Hotel and Spa. It includes a marquee that holds 400 people standing, 150 seated and has just had a massive revamp.

It will be opening on April 12th from 5pm to 7pm for local residents (which includes Reach!) so do come along, have fun and see for yourself.

Lots of events are planned, including DJ's and Bands, Family Fun Days, Outside Cinema, Silent Discos and Quiz nights. On the evening of Easter Sunday April 17th the UK's biggest Oasis tribute band Oasish (www.oasish.co.uk) are performing.

We also offer plenty of family activities including Crazy Golf, Croquet and Football.

Our dedicated chef will be providing mouth-watering food for consumption either on-site or take-away. With plenty of outside seating and music the Outside Inn has a wonderfully relaxing atmosphere.

It will be open during all Bank Holidays, Wednesday to Sunday, midday to 11pm and we also offer Private Hire, so why not come along and enjoy the fun in the sun!

You can follow the Outside Inn on Instagram and Facebook where you will see full details of events and ticketing.

Paul Story

Manager – The Outside Inn

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Quy Mill Hotel & Spa offers locals and visitors from afar a fabulous all-encompassing experience with a variety of accommodation options that include four-poster rooms, executives and standard doubles. With the added bonus of being pet-friendly, it is safe to say that all the family are welcome at Quy Mill. Quy Mill is more than just a hotel however, offering several dining options such as Sunday Lunch, Afternoon Tea and Fine Dining in our Waterwheel Restaurant. We are also a venue of choice for weddings and a firm favorite for corporate events and conferences, with the capacity to tailor our service to your needs from your enquiry all the way to the special day. Set in the beautiful Cambridgeshire countryside, whilst still just a stone's throw away from Cambridge City Centre, Quy Mill's location is second to none - offering a welcome and luxurious break for locals and travelling guests.



THE OUTSIDE INN
AT QUY MILL HOTEL

The Outside Inn at Quy Mill Hotel is Cambridge's biggest outdoor event space. Situated on the same site as our glorious hotel, we have offerings of food, drink, live bands, silent discos, DJs and family-orientated fun. Our policy is to provide a safe and fun space where anyone and everyone can enjoy themselves. Our season of events for 2022 is scheduled to run from 15th April - 1st October, with larger music events on the weekends and a relaxed and chilled outdoor bar setting on weekdays. Our fantastic events schedule begins on 15th April with JARD, a local house music DJ, performing for 5 hours non-stop to open the season. This is followed up on Easter Sunday by a special performance from one of the UK's leading OASIS tribute bands, OASISH. All tickets are available via Skiddle and our music events are open for ages 16+.



Wicken Fen



News from Wicken Fen Nature Reserve

Reach24 BioBlitz – Saturday 14 May

We're excited to be organising a BioBlitz on the 24Acres as part of our National Lottery Heritage Fund project: Footprints. Please save the date and join us to discover the wildlife and nature on your doorstep. From small mammal and moth trapping, to bird and wildflower walks, there will be lots of fun activities to enjoy. The BioBlitz will also be part of our Annual Neighbourhood BioBlitz Weekend, so we'll be encouraging you to look for and record wildlife in your back garden and local green spaces too.

For those new to BioBlitzes, the idea is to find and identify as many species as possible in a specific area over a short period of time. Everything found is documented and added to national databases that monitor wildlife. This helps establish how different species are doing and whether we need to take action where they are in trouble.

Here's the programme for the day:

8am Cambridgeshire Mammal Group will open the traps they set overnight.

9am Moth traps will be opened.

11am Join Steve Boreham for a woodland tour.

1:30pm Join David Fotherby for a bird walk (if you have binoculars, please bring them along).

2:30pm and **3:30pm** discover the local plant life on a 30 minute wildflower wander.

Please drop in for any of these activities and stay for as long as you like. We look forward to meeting the Reach community and getting to know its wildlife. Please contact Julia Hammond if you have any questions: julia.hammond@nationaltrust.org.uk

Volunteer opportunity

We are looking for volunteers to start with us as Dog Rangers – to chat to dog owners, let people know the best routes, where dog bins are, how to walk your dog around grazing animals, and also encourage responsible dog walking for everyone's benefit. If you are a regular user of our site, and interested in joining the Wicken Fen team in this role, please contact isabel.sedgwick@nationaltrust.org.uk – being a National Trust volunteer is a great way to get to know your local places and help with their conservation and upkeep.

Events

Easter Egg Trail

Join us for an Easter adventure in nature at Wicken Fen. Discover our family-friendly trail with fun activities for you to do along the way. Complete the trail and earn your Rainforest Alliance chocolate egg at the end. 9 to 18 April 2022, from 10am last entry 4pm. No booking necessary, £3 per child. Normal admission applies.

Owl Pellet Detectives

Delve into the fascinating world of owl pellets to discover what's on the menu for the owls at Wicken Fen! Wednesday 6 April 2022. Suitable for ages 5+, £6 per child (1 hour session). Booking essential, online.

Painting the Fens

For the budding artist this is a great opportunity to get some expert guidance and learn the basic watercolour skills. Tuesday 12 April 2022. Suitable for ages 6+, £9 per child (2 hour session). Booking essential, online.

Mucky Pups

Outdoor adventures at Wicken Fen, for pre-school children who enjoy getting grubby. Friday 1 April and Friday 6 May 2022. Suitable for ages 2-5 years, £6.50 (1.5 hour session). Booking essential, online.

For the latest information and online events booking please visit our website and keep an eye on our social media feeds www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen.

Julia Hammond
Senior Programming and Partnerships Officer
Wicken Fen Nature Reserve

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Tales from a Reach Garden



Spring is here at last! It is lovely to see daffodils blooming everywhere and to hear birdsong again. The weather has perked up so much in the last couple of weeks that all varieties of daffodils seem to have flowered at the same time, rather than over several weeks.



Massed daffodils by the woodland walk at Anglesey Abbey

We still have some vegetables growing in the garden left over from last year which we are harvesting now. Chard, perpetual spinach and rocket have overwintered in the same beds since they were sown by seed last spring. We normally remove all leaves before the frosts set in in autumn/winter which would turn any chard leaves to mush unless protected. During winter the plants are virtually dormant, barely growing at all, but the roots seem to cope with the colder temperatures. Then as the weather warms up in spring a fresh flush of leaves are produced that we pick before the plant produces flower stalks.

Slug damage can be a problem for the spinach and chard, but not the rocket – especially if juicier chard leaves are nearby. We also noticed that rocket plants which have been left to grow over winter provide more hole-free leaves than when grown in the summer. They are prone to damage by flea beetles in the summer which puncture the leaves, sometimes leaving more holes than leaf. I'm very reluctant to use the pesticides against flea beetle because of the potential impact on bumble bees in the garden, plus I want to eat those rocket leaves without pesticide residues. It may be that sowing rocket in late summer for a spring harvest would be a better option.

The garlic we planted in autumn spent the cold winter months protected by fleece, but it is growing well now. The leeks were covered in a fine mesh and survived leek fly, but a couple were damaged where there was a tiny hole in the mesh…

The cabbages have long gone – either damaged by storms or eaten by us (or by slugs and snails). However, the kale has been largely unaffected by slug damage; probably because the slugs prefer the sweeter tasting cabbages to the more savoury flavour of kale.



Red-stemmed leaves of chard "Bright Lights"

At this time of year we start to harvest spears of broccoli – the type known as "Tender-stem broccoli" in the supermarkets. We usually grow early purple sprouting broccoli which are prolific and we'll keep harvesting them until May. The plants do grow tall (as tall as me) – which makes for easy picking, but means they have to be protected from deer, rabbits, pigeons and squirrels, then staked to cope with the winter storms. Even so, some were blown over in the February storms and had to be put back in place. We are also growing a variety called "White Burbank" which doesn't grow quite as tall and produces white spears of broccoli, which look like miniature cauliflowers nestling among the leaves. They seem to be maturing a little later than the purple varieties, so it is too early to say whether they are as prolific.



"White Burbank" sprouting broccoli

Meanwhile we're preparing for the year ahead. I've been busy in the polytunnel sowing seeds while Richard has been busy replanting an old Leylandii hedge on the north side of the garden, which was dying by the metre and not pretty to look at, so we are replacing it with yew, which will take a few years growth before reaching the height we need to diminish the impact of northerly winds. We have both been busy with the loppers and secateurs to carry out pruning in the garden. Then there's all the weeding and mulching to do as well…

Gardening does help to keep us fit, but we try to vary the tasks in the garden day by day, so we're not over-using the same muscles.

Danuta Gibson

Reach Community Cafe

Reach Community Cafe has now been running for 5 months and continues to be well supported - and so we plan to continue with the current formula of tea and cakes on a Friday afternoon.

We would like to expand the "community" feel of the cafe however. So if anyone wants to have a pop up shop (eg beef, cards, crafts or similar) do just let us know!

Similarly, if any teenagers wish to use the cafe as an opportunity to complete the volunteering section of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, we would be very happy to hear from you! Our recent volunteer has come every week to wash up and clear away - and has now successfully completed his Bronze volunteering with us. There are also always volunteering opportunities for cake makers too 😀

Other information:
We are changing the time of the cafe for the summer. Starting next week, the cafe will be open from 3.00pm - 4.30pm.

There will be no cafe on Good Friday.

We have a small surplus from donations and have today donated £20 to the DEC Ukrainian appeal. Thank you.

Claire and Helen

Food Focus

Wild & Wet Garlic Risotto



When we were first married, George and I lived on the edge of Bodmin Moor near a village called Blisland - bliss when the heavens weren't decanting a portion of their 84" of annual rain on us.

The western edge of the Moor is characterised by verdant steeply dissected river valleys lush at this time of year with drifts of bluebells and pockets of wild garlic. In that part of the world, the smell hits you almost before you can see the giant lily of the valley like leaves or the simple allium flower heads. Here in Cambridgeshire, where we often qualify as a semi-arid desert, wild garlic inevitably isn't so plentiful, but I gather that you can grow it in your garden and some ancient woodlands have patches of it.

Being a great fan of food for free, I made this recipe repeatedly in the wild garlic season…often without the wet garlic which is harder to come by. The recipe, and the wet garlic back then, were courtesy of a Riverford Box. Thankfully now we have Snakehall Farm which more than compensates for the veg box and what's more occasionally stocks wet garlic. The presentation of this dish gets taken to another level if you can decorate it with wild garlic flowers. I can't divulge my spot, but I also discovered a source of wild garlic last year. Keep your eyes peeled.



Wild garlic risotto

Ingredients:

- 3 wet garlic, sliced thinly
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 30g butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 250g risotto rice (Arborio)
- splash white wine or vermouth
- 1 litre vegetable or chicken stock (hot)
- large handful wild garlic leaves, roughly chopped
- 50g Parmesan, grated finely
- wild garlic flowers, to garnish
- salt and pepper

Method

Prep time: 5 min

Cooking time: 30 min

1. Cook garlic and onion slowly in half the butter and oil for about 10 minutes without colouring.

2. Add rice, turn up the heat and cook until the rice is coated with garlic mix, season and add alcohol. Stir until the wine has been absorbed.

3. Next, add the stock until rice is just covered and turn down the heat. Maintain rice at a gentle simmer and keep adding stock once the last addition has been absorbed.

4. After about 10 minutes add wild garlic leaves and stir into rice. Add more stock. After another 5 minutes, when rice is just cooked but has some bite, add the remaining butter and cheese.

5. Season and serve with a sprinkling of cheese and some wild garlic flowers if they are available

Catherine Gibson

Tree Bench on the Fair Green



The circular bench has been reinstalled on the Green after an absence of two and half years - just in time for the Fair and the 'good' weather. The bench had been taken down shortly before the felling of the Jubilee Tree but now sits round the sweet chestnut that was planted as a long-term replacement.

The bench needed new boots where its legs had rotted but is otherwise in great condition for its age (it was originally installed in 1996), a testament to the fine joinery of Ranald Scott and the resilience of iroko of which it is constructed. Thanks go to Ron Greenhill who supervised the reinstallation, John Cole and Geoff Newman who carted the bench on and off site and stored it for us and also to Rob Keutgen who provided some muscle in the final stages! Thanks also go to Manchetts Garage who paid for the boots.

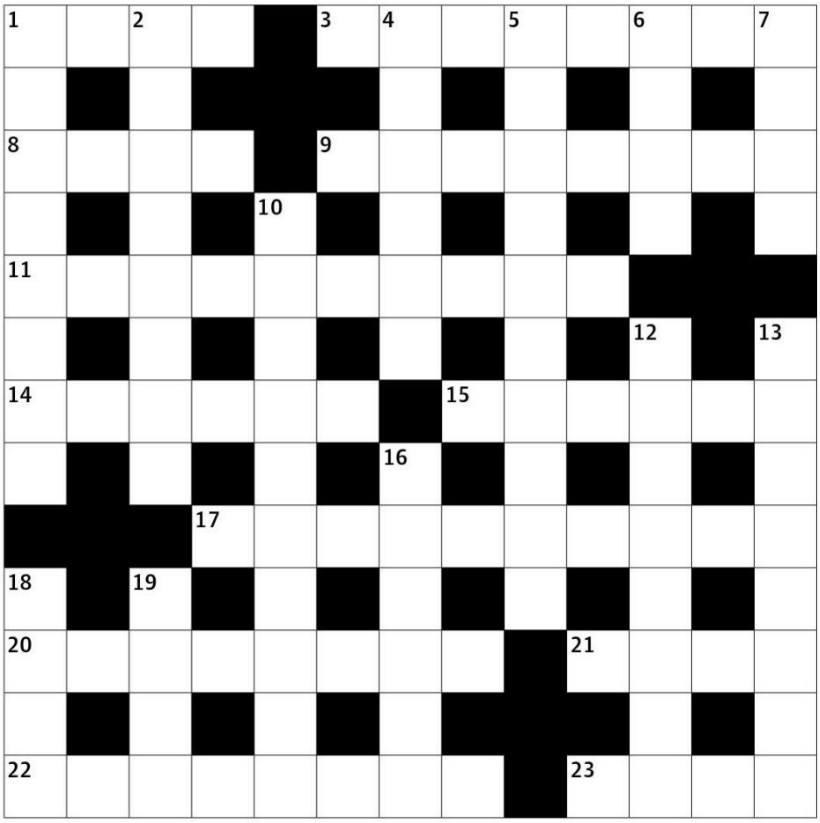
Nick Acklam

CentrePeace

Tuesday 10 - 12.30
Wednesday 2 - 4
Thursday 10 - 12.30
Friday 10 - 12.30
Saturday 10 - 12.30

CentrePeace is run by volunteers and supported by our churches. Opening times may be extended as more volunteers feel able to come forward.
If you wish to volunteer, please get in touch with Hazel Williams (743897), even if you have worked in the shop in the past.

Crossword



Across

1 Empty talk (4)
3 Ultimate right to decide (5,3)
8 Circuit (4)
9 Vindictive (8)
11 Paddington Bear's favoured garment (6,4)
14 Humid (6)
15 Walked purposefully (6)
17 Makeshift (10)
20 Stevenage, Corby and Skelmersdale, for example (3,5)
21 Cab (4)
22 Annoyed (8)
23 Previously (4)

Down

1 Highly-prized item (4,4)
2 Visitor numbers (8)
4 Collision – shock (6)
5 Magnetic (10)
6 Secure – a place to keep valuables (4)
7 Cry out in pain (4)
10 Sculptor known for his semi-abstract monumental bronze figures, d. 1986 (5,5)
12 Crew member who never does a stroke (8)
13 What tops an article (8)
16 Flinch – fawn (6)
18 One looks down on others (4)
19 Mug up (4)

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10am - 11am Forever Active Chen Style (£5)
11am - 12pm T'ai Chi Health (£5)
5pm - 6.30pm Beijing 24 Step T'ai Chi Chuan (£8)

Wednesday Morning: Burwell Sports Centre
9.45am - 10.45am Improvers 24 Step (£3.50)
11 am - 12pm Beginners T'ai Chi Health (£3.50)

Wednesday Afternoon: Reach Village Hall
12.30pm - 1.30pm Chen Style and Yiquan (£5)

Thursday: Paradise Sports Centre Ely
10am – 11am Beijing 24 Step T'ai Chi Chuan (£4)
(Part of the Keep Active Ely sessions)

Contact Instructor Faradena Afifi (Fara) for more information
Phone: 07919857617 Email: faradena@yahoo.co.uk

www.grey-heron.com


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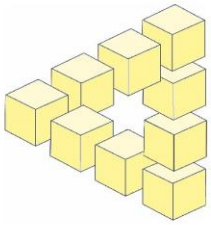

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Bottisham Village College
Sports Centre

Bottisham Village College has a widely important role in the local community so we would like to apologise for the disruption our closure caused - but are very excited to have
***reopened Bottisham Sports Centre as of the 4th of January 2022**.*

Our Opening Times are:

Monday to Wednesday 4:00pm - 10:00pm
Thursday 6.30am 9.00am and 4.00pm - 10.00pm
Friday 4.00pm - 10.00pm and **Saturday & Sunday** 8:00am - 4:00pm

Currently, the Sports Centre has lots of clubs covering swimming, football and many other sports, so please get in contact with us if you would like to know more of what is on offer!
We look forward to welcoming you all in Bottisham Sports Centre once again!

facebook.com/BottishamSportsCentre
For more information call **01223 811121**
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Cricket Report

When Ross Clark decided to re-launch Reach Cricket Club sometime back in the early noughties the team, sometimes consisting of 11 players (but often not that many) played a handful of games at Burwell's ground each season. We lost most of them! We moved back to Reach a few years ago at the 24Acres site where we got changed before we left home and sheltered from the rain in our cars.

The 2022 season is going to be different. We've had the telegraph pole removed from the middle of the outfield, we're getting water connected in a few weeks and we've got a pavilion!

We'd like to invite everyone in the village to the official opening of the pavilion on Sunday 1st May when we play TAC – the Telugu Association of Cambridge (who rent our pitch on Saturdays). During the tea interval, which should be around 3:30pm, there will be cake, games, a chance to try some cricket skills and a small ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially open the building. The 2nd half will get underway at about 4:30 and hopefully some of you will stay and watch us attempt to win the match.

We get our season underway the previous Sunday with an intra-club T20 match, before our first ever league match away at Ickleton on Wednesday 27th April. Entering a league is a new thing this season and co-captains Chris Bridgeman and Tony Fordham will be guiding us to glory. Or not.

We're playing a friendly game every Sunday through to the end of September and have our annual tour to Monmouth booked in again. All of our fixtures can be seen on our website: reach.play-cricket.com.

We're always happy to welcome new players. Whether you want to play competitive league cricket on a Wednesday, or friendly cricket on a Sunday we'd encourage you to come along and have a go. We have people who play once or twice a season and some who play most weeks. Just pop down when we're playing or get in touch via the website.

If you don't want play, we'd welcome your support throughout the season. Come down and sit on our new veranda and watch some cricket.

Rob Steed

Cricket Fixtures 2022

Day/Date	Opposition (Home/Away)	Start
Sun 24/4	Intra Club Pairs Game (H)	1.30pm
Wed 27/4	Ickleton (A)	6.00pm
Sun 1/5	Teluga (H)	1.30pm
Wed 4/5	Linton (A)	6.00pm
Sun 8/	Extras (H)	1.30pm
Sun 15/5	Journeymen (H)	1.00pm
Wed 18/5	Haverhill (A)	6.30pm
Sun 22/5	Stansfield (H)	1.30pm
Sun 29/5	Barrow (H)	1.30pm
Wed 1/6	Fulbourn (H)	6.30pm
Sun 5/6	Lidgate & Ousden	1.30pm
Wed 8/6	Dullingham (A)	6.30pm
Sun 12/6	Space Cadets (H)	1.30pm
Wed 15/6	Abington (H)	6.30pm
Sun 19/6	Chippenham (A)	1.30pm
Sun 26/6	Milton (A)	1.30pm
Wed 29/6	Ickleton (H)	6.30pm
Sun 3/7	Cam Kerala (A)	1.30pm
Wed 6/7	Dullingham (H)	6.30pm
Sun 10/7	Ivanhoe (H)	1.00pm
Wed 13/7	Linton (H)	6.30pm
Sun 17/7	T10 Tournament (A)	10.30am
Wed 20/7	Abington (A)	6.30pm
Sun 24/7	Wandering City Boys (H)	1.00pm
Wed 27/7	Fulbourn (A)	6.30pm
Sun 31/7	Rain Men (H)	2.00pm
Wed 3/8	Haverhill (H)	6.00pm
Sun 7/8	Cam Ceylon (H)	1.00pm
Sun 14/8	Waterbeach (A)	1.30pm
Sun 21/8	Woodford Green (A)	1.00pm
Fri 2/9	Usk (A)	5.30pm
Sat 3/9	Lanarth (A)	1.30pm
Sun 4/9	Penallt & Redbrook (A)	1.30pm
Sun 11/9	Sharks (H)	1.00pm
Sun 18/9	Simmons (H)	1.00pm
Sun 25/9	White Walkers (H)	1.00pm

Letter from the Vicarage



One of the most challenging things over the last two years has been dealing with change and uncertainty. We seem to be only just beginning to feel as if things are getting back to normal, after two years of pandemic and suddenly we've been shocked by the news of the invasion of Ukraine, with the news worsening each passing day. We long to see a peaceful end to this, but a quick resolution does not seem likely.

Many have been gathering urgently needed supplies for Ukrainian refugees. Responding to the situation in a Radio 4 Thought for the Day, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby reminded us not to give in to the fear provoked by uncertainty but instead remember that 'the only certainty, is that we know that God does not change. Let us find our resolution, our peace, our certainty not by screwing up our courage, but in the knowledge of the eternal arms that hold us.' Let's join together to do what we can to offer support where it is needed and for those who pray, let's keep praying.

As we look towards Easter, I am reminded that when everything seems hopeless and all is lost, new hope can come. That is what we remember, year by year in the Church's calendar: the terrible events of Good Friday and Jesus' death, the desolation of Easter Saturday and the glorious, wonderful joy of Jesus's resurrection on Easter morning. If you'd like to find out more about what Easter could mean for you, do get in touch. More details of our services for Holy Week and Easter services are on the Churches Together Easter page, along with those of the other village churches. Refresh Café continues to meet in St Mary's each Friday morning, including during the school holidays, for babies, toddlers and their grown-ups. Messy Church will be meeting on Good Friday morning at St Mary's. For updates about what's going on at St Mary's or St Etheldreda's in Reach, please see our Facebook pages. Please get in touch if you would like more information about these or any of our events or services, including weddings, christenings and baby thanksgivings, or if you would like would value an opportunity to chat. If you find yourself in need of the support of the Foodbank, I do have emergency vouchers, or you can contact Ely Foodbank on 01353 468626.

Revd Dr Eleanor Williams

Vicar of Burwell with Reach,
01638 741262
vicar@stmarysburwell.org.uk

Reach Church Building Update

The builders have continued to make excellent progress. They replaced all the damaged joists which were discovered when they removed the floorboards and then removed the ceiling (being careful not to disturb the bees) and the plaster on the lower section of the walls.

They then began putting in the insulation. The first stage of re-wiring has also taken place. They are apparently on-schedule at present. The bio-diversity plan mentioned last month was completed and sent off to ECDC and has now been approved.



Wall insulation on the lower part of the walls

Expert advice has been taken on care of the bee colony. After helpful conversations about what is best for them, the bees are being placed in expert hands with whom we are very impressed. The colony will be carefully and safely removed to a hive with honey from which they may choose to return to the church when building works are complete.

The builders have now asked us to finalise a few items that were only partially defined when the plans were prepared, as they will soon need these details to proceed. They include the position of the font, detailed layout of the kitchen; the exact specification of the AV system and some ideas about a suitable design for a memorial to Maisie Whitehead. The Reach Development Group is working on this.

Paula Spalding and Pat Chalmers
on behalf of the Reach Development Group

Church Services at Burwell and Reach

April 2022	St Mary's Burwell	St Etheldreda's Reach
Sunday 3rd 5th Sunday of Lent	10.00am Holy Communion	
Wednesday 6th	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 10th Palm Sunday	10.00am Holy Communion	9.00am Holy Communion
Wednesday 13th	10.30am Holy Communion	
Thursday 14th Maundy Thursday	7.30pm Holy Communion	
Friday 15th	10.30am Messy Church 2.00pm Meditation	
Sunday 17th Easter Day	6.00am Sunrise Service at Castle Mound 10.00am Holy Communion	
Wednesday 20th	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 24th Easter 1	10.00am Holy Communion and Annual Parochial Church Meeting	
Wednesday 27th	10.30am Holy Communion	
May 2022	**St Mary's Burwell**	**St Etheldreda's, Reach**
Sunday 1st Easter 2	10.00am All Age Service	9.00am Holy Communion
Wednesday 27th	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 8th Easter 3	10.00am Holy Communion	7.00pm Sunday@7 Service in the Village Hall Communion
Wednesday11th	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 15th Easter 4	8.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Christian Aid Service 4.00pm Confirmation Service	
Wednesday 18th	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 22nd Easter 5	10.00am Holy Communion	
Thursday 26th Ascension Day	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 29th Easter 6 Sunday after Ascension	10.00am Holy Communion	
St Mary's Burwell St Etheldreda's Reach *Loving God, Loving People*	**Scan the QR code to go to our website for more details and links to book for services in church buildings and to join in via Zoom and Facebook https://stmarysburwell.org.uk www.facebook.com/stmarysburwell**	

Know Your Parish Council

Your councillors are:

Charlotte Cane	Chair	741064
Nick Acklam	Vice Chair	743749
Cristine Fletcher	Councillor	07763 529886
David McMillan	Councillor	741259
Andrew Trump	Councillor	07980 955490
Hannah Web	Councillor	
Vacancy	Councillor	

Charlotte Cane	District Councillor
John Trapp	District Councillor
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor

Your Clerk is Susan Bailey
29 Great Lane Reach CB25 0JF; 01638 743794
clerk@reachparishcouncil.org

Meetings take place in the Village Hall on the first **Tuesday** of each month. They start at 7.45pm and all Reach villagers are welcome to be involved.

Know Your District Councillors



The Council budget for 2022/23 was passed on 22 February, including a Council Tax freeze to recognise the cost of living challenges facing many residents. We supported the Council Tax freeze and proposed an amendment to devolve the Rural Services Delivery Grant of £169,000 to Parish Councils and to allocate £10,000 to investigate options for Civil Parking Enforcement, to address the problems caused by illegal parking around the district. This would have been funded by joining the Combined Authority's Community Led Housing Support service, saving the costs of providing it in-house and drawing on the extensive experience of ACRE in community engagement.

We also proposed to cut the £25,000 (33 per cent) proposed increase to the Council's PR budget. This amendment was defeated. East Cambs is a relatively small part of the total Council Tax bill, which includes tax for the County Council, Police, Fire services and Parish Council, so our Council Tax bills will increase from April, even though the East Cambs element will not increase.

We also unanimously passed a motion thanking residents in East Cambs for their exemplary behaviour during the lockdown periods, during which very few Fixed Penalty Notices were given to our residents for breaching Covid Lockdown rules and volunteers helped those in need. We also thanked health professionals and all those in public office and leadership positions who worked hard to lead by example. The administration deleted the section which would have shared the severe disappointment of many East Cambs residents that this leadership and responsibility had not been demonstrated by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson.

At this meeting, the questions from the public revolved around actions to address the Climate Emergency. One asked about the provision of electric vehicle charging points and highlighted how few points there were in East Cambs and that many of those had not been working for several months. Another asked for the Council to bring pressure on the Local Authority Pension scheme to disinvest from fossil fuels.

The County Council are creating a new heritage website for Cambridgeshire, with the aim of improving the availability of local heritage lists. Once this is up and running you will be able nominate buildings and sites as local heritage assets - https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire

Jubilee Gardens in Ely celebrated 20 years since it was opened by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh in February 2002. Charlotte was one of the Councillors at the time who pressed the administration at the Council to retain this green space rather than selling it as a building plot - Lib Dems celebrate 20 years of Jubilee Gardens Ely (ecld.org.uk). She wanted people to be able to walk through park land from the river to the Cathedral, rather than having to navigate between buildings. It's disappointing that 20 years later we are still having to fight across this ward to protect local green space from development pressures.

Our next Councillors' Surgery is on Wed 27 April at 6.30pm, by Zoom. Meeting ID: 865 7631 8040, Passcode: 490667. If you prefer to join by 'phone, the number is 01314 601196. Our following Surgery will be the first face-to-face one for some time, on Wed 25 May 6.00-7.00pm at Reach Village Hall or you can meet us at the Dyke's End from around 7.00pm.

Charlotte Cane
charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk 01638 741064

John Trapp
john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk 01223 812120

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the village hall on Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 7.45pm

Attendance

Charlotte Cane	Chair	Not Present
Andrew Trump	Councillor	Present
David McMillan	Councillor	Present
Cris Fletcher	Councillor	Present
Nick Acklam	Vice Chair	Present
Hannah Webb	Councillor	Present
Alex de Giorgio-Miller	Councillor	Not present
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Present
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present

Apologies for absence - Approved. Councillor Cane was absent, so Councillor Acklam took the Chair for the meeting.

Forum for members of the public.
A member of the cricket club attended to clarify details of the pavilion payments.

1. Declaration of Interests
There were none.

2. Planning
There were none.

3. District Councillor Report
Businesses in East Cambridgeshire which lost significant trade because of the Omicron variant are being encouraged to check if they are eligible for a one-off COVID grant of up to £6000. The deadline for applications is 11 February. Hairdressers, mobile caterers, beauticians, and taxi drivers are among the list of businesses that could be eligible for the eighth round of the Additional Restrictions Grant which is being administered on behalf of the Government by East Cambridgeshire District Council. Specifically, the discretionary grant is available to support businesses that can demonstrate they have lost more than 30% of income because of the coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant between 13 December 2021 and 9 January 2022.
For more detail see - Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme Round 8 | East Cambridgeshire District Council (eastcambs.gov.uk)

The Audit Committee in January was impacted by Covid because neither the external nor internal auditors were able to attend. This hampered discussion of their reports. The major item from the external auditors was noting that there had been an error when consolidating the trading companies into the Council's Group accounts. This had meant that the income and expenditure figures had to be adjusted by £4m. Furthermore, the figures for 2019/20 published last year also had to be adjusted by £4m. Because the errors were in income and expenditure, they did not impact on the bottom line. Nevertheless, they are material and higher than the £2m which was reported to the Committee in November.
The internal auditor found that 'the Council was not compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code', because not all payments over £5,000 had been properly recorded. Despite this, the risk of non-compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements on the Risk Register had been reduced, with the assertion that 'There are no known issues of non-compliance.' When asked to explain why they said there were no known issues of non-compliance when the internal auditor had said there were, they replied 'The Risk Management Group are awaiting the outcome of the Internal Review in Q4 and will make the necessary adjustment (if required).' Whilst we hope the review in Q4 finds that all contracts and payments are properly documented and recorded, the risk register should reflect what is currently known.

The Operational Services Committee, which is the Committee which oversees waste services, was due to meet in January but this meeting was cancelled.

The main item for the Finance & Assets Committee was to review the budget for 2022/23. The Finance Officer briefed us on his 2022/23 budget proposal before the meeting, and this was presented to the committee for debate. The Administration tabled a motion to refer the budget proposal to Full Council where there is less opportunity for scrutiny and debate. It seems as if the Administration will rewrite the budget, and it seemed pointless to debate the budget that was presented as it might be different. So, we await the papers for full Council on 22 February to see what the budget proposals are.

February's Planning Committee has been cancelled, so the only meeting in February will be Full Council on the 22. Although Councils can no longer hold remote meetings, many Councils have continued to livestream their meetings so that residents can continue to see the debate as decisions are made. East Cambs does not do this. We felt that was a missed opportunity especially for our residents and others not in or near Ely. With other Councillors we asked for this to be reconsidered and the Council has now committed to livestreaming Council and Committee meetings, starting with Full Council on 21 April 2022.

Our next Councillors' Surgery will be on Thursday 17 February at 6.30. Meeting ID: 865 7631 8040, Passcode: 490667. If you prefer to join by 'phone, the number is 01314 601196.

4. County Councillor Report

COVID-19 Overview

Whatever the Government may say, rates of the virus in Cambridgeshire are currently the highest they have ever been and continue to rise. In Cambridge they are particularly high—the city has the sixth highest rate in the country. In the East of England, one in 20 people currently has COVID-19.

Omicron symptoms are milder than those for other variants of the disease with the protection of the vaccine, but high case rates lead to high numbers of people self-isolating which impacts public services—the running of schools, care for vulnerable children or older people, or refuse collections for example. A high number of people in hospital with COVID-19 is creating additional pressures. Other routine appointments with the NHS such as planned operations might need to be cancelled.

The local Director of Public Health is continuing to ask people to

• Vaccinate: get COVID jabs and booster jabs when offered.

• Test: take a rapid test before meeting others, and isolate if positive. If you have symptoms, always isolate and get a PCR test.

• Protect: wear a face covering in crowded indoor spaces, keep your distance, wash hands, and meet in well ventilated spaces.

COVID in schools

A majority of COVID cases are in the pre-school and primary school-age population where the virus continues to spread rapidly and where there is currently no protection.

For the week ending 20 January, Cambridgeshire recorded 2,956 cases of COVID 19 across 392 educational settings. This is a significant increase on the previous week when there were 1,421 cases across 342 settings.

Attendance in state schools has also declined and stands at 88.3 per cent in Cambridgeshire, compared to 88.1 per cent in England overall. In addition, 8.6 per cent of teaching staff in Cambridgeshire were unavailable for work due to Covid.

Testing

Changes in testing policy (removing the requirement for confirmatory PCR tests) are affecting the reliability of data, both nationally and locally. Cambridgeshire's high case rates may also be reflective of the county's very proactive management of COVID-19 in schools, which is leading to more cases being identified, as many young children do not show symptoms.

https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

General Covid information

• https://twitter.com/CambsCC

• https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-overview

• https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine

FINANCES - County Council budget and spending plans

Cambridgeshire County Council's Joint Administration proposes to set up and spend a £14 million 'Just Transition Fund' over the next five years to tackle inequality, improve lives, and care for the environment. The Council's Strategy and Resources Committee on 27 January recommended proposals for the fund, as part of the new administration's plans which also include a set of new priorities for the council.

In its first year, if agreed by the Full Council budget meeting on Tuesday 8 February, the Just Transition fund will fund schemes that

• Increase flood prevention, continuing a recent rapid increase in gully clearing

• Help tackle climate change

• Widen opportunities for children with special educational needs and disabilities

• Increase independent living services

• Expand direct payments and individual service funds, where adults assessed as needing support can choose and manage their own care services
• Expand the ‘Care Together’ programme, providing care services close to where people live

When the Joint Administration took control of the council in May last year, it inherited a potential budget gap of £86M by 2027. The new leadership invited in an independent and cross-party team of local government experts in July 2021 to review the council, who highlighted this as an issue ‘of significant magnitude’ for the new council administration.

In order to help balance the county council’s finances, the Joint Administration proposes to raise the County Council’s share of council tax by 4.99 per cent—an extra charge of £1.04 per week for a Band B, and £1.19 for a Band C household. More than half of all homes in Cambridgeshire are in these two bands. The local government experts who visited in summer highlighted that historic decisions not to raise council tax in previous years had led to significant ongoing lost income to support local services.

This is a difficult time for many people who are struggling with factors including the financial effects of the pandemic, enormous increases in energy bills, national insurance rises of over 10 per cent, and loss of universal credit. The council’s business plans therefore include direct support for those most in need.

If Cambridgeshire received the same level of funding as the average county council, it would have received an extra £23M for services in 2022/23. Instead, the Government has announced that a review of local government funding expected in 2020 has been postponed for at least another year and is now not expected until 2023/4.

Current funding baselines for local authorities in England come from an assessment of relative needs and resources which has not been reviewed since 2013/14. It takes no account of Cambridgeshire’s 27 per cent increase in people aged 65+ in the past ten years, compared to the national average of 19 per cent.

<u>This Land</u>

One of the commitments of the Joint Administration on taking office was a thorough review of the council’s development company This Land. The independent report, by Avison Young (AY), a multi-national real estate services consultancy with no prior involvement with This Land, was discussed by the council’s Strategy & Resources Committee at the end of January.

The report referred to 'unusual' accounting practices, and to 'shortcomings [which] require immediate attention'. It said, ‘Overall we do not consider that there is a full understanding within This Land of the level of risk exposure the business is under,’ and that ‘it did not seem that there was a sufficient level of familiarity and understanding of the sites during the meeting [between consultancy AY and This Land].’

AY made a number of recommendations to the council, most to be carried out within three months. The committee will receive a further report in March.

<u>ADULTS & HEALTH - Integrated Care System</u>

Along with every other part of the country, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough is preparing for the ‘Integrated Care System’ which will become statutory from April. This will involve health and social care systems coming together to meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services, and plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities.

ICSs are based on Primary Care Networks, groups of GP practices serving 30,00- 50,000 people. This is a whole new way of working for the NHS and for council social care systems, with a lot of adjustments to make.

Staffing pressures

COVID-19 continues to bring significant pressures to care services in the local community. Some of these challenges include

• Increased staffing costs
• Impact on staff wellbeing and mental health, with some leaving the sector
• Increased insurance
• Increased cleaning and PPE costs
• A competitive job market and challenges recruiting and retaining staff

The Adults & Health Committee has therefore agreed to invest £4.2M to ensure continued support for care providers to meet the needs of their clients.

<u>CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE - Young persons’ mental health hubs</u>

A motion from Fenland councillor Samantha Hoy calling for a network of mental health hubs to meet the needs of young people received unanimous support by the County Council last month. Work is beginning on putting this into practice.

<u>School admissions review</u>

The Children & Young People Committee has agreed to undertake a full and comprehensive review of admission arrangements for all own admission authority schools. This should include the published definitions of existing school catchment areas, and admission policies for schools with a sixth form.

<u>Free school meals</u>

The numbers of children in Cambridgeshire eligible for free school meals has continued to increase significantly across the county. The numbers were included in a report to the Children & Young People Committee.

<u>COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY, & INCLUSION - Household Support Fund</u>

A reminder that the County Council’s Household Support Fund is still open (to 31 March). It offers:

• Support with food, household energy and other essentials for individuals and families: residents are eligible to access this support if they earn less than £17,940 per year, or are in receipt of certain state benefits

• Direct food vouchers: as in previous school holidays, supermarket vouchers will be issued to eligible families.
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/household-support-fund
The County Council is offering a one-off payment of £20 from this fund to all 39,000 people in the county who are on Universal Credit. More information at orlo.uk/97w7o

Cambridgeshire Skills Learner Voice Forum

Cambridgeshire Skills are looking for past and present learners from a wide range of backgrounds willing to give their time to participate in a new Learner Voice Forum. The Forum will advise staff on a variety of issues and will have the opportunity to work in partnership to shape the future of Cambridgeshire Skills.
The Forum will meet termly but may also be invited to get involved in projects and activities as they arise. These could include sitting on the interview panel for staff recruitment or representing Cambridgeshire Skills at networking events. More details from 01353 613013 or cambsals@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The consultation period on the revised flood risk management strategy has now closed, and the responses are being reviewed before the strategy is finalised. The Chair of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Flood & Water Partnership, has had initial conversations about whether that body—which brings together a range of agencies with flood and water responsibilities—can take on the oversight and monitoring of the progress of actions in the strategy's Action Plan.

Cambridgeshire Local Councils Conference

The Cambridgeshire Local Councils Conference on 14 January, had two excellent sessions on climate change and community flood groups.

Carbon footprints Cambridgeshire

The county council's Environment & Green Investment Committee received its latest carbon footprint report, on the carbon emissions of the county council, and of Cambridgeshire as a whole.
2020/21 was an unusual year, with COVID lockdowns and reduced economic activity. So, it is not surprising that the council's carbon emissions from its own sites and assets, and from its purchased
electricity, were down twenty per cent on the previous year. Adding in indirect emissions, from the activities of the Council's contractors and suppliers, the Council's carbon emissions were down a staggering forty per cent. Much of that drop is likely to be temporary.
The most recent figures for Cambridgeshire as a whole are from 2019, and show a steady decline, mostly due to the decarbonisation of electricity generation. It is interesting to note the very obvious differences between the different districts. These include the huge contribution of LULUCF (Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry) in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland. And of course, the similarly very significant contribution of transport in Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. Without these two major pressures, Cambridge's
footprint is very much smaller – just one-third that of Huntingdonshire, which is the largest.

Local parishes

At the Cambridgeshire Local Council Conference, we were introduced to https://impact-tool.org.uk/
—a parish-level carbon emission estimator. The estimator is not perfect but is a reasonably reliable indicator.

Envar planning application

A motion was recently brought to full council for debate, about the application by Envar at Woodhurst for a new facility for incineration of medical waste.
The motion said that the council 'supported the objections' against the application. Whatever one's views of the application itself, this was singularly inappropriate, as it is the council's own planning committee that will decide the application, and it must do so on the basis of the facts in front of it.
The motion was passed, however, as members of the council's Joint Administration chose not to vote—refusing to be pushed into voting to disregard the clear wishes of residents, but also not prepared to agree a council policy on an application before the planning committee does the job it is supposed by law to do without prejudice.

Council climate change plan scores well

A group called Climate Emergency UK has scored the Climate Change plans of all local councils in the UK, against 28 questions in nine sections.
Cambridgeshire County Council was the second highest scoring county council. This is based on the council's current plan, not the updated and more ambitious one which will be presented to the full council on 8 February for approval.
https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/

CUSPE research

Postgraduate students from the Cambridge University Science & Policy Exchange have been working on a number of projects for the council, including two environmental ones. They reported back to the Environment & Green Investment Committee recently. One project was on setting up a Decarbonisation Fund for Cambridgeshire, and the other was on the potential for local heat networks to power homes sustainably in our market towns, using Huntingdon, March, and Ely as examples.

Heritage website

A new heritage website for Cambridgeshire is currently under construction, with the aim of improving the availability of local heritage lists.
https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire

Digital connectivity strategy and the copper switch-off

Connecting Cambridgeshire has produced a new digital connectivity strategy for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. Councillors were particularly concerned at the lack of national government publicity about the imminent copper switch-off in 2025. Old copper networks will be phased out and start to be replaced with digital systems delivered over broadband connections.

"This will affect all public services, businesses and domestic premises, making people even more reliant on digital connectivity and will require signposting and awareness raising, particularly among those who do not use mobile phones, or cannot access the internet," says the report.

Many homes still rely on this network. But so do a great many specialised applications such as alarm lines, payment terminals and health-monitoring equipment. Many older telephone systems, fax machines, payment terminals and alarms that do not have SIM card capability will no longer work after the 2025 deadline. There is concern that a great many people who rely on these systems have not yet been fully informed about the changes that lie ahead.

20MPH fund

The council's new Joint Administration undertook to make the option of 20MPH zones more widely available, and easier to obtain. The Highways & Transport Committee has agreed to set up a 20MPH fund (expected to be around £400,000), and a working group to consider application criteria and priorities.

Petition to reinstate online council meetings

The Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) and Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) has launched a petition (link below) calling on the government to create Parliamentary time to agree a change in the law to allow councils in England to meet remotely if they wish. I have signed this as I believe online meetings enabled greater participation, transparency, and accountability, were better for the environment and safer for participants during a pandemic.

https://www.change.org/p/uk-government-and-parliament-for-councils-in-england-to-have-the-choice-to-meet-remotely

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Combined Authority's Local Transport Plan update, and its extension to include Connectivity, has been held up for several months. The proposed update was expected to be relatively minor, with a six-week consultation. However, it now appears that the changes will be more significant, and legal advice is that they will require a twelve-week consultation. This cannot be carried out during the local election period in Cambridge, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. The consultation will therefore be launched on or after Tuesday 10 May.

The Combined Authority has approved a new Employment & Skills Strategy. This contained some interesting information about skills provision and opportunities district by district.

Only 25.4 per cent of pupils at schools in East Cambridgeshire progress to higher education, and rates of higher skills are falling in the district. However, there is higher than average progression into apprenticeships in East Cambridgeshire, at 11.4 per cent compared to 10.6 per cent in Cambridge.

East Cambridgeshire is recognised by the Strategy as a 'cold spot' for further education provision, and supply chains and labour shortages from COVID and Brexit are affecting the range of industries. The strategy sets out priority actions for the Combined Authority to address these and other issues in our district and across the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.

The Combined Authority has granted Laragh Homes a three-month extension to its loan for the completion of its project at the former Alexander House at the bottom of the Forehill in Ely, at six per cent above base rate.

Councillors felt that it was a sensible idea to be able to attend meetings remotely should it be necessary. ***Clerk*** to speak with Councillor Cane then sign the petition.

Councillors were very interested in the parish-level carbon emission estimator. ***All Councillors*** to take a look ***Clerk*** to add to Agenda for next meeting.

5. Minutes of previous Meeting - approved as correct.

6.1 Reach Grant Fund

Nothing to report.

6.2 Finance

Nothing to report.

6.3 Parish Council Members

Highways issues were discussed, including Little Fen Drove and an issue a resident on Burwell Road is having.

Clerk to write to Highways & Councillor Schumann to start a discussion on how the issues can be rectified, and what the future plans are for Little Fen Drove and its repair.

6.4 Play Spaces

Nothing to report.

6.5 Rights of Way
A discussion took place regarding the path that leads down from the Devils Dyke and who's responsibility it is. Clerk reported that when last enquires were made in 2020, Highways informed the PC that the footpath only ran along the top of the Dyke. ***Clerk*** to ask again.

6.6 24Acres Committee
The NT engagement officer would like to arrange a bioblitz on the 24Acres on the 14th May. The last one was in 2013, results will be compared. Unanimously approved. ***Councillor Acklam*** to liaise with the NT.

6.7 Neighbourhood Plan
No report received. ***Clerk*** to chase report for the next meeting.

6.8 Friends Of Reach Wood
There had been some vandalism in Reach Wood, which has been reported to the Woodland Trust.
It appears that some mountain bikers decided to create a ramp on one of the rides by digging some holes.
These were hazardous for walkers, dogs and runners. Steve Boreham, Nick Acklam, Julie Boreham, and Lola Jones flattened the ramps and filled the holes. They also covered over the 'mountain bike path' that had been cut through the wood with leaves and branches.
Could everyone using the wood keep an eye out for any similar activity in the coming months, and report anything suspicious.

6.9 A to B1102 Group
The focus of this month's meeting had been the rapid bus scheme as the group would like to have some influence over its route, parking, and access. It will be rapid along the B1102 but not into Reach. Reach should link into the Burwell hub. Routes to Burwell will need to be improved which will help Reach residents access the other services in Burwell.

7. Reach Fair
Progress continues. The group had been going door to door asking for interest and support. Response had been very encouraging. Following the fair, the exercise will be repeated to establish in what form the village wishes the fair to continue.
CCC had asked whether we wished for the throwing of the pennies to continue, due to health and safety. The PC agreed that this tradition should continue.
All Councillors would be added to the Reach Fair bank account.

8. Cemetery
All Councillors to visit the cemetery over the next month to look particularly at the trees and hedge growth and the older headstones. ***Clerk*** to add to March meeting agenda.

9. Reach PC trees
An inventory had been carried out of 147 trees assessed to be the responsibility of the PC. Thanks to Steve Boreham and Councillor Acklam.
There are no immediate threats to public safety. One tree identified as of particular significance, and six recommendations made to the PC.
Recommendations
1. Publish of the inventory with a request to villagers for additions and amendments
2. Survey trees at the Clunch Pit to create a management plan once the PC's ownership of the land is clarified.
3. Regularly monitor for dieback the ash trees in the inventory and make financial provision for their felling.
4. Implement biennial pruning of high level epicormic growth on the lime trees in the cemetery
5. Commit to an annual inspection of the trees in the inventory
6. Take action to protect an elm tree of some significance on the playing field.

Recommendations unanimously approved.

10. Byways around Reach
The Droves around the village are in a poor state of repair. This is due to a very wet winter, farm traffic and a large amount of 4x4 recreational traffic. Discussions with CCC Highways had given 3 options. To repair once the winter has passed. To repair and add road plannings, this would deter the 4x4 traffic but spoil the character of the byway. Or 3, introduce a seasonal traffic regulation order, this would be very expensive to the PC and again detract form the character of the area.
Following discussion, it was felt that the first option would be best, that is to wait for dryer weather and ask the local farmers to help by repairing any damaged caused. ***Councillor Acklam*** to discuss.

11. Power on the green improvements

A quote was supplied, when the power on the green was safety checked, for additional work which would "*improved safety of the installation".* Considering the installation had passed its safety check the PC were confused as to what this meant. ***Clerk*** to get more information from those using the power supply and from the electrician.

12. Sunnica - should the PC register as an interested party

The Infrastructure planning inspectorate has opened registration to become an interested party for the Sunnica Energy Farm application. Registration ensures that you will receive formal notifications during the Examination process and gives you important participation rights. Any member of the public, business or group can register to participate in the Examination. Registration closes on Thursday 17 March 2022.

It was agreed that it was important for the PC to be part of the discussions and aware of developments. Reach has a particular interest in the massive growth in infrastructure at Burwell and potential fire risk. ***Councillor Acklam*** to register on behalf of the PC.

13. Payments

S Bailey – clerk salary	Confidential
S Bailey – postage	£15.84
D Parr – Reach Fair website hosting fee	£71.86
HCR Ltd – Clunch pit	£1440.00
Reach Village Hall – shed rental	£720.00
Events team – Christmas events	£550.00
PDC Landscaping – Cricket pavilion	£2450.00
Hortons Portable Buildings – Cricket pavilion	£13085.90
Eon – power on the green	£41.80

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

DRAFT Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the village hall on Tuesday 1st March 2022 at 7.00pm

Attendance

Charlotte Cane	Chair	Not Present
Andrew Trump	Councillor	Present
David McMillan	Councillor	Present
Cris Fletcher	Councillor	Present
Nick Acklam	Vice Chair	Present
Hannah Webb	Councillor	Present
Alex de Giorgio-Miller	Councillor	Not present
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Not Present
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present

Apologies for absence - Approved. Councillor Cane was absent, so Councillor Acklam took the Chair for the meeting.

Forum for members of the public.

A member of the cricket club attended to clarify details of the pavilion payments, water pipe installation and insurance.

It was agreed to hold off from submitting a second grant claim from Amey Cespa as this would be the last claim allowed. The final claim will take place once all invoices have been received to allow for all expenses to be claimed

A licence is required from County Farms for permission to install a water pipe. It was agreed that this would be in the PCs name to keep inline with the 24Acres lease.

Any costs would be paid for by the Cricket Club.

1. Declaration of Interests
There were none.

2. Planning
There were no Reach planning applications.
Councillor Acklam had been asked whether the PC would comment on application 22/00160/VARM in Burwell Parish. This a varying of a condition of an approved application for a solar farm at Hightown Drove. The PC did submit comments during the application process. The variation is regarding the road access. Either access point will include Weirs Drove which the PC feels is already suffering damage from the ongoing developments. ***Councillor Acklam*** to write highlighting the issue of damage to the road and the increased cumulative damage with increased construction. ***Clerk*** to ask Burwell PC if they are commenting.

Councillor Acklam had registered the PC with the planning inspectorate regarding the Sunnica proposal.

3. District Councillor Report
None received.

4. County Councillor Report
None received.

5. Minutes of previous Meeting
Approved as correct.

6.1 Reach Grant Fund
Nothing to report.

6.2 Finance
Clerk was still struggling to get the signatory changes completed by Barclays Bank.

There had been a little confusion between Councillors regarding the amount a resident had agreed to pay for the solicitor fees regarding the Clunch Pit ownership. This was discussed and understood. There had been no further agreed expenditure on the Clunch Pit.

6.3 Parish Council Members
The PC had received communication regarding dog poo in the playing field. There had been an offer to put up signs about this. The PC were grateful for the highlighting of the issue and the offer of help. The PC asks that the signage words and position is agreed with the PC prior to the work being carried out.

Information had been received regarding an increase in the IT costs. This is a Microsoft increase rather than a supplier increase. ***Councillor McMillan*** to confirm with the contractor.

There had been talk on Facebook regarding the removal of the cherry tree by the Village Hall Committee. Consensus seemed to be that the village would like some planting in the centre of the village of ornamental trees. There may be an opportunity to do this linked to the jubilee celebrations this year. ***Councillor Acklam*** to write a paragraph for the village magazine discussing this.

It was still hoped that the bench would be in place around the tree on the green in time for the Fair.

It had been noted that a tree on the Drying Ground had been damaged in the storm. It is considered that this is still safe but will need work at some stage. There is confusion as to the ownership of the Drying Ground. ***Clerk*** to discuss with the Tree Officer at ECDC. ***Councillor Acklam*** to discuss with the owners of White Roses.

6.4 Play Spaces
Nothing to report.

6.5 Rights of Way
Nothing to report.

6.6 24Acres Committee
The organisation of the BioBlitz on the 14th May continues.

6.7 Neighbourhood Plan
No report received.

6.8 Friends Of Reach Wood
Nothing to report.

6.9 A to B1102 Group
The group is working towards developing a more formal constitution to ease the holding and raising of funds.

7. Reach Fair
Progress continues. Stall rotas had been completed.
There are still 10 pitches to sell.
A small number of signs and flyers will be produced, most advertising will be Facebook and the website.
Arrangements are being made for card payments to be taken by the salad stall, the BBQ & the car park.
The list of payments was approved by the PC, these will be paid from the Fair bank account.

8. Cemetery
Councillor Acklam & Steve Boreham are you produce a new map of the cemetery with an accurate detail of space available.
The canopy of Lime trees needs raising and there is some deadwood that will need to be removed ***Clerk*** to get quotes.
There are some older graves with headstones laid down but there are two which are beginning to lean. These will be monitor and dealt with when necessary.
Overtime a management plan for the cemetery will be produced.

9. Parish-level carbon emission estimator
Councillor were unsure whether this was a necessary tool. ***Councillor Cane*** to investigate whether other PCs were using the estimator and how useful they were finding it.

10. May Parish Council meeting
Following discussion, it was agreed that the May meeting should remain on it scheduled date 3rd May.

11. Payments

Events team – Christmas events	£550.00
Eon – power on the green	£41.80
CR Contracting – mowing	£42
Places4People – N/P printing	£685.00
Balfour Beatty – streetlight maintenance	£441.60

These reports were received after the meeting and therefore not discussed. Included below for information.

County Council
Farmgate report, finally

The county council's Constitution & Ethics Committee met on Friday 25 February, to receive the report of solicitors Wilkin Chapman LLP into the conduct of former Conservative councillor and County Council Deputy Leader Roger Hickford. The case, known as 'Farmgate', concerns Mr Hickford's actions in obtaining the tenancy of a county council farm. Mr Hickford had been chair of the council's Assets & Investment Committee in 2016/17, and 'member champion' for the county farms estate. He was awarded the tenancy at Manor Farm Girton in April 2017 and took it up in December 2017. In December 2018, a request was referred to the council's General Purposes Committee for a substantial council investment in the farm. It was only at that point that many councillors realised that Mr Hickford was the tenant, and Cllr Lucy Nethsingha, now Leader of the Council, requested an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the award of the tenancy. Council auditors began to investigate the matter, but this was then taken on by external auditors Mazars, whose report has still not been published.

The Constitution & Ethics Committee last year requested an investigation on lines similar to an investigation under the council's Code of Conduct, though this Code does not apply to those who are not councillors. This investigation was carried out by Jonathan Goolden of Wilkin Chapman LLP, who has investigated and led a large number of reviews of complex and politically high profile cases of alleged misconduct in the public sector.

The committee decided to publish the 177-page report in full, on grounds of public interest. The report found appalling levels of bullying and intimidation by Mr Hickford in pursuit of personal advantage, and has sent shock waves through the local authority. The summary is as follows.

24.1 We have concluded that Roger Hickford's conduct in respect of his conduct towards Officers and others in relation to his tenancy of Manor Farm Girton did amount to breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct as follows:-

a) Official Capacity (paragraph 1.1) – he acted in his official capacity when dealing with Officers in respect of the tenancy of Manor Farm, Girton;

b) Respect (paragraph 2.1) – he failed to treat Officers and others acting on behalf of the Council with respect;

c) Bullying (paragraph 2.2(b)) – he used a bullying manner in order for the Council to pay for works that would otherwise be the responsibility of the tenant. He also used a bullying manner in order to set the terms of the Lease for Manor Farm;

d) Impartiality (paragraph 2.2(d)) – he compromised Officers and others' impartiality in his dealings with regard to Manor Farm;

e) Disrepute (paragraph 2.2(e)) – his conduct towards Officers and others and his conflict of interest would have reduced the public's confidence in him being able to fulfil his role or the Council being able to discharge its functions;

f) Improper use of position (paragraph 4.1) – he used his position as Deputy Leader to receive concessions that the Council would not otherwise have agreed to;

g) Interests (paragraphs 8 and 10) – he failed to register a disclosable pecuniary interest (the tenancy of Manor Farm) within 28 days and he failed to declare a non-statutory disclosable interest in meetings with regard to County Farms matters.

24.2 However, he did not breach paragraph 5.1(a) of the code, Misuse of Council resources.

Finding

24.3 Our findings are that there have been breaches of the code of conduct of the authority concerned.

• The report can be found at www.tinyurl.com/farmgate-report

• The debate is online at https://youtu.be/YqSxVYCxoxQ

The meeting agreed unanimously, that

• The issues raised in the report should be treated as a cross-Council priority;

• The Committee should refer it to the Strategy & Resources Committee, with a request that they establish a programme of action to resolve these issues and prevent a recurrence;

• The Committee should invite the Strategy & Resources Committee to refer the matter on to the Full Council if appropriate; and

• The Council should take up the matter with council colleagues across Cambridgeshire to improve standards of behaviour in public life more widely.

The publication of the report is welcome, but the matter is far from over.

COVID-19

Overview

Covid precautions in England were removed on Thursday 24 February. People with Covid are no longer legally required to self-isolate, and the £500 payment for some people on lower incomes has also ended. Statutory sick pay and employment support allowance will start to be paid after four and seven days of absence, rather than immediately. Routine testing for pupils and staff in schools has ended, with the exception of special schools. Free lateral flow and PCR tests will end from 1 April, with very few exceptions.

Vaccinations

The roll out of vaccinations for 5 to 11 year olds will begin from 31 March. Advice at this point is that children will be vaccinated in pharmacies and mass vaccination centres rather than in primary schools. Mobile vaccination centres are still in operation—see the schedule at https://www.thevaccinators.co.uk/

General Covid information

• https://twitter.com/CambsCC

• https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-overview

• https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine

FINANCES & COUNCIL ASSETS

County Council budget and spending plans

The County Council's budget was set on Tuesday 8 February as outlined in the previous report. Significant budget gaps were left to the incoming Joint Administration for the years ahead, and still remain to be addressed.

County Farms estate

Cambridgeshire County Council has been advertising for new tenants for seven council-owned farms, part of the council's 33,000 acre rural estate.

The council's estate – the largest public sector estate in the country – is divided into 226 holdings, with 160 different tenants. The seven farms up for application, 1,800 acres in total, are in South Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Littleport. Interest is high, with 67 viewings booked by mid-February.

The estate brings in £5M in rent to the council each year, to support local services. It contributes to the local economy, enables the council to put its environmental commitments into practice, and ensure public access to the countryside with permissive paths and bridleways.
The council is looking for innovative, entrepreneurial applicants with new ideas for developing their own businesses on the land. These could well be arable or livestock farming, but there are also opportunities for ancillary enterprises such as livery, farm shops or engineering. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills and a viable three-year business plan and budget. They will also need to show that they understand the council's expectations for the farms estate, and in particular are keen to farm in step with nature and do their bit to help tackle climate change and increase biodiversity.
Interviews will take place this month, and tenancies will be ready to take up from October onwards. The council has published a brochure about this opportunity, https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/business-with-the-council/rural-business-opportunities.
On Sunday 13 February the chair of the environment and green investment committee was on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire telling Richard 'Spanners' Ready about this terrific opportunity. The interview is on her YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjloOsjbM94
Queen's Green Canopy
On Saturday 19 February the chair of the environment and green investment committee joined Waterbeach County Councillor Anna Bradnam, deputy Lord Lieutenant Tim Breitmeyer, and members of the County Council's farms team to start the planting of five thousand trees at Oldfield Farm in Landbeach. The trees are part of the Queen's Green Canopy project to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The farm is part of the County Council's rural estate, and is let to a local tenant farmer.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
Holiday vouchers and household support
The council's Children & Young People Committee is being asked at its meeting on 1 March to continue the supermarket voucher scheme for 2022/23 for eligible families, on the same basis as in the current financial year. This will cost around £3.6M, and will operate alongside the Holiday Activity and Food Scheme which will also continue to run in the coming year.
Meanwhile the Household Support Fund will run until the end of March. Demand is very high so is now restricted to one application per person.
Special needs provision
During Covid-19 Cambridgeshire has seen an unprecedented increase in the numbers of children with special educational needs and disabilities who require a specialist placement. As of 8 February, 211 children in Cambridgeshire had an Education Health and Care Plan requiring placement in a special school or specialist provision attached to a mainstream school in the near future. This includes pupils who have moved into Cambridgeshire. These pupils are either currently on roll in a mainstream school or receiving tuition packages of alternative provision.
The council is proposing to commission new and additional places to meet this need through appropriate specialist educational provision across Cambridgeshire. On a wider, strategic scale, officers are also mapping future demand in order to develop sustainable specialist provision for the future.
Proposals include expansion of existing Area Special schools, creation of dedicated provision attached to mainstream schools, and more efficient use of independent providers through negotiation of block contracts.
CONSTITUTION & ETHICS
Motions about planning applications
Last month's report noted a motion to the county council's Full Council meeting in January
opposing the proposal by Envar for an incinerator near Somersham. It was passed because the Joint Administration did not vote. We felt it was inappropriate to discuss at Full Council a planning application which was waiting to be determined by the County Council itself.

Such motions increase the risk of the council appearing to pre-judge applications, and of the council forming an opinion on applications where all the facts are not necessarily available. This could lead to appeals by unsuccessful applicants, or even judicial review. Planning applications should be discussed by the Planning Committee on the basis of the evidence in front of them.
At the meeting of the Constitution & Ethics Committee on 25 February—the same meeting that discussed 'Farmgate'—the committee agreed unanimously to recommend to the Full Council that motions for debate relating to planning applications yet to be determined, whether by the Council or the Planning Inspectorate, should not be permitted.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT
Household Recycling Centre changes
COVID-19 measures at the Household Recycling Centres are being changed with effect from Tuesday 1 March. Booking requirements for all vehicles at all sites are being removed, and the number of vehicles allowed on all sites is being increased to pre-COVID levels.

There will still be ‘meet and greet’ staff to limit the number of vehicles on site to the sites’ maximum parking bay capacity, site signage related to COVID, hand sanitiser for public use, and social distancing between site staff and visitors. Anyone who is self-isolating is asked not to attend any site. Where staff assistance is needed, materials must be removed from the vehicle by the site visitor for removal by site staff after the visitor’s departure. Staff will maintain social distancing, wear gloves and sanitise after handling waste. Where practical, only one person should be on a gantry at any time except where two are required to lift bulky items.
Visits using vehicles or trailers which require e-permits will be registered by site staff on arrival at a recycling centre, as they were prior to the introduction of the booking system, with no requirement to book visits in advance.
Solar Together

On 9 February the chair of the environment and green investment committee was on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire to promote the second round of Cambridgeshire’s group buying scheme for solar energy. The interview is on her YouTube channel at https://youtu.be/8N_bb67mfps
Registration is currently open to join a large group of people across Cambridgeshire buying solar panels or battery storage from pre-approved installers. Homeowners can register online to express interest free of charge and without obligation. More information about the scheme is available at https://solartogether.co.uk/cambridgeshire/landing
Pre-approved suppliers will take part in an auction on 15 March, bidding to supply and install the panels and batteries for the whole group. They can offer competitive prices because of the number of installations close to each other.
After the auction, applicants will receive a personal recommendation. If they accept this, the details will be confirmed with a technical survey and an installation date set. Telephone and email helpdesks are on hand throughout, along with pre-installation information sessions.

The effects of climate change are becoming ever more obvious, and energy bills are rising astronomically. This is a great way to reduce carbon emissions, and energy costs over the longer term.
Climate Change Strategy
The Joint Administration’s ambitious Climate Change & Environment Strategy was approved by the Full Council on Tuesday 8 February. The chair of the environment and green investment committee was invited by UK100 to write a guest blog post for them on our new strategy, and it has been published at https://www.uk100.org/blog/2022/02/ambitious-cambridgeshire-our-new-climate-change-environment-strategy
UK100 is a network of highly ambitious local government leaders, which seeks to devise and implement plans for the transition to clean energy that are ambitious, cost effective and take the public and business with them.
Cambridgeshire COP
80 representatives of organisations fighting the climate emergency met on Monday 28 February to kick off a year-long ‘Cambridgeshire COP’. After COP26, the climate summit held in Glasgow last November, Cambridgeshire County Council leader Cllr Lucy Nethsingha was inspired to bring together countywide organisations to share information on Cambridgeshire’s current position in the race to net zero.

Monday’s webinar heard from Cllr Nethsingha, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Mayor Dr Nik Johnson, and Cllr Pippa Heylings who sits on both the Local Government Association Climate Board and South Cambridgeshire District Council. Cambridgeshire’s Lord Lieutenant Julie Spence was also in attendance and read a message of encouragement from Prince William Duke of Cambridge.
The event included four group discussions on increasing biodiversity, developing sustainable transport, changing heating and housing options, and dealing with waste.
A range of local events and activities will take place throughout the year. These will include a biodiversity in May, to mirror the international national biodiversity conference in China; activities led by youth groups in June to coincide with the pre-COP27 discussions in Bonn; and a two week series of activities across Cambridgeshire 7-18 November to coincide with COP27 in Egypt.
Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
The revised local flood risk management strategy is expected to be approved by the council’s Environment & Green Investment Committee on Thursday 3 March, having completed its public consultation and been amended in the light of residents’ and councillors’ comments.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT
Local Highways Improvement bids
On 21 February the East Cambridgeshire Local Highways Improvement panel considered sixteen of the nineteen applications submitted. Three applications, including Witchford’s, had been withdrawn. The total amount of council funding available to these projects in East Cambridgeshire is under £100,000, and the total requested by applicants is over £127,000. It seems likely therefore that between half and three quarters of this year’s bids will be approved. The Highways & Transport Committee will meet on Tuesday 26 April to make the final decision on the applications.
Bicycle stands
The county council is using Government ‘active travel’ grant to install bicycle stands in some villages.

IN OTHER NEWS

County Council pay policy and pay gaps

The county council's Staffing & Appeals Committee met in February to receive annual reports on the council's pay policy and pay gaps, and the council's People Strategy. These reports contain some very interesting analysis of the gaps in pay between men and women, and between white and minority ethnic staff, as well as pay ratios between higher and lower earners.

The council's mean gender pay gap is 9.6 per cent, compared to 7.3 per cent last year. The council's median gender pay gap is 8.6 per cent, compared to 8.9 per cent last year.

The council's mean ethnicity pay gap is 2.5 per cent, no change from last year. The council's median ethnicity pay gap is also the same as last year at minus 2.9 per cent. However, the council does not hold ethnicity data for 1 in 4 of its employees, so this calculation is less reliable than the gender gap figure.

The median salary of the organisation in 2021 was £27,041, the same as last year. The ratio of the Chief Executive's salary to the organisation's median salary was 1:6, again the same as the previous year. The current mean salary for the organisation this year is £29,791, a slight increase of £328 compared to the previous year.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

February was a quiet month for the Combined Authority, with only one meeting—the Employment & Skills Board which contains no elected representation. The Overview & Scrutiny and Board meetings for February were cancelled.

Friday 25 March will see the first Mayor's Question Time to include questions from the public. This is expected to take place in the morning at Eddington, with some online capability too. This will be hosted by the Chair of the Combined Authority's Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Staff at the Combined Authority are currently working on promotional materials to advertise the event and invite questions from the public.

District Council

The only meeting in the last month was Full Council in which the following decisions were made:

- A motion was passed unanimously thanking residents in East Cambs for their exemplary behaviour during the lockdown periods, during which very few Fixed Penalty Notices were given to our residents for breaching Covid Lockdown rules and volunteers helped those in need. We also thanked health professionals and all those in public office and leadership positions who worked hard to lead by example. The administration deleted the section which would have shared the severe disappointment of many East Cambs residents that this leadership and responsibility had not been demonstrated by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson

- The budget for 2022/23 was passed, with a Council Tax freeze, recognising the challenges many residents are facing in the cost of living. We supported an amendment to devolve the Rural Services Delivery Grant of £169,000 to Parish Councils and allocate £10,000 to investigate Civil Parking Enforcement options, to address the problems caused by illegal parking around the district. This would be funded by joining the Combined Authority's Community Led Housing Support - Community Led Housing | CPCA | The Combined Authority (cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk), saving the costs of providing it in-house and drawing on the extensive experience of ACRE in community engagement and cutting the £25,000 proposed increase to the Council's PR budget. This amendment was defeated.

- The budget established a £2m Growth & Infrastructure Fund, using money refunded from Cambridgeshire Horizons.

- There were various changes to the Constitution, most of which were proposed by the officers after extensive consultation with all members and with all-party support. The administration also changed the rules on Public and Members questions, so that rather than being an opportunity to hold the administration to account, any member can be questioned. As the public questions and answers are limited to 15 minutes, we are concerned that this will reduce the opportunity for scrutiny of the administration. These changes were not consulted on and did not have cross-party support.

- At this meeting, the questions from the public revolved around actions to address the Climate Emergency. One asked about the provision of electric vehicle charging points and highlighted how few points there were in East Cambs and that many of those had not been working for several months. Another asked for the Council to bring pressure on the Local Authority Pension scheme to disinvest from fossil fuels.

- March is a busy month, with meetings of the Planning, Licensing, Audit, Operational Services and Finance & Assets Committees.

- Our bin days change at the end of this month to make the routes more efficient and save 12 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year. From 28 March our collection days will be:

Monday - Bottisham, Brinkley, Lode, Long Meadow and Westley Waterless.

Tuesday - Reach, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior.

Diary Dates

April 2022	Event	Location	Time
Fridays 1, 8, 22, 29	Reach Cafe	Village Hall	3pm to 4.30pm
Tuesday 5	Recycling Day (Green)		
Tuesday 5	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.00pm
Monday 11	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Wednesday 20	Recycling Day (Green)		
Tuesday 26	Recycling Day (Blue)		

May 2022	Event	Location	Time
Fridays 6, 13, 20, 27	Reach Cafe	Village Hall	3pm to 4.30pm
Tuesday 3	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.00pm
Wednesday 4	Recycling Day (Green)		
Tuesday 10	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Tuesday 17	Recycling Day (Green)		
Tuesday 24	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Monday 30	Recycling Day (Green)		



Community Catalysts are working with Cambridgeshire County Council to support people in East Cambridgeshire interested in becoming sole traders or small community enterprises offering a range of care, support and activities for older and disabled people at home and in the community. **Local people helping other local people**. How they do that is entirely their choice - as a sole trader or maybe with friends they set up a co-operative or social enterprise.

Having a focus on Ely, Littleport, Soham and Burwell but the East Cambs villages, including Reach will also be part of the project as vulnerable groups face the rural challenges of care and support.

We have a local Catalyst, working with all the amazing groups, communities' teams and area connectors. The project will offer free support, helping folks to help their neighbours and understand how to run their own enterprise well whilst providing the best care and support. We are also able to advise small groups and organisations already established with developing or diversifying their business.

At Community Catalysts we've done this for over 10 years, with many successful projects up and down the country. We have seen that with Covid that continuity of support is even more important, difficult times have shown even more that people want to help others in their community.

For more information contact your local Catalyst, Anna Tuck on; anna.tuck@communitycatalysts or 07881 297330.
www.communitycatalysts.co.uk www.facebook.com/CommCatsEastCambs

Bus Timetable

Reach is served by the Stagecoach number 11 bus service - summary of all buses serving Reach is shown below.

Please note that there is no bus service at all on Sundays

Cambridge to Bury - Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)				
Cambridge Drummer Street	**Reach**	**Burwell Ness Road**	**Newmarket Bus Station**	**Bury Bus Station**
06:50	07:28	07:36	08:08*	08:49
07:50	08:28	08:36	09:08*	09:49
09.50	10:28	10:36	11:08*	11:49
11:50	12:28	12:36	13:08*	13:49
13:50	14:28	14:36	15:24*	15:49
15:50	16:28	16:36	17:30	17:55
18:15	18:53	19:06		
19:15	19:53	20:06		

Cambridge to Bury - Saturdays (excluding Bank Holidays)				
Cambridge Drummer Street	**Reach**	**Burwell Ness Road**	**Newmarket Bus Station**	**Bury Bus Station**
06:50	07:28	07:36	08:08*	08.49
07:50	08:28	08:36	09:08*	09:49
09.50	10:28	10:36	11:08*	11:49
11:50	12:28	12:36	13:08*	13:49
13:50	14:28	14:36	15:08*	15:49
15:50	16:28	16:36	17:08	17:55
18:15	18:53	19:01		
19:15	19:53	20:03		

Bury to Cambridge - Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)				
Bury Bus Station	**Newmarket Bus Station**	**Burwell Ness Road**	**Reach**	**Cambridge Drummer Street**
		06:19	06:33	07:12
		06:39	06:53	07:32
	08:40	09:06	09:20	09.59
10:05	10:35*	11:06	11:20	11:59
12:05	12:35*	13:06	13:20	13:59
14:05	14:35*	15:06	15:20	14:59
15:05	15:35*	16:06	16:20	15:59
16:05	16:35*	17:06	17:20	16:59
17:05	17:35*	18:06	18:20	17:59

Bury to Cambridge - Saturdays (excluding Bank Holidays)				
Bury Bus Station	**Newmarket Bus Station**	**Burwell Ness Road**	**Reach**	**Cambridge Drummer Street**
		06:19	06:33	07:12
		06:49	07:03	07:42
	08:40	09:06	09:20	09:59
10:05	10:40*	11:06	11:20	11:59
12:05	12:40*	13:06	13:20	13:59
14:05	14:40*	15:06	15:20	15:59
15:05	15:40*	16:06	16:20	16:59
16:05	16:40*	17:06	17:20	17:59
17:05	17:40*	18:06	18:20	18:59

* These are departure times - buses will arrive approximately 5 minutes earlier
A full timetable can be downloaded from www.reach-village.co.uk/bus_service.html

Then and Now *(see opposite page for pictures)*

A winter view of ‘White Roses’ from the junction of Little Lane and Great Lane.

The fenced area was part of the main garden and was always known as ‘the paddock’. It was gifted to my aunt after my grandfather died in 1976. She and her husband built ‘Paddock House’ on the site which has been vastly extended over the years and is now known as ‘Little Orchard’.

Chris Patterson

Contact Information

Parish Council – see “Know Your Parish Council”			
Village Hall			
	Chair	David Thomas	01638 742676
	Finance	Andrew Trump	01638 743335
	Bookings	Grahame Radford	01638 742814
	Secretary	Sue Elliot	01638 742268
Marquee Bookings		Andrew Hall	01638 743737
Church			
	Vicar	Eleanor Williams	01638 741262
	Curate (Duty days Wed, Fri and Sun)	Reverend Paula Spalding	07545 868549
	Priest in Retirement	Reverend David King	01638 742924
	Churchwarden	Dr Stephen Martin	01638 611235
Emergencies			
	Electricity (Eastern Electric)		0800 783 8838
	Police (Emergency) Police (Non-Emergency)		999 101
	Water (Anglian Water)		08457 145145
Doctors, Burwell			
	Contact Phone Numbers		01638 741234, out of hours dial 111
	Surgery Hours		Mon to Friday, 8.30am to 6.00pm
	Website		https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/index.aspx

Then and Now pictures – see facing page







Swan Corner Daffodils



Spring Picture courtesy of Penny





Spring Picture courtesy of Rosanna



Common Toad – Spring Picture courtesy of Claire Acklam



Allen Alderson greeting Joss's donkey, Dante