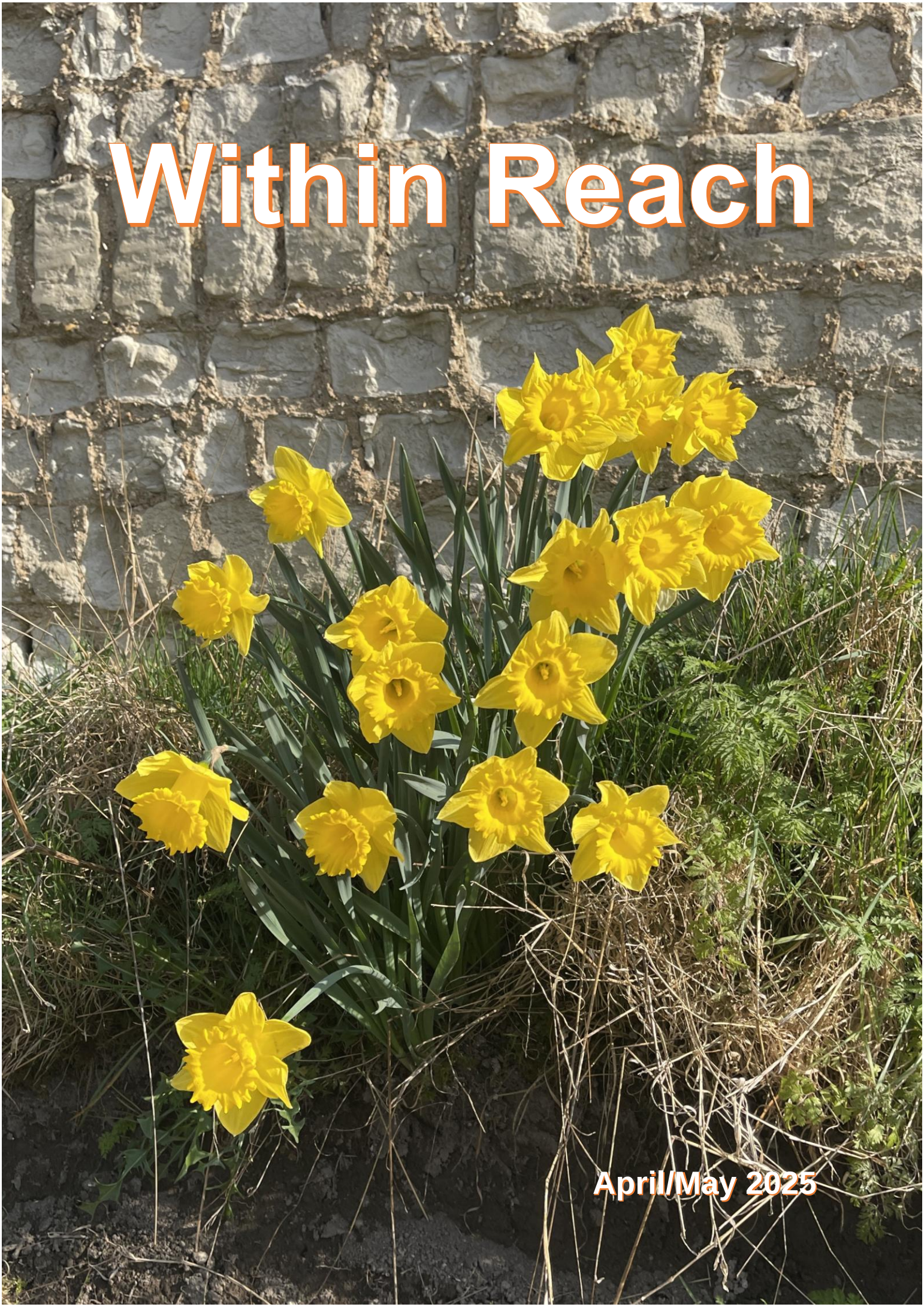
Within Reach



April/May 2025



From James Griffin – Charlie has taken a particular liking to this spot on our walks . . . .

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From the Editor



It looks like we are well into the Spring now, which I always find to be a delightful time of year. Bulbs are showing, daffodils are everywhere you look and most importantly, in just five weeks or so it'll be Reach Fair! I know its not to everybody's taste, but I just love it – and especially the fact that it is all done and dusted in one lovely afternoon!

The Reach Fair Team are in great shape, but they do need some help both prior to (putting up a few leaflets in the area, it can be a fun couple of hours, with a nice lunch at the end) and other needs on the day itself, as you'll see from Alex's article on page 15. I can also confirm that the Reach Fair website is up to date, go to: https://www.reachfair.org.uk/index.html and see what is in store for you.

For the magazine, this is the time of year when our advertising revenue gets generated so that we can cover our print costs and keep the magazine free of charge to villagers. The invention of community Facebook pages doesn't help the generation of new advertisers because they can get access to these for free. Its not a big issue at present, but if you know of people who you feel would benefit from advertising in our village magazine, then let me know and I will hunt them down!

Its pleasing to see that the Church wall has now been repaired (see cover picture) and everything is clean and tidy again – after what was quite a considerable period of time. Bit of a contrast to God's achievement in creating the whole world in just six days. Similarly, the new buses arrangements, due to be in place four months ago - I'm hoping they just leave it as it is!

And finally, big thanks go to James Loftus who provided two training events recently on using the village defibrillator. You'll see Catherine's article on the subject on page 12 of this magazine – and there is another event organised for Wednesday 30th April, 6.30-8.30pm. If you would like to come along please let Catherine know.

David Parr



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
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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	David Thomas
Village Update	Alex de Giorgio-Miller
Wicken Fen	Ajay Tegala
Wildlife	Nick Acklam

Village Update

Hurrah for Spring!



Doing the morning dog walk in daylight (just!) is delightful after months of juggling the torch and lead. A bit of sun makes such a huge difference to my mood and seeing the daffodils begin to bloom is a welcome sign of some warmer weather on the way – fingers crossed!

COVID-19 Day of Reflection

Sunday 9 March 2025 marked five years since the COVID-19 pandemic changed our lives in ways we could never have imagined. The date was set in the UK as a 'Day of Reflection' and was a moment to remember those we lost, acknowledge the sacrifices made and reflect on the resilience shown by our communities. Various events were held across the UK and more details about the COVID-19 Day of Reflection can be found at https://dayofreflection.campaign.gov.uk/2025.

Safe Disposal of your Fridge or Freezer

Residents thinking of buying a new fridge or freezer are being asked to think twice about the disposal of their current models. Last year East Cambridgeshire District Council was called to 35 fly-tips which included a fridge or freezer. Shockingly, just one fridge containing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that has not been disposed of properly causes the same contribution to the greenhouse effect as a small household's annual electricity requirement or a car's annual mileage. This is because the chemicals used in them can leak out over time. Their capacity to warm the atmosphere is thousands of times greater than carbon dioxide.

If you do need to dispose of an old fridge, the council are requesting that you do so responsibly. If the retailer does not have a take-back service, you can do this by ordering a bulky waste collection service from the council. They currently charge £30.25 for 3 household items but fridges and freezers are £30.25 each as this requires additional handling costs to dispose of the gases. Alternatively, you can take your fridge or freezer to a household waste recycling centre, such as the one at Witchford. This only applies to regular fridges and not ammonia fridges often used in vehicles, caravans and boats, as these are not classed as household waste and need to be disposed of via properly licenced commercial contractors who can be found through a Google search. If residents have any further questions, please contact the waste management team wmt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

The council would also like to remind households to refuse the services of any waste collector who cannot prove to you that they are a registered waste carrier and cannot satisfactorily confirm where they are taking the waste to. Do not be tempted by cheap offers, it is cheap for a reason - but the fixed penalties are not.

Thieves Stealing Skips!

People who have skips in their gardens or at business premises are warned to be extra vigilant after thieves stole a skip and fly-tipped the contents. Skips are apparently valuable items, sought for their weight in metal. The council advises users to be mindful of access to the skip, particularly at business premises overnight.

Cambridgeshire County Council joins UK100

The Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, has been appointed as one of three new co-presidents of UK100, the UK's network of local government leaders committed to tackling climate change. UK100 is a cross-party membership organisation supporting the most ambitious councils to go further and faster on their Net Zero and Clean Air targets, facilitating knowledge-sharing and partnership building between members, while providing leadership and mentoring. To accelerate action, UK100 brings together the most influential leaders across the country to learn together and agree on priorities for legislative and regulatory change, while empowering engagement with national decision-makers, providing the knowledge, tools and connections necessary to make this happen.

All members of the UK100 network have pledged to meet their ambitious climate targets ahead of the government's 2050 goal and as a member, Cambridgeshire County Council is making good progress to reduce its own carbon emissions. Between 2018-19 and 2023-24, direct emissions from the council's own assets have reduced by 42 per cent. The ongoing reduction in direct emissions is due to a programme of low carbon heating projects. Fossil fuel-based heating systems (like gas or oil boilers) have been replaced with low-carbon air source heat pumps at 25 council buildings. The Council is also exploring ways it can reduce its indirect emissions further.

Keep well and fingers crossed for more sunshine!

Alex de Giorgio-Miller



Village Hall



17-25th March was National Village Halls Week – an annual campaign that shines a spotlight on the contribution that England's 10,000+ village halls make to rural communities. Here in Reach we are lucky to have a beautiful hall at the heart of our village, serving everyone in the community.

The Village Hall Committee has been working hard to maintain and improve our village hall. Jobs underway or recently completed include:

Roof Repairs

Last year a survey of the roof showed that it needed to be re-tiled – at an estimated cost of about £30,000. We have secured a generous grant that will cover most of the cost from Thalia WB Community Fund (part of the Landfill Communities Fund). A massive thanks to David Parr who led the preparation and writing of the funding application.

Work will begin sometime in the next couple of months, we'll provide more information in due course, but needless to say we will aim to ensure minimum disruption to regular users of the hall who will be contacted individually once we have precise dates.

Roof Space Insulation

The loft space is very poorly insulated so while the roof tiles are off, giving good access, we aim to add some insulation.

Clock

Some of you will remember the lovely clock that graced the hall's main room. It ceased to work some years ago and was taken down and replaced by a rather less lovely electric clock. Paul Greer has now repaired it and it is now back on the wall, ticking along very nicely. Please don't try to wind the clock yourself – its mechanism is old and sensitive – we'll aim to ensure that it is wound regularly and kept working.

Mirror

A full-length mirror has been purchased and will soon be installed in the disabled loo (accessible by all genders).

Front Door

The front door has been sticking. It has now been planed and re-hung so shouldn't be causing any further problems.

Acoustic Baffles

Some regular users of the hall have told us that they find sound echoing around the hall makes it hard to hear conversations, especially when the hall is busy. We have started to explore the installation of acoustic baffles to help resolve this problem – we'll provide an update in the next issue of Within Reach.

Fire Alarm

Some users have been inconvenienced in the last month by false fire alarms. The company servicing the system thinks that a faulty battery might have been the problem. That has been replaced and so far, so good – no more false alarms. If you do experience a problem there is an updated list of contacts in the hall's entrance lobby.

Yard Tidy.
Weather permitting, committee members will be meeting at the hall at 6pm on Friday 25th April to tidy up the back yard, driveway and front garden so that they are looking good for Reach Fair. Any volunteers are welcome to join us.

88% of England's 10,000 village halls are run by volunteers and Reach is no exception. As a reminder, your village hall's committee members are:

- David Thomas (Chair)
- Andrew Trump (Treasurer)
- Diana Greer (Bookings Manager)
- Tony Fordham (Fire Officer)
- Rebecca Fordham (Secretary)
- Paul Greer
- Rowan Foster-Marian
  (Parish Council representative)

David Thomas

Bottisham and Burwell Photographic Club



This has been a very busy period for our club, we have taken part in many external competitions during February and March.

The club entered the East Anglian Photographic Society PDI Competition held at Fulbourn on the 16th February. Out of 23 clubs, we came a respectable 12th and in the St Ives Inter-Print Competition, held in St Ives Free Church, we came 16th out of 21 clubs - not so good that time.

The East Anglian Print Competition was held on 16th March in which we came 9th out of an entry of 17 clubs.

The last external competition will be the A45 Competition held in Bury St Edmunds on 3rd April in which we enter 5 digital images along with 10 other clubs in the East Anglian area.

Our club members are now entering their prints and digital images to be judged for exhibiting at the East Anglian Photographic Society Annual Exhibition, which this year will be held at The Apex in Bury St Edmunds from 3rd to 18th May 2025. Entry is free and there is parking nearby. Our meetings continue a s follows:

1 April Annual General Meeting
Followed by a presentation of award-winning images from previous competitions.

8 April The Hanson Trophy PDI Competition
Judge: Alison Jenkins, Ware

15 April Zoom presentation by Polina Plotnikova
"Starting from a Blank Canvas" - a completely different approach to flower photography.

29 April The Roger Human Print Trophy
Judge: Naomi Saul, Shillington

6 May 15 Minutes of Fame
Members will talk about their most successful images of the season.

9 June Club Outing to The Black Country Museum, Dudley, West Midlands
Close for Summer Break.

Meetings are held Tuesday evening from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm at Swaffham Prior Village Hall, High Street, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0LD (except the third Tuesday in the month which is an online 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.

A copy of our programme for the rest of our season can be obtained from our Secretary, Debra Bennett, at secretary.bandbpc@gmail.com.

Daphne Hanson DPAGB HonPAGB
Chairman

Reach Riders



Reach Riders Group and Friends - let's enjoy a meal and a drink together - and a Raffle!

7.00 for 7.30pm
Thursday 10th April 2025
Dykes End Pub, Reach CB25 0JD

Menu: Choice of Pie (see below) and a Drink
Beef and Ale; Chicken and Leek; Turkey and Vegetable or Mushroom and Chestnut (V).
All served with crushed peas, mashed potato and gravy

Tickets: £15.50 includes a Drink
Tickets to be purchased in advance of the evening

Contact Helen Oliver before April 1 to book a ticket and give your Menu Choice
07763 201786 or helenoliver01@btinternet.com

Rosanna's Ramblings



We've just had a few days of gorgeous warm (possibly over-warm for the time of year) sunny weather and now it's back to being cold with a bitter wind. Every year I observe this "Is it Spring? Yes? No? Yes? No … not yet! Or maybe it is …" thing that happens.

My acupuncture practice fills up in late February with people whose reserves have just about run out and they have had ENOUGH of the winter and need a boost. And now, with the light levels rapidly picking up, with snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils all in weird flower togetherness, the blackthorn blossom out and bees on the move … well, spring really is here, almost, until maybe it's not.



That stop-start, bad-good vibe feels very strong to me at the moment. I'm not doing too well, to be honest, coping with the world right now. I deliberately restrict my exposure to the news but even with that sensible precaution, I'm painfully aware that we are living through extremely unsettling times. I worry daily, hourly. I grieve regularly. I fear silently. And … and … I celebrate all the time how lucky I am to live, for now, in a peaceful country and among a community that values friendship, kindness and togetherness.

And to have such easy, joyful access, literally, from the back door to the natural world and to the countryside, even to the mud that is currently in that sweet spot between treacherous slime and unforgiving concrete. As I walked Milo before 7am this morning, the churned up mud at the corner of the wood had a pleasantly tacky yield which made it feel positively pleasant to step on. One has to seize the moment and be grateful!

Milo, of course, makes me grateful all the time. I've been walking him a lot, in my 2025 kilometres in 2025 quest (total after 10 weeks, a pleasing 424.5 km which will take me over my goal if I keep this pace up).

And I'm delighted to report that this hound is not bothered one bit about the state of the world, about politics and war and tariffs and genocides.



He sniffs and lopes and rolls and worries really only when he's responded to my call and I somehow have failed to produce a treat from my pocket. It's a hugely helpful antidote to human mitherings.

I remember feeling something similar during the first lockdown – five years ago, extraordinary! It was the birds just getting on with their normal springtime activity that struck me. They were pairing up, scouting out nest sites, flying around with twigs in their beaks. They lived in a quite different world from the one we had, full of anxiety and uncertainty. And the same is true now. We have seen a pair of little egrets, all gawky and gangly, perching up in some of our trees like a young couple being shown property by an eager estate agent. You can almost imagine them saying, in an egrety way, "Well, it's not very tall but I think, if we balanced that branch over there, we could manage to fit in a nest. Nice view, at least." But then Milo spots them and rushes down the garden with his tail out stiff behind him, barking like the fierce and outraged dog he fools no-one into believing. And off fly the egrets, saying "Well, thank goodness we found out about those awful neighbours before it was too late!".



And talking of egrets, I saw something very strange indeed in the Pocket Park last week. It was dusk and Milo was sploshing around in the flooded grass. I could just make out, minus my distance glasses, three upright white figures at the very far end of the meadow. Birds, clearly, two taller ones, one squat one, arranged in a triangular pattern several metres apart. I was puzzled, Milo was unaware because they were quite still and we walked towards them slowly. Suddenly the smaller bird took to the air and swung round not far from me.

It was a silent barn owl. I distinctly saw its flat face. The other two, on closer inspection, were clearly egrets and as we approached, they too took off at first all ungainly flapping, and then smoothly heading across the river. I was quite mystified. What on earth did two egrets and one barn owl have to talk about or meet up for? What was the nature of the solemn, still, gathering I seem to have witnessed?

I told Charles what I'd seen and he said "Oh, they probably exist in separate universes. They may not even have been aware of each other". I wondered how he might have come to such a conclusion. Had he some shamanic animal-spirit experience to draw upon? I didn't quite think so, but then you never know, ten years together hasn't been long enough for new insights into each other to be impossible.

But this morning, as news comes that the USA and Ukraine have agreed on a ceasefire proposal to put to Putin in a few days, it makes me think anew about those different universes humans can occupy. Because ceasefires mean such different things to the different sides. And it takes higher human consciousness to have the bigness to see things from both, or all, sides. And that's not what global capitalism, imperialism and profit like to do. So, it's hard not to feel hopeless and cynical.

Back to the contemplation of animals, then, in the quest for staying sane and reasonably contented. I watched a solitary Canada Goose on Reach Lode yesterday from the bridge, honking an unanswered call out to others of his/her kind and I longed for a companion to turn up to ease that loneliness. I watched two long-tailed tits in the dormant Albertine rose just outside the kitchen window this morning and sent up a message of thanks for that gift. I smiled to myself last night listening to two tawny owls' call and response in the darkness. I appreciated the Moon and Jupiter and clearly red Mars high above. Poor earth, so tiny, so huge, so beautiful, so damaged. But whatever disasters we humans create, the animals and plants will survive and evolve.

Good for them.

Rosanna Moseley-Gore

Burwell Belles Women's Institute

We've had a busy and exciting start to the year!

Our first meeting saw us voting on the national WI's 2025 resolutions. This year's options were:

- Let's Talk About Incontinence
- Bystanders Can Be Lifesavers
- Join the Repair Revolution
- Eliminate Landfill of Medication Packaging

Did you know 14 million people in the UK struggle with bladder issues, yet it remains a taboo topic? It's time to break the silence and support those in need.

Burwell is already ahead on the other resolutions, with defibrillators, repair cafes and swishing events thriving in our community. Plus, we're excited to announce a new blister pack recycling initiative launching on 1st March. In partnership with Burwell Parish Council Climate Change Forum, Burwell WI will be placing blister pack recycling boxes in several locations around Burwell village. The locations are Burwell Library, Parish Council Reading Room and Burwell Day Centre. Drop off your empty blister packs (these can't go in blue bins!) and help us reduce waste. A WI member will be collecting the blister packs and taking them to Superdrug in Newmarket for recycling.

Our January meeting also featured a heartwarming tribute to the late Joan White with a 'Best Victoria Sponge' competition using her cherished recipe. With 15 delicious entries, Joan's daughters joined us to judge, and Jean Gawlinski-Reeves took home the prize – an engraved glass cake stand.



We always welcome fantastic speakers and we're looking forward to working on our strength and balance with Isabel Dodds de Jesus from Body-Strong in March. Our June open meeting will feature Alan Gray, a Wimbledon umpire from 1988-2012, with his talk, "You Cannot Be Serious!". This event is open to everyone – non-members and men included – so bring a friend and join the fun. It is £5 for non members which includes on this occasion strawberries and cream, afternoon tea with scones and homemade jam .

The Burwell WI meet on the very last Thursday of every month at the Gardiner Memorial Hall , High Street, Burwell starting at 7.30pm .If you would like to contact us please do so via alisondodds@hotmail.co.uk

Here's to a brilliant 2025 with the Burwell Belles!

Nature in Reach



The most significant reports of the winter months relate to the presence of a pair of common cranes on Tubney Fen and in the fields to the north of the cycle bridge. There have been occasional sightings of cranes in our neighbourhood for several years now and a pair has nested at Wicken Fen since 2019. However, the frequency and regularity of local reports by residents over the last couple of months suggests that something interesting might be afoot.



A local pair of cranes - courtesy of Ellis Selway

Although the common crane is a native species, hunting and drainage of wetlands ended its breeding presence here, probably in the 16th century. However, it is now making a comeback thanks to reintroductions and habitat restoration programmes such as those being undertaken on Tubney and Burwell Fens. There are now more than 80 pairs of cranes in the UK, forming a self-sustaining population. A similar number fly in from the continent to overwinter here.

The common crane is very distinctive as the photo shows. It is the UK's tallest bird and its evocative, mournful cry carries long distances and is hard to mistake. It is unclear if all the local reports relate to the same pair of birds. Cranes can be identified by individual feather patterns and re-introduced birds are ringed but nobody has got close enough to our birds to secure this information.

The current view is that the cranes are detaching from one of the established winter groups on the Ouse or Nene Washes or at Lakenheath Fen.

In terms of other sightings:

14 January: a pair of very noisy Egyptian geese land in the small lode-side field at Hurdle Hall.

20 January: a blackcap sings from the scrub on the Hythe. Although primarily a summer visitor from the continent, this report demonstrates that blackcaps are increasingly spending the winter in the UK.

5 February: Claire Acklam watches a barn owl hunting over the fields of Hurdle Hall for the entirety of her walk along Reach lode bank. At the cycle bridge, twitchers draw her attention to a short-eared owl hunting over the 'wet' pasture between the lode and Straight Drove. Claire notes the contrast in wing shapes between the two species but also the similarities in flight and hunting behaviour.

9 February: 100 or more wigeon take flight from the newly created pond on Tubney Fen. Black headed gulls and greylag geese are also present.

14 February: we finally solve the mystery of periodic 'avalanches' of moss from our roof, catching jackdaws pulling the moss free to feed on grubs that lie underneath.

15 February: two barn owls are hunting in daylight and in close proximity, one on each side of Little Fen Drove.

19 February: large bird numbers cluster around the new pond on Tubney Fen. Wigeon are now numbering several hundred and there are also smaller flocks of starling 'murmurating' on the fringes.

23 February: a solitary Chinese Water deer runs across Tubney Fen. Song thrushes are singing, seemingly competitively, from taller shrubs along Straight Drove.

25 February and 11 March: two barn owls are hunting over the pasture at Hurdle Hall. I surmise they are a pair - certainly they are remarkably close together and show how much variation there is in barn owl plumage. One is very pale, almost white, the other grey. Rosie Almond also remarks on the visible presence of barn owls to the north of the village, as does Jonathan Latchford.

A yellowhammer gives away its presence in an elder shrub on Hurdle Hall through its chinking call.

26 February: on supposedly the best night to view the 'Planetary Parade', I spot Venus, Jupiter and Mars in the sky above Reach. I am unable to see Mercury, Saturn (probably because by the time I am outside they are too low on the western horizon) and Neptune and Uranus (probably because they are invisible to the naked eye).

4 March: a brimstone butterfly flies along the track to Reach Wood and a peacock butterfly suns itself on a south facing wall in our garden - both are exploiting the warm midday weather. Penny Greenhill reports seeing brimstones during the same warm spell.

Jonathan Latchford sees a kingfisher with a fish in its beak perched by the catchwater at the bottom of his garden. He also witnesses a pair of sparrowhawks calling as they fly across his garden and hears a water vole plop into the catchwater before watching it swim off downstream.

5 March: 20 goldfinch and a solitary blue tit gather in the late afternoon sunshine at the top of the lime tree in our garden.

8 March: two peacocks and a peahen emerge from the hedge by Highbridge Farm (Swaffham Prior).

9 March: Spring seems, briefly, to be in the air. Green woodpeckers are yaffling on Straight Drove, a great spotted woodpecker is drumming from somewhere close to Reach Wood and rooks are active, building nests in the large ash trees on the Hythe. I watch one rook labouring in flight to bring in a very large twig - bigger than the bird itself. This rookery seems to be a new development. Penny Greenhill remarks that, given the noise, it seems especially appropriate that a group of rooks is called a parliament.

13 March: Rosie Almond spots a great spotted woodpecker on a telegraph pole by Swan Lake barns.

On 12 February the RSPB and Cambridge University published a study that concluded that land underlying solar farm panels can make an important contribution to biodiversity. However, the study was focused on birdlife and emphasised that the underlying land has to be managed actively and sensitively and that areas of solar panels need to form part of a mixed landscape containing hedges and woodland. There are questions about whether the solar farms on Burwell Fen meet these criteria.

Nick Acklam
acklam@reach-village.co.uk



Hedge Laying on the 24Acres

On Sunday 2 February 2025, seven villagers joined a team of ten from Cambridge Conservation Volunteers (CCV) to lay part of the hedge on the southern boundary of the 24Acres. The hedge sits on land leased by the Parish Council from the National Trust. The hedge laying was organised by the Parish Council.

The hedge, formed of native species, mainly hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, dogwood and dog rose, was planted by villagers about a decade ago. It has developed well, so much so that it was beginning to intrude on the cricket pitch and the neighbouring byway. It could have been flailed or mechanically cut back but the PC opted for a more traditional approach because it will create a denser and more biodiverse hedge that is better to look at.

The day in question was dry and bright and the team achieved its target of laying 50 metres of hedge, about a third of its total length. The CCV experts had noted beforehand that the hedge was in ideal condition for laying and were pleased with the results, as were we.



The villagers involved in the task were able to learn how to use a billhook and bowsaw to manipulate the shrubs of the hedge into place without killing them. This will stand us in good stead when we come to lay the remainder of the hedge and then to maintain it. On this occasion we used imported hazel stakes and willow binders to give the hedge a robust structure but in the future we hope to use hazel coppiced from Reach Wood.

We will be laying the remainder of the 24Acres hedge in 2026 and 2027 and will need to re-lay the whole hedge in a decade's time. So, whilst the nature of hedge laying limits the number of people that can be actively involved, the PC would welcome hearing from other villagers who would like to learn a new skill and want to have a go in the future.

Nick Acklam
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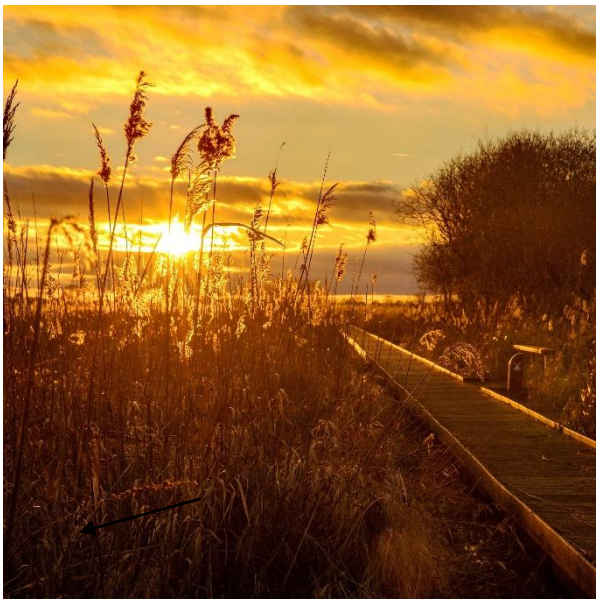
Wicken Fen



Courtesy of National Trust - Mike Selby

We've been enjoying some stunning sunrises and sunsets over the winter here at the Fen. If you can visit either early morning or when the light is fading, you'll often be rewarded not only with beautiful skies, but building birdsong and if you're lucky, occasional drumming woodpeckers. The days are getting longer now, so look out for signs of spring when you next visit. Our **Mucky Pups** sessions for pre-school children continue on 25th April. Plenty of outdoor adventures including seasonal nature activities, crafts and stories. Details are on our website.

You can join a member of the Ranger Team for a gentle stroll on the boardwalk on Tuesday 8th April. Over the Easter Holidays, we have lots of family events available:

Family craft workshop – mixed media moths is a brand-new workshop for children and adults on 9th and 15th April. Delve into the watery world of Wicken Fen and find out what is living beneath the surface in one of our popular **pond dipping** sessions running on 14th and 17th April. On Wednesday 16th April, local mixed media artist Judith Handley will be leading a **lino printing workshop** (age 12+). Not to mention our **Easter egg hunt**, which runs daily from 5th – 21st April.

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

Ajay Tegala

Anglesey Abbey



Courtesy of National Trust – Mike Selby

Get ready for a baa-rilliant Easter!

How far can you throw the farmer's welly boot and can you carry your sheep to safety through the mini obstacle course? Come and complete all 10 sheep-themed activities on the Easter Adventures trail at Anglesey Abbey from 5 to 21 April and collect a chocolate reward at the end! The trail costs £3.50 (normal admission applies) and includes an Easter egg, bunny ears and a trail sheet. Don't forget you can also see Wild in Art's Shaun the Sheep sculptures until 27 April.



Courtesy of National Trust – Mike Selby

Shaun the Sheep has been un-baa-lievably popular at Anglesey Abbey and we've been blown away by everyone's support. Thank you to everyone who has visited and shared their photos with us! Please be aware that if you are planning to visit Anglesey Abbey at the weekends while Shaun the Sheep is in residence, it is likely to be extremely busy and the car parks are reaching capacity at times. To avoid long queues on entry, you may want to consider arriving before 11am, or after 13.30pm. We'd also encourage all those who can visit during the week to come and enjoy a quieter weekday visit. Thank you for your patience and understanding. We hope you have a baa-rilliant day out!

Spring highlights in the gardens

If you are visiting this spring, be sure to visit the Formal Garden, planted in uniform rows of 'Blue Star' and 'Carnegie' hyacinths, offer a striking blue and white display during the months of April into May. Look out for the 'Little Beauty' tulips underneath the silver birch trees in April and enjoy swathes of daffodils around the grounds. The Winter Garden, Monks Lawn and Spring Garden are good spots to see daffodils and visitors can also see hundreds of Narcissus 'Dutch Master' recently planted by the caryatid statues on Coronation Avenue.

Head to our website for more information: nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey

Issy Vetoshkina
Senior Communications and Marketing Officer

Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group

Health and Wellbeing Coaching

At January's PPG meeting our guest speaker was one of three Health and Wellbeing Coaches who work across a number of surgeries, including Burwell. Health and wellbeing coaches are non-clinical team members who help patients make lasting lifestyle changes. The PPG thought it would be helpful to share some more information about this really valuable service.

Who is it for?

Health and wellbeing coaching is FREE for any eligible patient over 18 years old who is registered at the Surgery.

Why do people need a Health and Wellbeing Coach?

Change is tough. People know they should eat well, exercise, sleep better and manage stress, but obstacles - whether practical or mental - get in the way. Coaching helps identify these barriers and find ways to overcome them.

What kind of things might a Health and Wellbeing Coach help with?

The sorts of things people often talk about include:

- lifestyle changes they would like to make – e.g. losing weight, getting more active, improving sleep
- managing physical and mental health conditions which affect wellbeing, e.g. diabetes, high blood pressure, chronic pain, ME, anxiety and depression amongst others
- balancing competing demands of life
- managing stress and developing positive coping strategies.

When and where does it happen?

Coaching is done on the telephone, virtually (via a video platform), or in-person at the surgery (Wednesdays). It normally involves 6 sessions of up to 45 minutes, but it's flexible - some people need more sessions and other people might need fewer sessions.

What happens during a coaching session?

Coaches ask questions, listen and help create a plan to reach a patient's goals. Each session ends with small action steps chosen by the patient. Instead of giving instructions, coaches offer support, highlight strengths, and guide patients to helpful resources.

How do I get referred?

If your GP, one of the nurses or the pharmacy team think you would benefit from this service they may recommend a referral. In addition to speaking to the Surgery about this service directly, you can also do a self-referral to the FREE Healthy Lifestyles Service run by Healthy You across Cambridgeshire at https://healthyyou.org.uk (click on Healthy Lifestyles to find out more and then Self-Referral).

Next PPG meeting – all welcome – why not join us online if you can't make it in person!

The next two meetings of the PPG will be at 6.30pm on Tuesday 15th April and Tuesday 15th July at Burwell Day Centre – all welcome. If you would like to attend the PPG for the first time, or if you can't attend in person but can join via Microsoft Teams, then please contact cpicb.burwellsurgery.admin@nhs.net

Mobile Library

The mobile library 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

Able Community Care

Able Community Care is a Norfolk, family owned, Home Care provider which was established in 1980. We are often asked by our clients, carers and members of the public, questions across a wide range of care issues. Care information is often time-consuming and difficult to access, so we are happy to share some of our questions and answers with you.

Question - I was told that the WaterSure Scheme might be of interest to me, but the details were sketchy, what is WaterSure?

Answer - WaterSure is a scheme which helps some people with their water bills. To apply for the scheme, you must be on benefits and need to use a lot of water either for medical reasons or because your household has a certain number of school-age children. You also need to be on a water meter or be waiting to have one installed.

If you get help through the WaterSure scheme, your water bill will be capped. This means you will not pay any more than the average metered bill for the area your water company deals with. For further information contact your local Water supplier, details will be on your annual bill.

Question 2 - Can I make a complaint about a local NHS service, to Healthwatch?

Answer - Yes, you can complain to your local Healthwatch if you are unhappy with the service you received from, for example, GP's, hospitals, dentists, chemists, care homes, care support services, etc. Healthwatch is an independent body that helps people raise concerns about NHS services, it can provide guidance and support in making a complaint against a service. There are 151 Healthwatch organisations throughout the UK. To find your local one, just Google Healthwatch and your County.

Ed: I'm delighted to say that as well as providing these helpful Questions & Answers, Able have agreed to advertise in our magazine, you'll see their advert on page 8 of the adverts section.

Defibrillator Training



Reach's defibrillator (currently at the Village Hall) has recently been serviced so is fully operational and registered on The Circuit, the British Heart Foundations national defibrillator website. The Parish Council are in the process of acquiring the village telephone box from BT and the plan is to relocate the defibrillator into that once the transfer has taken place. Many phone boxes country–wide are being re-purposed to house defibrillators, making the new location an obvious one as well as making it more visible, accessible and more easily found in case of emergency.

Over the last month James Loftus, a village resident who has over 16 years experience in first aid, training and resuscitation, has kindly volunteered to help the Parish Council with the management and maintenance of the village defibrillator. Over 2 sessions he has trained 15 villagers in the use of it and plans to hold another session for any residents who couldn't attend either of these sessions but would still like to train. By all accounts James is a very good trainer and participants rated the sessions highly.

I already have names of five people who would like to attend a future session, but if you are interested and haven't already contacted me, please let me know and I will add you to the list.

The village hall has been booked for **Wednesday 30th April 6.30 – 8.30pm** and there are approximately 7 spaces available at time of going to print. For those that are happy to be named, a laminated list of contacts and phone numbers will be kept in the defibrillator box for emergency use. Please let me know if you would like to attend the session c.gibson@reachparishcouncil.org.

Catherine Gibson

Burwell Museum



We have been busy at the Museum over the last couple of months but are welcoming the lovely sunny dry days that Spring has brought! Thank you to all those who made contact with us or came along to our Recruitment day on the 1st March – you can still volunteer if you missed this date - we urgently need a volunteer to do rope access work on the Mill if anyone can help us with this.

Our winter maintenance works for the Barn and toilet block are complete and our Mill team are almost finished with the replacement of the bearing beams, with the repairs to the sail panels next to be done so they can be reinstated. The observatory has taken a leap forward too with the fibreglass to the dome now complete with the next step to replace the rollers and connect with the base, moving closer to being operational.

In February we were lucky enough to receive the Old Bakers Shop from Swaffham Prior which has been donated by Colin Lowe. This is currently being installed in our Past & Present Gallery – there is such a lot of detail and objects that have come from his collection for you to see.

We also welcomed 2 school visits, with 2 more planned for March / April and one in May. One of the schools is coming all the way from Peterborough and bringing 60 children! We have also held a talk in Cambridge and have a group booking from a care home for a non-open day in July – if you want to visit during the week, we will try and accommodate you so just get in touch.

Our **BIG NEWS** is that we have been successful in securing a Net Zero Villages Grant from East Cambridgeshire District Council which allows us to install solar panels and battery storage, enabling us to generate, store and use our own electricity. We anticipate that this will reduce our electricity costs by about 70%. A press release about this will be issued shortly by ECDC. We hope to have the solar installed before we open in April.

As part of our grant, we will be installing a small Demonstration Wind Turbine and setting up a Renewable Energy and Climate Change Education Hub. We aim to educate our visitors on this important issue, and to explain using the windmill how wind power has been harnessed for hundreds of years. We will with our Solar Array also demonstrate how we are harnessing the power of the sun to provide us with our electricity.
Our plans for this Hub are in the very early stages with some of our new volunteers, brainstorming on what this should look like and will be installed over the next few months. We also hope that this will become an important destination for the many schools in our area as part of their curriculum for Climate Change and Renewable Energy.

We have also been successful in securing two other grants – one from the Reach Community Solar Fund to help with consultant's fees relating to future works needed on the Mill, and a Collections Care Grant from Museums Development South East to review our Collections environment.

A full list of our programme of events can be found on our website, but below are the ones coming up over the next few months for your calendar:

Easter Sunday – 20th April
Including Easter Egg Hunt for the Children*
Pre-booking available on our website.
VE Day – 4th May
National Mills – 10th/11th May
Made in the Fens – 21st June

You can enjoy free entry* to all of these by buying a season ticket, the price of which is staying the same for 2025:

Single	**£20**
Joint	**£30**
Family	**£40** (2 adults and up to 4 children)

* cost of the Easter Egg Hunt is £2.00 per child

This year we are also offering you the chance to buy **Lifetime Membership** at a cost of **£250**.

As a member, you will be supporting the work of the Museum, making sure that the history of life in the Fens is there for future generations to enjoy.

We are doing a couple of other events outside of the Museum – you will find us at the Burwell Farmer's Market in April and at Reach Fair on the 5th May. Come and see us to buy your Season Ticket, as well as other goodies that we will have with us.

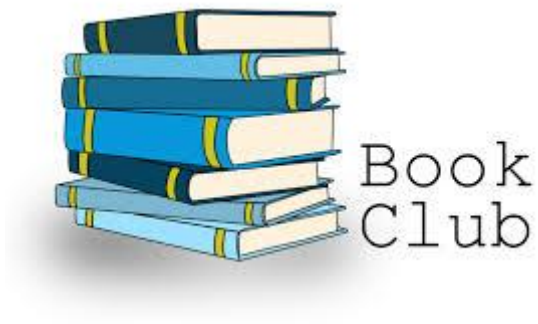
As you know, the Museum is run entirely by volunteers and is completely reliant on visitor admissions, grants, donations and legacies to remain open, but it was also pointed out to me last week that we also need tools and maintenance items. We can't accept any electrical equipment, but we can take old tools or equipment, screws (imperial/metric), wood, metal, etc that may be lying in your shed/garage needing a new home. This is sometimes just as valuable as the money! So, if you think you might have any 'stuff' that could be useful to us sitting in your shed/garage, please get in touch. The team might even be able to help you move it!

We look forward to seeing at one of our pre-season events or on Easter Sunday!

Burwell Museum Trustees



Dyke's End Book Club



Calling all bookworms! Join our new Dyke's End Book Club.

Are you looking for a new way to connect with fellow book lovers and meet new people? We're excited to announce the launch of the Dyke's End Book Club, a new book club in Reach open to anyone who enjoys reading.

Here's where you need to know . . . .

Meeting date and time: **Thursday, 10 April 2025 at 7pm**
Location: **Dyke's End Pub in Reach**

How to join: Simply turn up!

If you have any questions prior please do not hesitate to **contact me on 07897672329 or email me at aeariss123@hotmail.co.uk**

During this first meeting we will decide on the book to read and how often we want to meet, we are aiming for 1 book every two months and potentially meet once a month/every 2 months.

As mentioned the purpose of the book club is to meet new people and connect with fellow book lovers. I understand we all have busy lives so there is no pressure to attend all meetings and complete a book every 2 months, but please be aware that some spoilers may be discussed during the meetings.

The Dyke's End serve pies on a Thursday from 6:00-8:30pm so feel free to enjoy a meal either before, during, or after our meetings.

Let's share our love of reading together.

Ally Eariss

PS Please feel free to spread the word to anyone who might be interested.

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11 am - 12pm Beginners T'ai Chi Health (£3.50)

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

Thursday: Paradise Sports Centre Ely
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Best wishes
Kate Bowman
Care Manager for Cambridgeshire

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Care Manager for Cambridgeshire

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Reach Fair 2025



From Alex . . . .

It's that time of year again when I'm tasked with filling the rotas for Reach Fair. We have lots of the usual lovely slots available in the car park, road closures, tea tent, salad stall, bottle stall – and we have some slots that are before or after the fair if that works best for you! As before, I've set up a fancy online sign-up sheet: https://volunteersignup.org/BHWPP which shows the spots we have still to fill, or you can just email me at a.degiorgiomiller@gmail.com and I can add you that way!

And the **Reach Fair website is now up to date** so if you go to https://www.reachfair.org.uk/index.html you can see what it's all about in 2025!

If you are able to put up a **2025 Reach Fair poster** at your place of work, child's school or if you visit any of the locations listed below and are able to see whether any shops etc. might be willing to put up a poster, please do contact me - **Susan Hatley** susanhatley@hotmail.com.

Location Groups

1. Fen Ditton, Horningsea, Waterbeach
2. Abington, Linton, Six Mile Bottom, West Wratting
3. Soham
4. Chipenham, Exning, Snailwell
5. Cambridge Science Park
6. Dullingham, Stetchworth, Woodditton

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue

CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Working together to improve community safety

More than half the fires our crews attend in the home start in the kitchen. Below are some simple safety tips to help you stay safe:

- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of their reach.
- Take care if you're wearing loose clothing – this can easily catch fire.
- Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob.
- Double check the cooker is off when you've finished cooking.
- Take care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down.
- Make sure saucepan handles don't stick out.
- Keep electrics (leads and appliances) away from water.
- Check toasters are clean and placed away from curtains and kitchen rolls.
- Keep the oven, hob and grill clean, a build-up of fat and grease can ignite a fire.

Don't let a garden spring clean lead to fire

Staying safe outside is just as important as keeping your family safe from fire in your home. As the Springtime weather (hopefully) begins to arrive, many will take the opportunity to get out in the garden and give it a tidy.

There are a few simple things to do which will help reduce the risk of having a fire:

- Dispose of garden waste using either a local waste pick up service, or take it to a local recycling centre. Do not light a bonfire!
- Ensure cigarettes are completely out
- Do not leave glass bottles lying on the ground – the sun's rays can start a fire

If you are planning to have a BBQ:

- Use barbeques on a hard, flat surface away from grass, shrubs or fencing
- Put disposable barbeques on bricks, do not place directly on grass

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue

Purple Poppies



International War Animal Day (IWAD) on 24th February was established in 2024 to honour the contribution and sacrifice made by millions of animals during wars and conflict.

At 11am animal and service organisations throughout six countries, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, France, Canada and America gathered together to seek overdue recognition for the part animals played and continue to, alongside soldiers in conflict. Flags are flown, purple poppy wreaths are laid, candles are lit and words are said. The purple poppy is the symbol recognised as a tribute to animals in war.

Over 16 million animals served in the First World War alone, they were used for transport, communication and companionship. Horses, donkeys, mules and camels carried food, water, ammunition, medical supplies to soldiers at the front, dogs and pigeons carried messages, canaries detected poisonous gas, cats and dogs hunted rats in the trenches.



In the Eastern region this year members of the Donkey Breed Society, a charity I work closely with, gathered together in Central Park, Peterborough to commemorate IWAD. We took donkeys and met at the impressive Jimmy's Grave memorial.



Jimmy, the donkey foal, was born in the trenches during the Battle of the Somme in 1916, his mother carried supplies from the rear to the frontline. Soldiers of the 1st Scottish Rifles reared him when his mother was fatally injured and he became their mascot. Despite being wounded 7 times, he was demobbed in 1919 and travelled to the UK to be sold at auction. He was bought by the Peterborough branch secretary of the RSPCA and as a best loved mascot, went on to raise funds for the RSPCA. He died aged 26 years and the above memorial stone was laid.

WAR HORSE MEMORIAL
STRENGTH IN ADVERSITY

Joss Goodchild

Letter from the Vicarage



I had a conversation once about which was the more important Christian festival – Christmas or Easter and we concluded that it was a difficult question! Easter is probably associated in most people's minds with eggs, chicks, bunnies and lots of chocolate and it's wonderful to be able to celebrate together. For Christians, that joy comes because of what happened on the dark and terrible Friday when Jesus died. The good news of Easter is that out of death comes new life; when everything seems hopeless and all is lost, new hope can come. That is what we remember, year by year in the Church's calendar: the terrible events of Good Friday and Jesus' death, the desolation of Easter Saturday and the glorious, wonderful joy of Jesus' resurrection on Easter morning. If you'd like to find out more about what Easter could mean for you, why not come along to any of our services or groups.

Easter is very late this year, at the end of the school holidays. Refresh Café is at St Mary's each Friday morning from 10.00am during the holidays - a welcoming café and play space for babies, pre-school children and their grown-ups, ending with a simple lunch. All welcome in school holidays. Our new Connect Café at St Mary's, will be on Wednesday 9th April 3.30 – 5.00pm – a connecting space for families, with games and activities for all ages. During Holy Week, we will have a mid-week service in Reach on Wednesday 16th April at 10.30am. For families, Messy Church will be meeting at St Mary's on Good Friday 18th April at 10.30am, exploring Easter together, including games and crafts, outdoor trails, hot cross buns and egg hunt. Later in the day, there is an opportunity for quiet reflection at the Hour at the Cross service in Reach at 2.00pm. On Easter Day we will be celebrating early at 6.30am on Burwell Castle Mound, for the Churches Together service, then at 8.30am in Reach and 10.00am in St Mary's.

We are very pleased to be hosting the Knitted Bible exhibition In St Mary's again, from early April, with many scenes from the Bible depicted with knitted figures and scenery. For updates, please see our Facebook pages and website. If you're new to church, a good place to start is our Café Church which is usually the first Sunday of the month. We begin with pastries and drinks, time to chat and themed activities, followed by a short service. Next dates are 6th April and 4th May. Please get in touch if you would like more information about these or any of our events or services, including weddings, christenings and baby thanksgivings, or if you would like would value an opportunity to chat.

If you find yourselves struggling to make ends meet, Pop-Up Pantry is at Burwell Day Centre on Fridays 2.00 – 3.00pm, moving to Thursday 17th April in Holy Week.







Palm Sunday 13th April

10.00am Holy Communion at St Mary's, Burwell

Holy Week 14th - 19th April

Mon, Tues, Weds 14th - 16th April

6.00pm Night Prayer at St Mary's

Tuesday 15th April

5.00pm (approx.) Pilgrim Cross visit at St Mary's

Wednesday 16th April

10.30am Holy Communion at St Etheldreda's, Reach

Maundy Thursday 17th April

7.30pm Holy Communion at St Mary's

Good Friday 18th April

10.30am Messy Easter at St Mary's for families of all ages

11.00am Churches Together Walk of Witness from North St Co-op

2.00pm Reflective Service at St Etheldreda's, Reach

Easter Sunday
20th April

6.30am Churches Together Sunrise Service on Castle Mound followed by breakfast

8.30am Holy Communion at St Etheldreda's, Reach

10.00am Easter Celebration Holy Communion at St Mary's

Eleanor Williams Vicar of Burwell with Reach
01638 741262 vicar@stmarysburwell.org.uk
www.stmarysburwell.org.uk
https://www.facebook.com/stmarysburwell/

Reach Community Solar Farm

REACH
community solar farm

Grants

As a Community Benefit Society, Reach Community Solar Farm is able to offer small grants every year to organisations with a community focus.

The beneficiaries of these grants are decided upon by our members at our AGM, which usually takes place in June. We are therefore inviting organisations with a community focus to apply for one of this year's grants.

There is an application form on our website:

https://reachsolarfarm.co.uk/docs/RCSF-Grant-Fund-Application-Form.docx and forms need to be received to info@reachsolarfarm.co.uk by 31st May.

We look forward to hearing from you

The Board

Reach Community Solar Farm.

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.

Tales from a Reach Garden



The recent warm and sunny weather has been very welcome after the rain and gloom of winter – and much of 2024. The snowdrops had their show in January and February, but now other spring bulbs, such as daffodils and hyacinths, are flowering in this bright spring sunshine. Although this sunshine isn't likely to last, it has certainly lifted my spirits and Richard's too.



Hyacinth blooming amid the snowdrops and sage

Most of the winter pruning has been done and Richard is repairing some of the raised vegetable beds as most of them are empty, it's best to do the job before they're planted up. It would certainly be easier (for Richard at least) if we got rid of the bed system, but there are several reasons why we persist. The main reason is that our vegetable plot is on a north-facing slope, so by creating raised beds we have levelled the ground in the beds where we are growing vegetables.

Another important reason is that chalk bedrock starts just 20cm below ground level in some parts of the plot – this isn't nearly enough soil for root vegetables like potatoes and carrots, so the extra 30 to 40cm of soil and compost above that helps. Another reason is that it's useful to keep track of what has been planted where, so that we know which beds to manure and which to leave. Onion sets tend to rot when planted in freshly manured beds so those beds are left alone. However, lots of fresh compost is fine if growing onions from seed, which is also great for leeks and spring onions which are grown from seed.

There are some beds which are in full sunshine and other beds which lie in shade for part of the day. Two of the beds contain permanent crops of rhubarb and asparagus, both of which can cope with some shade. In fact, rhubarb thrives in the shade and is grown commercially in dark forcing sheds because those conditions produce the long, pink stems of rhubarb seen in supermarkets and greengrocers. Crops such as spinach and peas also cope with some shade – in fact, our pea crop did very well in the cool, damp and gloomy conditions of last year, but struggled in the previous very hot summers.

Last year's damp and gloomy conditions were perfect for snails and slugs which did a lot of damage to our cabbage and kale (and most of the leafy vegetables), but the pesky molluscs left the broccoli plants pretty much nibble-free largely because these were planted out in another bed. We did succeed in harvesting some kale but many leaves were badly damaged and yields were low. Normally we'd be picking some fresh kale and rocket leaves at this time of year but the slugs have eaten all the young leaves. When that happens, you do wonder why you bother with all the effort of growing vegetables, especially brassicas like cabbage and kale which have such a long growing season.

The problems do vary from year to year. In some years, when the slugs are less prevalent, we've had large crops of leafy greens and this brings us to another reason as to why we have a raised bed system: it's so we can "rotate" the crops to avoid a build-up of pests and diseases so we won't be planting cabbages, kale or broccoli in the same bed this year.

The reason why we grow any vegetables at all is because most of them are picked and cooked on the same day, so they have more flavour than a lot of shop-bought produce. When you realise that we also know that there are no pesticide residues to rinse off our vegetables, then the question becomes, well, why wouldn't you grow your own?

Danuta Gibson

Know Your Parish Council

Your Parish Councillors are:

Edward Hall	Chair
Nick Acklam	Councillor
Nathan Bridgeman	Councillor
Hilary Fielding	Councillor
Rowan Foster-Marian	Councillor
Catherine Gibson	Councillor
Tim Quilter	Vice Chair
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor
John Trapp	District Councillor
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor

Meetings normally take place in the **Village Hall** on the first **Tuesday** of each month. They start at **7.30pm** and all Reach villagers are welcome to attend.

The Parish Council now has its own website which you can access at: https://reachparish.gov.uk/.

You can also get to it from the **Reach Village website** on the **Parish Council page**.

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

Know Your District Councillors



Charlotte Cane (also our MP) and John Trapp

Full Council 25 February 2025

In view of the impending Local Government Reorganisation, it was resolved to cease work on the Local Plan (that sets out the development envelopes and planning guidelines for the District) since the new Unitary authority would revise this anyway.

It was decided that the District Council Tax for 2025/26 would be the same as the last twelve years; this was supported by both sides of the chamber. The Lib Dem & Independent group proposed a budget that: increased funding for tourism and the arts to boost the local economy, increased the Council's actions on climate and the environment, used funding from the abandoned Local Plan review to prepare for proper parking enforcement across East Cambridgeshire which is sadly lacking. This budget was defeated.

Later in the meeting, however, when the allocation of CIL money was the agenda item, Conservative councillors voted to block a further amendment from the Liberal Democrat & Independent Group from being debated.

This amendment would have ceased spending on the Conservatives' crematorium at Mepal and used the money to provide for more investment in District-wide community facilities, inclusive play and local facilities, and improve footpaths and cycleways in the District. Many projects, including one of £2.2m for the Staploe Medical Centre to expand at Soham, for which CIL money had been promised were curtailed to pay for the crematorium. The CIL commitment was almost £18m, but there was only less than £12m in the CIL fund, so by keeping £8m for the crematorium only £4m was left for schools, health, play areas etc.

Extraordinary Council 20 March 2025

Approved the update to Witchford Neighbourhood Plan, which significantly strengthened the policies to protect and enhance the Environment.

Agreed the joint letter to the Government, signed by all local Council Leaders. Government required this letter by 21 March to confirm that the local authorities were considering how to create Unitary Authorities to replace the existing Districts and County Councils and Peterborough Unitary authority.

The Government has launched a review of Local Government Authorities with a view to improving efficiency. There is little time for constructive consultation and submission to the Government, but there will be a discussion among ECDC members as to what would be of most benefit to our residents. There is ongoing discussion with the other Local Government Authorities in the county. Parish Councils will remain and may have more voice in local matters.

Which local authorities will merge has still not been fully discussed, let alone decided. Options range from 1 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough wide Unitary through to 3 Unitaries based on Cambridge City and South Cambs; East Cambs and Huntingdon; and Peterborough and Fenland. We would prefer 2 Unitaries based on Cambridge City, South Cambs and East Cambs; and Peterborough, Huntingdon and Fenland.

Sunnica

It is not expected that there will be any formal submission of plans until late 2026. ECDC, CCC and West Suffolk DC will be liaising with each other on this matter. Once the plans have been submitted then there will be eight weeks for the Councils to respond. We shall be engaging with communities affected by the infrastructure, and individuals or groups can submit comments by email to: sunnica@eastcambs.gov.uk

Local Elections

Elections for County Councillors and the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will take place on Thursday 1 May. If you are not going to be able to get to the polling station (Reach Village Hall) on that day, you can apply for a postal or proxy vote.
For postal votes your ballot paper will be sent to you and you will need to return it by 1 May. For proxy votes you appoint a trusted person to cast your vote for you. You can apply for a postal vote at - https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote and must do so by 14 April 2025, but you can apply as soon as you are ready. You can apply for a proxy vote at - https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote and must do so by 23 April 2025.

The next ward surgeries will be at the Bottisham Sports and Social Club, Downing Close, CB25 9DD, from half past six to half past seven on Tuesday 22 April 2025, followed by a social meeting at The Bell in the same village. And Reach Village Hall on Wednesday 21 May from half past six to half past seven.

Charlotte Cane and John Trapp



Reach Cricket Club

The cricket club is gearing up for another season, with a fixture list of Sunday friendlies beginning on 27 April and competitive T20 matches on Wednesday evenings. As ever, we would love to hear from anyone who fancies turning out for a game -- or many games. Our Sunday side is very mixed ability, so don't worry if you haven't played for years -- or not at all.

Do let me know at rossjclark@aol.com



Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 4th February 2025 at 7.30pm

Attendance

Edward Hall	Chair	Present
Tim Quilter	Vice Chair	Not Present
Nick Acklam	Councillor	Present
Nathan Bridgeman	Councillor	Not Present
Hilary Fielding	Councillor	Present
Rowan Foster-Marian	Councillor	Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Not Present
John Trapp	District Councillor	Not Present
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present

Apologies for absence
Received and approved.

Forum for members of the public – There were none.

Declaration of Interests – There were none.

1. Planning Applications
There were none.

2. District Councillor Report
Finance and Assets Committee on 30 January 2025, at this meeting, the following decisions were made:
1. The first draft of the 2025/26 Budget was discussed. The Director Finance recommended that the District Council Tax should increase by £5 (for a Band D property), but the Conservatives' amendment to have no increase in Council Tax was agreed.
2. The Crematorium project has now moved from RIBA stage 3 to RIBA stage 4, after the original design was value-engineered, and the outcome will be brought to Full Council in May.
3. The draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2025-2028 was formally adopted.

The Government has launched a review of Local Government Authorities with a view to improving efficiency. The Leader of the Council is reluctant to have any changes made; it is not clear what is the view of the other Conservatives; the Lib Dems and Independent are aware that changes will have to be made, and their discussion is based on what is best for the residents.

3. County Councillor Report
No report received.

4. Minutes of previous Meeting
Approved as correct.

5.1 Finance
Nothing to report.

5.2 Parish Council Members
Councillor Fielding had reported back to residents of Ditchfield regarding the "children at play" signs not being allowed by Highways. The Ditchfield residents are considering this.

5.3 Play Spaces
Nothing to report.

5.4 Rights of Way
Councillor Acklam had again contacted Highways regarding the section of Straight Drove which was not repaired. They will not be visiting Straight Drove until the summer when they will decide our request for further repairs.

5.5 24Acres Committee
Hedge laying led by Cambridge Conservation Volunteers took place on 2 February. Both the CCV and the village volunteers had a very successful day, and it is hoped that the rest of the hedge can be laid in a similar fashion in 2026 & 2027.

Civil engineering works by the National Trust to create a pond and otherwise improve biodiversity on land beyond the woodland is scheduled to start on the 10th February for a period of approximately 2 weeks.

5.6 Friends Of Reach Wood
Nothing to report.

5.7 A to B1102 Group
Nothing to report

5.8 Nature Recovery Plan
Nothing to report.

5.9 Hythe Restoration Group
Councillor Acklam has requested an update from Anglian Water on its plans to coppice the weeping willow at the tip of the Hythe, to manage the large ash trees infected with dieback that shield the sewage works from view, & for Anglian Water to remove the graffiti from the pump house, which has been in this condition for some time, as it clearly unsightly & a discouragement to people using the Hythe for recreational purposes.

5.10 Website & public communications
The website is now live and will be promote around the village. Councillor Hall asked for articles, photos, and information to be emailed to him to add to the website. The Neighbourhood plan and defibrillator information will also be added.

6. 20 is plenty funding initiative
Funding applications have opened for the 20mph initiative. Following discussion, the PC decided that it was too late to consult the village for this round of funding. The PC would like to consult the village in the coming months to have the information ready for the next round of funding should the village residents want 20mph on all or some of the village roads. The PC would be grateful of any residents who would like to come forward to assist in this consultation.

7. Mowing contract
The 5 year contract for the village mowing services is due to be renewed. It was proposed that the PC financial regulations be suspended to allow the contract to be renewed with the present contractor without obtaining 3 quotes. The reasons for this are that the present contractor is very good, very helpful and fully engaged in assisting the PC at short notice and knowing what is required. Additionally, the present contractors pricings have remained very stable over recent years. Proposed Councillor Gibson, seconded Councillor Fielding, approve unanimously.

8. Parish Council Communications & Website officer
A decision was not reached & further discussion will take place on this matter.

9. Defibrillator update
James Loftus, the PC defibrillator officer, had inspected the defibrillator. His findings were as follows -
The machine was last serviced on 14/11/2022. The recommendation from the manufacturer is for this to be done yearly, so this should be arranged. The battery is currently showing as full, but the service will test this.
There is currently one set of pads, which expire in September. Generally, the recommendation is that there are two sets of pads with the unit. This means it can be used for prolonged periods of time if needed, and if a set is used, the machine is still usable if required for a second time. Pads are single-use and have a 2-year shelf life.
The Defib comes with additional consumables such as gloves, scissors, razors, etc. These items are still present but do seem relatively old. I have some spares, so I will replace these where needed. The information on the Circuit, a website which records defibrillators and their positions, will be updated in the next few days. James Loftus will be added as the guardian with Councillor Gibson as a support guardian. James will then ensure regular checks are carried out, and information is updated where needed. The PC will apply to the Grant Fund for the costs of bringing the defibrillator up to standard and also for the associated costs of moving it to the telephone box once the box has been transferred to PC ownership.
Training dates are also being planned with the village hall.

10. "Green" energy developments in the locality – update

Concern in the village is growing slowly. There is an article in the new edition of 'Within Reach' which updates the pre-Christmas village Facebook post and should raise awareness more widely in our community.

The PC has written to the Planning Inspectorate objecting to Kingsway Solar's proposed approach to producing an Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA). An EIA is currently a key step in the consideration of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) such as Kingsway's, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer has hinted that EIAs may be dispensed with to streamline the NSIP process. We do not know if this will come to pass, or when, or what, if anything, will replace EIAs.

The PC has initiated a dialogue with David Morren, Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager at ECDC outlining our concerns about the level of energy developments on Burwell Fen and the lack of a district planning strategy (or indeed at national level) for gauging the cumulative impact of such proposals. He has said that a strategy for energy development will be included in the merging new Local Plan, but it is not clear when this will come into effect & NSIPs are considered outside the district planning system. Mr Morren has agreed to meet with us at a point when there is more clarity on national planning, the Kingsway Solar proposal & the ECDC Local Plan

The PC has written to other concerned PCs, sharing our approach & indicating that we would be prepared to join an alliance. No formal response as yet although several PCs have also objected to Kingsway's approach to producing an EIA.

The PC has also written to Burwell PC sharing our map of the confirmed and proposed developments on Burwell Fen and suggesting that meet to discuss. Anecdotally we believe there is considerable concern among Burwell residents. No response from Burwell PC has been received.

No updates from Grenergy regarding the BESS proposal - the scheme nearest to our village.

11. March meeting

The Clerk is unable to attend the March meeting. Councillor Acklam volunteered to take the minutes therefore the PC will meet as planned.

12. Payments

Parish Council Websites – Website design & build	£830.46
E.on – power on the green	£63.93

Draft Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 4th March 2025 at 7.30pm

Attendance

Edward Hall	Chair	Present
Tim Quilter	Vice Chair	Present
Nick Acklam	Councillor	Present
Nathan Bridgeman	Councillor	Present
Hilary Fielding	Councillor	Present
Rowan Foster-Marian	Councillor	Not Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Not Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Present
John Trapp	District Councillor	Not Present
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present

Apologies for absence

Received and approved. In absence of the Clerk, Cllr Acklam took the minutes.

Forum for members of the public – The Chair read out a letter from a resident unable to attend the meeting. The letter raised concerns about an application to the Land Registry for adverse possession for a parcel of land on Chapel Lane. The PC understood that the land was communal (as with the Green, the Drying Ground, parts of the Hythe and some other verges in the village). The land was crossed by two public footpaths. The PC noted the importance attached to local green spaces in the Neighbourhood Plan and felt that areas of public land of this kind should remain 'owned' by the community. The PC would write to the Land Registry to this effect. The PC also agreed to seek the County Council's view on the rights of way issues that might be created by this application. **Action: letters to Land Registry and Cambridgeshire County Council.**

Declaration of Interests – There were none.

1. Planning Applications There were none.

2. District Councillor Report

Charlotte Cane provided a short summary of her report below, highlighting the challenges faced by ECDC in prioritising the spend of Community Infrastructure Levy funds. ECDC had decided to proceed with the funding of the crematorium at Mepal although this would limit spending in other areas. Charlotte also reported that ECDC had abandoned work on a new Local Plan as the Plan could not be completed before reorganisation of local government would render it invalid.

Full Council 25 February 2025

Unfortunately, one of the members of the Lib Dem & Independent was unable to be present as his wife had to be taken to hospital after breaking her wrist, so the Conservatives were in a majority.

1. A member of the public spoke about the need for funding for Babylon Arts, an Ely-based arts group that served the whole District.
2. In view of the impending Local Government Reorganisation, it was resolved to cease work on the Local Plan (that sets out the development envelopes and planning guidelines for the District) since the new Unitary authority would revise this anyway.
3. East Cambridgeshire Trading Company (ECTC) requested a loan deadline extension from March 2027 to March 2029 to initiate work with Haddenham CLT, for whom it had already built houses, this was agreed.
4. It was decided that the District Council Tax for 2025/26 would be the same as the last twelve years; this was supported by both sides of the chamber. The Lib Dem & Independent group proposed a budget that: increased funding for tourism and the arts to boost the local economy and secure a future for Babylon Arts, increased the Council's actions on climate and the environment, used funding from the abandoned Local Plan review to prepare for proper parking enforcement across East Cambridgeshire which is sadly lacking. This budget was defeated.
5. Later in the meeting, however, when the allocation of CIL money was the agenda item, Conservative councillors voted to block a further amendment from the Liberal Democrat & Independent Group from being debated. This amendment would have ceased spending on the Conservatives' very expensive and unwanted crematorium at Mepal and used the money to provide for more investment in District-wide community facilities, inclusive play and local facilities, and improve footpaths and cycleways in the District. Many projects, including one of £2.2m for the Staploe Medical Centre to expand at Soham, for which CIL money had been promised were curtailed to pay for the crematorium. The CIL commitment was almost £18m, but there was only less than £12m in the CIL fund, so by keeping £8m for the crematorium only £4m was left for schools, health, play areas etc.

3. County Councillor Report No report received.

4. Minutes of previous Meeting Approved as correct.

5.1 Finance Nothing to report. The PC noted that funding for IT support would shortly be switched to a new provider.

5.2 Parish Council Members

The PC noted the renovation of the boundary wall of the Church and complimented those responsible for its quality.

5.3 Play Spaces Nothing to report.

5.4 Rights of Way

Cllr Fielding reported concerns from residents about the creation of car parking space at the rear of houses at Ditchfield. The parking space intruded onto the byway. The PC agreed to write to the County Council Rights of Way officer expressing concern about the precedent that would be set if the space was allowed to stand. **Action: Letter to Cambridgeshire County Council**

5.5 24Acres Committee

Cllr Acklam reported that construction of the pond on land retained by the National Trust was close to completion.

5.6 Friends Of Reach Wood Nothing to report.

5.7 A to B1102 Group Nothing to report

5.8 Nature Recovery Plan

Cllr Acklam reported that he was in email correspondence with a local resident who had been engaged in scrub clearance on the edge of the Devils Dyke. The resident was keen to recruit villagers to assist in the task.

Cllr Acklam noted that scrub clearance on the Dyke was an objective of the Nature Recovery Plan and hoped to meet the resident on site to clarify what might be possible.

5.9 Hythe Restoration Group
Anglian Water has promised an imminent response to the PC's requests for tree pruning and graffiti removal.

5.10 Website & public communications Nothing to report.

5.11 Energy developments in the locality
The PC had written to the Clerks of parishes within Kingsway Solar's Connection Corridors, asking for their response to the proposal. All of the PCs that have replied so far have adopted a similar stance to Reach PC.

6. **Adoption of the phone kiosk on Fair Green.**
The PC discussed the implications of adopting the kiosk from BT (maintenance of a listed 'building', electrical safety and insurance) and agreed to proceed subject to the Chair receiving confirmation that adoption would not greatly increase our insurance premium. **Action: Chair to clarify insurance position and, if there was no significant increase in premium, sign the adoption agreement.**
On an associated issue Cllr Gibson reported the cost for servicing the defibrillator and renewing items with a limited shelf life was £400. **Action: Cllr Gibson to apply to the Grant Fund.**

7. Payments E.on – power on the green £63.93 approved

Summer Term
at Reach Village Hall

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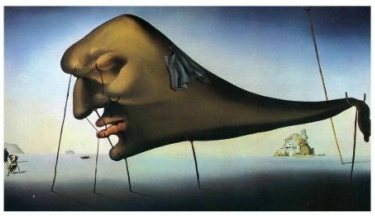



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Diary Dates and Bus Timetable

April	Event	Location	Time
Tuesday 1	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Tuesday 1	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Sunday 6	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Tuesday 8	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Tuesday 15	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Wednesday 16	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Friday 18	Good Friday Meditation Reflective Service	St Etheldreda's, Reach	2.00pm
Sunday 20	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Tuesday 22	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Tuesday 29	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		

May	Event	Location	Time
Sunday 4	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Monday 5	Reach Fair	Fair Green	Midday to 5pm
Tuesday 6	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Tuesday 6	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Tuesday 13	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Tuesday 20	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Wednesday 21	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Tuesday 27	Recycling Day (Green/Brown)		

STEPHENSONS

Service No. 11 - Newmarket to and from Cambridge

Monday to Saturday only	NS	SO	NS	SO										
Newmarket, The Guineas Bus Station	--	--	700	700	820	920	1020	1120	1220	1320	1420	1520	1620	1745
Newmarket, Academy	--	--	703	703	823	923	1023	1123	1223	1323	1423	1523	1623	1748
Newmarket, Studland Park Centre	--	--	710	710	830	930	1030	1130	1230	1330	1430	1530	1630	1755
Burwell, Ness Road	639	649	721	721	841	941	1041	1141	1241	1341	1441	1541	1641	1806
Burwell, Hawthorn Way	641	651	723	723	843	943	1043	1143	1243	1343	1443	1543	1643	1808
Reach, Great Lane	653	703	--	--	855	--	1055	--	1255	--	1455	1555	1655	1820
Swaffham Prior, Cage Hill	658	708	737	737	900	957	1100	1157	1300	1357	1500	1600	1700	1825
Lode, Fassage Close	--	--	--	--	--	1004	--	1204	--	1404	--	--	--	--
Stow cum Quy, Station Road	708	718	751	747	910	1012	1110	1212	1310	1412	1510	1610	1710	1835
Fen Ditton, Cambridge Airport	718	728	804	757	920	1022	1120	1222	1320	1422	1520	1620	1720	1845
Cambridge, Drummer St Bus Station	732	742	816	811	934	1034	1134	1234	1334	1434	1534	1634	1734	1859

NS = Not Saturdays, SO = Saturdays Only

Cambridge, Drummer St Bus Station	650	750	850	950	1050	1150	1250	1350	1450	1550	1715	1815	1915
Fen Ditton, Cambridge Airport	702	802	902	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1602	1727	1827	1927
Stow cum Quy, Station Road	712	812	912	1012	1112	1212	1312	1412	1512	1612	1737	1837	1937
Lode, Fassage Close	--	--	920	--	1120	--	1320	--	1520	--	1745	--	--
Swaffham Prior, Cage Hill	723	823	926	1023	1126	1223	1326	1423	1526	1623	1751	1848	1948
Reach, Great Lane	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, Studland Park Centre	752	852	952	1052	1152	1252	1352	1452	1552	1652	1817	1917	2017
Newmarket, Academy	759	859	959	1059	1159	1259	1359	1459	1559	1659	1824	1924	2024
Newmarket, The Guineas Bus Station	802	902	1002	1102	1202	1302	1402	1502	1602	1702	1827	1927	2027

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

The villagers of Reach responded to the lightning strike that damaged the church in 1958 by setting up a fund to raise £400. This involved all sorts of fundraising activities such as whist drives and jumble sales. The lady to the left in the photo is my grandmother, Edith Washtell and the vicar of the time, sitting down, I believe was Reverend Hicks. Although I recognise the lady standing between them, I cannot recall her name.

Chris Patterson

Contact Information

Parish Council – see "Know Your Parish Council"			
Village Hall			
	Chair	David Thomas	01638 742676
	Finance	Andrew Trump	01638 743335
	Bookings	Diana Greer	rvhcb25@gmail.com
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









The original village hall clock, now restored by Paul Greer





