Within Reach



October/November 2026



The BBQ on the Green, which took place on Saturday 5th September, was a lovely event which ultimately raised £900 for Macmillan Cancer Support – a record for our Macmillan events. The weather was kind and being joined by the Sports Day contestants worked really well.

Huge thanks go to organiser Cris and her team, some of whom feature on our front cover – and to everyone who came along on the day and contributed so generously.



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From the Editor



So summer is almost over and we'll soon be heading into autumn. But you wouldn't know it; as I type, in the late afternoon, the sun is shining and the temperature is 20 degrees. And it seems this weather will continue well into October. We are thankfully seeing some rainfall but not nearly as much as is needed; the "hosepipe" ban continues.

I've just got back from a late Monday lunch at the **Five Miles**. As you may be aware, the bridge over the Lode as you get to Upware is closed and it seems it will remain so until **mid 2028**, at the earliest. The good news is that it remains passable for cyclists and pedestrians and there is plenty of parking space available on the roadside before the bridge, then it's only a short walk.

Since the last issue, we have had our BBQ on the Green, supporting the Macmillan Cancer Support Charity, as well as Sports Day. We have pictures of these events, together with a little commentary, on the covers.

Alex provides us with some data on the new recycling/refuse arrangements – and they look encouraging. Personally, I haven't come across many fans of the food collection side of it and the addition of yet another bin in place of the weekly black sack, so it's encouraging that the new arrangements are being viewed as a success.

I took over the **village website** www.reach-village.co.uk in 2009 and have looked after it ever since. Then I got involved in a trampoline park (now also padel tennis club). In July, I retired again and this time for good, so I have a little more time on my hands. One of my main objectives is to bring the website up to date. I've added an article about it which I hope you find useful – see page 12.

The magazine always includes a **Diary Dates** section where you can see what is happening over the next few weeks. Please have a look at page 27. It includes the always popular **Harvest Supper** (Saturday Oct 3), an **Animal Service** at the Church (Sunday Oct 4) and **Wear it Pink** in the Village Hall (Friday Oct 23).

On final thought - why is **abbreviated** such a long word?

David Parr

Front Cover Picture courtesy of: Some random during the BBQ on the Green . . . .

About the Magazine

The purpose of *Within Reach* is to serve the whole village by circulating information and interesting articles free to every household. Additional copies are available at a charge of £3.00. Issues are published bi-monthly covering the months of Feb/Mar, Apr/May, June/July, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov and Dec/Jan.

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

The Team

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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



Usually, this time of year I'm enjoying the autumnal colours in the woods but, despite our conker collection building up nicely already, it feels like summer is hanging on. I've enjoyed seeing more of our neighbours out on our walks as the weather stays fine – how wonderful to live in such a friendly village! And I'm selfishly very keen for the weather not to turn until our extension work is watertight and we get the heating reconnected… fingers crossed!

Nearly 1,000 tonnes of food waste recycled in the first 11 weeks

East Cambridgeshire residents have recycled almost 1,000 tonnes of food waste in just 11 weeks, helping to reduce the amount of household waste requiring disposal by almost 40%.

The figures represent an impressive start for the district's new food waste collection service, which was introduced earlier this year as part of changes to household waste and recycling collections. The impact has been significant. Over the first 11 weeks of the service, the amount of residual waste collected fell from 2,521 tonnes to 1,524 tonnes, a reduction of 998 tonnes (39.6%) compared with the same period last year. At the same time, dry recycling increased by 9.5%, while the amount of food and garden waste collected increased by 23.1%, demonstrating a clear shift away from general rubbish and towards recycling and organic waste collections.

Food waste that may previously have gone into the general rubbish is now being turned into a valuable resource through anaerobic digestion, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generate renewable energy. While some food waste is unavoidable, such as peelings, bones and eggshells, some could have been eaten if it had been used up, frozen or turned into another meal. Over the coming months the council will be sharing tips and advice to help residents reduce avoidable food waste, which is good for both the environment and household budgets.

Unclaimed Pension Credit campaign

Cambridgeshire County Council is working with district and city councils to contact families identified as eligible to receive currently unclaimed Pension Credit, aiming to put up to £2M per year back into residents' pockets. Over 700 households across Cambridgeshire will be contacted by letter, email and phone call. Each household will be advised of their eligibility and provided with support to help them apply for their unclaimed benefit.

Based on an average Pension Credit claim of £4,300 a year, the 500 households identified as eligible for Pension Credit Guarantee would have a total income gain of over £2M per year, ongoing, should all apply. The council has asked for help to spread the word about this excellent campaign so that families contacted by their district or city council will know they can trust the information they've being given. Although there have been no reported incidents of scams purporting to be part of this programme, the Council is reminding residents that if they are ever in any doubt about the authenticity of a letter or a phone call – they can call their District or City Council directly to ask.

New powers to tackle anti-social driving

A new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) aimed at tackling anti-social driving and vehicle-related nuisance has been introduced across East Cambridgeshire. Designed to address persistent complaints from residents about dangerous and disruptive driving behaviour in public areas, the PSPO will give police and authorised officers additional powers. Anti-social behaviour including but not limited to excessive speeding, revving engines, racing, wheel spins, sounding horns unnecessarily, and gatherings that cause harassment, alarm or distress to local communities will be tackled with the new Order, covering public roads and spaces across the district. Anyone breaching the Order could face enforcement action, including receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice and being directed to leave an area. Members of the public are encouraged to report incidents of anti-social driving to Cambridgeshire Constabulary via the force website or webchat - www.cambs.police.uk or by calling 101, in an emergency, always dial 999

Music, dance, history and creativity with The Library Presents this autumn

Enjoy the familiar or discover something new at events from 16 October to 12 December. Chosen by residents, this season has a line-up of different events including music, comedy, theatre and workshops in art, craft and dance. Hosted in 23 Cambridgeshire Libraries, there will be something on your doorstep for you to enjoy. **Klezmer Foygl** launches the season in Wisbech with their concert of energetic Yiddish music woven with stories of its origins. Then, award-winning **The Bookshop Band** are sharing their book-themed folk music in St Ives and Cambourne. Discover the delights of Opera in Ely with **A Pocket Opera** or sing your heart out like a sailor at the **Sea Shanty Workshop** in March Library. Grab your hats and head to **Hat's Off!** an interactive family concert with a carnival themed music workshop in Arbury, Cambridge City.

There are plenty more offerings and not enough space here to share them all! Find more information at: www.library.live/the-library-presents

Keep well and enjoy the autumnal colours!

Alex de Giorgio-Miller

MP Update



Since Parliament returned after the summer recess, I've continued raising a range of local and national issues in Parliament. Two matters that are especially important to our area are the future of local councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and access to NHS dentistry.

Just days after I spoke in Parliament about the unacceptable uncertainty surrounding local government reorganisation, the Government announced that the process would be paused, once again leaving Cambridgeshire in limbo after years of work by local councils. The whole process has become a farce. Residents deserve clarity about the future of their councils and the local services that affect our daily lives and I will continue to press Ministers to provide the certainty our communities need and to ensure proper local consultation.

During the subsequent Health Bill debate, I stressed the urgent need to fix the NHS dental contract and bring more NHS dentists to Ely and East Cambridgeshire. Our area is a 'dental desert', where finding an NHS dentist can be near-impossible. That is unacceptable - but it does not have to be this way.

At the core of the issue is a broken NHS dental contract that is unfit for purpose and prevents dental practices from taking on more NHS patients. Here in Ely and East Cambridgeshire, a shocking 45% of children and 70% of adults have not seen a dentist within the past two years. Fixing this intolerable situation must be a priority for this Government.

This Government made a commitment to reform the NHS dental contract, yet progress has been limited to piecemeal changes. We urgently need a new contract and decisive action to bring more NHS dentists into our area. I have repeatedly raised this issue with Ministers in Parliament and in correspondence with the Government, but now I want to hear from you too.

Have you struggled to find an NHS dentist, faced long waits, had to travel further afield or been forced to pay for private treatment? If so, I want to hear about your experience.

I've launched a constituency-wide survey to build a clear picture of the challenges residents are facing in accessing NHS dentistry. The survey takes just five minutes to complete – and your response will help strengthen my case for urgent Government action. To take part, simply scan the QR code below or find a link to it on my Facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/charlottecanelibdem



If you have any other concerns or issues which you would like to raise with me, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Charlotte Cane MP

charlotte.cane.mp@parliament.uk | 020 7362 1601

You can also sign up for my fortnightly newsletter: www.bit.ly/newsfromcharlotte

rowan
Creating art, Improving lives

Rowan is a vibrant, independent registered charity providing an arts centre and forest school for more than 100 adults with learning disabilities in Cambridgeshire and the adjoining counties.

Rowan's Secret Postcard Exhibition will take place on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th February 2027 at The Pitt Building, Cambridge. *For more details on purchasing a canvas to take part or joining the Cork and Canvas evening, visit their website on www.rowanhumberston.org.uk or call on 01223 566027.*

Rosanna's Ramblings



Ah, what happiness, what relief! It's the rain of course. Deliciousness that comes with waking up in the night and hearing the sound of water flowing. Of having to put wellies and waterproof clothing on to take the dog for an early walk. Of smelling that marvelous 'it's just rained' smell again after so many wretched months of heat and drought. I could hug myself. I don't care if the rain means that Reach mud is plotting its inevitable squelchy revenge. Anything that makes the giant cracks in the ground start to disappear as the soil gradually rehydrates and swells has got to be a Good Thing.

This morning, very early, when I took Milo out in a marvellous downpour, I noticed that it was going to take a LOT more rain for the level of the fishing pond to start rising. Even big and strong as he is, he's been struggling to haul himself out of it when he's had a swim because the usually gradual deepening has turned into a miniature version of a continental shelf plummeting into the sort of deeps in which sperm whales like to hunt squid. I actually think that the rarely glimpsed otters might rather like to be talked about in the same paragraph as their mighty seagoing mammalian cousins. And yes, I admit that I've just googled whether sperm whales and otters are related and the answer is, unsurprisingly to me, a firm YES (but from a shared mammal ancestor 70 million years ago – not that long ago in geological terms). In the unlikely case that you might be interested, the DNA of whales is most closely related to that of the hippopotamus … fun fact for the day.

But I digress. Though from quite what, I don't actually know. I'm allowed to ramble in my Ramblings after all, so today my stream of consciousness is taking me from rain, to mud, to pond levels, to mammal evolution, to blackberries. What a bizarre blackberry season it's been! Firstly, there was the outrageously early ripening of some, but not all, bramble patches. June blackberries are not normal. But then the heat and lack of water made things go rather into stasis and it seemed to me that there was a period of nearly two months in which individualism reigned supreme among the blackberry cohorts. Was it availability of water along the river? Was it shade versus relentless sun? We picked a load a week ago, which to be honest were too sweet for my liking because of the horrible summer (sorry, sun lovers, but it was actually a Very Bad Thing for what it meant about the state of the planet). But now they are just soggy and uneatable, though still with plenty of unripe hard green bullets on the plants in some places. Nature is confused.



In my garden in Ely, I've had an absurdly huge crop of grapes – delicious, if pippy and way bigger fruit than last year. How did the vines achieve this, in a south-facing courtyard garden with absolutely no watering?



Deep roots, I guess, but it still seems implausible that they managed it. And I now consider I was ill-advised to plant two vines some five years ago, as there are only so many grapes you can eat, or give away – and the potential peril to any permanently hungry passing labrador of eating fallen fruit is a constant worry. Even the blackbirds, who ate most of last year's crop, don't seem to be bothered this year. Now I consider that to be simply contrary of them, though perhaps they have more than they could possibly manage. I did look up grape recipes and found one for Grape & Apple Chutney. "That sounds good", I thought, until I realised that it only required 300g of grapes and specified that they should be seedless. Hmph, I thought. What weight of seeded grapes would I need and how quickly would I lose the will to live if I individually de-seeded the seeded grapes? Would a chutney with inbuilt crunch be culinarily desirable? What is the nutritional value of grape seeds? Actually, I know that one – they are rich in good oils and antioxidants. But, are those nourishing credentials good enough to overwhelm the dubious benefits of gritty crunch with one's Christmas pork pie condiment? Or would the seeds soften on cooking up with sugar and vinegar? So many questions, so much (resisted) temptation to sell my soul and the world's water supply, to AI and ask for unnecessary answers.

And I'm sorry I mentioned Christmas. That is, as far as I'm concerned, an unforgivable sin when we aren't yet into the glories of The Best Time of Year – the autumn. Sigh. Swoon. How can one not love the prospect of the foliage changing colour in Reach Wood because of the turn of the season, rather than because the trees are so stressed and distressed by the drought that they've been dropping yellow leaves for the past month or two. Socks are back on – hooray! I put a blanket on top of my duvet last night – double hooray!! The village harvest supper is imminent, though we will miss it as we're away.

Pumpkin-themed tat is already everywhere in the shops, which is of course ridiculous. Where would we be, after all, if we didn't have an unnecessary 'seasonal aisle' in the supermarket to tell us what time of year we were in, or rather would be in a couple of months ahead? Well, I know the answer to that one, even minus Google or Artificial Intelligence. We'd be more in the moment, wouldn't we? And that's where all the mental health gurus say we should be much more of the time. The time being NOW, obviously. Less grieving and regretting about the past. Less stressing about and fearing the unknown future. And right now, as I look out of the window, the sky is grey, with a hint of rain, and I see some puddles on the road. All is well.

Rosanna Moseley-Gore

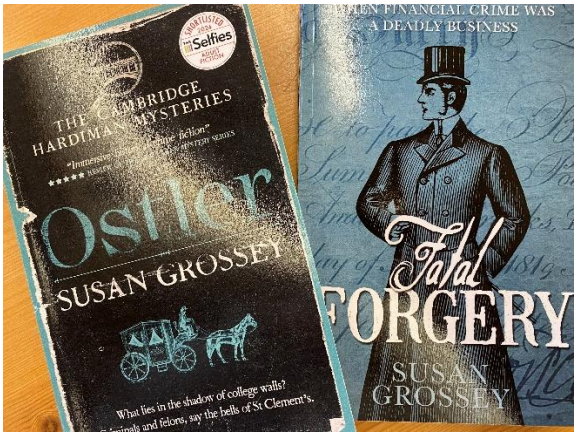


The Swaffhams' Women's Independent Group (SWIG)

Our August meeting continued a literary theme and this time our speaker was Susan Grossey, who for 25 years ran a one-woman anti-laundering facility educating businesses and banks as to how to spot criminal money. Susan is fascinated by financial crime and she became a passionate researcher into the financial crimes committed from 1824 in London. With her degree in English, Susan soon turned to writing fiction, resulting in a 7-book series following the life of Constable Samuel Plank. It was the true-life character of Henry Fauntleroy, who triggered the events of the first book in The London Series; in 1824 Henry stole all the money from his bank in Oxford Street, London. Why would Henry do such a thing? He was rich and pleading guilty to this crime would definitely lead him to the scaffold.

The London Series was then followed by The Cambridge Series, which follows the life of Gregory Hardiman from 1825 – 1830, an ex-soldier turned ostler, whose life becomes entwined in the murky world of Cambridge college life. Susan talked about her three passions of the 1820s: Finance (paper money was just being introduced), Policing (regional policing was being introduced pitting, for example, the town constables against the university constables in Cambridge) and Justice (in the 1820s there was no defence in a court of law, only the prosecution and the jury and the average murder trial lasted just 8 minutes.) In each book you will always find crime and death, picked up meticulously by Susan from the newspapers of the time and court transcripts. But there are other fascinating nuggets included too: Did you know that in the 1820s a paddle steamer ran from Cambridge to King's Lynn? That the Vice Chancellor of Cambridge held his own court for the Gownsmen (students) whilst the Magistrates Court dealt with the Townsmen? Imagine the conflict and tension that caused!

Do look up Susan Grossey and sign up for her newsletter: www.susangrossey.com/insider-updates. In the meantime, I have added two more books to my reading pile!



If you are interested in joining our group or would like to come along for a visit, please get in touch with Kaye by email (kayejanelew@gmail.com) or Kate on 07752 011308. We meet in Swaffham Prior Village Hall at 7:30pm on the third Monday of the month. Our next meeting is on 19th October when Alison Giles will be talking about (and maybe demonstrating) Molly Dancing.

It would be lovely to see you there.

Kate Muscroft, Committee Chair
katemuscroft@gmail.com

Reach Riders



The rabbit fencing which was installed in the Spring has been 100% effective with no new holes occurring since the fencing went up. Not only does the fencing deter the rabbits, but it is also impressive and creates a secure riding area.

Our membership numbers have increased significantly in response to the improved fencing. We will always feel lucky to have the arena and will always be grateful to the Reach Village Grant Fund and Sport England for their funding which has enabled continued use of the arena and continuation of the Reach Riders Group.

The arena has been a bonus during the extremely hot weather when the ground and bridleways have been unusually hard and it's unwise to trot and canter for fear of damaging the horse's hooves. The grassed arena has been relatively soft.

A child's birthday party with the theme of hobby horses was held in the arena and it was lovely to see the facility widen its use.

We congratulate our Treasurer, Sue Cameron, on becoming a grandma and would like to reassure her that she doesn't look a day over twenty-one.

Claire Halpin-McDonald

Nature in Reach



In this edition of the magazine, I want to focus on two common elements of Reach's wildlife - so common that there is a danger of overlooking them!

The Robin

At this time of year, birdsong is limited. A notable exception to this is the robin. As September arrives and with late summer moult complete, robins are calling from prominent trees and shrubs across the village. The song extends well beyond daylight hours. Robins are one of the few songbirds that regularly sing into the night.



A robin's song is melodic and to my ear, sad. The song, of course, has a purpose - the birds are staking territories. As autumn begins, shared summer breeding territories break down and new, individual territories are being established. Unlike almost all other garden birds, female robins claim and defend their own separate winter patches.

Robins are highly visible in the garden at this time of year. They evolved to closely follow wild boars rooting through forests, picking up unearthed insects and worms. Village gardeners disturbing the soil provoke similar bold behaviour.

The Ash Tree

The ash was and perhaps still is, the predominant tree of the chalk soils of south east England. It features in the hedges and byways around Reach. Unfortunately, the fungal infection, commonly known as ash dieback, first noted in the UK nearly two decades ago, has done great damage to the country's ash population and presents a very significant ongoing threat.

However, my assessment of the current position around Reach is that the great majority of our mature ash trees (many naturally arising) have so far avoided significant dieback. Many of the ash trees planted around the village from the mid twentieth century onwards are struggling. Older plantings, for example the screening trees in front of the sewage works on the Hythe, are clearly infected but hanging on. Sadly, more recent plantings, for example at Reach Wood in 1994, have suffered the most and many have died.

Any assessment of this type must be provisional and there are no grounds for complacency given the exceptionally high mortality rates recorded in mainland Europe where this disease struck earlier. However, I am increasingly hopeful that we will hang on to many of our older ash trees. Younger ash trees have always been considered more susceptible to the disease but, in Reach at least, it also looks as if genetics is playing a significant role. Certainly the ash trees planted at Reach Wood were sourced out of area (I have a dim recollection that they came from the Netherlands), don't have the same genetic make-up as local trees, are less adapted to our conditions and have thus been very susceptible to the disease.

Dead ash trees are not without value to wildlife and in Reach Wood the Woodland Trust's policy is to leave standing deadwood as valuable habitat and only to fell dead ash trees that are adjacent to paths and rides. The open glades arising from the death of ash trees at Reach Wood have created a far more ecologically interesting and biodiverse woodland than would otherwise been the case.

Steve Boreham is monitoring the evolution of Reach Wood and I encourage any reader who wants to learn more about what is happening there to have a look at Steve's Wild Reach website:
https://www.wildreach.co.uk/reach-wildlife-resources/reach-wood/

No ash trees were planted when we created the 24Acres woodland in 2013. The tree was deliberately omitted because of the threat of dieback. The exclusion has reduced the woodland's wildlife value but I hope that over time, dieback resistant ash trees will colonise the wood - a possibility given that ash keys can be blown hundreds of metres.

In terms of sightings:

30 July: Rosanna Moseley-Gore emails that she and Charles had just seen two ospreys circling on thermals above Little Fen Drove. She noted the birds' very distinctive silhouettes from below.

1 August: Andrew Trump reports seeing an otter at White Fen.

3 August: A buzzard calls whilst circling above Tubney Fen. Swift numbers have started to fall as some at least have begun the return migration to sub-Saharan Africa. Whilst these birds are normally only present in the UK for about 90 days, the decline this year seems more gradual than usual, perhaps because the hot dry conditions have maintained a good supply of airborne insects. Dafila Clutton-Brock certainly felt that the swifts using her nesting boxes had done well. One pair was still present on 7 September, which Dafila presumed was to feed a late brood. Towards the end of August, Penny Greenhill recorded at least 40 swifts swirling around her house 'screaming as if to say goodbye until next year'.

5 August: A great spotted woodpecker calls from the large willow at the base of the Pocket Park but, despite looking for several minutes, I am unable to see it. I do, though, spot a hobby flying across the park.

12 August: Quite a few villagers gather on Fair Green to view the partial eclipse of the sun. Some come equipped with the requisite glasses. Others make do with pin hole cameras or colanders. Whatever, the clear sky allows good viewing. At the height of the occlusion the atmosphere in the village is strange, light becomes soupy and birds stop singing.

17 August: A common agrimony is in flower on the edge of the meadow at Reach Wood. Steve Boreham had also recorded this as a new arrival at the site this year. The pollinated flowers of agrimony develop fruits with burs. These attach to passing grazing animals, such as cattle, sheep and deer, and can be dispersed over a large area. Agrimony is usually found in grasslands that are less than 50 years old. Its arrival at Reach Wood is therefore unsurprising. Agrimony flowers offer an abundant pollen supply which attracts hoverflies and honeybees. They also are an important food source for butterflies like the grizzled skipper.

The hot dry conditions this summer have led to sparse vegetation across Reach Wood meadow - hardly surprising given the underlying thin and free draining soil. A toadflax brocade moth caterpillar sits on brickwork by my pond.

18 August: There is a very large and noisy 'parliament' of rooks in the ash trees at the Hythe. About 40 birds are present - seemingly far more than nested there earlier in the year. I have no explanation for the gathering.

22 August: About 30 swallows gather on the telephone lines on Burwell Road. This striking phenomenon, a prelude to migration, is known as 'staging'. These assemblies give birds a chance to build flock cohesion and gauge the right moment to move. Before launching into their 6,000 mile journey to Southern Africa, swallows must build up fat reserves to survive non-stop flights across Europe, the Mediterranean and the Sahara Desert. By gorging on midges, aphids and flies that are readily available at this time of year, a swallow can nearly double its body weight in just a couple of weeks.

Probably around half of the birds lined up on the wires are fledglings that hatched only a few weeks earlier. Unlike many other birds where parents guide their young along migration routes, young swallows navigate almost entirely on instinct. Amazingly armed only with an internal compass and an urge to fly south, will journey to an African wintering ground they have never seen before.

26 August: Hilary Fielding sends images of firebugs at her stable. The insects are a striking orange-red and black and despite appearances, are harmless. Hilary's photos contain common mallow, a favoured firebug food.

In the late evening a female tawny owl calls in Reach Wood. She receives no answering call from a male.

Late August: There are lots of fallen apples at the community orchard at the 24Acres, damsons and bullace litter Barston Drove and overripe blackberries stain the footpaths of the village. Gnawed cores and purple droppings show that local wildlife is making the most of this bounty. Foxes and badgers are opportunistic foragers and wild berries make up a big portion of their diet at this time of year. Hunting live prey requires a significant expenditure of energy, so the readily available sugars in fallen fruit offer a high-reward, low-effort meal. The rotting fruit also becomes a crucial nectar substitute for late-flying butterflies, such as red admirals and commas. With floral nectar sources dwindling, these insects feed on the sugary juices of decaying berries to extend their active lifespan or to fuel up before hibernation.

Birds depend heavily on the autumn fruit glut too. Resident species like blackbirds and song thrushes gorge on the fruit to build the fat reserves necessary to survive harder conditions ahead. Departing summer visitors, such AS whitethroats, rely on these dense and accessible calories to fuel their flights south. The order of the foraging isn't random. Easily digestible fruits like blackberries, elderberries and rowan are the first to be targeted. Bitter or astringent berries such as holly and guelder rose are bypassed until winter frosts make them more palatable.

7 September: Cetti's warblers join robins in singing to establish territories on Straight Drove. Blue and long tailed tits can also be heard as they move in large groups through hedgerows and scrub.

Ron Greenhill and Joss Goodchild both report the presence of ravens in the village. Ron rings to say that four are scavenging in the field behind the village hall. I can hear the deep honking calls from inside my house. Ron mentions that a pair of ravens had been nesting in Swaffham Prior this year and he suspects that he is watching the offspring.

Ron and Penny also mention that their friend Roseen Scott had recently photographed a wryneck on Heath Road, Burwell. This is a rare and interesting sighting. A wryneck is a small member of the woodpecker family. It bred in the UK until 2002 but is only seen in spring and autumn as it passes through on migration between Scandinavia and Africa. It largely eats ants.

A female tawny owl calls form the field behind the villages hall. Again, there is no response.

Early September: Jonathan Latchford relays that his Merlin bird song app had identified common whitethroat, black redstart and meadow pipits in the vicinity of his garden.

9 September: Dafila spots a weasel in her garden.



Several villagers report hummingbird hawkmoths in their gardens in the later summer. This moth is spectacular, measuring more than 5cm across, its wings beat up to 80 times a second as it feeds on a plant's nectar, emitting a faint hum as it does so. The Times reports that this summer, there have been nearly twice as many sightings of hummingbird hawkmoth as in any other year of the past decade.

Nick Acklam



Bottisham and Burwell Photographic Club



Our club commenced meetings on the 8th September with a Welcome Evening when Cups & Trophies were awarded for photographs entered from last season for the internal Print and Projected Digital image competitions.

On the 15th September we enjoyed a zoom talk by Peter Ormsby from Glasgow entitled 'Home and Away' when Peter showed us images of birds and animals in the UK and wildlife captured, mostly by wide angle lenses, of species in Scotland and the surrounding area.

Our next internal competition will be digital images taken on the day of our Club Outing on the 12th July in Cambridge for The Metcalfe Trophy. Members will submit 4 images on subjects of Architecture, People in the Street, Water and an Unusual View. The weather was very hot but members who took part thoroughly enjoyed the day and look forward to the judging of their images on 29th September by Simon Shore of Swavesey.

At the time of writing, we are preparing for our Club Exhibition to be held at Swaffham Prior Village Hall on Sunday 27th September when 160 prints and 200 digital images of members' work will be displayed during the day. The Exhibition will officially be opened by the President of the East Anglian Federation of Photographic Societies Paul Radden at 11 am, when he will present awards for the Best Print, Best Landscape, Best Sport and Action prints, Best Nature, People and Creative Image. The Exhibition will be open until 5pm and refreshments will be served throughout the day. Prints will also be on sale, mounted and unmounted.

During the Autumn term we will enjoy Table Top Photography on 24th November run by our members John Wilderspin and Gary Mills and a 3-way Friendly Cup Print Battle with Melbourn and Ely Photographic Clubs, hosted by Bottisham & Burwell, on 1st December to be judged by Jonathan Vaines from Bedford.

Our meetings are held Tuesdays at Swaffham Prior Village Hall, High Street, Swaffham Prior CB25 0LD, from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, except the third Tuesday in each month via Zoom conferencing.
Visitors are always welcome to join our weekly meetings and zoom presentations for a small fee of £4.00.

If you are interested in joining this active club, please contact our Secretary, Debra Bennett, for further information and a copy of our 2026-2027 programme. Email: secretary.bandbpc@gmail.com or visit our website www.bottburpc.org where you will find more detailed information and a gallery showing a selection of our members' work. I look forward to meeting you.

Daphne Hanson DPAGB HonPAGB
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Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group

The Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group of patients and GP practice staff who meet for 90 minutes in person (with the option to join online), four times a year.

At PPG meetings we get to hear about any upcoming changes at the surgery as well as being able to provide feedback on the patient experience to help improve the service. The PPG also acts as a consultative group for any changes at the practice and the wider NHS.

Our next meeting will be at 6.30-8pm on Tuesday 13th October at the Burwell Day Centre, with an option to join online via Teams.

Joining the PPG does not mean you have to come to every meeting. But by being part of the group you can stay informed by receiving the agenda and minutes of each meeting.

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 minutes of PPG meetings, and a wide range of PPG articles about Surgery services such as weight loss jabs, perinatal feeding, prostate cancer awareness, health checks, social prescribing and health and wellbeing coaching, please visit:
https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/patient-group/about-our-ppg/

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. **They now also have Blood Pressure monitors available to loan if you over 18 years of age.** You can join Cambridgeshire Libraries on the bus if you are not already a member.

Burwell and Reach Car Scheme



The Burwell and Reach Car Scheme offers those with travel restrictions or mobility issues a drive to the doctor, dentist, hospital, optician, hairdresser, shopping or just a visit to a friend, at a cost of 30p per mile. Just leave a message on 07399 154913 with your requirements and someone will get back to you. Or contact me, Pam King in Reach on 07484 852889. If anyone in Reach would like to volunteer to drive we are always grateful for extra people. Just leave a message on the answerphone 07399 154913

The Dyke's End



Food at the Dyke's End

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- Sunday: Sunday Roast 12 - 3pm

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Energy Developments around Reach – an Update

This note provides a further update on the two energy development proposals that will affect the village should they proceed. The Parish Council is carefully monitoring events which are currently playing out between developers and the Planning Inspectorate. We will keep you briefed.

Grenergy Battery Storage

As previously reported, Grenergy has appealed the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) to reject its application for a battery storage scheme on Hightown Drove to the east of the village. The Planning Inspectorate, which rules on such appeals, will hold an informal hearing to consider the refusal. This will last for two days starting on 1st December 2026 at 10am at Mandeville Hall Burwell. Reach PC will attend to ensure that the case for refusing the application is fully articulated to the Planning Inspector.

This will be a public hearing so residents are free to attend but, should you wish to do so, you should notify ECDC Planning Department:
(Gavin.Taylor@eastcambs.gov.uk)
in advance, giving your name, email address and details of status

Please contact me if you have further questions.

Kingsway Solar and Battery Scheme

Kingsway withdrew its application for a Development Consent Order (the type of planning permission required for a project of this size) to the Planning Inspectorate on 17 June. At withdrawal, Kingsway indicated that it intended to submit a revised application very quickly. This hasn't happened, possibly because significant flaws in the original application, identified by the Planning Inspectorate are taking far more time and effort to address than Kingsway had anticipated.

There are also signs that Kingsway is struggling to secure a connection agreement with National Grid. Unfortunately, Kingsway continues not to engage with stakeholders, including local authorities and currently there is nothing to suggest that a revised application will address the PC's concerns.

The PC's concerns focus on the adverse impact of the pylon route that Kingsway proposes to connect its solar and BESS installation to the national grid at Burwell. The pylon route threatens the outlook from many parts of the village and would damage the sense of place along the northern end of the Devil's Dyke. The PC's formal opposition is laid out here:
https://reachparish.gov.uk/download-attachment/4156

The Parish Council Alliance (of which Reach PC is a part) and its team of experts are ready to respond should a resubmission be made and approved by the Planning Inspectorate. The Alliance continues to assess that its grounds for opposing the proposal are strong. Should Kingsway's re-application be allowed to proceed to public examination, the Alliance will provide guidance as to how individuals can register as Interested Parties and submit comments (known as Relevant Representations), to the process. This will be your chance to voice your concerns directly.

Nick Acklam

n.acklam@reachparish.gov.uk

Reach Village Website

I took this over in 2009 and have managed it ever since. Now I plan to pay extra attention to keeping it up to date and extending it, the aim being for villagers (and non-villagers) to use the village website to answer their questions. The site can be found at:
https://www.reach-village.co.uk/index.html

It's not a modern flashy thing, but the information contained in it is easily accessible, up to date and relevant. Some first examples . . . .

The **News and Events** page shows what's going to happen and what has happened, right back to 2009 – and you can click on individual "Concluded Events" and reminisce. For instance, click on the **Daffodil Planting Day pictures from October 2009** – there's plenty of them and most villagers on them are still villagers, 17 years later.

And we had **Snow in Reach in December 2009** – again, lovely pictures.

Going back to the current – have a look at the **Services** page. It includes links to get you information on our **Buses** - and you can download timetables for both the **T4** and **T5.**

The **Refuse and Recycling** page allows you to check what's happening and when, each week.

And **Street Lights** – you can see which streetlight is which, its number and how to report issues.

And whilst you all get your printed copy of this magazine, the main magazine is printed in monochrome, on cost grounds. But if you go to the **Magazine** page on the website you can see it in colour – **right back to the first issue in June 2010**.

More next issue – in the meantime, please go look!

David Parr

Xtreme360 Indoor Padel Tennis Club in St Neots



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.

These timetables can be downloaded from the village website at**: https://www.reach-village.co.uk/bus_service.html**

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

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Food Focus



I know at least two people in the village are coeliac and presumably many more are gluten-free these days so here are a few recipes for those who want to stay clear of gluten.

Quinoa Bread

Ingredients:

2 cups quinoa
3/4 cup chia seeds
1/2-1 cup mixed pumpkin, sunflower, walnuts etc.
3 tbsp lemon Juice
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
1 tsp honey
60 ml extra virgin olive oil

Method:

Step 1: The night before you plan on baking the bread you need to soak the quinoa in enough water to cover well. Keep in fridge overnight.

Step 2: Preheat the oven to 160 degrees. Cover the chia seeds in a jar with 1 cup of water and stir until it's soaked up the water. In a food processor/blender - add all ingredients other than the mixed seeds/nuts. Blend until the mixture is smooth, but you can still see lots of whole quinoa. If you blend too much the bread gets sticky. Then add in the mixed seeds and stir (don't blend more as seeds will be cut up). Pour the mixture into 2 bread tins lined with parchment paper. Bake for 60-70 minutes.

Seed Crackers

Ingredients:

½ a cup of sesame, sunflower and pumpkin seeds
¼ cup flax
1 tbsp psyllium
½ cup nutritional yeast
1 tsp cayenne pepper, salt and pepper
1 cup of boiling water

Method:

1. Heat the oven to 150-160 degrees C
2. Line two baking sheets with parchment and brush lightly with a little oil
3. Combine the above ingredients and leave for 1 minute
4. Spread mixture thinly with a fork
5. Cook for an hour
6. Turn over then leave in oven to dry out in the residual heat

Gluten-free Flatbread – makes 3



Ingredients:

255 g gluten free self raising flour
195 g plain yoghurt
3 tsp olive oil
Pinch salt, optional

Method:

1. Add the flour, yoghurt, olive oil and pinch salt (optional) to a mixing bowl.
2. Mix together with a spatula or by hand.
3. Make it into a ball shape.
4. Flour a work surface and pat the dough ball down with your hands into the shape you want. I aim for roughly 1cm thick (it can be delicate so be careful or pick it up with a spatula).
5. Place onto the pre-heated griddle pan and cook on each side for 2 minutes.

Catherine Gibson

Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities

As most people in the village of Reach will be aware the above charity helps pensioners and anyone who considers themselves in need of assistance at Christmas time. **Please be aware that help is available at anytime of the year.**

If you should know of someone who may be in need and finding things difficult and would not apply themselves please get in touch. We stress that any application or enquiry will be treated in confidence. May we also mention that help is available to students with educational needs ie reference books etc.

Please apply to: Pam Waters, Clerk to the Trustees. 01638 741035

Tales from a Reach Garden



We are near the end of September, autumn has started and we're currently enjoying another few days of unusually warm weather. The lawn is recovering from this summer's hot and arid conditions, although it is patched with green at the moment, but if I look more closely at the straw-coloured areas, I can see the tips of tiny green shoots of grass poking through.

In the vegetable garden the effects of the parched summer and recent winds and rainfall are apparent. Most of the vegetable foliage looks mildewed and bedraggled – except for the kale and leeks growing under butterfly netting, which are looking quite good. They had been mulched and carefully irrigated by watering can when there was no rain, because they need to flourish during the winter months.

I wish I had access to some long-term prediction for the main growing season before I sow seeds in late winter and early spring for the vegetables to be grown in the garden. Our weather has become so very unpredictable. This summer has been very hot and dry which has had a significant impact on fruit and vegetables grown this year. If I'd known the weather was going to be so arid, I'd have sown and planted many vegetables much earlier to make use of the mild winter weather and heavy rain and I'd have sown chickpeas instead of garden peas. Yet only two years ago, in 2024, we endured a summer of gloom, heavy rain and lots and lots of slugs and snails. I still think of it as the "slug summer of '24".



Cherry tomatoes ripening in the polytunnel

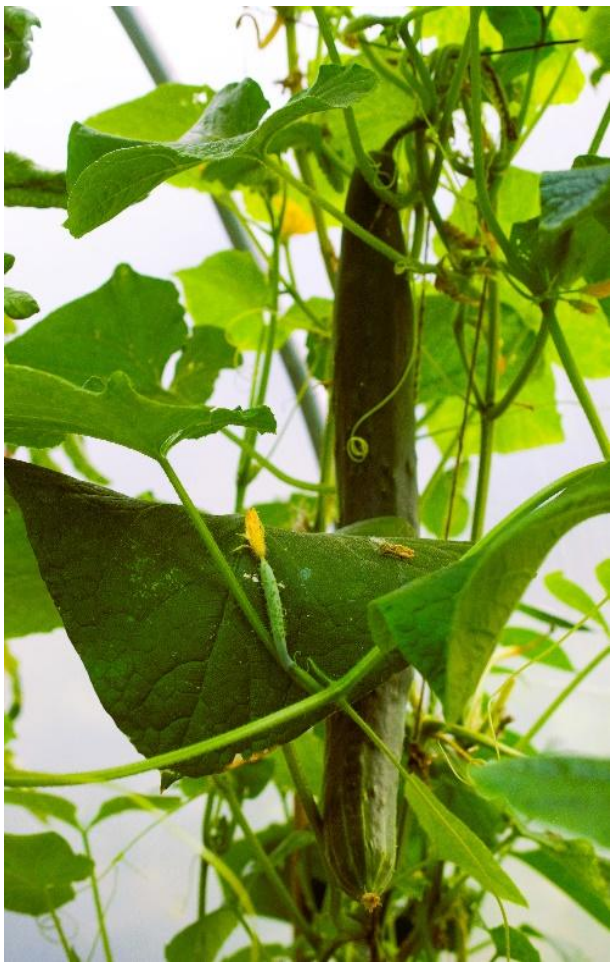
This year our young tomato plants suffered in the first heatwave at the end of May just as they were putting out the first set of flowers, most of which fell off the plants or went on to produce dwarf tomatoes. Then again in July, just as the tomato vines were recovering, we had another heatwave and the start of the hosepipe ban. Thankfully the more targeted watering of the tomato vines in the polytunnel has allowed us to pick tomatoes continuously since July and they continue to ripen, although any flowers they produce now are unlikely to produce ripe, full-size tomatoes as daytime temperatures continue to fall and nights draw in. Overall, the crop has been smaller this year than in previous years.

We lifted the onions and shallots a few weeks after the hosepipe ban was imposed and before the rains fell. The onions are very much smaller than in previous years, but none of them have shown any signs of rotting, in fact they are fairly firm, so they should store well.

The pumpkin and butternut plants were also affected by the hot weather. To create the pumpkin and butternut fruits, both male and female flowers are needed. This year most of the butternuts put out loads of male flowers and no female flowers at all each time the temperatures rose above 30°C, so no fruitlets were produced during the heatwaves and any small pre-existing fruitlets withered and died. Thankfully we have had a few weeks of "cooler" weather (still over 25°C) which our butternut plants seem to prefer, especially during the recent rains, but many of the squashes have yet to ripen fully and we'll have to accelerate the ripening process by removing leaves from the plants, and hope that the recent sunshine continues for a bit longer.

The hot, dry weather did not affect the cucumbers in the same way, in fact we had a glut of cucumbers which grew and ripened very quickly in the heat. We used them to make batches of gazpacho-like chilled cucumber soups. We also ate the smaller cucumbers like apples. They are a staple of many salads, so we ate a lot of salads in July and August. We also gave some away to friends and family, but frankly, we got a bit fed up with eating cucumbers. Alas, unlike most other vegetables they can't be frozen unless you enjoy eating cucumbers that are watery mush. They can be frozen as soups and they can be pickled - which Richard hates. Thankfully, cucumber production in the polytunnel has slowed down now and we pulled up the outdoor cucumber plants to make way for the ever-spreading butternut plants. The outdoor cucumbers mature faster than the "glasshouse" varieties, and I would plant fewer next year if I thought the weather was going to be the same as this year.





Cucumber currently growing in the polytunnel

This summer has been excellent for growing grapes outdoors – one of the varieties we grow outdoors over an arch in the garden is “Boskoop’s Glory” we planted it in 2007 because I like grapes and this Dutch variety copes well with the average (for 2007) British weather, although in some cooler years the grapes ripen later in the autumn. Established grapevines don’t need any watering either – not even this year. I’ve been eating bunches of grapes as they ripened since the middle of August. The bunches swelled after the rains and the flavour is a little watery now, but still good to eat.

I have found that bunches of grapes keep well for about a week or two in a box in a refrigerator provided they are dry and picked over to remove any damage. I don’t wash them before putting them in the fridge because that encourages moulds and rotting (which is also true of most soft fruit). I only wash them immediately before eating or using them, such as making into grape jellies, or adding to a fruit salad.

We have had gluts of grapes in the past and made wine - but it is fair to say that it was best for culinary use, so we probably won’t be tempted to do that again! However, if we planted a different variety… I shouldn’t be tempted, who knows what next year’s weather will be?



Outdoor grapes loved the weather this summer.

Danuta Gibson

Cambridge Fire and Rescue

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Come along to one of our Older Driver Workshops

We host regular Older Driver Workshops at fire stations around the county. These are free sessions designed for those over 65 and currently driving, to help them keep driving safely for longer. We discuss how driving can become more challenging as we get older and what simple checks we can do at home to keep ourselves fit to drive.

This interactive, two-hour session covers the following topics:

- Age-related changes when driving
- Eyesight and driving
- Conducting a vehicle check
- License renewal
- Signs to be aware of
- Alternatives to driving.

Visit our website (https://bit.ly/4n4hBoG) to find out more.

Pantomime Time!



Beauty and the Beast

This Christmas, KD Theatre Productions will return to The Maltings in Ely, for a spectacular 14th pantomime season with the tale as old as time, *Beauty and the Beast*, playing from Friday 11 December 2026 until Sunday 10 January 2027.

The *Beauty and the Beast* cast is led by beloved panto dame **Rob Stevens**, back by popular demand as Dame Cherry Bakewell. He will perform alongside **Samantha Richards** (*Footloose* tour, *Zog and the Flying Doctors* tour) as Belle, **Harry Rodgman** (another returning star having played Fleshcreep in last year's panto at The Maltings) as Gastrong, **Kieran Capaldi** (*The Jungle Book* tour) as the Beast/Prince, **Joey Warne** (*Alice in Wonderland* tour) as Billy Bakewell and **Coral Mourant** (previously seen in KD Theatre Productions pantomime *Sleeping Beauty*) as Morgianna.

Audiences will be taken on a magical journey full of laughter, song, dance and festive cheer with a sparkling production which promises all the beloved elements of The Maltings' annual pantomime; dazzling costumes, hilarious comedy, live music and a few hairy surprises along the way . . . .

When a vain and selfish Prince is cursed to live as a fearsome Beast, his only hope is to find true love before the final rose petal falls. But who could ever love a Beast? Will Belle be the one to break the curse and save the day? With heartwarming romance, jaw-dropping sets and plenty of audience participation, *Beauty and the Beast* is the perfect present for the whole family.

Katherine Hickmott and Daniel Bell, from KD Theatre Productions, said: "As our home city panto, it's always a delight to bring pantomime to Ely! This will be our 14th year, and we've got lots of new surprises up our sleeves!"
Tickets are available to book now. Visit: https://kdtheatre.co.uk/beauty-and-the-beast

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Show title: *Beauty and the Beast*

Venue: The Maltings, Ship Lane, Ely CB7 4BB

Dates: Friday 11 December 2026 - Sunday 10 January 2027

Tickets: £21.55 (available from https://kdtheatre.co.uk/beauty-and-the-beast)

Running Time: approx 2 hours 15 mins (including 20 minute interval)

Access information: Concessions and access rates available (wheelchair accessible seating bookable via box office).

Further details here: https://kdtheatre.littleboxoffice.com/events/150680

Anglesey Abbey



Autumn is one of our favourite seasons at Anglesey Abbey with plenty of colour to see around the gardens; the dazzling dahlias are still in bloom in the Dahlia Border and a carpet of delicate cyclamen lines the woodland path by Lode Mill.

What's on: Winnie-the-Pooh

Step into the enchanting world of the Hundred Acre Wood this autumn at Anglesey Abbey. Join us for *Three Cheers for Pooh!* - a family-friendly story trail and exhibition celebrating 100 years of the much-loved bear and his friends.

Rediscover classic characters and favourite adventures, through extracts from A.A. Milne's classic stories and E.H. Shepard's iconic illustrations.

.

From Saturday 3 October 2026, enjoy the trail as part of normal admission to Anglesey Abbey. Perfect for children (and grown-ups) of all ages. Created in collaboration with *HarperCollinsPublishers.*

October Half term

Join us for some outdoor ceramic pumpkin painting on the Pinetum this October half term from Monday 26 to Friday 30 October. Under the cover of outdoor tents, each session lasts 45 minutes and children can be accompanied by family members as they get creative; tickets cost £4 per child and we recommend booking online to avoid disappointment.

On Friday 30 October, there will also be an author event at Anglesey Abbey with Jane Riordan who has authorised the latest Winnie-the-Pooh sequel book.

Did someone say Christmas?

Father Christmas tickets are now live on our website – this year Santa will be making himself at home again in the Lower Gallery inside the Anglesey Abbey house, surrounded by paintings and statues all festively decorated for Christmas. For more details and to book, please visit the Anglesey Abbey website.

Wicken Fen

In the grip of autumn, Wicken Fen is alive with colour and sound. The wetlands are a magnet to migratory ducks, geese and swans that head south from the Arctic Circle for our milder winters, their calls filling the fenland air. As flowers and insects shrink away, the reeds and sedges turn golden-brown and the autumn leaves add yellows, reds and oranges to the colour palette.

Whatever the weather, our rangers and volunteer groups are outside busy with practical management of the Fen. This includes clearing bushes and trees that could choak the important fen meadows and cutting back reeds to prevent the important wetlands from being overtaken.

It's an atmospheric time of year. Perfect for Wicken walks, sometimes mild and surprisingly summer-like, but just as likely to be a bit nippy and bracing. While damp, dewy mornings have a seasonal charm, so to o does the Docky Hut café: with drinks and snacks to revive and refresh, while the gift shop is stocked with festive items, perfect for stocking up on stocking fillers.

During October Half Term week, Cycle Hire will be open daily, otherwise only at weekends. Both Cycle Hire and boat trips finish for the season on 1st November, the latter run most days until then, depending on the weather. We have a new Stranger Folk trial (aimed at 7-13-year-olds, requires a pre-downloadable app) during the October school holiday week and a family craft workshop on Thursday 29th October in which you can create an autumnal owl from pressed leaves and natural materials. Check our website for more information.

Our Mucky Pups adventures, for pre-school children who enjoy getting grubby, are running on 16th October and 13th November (10.30-12.00). Head to our website for more information and to book.

As ever, our popular Father Christmas at the Fen events are running between 29th November and 23rd December. Head to our website now to avoid disappointment as tickets always disappear fast for this chance to meet Father Christmas in the Fen Cottage for a traditional, festive experience.
nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen

Our daily opening hours are:

The Docky Hut Café: 10am–5pm (10am–4pm from 2nd Nov)

Visitor Centre and Shop: 9.30am–5pm (10am–4.30pm from 2nd Nov)

Nature Reserve: Dawn – Dusk every day (but closed on Christmas Day)

Burwell Museum

Well we can't believe it's September already – what a busy summer we have had!

In July we held our 1940's event. The sun shone and lots of you came along and joined in with the event making it very successful. Sara Mai and Ryan Hornett entertained us and you danced the afternoon away – thank you.

August saw us hosting our popular Classic Car show. We were joined by lots of cars and motorbikes – some coming a distance to be with us. Along with the cars and bikes, we had a Tucker Snocat! Here's an image of the vehicle, if you didn't manage to make it along on the day.



Both the above events were supported by 1st Burwell Scout Group providing hot food for our visitors. Spinney Abbey and Lanes Bakery ingredients were used to keep it local and we were able to share 50% of the profits with them (and a few burgers for their camp this month). Our thanks go to them and we hope that this can be repeated in 2027.

In early August we were delighted to help celebrate the 90th birthday of one of our founding Trustee's - John Waller. It was his first time back to the Museum in a quite a while and he was very impressed with all the changes that have been made. It was also a lovely surprise for him and Paul Hawes to chat again about old times!

August also saw us host our School Holiday Thursday opening. It's been lovely watching the children engage with our activities and colouring our bees for our new education hub and this couldn't have happened without our volunteers. Special thanks go to Jane Barrett and Malcolm Busby, as well as our Trustee team for making these days happen. We are already thinking of what we can do for 2027 but if anyone has any ideas – please share them with us!

This summer we have introduced a working jobs list to capture works needed by all the maintenance, mill and collection teams. Everyone has really engaged with this change in process and we have managed to complete a huge number of tasks. However with all lists, it gets longer by the week, as things seem to go on quicker than we can clear them off!

In taking this approach, we have identified some jobs / projects where we need extra / specialist help:

- Some windows in the mill have some rotten sections and need repairing. We think this will need help from a carpenter.
- We are looking to create a 2nd fire exit to our barn. Unfortunately, the barn has recently been registered as a 'building of significant interest' and to create this we need to submit a planning application. We need someone to help with drawing up plans and give us structural advice.
- We need to build a new raised decking platform with handrail, to complete our level access arrangements on site. We have received a grant from Cambridgeshire County Council towards this, and we already have a ramp donated a couple of years ago. It needs to be designed, planned and built by March 2027 to comply with the grant.

If you can help us with any of these, even in a small way, please do get in touch with us.

By the time you read this, we will have participated in the National Heritage Open Days scheme in early September – where we make available our heritage site to visitors for free. Hopefully you have joined us for this event. Although we are rapidly coming to the end of our open Season, we still have lots going on:

- 24h October – Halloween
- 14th November – Wreath Making Workshop *
- 28th November – Cake Decorating Workshop *
- 5th & 6th December – Christmas Barn and Santa's Grotto *

For more information and to book, please visit our website.

If you haven't managed to visit us yet, why not come along to one of our remaining events and try a home-made cake in our new tearoom. (*Booking required for workshops and Santa visits).

As we get closer to the end of our open season, we are discussing our over winter projects. We are always trying to improve our customer experience, so if you have been to see us and you have a suggestion on how we can make things better – we'd love to hear from you.

Burwell Museum Trustees



Letter from the Vicarage



After the extreme heat of the summer, autumn is a bit of a shock to the system! Autumn brings Harvest and with it, an opportunity for gratitude to God for all that we have, and to pray for a fairer world. We're celebrating Harvest at St Mary's, Burwell, at our Café Church on Sunday 4th October at 10.00am.

At Reach we will be having an Animal Service at St Etheldreda's on Sunday 4th October at 3pm. Come along with your pets or working animals to this fun Animal Service. All creatures, great and small, furry, feathered, scaly or smooth, are welcome. Bring a photograph if you can't bring your pet (or if your beloved animal friend is no longer with you). We'll bless the animals and reflect on how we can best be stewards of the Earth and all who live here with us. Please bring contributions to all the services – tins/packets or produce – all will be donated to the Foodbank or distributed in the villages.



As we think about our responsibility to care for the earth, St Mary's is about to embark on a really exciting project to replace our ageing and unreliable gas boiler with pendant radiant heaters, to help us move to carbon net zero and make the building warm for all.

This is a major undertaking for us and we would love to hear from you if have experience in fundraising, organizing events, publicity or grant applications and would be willing to help us. The appeal for the heating will be launched in the coming weeks, so look out for ways that you can donate.

November is Remembering month and on 2nd November at 3.00pm in St Mary's is our service for those who have been bereaved, an opportunity to give thanks and light a candle to remember loved ones. Remembrance Sunday is on 9th November, with services in Reach starting at 10.45am and the joint Churches Together service beginning at 2.30pm at Burwell War Memorial.





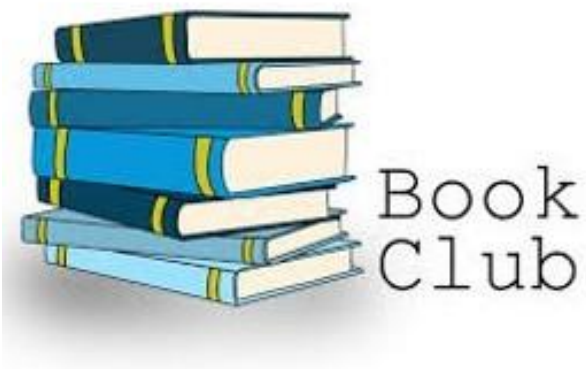
Regular services in Reach are on 1st Sunday of the month at 8.30am and 3rd Wednesday at 10.30am. Alongside our Sunday and mid-week services, our regular activities include Refresh Café is in St Mary's every Friday morning from 10.00am, a friendly and welcoming group for babies and toddlers with their carers, including a simple sandwich lunch each week.

Pop-Up Pantry is at the Day Centre on 1st Friday of month 2.00 – 3.00pm, with short life food items, cupboard basics, toiletries & hygiene products, for anyone in financial need to access support without the need for a voucher. For updates about what's going on at St Mary's, Burwell or St Etheldreda's, Reach, please see our Facebook pages and website. We aim to livestream most of our weekly 10.00am Sunday services on Facebook.

Please get in touch for more information about these or any of our events or services, including weddings, funerals, christenings and baby thanksgivings, or if you would value an opportunity to chat.

Revd Canon Dr Eleanor Williams, Vicar of Burwell with Reach, 01638 741262 vicar@stmarysburwell.org.uk
www.stmarysburwell.org.uk
www.facebook.com/stmarysburwell/

Dyke's End Book Club



Next meetings: **Thursday 8th October 2026 and Thursday 12th November 2026 at 7pm** in the **Dyke's End.**

Simply turn up – you don't need to have read the current book - and you can influence the choice of the forthcoming one!

Ally Eariss

07897 672329 or aeariss123@hotmail.co.uk

Know Your Parish Council

Your Parish Councillors are:

Nick Acklam	Councillor
Hilary Fielding	Vice Chair
Catherine Gibson	Councillor
Edward Hall	Councillor
Tim Quilter	Chair
Vacancy	Councillor
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@reachparish.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Watch

As thousands of students prepare to start or return to university this autumn, fraudsters and cyber criminals will be looking for opportunities to exploit the excitement and uncertainty that often comes with a new term.

Criminals use a wide range of tactics to steal your money or obtain personal information that can be used later in a fraud attempt. They operate on websites and apps, by email, text, phone, post or in person, including on your doorstep.

To support students and their families, Report Fraud has produced a practical guide packed with advice, real-world examples and simple steps that students can take to protect themselves online and offline throughout university life. This can be downloaded from:

https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/university-students-booklet/

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 1st September 2026 at 7.30pm

Attendance

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

Apologies for absence Received and approved.

Declaration of Interests There were none.

Forum for members of the public
Several members of the public attended the meeting to raise serious concerns regarding the ongoing and worsening problem of oversized vehicles attempting to negotiate the corner of Great Lane and Fair Green. This is no longer simply an issue of traffic management. The PC & residents considers this to be an urgent public safety matter. In 2013, a scheme funded by LMHI established a vehicle length restriction at this corner. However, the situation has now deteriorated significantly, with vehicles regularly exceeding this restriction. Width of vehicles has now also become an issue.
In order to complete the manoeuvre, heavy vehicles are frequently forced to mount the pavements. This has already resulted in damage to garden walls and properties. On several occasions, residents have also had to intervene to prevent further attempted dangerous manoeuvres.
A heavy vehicle mounting the pavement on a blind bend could have catastrophic consequences for a pedestrian, cyclist, or horse and rider who happens to be passing at that moment. The PC & residents are extremely concerned that it is only a matter of time before a serious incident occurs.
Clerk to write to CCC Highways to request a member, or members, of the Highways team attend an urgent on-site meeting with Parish Councillors to inspect the location, consider the evidence available, and establish what immediate and longer-term measures can be implemented.
The existing restriction is not preventing the problem, and the continued use of the pavement by oversized vehicles cannot be allowed to continue without intervention.

1. Planning Applications None.

2. District Councillor Report No report received.

3. County Councillor Report
Councillor Malinowski attended the meeting. Very little to report from over the summer. Councillor Malinowski will help with the above discussed highway issue and continue to chase Balfour Beatty for a solution to the ongoing streetlight problems.

4. Minutes of previous Meeting
Approved as correct.
Councillors Gibson & Acklam to meet and discuss the Assets of Community value.

5. Finance Nothing to report.

5.2 Parish Council Members
More complaints had been received regarding the increase of owners not clearing up after their dogs. This is particularly evident along Straight Drove, the Lode banks & in Reach wood.
Councillor Gibson to send out a note on Facebook.

Councillor Acklam attended a forum for the EDCD planning department. There are new guidelines from Central Government regard the extending of "comment dates" on planning applications. Occasionally the PC will ask for an extension to the time limit if there is not a meeting prior to the date. Otherwise, an extra meeting will be required. The new guidelines will require a more detailed request for an extension.

Councillor Quilter to set up a PC Whatsapp group to highlight to members any urgent emails. Emails will continue to be the main system of communication.

5.3 Play Spaces
Nothing to report. ***Councillor Quilter*** will supply Lisa with an inspection form and terms of reference to ensure everyone is in agreement as to what is expected of the officer.

5.4 Rights of Way
Clerk to write and thank ECDC street scene team for going over and above their duties in the recent clear up after the traveller encampments. Thanks also to Councillor Fielding for all her work keeping everyone on top of this.

5.5 24Acres Committee Nothing to report.

5.6 Friends Of Reach Wood
The PC noted and thanked Steve Boreham for his work on the bio analysis for Reach wood, the cemetery and catch water drain.

5.7 A to B1102 Group Nothing to report.

5.8 Nature Recovery Plan Nothing to report.

5.9 Hythe Restoration Group
AW have made the handing back of the area at The Hythe contingent on the PC sorting out access problems at the junction and along The Hythe. This is not something the PC has the power to do.
The PC will consider raising awareness of this with publicity, ***Councillor Acklam*** to report back at the next meeting.

5.10 Website, IT & public communications
Councillor Gibson to be added to the PC Facebook admin. Several councillors had received a suspicious email from "Councillor Quilter". This was spotted and not replied too. The new Whatsapp group will help in these situations.

5.11 Energy developments in the locality
Grenergy Battery Storage
Grenergy has appealed the decision of East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) to reject its application for a battery storage scheme on Hightown Drove to the east of the village. The Planning Inspectorate, which rules on such appeals, will hold an informal hearing to consider the refusal. This will last for two days starting on 1st December 2026 at 1000hrs at Mandeville Hall Burwell. Reach PC will attend to ensure that the case for refusing the application is fully articulated to the Planning Inspector.
This will be a public hearing so residents are free to attend but, should you wish to do so, you should notify ECDC Planning Department (Gavin.Taylor@eastcambs.gov.uk) in advance, giving your name, email address and details of status
Please contact Nick Acklam n.acklam@reachparish.gov.uk if you have further questions.

Kingsway Solar and Battery Scheme
Resubmission is still awaited.

6. Scrub clearance by The Devils Dyke
Councillor Acklam has organised a working party for Saturday 17 October 2026 1200 to 1700. Gathering of cut material and creation of litter piles in the narrow field to the NE of the Devil's Dyke. This builds on the scrub clearance work undertook last October and will be involve moving material cut earlier in the day by tractor flail. Approved.

7. Cemetery - Community Payback work approval

Councillor Fielding met with the Community Payback Placement Coordinator at the cemetery.
The works discussed were as follows:

1. Clearing the weeds/grasses from the fence along the front of the cemetery
2. Clearing the path up to the shelter back to the edging boards
3. Clearing the twigs and leaves from the mown areas on either side
4. Clearing out the shelter
5. Cutting the hedge on the rear boundary back to the fenceline. The "Team" is not permitted to touch the graves or cut back any vegetation above head height.
6. Removing the loose paint and rust from the iron railings and gate along the front, and repainting. The PC would need to provide the paint.

It is likely that the work would be carried out once a week each Friday (tbc) and would start as soon as the paperwork is completed.
Eleanor says that the church will be open and the toilet there can be used. As it may not be possible to refill water bottles from the tap in the basin, the outside tap at the village hall could be used.
The PC thanked Councillor Fielding and approved the works.

8. LGR letter approval.

Following the decision in July to defer a conclusion on the future structure of local government in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and the change in Government minister, a new draft letter has been produced to ensure that our position is clearly understood by the new decision makers. The letter was approved. ***Clerk*** to let the organising team know.

9. Cil spending

The Parish has received £ in CIL money from ECDC. There are strict rules as to what the PC can spend the money on. ECDC have offered to attend a meeting to discuss the scheme. ***Clerk*** to arrange for an ECDC representative to attend a future PC meeting.

10. Payment

E.on – Power on the green	£18.23
CR Contracting – Mowing contract	£278.00

The date of the next Parish Council meeting Tuesday 6th October 2025 at 7.30pm.
The agenda for this meeting will be issued by the previous Tuesday and can be accessed from the Parish Council website https://reachparish.gov.uk/parish-council/agendas-and-minutes



Diary Dates

October	Event	Location	Time
Saturday 3	Harvest Supper	Village Hall	7.00pm
Sunday 4	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Sunday 4	Animal Service	St Etheldreda's, Reach	3.00pm
Tuesday 6	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Wednesday 7	Bin Day (Blue and Food Caddy)		
Thursday 8	Book Club	Dyke's End Pub	7.00pm
Wednesday 14	Bin Day (Black, Brown/Green and Food Caddy)		
Wednesday 21	Bin Day (Blue and Food Caddy)		
Wednesday 21	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Friday 23	Wear it Pink Afternoon Tea	Village Hall	3.00pm
Wednesday 28	Bin Day (Black, Brown/Green and Food Caddy)		
November	**Event**	**Location**	**Time**
Sunday 1	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	8.30am
Tuesday 3	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Wednesday 4	Bin Day (Blue and Food Caddy)		
Sunday 8	Remembrance Service	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.50am
Wednesday 11	Bin Day (Black, Brown/Green and Food Caddy)		
Thursday 12	Book Club	Dyke's End Pub	7.00pm
Wednesday 18	Bin Day (Blue and Food Caddy)		
Wednesday 18	Holy Communion	St Etheldreda's, Reach	10.30am
Wednesday 25	Bin Day (Black, Brown/Green and Food Caddy)		
Sunday 29	Christmas Tree Lights Switch On	Village Green	5.00pm

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.



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

Just before we lose the Summer here are two photos taken around 1960 of the annual village garden party that was held on the main lawn at 'White Roses'. An exciting lineup included a fancy dress competition which was always well attended. The vicar I believe was the Reverend Hicks.

Chris Patterson

Contact Information

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	
Magazine	David Parr 07887 563720 davidmparr@btinternet.com	
Parish Council – see "Know Your Parish Council"		
Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities	Pam Waters (Clerk to the Trustees) 01638 741035	
Tents and Village Games	Claire Halpin-McDonald 01638 743330	
Village Hall		
Chair	David Thomas	
Finance	Andrew Trump	
Bookings	Diana Greer	

Then and Then pictures – see facing page







Once again we were blessed by gorgeous weather and a fantastic turn out for a really fun sports afternoon – and so great to have a new cohort of younger villagers coming through! Races ranged from the standard sprints and marathon to the traditional three-legged and wheelbarrow races, to the more bizarre slow bike race and the potato race (which involves taking shoes off and the rules change every year!).

It was so lovely to see all the children taking part in some good old-fashioned silliness and the attitude and kindness of all the competitors was fabulous – no one was ever left without a partner and all the smaller children had oodles of helpers. Such a wonderful display of sportsmanship from all – thank you!

After the highly exciting egg toss event, we headed back to the green to the Village party so brilliantly coordinated by Cris and her team. Thanks to Tash and Lisa for their help with organising as usual! Well done to our winners – and to everyone who took part! Alex



