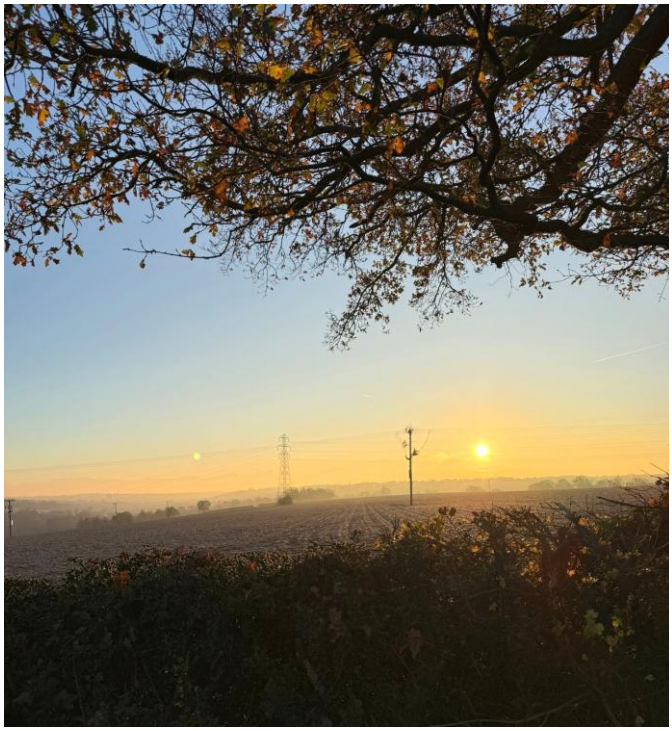
Within Reach



December 2025/January 2026



Courtesy of Robert Keutgen



Checking stock – ready for the Christmas Tree lights switch-on



A good start . . . .



The good old days when it snowed properly!
This was the scene in Reach on Saturday 4th February 2012

Contents

Title	Author	Page
Able Community Care	Angela Gifford	7
Anglesey Abbey	Issy Vetoshkina	12
Bottisham and Burwell Photographic Club	Daphne Hanson	11
Burwell and Reach Car Scheme	Pam King	-
Burwell History Society		4
Burwell Museum		16
Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group		14
Bus Timetables		15
Cambridge Fire and Rescue		4
Church Letter from the Vicarage	Eleanor Williams	17
Church Services	Eleanor Williams	31
Contact Information		32
Council – District Councillors	Charlotte Cane and John Trapp	-
Council - Parish Councillors		22
Council - Parish Meetings Minutes		23
Cricket Report	Ross Clark	20
Diary Dates		31
Dyke's End	Dan and Ruth	14
Dyke's End Book Club	Ally Eariss	17
Ely Food Bank		5
Events in Reach		14 and 30
Food Focus	Catherine Gibson	-
Football Report	Nathan Bridgeman	-
Grant Fund		31
Kingsway Update and Social Community Action	Nick Acklam and Kathy Day	21
Mobile Library		22
MP Update	Charlotte Cane MP	5
Nature in Reach	Nick Acklam	10
Reach Riders	Sue Cameron	11
Rosanna's Ramblings	Rosanna Moseley Gore	6
Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities	Pam Waters	22
Tales from a Reach Garden	Danuta Gibson	19
The Holmwoods Move To Pastures New	Penny Greenhill	13
The Swaffhams' WI	Kate Muscroft	8
Then and Now	Chris Patterson	32
Village Update	Alex de Giorgio-Miller	3
Wear it Pink	Sue Jordan	12
Wicken Fen	Ajay Tegala	9

From the Editor



I'm up quite early this morning to get the magazine finished and off to the printers by 10.00am so that I can collect the copies tomorrow and get them to the kind villagers who make the deliveries. Freda Lloyd, Claire Halpin-McDonald and Grahame Radford have been taking on this task for a number of years now and big thanks go to them for doing this.

Throughout its lifetime, as far as I am aware, the village magazine, called out of Reach until May 2010 after which it became Within Reach, has survived as a "free to every household" publication and the reserve, built up by Grahame Radford, the previous editor, still exists. However, some potential advertisers now see posting onto social media as being a "no cost" option and therefore breaking even each year has become a bit more of a challenge. So if you have any thoughts on who we might be able to encourage to advertise in 2026, do let me know. If you go to the adverts section you'll see the pricing for the different size options; its good value for money, all we are trying to do is break even.

As always nowadays, Kingsway has a significant presence this issue, with contributions from Nick Acklam and also by KSCA (Kingsway Social Community Action) on page 21. And Ross's cricket report becomes a golf report on page 20, as always, it is well worth a read!

And as you would expect, there's plenty going on in Reach through the remainder of 2025, starting with the Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on, this Sunday November 30th from 5pm, with the customary mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies. We again have the excellent Cambridge Brass Band coming along to entertain us.

Our Christmas Tree arrived yesterday and it looks very fine indeed. Today it will be decorated by "American Matt" who saw some of our previous decoration attempts and decided he had to take over – and we are so glad he did! We also have a new star for the tree (the last one, the wrong way up one, sadly died last year). This sparkly new one was constructed by Brian Marsh and the lights strip selected by Duncan Grindley from Cambridge Electrical, big thanks go to them both.

For all the other December events, please go to page 14 and/or visit the village website News and Events page.

David Parr

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

About the Magazine

The purpose of *Within Reach* is to serve the whole village by circulating information and interesting articles free to every household. Additional copies are available at a charge of £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

Editor	David Parr
Distribution	Freda Lloyd, Claire Halpin-McDonald and Grahame Radford
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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



Cosy evenings in - and the anticipation of the holiday season, I do love this time of year. And so far I've not needed to bundle into too many layers of fleece, although I'm sure the colder weeks are on their way! 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. But we are 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.

Community groups encouraged to apply for grants

Grants of up to £1,000 are being offered by East Cambridgeshire District Council for community groups for new or existing projects designed to improve the quality of life for residents.

Little Miracles, a charity that supports families with children that have additional needs, disabilities or life limiting conditions, was one of the successful applicants in the last round of grants with the grant funding helping to provide for the venue costs of their youth club in Littleport. They offer a weekly club for children aged 8 and over with additional needs with a wide range of activities such as arts and crafts, games, sensory play, life skills sessions, and themed events, welcoming families with disabled children from across the East Cambs district.

Other successful applicants in the last round of grants included Stretham Youth Centre for their Youth Breakout 25 life and social skills development club and PosAbility, to provide chair-based exercise sessions for people living with long-term neurological conditions, such as strokes, Parkinson's and reduced mobility.

The East Cambridgeshire Community Fund will be open to applications between 31 October and 12 December 2025 and the council are urging community groups to apply to the fund for their projects or events. Applying for this grant is simple, information about the grant including eligibility criteria and application guidance can be found on the ECDC community-fund page. www.eastcambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-wellbeing/grants-and-community-projects/community-fund

Remember hedgehogs this autumn

As the clocks change and the colder nights draw in, residents are being asked to remember hedgehogs this autumn. Numbers of hedgehogs in rural areas have declined between 30 and 75 per cent since 2000.



To help halt this decline council are asking residents to do what they can to help our prickly friends. Top tips include:

Provide access to your garden

One of the main reasons hedgehogs are struggling in Britain is because our fences and walls are becoming more and more secure, reducing the amount of land available to them. Have a look around your garden and see if it can be accessed by a hedgehog. They typically need a 13cm by 13cm hole, which can be cut into a fence to create access.

Access to food and water

Hedgehogs must feed intensively and be in great condition before hibernating if they are to have enough reserves to last the winter. Hedgehogs eat a wide variety of insects and other invertebrates including beetles, earthworms and caterpillars. The best way to support a hedgehog is to leave areas of your garden undisturbed. Alternatively, you can leave out cat or dog food or specialist hedgehog food. A shallow dish of water can also be provided. Please do not give hedgehogs milk as they are lactose intolerant, or anything containing peanuts.

Create a hedgehog home

Log and leaf piles, wilderness areas, simple shelters and purpose-built hedgehog homes make great places for hedgehogs to nest and hibernate. Fallen leaves also make the perfect nesting material, so make sure you do not clear all of these away.

Record your sightings of hedgehogs

The BIG Hedgehog Map (www.BigHedgehogMap.org) enables sightings of hedgehogs from across the UK to be recorded, helping conservationists understand where they're living and where they most need help. Click on the regional section of the map to be an East Cambs Hedgehog Hero and be part of the local monitoring of our prickly friends. Recording hedgehogs seen dead or alive is vital for learning about the population of this important local species.

Stay safe, warm and well this winter with BeWinterWise

Following two successful years that have seen thousands of residents supported, Cambridgeshire County Council has relaunched its #BeWinterWise campaign, featuring Olly the Owl, for winter 2025–26. The campaign aims to help Cambridgeshire residents stay safe, warm, and healthy throughout the colder months by sharing practical advice, highlighting local support and encouraging communities to look out for one another.



Winter can be a difficult time for many: cold weather, rising living costs and health concerns can put extra pressure on households, particularly older residents, families, people on low incomes and those living with long-term health conditions.

This year, #BeWinterWise will run alongside the council's 'Working For You' campaign, which highlights the services, outcomes, and people making a difference across Cambridgeshire. Together, these two campaigns will show both what the council are doing to support residents and how communities can access help and take simple, practical steps to stay well this winter.

Residents can follow the campaign on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram by searching #BeWinterWise, and keep up to date with the latest travel and traffic updates by following @Cambs_Traffic on X. Keep well and enjoy the autumnal colours!

Alex de Giorgio-Miller

The Burwell History Society

The Burwell History Society meet at the Gardiner Memorial Hall on Burwell High Street, CB25 0JD. All meetings start at 7.30pm.

On Wednesday December 17th, Bryan Thurlow will be giving a talk entitled ' Borley Rectory'

The talk on Wednesday January 21st will be given by Kathryn Blackbourn on ' Defining Late Bronze Age Settlement: a wealth of evidence from Newmarket Road, Burwell'.

Visitors are welcome to individual meetings, cost £5. Visit our website for further details or email Judy Paxton judympaxton@gmail.com

Cambridge Fire and Rescue

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
Working together to improve community safety

Get your chimney swept and keep your home fire safe!

The Service attends around 100 fires a year involving chimneys, most of which could be avoided by following some simple safety tips:

- Appoint a skilled and technically competent chimney engineer. To find your nearest local HETAS Approved Chimney Sweep visit: https://www.hetas.co.uk/find-chimney-sweep/
- Keep the flue shafts clear and ensure they are well maintained
- Only use properly treated wood to build a fire
- Always use a fireguard to protect against flying sparks from hot embers
- Make sure embers are properly put out before you go to bed.

We always advise getting your chimney swept at least once a year, preferably before lighting it for the first time when the cold weather arrives. There could be a buildup of debris that's accumulated over the year, which can be set alight when heating the home and could cause a significant fire.

Some will also be looking at using a chimney for the first time, that may not have been used for many years. It is really important to make sure it is swept and inspect the brickwork before lighting it for the first time.

Stay fire safe in your kitchen

More than half the fires crews attend in the home start in the kitchen. This can be down to a number of things. Below are some simple safety tips to help you stay fire safe in the kitchen:

- Avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone when cooking on the hob. Keep matches and saucepan handles out of their reach to keep them safe
- 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
- Don't store items on top of hobs

- Take care if you need to leave the kitchen whilst cooking, take pans off the heat or turn them down to avoid risk
- Make sure saucepan handles don't stick out – so they don't get knocked off the stove
- 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 and in good working order. A build-up of fat and grease can ignite a fire.

Help your local community – become an on-call firefighter!

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is looking to recruit more on-call firefighters to help local communities by responding to emergencies. On-call firefighters are a vital part of your fire and rescue service. They respond to a wide range of incidents, from fighting fires and attending road traffic collisions to recuing people and animals in need. They also respond to medical emergencies.

Being an on-call firefighter has many benefits. As well as being paid an annual wage and for the time spent at incidents or training, there are also opportunities to develop first aid skills and heavy good vehicle driving qualifications. For more information log on to www.cambsfire.gov.uk, email us at pressoffice@cambsfire.gov.uk, follow us on social media or call 01480 444500.

Ely Foodbank Letter

We were very pleased to receive a thankyou letter from the Ely Foodbank for the sum of **£815** which was raised at the recent Harvest Supper.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed: lots of you are amazing casserole makers; Claire (Acklam) made all the delicious puddings; many donated generously to the raffle which raised over £200. Donations from the Co-op and Prospects Trust were also much appreciated.

Particular thanks go to Thomasina, Catherine (Gibson) and Jo (Trump) who made the hall look incredible 😊 as well as those who helped set up/clear away - and a special thank you to the 'washing-up Team' which was made up entirely of people under the age of 30.

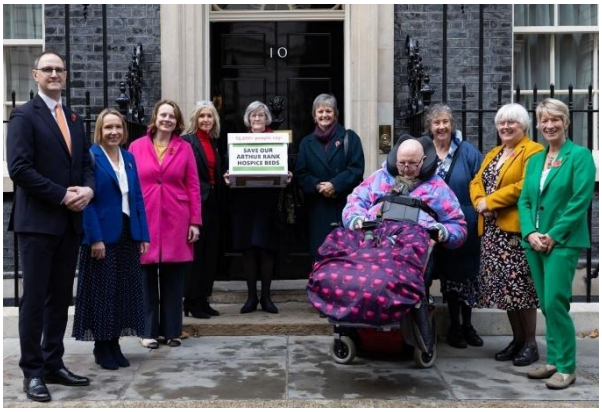
Amazing!

Thank you all from **Andrew** (Trump), **Debbie** (Quilter) and **Helen** (Oliver**)**

MP Update

As the year draws to a close and we gather for festive events across our villages and towns, I've been reflecting on what makes Ely and East Cambridgeshire so special — our sense of community, our compassion and our determination to look out for one another. That spirit has shone through in everything from local campaigns to doorstep conversations this autumn.

In November, I joined my constituent Lisa Smart, from Cottenham, outside 10 Downing Street to deliver a petition with over 15,500 signatures calling on the Government to save vital hospice beds at Arthur Rank Hospice. Lisa's daughter received end-of-life care there, and her powerful story shows just how much this service means to families across Cambridgeshire.



Charlotte Cane MP (second from right) standing alongside local residents and MPs to deliver the petition to save palliative care beds at Arthur Rank Hospice

The petition is part of a joint campaign I launched alongside Liberal Democrat Cambridgeshire MPs Pippa Heylings and Ian Sollom to reverse an £829,000 funding cut. Without that funding, nine of the hospice's 23 beds face closure – meaning more than 200 patients could be left without access to specialist care each year. Everyone deserves compassion, dignity and peace at the end of their lives. We must not let a funding failure take that away.

In Parliament, I've been urging the Government to deliver fair funding and real reform for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In Ely and East Cambridgeshire, 4% of pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans — higher than the national average. Our schools do incredible work, but they need the Government's support. Every child deserves the chance to thrive, with properly funded and accessible support close to home.

I continue to press the Government on fuel poverty, after uncovering official figures showing that 9.6% of households in our constituency, that's 4,487 homes, were living in fuel poverty as far back as 2023. Shockingly, Ministers have yet to publish the data for the past year, even as families continue to struggle with soaring energy costs. I am urging the Government to publish the latest figures, to end fuel poverty and tackle the cost-of-living crisis.

Whether it's meeting residents on the doorstep, attending local events, or holding my three-monthly surgeries, I'm always here to listen and help. Since being elected, I've now closed over 9,000 cases where residents have come to me for advice or support.

As your local champion, I'm here to stand up for you – and I'll keep doing just that.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who keeps our community running through the darker months, from NHS staff and carers to utility workers, emergency services and transport teams who work tirelessly through the holidays.



Wishing you a peaceful and happy festive season!

PS This is just a snippet – to keep up with everything I'm doing, sign up to my newsletter at bit.ly/newsfromcharlotte.

Charlotte Cane, MP for Ely & East Cambridgeshire charlotte.cane.mp@parliament.uk | 020 7362 1601

Rosanna's Ramblings



I got my usual inspiration for these ramblings while rambling along the river in the pocket park last week. Ever since the sheep returned to the meadow, they've had a tendency to bunch up tight along the path.

They haven't quite worked out how to behave like sheep, somehow, in that they don't run away when you approach with a dog on a lead. They particularly like packing themselves close in around and between the brambles where the path squeezes tight between the prickly mounds. And as a result, they have been leaving loads of snagged wool on anything that has thorns or sticking out twigs – not just the brambles, but low hawthorn branches, shrubs, even particularly stiff reeds.



And that got me thinking – about entanglement, about just how much we are entangled with, snagged up by, encumbered with stuff. Now that stuff can obviously be physical tangible possessions, as evidenced by Hannah generously offering for free, to anyone who'll take them, things they are sorting out ahead of their proposed move away. But the stuff is also our baggage. Our cares and concerns. Our griefs and regrets. Our fears. Our worries.

As we emerge from the remembrance season and build up to the festive season, I've been so aware of how heavy and concerning some of the stuff around can be. Charles has been to three funerals recently, with another loss of a very old friend (both in age and duration) sadly imminent. It weighs upon him, as indeed is inevitable. Late October marks the anniversary of his first wife Jenny's death. My parents died in late December and early January, ten and nine years ago. But despite the passing of the years, as nature acts out its recurring cycle, I find my memories are triggered afresh by the smell of rotting leaves, the dampness in the air, the darkening of the sky earlier and earlier in the afternoon. We're entangled by the web of all we have experienced, and at this end of the year its normal for the experiences of grief to speak loudest.

And then there's Christmas coming up. In my case, that means "Is it my turn, or my ex-husband's turn, to have the [grown-up] children?" That sets the hares running in my mind, because I have to think about the less than perfect Christmases we had. And I remember my parents being with us and sometimes that was good and sometimes it wasn't so good. And I worry, how I worry, about my children – both currently unemployed. I lie awake at night wondering what's going to happen to them in this uncertain and harsh world. How can I help them? Should I help them, indeed?

It's all so confusing, and tiring. And it's hard to keep one's energy going when the skies are low and grey and the weather is annoyingly and damply mild, with crisp frosty sunshine currently feeling like an unreachable dream. So, what do I do to tackle the gloom? (Apologies, dear reader, for being so honest – but frankly, what's the point in pretending everything's sparkly and bright just because it's nearly December?)

Well, mostly I walk the dog. Current walking total this year is 1,859.2km out of my 2,025km goal. Not bad. On track. And while I'm out walking, I do my very best to do that mindfulness thing – noticing what I'm seeing, smelling, hearing, touching. Noticing the yield of the ground under my feet. Noticing the leafy decoupage on my boots. Being open to ideas and inspiration and sources of unexpected joy all around me.

It's easy to be cynical about self-help techniques but on one of my early morning walks this week, I witnessed something that I found truly helpful, in the unlikely form of a roe deer. Well, a roe deer and presumably a pair of half-grown twin children. I was heading back towards the village along the river, just beyond the Hurdle Hall path, and Milo suddenly rushed towards a patch of willows with heavy undergrowth and started barking. A second or two later, off sprung the deer, her white bottom bouncing away from her comfortable cover into the field which currently has cattle in it. Pleased with himself, Milo returned to me and we continued on our way. But almost immediately I could see two more, smaller, white bottoms bouncing away from us and the half-growns emerged from some scrub and started running along the side of a barbed-wire fence. They could see their mother, she could see them. SHE could easily have jumped the fence, but for whatever reason didn't. THEY tried repeatedly to find a way back to her but failed. The DOG thought he should help in some way, but was restrained by the WOMAN watching whose internal dialogue went something like this …

"Should I try to do something to help? What could I do? Can she find a way round those fences? What if I tried to guide the youngsters round onto the concrete path? Don't be ridiculous! They'd just bolt in any direction. You're just going to have to walk on and trust that it all works out OK. Oh … wait … there's a metaphor here, isn't there? Stop fretting about the kids, they have to find their own way. It doesn't mean you don't love them, but there's actually nothing you can do to rescue them. Just be there for them if and when they ask.

Hmm, lessons from nature, eh?" (mental image of 'raised eyes' emoticon).



So, off Milo and I went back home. I don't know what happened to the deer, but I suspect they're still munching and hiding in cover on the fen somewhere. But I've been feeling less stressed. I call that a result. And we're currently keeping our fingers crossed that the wretched woodpigeons will leave a few berries on our huge holly bush with which to do festive things in the house at Christmas. Regular readers will know that my goodwill doesn't manage to stretch to pigeons!

Rosanna Moseley-Gore

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 - What is The Blue Light Card?

Answer - The Blue Light Card is a UK-based discount service offering exclusive savings on over 15,000 partner brands for those working in:

- The emergency services
- The NHS
- Individuals employed in the Social Care Sector
- Teaching, and the Armed Forces

Many chain restaurants have signed up to offer discounts as have many clothing retailers, travel agents, home & garden retailers, etc.

To find out more and to see if you are eligible visit: **www.bluelightcard.co.uk**

Winter Safety Tip

Hot Water Bottle Safety

As the weather gets colder, there are lots of advice and tips about this one from the NHS.

For a cozy and safe autumn, the NHS and safety experts recommend checking your hot water bottle for age and damage.

Before first use in Autumn and to avoid burns and leaks from degraded rubber, follow these steps before you start using your hot water bottle for the season.

- Check the expiration date. Hot water bottles should be replaced every two years, even if they look fine.
- Find the "daisy wheel". A date stamp, often shaped like a flower, is usually found on the neck or body of the bottle.
    - The central number is the manufacturing year (e.g., '22' for 2022).
    - The twelve segments represent the months. Filled segments indicate the month it was made.
- Inspect for wear and tear. Look for cracks, splits, discolouration, or brittle areas. Do not use the bottle if you notice any damage.
- Check for leaks. Fill the bottle with cool water, insert the stopper tightly and turn it upside down to see if any water leaks out.
- In addition, never use boiling water and always use a protective cover.

Able Community Care Ltd
The Old Parish Rooms,
Whitlingham Lane, Trowse, Norwich NR14 8TZ
www.ablecommunitycare.com 01603 764567

The Swaffhams' WI

This month there are two items to report on for The Swaffhams' WI. In September our annual outing was to the Cambridge Mosque, **please see Kaye's lovely report below**.



There was an immediate sense of wonder, calm and tranquility when entering the garden in front of Cambridge Mosque. Traditionally the garden would be placed at the centre of the site but there was a strong belief that this should be a space for the whole Mill Road community to enjoy. Originally a brown-field site where once stood a sawmill, the building of Cambridge Mosque started in 2014 and finished five years later. And you can really see why it took so long. It is beautiful! Weaving in both Islamic and English religious designs, the ancient and the timeless Cambridge Mosque brought in artists, architects, garden designers and craftsmen to work closely with the community to create Europe's first eco-mosque.

Our tour guide was so welcoming, interesting and informative. She explained its history and design concepts, took us to the portico, then the atrium, through to the ablution areas and onto the magnificent grand prayer hall explaining rituals and traditions as we went.

Our trip was rounded off nicely, as always, with a very welcome tea and cake at The Edge Cafe a few doors down on Mill Road. Thank you to Margaret for organising this inspiring visit.

Now on to the October report. I am sure that many of you eagerly gather in your gardens on a Tuesday evening in Swaffham Prior and on a Wednesday evening in Swaffham Bulbeck to hear the practice sessions of the local bell ringers.

So the fact that we had Gareth Davies, the Swaffham Prior Tower Captain and local expert on all that is to do with bell ringing, come to talk to us in October was a real treat. The intriguing title of Gareth's talk was "Who Wants to be a Millionaire Bellringer" and we were not disappointed!



Gareth demonstrating the workings of the bell

Did you know the familiar ding-dong-ding-dong quarter-hour Westminster Chimes of 'Big Ben' was copied from the chimes of the clock at Great St Mary's in Cambridge?

Before 1753 bells were rarely rung at weddings. In 1753 Lord Hardwicke's Clandestine Marriage Act came into being. This Act declared that secret marriages were illegal and that all marriages had to be performed by an Anglican minister in a church or chapel. The peeling of the bells was an important way of telling people that the wedding was all above board.

For most of the 18th and 19th centuries bells were rung for almost any occasion or for any person who would pay. Being a bellringer could be an extremely profitable position! The bells used to be rung to announce the death of a person in the Parish: three times three for a man and twice times three for a woman, followed by a bell ringing the age of the deceased.

Swaffham Prior once rang a gleaning bell. This bell signalled the end of the commercial harvest and marked the time when the poor could enter the fields to collect leftover grain. Gareth also talked about the mechanics of bell ringing and the methods rung. He demonstrated the complexities of managing the sequencing with handbells and four of us were guided slowly through a very simple tune, demonstrating how the bells swop places to create the tune.

We heard about the mechanics of the bells and therefore the challenges that playing them brings. The rope has to be controlled; the timing of the toll depends on the weight of the bell and how long the rope is. Each bell has to be struck at the correct moment.

Sequences have to be memorised; Swaffham Prior's church has 6 bells which allows a certain amount of complexity when ringing, Swaffham Bulbeck has 8 bells, but a church with 12 bells would allow millions of changes to take place. Great St Mary's in Cambridge has 13!

If this has struck a chord, do look out for the information about the celebration of 205 years of the Swaffham Bulbeck church bells taking place on Sunday 16th and Wednesday 19th November at St Mary's Church, Swaffham Bulbeck. And do come and see what life is like in the Swaffham Prior bell tower by emailing swaffhampriorbell@gmail.com to arrange.

Our next meeting of the Swaffhams' WI is on 17th November, where Ali Racine will be demonstrating how to paint on silk and we will be giving it a go too. For this meeting we need to know numbers in advance (there is a £7.50 charge) so that we can organise the supplies needed. If you would like to join our friendly and welcoming group for the silk painting session, do please email me on katemuscroft@gmail.com to book a place.

Kate Muscroft

Wicken Fen



Winter is here, a magical time on Wicken Fen. Hedgerow fruits and berries have been food for thrushes, while the wetland hosts hundreds of ducks, geese, swans and wading birds. Sometimes, murmurations of thousands of starlings swirl above the reedbed before dusk. And sparkly, silver dawns are a beauty to behold. So why not head for a walk on the Fen?

Throughout winter, the Docky Hut Café is open 10-4pm every day and the visitor centre and gift shop are open 10-4.30pm every day. Don't forget that we're interested in your pre-loved jigsaw puzzles and books for our secondhand 'book nook' in the visitor centre. As always, we will have themed activities at the Family Discovery Area in the visitor centre and there will be special trails around the boardwalk during the Christmas/New Year and February Half Term school holiday periods. Events: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve/whats-on

Nature in Reach



It has been a grey couple of months. The cloud hasn't often produced rain; ground water and aquifers have yet to be replenished and we are still classed as area suffering 'prolonged dry weather' by the Environment Agency. This is not good for local plants and animals.

The passage from autumn into winter has been slow this year. Temperatures have been above seasonal averages. That said, the first grass frost of the year was early and quite hard on 22 September although there have been no real frosts since.

On 22 September: two muntjac race across the footbridge over the Catchwater directly in front of us as we return from our morning walk. On seeing the dogs, one retreats onto the Hythe and the other disappears into scrub on the western bank. Thankfully both dogs are on leads. The internet is full of stories of cornered muntjac seriously injuring dogs. The advice is to keep dogs on leads in areas where muntjac might be encountered. In Reach that would mean dogs could never be off-leash!

3 October: I spot a 'black' grey squirrel foraging on the verge of Burwell Road close to the junction with Weirs Drove. I made a similar sighting a year previously at the same location. There are around 25,000 black or melanic squirrels in the UK, concentrated in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. They are judged to be the result of interbreeding between grey squirrels and fox squirrels, both of which are alien species originating in the United States.

6 October: a Chiffchaff is calling in our garden. In autumn, many breeding Chiffchaffs depart for southern Europe and North Africa although somewhere between 500 and 1000 birds now stay for the winter months.

17 October: it has been a mast year for local oaks although the abundant acorns are very small and of questionable viability - a consequence, I imagine, of the stresses of a very dry spring and summer. Under the oak planted by Charles Moseley on the bank of the Catchwater, the acorn fall is so heavy that it is like walking on pea shingle.

28 October: a female sparrow hawk flies low, hard and fast over the pasture at Hurdle Hall.

28 October: Jonathan Latchford spies a healthy-looking fox in one of the fields beside Little Fen Drove. It watches Jonathan until the arrival of his dog prompts it to disappear. The dog never spots the fox.

29 October: a barn owl crosses Little Fen Drove from Tubney Fen in the dawn light. It perches briefly on a muck heap, sizing me up before continuing its foraging.

Throughout the period several villagers including Jonathan and Rosie Almond have been very pleased to report sightings of kingfishers along the Catchwater. On one occasion Jonathan sees a kingfisher emerge from the water carrying a small fish. It perches on an ash tree at the bottom of his garden before battering the fish to death and flying off with it.

4 November: Hilary Fielding reports seeing a male Chinese water deer by Little Fen Drove close to the junction with Headlake Drove. Hilary notes the animal's tusks and teddy bear-like ears.

5 November: redwing and fieldfare are drifting westwards across the fields around the village. These birds are winter migrants, their numbers are low at present but will increase as winter conditions bite on the continent. On Headlake Drove I see a female sparrowhawk attempting to seize a redwing in passage but it is seen and quickly outflown.

7 November: in the morning Joss Goodchild spots eleven cranes flying in V formation over Reach Wood in the direction of Tubney Fen.

Ron and Penny Greenhill see an autumnal gathering of blue and long-tailed tits within a hawthorn bush on the 24Acres.

9 November: Cetti's warblers are singing from hawthorns in the Pocket Park.

14 November: in the dusk Joss spots a little owl in a Great Lane hedgerow.

15 November: On a walk by Burwell Fen, Tim and Dafila Clutton-Brock record the presence of wigeon, mallard, teal and gadwall as well as about 300 lapwing, 250 fieldfares (and redwings perhaps, although they weren't close enough to identify), a cormorant, roe deer and one marsh harrier. Dafila comments that there seems to have been a dearth of blackbirds, dunnocks and even blue and great tits in their garden although this may now be changing as temperatures have belatedly started to fall. On 16 and 17 November, Dafila hears a song thrash singing in the garden.

Mid November: a single cormorant is present on the Catchwater by the Hythe most mornings. I imagine it (or they) are drawn here by an abundance of small fish. A pair of mute swans are established on the same stretch of water. I hope that this will lead to successful breeding next year. It has been a number of years since we had cygnets on the lode.

Nick Acklam

Reach Riders



Lots of planning has gone into a festive ride - open to all local riders, not just the members of Reach Riders. And as in previous years, it's always lovely to see villagers out in force to wave everyone on their way, so do please join us, we meet at 11.00am on the village green and head of at 11.20am.



Full details of this event and of Reach Riders themselves can be found on their web page https://www.reach-village.co.uk/reach_riders.html

We are still trying to manage the rabbit holes in the arena by filling them regularly, but a lot of work is currently going into grant applications to fund some rabbit fencing. This is expensive and will require financial support from grants as well as continued fundraising, so keep an eye out for information regarding the fundraisers.

On a final note, as the winter months approach, dark nights and low sun, we encourage all riders to wear hi viz to ensure they are seen in good time. We are always grateful to drivers who slow down and pass wide when they see horse riders

Sue Cameron

Bottisham and Burwell Photographic Club



Our meetings continued through the autumn months and we enjoyed an excellent digital lecture on Tuesday 28 October by Alison Jenkins of Ware on the Dalmatian Pelikans of Lake Kerkini. Alison has a passion for these fascinating birds and runs photographic workshops twice a year for other photographers to enjoy them.

Our previous meeting on the 21st October was a Zoom presentation by local wildlife photographer Kevin Pigney. Kevin's talk called 'Passion for Scapes' included landscapes around the UK explaining long exposures, planning a shot, using filters, camera techniques and the kit required. Pleasingly, Kevin will return to us next season to give his new lecture, 'My Top Thirty'.

A Portrait Workshop was held on 14 October led by our club member John Wildespin who provided two male models and all lighting equipment to enable members to practice the technique of portrait photography.

Before we close our meetings for Christmas and New Year, we do battle with Melbourn & Ely Photographic Clubs in a 3-way Friendly Print Competition hosted by Melbourn PS, finishing with 'It's a Knock-out' Christmas Quiz, a fun evening with nibbles and a raffle to round off the year. Our meetings in 2026 include:

6 January: 'Spotlight on Hugh Milsom' featuring prints by this well-known award-winning photographer as told by Jonathan Vaines of Bedford.

13 January: Panel Pics/Creative Board Competitions judged by Naomi Saul, Shillington.

20 January: 'The Many Faces of China & People' by Mike Sharples from Stafford. Zoom presentation.

Our meetings are held Tuesdays at Swaffham Prior Village Hall, High Street, Swaffham Prior CB25 0LD, from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, the third Tuesday in each month being held via Zoom conferencing. Visitors are welcome for a fee of just £4 (includes refreshments).

If you are interested in joining this active club, please contact our Secretary, Debra Bennett, for further information and a copy of our programme. Email: secretary.bandbpc@gmail.com or visit our website www.bottburpc.org where you will find more detailed information.

Daphne Hanson DPAGB HonPAGB Chairman

Anglesey Abbey



Celebrate Christmas at Anglesey Abbey

The house will be richly decorated for all to enjoy and the wider estate offers walks around the sensory Winter Garden, festive shopping, tasty treats and wintry adventures in the woodland play area.



The Snowman™ trail

Come and see if you can spot all 12 Wild in Art sculptures around the gardens, each festively painted with designs from the carol, The Twelve Days of Christmas. From now until 4 January 2026, pick up a trail map in the visitor centre and enjoy a magical, wintry day out with friends and family.



We're likely to be very busy at weekends. If you can, we recommend visiting us during the week for a quieter Snowman experience. We look forward to welcoming you!

Christmas in the house

The Jacobean-style country house at Anglesey Abbey is beautifully decorated for the Christmas season, with festive displays highlighting Lord Fairhaven's vast and significant collection. Step inside to discover a treasure-trove of history and spot the miniature Snowman toys hidden among the Christmas decorations.

You can also meet Father Christmas in the house – there are just a few spaces left. For more information and to book, please visit the Anglesey Abbey website.

Snowdrops

From mid-January to February, the gardens will be full of beautiful snowdrops. The snowdrop collection at Anglesey Abbey boasts over 500 varieties of these delicate white flowers and you can join a specialist tour to learn more about them. Please head to the Anglesey Abbey website to book your ticket.

We will be closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and open again on Boxing Day. From all of us at Anglesey Abbey, we wish you a very merry Christmas!
nationaltrust.org.uk/angleseyabbey

Images courtesy of © National Trust / Mike Selby

Issy Ventoshkina

"Wear it Pink"

The Sewing Group want to send out a huge thank you to all those who so generously supported our 'Wear it Pink' afternoon tea.

We were delighted to raise **£795** for the very worthwhile Breast Cancer Now campaign.

Sue Jordan

The Holmwoods Move To Pastures New



Our Jack Russell Betty joining them for supper in the garden of Moon and Sixpence.

On Monday 3rd November this year John and Jen Holmwood moved from Moon and Sixpence in Chapel Lane to Letchworth Garden City in Hertfordshire. After living in central Cambridge with their daughters Kati and Liz for several years, they moved to Reach on the 1st May 1992 (Reach Fair weekend of course!).

In the years they lived here, both John and Jen did a huge amount for the village. Jen soon became involved with the church, joining the Parochial Church Council, helping to run the Sunday school and getting involved with the harvest suppers, church barbecues and the 'movable feasts'. She then became secretary to the Village Hall Committee helping with Reach Fair. Sue Jordan, Jen's friend and neighbour, recalls them both running the cake stall for a number of years and then moving on to organising cream teas together in the church before it had running water and a kitchen. Apparently, they used to make 250 scones each!

John meanwhile helped to raise £67,000 from various donors for the village hall extension. He carried out restoration work on the village sign and in 2013 carved a new one following Ron Morris's original design. A church bier used to carry coffins from the church to the graveyard was restored by John, he also refreshed the church sign from time to time.

Both John and Jen relish their hobbies. After years enjoying sailing their yacht they decided on more land-based entertainment. They joined the Burwell village twinning association and made many French friends. Jen was keen to improve her French, so she went on several courses and hosted conversation mornings in her kitchen with the slightly eccentric Frenchman Jean-Paul in charge.

John joined the Cambridge model engineering society and built a superb miniature railway engine which pulled several carriages around the club's track.
He thoroughly enjoyed its social side and would frequently amuse us by re-telling a joke he had heard while eating his lunchtime sandwiches. John is an excellent raconteur and we would be smiling as soon as he started a story with 'at my club the other day'. He plans to build a somewhat smaller railway in the attic of their new home. As a fellow train enthusiast, I can't wait to see this!

Jen has many interest; she became adept at jewellery-making and volunteered to do baking in the old kitchen at Anglesey Abbey in Lode. She has always had a love of gardening and is looking forward to tackling her new patch. In recent times she thoroughly enjoyed the Friday sewing group, Sue says she was a 'keen, valued and skilled member'.

Over the years we have had the pleasure of sharing many social occasions with John and Jen. Older Reach residents will remember John and Jan Robinson from Spring Hall Farm. The six of us used to celebrate birthdays at our house in midsummer with a veritable feast and every New Year's Eve we saw in the new year at Moon and Sixpence. It got more difficult to stay awake until midnight as we grew older, but we had a lot of fun.

In August 2024, John and Jen celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary – we were honoured to be the only non-family guests at their wonderful garden party. And of course, we cannot forget them being kind enough to be witnesses at our wedding in Bury St Edmunds in 2016. Jen was tasked with taking a video of us walking out of the registry office but she backed into a wall by mistake, so it ends up with us all laughing.

We will miss them of course, but Letchworth isn't too far away and I'm sure they will pay regular visits to the village which meant a huge amount to both of them. Good luck in your new home both of you!

Penny Greenhill

For colour pictures please see the outer back cover



2nd February 2009, the snow arrived in Reach!

Burwell Surgery
Patient Participation Group

BURWELL SURGERY PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG) – HAVE YOUR SAY!

The PPG is a group of patients and GP practice staff who meet for 90 minutes, four times a year, to discuss practice issues and patient experience to help improve the service. We also act as a consultative group for any changes at the practice.

Our next meeting will be at 6.30-8pm on Tuesday 14th October at the Burwell Day Centre with an option to join online via Teams.

ALL WELCOME!

If you would like to be part of the group please contact the Surgery on 01638 741234
or by email at cpicb.burwellsurgery.admin@nhs.net.

For more information, including a wide range of articles about Surgery services such as weight loss injections, health checks, social prescribing and health and wellbeing coaching, please visit:
https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/patient-group/about-our-ppg/

Events in Reach

Sunday 30th November
Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On from 5pm.

1st to 24th December

We will again be having our delightful Village Advent Calendar. See page 30 for the calendar itself . . . .

Thursday 4th December

Is the Dyke's End Christmas Quiz, which starts at 8.00pm. Its quite full already so please book a table by calling 01638 743816 or emailing dykesendpub@gmail.com.

Thursday 11th December

Our **Senior's Christmas Lunch** will take place in the Village Hall, from 12.30pm to 3pm. It's always a lovely event and we are delighted that Catherine, Claire and Ian will again be preparing the food for us.

Monday 22nd December

This delightful church service will start at 5.00pm in the church.

Wednesday 24th December

Carols around the Christmas Tree from 6pm – and **Santa** has indicated he hopes to visit us again!

Sunday 28th December

Reach Rider's Group Festive Ride which starts at 11.00am when they gather on the village green. If you're not a rider then you can still enjoy the event by seeing them off!

To get further details on all the above you can look at the village website at:
https://www.reach-village.co.uk/news.html.

The Dyke's End



Bus Timetables

The timetables below came into force on Wednesday 26th May 2025 – and it is now the T4 (run by Stagecoach) which comes through Reach. We will be getting 8 extra buses coming through each day (Monday to Saturday – still no buses on Sundays).

The only negative is that the T4 does not go to Drummer Street – but the T5, which goes through Swaffham Prior, does. Below, you will see how the connections might work.

TIGER BUS ROUTES

T4 - NEWMARKET TO ADDENBROOKES - Monday to Saturday (no buses on a Sunday)

Newmarket Bus Station	-	07:30	08:40	09:40	10:40	11:40	12:40	13:40	14:40	15:40	16:40	17:40	18:40
Burwell Newmarket Road	06:50	07:50	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00
Reach Post Office	**06:58**	**07:58**	**09:08**	**10:08**	**11:08**	**12:08**	**13:08**	**14:08**	**15:08**	**16:08**	**17:08**	**18:08**	**19:08**
Reach Ditchfield	**06:59**	**07:59**	**09:09**	**10:09**	**11:09**	**12:09**	**13:09**	**14:09**	**15:09**	**16:09**	**17:09**	**18:09**	**19:09**
Swaffham Prior Bus Shelter	07:03	08:03	09:13	10:13	11:13	12:13	13:13	14:13	15:13	16:13	17:13	18:13	19:13
Lode Church	-	-	09:20	-	11:20	-	13:20	-	15:20	-	17:20	-	-
Lode Quy Road	07:10	08:10	09:21	10:20	11:21	12:20	13:21	14:20	15:21	16:20	17:21	18:20	19:20
Bottisham Bell Road	07:14	08:14	09:26	10:24	11:26	12:24	13:26	14:24	15:26	16:24	17:26	18:24	19:24
Fulbourn Babraham Road	07:31	08:31	09:43	10:41	11:43	12:41	13:43	14:41	15:43	16:41	17:43	18:41	19:41
Addenbrookes	07:47	08:47	09:59	10:57	11:59	12:57	13:59	14:57	15:59	16:57	17:59	18:57	19:57

T4 - ADDENBROOKES TO NEWMARKET - Monday to Saturday (no buses on a Sunday)

Addenbrookes	06:25	07:50	08:50	09:59	10:59	11:59	12:59	13:59	14:59	16:05	17:05	18:05
Fulbourn Babraham Road	06:46	08:11	09:11	10:20	11:20	12:20	13:20	14:20	15:20	16:26	17:26	18:26
Bottisham Bell Road	07:03	08:28	09:28	10:37	11:37	12:37	13:37	14:37	15:37	16:43	17:43	18:43
Lode Quy Road	07:07	8.32	09:31	10:41	11:40	12:41	13:40	14:41	15:40	16:47	17:46	18:47
Lode Church	-	-	09:35	-	11:44	-	13:44	-	15:44	-	17:50	-
Swaffham Prior Bus Shelter	07:15	08:40	09:43	10:49	11:52	12:49	13:52	14:49	15:52	16:55	17:58	18:55
Reach Ditchfield	**07:18**	**08:43**	**09:46**	**10:52**	**11:55**	**12:52**	**13:55**	**14:52**	**15:55**	**16:58**	**18:01**	**18:58**
Reach Post Office	**07:20**	**08:45**	**09:48**	**10:54**	**11:57**	**12:54**	**13:57**	**14:54**	**15:57**	**17:00**	**18:03**	**19:00**
Burwell Hawthorn Way	07:31	08:56	09:59	11:05	12:08	13:05	14:08	15:05	16:08	17:11	18:14	19:14
Exning St Martin's Church	07:41	09:06	10:09	11:15	12:18	13:15	14:18	15:15	16:18	17:21	18:24	19:21
Newmarket Bus Station	07:49	09:14	10:17	11:23	12:26	13:23	14:26	15:23	16:26	17:29	18:32	19.29

T5 - SWAFFHAM PRIOR TO DRUMMER STREET CAMBRIDGE - Monday to Saturday (no buses on a Sunday)

Swaffham Prior Bus Shelter	07:12	08:12	09:27	10:27	11:27	12:27	13:27	14:27	15:27	16:27	17:32	18:42
Cambridge Drummer Street	07:42	08:42	09:57	10:57	11:57	12:57	13:57	14:57	15:57	16:57	18:02	19:12

T5 - DRUMMER STREET CAMBRIDGE TO SWAFFHAM PRIOR - Monday to Saturday (no buses on a Sunday)

Cambridge Drummer Street	06:35	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:05	17:15	18:15
Swaffham Prior Bus Shelter	07:08	08:33	09:33	10:33	11:33	12:33	13:33	14:33	15:33	16:38	17:48	18:48

Burwell Museum

October saw the end of our 'Open' season at the Museum. This year, we went for it by hosting a Halloween event over the weekend of the 25th and 26th October. It is the first time we have hosted this event and a lot of effort went in to make this a success – unfortunately due to Storm Amy, we were unable to host the Guides for an evening event – next year maybe!! Special thanks go to Catina Kirkpatrick, Karen Robinson and Malcolm Busby together with our team of very creative volunteers!



Our next event is Santa's visit to the Mill on the **6th and 7th December**. There is still time to buy your tickets!! There is free access to the barn where there will be storytelling and children's crafts available, along with face painting at a small charge (profits split with the Print Centre). There will also be spinning demonstrations, mulled wine, Burwell Brewery Christmas Ale, a Christmas hampers raffle and gifts to purchase! Tickets to Santa are by appointment only and each child gets their own specially chosen gift – visit our website to book.

In November, we have our last school visits of the year with Burwell Village College year 2 children joining us. We are then having a break until March next year where we already have 2 schools booked in to visit us. Our winter plans are progressing well and the Mill Team will have put their IPAF training to good use already by having a cherry picker on site to check out some concerns that they have with the fan tail and give the sails/mill a check before the winter.

Burwell is such a special village. The Museum Trustees were contacted by Gerald and Pauline Mason recently as they had heard that we were looking for funding to make some changes to our Tea Room. Thanks to their kind donation, we plan over the winter to expand and change our tearoom facility, enabling us to remedy the overheating and lack of space/height issues that we currently have, in both the kitchen and the main area.

This is a HUGE project for us and if you have electrical, plumbing, flooring or general building skills and you would like to help us, then please do get in touch.

Our volunteers are always busy and following the donation of a new work bench, bunded cabinet and wood working lathe for their workshop, they have been busy re-arranging it and sorting through their tools – some of which they have finally had to say goodbye to. So, if you have any old saws or tools that you no longer want, please think of us before throwing them away – the team would greatly appreciate this.

Our winter closure looks like it's going to be a busy time for us again, with the Environmental Education Hub planning progressing well, along with other practical things like completing our IT update and reviewing our website and finally sorting out our office!

Outside of the Museum, you may have seen that we have been selected for the Co-Op Local Community Fund. Please choose us as your charity of the year as part of your Co-Op Membership scheme and help us to purchase some AV kit for our new Environmental Hub.

Burwell Museum will be at the Christmas Farmers Market on the **13th December** and will be selling season tickets for 2026 if you wish to purchase one or give one as a gift to a loved one. We will have details of our events for 2026 by then too! We will also be selling raffle tickets for our Christmas Raffle Hampers so come along and see us.

After such a busy year, The Museum Trustees and Volunteers would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the year, by coming to an event or giving us a donation. Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you in 2026.

Burwell Museum Trustees



This is our second lot of snow in 2009, which arrived on the 18th December

Advertisers List

CATEGORY	Page
Accommodation	
Elm Tree Cottage, Culgaith	4
Garden Cottage, Swaffham Prior	4
Hilary's Cottage, Swaffham Prior	4
The Meadow House, Burwell	4
The Quy Mill Hotel and Spa	8
Architectural Drawings	
Ely Design Group	6
Cars	
Manchetts Service and Repair	6
Robinson and Claydon	15
Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning	
Rothwell's Carpet Cleaning	14
Chimney Sweep	
Brush Electric Sweep	7
NCS	3
Chiropodist	
Stepwise Footcare	11
Cleaning	
Hazel's Cleaning Services	10
Computing	
Burwell Computers	10
Community Care Homes	
Able Community Care Homes	8
Dry Cleaners	
Tina's, Burwell	11
Electricians	
Cambridge Electrical	5
Cartwright Brothers	2
Engineering Services	
N & G Marsh of Burwell	2
Florist	
Fabulous Flora	2
Food and Drink	
The Dyke's End	-
The Quy Mill Hotel and Spa	8
Funeral Directors	
Southgates	12
Gardens and Gardening	
C.R. Contracting	6
C W Kirk Lawnmowers	14
Four Seasons Tree Services	3
John Reed Landscape Gardener	7

CATEGORY	Page
Gifts and Interiors	
Tina's, Burwell	11
Haberdashery and Mending	
Tina's, Burwell	11
Home Maintenance	
D-Branch	13
Leisure	
The Quy Mill Hotel and Spa	8
T'ai Chi Chuan Classes	2
Locksmith	
Christopher the Locksmith	4
Oil	
Browns of Burwell	10
Painting and Decorating	
Elston Decorators	16
Performing Arts Training	
KD Academy	11
Pest Control	
D-Branch	13
Pet Sitting and Dog Walking	
Burwell Barkers	11
Lisa Greenhill	8
Plumbing and Heating	
Drain-Plumb Plumbing, Heating and Drain Services	9
Harrison Plumbing and Heating	9
NCS	3
Saniclean	7
Roofing	
Kennedy Roofing	14
Room Hire	
Reach Village Hall	4
Taxis	
Burwell Private Hire	13
Woodwork	
Paul Waldmann Woodwork	13

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Burwell, Reach, Swaffham Prior and Ely



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

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

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

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

Contact Instructor Faradena Afifi (Fara) for more information
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Yiquan



Chen Style

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Reach Village Hall



Reach Village Hall is located right next to our delightful village church and three doors down from the excellent Dyke's End Pub.

It is well equipped and spacious - and ideal for hosting a wide variety of events including birthday parties, business meetings, christenings, classes and wedding receptions.

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https://reach-village.co.uk/Village_Hall.html

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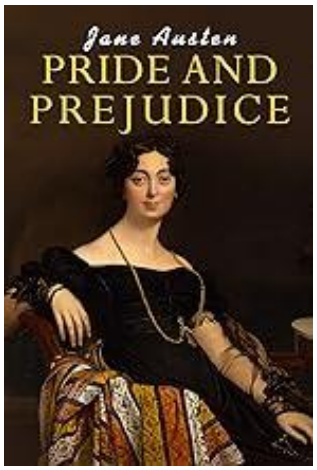
The current book we are reviewing is:



To be followed by . . . .



Ally Eariss
07897 672329 or aeariss123@hotmail.co.uk

Letter from the Vicarage



During December, people are 'counting down' to Christmas Day in an ever-increasing variety of ways. In my childhood we had a simple card Advent calendar with a traditional picture of a manger scene, doors marked with the countdown numbers and a picture of the different characters behind each. These days you can pay hundreds to have a gift for each day from toys to jewellery. And don't fret, your pets can have their own also! At St Mary's and St Etheldreda's, we mark each of the four Sundays of Advent by lighting a candle each time, one for the first week, two for the second and so on. I take special delight in announcing when it's time to light 'Four Candles'! Finally, when we get to Christmas, we light 5 candles, as we celebrate the Light of Jesus coming into the world.

Both our churches are open every day in daylight hours, with various services and activities going on throughout Advent and Christmas. Refresh Café, our Friday morning group for pre-school children and their grown-ups will continue up December 19th. In St Mary's, we'll also have our Remembering Tree in place from early December and all are welcome to write the names of loved ones on stars for the tree. All are welcome at any of our Advent and Christmas services and events, as we explore the meaning of Christmas together.

In St Etheldreda's, we have a Christingle service at 5.00pm on Monday 23rd December – a lovely, candlelit way to tell the Christmas story, with a collection in aid of the Children's Society.

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 on the first Friday of month 2.00 – 3.00pm at Burwell Day Centre and we also hope to have some Christmas specials.

Best wishes for an Advent full of hope, a Christmas full of joy, and a New Year filled with peace, from all of us at St Mary's and St Etheldreda's!

Revd Canon Dr Eleanor Williams, Vicar of Burwell with Reach, 01638 741262
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Saturday 13th December
12.00pm Community Angel Awards

Sunday 21st December
6.30pm St Mary's Carols by Candlelight

Monday 22nd December
5.00pm Christingle Service at Reach

Christmas Eve 24th December
3.00pm 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



Pop-Up Pantry
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Tales from a Reach Garden



We have had a very mild autumn up to the middle of November, although it has been quite gloomy at times, but the weather wasn't quite warm enough to sustain the summer vegetables; however, the winter vegetables have benefited and grown rapidly.

Throughout October the garden has been full of flowers and berries and we had a plentiful crop of large eating apples as well as cooking apples. Now the days are much shorter and currently the wind is blowing from the north, so most of the garden flowers have either withered or have dropped off their stems after an overnight frost, but not all – there is a lovely red rose still in bloom in one of the borders.



The last rose of summer, survived the overnight frost

It's at this time of year that I appreciate evergreen plants most. For much of the year they sit unobtrusively in the garden as the supporting cast for the showier, more colourful plants. Now I'm glad they are there, centre stage, to provide colour in the garden - even if it's just green. Many evergreens have berries and provide winter food for a lot of our garden visitors. For once, our pyracantha shrub is still full of berries in November, which is surprising because often they're stripped of every single berry before the end of October. Local birds are still helping themselves to the crab apples, but once they have finished them, I'm sure they will pay more attention the other berries in the garden.

One of the few evergreen plants in our garden that's in flower at this time of year is a tall Mahonia. Its spikes of brilliant yellow flowers light up the darkest corner of the garden in winter, and with the help of the local bumble bees (even on cold days!), they'll eventually form blue-black berries.



Bumble bee pollinating Mahonia flowers (at 2°C).

The vegetable garden is looking fuller than usual for this time of year because the mild autumn weather has allowed us to risk planting a few new vegetable varieties for the winter months, such as Tatsoi greens, which were planted out in September. They are brassica plants (like cabbage and broccoli) similar to Bok choi/Pak choi and are supposed to be winter hardy, resisting temperatures down to minus15°C. There is always a risk that the weather will change and they may not do much, but they have had a very good start, in spite of the best efforts of leaf-chomping caterpillars…

We need to be alert to slugs and snails during milder wet weather too, as they are attracted to any leafy vegetables, but especially brassicas. The Tatsoi greens also need protection from curious birds and mammals, so the bed where they are growing is covered in netting. The local birds, rabbits, squirrels and deer have plenty of food elsewhere in the rest of the garden! Tatsoi form an attractive rosette of leaves and can be lifted and eaten whole, or treated as a "cut-and-come-again" vegetable where the lower leaves are picked and used in stir-fries, soups and winter salads.

Recently, "Winter Gem" lettuces were planted in the polytunnel, in the spaces where the tomato plants had been cut down and lifted when they had finished cropping. This variety of lettuce is hardier than the lettuces we grow in summer, but even so, it benefits from some protection from the weather and we had the space in the polytunnel for them.

Richard and I are looking forward to trying these vegetables because occasionally it's nice to have some fresh salad leaves even in winter, but especially on Boxing Day with the leftovers!

Danuta Gibson

Reach Cricket Club

No more cricket this year, but there is one more sporting triumph to report. For the past four years the cricket club has held an annual Ryder Cup on the golf course, a challenge between the batsmen and the bowlers. It has always seemed a bit unfair to me, given that a batsman's business is hitting a ball with a long wooden stick; it is an interchangeable skill with golf. To even things up we ought to have a game of tenpin bowling as well and aggregate the scores. For the first three years the batsmen did indeed carry all before them. Could they make it four in a row? Or, to put it in Ryder Cup language, could they kick ass?

Below are the victorious bowlers with their trophy.

Ross Clark

Silly question. Why do you think I have written up this event this year when I haven't bothered in the past? But it did come down to the last pair, me and Bryan Perason. Bryan, his mind on his mangoes, kept slicing his ball into the non-existent lakes of the Cambridge Lakes golf course and it was all over. The final result: 5 and a half to 6 and a half in favour of the bowlers.



Andrew Trump, dressed as an extra from My Fair Lady, tees off at the first



KINGSWAY UPDATE

The statutory consultation period for Kingsway's Solar Farm proposal closed at the end of October. The Parish Council submitted a letter opposing the overhead pylon route proposed by Kingsway to connect its solar farm to the national grid at Burwell. Our opposition, based on strong concerns of villagers about the adverse visual impact on homes and the Devil's Dyke, was supported by a professional landscape study helpfully commissioned by some residents. Historic England has also raised significant concerns about the adverse impact of the proposed pylon route on the Dyke.

The PC has offered to work with Kingsway to come up with an improved solution that would be acceptable to residents and has suggested that the connection to the grid is buried underground. The very similar Sunnica scheme will connect to the grid at Burwell by underground cable so precedent is on our side. The PC's letter is here:

https://reachparish.gov.uk/news/reach-parish-council-submission-to-kingsway-process.

Kingsway now has some time to digest the responses to the statutory consultation and to make amendments (or not) to its proposal. In early 2026 it will apply for a Development Consent Order from the Planning Inspectorate (PI). The PI will either reject the application or, very probably, initiate a public examination (a.k.a. enquiry). We have, of course, been though this before with the Sunnica application although it could be argued that the stakes for Reach are higher this time around because the visual impact on our surroundings will be greater and if approved, Kingsway's application would set a precedent that would likely encourage other energy proposals to feed into the National Grid at Burwell by overhead pylon.

Approval of the Kingsway scheme in its current form could, over time, lead to a pylon 'wirescape' dominating views to the east and north of the village.

If a public examination is initiated by the PI, the PC will register as an interested party, giving us an ability actively to participate in the process. We will need professional legal and landscape architectural support if we are to stop or to modify Kingsway's proposal to a level that is acceptable to residents.

We can secure some of this support collectively - the PC has joined an alliance of parishes affected by the Kingsway proposal. We are engaged with Swaffham Prior and Burwell PCs in developing a combined position on the pylons. This will help in terms of sharing experience and costs but we will almost certainly require funds to support work specific to Reach.

Should it go ahead, there is nothing to stop any group or individual registering to participate in the examination. I would encourage anybody who feels strongly about this scheme to register and participate. A clear demonstration of the strength of local feeling about the pylon route can only help our case. I can provide guidance on registering in due course but it is a straight forward process. In terms of developing a strong local voice on Kingsway and other energy developments around the substation, it is good to see the formation of the Burwell Energy Advisory Team. The interests and concerns of our neighbours in Burwell are near identical to our own.

Nick Acklam

KINGSWAY SOCIAL COMMUNITY ACTION

It's been a busy month. We've published a report on land use and solar energy, drawing on new modelling by Tony Day showing that large-scale solar offers limited grid benefits. We've promoted the **#AskEd** campaign with **Stop Oversized Solar**, challenging the government's renewable-energy strategy.

We issued an **Open Letter to Ed Miliband** in response to the government's claim that 76% of the public "wouldn't mind" living next to a solar farm. We also contacted **George Freeman MP** following the APPGSTA report *Feeding Britain Sustainably to 2050*, which warns that current land-use policies risk undermining UK food security.

We are continuing to **encourage our MP to engage more fully with the inadequacies of the consultation process**, which has left many residents feeling poorly informed.

During the consultation phase we strengthened our links with communities along the **grid-connection corridor**, and we are now working with **BEAT (Burwell Energy Awareness Team)** to help maintain pressure on these issues.

Keep an eye on our **News page** for the latest updates, announcements and links to useful resources: **kingswayaction.org/news.**

It has also been a **busy month for wildlife**, with sightings of golden plover and lapwings near the Fleam Dyke as winter migration gets underway. Please continue to log any wildlife observations on **iRecord**, particularly along the grid connection corridor. Every record counts.

We are working closely with the Parish Council Alliance who are seeking **legal representation**, which will be critical in the next stage. Our **Crowd Justice** fundraiser supports this effort. This ensures that donations only go towards a fully-funded case, with automatic refunds if targets aren't met. Every pledge, large or small, helps.

Finally, a note on **sign thefts**. During the consultation it was wonderful to see so many signs, banners and stickers displayed. Unfortunately, after some early incidents, we've now had further reports of signs being taken. These are expensive to produce and funded entirely through your donations. If signs are removed from private land, please report it to the police and request an incident number. This helps us build a clearer picture of what's happening.

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas, and thank you for your support throughout 2025.

Useful links

- Join KSCA: kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us
- Request a sticker: hello@kingswayaction.org
- Support our campaign: gofund.me/no-to-kingsway-solar-farm
- Contribute to legal funds: crowdjustice.com/case/kingswaysolarcommunitylegalaction
- Follow us on Facebook & Instagram: #kingswaysolaraction

Kathy Day

Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities

Once again the time has come to remind everyone who lives in Reach and who considers himself or herself eligible for our Christmas Grant now is the time to apply. The majority of applications come from pensioners in particular those who have to manage on the State Pension and it may be that in the present times of uncertainty support is required.

If you are in need of help, or know someone who may be in difficulty but who are unlikely to apply on their own behalf, please do get in touch. The Trustees will always be happy to consider requests for assistance and confirm ALL applications will be dealt with in confidence.

Financial support is available throughout the year, not only at Christmas. Please apply to:

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Clerk to the Trustees 01638 741035**.**

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Nathan Bridgeman	Chair
Hilary Fielding	Councillor
Catherine Gibson	Councillor
Edward Hall	Councillor
Tim Quilter	Vice Chair
Vacancy	Councillor
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor
John Trapp	District Councillor
Yannifer Malinowski	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

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.

Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 7th October 2025 at 7.30pm

Attendance

Nathan Bridgeman	Chair	Present
Tim Quilter	Vice Chair	Not Present
Nick Acklam	Councillor	Not Present
Hilary Fielding	Councillor	Not Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present
Edward Hall	Chair	Not Present
Vacancy	Councillor	
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Present
John Trapp	District Councillor	Not Present
Yannifer Malinowski	County Councillor	Present

Apologies for absence
Received and approved.

Forum for members of the public
There were none.

Declaration of Interests
There were none.

Kingway – An Update from Councillor Acklam
Kingsway Solar formally applied for approval to build a solar farm to the south of Reach on 17 September. As a nationally significant infrastructure project, the application will be overseen by the Planning Inspectorate. This note provides background to the application outlines the likely implications for Reach should it be approved and offers suggestions about what you can do in response to the application.
Background
Kingsway Solar wants to install solar panels and large storage batteries on 1,500 hectares (3,706 acres) of farmland near Balsham, West Wratting, Weston Colville, Willingham Green, Carlton, Brinkley and Six Mile Bottom and to connect it to the national grid at a new substation at Burwell using overhead cable and pylons. The proposed connection route runs close to Reach.
The solar panel development will cover an area larger than Heathrow Airport and the 14 km cable route will use pylons up to 65 metres tall.
In 2024 the Parish Council informed Kingsway that it was unhappy with the principle of the development and with the approach that Kingsway proposed to take in assessing the environmental impact of the scheme. Our views went unheeded. We now plan to object to the development based on the strong opposition to it expressed by residents at a Parish Council meeting of 5 August and in light of more detailed, but far from definitive, information about Kingsway's plans.

How will the proposed development affect Reach?
The overhead pylon route and the new substation will fundamentally change the character of the countryside between Reach and Burwell.
In its Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) Kingsway has provided an indicative route for the overhead cable and pylon route. With thanks to Steve Boreham, this has now been added to the map of cumulative energy developments between Reach and Burwell attached to this article. Whilst the route is indicative and may be changed, it is not good news for the village. The proposed route will run much closer to the centre of Reach than the existing overhead cable route that cuts across Burwell Road. Many residents of Burwell Road will have the views from their homes industrialised should the connection be approved. Users of the 24 Acres will also find the overhead cable very intrusive. Furthermore, the pylons will run close to the Devil's Dyke for several hundred metres and thus will be very visible from the path on top of the Dyke and from Swaffham Road. The proposed overhead cable would complete a 'curtain' of overhead cables around the north and east of Reach.
Kingsway's proposal is the tenth energy scheme on land between Reach and Burwell. Its approval is dependent on an eleventh, the construction by National Grid of a new substation termed 'Burwell South'. This will be of a similar size and visual impact to the existing substation at Weirs Drove.

National Grid has not yet confirmed its location (even to Kingsway), but the likely site is several hundred metres closer to Reach. It seems almost certain that the new substation will have capacity to take further feeds from local green energy schemes, opening up the prospect of more arable fields around the village going over to solar panels and battery storage compounds and more overhead cables bringing in energy from solar farms further afield.

What can we do?

The PC has joined the alliance of Parish Councils opposing Kingsway to share costs and to strengthen our voice. With funding support from local residents, the PC has commissioned a preliminary assessment of the impact of the proposed pylon route on the landscape around the village. We will publish the assessment when we have it and will be using it to respond to Kingsway's PEIR. We have to respond by 29 October and would welcome your views beforehand. However, there is nothing to stop you expressing your own views directly to Kingsway http://www.kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk.

Indeed, we would encourage as many of you as possible to do so as this will demonstrate the strength of opposition to the application to Kingsway and the Planning Inspectorate. We would encourage you not to use Kingsway's template but instead to follow the guidance of the Kingsway Solar Community Action (KSCA) group https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/get-involved-in-kingsway-solar-farm-objection/consultation-period-is-here/

KCSA is running a number of letter writing workshops, and the PC is exploring if one can be organised close to Reach. We will keep you posted.

The PC is also pressing central and local government to revise planning frameworks and guidelines to take far more account of cumulative impact of energy developments on landscapes and communities.

1. Co-option of new Councillor. Councillor on Village hall committee

No one had applied to be a new Councillor, ***Clerk*** to email the village again. No Councillor has the capacity to become part of the village hall committee.

2. IT & village communications

The PC website is able to offer users the opportunity to join the PC emailing list and/or the village mailing list. This would meet the GDPR requirements which the PC must adhere to. ***Councillor Hall*** will speak with the provider.

Clerk to request an extra line on the PC page of the magazine encouraging residents to contact The Clerk if they would like to receive the PC emails and presently don't. And to add the Councillor emails to the PC page.

3. Planning

25/00966/VAR Land Southwest Of Hill Farm Fair Green - To Vary Condition 11 (width of Access) of previously approved 18/01397/OUT, dated 5 April 2019 for demolition of existing agricultural buildings, construction of two detached bungalows, associated parking and infrastructure.

Following discussion, the PC concluded that ***the Clerk*** should write to confirm that the PC is content that the access is not widened. The building engineer's report is compelling, an increase in the width of the track would almost certainly destabilise the barns on either side. The PC will also suggest that a Legal Modification Order be established to detail the legal widths of both byways 7 & 8.

Additionally, the PC will comment on the visual impact of metaling the track and the creeping urbanization of such.

25/00950/FUL The Dykes End 8 Fair Green - Replacement of existing front windows and associated works

The PC continue to take the view that, whilst supporting the replacement of the windows at the Dykes End, they should be wooden and not UPVC to keep the character of the premises and the conservation area in the center of the village.

Clerk to inform ECDC planning

4. District Councillor Report

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The political leadership of ECDC has now launched a campaign in favour of Option B, with East Cambridgeshire along with Huntingdonshire and Fenland being run from Peterborough. Neither Peterborough nor Huntingdonshire is supporting this option.

If you believe it will be deeply damaging to East Cambridgeshire to cut off our influence over the places where we work, study, and receive health care, and to be run from a city miles away with which most of us have no connection, please respond to their survey at https://tinyurl.com/eastcambs-lgr-survey

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

A long Full Council meeting on 18 September.

1. New Homes Ombudsman: the Lib Dems proposed that the Council should require its Trading Company to join the scheme which gives people moving into new build homes the right to take complaints to the New Homes Ombudsman. This was rejected by the Conservatives, on the grounds that it wasn't compulsory, & that the Trading Company had joined an inferior scheme which didn't give access to the Ombudsman.
2. Ely junction: the proposal that the Council should continue to press the Government to invest in upgrades to the rail network north of Ely, to open it up to more rail journeys for passengers & freight was passed.
3. Corporate Plan: the Lib Dems made the usual observation that this was a work of fiction. (The plans for the £13M crematorium at Mepal were developed in secret for eighteen months without being in the plan. If a £13M project is hidden from the Council's plan, what value can be attached to the rest of it?) There were some elements in it that the Lib Dems could support, such as the inclusive play project, and the need for a crossing at the A10 BP roundabout. It was pointed out that four years ago, the Conservative group had promised an army of uniformed volunteer traffic wardens — that has now shrunk to, possibly, part-funding one PCSO; the illegal and inconvenient parking continues in the villages and Ely.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE RETIREMENT AND REPLACEMENT

ECDC Chief Executive John Hill will be retiring at the end of this year, & the Council has set in motion plans to fill the vacancy. Of the three members of the recruitment panel, two are Conservative despite both groups being equal on the council.

STREAMLINING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The Government is consulting on removing the requirement for statutory consultation as part of the process for determining large national infrastructure projects such as the solar farm at Sunnica, or the incinerator at Wisbech. This proposal is set out in Government's Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

The consultation can be found on: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-streamlining-infrastructure-planning

AFFORDABLE HOUSING—A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Lib Dems on the Council's Finance & Assets Committee voted against plans to hand over £72,000 of affordable housing funds to East Cambs District Council's own company, East Cambs Trading Company, for use at Arbour Square Ely. The money came from developer contributions that must be used to create extra affordable housing. However, ECTC had already signed binding contracts to deliver all twenty-seven houses on this site as affordable housing for social rent. Lib Dem Councillors said this means the grant does not secure a single additional house—it simply gives taxpayers' money back to a Council-owned company that has already committed to deliver the scheme. Local residents in housing need are being denied the extra houses this money should have provided.

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 29 September.

•The Council's recycling rate is lower for the last two quarters than the equivalent periods a year ago.
•The Council has admitted that on most days the street cleaning service operates below the minimum number of staff.
•.It was noted that many residents had received duplicate or even triplicate letters about the forthcoming changes to the waste collection service, and that there were instances of two letters with different collection dates.

POLICE SURVEY

Cambridgeshire Constabulary have created a short survey to understand how people currently report crimes & how the police can improve the process. It only takes 10–15 minutes, and as a thank you, you'll have the chance to win a £100 shopping voucher in a prize draw. https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CIR_Cambs_Constabulary/

The PC encourages residents to complete surveys details in the above report.

5. County Councillor Report

Report to follow.
Councillor Malinowski outlined the work being done at CCC to support option A for the Local Government Reorganisation.

The PC discussed the LGR and agreed to support option A, based on Councillor views and those of residents who had expressed an opinion. The letter below was approved. ***Clerk*** to send.

Reach Parish Council has carefully examined the options to reorganise local government in Cambridgeshire. It has also consulted residents of the village. There is very strong consensus here in favour of Option A. Furthermore, there is consistency in the reasons people give for supporting Option A.

Reach PC firmly believes that Option A best serves the needs of the community we represent. Our village is a satellite of Cambridge, and the great majority of our residents work in the city and/or frequently and regularly visit for leisure and shopping. Of those residents in education, virtually all attend sixth form education and beyond there. Others in our community depend on services provided by Addenbrookes hospital and on specialist health and social care from other bodies based in Cambridge. Only Option A reflects these economic and social realities and can maintain and improve on existing local government provision to our community.

In business process terms, it also makes sense that the entire commuter belt around Cambridge is incorporated into a unitary authority with the city at its heart. This is beneficial to the city as well as outlying communities.

Residents of Reach see significant opportunities in the creation of an Option A unitary authority. We consider that there would be enhanced scope for improving public transport - the current two tier system of local government has not worked to our benefit. We also believe that an Option A authority would be best placed to deliver environmental improvements, for example the creation of traffic free routes and green corridors from communities such as Reach into the centre of Cambridge.

6. Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as correct.
The Councillors agreed that the draft minutes should be published on the website and distributed by email, with a notice that the minutes have not been review or approved and are subject to change.

7.1 Finance

The process of Councillor Bridgeman to becoming a signatory on the PC bank account is ongoing, ***Clerk*** to contact Barclays Bank.

7.2 Parish Council Members

Nothing to report.

7.3 Play Spaces
Nothing to report.

7.4 Rights of Way
Councillor Gibson commented on the path at the top of the Green, which is now overgrown and impassable. Clerk commented that this is only a permissive path over Councty Frams land and therefore does not have to be maintained. ***Councillor Gibson*** to contact Councty Farms and try and get the path reinstated.

7.5 24Acres Committee
Nothing to report.

7.6 Friends Of Reach Wood
Nothing to report.

7.7 A to B1102 Group
Nothing to report.

7.8 Nature Recovery Plan
Ellis Selway of the NT would like to brief the PC on plans to restore the peat areas of Hurdle Hall. Principally this involves civil engineering to hold water on the land for longer along the lines of what the NT did on Burwell and Tubney Fens last winter. The PC agreed to invite Ellis to the November meeting.

Scrub clearance in the field next to the Devil's Dyke took place on 4 October, thank you to those residents who assisted.

Reach PC had been approached to take part in Cambridgeshire County Council's Nature Recovery FROM THE GROUND UP project launching across Cambridgeshire. The PC agreed that Councillor Acklam should proceed with an exploratory conversation with the project officers.

7.9 Hythe Restoration Group
Charlotte Cane MP and Councillor Acklam to meet seniors from Anglian Water at the Hythe later in October to discuss improvements/restoration.

7.10 Website & public communications
Please see above

7.11 Energy developments in the locality
Local Area Energy Plan: Councillor Acklam has enrolled to attend this CCC workshop on 21 October. It is important to engage with such exercises in the hope of influencing the outcome, if we are arguing for a more strategic approach to energy development around Reach.
Grenergy: We await a date for this application to be heard by the ECDC Planning Committee. Councillor Acklam hopes to attend and address the Committee. The National Trust also plans to send an officer to speak in opposition.
Kingsway: The above summarises the current position.
The presentation at Burwell on 24 September revealed significant levels of concern amongst Burwell residents, some of whom pressed Burwell PC to become more actively involved.
A site visit has taken place with Alison Farmer to assist her in producing an initial landscape assessment which will be used to shape the PC's response to Statutory Consultation. The response has to be delivered by 29 Oct
The PC endorsed the principal messages of the letter (which are very unlikely to change in light of Alison's assessment). These are opposition to the proposed overhead line on the grounds of extensive and significant visual intrusion from very many parts of the village and in particular from the Devil's Dyke scheduled monument and a request that Kingsway buries the connection, following the precedent of Sunnica.
The PC encourages as many residents as possible to oppose the pylon route through the Statutory Consultation process. There is guidance in the above mentioned.

8. Remembrance Service
The service will take place on Sunday 9th November. ***Clerk*** to purchase a wreath. Councillor Bridgeman will attend the service on behalf of the PC.

10. Payment

E.on – Power on the green	£20.12
NT – 24Acres lease	£10.00
S Bailey – clerk Salary	Confidential
S Bailey – stationary	£36.44
CR Contracts - Mowing contract	£326.00

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

Attendance

Nathan Bridgeman	Chair	Not Present
Tim Quilter	Vice Chair	Present
Nick Acklam	Councillor	Present
Hilary Fielding	Councillor	Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present
Edward Hall	Chair	Not Present
Vacancy	Councillor	
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Not Present
John Trapp	District Councillor	Not Present
Yannifer Malinowski	County Councillor	Not Present

Apologies for absence
Received and approved. Councillor Quilter chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Bridgeman.

Forum for members of the public
A resident attended to listen to the presentation and discussion on the peatland restoration.

Declaration of Interests
There were none.

Presentation from Ellis Selway Wicken Fen NT - peatland restoration of Hurdle Hall.
Cancelled due to illness.

1. Planning
25/00393/FUM Anchor Lane Solar Farm
The PC had been offered a belated opportunity to comment on this energy development on Burwell Fen by ECDC. It was agreed that the PC would respond, reiterating concerns about the cumulative impact of energy developments on Burwell Fen.

25/01111/FUM Site West Of Hightown Drove Peatland restoration of Hurdle Hall. Creation of perimeter clay bunding on East & North of site created from site won material (forming borrow pits) to form impermeable barrier at ground level to a maximum of 0.5m above existing ground level
The area under discussion is to the right of the Lode, leaving the village, from the pylons to the bridge, excluding the fishing pits.
A clay bund will be created to help retain water and increase the water levels. This has been successful on Tubney & Burwell Fens.
The access track to the Hurdle Hall area, and cattle grazing will be maintained.
Discussion took place regarding wildlife, particularly badgers and deer. ***Councillor Acklam*** to contact Ellis Selway to establish whether there is a deer & badger management strategy.
The National Trust has conducted a flood risk assessment to meet an Environment Agency requirement. It showed no adverse impact.

The PC has previously given support in principle as this fits with the nature recovery plan.
Councillor Acklam proposed that the PC support the plan subject to more information on the wildlife management plan.
Approved. ***Councillor Acklam*** to contact Ellis Selway for confirmation and to write to ECDC planning.

25/01138/FUL - 31 Great Lane. Single story rear extension, installation of an air source heat pump & energy efficiency improvement
Date of Parish Council Visit: 04/11/2025 Councillors Acklam & Gibson
Local plan - Compliant
Previous applications/appeals – 05/00120/FUL – extension adding utility room. This application joins the previous extension to the conservatory creating one large room.
Loss of sunlight – N/A
Overshadowing/loss of outlook – single story extension, not visible by neighbours
Overlooking and loss of privacy – single story and doesn't protrude further that conservatory
Highway issues: Traffic generation, Vehicular access & Highway safety – N/A
Noise or disturbance resulting from use, including proposed hours of operation – ASHP will be situated at back of garage, where there are no neighbours. ASHP is covered under permitted development but is included in application as underfloor heating is being installed to make ASHP more efficient. Compliance certificate can be obtained.
Smells and fumes – N/A

Capacity of physical infrastructure – N/A
Deficiencies in social facilities – N/A
Storage and handling of hazardous materials and development of contaminated land – N/A
Loss or effect on trees – No tree loss
Adverse impact on nature conservation interests and biodiversity opportunities – N/A
Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas – Outside of the conservation area
Incompatible or unacceptable uses – N/A
Local financial considerations offered as a contribution or grant – N/A
Compliance with Reach Design Code – Extension at rear of property & not visible to public. However, matching existing and reuse of salvaged bricks were feasible.
Compliance with Reach Landscape Analysis – Extension similar to existing footprint, landscaping not required
Conclusion of outcome: No comments to raise

2. District Councillor Report
After a flurry of meetings in September, there was very little activity in the Council in October, and even the Planning Committee in October was cancelled through lack of business.
Local Government Reorganisation
The Leader of the Council is still pursuing Option B (with East Cambs joining Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough) for the Local Government Reorganisation. Fortunately, Cambs County Council will submit Option A (with East Cambs joining Cambridge City and South Cambs). So, the Minister will have Option A to consider as well as Option B and, no doubt further options submitted by other Cambridgeshire Councils.
We have both been arguing that Option A is the better option for our residents. The Full Council will debate this on Thursday 20 November; the meeting starts at six o'clock, but this item will appear a bit later, uncertain when, as the agenda has not been published yet. The meeting can be viewed live on YouTube, and details of how to join it will be given on the East Cambs District Council website.
The Council has launched a grant scheme for Community Groups. The scheme will pay up to £1,000 for projects designed to improve the quality of life for residents. Information about the grant including eligibility criteria and application guidance can be found on the council's website https://eastcambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-wellbeing/grants-and-community-projects/community-fund
Applications must be in by 31 December.

3. County Councillor Report
No report received.

4. Minutes of previous Meeting
The minutes were approved as correct.

5.1 Finance
Nothing to report.

5.2 Parish Council Members
Nothing to report.

5.3 Play Spaces
Nothing to report.

5.4 Rights of Way
Councillor Acklam reported that there had been an insident with a 13m + trailer harvester getting stuck at the bend of Fair Green & Great Lane and causing damage to one of the houses.

Discussion took place regarding parking on the Green & on the grass at the bottom of The Hythe. This is of particularly concerning with the onset of winter.
Clerk to request that the village hall & Church ask their users to refrain from parking on the grass. There is usually adequate parking around the green, if not right outside the church or hall. Under exceptional circumstance the PC asks that permission is requested if additional parking is thought necessary.

Discussion took place regarding the still broken crash barrier at the corner of Barston Drove by Swan Lake barns. ***Councillors Fielding & Acklam*** to discuss with highways at CCC. ***Councillor Acklam*** also undertook to write again to Highways to request remedial work on Straight Drove which was already deteriorating following autumn rain.

It was also noted that there was concern that the new bridge across Burwell Lode would make access easier for trail bikes.

5.5 24Acres Committee
A risk assessment for planned hedge-laying at the 24 Acres, in early 2026, was submitted and approved.

5.6 Friends Of Reach Wood
Nothing to report.

5.7 A to B1102 Group

The AtoB1102 group met to discuss GCP's proposals on the relocation of the Newmarket Road park and ride and the consultation material made available. Views were collected from members from the villages and parishes served by the group including Bottisham, Burwell, Fordham, Greater and Little Wilbraham, Lode & Longmeadow, Reach, Swaffham Bulbeck, Swaffham Prior and Stow cum Quy. This note summarises the views expressed.

1. There are major concerns about the **impact** of the scheme as proposed **on traffic coming South on the Newmarket Road from the Quy interchange and the A14 junction 35**. There is nothing in the consultation material that addresses these issues.
2. **Traffic already backs up in rush hour periods** where Newmarket Road moves from two lanes to one above High Ditch Road, **locking up the roundabout and causes tailbacks through Stow-cum-Quy on the B1102 and on the A1303, often stretching back to Dunsley Corner**.
3. **Increasing the volume of traffic to reach the Park & Ride and adding a traffic light control** to enable right turns from the Newmarket Road entrance **can only increase this congestion in the absence of any ameliorating measures** (for example dualling the southbound Newmarket Road to the P&R entrance) creating unacceptable peak times congestion and possibly leading to tailbacks onto the Westbound A14 at junction 35.
4. **The option of no right turn into the P&R from Airport Way** and expecting traffic to circle the Airport Way roundabout **would only exacerbate this congestion and tailback**.
5. More generally, there was a view that a **fuller exploration of traffic flows and congestion is needed**: for example, had there been any consideration of a one-way gyratory system through the P&R as a travel hub with the existing Airport Way / Newmarket Road or other similar flow enhancing solutions?
6. The proposals **do not include the provision of a bus lane inbound from the A14 junction**, something which is essential to enable reliable bus services timings especially in peak periods. Such a bus lane needs to be integrated into the design / layout of the Travel Hub along with access to the inbound bus lane along Newmarket Road.
7. There were **concerns about cycle paths and access to the P&R**. Safe crossings were needed but light controlled crossing of the road would create further barriers to flow. Should GCP not consider underpasses or bridging the road to facilitate cycle and pedestrian access?
8. There is a **need to ensure that there is a proper interchange between the regular buses servicing the B1102 corridor** (both public buses such as the 12 and the T5 and, potentially, school buses) and the P&R. This needs to be built into scheme plans.
9. The **P&R needs to be future-proofed for the impact of further development and sustainable travel**. It should be a full transport hub with provision for, *inter alia,* safe cycle storage, a café / retail offering, safe waiting areas, delivery pick up etc. to meet current and future needs and to act as a magnet, encouraging the use of public transport and more sustainable solutions.
10. There were **concerns to ensure that there was sustainable access to the P&R from the Wilbrahams** (which appeared not to be mentioned in the consultation) and that the balancing pools and substation might block such access.
11. There was some **concern that the P&R might become an access point for excess public use of Wilbraham Fen** and a need to consider the ecological impacts of any such increase in usage.

Given the above, the Group has serious concerns that what is proposed will lead to a detrimental situation as regards traffic flow and congestion, especially at peak times, rather than improving the current situation and creating additional capacity to help buffer the huge increase in vehicle and people movement that will arise as the Cambridge East development becomes a reality. We believe that the GCP should be held to account to demonstrate that their proposals will not cause detriment, through peer-reviewed modelling of their proposals against current and projected traffic flows over the coming 10 years.

The Consultation Documents / Information can be found at:
https://yourvoice.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/gcp/cea-travelhub

The Pc support all the AtoB group concerns and had nothing extra to add.

5.8 Nature Recovery Plan

Reach have been asked to join the CCC's Nature Recovery FROM THE GROUND UP project which aims to support communities in Cambridgeshire to co-create parish-level Community Nature Plans. Steve Boreham has agreed to attend a meeting; however, it is unclear at the moment how it can add value to what the village has already done.

5.9 Hythe Restoration Group

Charlotte Cane MP and Councillor Acklam to meet seniors from Anglian Water at the Hythe on Friday 7th November to discuss improvements/restoration.

5.10 Website & public communications

Nothing to report

5.11 Energy developments in the locality

The PC had written to Kingsway, as part of the statutory consultation process, opposing the pylon route on the grounds of adverse impact on homes in the village and the Devil's Dyke. The PC had offered to work with Kingsway to come up with a better solution.

The PC had been able to submit comment to the planning committee regarding the Anchor Lane solar application, although Reach had not been originally consulted as this is outside of our parish.

A Buwell Energy Awareness team has been formed. The group will operate outside of Burwell PC.

6. Local Government Reorganisation

Councillor Acklam to write to all Councillors at ECDC with regard to ECDC's preference for option B of the LGR. This may be better for those parishes north of Ely, but not those to the south. The PC feels that the survey was not balanced and the fact that it closed after only 3 weeks is not acceptable.

The CCC local councillors have written a letter to come from our local parishes to Steve Reed, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. It was agreed that Councillor Bridgeman should sign as Chair of Reach PC.

7. Moving the defibrillator

Councillor Gibson had struggled to obtain 3 quotes for the electrical work required to move the defibrillator from the village hall to the disused BT phone box. The PC discussed the 2 quotes and approved the cheaper quote subject to ***Councillor Gibson*** checking the lighting was included.
Councillor Gibson to also obtain costs for the painting, and new glass & fitting.
Clerk to submit a grant application. The future maintenance costs will be added to the next budget document.

Payment

E.on – Power on the green £20.12
S Bailey – Remembrance Wreath £24.49
CR Contracts - Mowing contract £406.00

ADVENT WINDOWS 2025



Diary Dates

December	Event	Location	Time
Tuesday 2	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Tuesday 2	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Sunday 7	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Tuesday 9	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Thursday 11	Seniors Christmas Lunch	Village Hall	12.30pm
Thursday 11	Book Club	Dyke's End Pub	7.00pm
Tuesday 16	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Wednesday 17	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Monday 22	Christingle Service	St Etheldreda's, Reach	5.00pm
Tuesday 23	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Sunday 28	Reach Riders Group Festive Ride	Fair Green	11.00am
January	**Event**	**Location**	**Time**
Friday 2	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Sunday 4	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Tuesday 6	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Thursday 8	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Wednesday 14	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Wednesday 14	Recycling Day (Blue)		
Tuesday 20	Recycling Day (Brown/Green)		
Tuesday 27	Recycling Day (Blue)		

Grant Fund

The structure of the new Grant Fund team is as follows:

Chair:	Hilary Fielding
Secretary:	Grahame Radford
Treasurer:	Edward Hall
Member:	Catherine Gibson



They can be contacted by emailing: reachgrantfund@gmail.com or you can call Grahame on 01638 742814 or deliver applications to 14 Ditchfield.

The team is in the process of reviewing and updating the paperwork and the village website will be updated accordingly in due course.

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

A view along Reach lode looking towards Upware/Pout Hall corner, taken in the early 1990's from a position next to the pits adjacent to the site of Hurdle Hall. The temporary bridge was built to enable earth moving equipment to cross the river during the creation of Tubney Fen.

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







John wondering if the wine will go with the lobster and John Robinson wondering when he is going to get some



John and Jen's diamond wedding celebrations – a garden party organised by their family



Ron and Penny Greenhill's wedding lunch at Le Maison Bleu in Bury St Edmunds