Within Reach



December 2023/January 2024





Courtesy of Rebecca Fordham





The 24Acres Woodland, November 2023 – courtesy of Nick Acklam

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From the Editor



It's nearly Christmas! I don't think I'm alone in thinking that 2023 has absolutely flown by.

Our Christmas events are now coming up, with our Village Advent Calendar starting on Friday 1st closely followed by our Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on, this coming Sunday at 5.00pm.

A full list of village Christmas events can be found on page 5 of this issue and as always there are Diary Dates on page 35, which include our Church Services and the Reach Riders Christmas Ride.

On page 19 Dan and Ruth from the Dyke's End have listed all the special events that are taking place at the pub over the festive period.

Also in this issue, we have two excellent articles about the 24Acres Project, starting with Nick Acklam on page 20 reviewing the status of the Woodland, which astonishingly has recently celebrated its 10th birthday.

Then we have an article on page 22 from David Thomas which, together with back cover pictures, describes how a meadow can be made and the work done recently to create one on the 24Acres.

With the equestrian manège and the cricket pitch, the 24Acres has been a huge success story for Reach and all those villagers who contributed to its creation should be rightly proud of the result of their endeavours.

I'd also like to update you on the status of the village website. It is back up and running after a difficult time (I'll not bore you with the details) but those difficulties have prompted us to start the creation of a new site, one that is more modern and most importantly, is a lot easier to keep up to date. To this end Mat Barnet, not a villager but a Reach enthusiast, has been putting in a lot of work to get the new site "template" finalised – and I thank him profusely for this. It should not be long before the new site can be launched – I'll update you when it does.

And finally, I'd like to wish every one of you a lovely Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2024.

David Parr

Cover Picture courtesy of **Penny Greenhill**

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 £3.00. 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

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Cricket	Ross Clark
Events Team	Debbie Quilter
Gardening	Danuta Gibson
Neighbourhood Watch	Kevin Evans
Reach Riders Group	Sue Cameron
Rosanna's Ramblings	Rosanna Moseley Gore
Then and Now	Chris Patterson
Village Hall	Sue Elliott
Village Matters	Alex de Giorgio-Miller
Wicken Fen	Julia Hammond
Wildlife	Cath Tayleur

Village Update



It feels like winter has finally arrived now and boots, hats, scarves and gloves are littered round our hallway. I'm clearly designed for warmer climes as I'm forever cold and bundled in multiple fleece layers, but I do love this time of year – the cosy evenings in and the anticipation of the holiday season.

Already there is much excitement in our house and frequent moans that we don't have our decorations up yet as I insist we wait until December. We're already designing our advent window and with lots of events being planned in the village we feel very lucky to live in such a wonderful community.

Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund is there to help households most in need with the rising cost of living, including families, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people. Speak to the ECDC Housing and Community Advice team for more details, they operate a drop-in service between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday or you can call 01353 665555 to make an appointment or to ask for advice.

Active for Health

Active for health is a new 12-week activity programme to help you become active and move more. Adults (18 and over) can sign up for the Active for Health programme if you have a BMI of 25 or over, or 23.5 if you are from the BME community.

The programme will include a range of activities to help you improve your fitness, socialise, learn new skills and ultimately improve your overall well-being.

Located at either a leisure centre or in a public open space, the programme consists of 12 weeks of group activities including fitness classes, walking sports, team games, healthy eating and well-being walks. Activities will be chosen by the group in consultation with the instructor.

Once signed up for the 12 week course, each participant will receive a free 12 week offer to use the associated Leisure facility subject to eligibility criteria. To register go to:
https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/health/active-health
to access the online form.

Hedgehogs!



Hedgehogs have found their way into the hearts of East Cambridgeshire's residents – in a public vote they have been chosen as the endangered animal that ECDC should support over the coming year. The council has started a hedgehog action plan which includes raising public awareness, working with schools, looking at improving the hedgehog friendliness of council owned premises and supporting organisations to create hedgehog friendly habitats. The plan will also explore how the council can work with housing developers to incorporate measures such as 'hedgehog highways' when building or renovating homes.

Hedgehog facts:

- The number of hedgehogs has declined by as much as 60% in the East of England since the 1990s.
- Hedgehogs are lactose intolerant – don't give them milk! Put out dog or cat food instead.
- The hedgehog's only serious predator is the badger.
- Hedgehogs may roam a mile each night to find enough food.
- Hedgehogs are the UK's only spiny mammal.
- Hedgehogs usually hibernate from October/November through to March/April.

What you can do:

- Create hedgehog doors so you can link your garden with hedgehog highways.
- Report any sightings at the Big Hedgehog Map https://bighedgehogmap.org.
- Put out clean, fresh water and cat biscuits or hedgehog food.
- Leave areas to grow to provide space for them to forage.
- Avoid slug pellets at all costs.
- Be careful with bonfires.
- Make ponds safe with a ramp.

More information is available on the hedgehog pages of East Cambridgeshire District Council's website. https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/hedgehog-recovery. Keep well and warm and happy holidays to all!

Alex de Giorgio-Miller

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.

ALLOTMENT PLOTS FOR RENT

New allotment plots are now available for rent at Barston Drove

Standard plots are 12 x 15 metres but smaller plots can be negotiated

Interested villagers should contact Nick Acklam acklam@reach-village.co.uk or 07379 411993

Mobile Library

Cambridgeshire libraries

The mobile library is visits Reach on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10.10 to 10.30am. This is route F16 and it parks at the Fair Green Bus Stop. They have a great selection of books for all, free NHS hearing aid batteries and walking stick ferrules. You can join Cambridgeshire Libraries on the bus if you are not already a member.



The A to B1102 Transport Group



The A to B1102 Transport Group (representing the villages from Fordham to Quy including the Wilbrahams and Bottisham) invite you to take part in our transport survey (which takes around 10 minutes).

The survey is being conducted to enable us to better understand the travel needs of our communities, to build an evidence base to inform future decisions - to understand where people need to get to and when.

We will use this information to lobby the various authorities who make decisions which affect our transport system, to safeguard and improve our existing (and potential future) bus services, to maintain vehicle access along our key routes, to build attractive transport alternatives as we all look to find ways to reduce congestion and get us to our destinations in reasonable time.

We realise there have been lots of surveys and consultations of late, but with our MPs, Local Councillors, County Council, District Councils and the Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority engaged in our work and over 250 respondees already having completed the survey, this information will be a key lever to inform future funding decisions which will affect us all!

The survey can be found online at: https://atob1102.org/travel-survey and for those who prefer a more traditional approach, paper copies are available in the pub. I am also happy to drop a copy off to you, in Reach, if you drop me a line on 07980 955490.

Completed copies should be posted at Nick Acklam's at 15 Fair Green. Thank you in advance for your support and time!

Andrew Trump

Events Team

Harvest Supper

Congratulations go to the organisers of what we hear was an outstanding (not Events Team) event, which raised a substantial amount of money for the Ely Foodbank who have also passed on their thanks to everyone involved (see below). Hopefully this means that the Harvest Supper will return to being an important and well attended annual event.

Ely Foodbank would like to thank all the Reach villagers who contributed towards the donation of £535, raised from the proceeds of their Harvest Supper. The money is very gratefully received, and hugely welcome, especially at this time of year. Thank you

Reach's Christmas Events 2023

In chronological order . . . .

Our **Village Advent Calendar** starts on **Friday 1st December** with the first window being at **16 Fair Green**. Below you can see the full list of addresses.

On **Sunday 3rd December at 5pm** we will be switching on our **Christmas Tree Lights** and enjoying the **Cambridge Brass Band** playing for us, with the customary **Mulled Wine and Mince Pies**.

The **Senior's Christmas Lunch** will take place on **Thursday 14th of December in the Village Hall from 12.30 to 3.00pm**. Any villager aged 65 or over is very welcome to come along, either email davidmparr@btinternet.com or call on 07887 563720.

Reach's **Christingle Service** will take place in the **Church at 5pm on Saturday 23rd of December**. It's a delightful event, to be enjoyed by anyone of any age, so do come along.

On **Christmas Eve from 5pm** for an hour or so, **Santa is planning to visit** us again! If you have young children who would like him to come along to your home and say hello, please email him directly at: santainreach@btinternet.com.

Then at **6pm on Christmas Eve**, we will be singing **Carols around our Christmas Tree**, again with **Mulled Wine and Mince Pies.**

Further information on events can be found on the village website News and Events page.



Reach Riders



Reach Riders would like to invite all members and non-members to a **Christmas Ride**.

We will meet on the village green and go along the fen paths to the No Hurry at Upware.

Previous rides on this route have been great fun and well received (see a typical picture below) - so we hope you will join us.



The Christmas Ride will take place on Thursday 28th December, meeting at 10am on the Village Green.

Mince pies, sausage rolls and a good dose of the finest port will be provided! And a route map will be available prior to the event.

Feel free to wear any sort of Christmas/tinsel/fancy dress attire!

We are also looking to have a social evening at the end of Jan/beginning of Feb with a range of speakers - vet/nutritionist/physio. Wine and raffle included - we will keep you updated with information regarding this.

Our arena remains open with good footing and lessons continuing with Lucy Tuck.

Sue Cameron

Village Hall



There is good and bad news this time. The lead flashing over the front door porch was stolen a few weeks ago and Andrew Trump deserves huge thanks for reporting this to the police and insurers and getting quotations for suitable non-lead replacement.

The good news is that It has been a busy couple of months for bookings, thanks go to Natasha for picking up enquiries and responding promptly. Our only income is from bookings - plus grants, especially from Reach Fair, via the Grants Fund, for which we are very thankful.

Over the past year the committee has spent a lot of time seeking information and advice about alternative energy suppliers and with the grant from the Solar Farm, were able to get a report from PECT, a community information organisation based in Peterborough offering technical expertise to Village Halls.

With the rapid technical advances being made in solar power, the committee is going to pause and gather more information on what system will best suit the VH. We shall prioritise replacing our high energy lights with LEDs and improve the insulation of the building, fairly simple cost cutting ideas which will have a big impact on the bills. If you'd like to help with our endeavours, you'd be very welcome - we meet every other month and it is rewarding to see the Village Hall thriving.

We are planning another **Wine Tasting Event** on **10th February**, hosted by Andrew Trump, Tony Fordham and Charlotte Cane. Tables of 8/6 will compete on their knowledge of wine and sample reds and whites with prizes! Gather friends and join us for a really great evening with cheese and bread plus a raffle or come on your own and we'll join you up with another team. Tickets will be available from January, so book yours to avoid disappointment!

Sue Elliott 742268

Rosanna's Ramblings



We've been having rather an archaeological time lately, which in my book is a Very Good Thing Indeed. I nearly studied Archaeology and Anthropology at university and when not focusing entirely on what I see around me, am prone to be pondering on what lies beneath my feet.

We were lucky to spend a week in Rome in late October. Charles was speaking at a Shakespeare conference, so we tagged on some extra days and mostly headed underground. We reckon we totted up 15 churches, many with extraordinary crypts. Down the dark uneven steps we went, sometimes into well-lit early Christian churches still remarkably well-preserved; sometimes into not so well-lit jumbles of walls, mosaics, arches that disappeared into later buildings, or well-trodden floor surfaces. In the crypt of the 12th century basilica of San Clemente, not only was there the earlier 4th century church, but below that a 1st century temple of Mithras and a culvert through which a spring, which was once bubbling out of the ground in daylight, was rushing still in the subterranean gloom. A gloom which was also as humid as a hothouse in Kew Gardens. It was remarkable, that being brought face-to-face with the past in quite that way.



So when, on returning to Reach, Milo and I came across a team of archaeologists setting up their equipment at the edge of the village orchard, I turned into one of those nosy, inquisitive people who ask a lot of questions. Where were they from? What were they doing? How long would they be there? Were they going to be digging test pits? What were they looking for? We talked about how important the fen-edge location was to our distant ancestors. I came back from the dog walk and reported back to Charles (who, in his teens, was described by his future wife Jenny's younger sister as "very historical") that he might like to wander over there later in the day to see what if anything they were finding. He forgot, or rather he thought I was referring to some test pits on the Hythe with which Steve Boreham was involved. We eventually found out that the orchard pits showed evidence of Mesolithic activity by a watercourse. And it felt good to know that this little patch of the globe continues to be of interest to those who care about such things.

In doing up my house in Ely, it was the cause of some disappointment that so little of archaeological interest emerged from the renovations of the 1776 property and the digging out of the garden. The garden had been a farmyard, so you would have thought that there might have been a bit of ironwork, or some clay pipes, coming out of the ground through which we had to run some trenches. But no, one rather good Gryphaea fossil (a very big "Devil's Toenail"), a mysterious spherical stone object about 10cm in diameter that was found under a fireplace and a walled-up 1940s lady's shoe.



Not so in Reach. When I first visited Charles in his house, my eye was struck very quickly by not one, but two, "cabinets of curiosities". They contained, still contain, an eclectic mix of fossils, stone bottles, flints, china sherds and – yes – clay pipes. If I hadn't already realised that this was the man for me, the existence of these collections of found objects would have told me so. My son, on his first visit, muttered something like "Oh, I get it!" because he had been brought up as a little one snuggled up under a blanket with me on the sofa watching Time Team on a Sunday afternoon.



On a primary school visit to Flag Fen (the only such trip for which I had ever enthusiastically volunteered to be a parent helper – I wonder why?), his archaeological knowledge was so vocally precocious that I suspect everyone other than his proud mum regarded him as annoying.

Charles tells me that when his grandsons were young boys, he let them dig a test pit in the dock in his garden. Seeing as this had been a silted up damp place into which all manner of rubbish was either chucked or was washed into from the road during rainstorms, it was unsurprising that the finds mostly consisted of rusty old cans. They wanted to set up a stall and sell them, but that didn't happen … nor did they find their way into the cabinets in the house.

But it matters, getting a feel for what has been in a place before. We need to feel we have foundations upon which our inner walls can be built and remain standing. Well, I need to feel that, because the lands of my ancestors are far away and I don't belong to them (even if, on some non-remembered level they still belong to me). I like my archaeology to be old – mediaeval or earlier. Give me an Iron Age hill fort, or a Neolithic burial mound and I'm happy. They give me a sense of deep roots which I value very much.

So, wondering around Reach's fields and droves and fens, it makes me happy when Charles says "that's where I got that bit of bog oak from" or "I found that flint tool here". It may have been a lot wetter, the eels may have been abundant and the bitterns may have boomed in a way we can't ever hope to witness. But the old ones speak to us, nonetheless. And I try to listen.

Rosanna Moseley Gore

Bottisham and Burwell Photographic Club

We commenced our Autumn meetings on the 12th September with a "Welcome Evening" - a social celebration of last season when we welcomed new and returning members for a prizegiving evening. Cups and Trophies were presented to the award winners of our annual Print & PDI competitions and members' prints and projected digital images from last season were on display during the evening.

Our meetings then continued with a Zoom presentation by Joe Houghton of Joe Houghton Photography entitled "Long Exposure Photography" on 19th September. This was a talk on long exposure photography and a demonstration of merging light trails shots into a dynamic final image. On the 26th September we enjoyed a talk by two of our members, Debra & Jim Bennett, who demonstrated how they produce their successful pastel photographs. On the 3rd October Andy Hanson presented "Panels, Pots & Stickers" – a talk on how to compile a panel and how to apply for a Photographic Alliance of Great Britain Award in either prints or projected digital images.

Members enjoyed a Club Outing this year to Southwold and Walberswick on 11th June. Images taken were entered for The Metcalfe Trophy, which was judged by Sarah Kelman of Cambridge. The Metcalfe Trophy was donated by our club member and former Chairman, Gerry Metcalfe and it was amazing to see the variety of images taken by the members on one day.

Our programme continues with a Print Competition, a Zoom presentation entitled 'Journey Across Africa' and a 3-way Print Battle with Melbourn and Ely clubs, hosted by Bottisham & Burwell PC on the 28th November. We round off the year with a Quiz Night, a fun evening led by our member Duncan Winterborn.

We meet Tuesday evening from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm at Swaffham Prior Village Hall (except the third Tuesday in the month a Zoom meeting) and new members are always welcome. Visitors can attend a lecture for a small entrance fee of £4.00, which includes refreshments. Our annual subscriptions are £55.00 for Adults, £30.00 for Students, plus a weekly attendance fee of £1, which includes refreshments.

If you would like a copy of our new programme and feel you would like to join us, please contact our Secretary, Debra Bennett for further information. Email secretary.bandbpc@gmail.com or 07722 388770.

I close by wishing you and your family a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

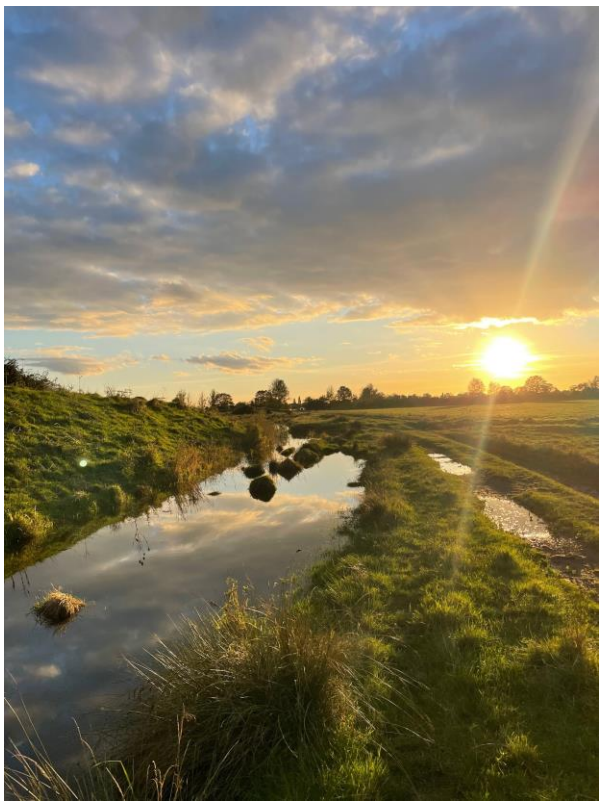
Daphne Hanson DPAGB HonPAGB - Chairman

Nature in Reach



The last of the leaves are still hanging on as I write this, but I expect the fen winds to take the rest soon. Some beautiful colours this year and in our garden my daughter noted a 'rainbow of trees'. We've still not had much in the way of truly cold weather. The extended warmth has meant the flies which are normally a summer problem for us have had their season considerably extended.

The fen winds are at least good for blowing away any cobwebs and we've had our annual pilgrimage to the Tubney Fen murmuration. There seem to be good numbers this year but the birds seem to be roosting further back in the fen, and spend a lot of time murmuring over the adjacent field.



Evidence from Nick of otters still active in the Lode. This time last year Luke Mercer got the chance to observe them directly. Also, Joss mentions signs of Badger activity. I've seen lots of Badger latrines but not the animals themselves - although my husband nearly ran into one on an evening dog walk recently.

Hilary reports a dead barn owl - I hope not the same one I observed being chased by a crow over Ditchfield one morning.

Hope you are all enjoying the last flashes of colour before we head into the more muted tones of winter on the fen…

WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS AUTUMN '23.

Joss Goodchild

'In Nature nothing dies. From each sad remnant of decay, some form of life arises'. Charles Mackay.

The seasonal departure of birds from our garden is noticeable, an absence of energy, interest and song. They've hidden during the moult and then been enticed into the wider countryside by the abundance of available wild foods (seeds, nuts, fruit) in hedgerows, woods and spilt grain on farmed land. Birds will return to the garden once stocks run low and poor weather prevents effective foraging.

17.9 Penny and Ron spotted a grass snake in their garden, also frogs and toads. On an unusually warm early October day they saw a hummingbird hawk moth (a summer visitor to the UK) going around the flowers at the side of their garden pond. This was such a late sighting they felt it could be another example of our changing climate.

10.10 Reach perimeter fields - roe deer, muntjac, fewer rabbits, brown rats. Barn owl.

13.10 High pitched twittering calls announced a flock of long-tailed tits in our dead garden tree, Great Lane.

14.10 Similarly, screeches gave away a number of jays in Great Lane, their metallic blue tails obvious in flight. They search for acorns to stash away for the cold winter months, as they stockpile they can hold up to 6 nuts in their gullets. By forgetting or dropping their bounty in transit they seed saplings.

19.10 At dusk collections of starlings alight on the pylons near Tubney Fen. The evening calls of geese and swans and the hoots of tawny owls carry from that direction. It's probable the skylarks on Tubney Fen have shifted their grazed grassland habitat for the preferred winter grounds of coastal marshes and weedy cereal stubble.

24.10 Greenfinch on the garden feeder, a rarity.

25.10 Hilary and Shaun mention the sad sight of dead barn owl, Old Bar Drove. They have also noted tree sparrows, regular visitors to her stable yard seed feeders, Little Fen Drove. On local journeys signs of badgers digging for worms. Pied wagtails chase flies in the paddock, twittering as they go. Several reed buntings fly up from a patch on Little Fen Drove. Flocks of fieldfare frequent the hedgerow around the paddock.

House sparrows have finally returned to the seed feeders at her home in Ditchfield following a noted 3 week absence. 11 Nov - saw and heard what seemed like a green rose-necked parakeet on Blackberry Drove near Delver Bridge.

6.11 Dafila emailed - 'Apparently there have been Whooper swans on Burwell Fen. Tim took some people there on Monday and saw 7 swans plus lots of ducks, and they also saw the starling murmuration on the way back!'

16.11 Ali Kohlman and I saw a wood mouse (also known as a field mouse) in the beam of our torch in the paddock, it had large ears and back feet to give a good spring when leaping.

Nick Acklam

18 October: a Buff Tip moth caterpillar, notable for its distinct pale grid markings, is active in our garden. Perhaps this sighting, so late in the year, is no longer surprising given the delayed onset of traditional autumn weather in recent times.

19 October: a solitary Crane in a roadside field at Mepal. I know this isn't truly local, but these special birds are always worthy of a mention!

23 October: a Grass Snake, pencil thin and just under a foot long lies dead on our lawn. I am afraid the culprit is almost certainly one of our cats. The frequency with which I am recording dead Grass Snakes is, ironically, a cause for optimism as it suggests that there are growing numbers of these reptiles in our neighbourhood.

30 October: the head - bronze green and gold - and tail are all that remain of a large Tench (see photo) on the bank of Reach Lode by the cycle bridge. I estimate that the fish would have weighed around 5lb/a couple of kg. I suspect that this is the work of an Otter.



31 October: we have recently installed a nature camera in our garden and marvel at the wildlife activity it captures. Male and female Muntjac deer, probably the same pair, are a near nightly presence which doesn't bode well for our spring bulbs. A large dog fox also pays occasionally visits, staring intently at the camera as he does so.

5 November: A Great spotted woodpecker calling from the very top of one of the birch trees on the Drying Ground.

7 November: My first sighting of large flocks of Redwing and Fieldfare in the large hawthorn hedges around Tubney Fen. Further north, there are gatherings of Lapwing - three groups each of about 30 birds, their black and white wings strobing in the bright sunlight.

16 November: A sizeable flock of Goldfinch appears to ripple along the taller vegetation bordering Straight Drove.

Cath Tayleur

Wicken Fen



Short-eared owl by Kevin Pigney

Winter Wildlife Watching

Groups of winter thrushes are creating colourful sights and chattering sounds around the reserve. Corvids can be seen swirling overhead, particularly in the later afternoon just before dusk. There have been regular sightings of short-eared owls and large numbers of lapwing too, so it's a great time for getting your binoculars out, pulling on some wellies, and heading to the Fen for some wildlife watching.

Father and Mother Christmas

At the time of going to press we have a few tickets left for midweek and Mother Christmas dates. See our website 'What's On' section for more details and to book.

Wicken Fen's Twelve Creatures of Christmas

Explore the Woodland Walk and experience our new Winter Trail – our take on the classic carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas". No French Hens or Gold Rings, but lots of the creatures that call Wicken Fen home.

Can you spot all the animals from each line of our carol? Games and activities to enjoy along the way. No need to book, drop in with family and friends to enjoy some festive fun.

Christmas and New Year Opening

As usual, we are open every day over the festive season apart from Christmas Day. The Visitor Centre and shop are open from 10am to 4:30pm, and the Docky Hut Café is open from 10am to 4pm. It's a great time to get together with family and friends to stretch your legs in a beautiful place and warm up afterwards with a hot drink and a snack or treat in the café.

Wicken 125 project: Future Artefacts ceramics exhibition

We had a great response to the ceramics workshops held over the summer at a variety of locations including Wicken Fen, Ely Market and Burwell Carnival. Over 300 artefacts were created and we are holding an exhibition at Babylon Gallery in Ely for the month of January. You'll be able to see the artefacts and artwork by local creatives that were inspired by Wicken Fen and the fen landscape. If you came to a workshop, your piece will be displayed at the gallery, and there will be the opportunity to collect your artwork at the end of the month. See our website for more information about the exhibition.

For the latest reserve information, please visit our website www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen

Details of our events can be found on our website at https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve/whats-on

Julia Hammond

Senior Programming and Partnerships Officer



Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group

Over the last year the PPG has grown from strength to strength, with regular topics including access to Surgery services for patients, communication and overall performance, as well as links with other key services. At October's meeting, we had a visit from Jardines which provided an opportunity for some early reflections following their takeover of Lloyds Pharmacy in the village.

As PPG members we continue to learn about the wide range of services offered by the Surgery, and about the specialist teams available to help patients with different needs.

Services include:

- NHS health checks
- Asthma/COPD diagnosis and regular reviews
- Prescription reviews
- Family planning clinics
- Diabetic reviews
- Ear irrigation
- Vaccinations, including travel vaccines
- Dementia support
- Other health and wellbeing advice and support

If the Surgery team feel you will benefit from these services they'll explain the support available and will invite you to attend an appointment.

Most of us will have had some contact over the years with the GPs and Practice Nurses as well as the Patient Services team on reception. Others will be regular users of the Dispensary. However, you might get a call from the Surgery's qualified Paramedic Specialist Practitioner, one of the Health Care Assistants, a Clinical Pharmacist, the Social Prescriber or the Health and Wellbeing Coach. These qualified practitioners are part of the core Burwell Surgery team, working alongside GPs to help the Surgery deliver all of the services above and more. They are all experts in their field and by working as a team this allows the GPs to see patients that need their help as quickly as possible.

The PPG exists to represent the patients of Burwell Surgery and work in partnership with GPs and practice staff to improve services for patients. We're a friendly group and new members are always welcome. Our four meetings next year will be on 16th January, 16th April, 16th July and 15th October, all at 6.30pm at the Burwell & District Day Centre. You can find out more about the PPG at our page on the Surgery's website: https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/patient-group/

Food Focus

Quince



If fruit could be categorised as romantic I'd argue that quinces are queen. Their warm yellow gleaming fullness ripening at a time of year when most other fruit has been gathered, eaten, bottled and stored.

The Owl and the Pussycat "dined on slices of quince"; their fragrance, according to one blogger who I agree with, is Chanel worthy; while Nigel Slater claims their magnificence to be akin to a "Rubens bottom"!

Our quince tree has received "Within Reach" fame in previous years and its fruit, the accompaniment to wine at the fondly remembered wine tasting nights of old, hosted by Hugh and Marie. I make membrillo and quince jelly fairly regularly, the former freezes well and makes a wholesome present, but I feel there are many other recipes which I ought to explore too – a few of which I have listed below.



Membrillo (Quince Paste/Cheese)

Ingredients

4 pounds quince, washed, peeled, cored, roughly chopped
1 vanilla pod, split
2 strips (1/2 inch by 2 inches each) of lemon zest (only the yellow peel, no white pith)
3 tablespoons lemon juice
About 4 cups granulated sugar, exact amount will be determined during cooking

Method

Boil the quince in water with vanilla pod and lemon zest:
Place quince pieces in a large saucepan (6-8 quarts) and cover with water. Add the vanilla pod and lemon peel and bring to the boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover and let cook until the quince pieces are fork tender (30-40 minutes).

Make quince purée:
Strain the water from the quince pieces (I kept this and made jelly with it). Discard the vanilla pod but keep the lemon peel with the quince. Purée the quince pieces in a food processor, blender, or by using a food mill.

Measure the purée:
Whatever amount of quince purée you have, that's how much sugar you will need. So if you have 4 cups of purée, you'll need 4 cups of sugar.

Heat purée to dissolve sugar, add lemon juice:
Return the quince purée to the large pan. Heat to medium-low. Add the sugar. Stir with a wooden spoon until the sugar has completely dissolved. Add the lemon juice.

Cook until thick and dark pink:
Continue to cook over a low heat, stirring occasionally, for 1-1 1/2 hours, until the quince paste is very thick and has a deep orange pink colour.

Put in low oven to dry:
Preheat oven to 125°F (52°C). Line a 8x8 baking pan with parchment paper (do not use wax paper, it will melt!). Grease the parchment paper with a thin coating of butter. Pour the cooked quince paste into the parchment paper-lined baking pan. Smooth out the top of the paste so it is even. Place the membrillo paste in the oven for an hour or longer to help it dry out. (If you have a convection or fan setting for your oven, use it.) Remove from oven and let cool.

Serve:
Cut into squares or wedges and present with Manchego cheese. To eat, take a small slice of the membrillo and spread it on top of a slice of the cheese. Store by wrapping in foil or plastic wrap and keeping in the refrigerator.

Note: The first time I made this the top part set, but the bottom had not. To fix, I emptied the quince paste into a large pyrex bowl and put in the microwave. I cooked it on high in 5 minute increments for 20 minutes. During the last minute, one of the edges started to caramelize and turn brown. This you don't want to have happen, as the caramelized parts destroy the flavour, but in this case it was a good indication that the rest of the quince paste was ready. I discarded the browned parts and returned the rest to a newly lined baking dish. Back into the oven for an hour and it was done to perfection.

Quince Jelly

It seems a pity to waste the water that the quinces have been poached in above – so I strain the poached quince and collect the water to make jelly, then you have two different fruits of your peeling and coring labour (which with quinces is significant). You'll be able to tell a quince is ripe by smelling the blossom end of it. Ripe quince have a strong, floral fragrance. For best results, only use quince that are ripe and have that lovely smell.

Ingredients

3 1/2 pounds (1.6 kg) quince, washed, stems removed, cored, quartered (leave skin on – unless you are making membrillo)
7 cups (1.6 litres) water
About 4 cups sugar (enough to add about 7/8 cup for every 1 cup juice)

Method

Cover the quince with water. Put the quince pieces in a large stockpot with a thick bottom and add water (if you are eyeballing it, put in enough water to cover the pieces of quince by about 1 inch).

Cook the quince until soft: Bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer, cover and cook for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until the quince pieces are soft.

Mash the cooked quince: With a potato masher, mash the quince to the consistency of slightly runny apple sauce. Add more water if necessary. If the mash is too thick, you won't get enough juice out of it.

Strain the quince juice from the pulp: Place a metal strainer over a pot. Drape 2 layers of cheesecloth over the strainer. (You can skip the cheesecloth if you are using a fine mesh strainer). Ladle the pulp into the cheesecloth. You may need to have two strainers set up this way.

Let the pulp strain for 3 to 4 hours. If you aren't getting enough juice out of the pulp, you may need to mix more water into the mash.

Measure the juice and add sugar. Measure the amount of juice you have. It should be about 4 to 5 cups. Pour the strained quince juice into a thick-bottomed pot on the stove and bring to the boil.

Measure out the sugar—a little less than 1 cup sugar for every 1 cup of juice. Add the sugar to the juice.

Bring to the boil, initially stirring constantly, until the sugar is dissolved, so that the sugar does not stick to the bottom of the pan. Insert a candy thermometer to monitor the jelly temperature.

Skim the foam: As the jelly cooks, skim off the foam that comes to the surface with a spoon.

Sterilize the jars and prepare the lids: As the jelly is boiling, sterilize your jars for canning. Wash the lids and rings in hot, soapy water.

Look for the set point: As the temperature rises above the boiling point of water (212°F), you will notice the consistency of the jelly/juice begins to change. When the temperature is approximately 6 to 8 degrees higher than boiling point at your altitude (anywhere from 218°F to 220°F at sea level) the jelly is ready to pour into jars. (Quince has so much pectin, it can set earlier than other types of jellies.)

Note that candy thermometers aren't always the most reliable indicators of whether or not a jelly is done. Another way to test is put a half teaspoonful of the jelly on a chilled (in the freezer) plate. Allow the jelly to cool a few seconds, then push it with your fingertip. If it wrinkles up, it's ready.

Ladle the jelly into jars and seal: Use a large ladle to pour the jelly into the sterilized jars to 5/8 inch from the top rim of the jar. Seal the top with a canning lid and ring. You will hear a popping noise as a vacuum seal is created when the jars of jelly cool.

Chicken with Caramelized Baby Onions & Quinces (Claudia Roden) *Serves 4*

Wash and scrub 2 quinces, then boil them whole for about 1 hour or until they feel soft. The time varies greatly depending on their size and degree of ripeness, so watch them and don't let them fall apart. Drain them, and when the chicken is nearly ready, cut them into quarters and cut away the cores, but do not peel them. Then cut each quarter in half so you end up with fat slices. Fry the slices in shallow vegetable oil until they are brown on the cut sides. Lift them out and drain on kitchen paper. Serve the chicken surrounded by the quince slices.

Ingredients

1 pound shallots or baby onions
1 onion, chopped
4 tablespoons sunflower oil
Good pinch of saffron threads
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 chicken, cut up in 6 or 8 pieces
Salt and black pepper
1 to 1 1/2 tablespoons clear honey
2 Quinces

To garnish: 1/2 cup blanched almonds or a handful of sesame seeds (optional)

Step 1

To peel the shallots or baby onions, blanch them in boiling water for 5 minutes, drain and when cool enough to handle, peel off the skins and trim the root ends.

Step 2

Sauté the chopped onion until softened in the oil over a medium heat in a pan or casserole large enough to hold the chicken pieces in one layer. Stir in the saffron, ginger and cinnamon, then put in the chicken pieces. Season with salt and pepper and turn to brown them lightly all over.

Step 3

Add about 1 cup of water and cook, covered, over a low heat, turning the pieces over, for 15 minutes, or until the chicken breasts are done. Lift out the breasts and put them to one side. Add the shallots or baby onions and continue to cook, covered, for about 25 minutes, or until the remaining chicken pieces are very tender. During the cooking, turn the chicken pieces and stir the onions occasionally; add a little water, if necessary.

Step 4

Wash and scrub the 2 quinces, then boil them whole for about 1 hour or until they feel soft. The time varies greatly depending on their size and degree of ripeness, so watch them and don't let them fall apart. Drain them, and when the chicken is nearly ready, cut them into quarters and cut away the cores, but do not peel them. Then cut each quarter in half so you end up with fat slices. Fry the slices in shallow vegetable oil until they are brown on the cut sides. This gives them a delicious, caramelized taste. Lift them out and drain on kitchen paper.

Step 5

Lift out the chicken pieces and set to one side. Stir the honey into the pan. Check the seasoning. You need quite a bit of pepper to mitigate the sweetness. Cook, uncovered, until all the water has evaporated and the onions are brown, caramelized, and so soft that you could crush them, as they say in Morocco, "with your tongue."

Step 6

Return the chicken pieces to the pan, spoon the onions on top of them and heat through. A few minutes should be enough. Serve the chicken surrounded by the quince slices and if you wish, sprinkled either with blanched almonds fried in a drop of oil until they are lightly golden, or with toasted sesame seeds.

Quinces Poached in Muscat (from Nigella Lawson)

I think this might be the recipe Hugh used at the wine tasting.

Method

1. Fill a bowl of water with cold water and a squirt of lemon juice to put the quinces in and stop them turning brown.

2. Peel 4 quinces, quarter and core them, putting them into the water and keeping the peelings/cores.

3. Add 700ml muscat, 300ml water, 500g sugar, 1 stick of cinnamon, 2 bay leaves, 4 cloves, 3 cardamon pods and 6 peppercorns to a pan and bring to the boil.

4. Put the peelings and quinces in an ovenproof dish, pour over the wine, cover and cook at 150C for 2 1/2 hours.

5. Remove from the dish, strain the syrup into a saucepan, and reduce for a few mins.

6. Serve the quinces with the syrup poured over them.

Nigella warns about over reducing the syrup and creating quince toffee.

Catherine Gibson

Reach Shoe Box Appeal

We are collecting on behalf of Teams 4 U for the Christmas Shoe Box appeal. We are collecting donations including toys, small household items, knitted hats/gloves plus many more found in the leaflet (below). If anyone is interested in being involved please get in touch. I have the boxes ready to handout if anyone would like to fill a whole one too (please include £3 to help towards its shipping to Eastern Europe)

They can be collected and dropped off to the workshop here in Reach and will be sent to vulnerable children and families. This year the shoeboxes will be heading to the Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia and Romania.

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OH CHRISTMAS TREE IN '23

Tales from a Reach Garden



It has been a good year for the vegetable garden in spite of the very cold start, the summer showers helped to keep things growing and we rarely needed to water the vegetables – unlike the heatwave of summer 2022.

This year the rainwater collected in the water butts outside our house were only used to water a few pots of herbs and flowers. As the year progressed, we realised that the prolonged frigid winter conditions had not only freeze-dried our broccoli plants and damaged the large phormium, it had also killed our agapanthus, dahlias, alstromeria, most of the "hardy" fuchsias and verbena. These plants only ever used to need a thick mulch to protect them over winters and we'd had them for several years. The only fuchsia to have survived last winter's icy blast was *Fuchsia Magellanica* which is a native of southern Chile and Argentina down to the Magellan straits. This very hardy shrub is still in full flower at the moment and will continue flowering until the first frosts.



Fuchsia Magellanica – our only fuchsia to survive from last winter

This year's cool, damp summer was much better for growing our vegetables than last year's excessive heat. We had a good crop of potatoes, although for the past five years we've been growing varieties which are blight resistant and they have coped well this year. We were aware that blight fungus was present because the few tomatoes we had growing outdoors were blight-damaged at the end of September. Some of the potato leaves and stems also showed signs of blight, but the potatoes themselves appear to be unaffected. So far there is no sign of smelly rot on any of the potatoes we have, but time will tell.

Even our squash and pumpkins flourished in spite of the cool damp weather. The secret is to grow them in a sunny spot even raising them off the ground in a relatively shade-free area to give them a chance to ripen. Richard had built a large "wigwam" of sturdy hazel branches to help lift the long vines off the ground. Each year I collect seed from a pumpkin to see what grows from them and this year the home-collected seed from last year's crop produced a lot of very large stripy pumpkins which are gradually becoming orange. We had to pick these in early October because the stems would not have dried out in the heavy rains that we had later that month. About 30cm of stem was cut off with each squash and initially they were left to dry outdoors, then we continued to dry them indoors when the rains started. Once the stems were completely dry and had hardened off, the squash could be stored.



Some of the squash we grew this year

This winter, who knows what the weather will bring. We've invested in some agricultural fleece to help protect the broccoli – they grow so tall that we can't grow them under cloches, but if each plant is gently wrapped in fleece, they should be protected from the freeze-drying winds…or so we hope (fingers crossed).

Danuta Gibson



Letter from the Vicarage



'Busy, busy, busy getting ready for Christmas' - lines from a song for children, but it's often what the weeks leading up to Christmas can feel like for all of us. Perhaps, even if it's just for a few moments, we might be able to pause, take a deep breath, and remember what it's all about.

Yes, it's about family, friends, presents, food and carols, but at the heart of it, the 'reason for the season' is the baby in the manger, the one who came to be God with us, the Prince of Peace. This year, in the midst of the busyness and all that's going on in the world, it seems a huge thing to hope and pray for 'peace on earth, goodwill to all people' - but that is my prayer - would you join me?

A brief update on the church building: we are looking into repairing the perimeter walls and are also in contact with a contractor about repairing the clock and bell. A few weeks ago, we were very pleased to be awarded a Silver Eco Church award for St Etheldreda's, which has included promoting a greener lifestyle, adding an eco focus in our prayers and worship, opting for greener choices where possible in managing the building, choosing a green electricity supplier and opting to put in as much insulation as we could. Caroline Smith has written separately about our plans for increasing biodiversity in the church garden.

All are welcome at any of our Advent and Christmas services and events, as we explore the meaning of Christmas together, with a Reach Christingle service on Saturday 23rd December at 5.00pm, as well as an 8.30am Communion on Christmas Day. Events in Burwell will include St Mary's Christingle service on Sunday 3rd December, Create for Christmas on Wednesday 13th December, Carols by Candlelight on Sunday 17th December, Crib Service on Christmas Eve, and our Midnight Communion and Christmas Day services.

We would love to have your help in decorating St Mary's churchyard and the church with angel decorations, to be in place by 9th December. Continuing the Angel theme, and to celebrate our amazing community, we are partnering with the Co-op again to present the Community Angel Awards. You can nominate anyone in the community who has made a difference to you. Please send your nominations to me by 9th December, with the Award Ceremony in St Mary's Churchyard on Saturday 16th December, hosted by North Street Co-op and St Mary's.

In St Mary's, we'll have our Remembering Tree in place in the weeks leading up to Christmas, with stars on the tree to remember loved ones. Both our churches are open each day, for anyone to be anyone to pop in. If you'd like to find out more about who we are and what we do or get more involved in the life of St Mary's and St Etheldreda's, please get in touch and also if you would like to chat or if we can pray for you, if you are struggling financially, or know someone who is, or need help accessing Ely foodbank. The Pop-up Pantry is open every Friday 2.00 – 3.00pm at Burwell Day Centre.


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Silver Eco Church Award Certificate

This is to certify that

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Signed Andy Atkins Date 2 November 2023
CEO, A Rocha UK

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May you know the light and hope of Christ this Christmas.

Revd Canon Dr Eleanor Williams 01638 741262

Vicar of Burwell with Reach
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Reach Church Garden



Now that work on the church building has been completed, we are starting to turn our attention to the church garden. The intention here is in keeping with the rest of the reordering: to retain and enhance what is already present, in order to develop an attractive space suitable for quiet reflection, by both church members and the wider community. In addition, we are mindful of our duty as stewards of this place, to enhance its biodiversity. Indeed, as part of the planning application, we were required to complete a Scheme of Biodiversity Improvement, and it is this which we are now working to implement.

The work to be undertaken includes:

- planting spring-flowering bulbs
- repurposing the sections of the removed pulpit to create a rockery area
- planting herbs, to benefit pollinators
- maintaining areas as hay meadow, using 'green hay' from local meadows to increase species diversity
- retaining habitat piles and some stinging nettles in unobtrusive corners
- putting up a bird box, and possibly swift and/ or bat boxes.

We would very much like this to be a project by and for Reach. Robert Keutgen will be carrying out routine maintenance, as before, but we would very much welcome the involvement of other members of the village community in aspects of this project, including help with the initial setting up.

To get involved, please email:administrator@stmarysburwell.org.uk

Caroline Smith
Assistant to the Churchwardens with particular responsibility for the churchyards

St Mary's Burwell
St Etheldreda's Reach
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OUR SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Sunday 3rd December
4.30pm Christingle Service at St Mary's

Sunday 17th December
6.30pm St Mary's Carols by Candlelight

Saturday 23rd December
5.00pm Christingle Service at Reach

Christmas Eve 24th December
3pm Crib Service at St Mary's
11.30pm St Mary's Midnight Communion

Christmas Day 25th December
8.30am Christmas Communion at Reach
10.00am Christmas Morning at St Mary's

****

Sunday 31st December
10.00am Communion Service at St Mary's

Sunday 7th January 2024
10.00am Epiphany Café Church at St Mary's

Burwell Food Support Group

Pop-up Pantry & Ely Foodbank
working together
to support our local community
at Burwell Day Centre
Fridays 2.00 - 3.00pm

Pop-up Pantry is working towards reducing waste and offers short life food and more as is available.
Donations towards the Pantry are gratefully received and can be dropped off at the Day Centre.
A voluntary contribution of £2 is helpful towards running costs.

Ely Foodbank provides food for 3 days and can help with issues such as benefit changes, low incomes and more.

Citizen Advice join the team on 1st Friday of month.

If you require help from the Foodbank please ring 01353 468626
or email info@ely.foodbank.org.uk

Burwell Food Support Group links individuals and groups working to support those in need in our community, and includes Burwell Help Group, Open Arms, St Mary's Church, Burwell Baptist Church, Burwell & District Day Centre, Burwell Co-op

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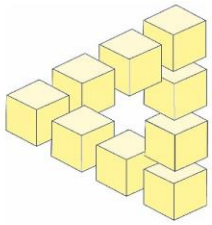

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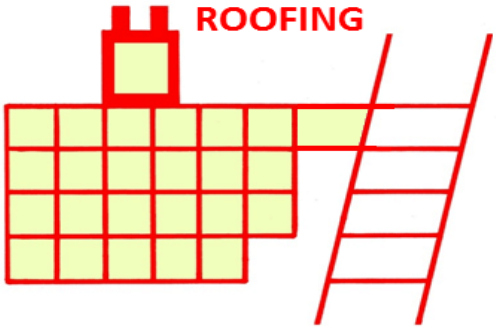

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The Dyke's End



Here's what's happening over the festive period at the Dyke's End so you can put some dates in your diary . . . .

We have some great music lined up, with **Chris Newman & Stella Hensley** returning on **Friday 1st December** after a brilliant first night at the pub back in July.

Dyke's End favourites **You and I Acoustic Duo** will also be back on **Friday 22nd December** for an extra Christmassy gig.

And the vivacious **Emily Davis** returns for another special **New Year's Eve** performance, this time accompanied by pianist **James Hall**. Emily will be singing new songs from her 2023 Edinburgh Fringe show Blodwen's in Paris and performing hits from great female vocalists from the movies.

Get your team and your Xmas jumpers sorted for the **Dyke's End Christmas Quiz** coming up on **Thursday 14th December**.

There's also some delicious food lined-up, supper clubs, **Fish & Chip night every Friday**, food trucks, and be sure to get booked in for a **Dyke's End Christmas Sunday Roast** starting from **26th November**.

Friday 1st – Music: Chris Newman and Stella Hensley, 8pm

Wednesday 6th – Food Truck: Scotties Hot Scotch Eggs, 5-8pm

Wednesday 13th – Food Truck: to be confirmed, 5-8pm

Thursday 14th – Dyke's End Christmas Quiz, 8-10pm

Wednesday 20th – Food Truck: Steak and Honour (burgers), 5-8pm

Friday 22nd – Music: You and I Acoustic Duo, 8pm

Sunday 24th – Christmas Eve Open Midday to 10.30pm

Monday 25th – Christmas Day Open Midday to 2pm

Tuesday 26th – Boxing Day Open Midday to 3pm

Wednesday 27th – Closed

Sunday 31st – New Year's Eve with singer Emily Davis and pianist James Hall

Monday 1st – New Year's Day Open Midday to 5pm

The 24Acres Woodland 10 years On

It has been a decade since we planted the woodland at the 24Acres. I thought it was an appropriate moment to reflect on what we did, to touch upon the lessons learned and to look to the woodland's future.

The woodland at the 24Acres forms a part of the land that Reach Parish Council leases from the National Trust and is one of a quartet of uses that the village decided it wanted to see at the site, the others being an orchard, a cricket pitch and an equestrian manège. An initial, but easy to overlook, point is that the four areas complement each other and user groups rub along harmoniously. The National Trust sees the way in which the village has made use of the land it has leased to us as a model for community engagement elsewhere in the Vision area and indeed nationally. This, in part, explains why the Trust has begun work, involving significant community engagement, to enhance land it retains at the 24Acres and on a neighbouring area it has just acquired.

Our woodland covers about 6.75 acres (or 2.7 hectares). Trees and shrubs cover 70 per cent of this area with rides, footpaths and a meadow occupying the remainder.

Our Approach

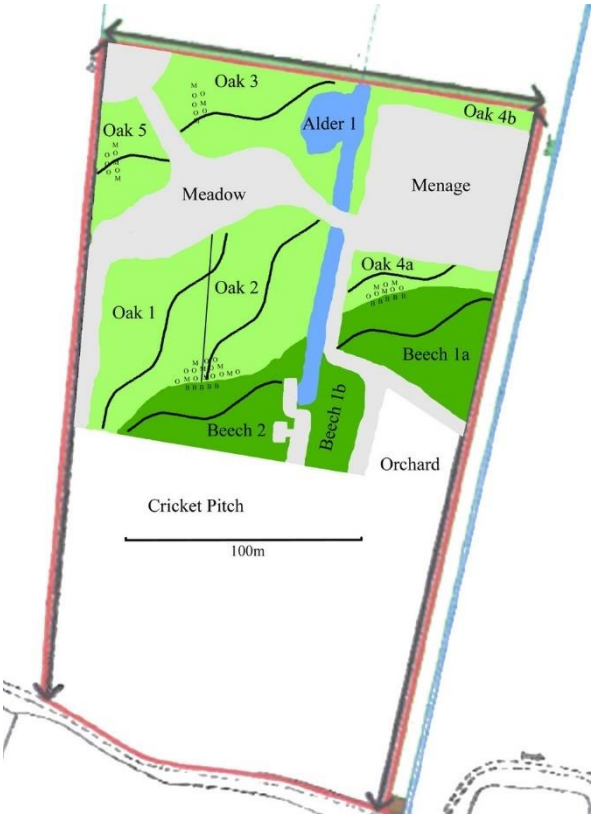
We wanted to create a woodland of native species that complied with principles laid out in the Forestry Commission's Bulletin 112 "Creating New Native Woodlands". (I have a copy of the Bulletin if anybody wants to read into the background in more detail). Funding for the trees, mulch mats, stakes and guards and for subsequent maintenance was secured from the Forestry Commission, work undertaken on our behalf by David Parr.

We wanted the wood to look natural straight away, rather than resemble a regimented plantation. We also wanted to make sure that trees and shrubs went into locations that allowed them to prosper. We therefore surveyed the soils and hydrology of the site which showed that there was a surprising amount of variation. Steve Boreham then created a planting strategy designed to achieve a natural look, to match trees to growing conditions and to meet the principles of the Bulletin. Creative input from villagers was also encouraged.

We wanted the planting to be a community project and wanted villagers to feel that the woodland belonged to them. Most of the planting took place on the weekend of 7 and 8 December 2013 and a third of the residents of the village participated. This was followed by a planting session involving pupils of Swaffham Prior school.

Maintenance of the wood after planting was to be limited. In part this was because we lacked the funding to do much after planting other than mow the footpaths.

More importantly we wanted the wood to evolve naturally. There has therefore been no mowing between trees and no use of pesticides or herbicides. We have done a little replanting and in the early days, some cutting of rank weed (here, again, we drew on the community and enlisted the support of Swaffham Prior Scouts). Overall, though, intervention has been minimal and other than mowing the paths and removing hay from the meadow, we have left the wood to grow. In due course we may need to do some thinning of the trees but currently this does not seem a pressing requirement.



Details of the Planting

We planted 3,500 trees and shrubs of 25 species. As the attached map shows, there were three zones, each with a dominant species (Oak, Beech and Alder). Historically Ash would have been a dominant species in a woodland at this location, but we purposely kept it out of the planting mix because Ash dieback would create future maintenance and public safety issues. The zones were clearly laid out in advance and those participating in the planting were briefed on what was required in each zone and on good planting practice. Beyond this, planters were encouraged to innovate in terms of the planting mix within this framework, thereby contributing to the natural feel of the woodland.

Two and three years old bare-rooted saplings constituted most of the planting but, at Steve Boreham's suggestion, we also planted taller feathered whips in ribbons through most of the zones to create an earlier sense of maturity, a contoured canopy and to achieve the naturalistic feel that we sought.

What has happened since and the lessons learned

By and large this has been a happy tale. The woodland is establishing well and developing a character of it own. Tree losses have been very low (less than 10 per cent over the decade). This figure would be considered low even in heavily maintained plantations. We were somewhat surprised by this and attribute it to investment in good quality tree guards and mulch mats, the careful matching of tree species to soil type and hydrology, the diligence of villagers in sticking to best planting practice and the availability of 'experts' to advise on the planting days. We have also been lucky in avoiding serious droughts in the first few summers after planting when the trees were at their most vulnerable. The lack of maintenance also seems to have worked in our favour in some areas - emerging brambles and thistles have deterred browsing by deer without out-competing our saplings for water or nutrients.

Initially the primary cause of sapling deaths was vole damage (voles leave a distinctive diagonal cut through the base of any sapling they kill) and with hindsight, use of vole guards, costing a few pence each, would have been a good idea. Thankfully as the trees have established, this problem has diminished. However, as the planting has matured, it has attracted roe deer which welcome its shelter, especially in the winter. Roe deer are a native species but their burgeoning numbers locally have created an ongoing challenge to the woodland. The deer browse unprotected growth from the ground to a height of a metre - hazel is a particular favourite. They also damage the bark on quite substantial trees (i.e those that have grown to a point where they have shed their tree guards). Trees on path edges seem to be targeted for what is presumably territorial marking. Intentionally or otherwise, deer knock over saplings as they move through the wood. Stronger and more durable stakes would have lessened their impact. Muntjac deer are present in the wood, but their impact is less visible. For the moment I feel that we should adapt to the presence of the deer. I would, though, encourage villagers to walk the footpaths in the wood as this will discourage the deer from becoming too settled.

The benefits

Anecdotally, the woodland is drawing in a growing range of bird, mammal and insect life. A bio-blitz to compare with that undertaken in July 2016 would quantify the improvement. For me, the biggest change over the past ten years has been in the quality of the soil. The site had been an arable field until 2011. When we took over the site the soil was virtually devoid of microfauna and worms were a rarity. This has now changed. A range of fungi has also returned and a rich soil litter is developing.

There is more to be done. We are working hard to return the meadow in the centre of the woodland to calcareous grassland, primarily by removing the 'hay' every year. This year we have sown yellow rattle, a semi-parasitic native wildflower that feeds off the nutrients that neighbouring grasses need.

Both measures will give chalk-loving flowers a chance to establish and boost insect and bird life. In due course I hope that the meadow might attract foraging Turtle Doves and other farmland birds that are in steep decline due to lack of feeding opportunities. For the past couple of years we have used the 'hay' to create litter piles on the meadow edge which in themselves are an attractive habitat for a range of wildlife including grass snakes.





Conclusions and the future

The woodland has established well. It forms a quiet haven on a range of routes for walkers and horse riders. It has become increasingly popular as a gateway into the Wicken Vision Land owned by the National Trust. Over the next couple of years, the Trust plans to create ponds and to plant additional trees on land adjacent to the woodland which will complement the environmental and recreational value of our woodland.

On an associated front, the National Trust sponsored archaeology excavations on 14 and 15 October 2023 revealed Mesolithic worked flint in situ at several locations in the woodland and demonstrated the fen edge environment here has been of value to humankind for at least 6,000 years.

Nick Acklam

Making a Meadow

Readers who are old enough may be able to remember picnicking in meadows that were a kaleidoscope of colourful wildflowers, buzzing with the sound of bees and grasshoppers, alive with clouds of butterflies.

As well as wildflowers, meadows can support a huge range of other wildlife including fungi, bees, flies, beetles, spiders, moths, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, bats and birds. They are also important in the fight against climate change – an undisturbed meadow can store and sequester (in the soil) as much carbon as woodland.

Unfortunately, it is now rare to experience a flower-rich meadow – although a stroll along the Devil's Dyke, especially the section between the B1102 and Newmarket racecourse, gives an idea of what a lowland meadow in Cambridgeshire would have looked like.

Especially since the Second World War and driven in part by government policy (UK and then EU), there has been a push for agricultural production that led to the removal of hedgerows, draining of wet land, application of chemical fertilizers and insecticides and the use of heavy machinery. All this has led to a decline in wildlife that can only be described as catastrophic and meadows have suffered as much as any habitat.

Today, only 2% of the meadows that existed in the 1930's remain. Nearly 7.5 million acres of wildflower meadow have been lost and they are still being destroyed. Along with the loss of meadows, once common birds and insects associated with grasslands and meadows have declined. The number of Lapwing in the UK dropped by 59% between 1960 and 2020 and starlings declined by 53% in just 25 years (1995 and 2020). As might be expected, butterfly species characteristic of grassland habitats have also seen numbers plummet – numbers of the Wall brown declined by 68% and those of the Adonis blue by 63% in the 10 years from 2011 and 2020.

In the face of this, every little bit of nature that we can restore, especially in and around the places where we live, has value.

When the orchard was first created, 10 years ago, the grass under the trees was dense and tussocky – wildflowers didn't stand a chance. This was inevitable in a field that had been farmed intensively and kept productive through application of chemical fertilizer. Since then, fertility has declined, and with it the vigour of the grasses. This creates an opportunity to try to create a meadow that is richer in wildflowers – good for bees, butterflies, beetles and hoverflies – and in turn the birds and bats that depend on them for food.

Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) is often described as the 'meadow maker' due to its ability to weaken vigorous grasses therefore allowing other wildflowers to flourish. It is a semi-parasitic native wildflower plant that feeds off the nutrients that neighbouring grasses need.

A grant from the Village Grant Fund was used to buy 1 kg of seed (enough for 1,000 sq m) and on 18th November a small group of volunteers raked the seed into ground that had been prepared a few weeks earlier by John Reed. It was important to get the seed sown by the end of November, as it requires a period of cold (vernalisation) if it is to germinate.



The seed should germinate early next year, around February – April, with the plants then flowering from May to August and setting seed from July to September before the plant dies (it is an annual). So, all being well we will be able to see the results of our labours in early spring. Then, over time, we might hope to see other wildflower species colonising the meadow, accompanied by growing numbers of butterflies, bats and birds.

David Thomas



Know Your Parish Council

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Cristine Fletcher	Chair
Catherine Gibson	Councillor
Edward Hall	Councillor

There are currently 3 vacancies, please contact Susan Bailey if you are interested in being co-opted onto the Parish Council.

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

Meetings take place in the **Village Hall** on the first **Tuesday** of each month. They start at **7.00pm** and all Reach villagers are welcome to attend.

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

Know Your District Councillors

We were saddened to hear that James Fitch had passed away on 13th October. James was County Councillor and District Councillor for many years for the Bottisham ward villages. He loved these villages and worked with and for the residents. One of his longest campaigns was to get safe cycle routes, so he was delighted when the Lode to Quy cycle path opened and looked forward to seeing the path from Burwell to Exning open.

He knocked on Charlotte's door the day she moved in to Reach to welcome her and her husband to the area and introduce himself as their local Councillor – they were very impressed! They soon realised that he was regularly out and about talking with residents and helping to get things done. More recently, he has given us advice and support and shared his long knowledge of the area with us. Like many people, we shall miss James greatly.

Bin collections will change over the Bank Holidays. The black sack and green/brown bin will be collected later than usual on Wednesday 27 December and the black sack and blue bin will be collected later than usual on Wednesday 3 January.

In January, the crews will collect real Christmas trees for recycling – please remove all decorations and cut them so that they are no higher or wider than your Green bin and put them out beside your green bin before 4 February.

There's useful information about how to recycle other Christmas waste on the website at https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/east-cambs-street-scene/christmas-recycling.

Full Council updated the Local Plan by adopting a single-issue review on housing growth. This sounds rather dry, but it has significant impact on planning matters across the District. Because the Plan dates back to 2015 Planning Inspectors were increasingly questioning its validity in planning appeals. Now that Council have updated the housing growth, the Plan is more robust and should last until the new Plan is in place. The review found that the Council needed to increase house building by about 50% over the growth in recent years but will still miss its targets for affordable housing. We will need to address the challenge of building houses which people can afford in the new Local Plan. Many Parishes are already trying to address this challenge in their Neighbourhood Plans.

We have been pressing Sanctuary about various issues locally, not least houses which have been empty for a very long time. At the October meeting of Full Council, a colleague from Ely noted the growing number of properties let by Sanctuary housing that are empty and have been so for over a year. Although the Council's leadership rejected a request to ask Sanctuary Housing to attend a meeting of the Council's Operational Services Committee to answer questions from members about its empty properties. They have organised members' seminar instead. There is a high level of public interest in the shortage of social housing in the district, so we would have preferred a meeting open to the public, but at least we will be able to raise concerns with senior management at Sanctuary.

Prices are rising at a slower rate now, with inflation coming down. But they are still rising and food and fuel remain expensive. A survey by Cambridgeshire County Council shows that 86% of us are concerned about cost-of-living increases and almost half of us – 48% - have cut back on heating use. If you are struggling, or know anyone who is struggling, there is help from advice through to grants and food vouchers. You can find out more at:
https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/cost-living/cost-living or call the Housing and Community Advice team on 01353 665555, or you can ask John or Charlotte who will put you in touch with the Council's team.

We have no meet your Councillors in December, so the next one is Wednesday 25 January at Westley Waterless Village Hall 6.30-7.30. You are welcome to contact us any time.
john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk,
charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk

We hope you all have a good break with your friends and families across the Christmas period and thank those of you who work over the holidays to keep services available.

Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 3rd October 2023 at 7pm

Attendance

Cris Fletcher	Chair	Not Present	Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	Vice Chair	Present	Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present	Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present
Ed Hall	Councillor	Present			

Apologies for absence - Approved. As Councillor Fletcher was not in attendance Councillor Cane took The Chair for this meeting

Forum for members of the public.
10 members of the public attended the meeting to listen to the Neighbourhood plan discussion. It was unanimously requested by the public that it be minuted and highlighted to the external examiner that all 10 members of public are in favour of the NP and that nobody against the plan attended.

Declaration of Interests
There were none.

1. AtoB1102 presentation – Andrew Trump
Andrew is the Reach PC representative on the AtoB1102 committee. He attended the meeting to brief the new Councillors on the aims of the group and give an update on its most recent activities and to request funding, previously agreed, from the PC.
The group have produced a transport survey to learn how people are presently travelling, where they are going to and what would encourage people to use public transport. ***Clerk*** to obtain survey link and circulate around the village.
Other PCs had given £200 to the group. Councillor Hall proposed Reach give £200, Seconded by Councillor Gibson. Approved. The PC would like to see a copy of the group's constitution documents.
Councillor Cane thanked Andrew for continuing to be the Reach representative until there are more Councillor to take on the role.

2. Neighbourhood plan – approval of answers prepared by People4Place to the external examiner's questions.
The external examiner appointed by ECDC had asked a number of questions regarding the NP. People 4 places, the Reach consultant had prepared answers for these.
Councillor Gibson proposed accepting the prepared answers, Councillor Hall seconded. Approved.

3. Planning
There was none.

4. District Councillor Report
Finance & Assets Committee
1. Growth & Infrastructure Fund has over £700,000 available, because one grant was returned; the Fund will be open from 9 October and closed on 8 December to fund projects in the District to support local growth. Criteria will be given shortly on the Council website; Charlotte and John will be able to advise you on your project and help produce a bid.
2. The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS), a scheme to reduce Council Tax for those on low income, was discussed at the meeting. Information on how many households benefitted from this, and how many were in arrears was not given in time for the meeting. John proposed an amendment to decrease the minimum contribution from 8.5% to 0%, but this was defeated, even though it would have only been a loss of at most £24,345 (since some of this would be non-recoverable debt) to the Council.

3. The Council finances might be dented by about £1.5m were the Business Rates be adjusted, something that Government has been threatening to do for several years now. This is because although Business Rates are collected by the District Council, they are paid to central Government who then uses a formula to allocate Business rate funding to local areas. They are proposing to change this formula which could mean ECDC receiving an estimated £1.5m less than it currently receives.

Bin Bags

Everyone should receive their black sacks for general rubbish by 31 October. If anyone hasn't received them by then, please let John or Charlotte know and we will get them delivered to you.

Licensing Committee

Following feedback from the consultation, the Committee decided not to require taxis to have CCTV in the cab. The Committee also agreed to consult on an amended policy for those who do install CCTV to ensure privacy for customers and that the footage will be made available to the proper authorities if required.

Operational Services Committee

1. Agreed Policies for – a. Food Safety Enforcement, b. Health & Safety Enforcement, c. Environmental Crime Enforcement
2. Noted the rising costs for hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) and asked officers to bring a paper detailing options for using HVO for the waste lorries.

East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS)

After years of refusing to give full answers to questions from Charlotte, John and colleagues, Charlotte finally got the Audit Committee to agree to a review of ECSS. It was not the independent review we really wanted, in that it was carried out by the Chief Executive of East Cambs, who is also the Managing Director of ECSS, but it was nevertheless damning. When Charlotte asked for a review at Full Council in February this year, the Leader of the Council – who had also been a Director of ECSS for 16 months, having been a Director since Incorporation – stated that she - *"disagreed with the assertions of poor governance...".* She then led her Conservative Group to vote against any review. Charlotte raised the issue again at the Audit Committee in July and finally got members to instigate a review. This review found, amongst other things, that –

"there are governance failures in relation to Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which does not provide a formal mechanism to escalate known and projected overspends to the Council and its shareholder committee"

"the formal reporting to the ECSS Board and to ECDC Member bodies did not fully reflect the emerging financial pressures facing ECSS;"

"there were inconsistencies in the corporate risk register in terms of A6,(i) specifically, the inherent and residual score; its RAG rating; the definition of risk; comparison with A2(ii) and lack of clarity around the risks specifically facing the Council and separately, ECSS"

And the overspends have not ended yet. Despite a £637,563 increase to the fee for 2023/24, the Chief Executive reports that there is an actual overspend of £87k in the first three months of 2023/24, although they hope to reduce this to £47k by the year end. One of the Chief Executive's changes is to second a senior member of ECDC staff, and Company Secretary for ECSS and ECTC, full-time to ECSS which will presumably add further to the overspend.

And as if this were all not sufficiently worrying, the Chief Executive also revealed that the –

"external auditors for ECSS have reported a 'Material uncertainty related to going concern' in the draft 2022/23 accounts and consequently the ECSS Board agreed to defer signing off the accounts at this stage"

Further governance failures have recently been revealed, but the Chief Executive did not mention these –

When the company was incorporated it was correctly stated that ECDC had significant control, but it was not clarified that ECDC holds 75% or more of the shares and the voting rights nor that it has the right to appoint or remove the majority of the Board of Directors. This was only notified to Companies House on 20 September 2023, with a statement that this had been the case since 1 April 2018.

Council agreed with ECSS, through the Shareholder Agreement, that the Leader of the Council and the Chair of Operational Services Committee are appointed as Observers to the Board. Instead, Council appointed the Deputy Leader and Chair of Operational Services Committee. This was in contradiction of the Shareholder Agreement and the Company Secretary excused it on the grounds that it was a 'typing error in the Shareholder Agreement'.

We are pleased that some of the more egregious deficiencies have been identified. However, we are now even more concerned that there should be an independent review of Governance and processes at ECSS and recommendations for addressing them. We would like a similar independent review of ECTC, which shares many of the governance structures and documents of ECSS. And we want a proper review of ECDC's risk management processes to understand why these risks were not seen sooner. There were months where bins were collected days late or sometimes not at all, and the streets are still not being regularly and adequately swept, there was an overspend of £500,000 and the Council's risk management group still insisted that there was a low risk of failure in service delivery or failing to deliver within budget.

We also want to understand what a red risk rating for ECSS will mean – since red risks are escalated to ECDC senior management to monitor, but those same ECDC senior managers are Directors, Company Secretary, or attendees at ECSS Board meetings, so none of the failings identified by the Chief Executive should come as a surprise to them.
Nor should the poor governance be a surprise to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Bailey, as she helped set up the governance and processes and was a Director for the company's first 14 months.
Nor should the failings be a surprise to the Chair of Operational Services, Cllr Huffer, as she has been an Observer at Board meetings since November 2021 and she admitted to Council in February this year that the Board had not seen Management Accounts before January 2023, explaining –
"ECSS Board last reviewed the management accounts on 31 January 2023. Prior to this, as it is essentially on operational budget, the Board did not receive management accounts, instead it discussed and approved the annual statutory accounts."

5. County Councillor Report
None received.

6. Minutes of previous Meeting
Councillor Gibson proposed accepting the minutes, seconded by Councillor Hall. Approved as correct.

7.1 Reach Grant Fund
£190 had been requested from the 24Acres committee.
For some years now, attempts have been underway to establish a wildflower meadow at the 24 Acres, and to make the orchard area more floristically diverse.
This would benefit biodiversity (not just flora, but also insects, especially butterflies, hoverflies, and bees).
The increase in wildlife will make the site more attractive for those visiting. As the orchard and wood have matured, and the footpath loop across to the lode becomes widely known about, the area has become an increasingly popular place to go for short walks and to gain access to the National Trust's Wicken Vision lands.
Yellow rattle (Rhinanthus minor) is often described as the 'meadow maker' due to its ability to weaken vigorous grasses within a meadow therefore allowing other wildflowers to flourish. It is a semi-parasitic native wildflower plant that feeds off the nutrients that neighbouring grasses need.
We would like to purchase 1 kg of Yellow rattle seed to be sown across the 24 Acres orchard and meadow. This will be enough to treat 1000 sq. m (0.1 hectares).
The seed will need to be sown on areas of bare/scrapped ground before mid-December. This is because the seed needs an extensive period of frost before it will germinate.
The proposal is to involve members of Reach village in the ground preparation and seeding, making this a community activity. We may also be able to draw on National Trust support as this proposal aligns with the Trust's plans to improve the biodiversity of its own adjacent land holding.
It will be co-organised by David Thomas (applicant) and Nick Acklam.
Regarding insurance (question below), this activity will take place on land leased by the Parish Council and therefore it has been assumed that it is covered by the PC's insurance policies.
A risk assessment has not yet been completed, but will be done before carrying out the event
Councillor Cane proposed allowing the grant, seconded by Councillor Gibson. Approved.

7.2 Finance
Nothing to report.

7.3 Parish Council Members
Cambridgeshire Geological Society will be putting the proposals for Local Geological Site designation of The Hythe and Reach Clunch Pit South to the County Sites Meeting on the 17th October.
The designation does not confer any legal obligations on the landowner, nor does it confer any right of access. They had asked that the PC again, confirm support. Councillor Hall proposed confirming support, seconded by Councillor Gibson. Approved

7.4 Play Spaces
A member of the public had reported that there was broken glass in the play area. Councillor Hall visited the site and found pieces of glass located in one area at the bottom of the slide. It's seemed that a glass drinking bottle had been smashed. All pieces were collected as much as possible however the mix of grass and play rubber chips around the play equipment makes this difficult, very small pieces could 'hide' under some of the grass clumps.

Discussion took place as to whether a review the flooring around the play equipment was necessary. ***Clerk*** to contact Fenland Leisure, who inspect the playground, to obtain advise and a quotation regarding this issue.

7.5 Rights of Way
Nothing to report.

7.6 24Acres Committee
Nothing to report.

7.7 Neighbourhood Plan
Nothing more to report.

7.8 Friends Of Reach Wood
Nothing to report.

7.9 A to B1102 Group
Nothing more to report.

8. Wicken Fen/NT update
Prior to the September PC meeting, the PC met in private session with Alan Kell, Countryside Manager at Wicken Fen presented on plans for the land to the North of the 24Acres and for land they have acquired adjacent to the 24Acres. Nick Acklam PC Tree office also attended. This presentation needs to be in private session due to public timing restrictions placed on the information as a condition of the grant received.
Within the northern compartment of the 24Acres the NT are proposing a new ditch, and ponds as well as planting of a new hedgerow.
A grant has been secured from Natural England which will allow work to be carried out on the new land. The NT Propose a new footpath on the western edge (with culvert to link to 24Acres); hedge and arable field margins on the eastern and western edge; and a perimeter fence line; a lowland meadow and a wild bird cover crop creation area. They intend to take part in the RSPB Operation Turtle Dove. Turtle doves are the fastest-declining bird in the UK. Operation Turtle Dove aims to reverse. Turtle Doves are still in the Reach area and it is hoped that with the right drinking and feeding habitats there numbers can begin to increase.
Alan also informed the PC of plans to submit a public footpath diversion to move part of the official public footpath, which runs through a fenced compartment, across 20-30m to the actual 'walked' and maintained footpath (on their land near to Burwell Lode in Burwell Parish). This would have the benefit of enabling that area of the field to be wetted up under the restoration plans, protecting the peatland and therefore reducing carbon emissions, increasing the biodiversity of the site for the public to enjoy whilst reducing the disturbance to wintering wildfowl and ground nesting birds and increasing the H&S aspect, by having a maintained path, away from breeding livestock.

9. Grant fund charity update
After additional discussions with Councillor Cane and a discussion at the September PC meeting it has been agreed that the new grant fund charity organisation for the village shall have trustees with a majority control by the PC. This will mean that current councillors without significant other conflicts of interest in the issuing of grants should be trustees of the "Reach Village Community Fund".
Paperwork is now ready to be resubmitted to the Charity Commission with all trustees (physical signatures will be required and is the last action before sending).
Once the Charity Commission has completed its processing the Community Bank Account with Barclays bank will also be resubmitted with the updated individuals and Charity Commission registration.

10. Payments

E.on Next – power on the green	£37.32
CR Contracting – mowing contract	£374.50
S Bailey – Clerk salary	Confidential
A Trump – Apple press – grant fund	£450.00
D Quilter – sports day – grant fund	£20.00
C Tayleur - sports day – grant fund	£39.90
National Trust – 24Acres lease	£10.00

DRAFT Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 7th November 2023 at 7pm

Attendance

Cris Fletcher	Chair	Not Present	Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	Vice Chair	Present	Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present	Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present
Ed Hall	Councillor	Present			

Apologies for absence - Approved. As Councillor Fletcher was not in attendance Councillor Cane took the Chair for this meeting

Forum for members of the public.
The Burwell Scouts were represented at the meeting along with a member of the Cricket Club.

Declaration of Interests
There were none.

1. Burwell Scouts & use of the 24Acres
Burwell Scouting group have sessions every Monday - Thursday evening between 6 and 9 with an additional early session on one of those nights. They are a well-funded group with an excellent library of equipment (including minibus, trailers, canoes, and kayaks) as well as solid financial reserves.
They would like to use the 24Acres on summer evenings for the playing of "Scouting Games".
Discussion took place, with concern for parking at the site, and the sharing of use of the site by other village groups. It was agreed that permission should be given for one year, for use during daylight hours in British Summer Time. Lift sharing from Burwell will be arranged. A timetable of usage would be supply at the beginning of each term and circulated to the village by the Clerk. The PC were not in support of any future building at the site and development of a permanent home for the scouts. ***Clerk*** to inform the NT.

2. Planning
There was none.

3. District Councillor Report
<u>The East Cambridgeshire Growth and Infrastructure Fund has reopened for applications</u>.
The scheme will provide capital funding towards the delivery of local infrastructure (including but not limited to transport, health care, social, cultural, education and recreational facilities) to assist, promote, encourage, develop and secure sustainable growth and enable people to live and/or work in East Cambridgeshire. Examples could include cycle and footpath improvements, or new community facilities such as village halls and public open spaces. The deadline for applications is 5:00 pm on Friday 8 December 2023.
More information about the scheme and the application form can be found at
https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/business/east-cambridgeshire-growth-and-infrastructure-fund
If you have any queries, please telephone 01353 665555 or email <u>gandifund@eastcambs.gov.uk</u>

<u>Sanctuary Housing</u>
Charlotte and John had a meeting with Sanctuary Housing about some aspects of their service after we received complaints from some residents. We were informed that they were improving their approach to residents and were conscious of some inadequate communications hitherto with residents. We also pressed them on the number of empty properties in the ward, and they said that they were restoring them slowly to use. Please let one of us know if you have any concerns with Sanctuary Housing.
At the October meeting of Full Council, the Council's leadership rejected a request to ask Sanctuary Housing to attend a meeting of the Council's Operational Services Committee to answer questions from members about its empty properties. They propose to organise a behind-closed-doors seminar instead, which is disappointing given the high level of public interest in the shortage of social housing in the District.
<u>East Cambs Street Scene</u>
Following the damning report from the Council's Chief Executive into the Council's own in-house company East Cambs Street Scene, changes have been made to the composition of the company Board to address the most obvious failures of governance at the company.

These amendments include a requirement to put in place a formal escalation process to oblige ECSS to report overspends or underspends to the Council's Operational Services Committee within an agreed parameter; and the implementation of revised Key Performance Indicators.
Charlotte proposed an amendment to these proposals, on the grounds that

- The proposed escalation process contradicts the Shareholder Agreement, which requires that the Company will maintain effective and appropriate control systems in relation to the financial, accounting and record-keeping functions of the Company, and provide to the Shareholder full details of any actual or prospective material change in the Business or the financial position or affairs of the Company, as soon as such details are available.
- The revised Key Performance Indicators should be reviewed by the Council's Operational Services Committee.
- The revised Risk Register is a cause for concern, with a high risk of ECSS failing to deliver on its business plan or to deliver a cost effective, sustainable, and high quality domestic waste collection and street cleansing service.
- The Chief Executive should be instructed to commission a fully independent review of the governance of ECSS.

This amendment was defeated. We are concerned by the apparent complacency of the Council's leadership in the light of these serious issues.

<u>Local Plan single issue review</u>

At its Full Council meeting in October, the district council approved the 'single issue review of its local plan. The review was commissioned three years ago and has now completed its examination by a Planning Inspector. It is a very limited review, with a number of 'take it or leave it' recommendations.
This Council's Local Plan is now eight and a half years old. If it were a human being it would be in junior school by now. We have consistently argued that this Council should have embarked on a more significant update of the Plan a long time ago. The current Plan has failed to protect residents from inappropriate development in several locations across the District, and it is now hopelessly out of date in the face of the threat of climate change.
The introduction of a standard national method to determine a local housing need gives a housing requirement of 5,398 for the nine years from 2022 to 2031.
Added to the approximately 3,600 dwellings completed in the eleven years from 2011 to 2022, this will mean a total figure of around 9,000 new dwellings in East Cambridgeshire between 2011 and 2031.
In order to achieve this, the rate of house building completions will need to increase very significantly indeed, from an average 419 a year over the past twenty years, to 600 a year for the next nine years. The Planning Inspector said: "There is under delivery of 2,688 dwellings in the plan period to date against the adopted housing requirement. Despite the Council identifying a potential housing land supply (untested in this examination) of 7,371 dwellings to 2031, the delivery of the housing requirement in full for the plan period as a whole, including the under provision, would require a significant increase in the annual delivery of dwellings from historic levels, and over a prolonged period."
At least as important as the number of homes is their affordability. The Inspector says: "The evidence suggests that there would have to be a significant uplift in housing provision for the identified affordable housing need to be met in full."
As the cost of living crisis continues to squeeze thousands of local households, the news from this limited review is that East Cambridgeshire residents should prepare for an increase of around 50% in the rate of house building, which will fail to meet the needs of our area for affordable houses. That is a challenge the Council needs to face up to in the remaining years of the Plan.

<u>Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme</u>

Once again, the leadership of the District Council voted down a proposal from the opposition to reduce to zero the level of Council Tax paid by the very worst-off households in East Cambridgeshire.
While the cost of living crisis continues to push more and more families into poverty, a temporary respite from Council Tax bills would have been a welcome help, and a sign of support from the Council in difficult times. Furthermore, the cost to the Council of £24,345.76 to adopt a minimum contribution of zero could be less than the cost of pursuing irrecoverable debts for Council Tax.

<u>Meet your councillors</u>

Our next surgery will take place on Monday 20 November 6:30-7:30PM in Swaffham Prior Village Hall.
Residents can continue to contact us by email, or phone.

4. County Councillor Report

STRATEGY RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE

Mind the [budget] gap Cambridgeshire County Council's estimated budget gap for 2024/25 has increased from a predicted £16M to more than £23M—largely due to increases in demand for services and inflationary pressure. Without action being taken this gap will grow and is predicted to be more than £20M in the following year, and a further £19M and more the year after that. Cambridgeshire is not alone. The Local Government Association currently reports that councils across the country face an 'inflationary storm' with a predicted £4Bn funding gap over the next two years. A report from the Council's Chief Executive Stephen Moir and Executive Director of Finance and Resources Michael Hudson says: "In 2023-24, pressures on our budget have arisen principally due to several very high-cost children's social care placements and a delay in receiving income from a newly constructed solar farm (which requires connection to the electricity grid). In addition, we are seeing that demand for bed-based care for older people is also rising, following a period of reduction in demand and then stability stretching back for some time, to the beginning of the pandemic." The report also points to wider national and international issues which have an impact on the council's pressures—such as interest rates which the Bank of England has said are likely to remain above five per cent until 2026. This will affect all goods and services the council buys, the cost of borrowing, and pay award costs for council workers as well as for a large externally commissioned workforce which includes staff working in residential care for vulnerable adults and children. The report highlights how all services in the council have been the subject of a comprehensive exercise to find efficiencies, alongside a number of specific reviews into particularly high cost areas such as home to school transport, children's social care placements, and high levels of historic adult social care debt. Proposals to set the Council's 2024/5 budget will be discussed by councillors in December before a period of scrutiny during January, including an opportunity for residents to comment on the plans.

Quality of life survey shows mixed picture

Most Cambridgeshire residents feel happy and safe in the county, well connected to their local communities, and believe it's a great place to raise children.

That's the headline finding of the County Council's first annual Quality of Life survey involving more than 5,500 residents. But the news is less good for some specific groups, with a stark finding that loneliness in Cambridgeshire is far higher than the national average. Loneliness was most likely to be reported by those aged 18 to 25, who also reported more struggles with their mental health.

The County Council commissioned the report from national independent market research agency Thinks Insight and Strategy and plans to use the results to help councillors set business plan and budget priorities for the coming five years. The survey will also be used to inform the Public Health Joint Needs Assessment, a mandatory document which local organisations use to identify the health and wellbeing needs of a local population.

The survey found the council itself plays a relatively trusted role in residents' lives, with just over half of residents trusting it to make decisions. Residents' views about whether the council acts on their concerns and delivers value for money were in line with Local Government Association averages for England.

Satisfaction with council services was mixed—highest across library, waste management, street lighting, and registration services, and lowest in road and pavement maintenance.

Residents reported high concerns about the cost of living and many said they were changing their behaviour because of it.

48 % have cut back on heating use,

27 %have cut back on nutritious food, eight per cent have used a foodbank and nine per cent have stopped using prescription medicines. The council intends to run the survey again next year.

84% feel safe in their local community

72% report high or very high levels of happiness

52% of 18-24s feel lonely—compared to only 18% of those aged 55+

37% have struggled with mental health (61% of 18-24s, 59% of 25-34s)

52% trust the council to make decisions about services

44% think the council delivers value for money (national benchmark 42%)

86% are concerned about cost of living increases 48%have cut back on heating use

FLOODING

Storm Babet hit Cambridgeshire on Friday 20 October, leaving some households with external or even internal flooding to their homes, or without flushing toilets, as well as seeing a number of roads closed. County Council highways officers have been working through the various incidents logged, and the Flood & Water team is pulling together an overall picture of events. If you were affected by flooding and have not yet reported it to the County Council, please do so, as it is really important to build up a full picture of what happened.

•You can report flood issues affecting your home or property atcambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Flood_reporting(This is not the place to report flooding in an emergency.)
•You can report highways-related flooding (blocked road drains, sewers, gullies, for example) at highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

FULL COUNCIL

Going through the motions

Five motions for debate as usual generated more heat than light at the Full Council meeting on 17 October.

1. A motion instructing the County Council's Chief Executive to convene a meeting to discuss how to move forward after the collapse of proposals for road charging in Cambridge was voted down as being devoid of solutions to the county's transport problems.

2. Another motion promoted the divisive notion of a 'war on motorists' to argue that planners should return to the old ways of 'predict and provide' to allow for more and more cars, rather than the 'monitor and manage' approach of seeking to avoid developments leading to congested roads and lack of public transport options. This was also defeated.

3. A third motion called for the publication of the council's action plan for addressing the (eye-wateringly expensive) problem of the many 'soil-affected' roads in the county. An amendment to improve the motion was accepted by the mover, and it was agreed unanimously.

4. A fourth motion was again altered to accommodate an amendment and was also agreed unanimously. This asks officers to bring forward a report on what can be done to stop lorries rat-running along the A1421 from Haddenham crossroads to Witcham Toll.

5. Finally, a motion on plans to review the council's policy on weed control was amended and then approved. The review was already scheduled for January 2024.

ADULTS & HEALTH Be Winter Wise

The County Council has launched its Be Winter Wise campaign to help residents with information and advice throughout the winter. Its aim is to draw together a range of services, activities and offers, keeping communities across Cambridgeshire informed and prepared to stay safe and healthy during the winter months of 2023/24—and to signpost to services offered by partners. The campaign links together everything from winter gritting and road safety activities to falls prevention, flu vaccination support, and the Household Support Fund which helps people with urgent expenses, or by issuing vouchers to every child eligible for free school meals in the half term and Christmas holidays, under a single Be Winter Wise banner. Activities include

•Work being carried out on the county's road network, including gritting, gulley and drain clearance, and getting ahead of expected impacts of bad weather.
•Road safety activities and advice, such as encouraging pedestrians, cyclists and motorists to wear reflective clothing, check lights and brakes, and always travel according to road conditions.
•Information to help residents stay warm and well through the colder months, with an emphasis on activities to reduce loneliness and support mental as well as physical health.
•Further work to promote the council's Household Support Fund, open to eligible residents who are most affected by the cost of living crisis.
•Supporting NHS colleagues by promoting flu, COVID and MMR jabs to eligible groups. For more information, search on social media for #BeWinterWise

Care quality initiative A new initiative to improve the quality of care and support for Cambridgeshire residents has been approved by the council's Adults and Health Committee and is to be launched by the County Council. The new initiative for the adult social care workforce, supported by investment of over £1M, seeks to address problems of recruitment and retention in the sector, support skills development, and drive up quality of services. The County Council already requires care providers with whom it contracts to pay the Real Living Wage. The Council will now also seek to embed the new approach to build skills in the workforce into future contracts with care providers. A high quality Care Certificate will be offered by the Council at low cost to care providers and to care workers themselves.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPL Supermarket vouchers continue The supermarket voucher scheme will continue to operate in the October half term for all eligible families in Cambridgeshire. Cambridgeshire County Council will run the scheme until the February 2024 half term using the Household Support Fund from the Department for Work & Pensions and additional funding provided by the Council. Eligible families were automatically sent a £15 voucher via email or text on Saturday 21 October. The voucher can be used at a choice of ten supermarkets. The voucher scheme has been a huge success since it was introduced and appreciated keenly by families struggling in the current financial climate. A survey revealed that over seventy per cent of families said the vouchers had helped them cope with the rising cost of living.

Appeal volunteers needed Volunteers are urgently needed to hear appeals when children are not offered a place at their preferred school. All parents or carers have the right to make an appeal to an independent appeal panel if their child is not offered a place at their preferred school. The role of the panel is to decide whether a child who has been refused a place by the County Council should be given a place. All parties involved must be given an appeal hearing that is transparent, accessible, independent and impartial. The appeal panel is independent of the local authority and its decisions are binding on all parties, unless overturned by the courts. Volunteers will sit on the independent admission appeal panels and ensure that parents feel they have had a fair and independent hearing and have been given every opportunity to put their case and have been taken seriously. Panel members must be able to listen to two sides of a case and weigh up evidence objectively and impartially. They must also be able to:

•Communicate effectively with a wide range of people
•Read and assess information and identify key points
•Listen to key information
•Ask questions to obtain information and clarify points being made
•Analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions
•Obtain and weigh up evidence to reach a decision
•Work as part of a team, take advice, and develop their own skills. All volunteer Panel Members receive initial and annual refresher training and will be fully supported by the Appeals Service. The time commitment depends on how much time volunteers are willing to give. While appeals are held throughout the year, the peak months are between April and July. The appeals are arranged either for half a day or a full day. Hearings are currently held online using Microsoft Teams. Anyone interested in applying or who would like an informal chat about the role should contact clare.cronk@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

COMMUNITIES SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION (COSMIC)

Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund is a £1M fund to help upgrade and improve community buildings and assets to better meet the needs of the families, households and communities who use them. Many expressions of interest were received by the September deadline. More than 85 per cent of them met the eligibility criteria and those applicants have been invited to submit a full proposal. This next stage will be competitive, with only one in four applications likely to be successful. All applicants who have made it through to this second stage have been invited to attend one of three virtual briefing sessions:

•Monday 30 October 4:00-5:00PM
•Tuesday 31 October 6:30-7:30PM
•Wednesday 1 November 12:00-1:00PM

East Cambridgeshire applications which have made it to this stage have come from Burwell, Brinkley, Coveney, Ely, Haddenham, Kirtling, Little Downham, Little Thetford, Littleport, Mepal, Soham, Stetchworth, Stuntney, Sutton and Witchford.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT Swaffham Prior Community Heat Network

I joined residents, contractors, council officers and others at the village hall in Swaffham Prior recently to celebrate the anniversary of the first connections to the new renewable energy centre. 100 external connections are now completed, and by November 65 properties will be fully connected to the heat network. Connections will recommence in Spring. The council is keen to complete these in batches to ensure works are carried out effectively and efficiently and disruption is minimised. Further testing of the heat network will take place over the winter to optimise the system.

I recently passed on landscape and lighting concerns to the County Council officer team who have been swift to respond to these.

Climate scorecard Campaigning organisation Climate Emergency UK once again published a ‘scorecard’ for each council to measure how it was responding to climate change. As the methodology changes every year it is not possible to compare present against past scores. Cambridgeshire was ranked fifth out of all county councils on this year’s scorecard, with a gold star for our work on decarbonising buildings and heating. We scored lower than average on biodiversity, and on waste reduction and food. This is unsurprising, given that Cambridgeshire is the most biodiversity-deprived county in the country, and that the Waterbeach waste facility is out of action while the council and its contractor Thalia seek to resolve compliance issues. https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/scoring/county/

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Getting Cambridgeshire’s roads winter ready Cambridgeshire’s gritting crew spent several nights in mid-October carrying out a trial run ahead of winter. Gritters including Buzz Ice Year and David Grittenborough were on the roads, along with quad bikes on cycle routes in Cambridge. The salt domes and barns have already been filled with 10,000 tonnes of rock salt ready for the start of the cold season. Last year gritting crews went out 51 times, many of them working throughout the night and early hours. Anyone interested in volunteering to help the council grit

Cambridgeshire during the winter months is invited to visit the council's website to find out how they and the local community can get involved. www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/help-with-gritting/

20MPH schemes—the next round

The council plans to reopen the window for new applications for 20MPH funding from Monday 15 January 2024, and close it on Friday 15 March 2024 at 5:00PM. There was intense interest from parish councils in this opportunity, showing how much popular support there is for road safety and speed reduction initiatives. In the meantime, the council plans to review and update its 20MPH website pages to provide additional information and assistance to applicants.

HS2: will there be winners?

The sudden announcement by the Government in October of the scrapping of HS2 to Manchester was followed by a list of transport schemes across the country that would receive a share of the funding instead. This list was then withdrawn from the Government website, with the explanation that these projects were simply 'illustrations. In East Cambridgeshire these illustrations included Ely railway junction and the A10 between Ely and the A14. However, it is not clear how much money there will be to reinvest in genuinely new transport projects.

5. Minutes of previous Meeting

Approved as correct.

6.1 Reach Grant Fund

£990 had been requested from the Events Team for the 3 Christmas events, subject to receipts.

1. Christmas Tree Lights Switch On, Sunday 3rd December, 5pm to 6pm
2. Senior's Christmas Lunch, Thursday 14th December 12.30pm to 3pm
3. Carols Around the Tree, Sunday 24th December 6pm to 7pm

Clerk to check this large amount does not take the PC over its spending limit as outlined in S.137 Local Government Act.

Councillor Gibson proposed allowing the grant, seconded by Councillor Cane. Approved.

6.2 Finance

Nothing to report.

6.3 Parish Council Members

Council Cane attended the Parish Forum which highlighted the need for the PC to develop a Nature Recovery Plan. ***Clerk*** to add to December agenda, ***Councillor Cane*** to ask Nick Acklam if he would help with this.

The Parish Forum also highlighted the Military Covenant that a PC can adopt, ***Clerk*** to add to December agenda.

6.4 Play Spaces

Clerk is still waiting for advice and a quotation for the flooring around the play equipment as necessary.

6.5 Rights of Way

A resident had highlighted that a dangerous drop had been exposed on the edge of the byway at the top of the Clunch Pit. A neighbour to the land had done a very good job of fencing the area in order to make it safer. ***Clerk*** to ask for advise from the solicitor, to purchase a warning sign and to liaise with Highways.

6.6 24Acres Committee

The Cricket Club would like to raise money for the purchase of covers for the wicket and sight screens. The PC were happy for these to be used and stored on the 24Acres.

6.7 Neighbourhood Plan

The PC had received the examiners report for the NP which recommended that it progresses to a referendum . This will be fact checked and the NP updated, with the modifications as requested by the Inspector. The referendum is likely to take place early next year.

6.8 Friends Of Reach Wood

Nothing to report.

6.9 A to B1102 Group

Nothing to report. A meeting is arranged for later this week.

7. Online banking and payments

Clerk had finally been advised that everything was set up to start electronic payments.
Going forward the new payment process would be –
Clerk to raise online payment, Councillor signatories are automatically informed.
Payments will be approved at the PC meeting by all Councillors and details minuted.
A single Councillor will be appointed as the online approving Councillor, this will also be minuted. This Councillor will then go ahead and approve the online payments.
As a trial this month the Clerks payment, listed below, will be made by electronic payment. The payment was approved, and it was agreed and approved that Councillor Cane would approve the payment online.

8. Grant fund charity update

The process continues with Councillor Hall liaising with the Reach Fair CIC.

9. Clerk annual review

10. Payments

E.on Next – power on the green	£47.61
CR Contracting – mowing contract	£276.50
S Bailey – Postage, stationary & wreath	£100.04
D Thomas – Grant fund – seeds 24Acres	£190.00

Burwell and Reach Car Scheme

The Burwell and Reach Car Scheme offers 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 me, 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 are easy to obtain through the scheme.



Diary Dates and Bus Timetable

December	Event	Location	Time
Sunday 3	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Sunday 3	Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On	Lower Green	5.00pm
Tuesday 5	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Tuesday 5	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.00pm
Tuesday 12	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Wednesday 13	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Thursday 14	Seniors Christmas Lunch	Village Hall	12.30pm
Tuesday 19	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Saturday 23	Christingle Service	St Etheldreda's, Reach	5.00pm
Saturday 24	Santa Visits Us Again!		4.30pm
Saturday 24	Carols Around The Tree	Lower Green	6.00pm
Wednesday 27	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Thursday 28	Reach Riders Christmas Ride	Starts from the Village Green	10.00am
Sunday 25	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am

January	Event	Location	Time
Tuesday 2	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.00pm
Wednesday 3	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Sunday 7	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Tuesday 9	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Tuesday 16	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Wednesday 17	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Tuesday 23	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Tuesday 30	Recycling Day (Blue)		

Stephenson's No. 11 – no service Sundays and Public Holidays - NS not Saturdays, Sa Saturdays only

	NS	Sa	Sa	NS										
Newmarket, The Guineas Bus Station	--	--	700	700	820	920	1020	1120	1220	1320	1420	1520	1620	1745
Newmarket, Studlands, Park Avenue	--	--	710	710	830	930	1030	1130	1230	1330	1430	1530	1630	1755
Burwell, Ness Road	639	649	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Burwell, Hawthorn Way	641	651	723	723	843	943	1043	1143	1243	1343	1443	1543	1643	1808
Reach, Post Office	653	703	--	--	855	--	1055	--	1255	--	1455	1555	1655	1820
Swaffham Prior, Bus Shelter	658	708	737	737	900	957	1100	1157	1300	1357	1500	1600	1700	1825
Lode, Church	--	--	--	--	--	1004	--	1204	--	1404	--	--	--	--
Stow cum Quy, Station Rd Bus Stop	708	718	747	751	910	1012	1110	1212	1310	1412	1510	1610	1710	1835
Cambridge, Marshalls Airport	718	728	757	804	920	1022	1120	1222	1320	1422	1520	1620	1720	1845
Cambridge, Drummer St Bus Station	732	742	811	816	934	1034	1134	1234	1334	1434	1534	1634	1734	1859

Cambridge, Drummer St Bus Station	650	750	850	950	1050	1150	1250	1350	1450	1550	1715	1815	1915
Cambridge, Marshalls Airport	702	802	902	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1602	1727	1827	1927
Stow cum Quy, Station Rd Bus Stop	712	812	912	1012	1112	1212	1312	1412	1512	1612	1737	1837	1937
Lode, Church	--	--	920	--	1120	--	1320	--	1520	--	1745	--	--
Swaffham Prior, Bus Shelter	723	823	926	1023	1126	1223	1326	1423	1526	1623	1751	1848	1948
Reach, Post Office	728	828	--	1028	--	1228	--	1428	--	1628	--	1853	1953
Burwell, Hawthorn Way	738	838	938	1038	1138	1238	1338	1438	1538	1638	1803	1903	2003
Newmarket, Studlands, Park Avenue	752	852	952	1052	1152	1252	1352	1452	1552	1652	1817	1917	2017
Newmarket, The Guineas Bus Station	802	902	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1602	1702	1827	1927	2027

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

The building of Reach church organ was a project undertaken by my grandfather, Colin Washtell, following the lightning strike that damaged the church in 1958. It took two and a half years to complete and utilised in its construction reclaimed pipes etc from St. John the Devine in Cambridge as well as other material adapted from a redundant theatre organ acquired in the West Country. I remember clearly him working by hand on the detailed fretwork and gilding that adorned the pipe casing. The family crest sits above the pipes.

Once completed and installed after 1300 hours of work it was gifted to the church in 1961, the photo shown dates to that time. A piece my grandfather wrote for 'The Organ' magazine in June 1962 entitled 'A fenland experiment' describes the project in detail (PDF for the website provided). My grandfather also designed and built the organs for Swaffham Prior and Burwell church although only the latter remains.

Chris Patterson

Contact Information

Parish Council – see "Know Your Parish Council"			
Village Hall			
	Chair	David Thomas	01638 742676
	Finance	Andrew Trump	01638 743335
	Bookings	Tash Bridgeman	07920 516586 rvhcb25@gmail.com
	Secretary	Sue Elliott	01638 742268
Tents and Village Games Bookings		Claire Halpin-McDonald	01638 743330
Church			
	Vicar	Eleanor Williams	01638 741262
	Curate (Duty days Wed, Fri and Sun)	Reverend Paula Spalding	07545 868549
	Priest in Retirement	Rev 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 (Surgery)	https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/index.aspx	
	Website (Patient Participation Group)	https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/patient-group	

Then and Now pictures – see facing page







Nick Acklam and Steve Boreham - teamwork . . . .



It grows really quickly!

Yellow Rattle Planting on the 24Acres
Saturday 18th November 2023



John Reed doing his stint sitting down . . . .



Catherine Clark clearly pleased with what she has achieved. Has anyone seen Ross recently?



Helen Oliver and Catherine Gibson – matching wellies . . . .