



The Swaffham Crier

Volume XLVII Number 12

December 2023



Editorial

Phew! And it all ended happily ever-after as erstwhile combatants speedily retired to the (excellent) Red Lion after the Crier's critical meeting with PC this month. It was looking a bit iffy for a while, but... you can read all about it in James' account on page 12, and also Jude on p. 26. We have our PC Notes back (and we've printed the originally banned October ones in this issue), so you can catch up with what's been going on. I must say, I really enjoyed my visit to the PC — they are an impressive bunch and they certainly gave us a warm and friendly welcome.

This month, to our surprise, we have a communication from our MP, Lucy Frazer, who is telling us what she has been up to on our behalf during the last year. This is the first time she has done this, and — we hear what you are thinking! Election year looming perhaps? — but it seems Lucy has always been keen to communicate with the village, not only offering to visit the PC (thanks but no thanks from the PC, apparently!) but also giving a talk at the Primary School, where (allegedly) she retired reeling from a barrage of quite unexpectedly penetrating questions from our youngsters! But thank you Lucy, it is appreciated and we hope the PC relents and asks you back—we can always send some more youngsters down...

The short-eared owls are back (see the report from Wicken Fen, p. 31) and a quick trip down to the Cockup Bridge will enable you not only to appreciate these delightful birds, but also and even more fun, a whole Piccadilly Circus of Twitchers, latest gear and all.

Lastly, if you have not experienced Advent by Candlelight before, **make this your first visit on Sunday** — it is a truly excellent event. See you carolling, Christingling, and don't forget: copy date 28 Dec—and the Crier will be late out because of the holiday, printers etc.

And for Christmas Day, why not try Julie's Vegetarian Christmas (p. 10)? A step too far? Boxing Day? We'll think about it!

Wishing you a very Happy Christmas, and New Year!

from Caroline Matheson and all at the Crier Team

Cover Picture: *Spirit of Yule*, felting by Deborah Cutting

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Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Allotments Available.

The PC have 2 full allotment plots and a half plot, recently cleared, available for rent, on the site opposite the cemetery (across the B1102). If you are interested or would like to view them, please contact the Clerk at swaffhamprior-clerk@gmail.com or 07833 784 626

Jude Griffiths

Clerk to the Parish Council

Dear Editors

Tower Open Day

With regard to Rob Frost's letter in the last issue, I'm sorry that we were not able to get the details of the St Cyriac's Tower Open Day into the October edition of the Crier. That was entirely my responsibility rather than that of the editors. The day was organised at the request of the Churches Conservation Trust for the annual meeting of their volunteers from across Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. We were delighted to be able to extend the invitation to Prior residents and to have the primary school visit in the afternoon. Unfortunately, we were unable to confirm all the arrangements until the Crier copy deadline had passed. We hoped that the posters posted around the village and the banner on the church railings would suffice.

It will be no consolation to Mr Frost if I report that the day was extremely successful. However, all is not lost. If Mr Frost would like to contact me, I would be happy to arrange a personal tour of the tower for him. We have already done the same for other residents who were disappointed to miss the open day and I'm happy to extend the opportunity to anyone else who cares to get in touch.

On a separate note, we are still looking for new recruits to learn bellringing. Though, we now have the makings of a thriving band at Swaffham Prior we can still struggle to ring on important occasions if any of our ringers happen to be unavailable. Ideally we would like to begin teaching another three to five people, starting in the New Year. If you would like to find out what is involved, or even have a taster session, then please do get in touch. Learning is much more fun together, so do suggest it to friends or family!

Gareth Davies

Tower Captain

swaffhampriorbells@gmail.com

07886 323686

*Gareth—you DID get the Open Day into the October Crier, Janet Willmott had sent it to us n good time—it's just that the October Crier was a bit late, and that was entirely the **editors'** responsibility! Eds*

Dear Editors,

Deborah Monteiro's Art History Classes at the Village Hall

Unfortunately, I have been barred from using the Village Hall from December. I was unable to get in one Tuesday as the door was stuck, swollen from wet, etc. and I didn't want to force it so I tried to get hold of one of the members of the committee to come down and help. I had a large group of elderly people, some needing the toilet and so I persisted and we waited nearly an hour, but it was construed as abuse, apparently I had no right to expect anyone to be available. I have since learned that Burwell and Reach Halls always have one person at least contactable in case of any emergency - I was told I was a trouble maker and that I am always complaining - I know other users who were unhappy with aspects of their hire, but no matter. So, although I had already a signed contract up to the end of March, Phil said they don't want me to use the hall anymore - a loss of £1000 annually that I contributed, which they clearly would rather miss, because I am not welcome.

I feel victimised and upset but I have to move on so will be at Reach from next year !

Deborah Monteiro

We contacted a spokesperson for the Village Hall Committee about Deborah's letter, and they said: "It is certainly unfortunate. I do, however, feel it inappropriate to discuss grievances in an open forum but confirm that it was a committee decision and one by which we stand." Eds



Some of the delicious cakes served at the Heating Scheme's Anniversary event — made by Maggie Pratt herself! See page 18.

This Month's Cover Picture

Deb Cutting is now concentrating on felting in her textile practice. She describes her creative process as 'transforming handfuls of fluff into decorative and wearable art'. Spirit of Yule is one in a series of unique 'felt men' wall art pieces : vivid felt faces that capture nature and evoke celestial elements.

Her new website is spiritoffelt.co.uk and she can be contacted on 07778 666187 or by email deb@spiritoffelt.co.uk. She is also on instagram @spiritoffelt.

Celia Tyler

From our Reporter

In last month's Crier I mentioned the 1914 weekday closure of the churches by the vicar because he did not like the actions of certain "wicked women" No reason was given. Someone has come up with a possible answer. The Vicar at the time (from 1897 to 1952) was the Reverend Lawrence Fisher. It seems he was controversial, a bit of a character and maybe a rogue. This came out in the September 1995 Radio 4 programme about the village which included interviews with many elderly residents who remembered Fisher well. It was claimed he was a little bit naughty with choir boys and widows, possibly wives. One elderly village resident in the programme claimed he "were homosexual, heterosexual, and I dunno what else." Could this have been the reason for the "sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion promoted by certain wicked women" to which the Vicar objected?



We are currently in very sad times, and equally sad in many ways is that the Covid Enquiry is providing a kind of comic relief. It could be a Comedy of Errors or a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, and certainly material for one of James Graham's excellent plays. It is all rather tawdry.

They cannot even curse with any style. It is flat, unimaginative boring stuff. There is nothing to match D.H.Lawrence's furious letter which he sent when William Heinemann rejected his *Sons and Lovers*. He wrote "*Curse the blasted, jelly-boned swines, the slimy, belly-wriggling invertebrates, the miserable sodding rotters, the flaming sods, the snivelling, dribbling, dithering palsied pulse-less lot that make up England today.*"

It is worth reading again – very slowly. Could one apply it to No 10 during Covid times? Should we not curse the same when we think of them – or are we so spineless. It is not only the likes of Lawrence who can curse with style. Take Harold Macmillan. Once when out shooting the recoil from his gun sent him tumbling backwards into a snow drift. By all accounts he lay on his back swearing non-stop for two minutes, without repeating himself once. Great stuff. The Bard could also put out a good curse. Oh! Where has all the style gone.

Christmas will be upon us very soon and all drinks are being promoted, especially celebratory champagne, prosecco and cava. Wales now produces its own sparkling wine and to distinguish it from the above it has been given a new name. They call it "Pefriog". Pronunciation uncertain. Earlier Wales was also cock a hoops over having achieved GI status for Penderyn, the name of their Welsh whisky. The GI status gives it legal protection against imitation and misuse. As possibly the only person in the village to have

tasted Penderyn I think it unlikely there will be any imitators, But, come, all you whisky drinkers, try it. The bottle itself is quite amazing. Give a bottle of Penderyn or Pefriog to your friend for Christmas. Or be very generous, and treat yourself to a bottle.

It is not difficult being unique regarding Penderyn. But we have one non-Welsh person in the village who can fluently pronounce:- LLANFAIRPWLLGWYNGLLGOGERYCHWYRNDROBWLLLLANTYS ILIOGOGOGOCH.

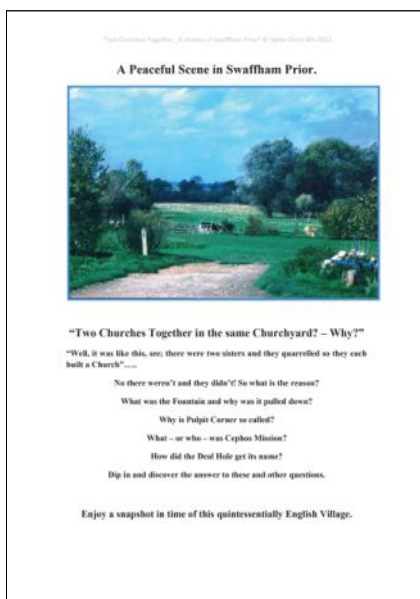
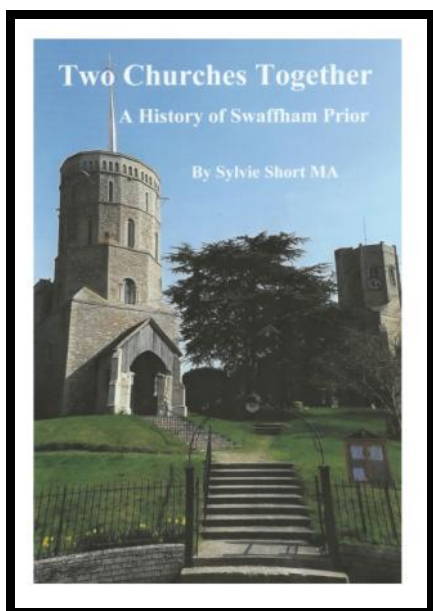
That is a real achievement.

A suggestion for Christmas dinner. Forget crackers. Just ask everyone in turn to try to read the Welsh name. It could be quite fun as it goes around the table.

Alastair Everitt

** The source of some of the information regarding the Reverend Lawrence Fisher was Silvie Short's excellent well-illustrated *Two Churches Together. A History of Swaffham Prior* which was published in 2013. Is it still available?

Yes, at <https://sylvieshort.co.uk/product/two-churches-together-a-history-of-swaffham-prior/> —an excellent Christmas gift! Eds





CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE ANGLESEY GROUP OF CHURCHES

Sunday 3 December

4pm Countdown to Christmas, Worship in the Village Hall, Quoy
4pm Advent by Candlelight Concert with Cambridge Voices, Swaffham Prior - £10

Sunday 10 December

10.30am Christingle Family Worship, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 17 December

3pm Carol Service, Quoy
4.30pm Carol Service, Swaffham Prior
6.30pm Carol Service, Swaffham Bulbeck

Thursday 21 December

3pm Carol Service, Lode

Friday 22 December

10am Crib Service with Toddler Group, Lode
6pm Carol Service, Bottisham

Sunday 24 December - Christmas Eve

6.30pm Holy Communion, Bottisham
11.30pm Holy Communion, Swaffham Bulbeck

Sunday 25 December - Christmas Day

8am Holy Communion, Quoy
10am Holy Communion, Swaffham Prior

All are welcome to services at any churches in the group:
Bottisham, Lode, Stow-cum-Quoy, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior



St Mary's Church Swaffham Prior Christingle Family Service

- **Sunday 10 December at 10.30am**
- **Make a traditional Christingle as part of the service**
- **Please give in support of the work of the Children's Society**
- **All welcome!**





Swaffham Prior Village Hall

Christmas Carol Singing

With Village Band

13th December 6:30 – 8:30

Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

All Are Welcome



BON MOT NUMBER 144

“The nicest feeling in the world
is to do good anonymously –
and have somebody find out.”

Oscar Wilde (1854 – 1900)



ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT

SUNDAY 3RD DECEMBER

AT

THE TWO CHURCHES

OF SWAFFHAM PRIOR

**4.00pm Admission £10 (children free) including mulled wine
and mince pies afterwards.**

The Cantilena Singers

is a well-established chamber choir that performs regularly in Cambridge and the surrounding villages, often in churches. The Cantilena Singers brings its 40th anniversary year to a close with an evening of seasonal music for Advent, featuring works by William Byrd, in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of his death.



Christus natus est

Saturday 9 December 2023, 7.30pm

St James's Church, Lode, Cambridgeshire CB25 9EW

Refreshments will be served during the interval.

No need to book, just come along.

There will be a retiring collection

THE SWEETEST STORY EVER TOLD

The sugar rush in Georgian Britain and its implications

Friday January 26th 2.30 till 4.30 p.m.

at the

Gardiner Memorial Hall, Burwell



Discover how Cambridge University hosted Queen Elizabeth I and her entourage in the late 16th century for a Royal progress and how they pandered to her sweet craving !

Hear how the demand for tea with sugar from the 17th century onwards became a lucrative trade across Europe, a fashion started by Royalty.

And.. how the institution of slavery fuelled its production !

It is a sweet and sour story, of the craving for all things sugary, the rise in tea drinking in Britain and how this craze drove the demand for suitable porcelain wares, tea parties, as depicted in paintings and even the building of tea bridges in country estates.

As a story, this is an essential part of our cultural heritage. Unmissable !



There will be a tea break with some suitable treats on offer to sweeten the start of the New Year !

The Gardiner hall is on the high street, near the Five bells Pub, CB25 0HD.
There is plenty of parking outside.

Go to arthistoryincambs.com to enrol

Mince pies!

Every Advent Sunday - this year 3 December - the two churches of Swaffham Prior ring to the sound of Cambridge Voices' Advent Concert in aid of Emmaus. After the second half of the concert, choir and audience return to the warmth of St Mary's for mince pies and mulled wine. If you are able to donate a quantity of warm mince pies - homemade or bought - please let me know by 1 December. Many thanks

Dee Noyes: admin@anglesaygroupparishes.co.uk

01638 743864



Julie's Vegetarian Christmas

Mushroom, chestnut and squash filo pie

3 tbsp extra virgin oil
250g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
1 red onion, sliced
300g butternut squash, peeled and diced
75g curly kale, de-stalked and shredded
150ml vegetable stock
50g ready to eat apricots, quartered
180g chestnuts, halved
75g walnuts, roughly chopped
½ tsp dried chilli flakes
85g goats cheese, cut into small pieces
4 sheets of filo pastry, packet
Extra olive oil for brushing
Handful of chopped parsley to garnish



1. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large pan. Cook the onions and squash for 5 minutes or until the onions and squash start to soften and brown, add the mushrooms and cook until lightly browned.

2. Add the kale, stir in stock and bring to a simmer, until the liquid has reduced to almost nothing, stirring regularly.

3. Stir in the apricots and gently heat for 2 mins, add the chestnuts and walnuts, stirring well. Add the chilli flakes, season well and leave to cool for 45 minutes.

4. Preheat the oven to 190c. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Layer the filo pastry, each sheet brushed with oil and overlapped to make a star shape.

5. Spoon the filling into the centre and scatter with goats cheese.

6. Bring the excess pastry up around the filling, leaving a gap at the top. Brush the pastry with the remaining oil. Bake for 25-30 mins, when ready garnish with chopped parsley.

Serves 6

Perfect nut roast

300g mixed nuts, almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans or brazil nuts
1 vegan/veggie stock cube
2 tbsp virgin olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
2 celery sticks, finely chopped
1 leek, trimmed and finely sliced
2 carrots, (150g) coarsely grated



2 garlic cloves, crushed
180g cooked chestnuts, finely chopped
75g dried cranberries
20g fresh parsley, finely chopped
1 lemon, zest only grated
4 tbsp milk, alternative soya or almond
4 tbsp cashew butter
1 tsp sea salt
Ground black pepper

1. Blitz all the nuts in a food processor chopping into small pieces, but not fully ground.
2. Preheat the oven too 200c. Line a 900g loaf tin with baking paper.
3. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion, celery, leek and carrot, cook until soft and then add the garlic.
4. Tip into a mixing bowl and stir in the cashew butter, add nuts and all other ingredients, season well and stir until thoroughly mixed.
5. Spoon the mixture into the loaf tin, press in firmly. Cover with foil and bake for 30 mins, remove the foil and bake for a further 20 mins until it is lightly browned.
6. When cooked, leave to cool for 5 mins, loosen the edges of the nut roast carefully with table knife and turn out onto a platter. Serve with Vegan/veggie gravy.

Serves 6

Happy Christmas!

Boxing Day Hockey Match

SWAFFHAM PRIOR VS SWAFFHAM BULBECK

The Denny, Swaffham Bulbeck

Tuesday 10.45 am (10.30 am players)

COME AND SUPPORT SWAFFHAM PRIOR!!

All proceeds to MAGPAS



Contact **Mandy Kingsmill** if you would like to play in the winning team!
New players especially welcome

07796 091855 (mandy@kingsmills.uk)

The Crier's Adventures at the PC Meeting

Following last month's bombshell email from the PC's Clerk to the **Crier** saying that *"At last night's meeting, the PC made a decision that they no longer want me to submit the 'Notes from the Parish Council' to you for publication"* the Editor and I attended the PC Meeting on 9 November in the hope of retrieving the situation since, by then, the decision had appeared in the unapproved minutes on the PC web site as *"Action: Clerk not to produce the 'Notes' for the Crier this month. To be discussed at the November meeting"*.

In the section before the meeting proper where members of the public can speak, Caroline spoke with passion explaining the situation from the **Crier's** perspective. Since it started 46 years ago, the **Crier** has published "Notes from the Parish Council" supplied by the Clerk and based on their unapproved minutes. These have to be based on the unapproved minutes to be ready in time for publication in the **Crier** immediately following the meeting and thus to be of maximum usefulness in keeping the village informed and enabling people to enquire about things at the very next meeting. Other villages round here follow the same practice though in some cases the Chair, or a different PC Member each month, prepares the Notes recognising the importance of these being available to the village and the value of a village magazine in providing free printing and distribution. Amongst the information not published because the Notes were withheld last month was: a correction of what we now believe to be the issue in dispute (see the digression below); the further news of Gigaclear and County Broadband's plans; plans for Burwell Bonfire; and the draft Parish Nature Recovery Plan. There were nods of agreement and recognition of the importance of this from several Councillors during Caroline's speech.

At the suggestion of one of the Councillors, the Chair very kindly agreed to move this item to the start of the agenda. In the following coverage I've avoided using names because the Councillor who had raised the item last time started the discussion by noting their unhappiness in being named several times though it was not clear whether this was the printed copy and/or the Editor's opening words. They did not recognise our version of events and explained that their unhappiness was over the use of unapproved minutes to produce Notes for the **Crier** leading to a printed inaccuracy over a "divisive subject". A contrast was made between the **Crier's** implied sloppy journalism in not checking the Notes were correct and the effort that daily broadsheets put into ensuring accuracy and correcting mistakes.

A brief digression: It has never been made clear either in the PC Minutes, emails from the PC or the PC meeting exactly what the inaccuracy causing the divisive subject was so we were unable to publish a full correction in the November **Crier**. To avoid risking further inaccuracies, the following explanation is based as much as possible on the approved October minutes, the unapproved November minutes, and what has been printed in the **Crier**. Reading between the lines, the inaccuracy appears to have been the number of houses to have the Heating Scheme internal work complete by the end of November. The Notes said "when 100 external connections will be complete; full connection for these will be completed by the end of November" whereas it should have said "... full connection for 65 of these ..." which would

have corresponded to the information from the Heating Project printed elsewhere in that **Crier**. Unfortunately I picked up on this discrepancy in my comment article on the Heating Scheme elsewhere in the Crier for what was intended to be a joke about the numbers changing yet again (and over-optimism about the rate of progress). Ironically, I'd originally intended to make a similar comment about the new figures for the total project cost (also in the PC Notes) but I'd thought that this might be genuinely difficult territory, especially as we were promised a further clarification at the next PC meeting. I'm sorry that the numbers I used have turned out to be a divisive subject, they certainly weren't intended to be, nor was there any intended criticism of the PC or Councillors, nevertheless I apologise to the Councillor concerned for any embarrassment that has inadvertently been caused.

And so back to the meeting where the discussion moved on to how to prevent similar problems in future. Fortunately there seemed to be little general enthusiasm for discontinuing providing minutes to the **Crier** in some form or other in time for publication before the next Council Meeting. Perhaps the **Crier** could be sent the full unapproved minutes to publish thus saving the cost of the Clerk's time producing separate Notes – interruption from a member of the public (the Editor!): “do you think the **Crier** is made of money to publish all those extra pages?”. Then maybe the **Crier** could be responsible for shortening them – further interruption from the same member of the public: “do you think we've time to spare”. Both interruptions were accepted and the discussion turned to how the PC could distance itself from any future mistakes in the Notes (despite these being very rare and it becoming apparent that Councillors get to see the unconfirmed minutes Notes in time for the **Crier** to be alerted to any significant errors ahead of publication). In the end it was agreed that a disclaimer would be published with the Notes making it clear that they are unofficial and may contain errors (see this month's Notes for full details of the decision and the disclaimer in action).

We stayed for the rest of the meeting and had been intending to add some comments on the rest of the business but it would be hard to improve on the Notes so we won't try. We do however encourage everyone to look at the item on ACRE's plans for rural affordable housing in the village since this is likely to be a major talking point over the next few months and showed the Council at its best highlighting the key issues for the village including the importance of knowing where the land is which would be used. It was also good to see the seriousness with which an item on playground safety inspections was discussed, balancing risk and the cost of the inspections.

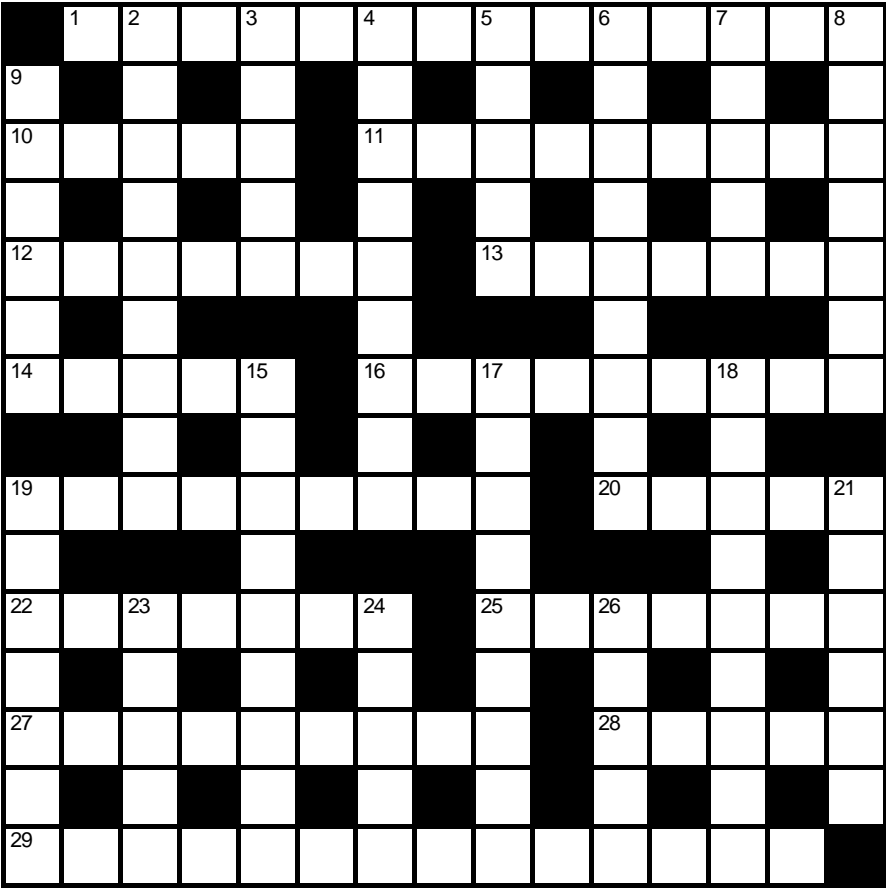
Whilst the **Crier** had got what it most needed, the Notes reinstated, it seems a pity that these can no longer give due credit to the Clerk, Jude Griffiths, as author. A happy note was struck after the end of the official meeting when the public are again allowed to speak and Michael Limb noted that he'd not been able to be at the previous meeting but felt that the Council seemed to have managed to dig itself into a hole. He then went on to speak kindly of the service that the **Crier** performs for the village and the Editor's contribution to the meeting. A number of Councillors nodded their agreement.

James Matheson

Crossword Number 211

Compiled by **CALVIN**

This month's puzzle is a simple cryptic crossword. Send your answers to the editors by 18th December 2023. The sender of the first correct solution out of the hat will be awarded a *Winner's Certificate*. Emailed solutions are acceptable but



Name:.....
Address:.....
.....Tel:.....

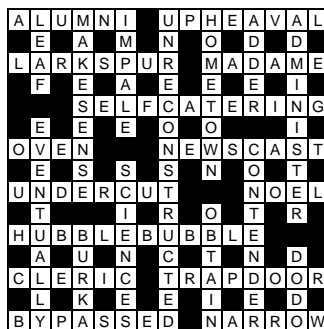
Across

- 1 Artistic movement formed by paper-shape tiler, briefly (3-11)
- 10 Part of tree from times unknown - mostly citrus? (5)
- 11 Quite confused by note: back and forth regarding manners (9)
- 12 Cut into exam on American frontier (3,4)
- 13 E.g. there used to be plenty (7)
- 14 Display book on leaving the army (5)
- 16 An arrangement for four viols is unnecessary (9)
- 19 Times, perhaps, speed of stationery item (5,4)
- 20 Rogue alumnus? Lad, you've got it backwards! (5)
- 22 Emailed about drink (7)
- 25 Met, for example with William, aged 91? (3,4)
- 27 Excited bird sitting on a ring (4-1-4)
- 28 French rabbit mix, in unexceptional field (5)
- 29 Forlorn hope, presently located here, having about lost in battle (2-3,9)
- 6 Peer - a Conservative, we hear - is expressing praise (9)
- 7 Add child to university, quietly! (3,2)
- 8 Electrical unit belonging to sailors in audition (7)
- 9 Former number one bear quit (6)
- 15 Renaissance might be source of fervent Christian? (4-5)
- 17 Unplanned but setter's on time and - finally! - emu's last (9)
- 18 Mandatory to include book, as nothing replaces last musical section (9)
- 19 Touring penal colony primarily, I visited bird (7)
- 21 Tea produces sound of appreciation, drawn out (6)
- 23 Parrot my aunt's conversation, about weather, primarily (5)
- 24 One co-licensor holding bacteria (1,4)
- 26 To be contrary, drank in warehouse (5)

Down

- 2 Paper with lines on hills and valleys, showing where one might find a toilet? (6,3)
- 3 Fabric, coming from the East, retrieved from Weimaraner (5)
- 4 Pullet with fin? Such a hybrid could be abundant! (9)
- 5 Indistinguishable, oddly, from all winkles (5)

Solution to crossword no. 210



We congratulate Christine & Mike Carrington, the winners of last month's competition, who will receive a prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Sue Jackson, Julian Luttrell and Robert Nunn.

BURWELL REPAIR CAFE

Bookings are open for the next Burwell Repair Cafe to be held on Sunday 10th December, from 2pm to 5pm, at Mandeville Hall in Burwell.

Our repair cafe is staffed by volunteers who will assess and try to fix your broken items for free to help save them from landfill. Please do come along and see if we can help.

The best way to guarantee time with a repairer is to book your slot here on our web-site <https://www.burwellrepaircafe.org/>

But we also welcome anyone who wants to drop in and wait for one of the volunteers to become free.

There are delicious cakes, biscuits, savoury snack and tea and coffee to buy at our cafe while you wait - the cafe is cash only but is also very reasonably priced.

Our repairers can fix a wide range of items - although there are no guarantees - including electrical goods, jewellery, bikes, small pieces of furniture, items that need sewing and more.

If you think that you might be able to use your knowledge and skills to support our team of dedicated repairers, please let us know.



News from Bottisham Medical Practice Patients' Participation Group

Update from Bottisham Medical Practice:

UK Health Surveillance Agency respiratory virus swabbing project. We have signed up to this project whereby any patient with viral or infective symptoms will be offered a nasal and throat swab. This is posted away and results are sent to the patient. The aim of the project is to see what are the prominent viruses circulating to help assist in planning for future viral treatments and vaccines.

IMPORTANT: Patient access to medical records through the NHS app.

The NHS wants to give people better ways to see their personal health information online. We know that people want to be able to access their health records. It can help you see test results faster. It also lets you read and review notes from your appointments in your own time.

From 31 October 2023 you will be able to see all the information within your health record automatically. For most people, access will be automatic, and you won't need to do anything.

It's important to remember that these documents may, at times, contain information that could be upsetting, especially if they contain news of a serious condition. Some patients may prefer not to have access to their records. Some entries may cause distress surrounding recent or past medical events.

Great care is also needed in case private details might cause harm at home, should people in a difficult or pressured relationship be forced to show their medical record to an abusive partner. Anyone in such a position should make this clear to us at the practice, so we can take steps to keep you safe. This might mean removing access through the NHS app for the time being, or through a careful process where we hide sensitive things.

If you do not wish to have access please let us know. Either contact your GP or email via

admin.bottishammedicalpractice@nhs.net

Keep up to date on our latest information

<https://www.bottishammedicalpractice.nhs.uk>

Survey on Access to Primary Health Care: Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is launching a survey on 1st November 2023 to gather people's experiences of accessing Primary Care services, such as GP services.

This survey, which will remain open until 17th December 2023 is being conducted independently by Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with the support of NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough [understand how important local access to health services are](#), such as your GP Practice, and are keen to hear your experiences, feedback and thoughts on ways in which you currently access local GP services and how these could be improved.

This valuable insight will be used to help NHS & Cambridgeshire & Peterborough to shape how our local services are developed for the future to ensure they continue to meet local needs.

<https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/form/primary-care-access-survey>

Christmas and New Year: Please remember to order your medications in good time to allow for the bank holidays over this period, also to ensure you have enough to last you over this time.

NAAFI Break: Next one 6th December at Anglesey Abbey Redwoods Restaurant 10am. See message from Gary below.

The Patient Participation Group: As usual we are looking for new members to join the committee, all patients of this Practice are eligible. Please contact our chairman as below to find out more information and how you can be involved.

Change of Meeting: We have postponed the next meeting from December. This will now be at 6.30pm 25 January 2024 in the Surgery waiting room. If you wish to join our meeting, please email our chairman s.j.gilson@btinternet.com. Or speak to reception.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and good health for 2024.

Bottisham Medical Practice Patients Participation Group

Heating Scheme News

We had a wonderful turn out at our Anniversary event on 18 October and we have been asked by the Swaffham Prior Editors to feature the cakes that were made for the event. Not only did we have delicious cakes but it was also fantastic to be able to put faces to names.



Award Winner

We now have even more to celebrate because the Swaffham Prior Heat Network has won the prestigious **Edie Net Zero Award for Renewable Energy Project of the Year**. The Edie Awards are the world's largest sustainable business awards and recognise green projects which are transforming the energy landscape for good.



We could not have won this award without the team effort between the Council and our Contractors along with the support we have from the Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust and the village community. Thank you, Swaffham Prior!

Heat On

We are very happy to report that there are 62 homes now in the village fully connected and receiving heat, at the time of writing. We are hoping to imminently connect another two customers by the end of this year. In addition to this, we have put in the external pipework to another 36 Sanctuary properties, which we hope to be connecting in due course, which will speed up this process. We are very grateful to all those who have connected so far in their liaison with our contractors over scheduling of the works. This is a complex process involving several companies and every home is different, so co-ordination between all parties is a key part of making this project happen.

Construction Costs

Lastly, we have been asked again



to share some scheme costs and information. The cost of building the energy centre and primary heat network was £9.4m, (£5.9m and £3.5m respectively). The Council received a government grant towards this of £2.9m. That left a balance of £6.5m which has been funded through prudential borrowing through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). These loan funds do not come out of council tax receipts. This is a loan, only available to local authorities like Councils, with a lower rate of interest than commercial loans or personal finance. The Council will pay back this loan over the lifetime of the project from income generated by selling heat.

As a U.K pioneering project, one key aim has been to pilot new finance approaches to ensure everyone can benefit from the energy transition, irrespective of income. Rural communities have many additional challenges compared to urban areas. In addition to often not being connected to the gas grid as in Swaffham Prior, there are also often pressures on the electricity distribution network. This project aims to tackle these upfront, so everyone can connect, rather than let those most able to afford the technologies to install them first, leaving potential issues for those coming later.

Future connections

We continue to be very encouraged by the community support and we are getting more and more interested to connect to the heat network. If you are interested in connecting to the heat network you can contact us three different ways. We will then organise a **FREE no obligation** survey of your property that will identify where the Heat Interface Unit will be located and how the pipework will be installed from the road to your home. Once we have the report we will issue you with a Heat Supply Agreement which is the contract between you and the Council to connect you to the heat network. To register your interest you can:

Fill out this form – <https://forms.office.com/e/8mg3xtEpnY>

Email us on heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Call us on **0345 0455210**

Thank you from The Heating Swaffham Prior Team

SWAFFHAM PRIOR PAROCHIAL CHARITIES

Plot of land to rent in Swaffham Prior

Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities have a vacant plot of land to rent within the village.

Plot size 30 metres x 20 metres.

This could be ideal for allotment purposes.

No livestock permitted on site.

Applicants must reside in Swaffham Prior or Reach.

Anyone who may be interested and wishes to apply please contact

Pam Waters
Clerk to the Trustees
Tel 01638 741035

The Swaffhams' WI

A sense of community is important to us all and this was brought home to us in the November meeting of the Swaffhams' WI. Our speaker, Ellie, visited us from the Arthur Rank Hospice based in Cambridge and spoke with sensitivity, passion and at times gentle humour about the Hospice, its outreach programmes and the ethos behind its work.

In 2016 the hospice moved to its new location in Cambridge where it now proudly provides bright, private rooms with ensuite facilities, beautiful gardens accessible from each individual room, a hair salon and a bistro which is also open to the public.

2022 saw the 40th year of the Arthur Rank hospice and since its conception, the hospice has developed into the loving, caring space we see today. In 1981 Arthur Rank was determined to change what hospice care meant. He felt that the last moments of life should be celebrated and treasured. Although most people choose to go home to die, there is always a place at the Hospice if this is not possible. The Hospice prides itself on making the last moments of life meaningful and memorable. It has hosted marriages, sleepovers and key to its support is the Living Well service which provides, amongst other things, massages, memory books and support for the whole family for as long as it is needed.

The Arthur Rank Hospice is an adult hospice but it is sensitive to the fact that there are children who are also going through end-of-life care. It has therefore developed an inspiring transition service for children from the ages of 16 to 18 so that should they come to the Hospice as an adult, it is less of a shock when being cared for in the adult facility.



But how is this all financially possible? This year the cost of care, which comes free to patients, will be £12.12 million. £7.33 million comes directly from the NHS which therefore leaves £4.56 million to be found within the community. This is where Ellie springs into action. Ellie works in corporate sponsoring which is an important key to the fundraising. Legacies are also a vital source of income as well as the Arthur Rank charity shops. However, there are so many ways we, as a community, can get involved. The Hospice takes part in many fundraising events throughout the year including Bridge the Gap (a walk through the Cambridge Colleges), the Cambridge Half Marathon, the Fire Walk and the Star Shine Night

Walk. You might also have met Arthur Bear who often visits schools.

The work of the Hospice together with the fundraising would not be possible without the close relationship between the clinical and administration teams plus the 500+ volunteers. It was lovely to hear several of our WI members talk about their volunteering experience with the Arthur Rank Hospice.

There was so much more in Ellie's November talk and if you feel that you would like to support the Arthur Rank Hospice, do please have lunch in their highly recommended bistro, have a look on their website at upcoming events and buy some of their beautiful Christmas cards and delicious plum puddings!

Our December meeting is our Christmas party celebration.

On 15th January 2024 our guest speaker is Dr Yeo, who will be talking to us about diet and gut health. Dr Yeo is the author of the popular book *Gene Eating*. He is also well known for his appearances on TV programmes including *Trust Me, I'm a Doctor* and his influential BBC Horizon special *Clean Eating – The Dirty Truth*. Do please come along to Swaffham Prior Village Hall at 7:30pm on 15th January to hear Dr Yeo speak. After the Christmas celebrations, I am sure we will all need a little help to get back on track in the New Year!

Kate Muscroft



VILLAGE GARDENERS

Our speaker Margaret Nimmo-Smith gave a talk titled *Fashions in Garden Plants* about her interest in plants from a young age and how, in many cases, preferences have come full circle! Margaret was born and lived in Kent and visited Sissinghurst Place, even seeing the renowned gardener Vita Sackville-West.

On marriage and moving to Cambridge in the '70's she was able to buy plants on line from Margery Fish, now deceased, in Somerset. She was a member of the Alpine Garden Society which no longer exists, perhaps because rockeries are no longer fashionable.

Bressingham Gardens was a popular place to visit. At the time it was run by Alan Bloom. His son, who now runs it, introduced a lot of conifers from Germany.

Garden Festivals became popular in the '80's, the first in 1984 in Liverpool. Margaret was helping on a stand displaying irises from Germany. Everyone connected with the irises had gone and the judges had not yet appeared when she

discovered that a row in the front of the display hadn't been named. So, Margaret set to and gave them names! Nobody ever remarked on them!

Also at this time Peter Rose formed a society for ivies and searched out 150 of them! Margaret was a founder member of the Plant Heritage society.

Hellebores and Arum lilies became popular in the '80's and '90's and a number of different Brunneras in 2000's.

This trend was followed by the introduction of Prairie Planting by Piet Oudolf. Another fascinating introduction was stumperies. These are comprised of trees that have been cut down and upended and then ferns grown in the root ends which are then at the top!

Wall planting and vertical planting are among different methods of gardening that have emerged recently. Cloud pruning of shrubs has become popular and with the change in climate we are able to grow more exotic plants like cannas, datura and eucomis. Dahlias have come back into fashion too.

The talk was illustrated with some colourful slides which we all enjoyed.

We now have a break until January 2024 when our next meeting will be on Tuesday 16th at 8.00 pm. Everyone is most welcome.

Ruth Scovil



Mothers' Union

Our October meeting began with feedback from the Trustee reports of the Autumn Diocesan Meeting held in Waterbeach on 14th October. After our usual short service of worship members enjoyed a social afternoon playing Bingo. The 'Bring and Buy' stall raised over £50.

Mothers' Union takes an active part in The United Nations' 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and Abuse. This runs from 25th November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10th December, Human Rights Day. This is the topic of our November meeting. More information can be found on the MU website <https://www.mothersunion.org/what-we-do/policy/16-days-global>

At our next meeting on Thursday 14th December, we will have a short Advent Service followed by Christmas craft and mince pies. You are always welcome to come and join us.

We wish all readers a blessed and peaceful festive season.

Ann Langran



East
Cambridgeshire
District Council
www.eastcambs.gov.uk

From our District Councillors
Charlotte Cane &
John Trapp

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

In January, the crews will collect real Christmas trees for recycling – please remove all decorations and cut them so that they are no higher or wider than your Green bin and put them out beside your green bin before 4 February. There's useful information about how to recycle other Christmas waste on the website at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/east-cambs-street-scene/christmas-recycling>.



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

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

Prices are rising at a slower rate now, with inflation coming down. But they are still rising and food and fuel remain expensive. A survey by Cambridgeshire County Council shows that 86% of us are concerned about cost-of-living increases and almost half of us – 48% - have cut back on heating use. If you are struggling, or know anyone who is struggling, there is help from advice through to grants and food

vouchers. You can find out more at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/cost-living/cost-living>, call the Housing and Community Advice team on 01353 665555, or you can ask John or Charlotte who will put you in touch with the Council's team.

We have no meet your Councillors in December, but you are welcome to contact us any time john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk, charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk

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

CHRISTMAS FAIR

St Mary's Church, Swaffham Bulbeck
Saturday 2nd December 2023
10am – 12noon

Come and join us for some Christmas cheer and
enjoy a complimentary glass of mulled wine and a mince pie.
For all children 11 years and under
come for a free visit to Father Christmas in his Grotto.

Christmas Gifts, Stocking Fillers, Christmas Cards,
Art, Jewellery, Plants, Craft,
Homemade Pastries, Cakes,
Books and Jigsaws, Tombola, Raffle

ADMISSION FOR ADULTS £1.00

All proceeds split between St. Mary's Church
and Mara, Tanzania

For the residents of Swaffham Prior

Lucy Frazer's End-of Year Round Up

As we approach the end of 2023, I wanted to look back on the year and let you know about some of the work I have been doing for you as your local Member of Parliament.

2023 has been a year of highs and lows. I think most people would join me in recognising the coronation of Charles III and Camilla in May as a memorable highlight. As the first coronation in seventy years, the event was always bound to be a special occasion, but I was moved by the many displays of national unity and celebration I witnessed over the Bank Holiday weekend.

However, for all of its wonderful moments, the year has presented us with challenges. Not only have we had a second year of war in Ukraine, but another conflict has commenced in the Middle East.

I know how important quality healthcare is to my constituents. That's why I have been working with my neighbouring MP, Anthony Browne, and senior leaders at Addenbrooke's Hospital to secure a new cancer hospital at Cambridge Biomedical Campus, which will enable better diagnosis and precision treatments from 2026-27. I continue to campaign for the funding required to deliver a new children's hospital on the same site, which would be a world-first specialist facility for children and young people.

As MP for a largely rural constituency, I also appreciate the need for effective bus services. Following my efforts at the end of last year to prevent Stagecoach from axing or significantly altering 23 local bus routes, including the No.11, I was pleased to assist the Combined Authority with the retendering of bus services for at least another 12 months from April 2023. Recently, I have written to the Mayor to call him to identify how he intends to utilise the new £2.3 million government funding for Cambridgeshire's bus network.

I have also campaigned for better cycle infrastructure in Swaffham Prior, whilst at the same time, reiterating the importance of careful design and community buy-in. In November, I represented the concerns of residents about the planned cycleway at a meeting of the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

I have also been working with Cambridgeshire Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner to get crime down, so that my constituents can feel safer in their communities. The force is at a record size following the government's 'Police Uplift Programme' and I am pleased that it is paying dividends, with neighbourhood crime down 30% and rural crime down 21% across Cambridgeshire.

If there is anything I can do to support you in any way, or if you would like to notify me about an issue in your village, please do not hesitate to contact me on lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk. I wish you all the best for the rest of the year.

Lucy Frazer



Notes from the Swaffham Prior Parish Council

November meeting

Cllr Covill chaired a meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 9th November, attended by 8 parish councillors and 6 members of the public.

Public participation.

A member of the public spoke in favour of the Swaffham Crier receiving monthly Notes from the PC, pointing out it was common practice locally using unapproved minutes.

Discuss and approve the content relationship with the Crier

Cllr Greenfield outlined the situation that led to last month's unhappiness in the PC over the use of unapproved minutes to produce Notes for the Crier – a printed inaccuracy over a divisive subject. Various solutions were discussed at length.

The PC decided that 'Notes from the PC meeting' continue to be produce for the Crier by the Clerk, without the Clerk's signature and with the endnote "produced from unapproved minutes and may contain errors; approved minutes can be found at <http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/minutes.html>".

Reports

a) Cambridge County Council. Report from Cllr Lorna Dupre circulated by email. No representative attended. Cllr Charlotte Cane (ECDC) noted that the survey of well-being for the county had recorded higher than average feelings of loneliness and high levels of concern regarding heating and food costs.

b) East Cambs District Council. Report circulated by email. Cllr Charlotte Cane attended.

Cllr Cane highlighted:

- The difference between the growth and Infrastructure Fund and the Pride of Place Grant
- Meetings and discussions with Sanctuary Housing regarding empty properties and alleged poor customer service.
- The passing of the Single Issue Review of the Local Plan and the need for a new Local Plan as the current one is now over 8 years old and does not provide for enough affordable housing to cover the need identified.

Cllr Latchford asked what the Council viewed as 'affordable'. Cllr Cane said that officially it is 20% of average which locally is about £350,000, so would be £280,000.

Cllr Greenfield commented that more needed to be done to enforce the building of affordable housing agreed under planning approvals.

Correspondence

a) Proposed Temporary Traffic Road Order application for Burwell Road closure 8th-10th January 2024.

b) Emails from Cllr Lorna Dupre (CCC) and Chippenham PC regarding lack of contact from Cllr Josh Schumann and offers of support from Cllr Dupre.

c) Email from Wicken PC regarding updates on the state of road repairs. The

Clerk to email Cllr Charlotte Cane to ask for further support for funding.

Presentation from Jenna Brame of Cambridgeshire ACRE regarding rural affordable housing.

Jenna Brame discussed a proposal to survey the housing needs of the Swaffham Prior community with an aim of creating a rural exception site of affordable, shared ownership and rented housing. The houses would be built to House Association standards and be affordable in perpetuity. Cambridgeshire ACRE were seeking the PC's support for the survey.

Cllr Greenfield established that the landowner could profit from the project, but that other costs were covered by government grants and profits reinvested in other projects, and that rural exception sites could only be for affordable housing.

Cllr Muscroft asked the timescale for the survey. It would be distributed in the New Year, for roughly 3 weeks, the report from the data collected written in a month, then the developers brought back the PC to discuss the results.

Cllr Latchford asked what questions would be asked? The survey would be anonymous and PC would get to see the questions before it was distributed.

Cllrs Greenfield and Latchford noted that there are specific areas of the parish that there are strong objections to building on, despite the need for housing.

The PC decided to wait for Cllr Charlotte Cane (ECDC) to check that agreeing to the survey did not affect the PC's right to veto a rural exception site before revisiting the matter in the December meeting.

Accounts

Quotes were accepted for the pollarding of the trees lining the Village Hall driveway (Eastern Tree Surgery) and for inspections of the play equipment in the playground three times a year (Online Playgrounds).

Policies

Amendments to the Financial Risk Assessments were agreed.

Report on Heating Scheme – Cllr Greenfield.

The Anniversary Evening event of 18th October was a useful, informative, successful and enjoyable evening; attendees included current customers, local government representatives, contractors, stakeholders and customers wishing to connect.

Issues:

Lighting – downlighters and daylight sensors have been installed and the effectiveness is being monitored.

Noise – Bouygues have implemented a programme of noise reduction measures at the Energy Centre, the first phase of this is concluding this week and includes: -

Acoustically insulated enclosures around the compressors, the noisiest plant in the Energy Centre.

Lots of temporary acoustic fencing on-site.

Acoustic membrane installed on the personnel door and in the sides and top of the sectional overhead door opening on the gable end nearest to the adjoining property.

Bouygues and the compressor supplier will be running up the compressors to full load (occasionally) to measure the effectiveness of the measures installed.

Once they have measured the effectiveness of the first phase, there will be a second phase of works removing temporary measures with more permanent acoustic fencing and insulated door panels. Additional sound insulation reinforcement will be installed in critical areas.

The complainants were being kept informed of developments.

Clerk's Report

a) Allotments. 1 full allotment plot and one half plot are under consideration by new renters on the B1102 site. This leaves 3 full plots and one half plot still available to rent – to be advertised.

b) Playground. Anti-pigeon spikes have been attached to the swing frames. The Clerk to chase up the grant for the new play equipment.

c) The Clerk ordered a poppy wreath plus donation to the Royal Legion on behalf of the PC, in line with previous years donation (£50 total) for Remembrance Day.

d) The PC has a statutory duty to have a Nature Recovery Plan in place by 1st January 2024 so the Clerk will be circulating the one discussed with Mike Barker at the September/October meetings to be agreed at the December meeting.

Parish Councillors' Reports

a) Cllr Greenfield reported on an A-B1102 group meeting. A survey had been published in the Crier, with copies in the church and on Facebook to gather information on the type of bus services wanted. It is important that as many people answer it as possible to gather as much information from as wide a viewpoint as possible. The group now involve representatives from Great Wilbraham to Fordham including all the PCs along the B1102, and transport and technical experts. The Combined Authorities have expressed interest in the design for the Fast Route bus service.

b) Cllr Hart noted that very few of the traffic calming posts on Mill Hill are still standing – Cllr Kent-Phillips to follow up.

c) Cllr Covill noted that the Parochial Charities survey the playground trees for Health and Safety (the clerk requested a copy of the report) and in response to enquiry from the clerk, the Parochial Charities would have no objection to a bench for the use of dog-owning families, outside the playground fence, facing towards the play equipment.

Open Question Time.

A member of the public commended the service of the Crier to the parish.

Produced from unapproved minutes and may contain errors; approved minutes can be found at <http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/minutes.html>. If anyone would like any further information on any of the above items, please contact the Clerk.

The next monthly Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 14th December 2023 starting at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Notes from the Swaffham Prior Parish Council

OCTOBER meeting

(These notes were omitted from last month's Crier—see below, p.26 and p. 12)

Cllr Greenfield chaired a meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 12th October, attended by 8 parish councillors and 3 members of the public.

Reports

East Cambridgeshire District Council – Cllr Charlotte Cane attended as representative.

Cllr Cane noted that the Growth and Infrastructure Fund was now open and that black refuse sacks should be provided to everyone by 31st October 2023.

Corrections to minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 14th September 2023.

Under min. ref. 109/23-24, “Phase 1 is due to end at the end of September 2023, when ~~400~~ 65 external connections will be complete; full connection for these will be completed by the end of November 2023” was inaccurate and be replaced with “Phase 1 of the external connections is due to end at the end of September 2023, when 100 will be complete. By the end of November 2023 there will be 65 with full connection to the system”.

Matters arising from previous minutes (for information only)

Cllr Hart noted that the ‘tripwire’ on the footpath near the heating centre was still in place – Cllr Lambert to check and report to Highways.

Cllr Kent-Phillips reported that Meads had cleared the new allotment plots well and that he and PL had marked them out.

Cllr Durrant obtained a quote for steel path edges for the cemetery – to be discussed at the November meeting.

Cllr Greenfield noted that revised plans for the proposed greenway had not been forthcoming yet.

Cllr Greenfield noted that a recent ‘Notes from the PC meeting’ in the Crier contained a factual error, expressed unhappiness with the notes being written by the Clerk from unapproved minutes and the PC agreed. It was decided that the Clerk should not produce the ‘Notes’ for the Crier this month and the matter be discussed further at the November meeting.

Planning applications.

23/00942/FUL Amended Two levels of raised decking to the rear – retrospective. 10 Green Head Road, Swaffham Prior, Cambridge, CB25 0JT

The PC’s agreed response was “if the amendment was made after discussions between the Planning Department, the applicant and the neighbours and meet Planning controls, the PC has no further comment”.

Policies.

Employment Policies be adopted by the PC.

Parish Nature Recovery Plan.

Mike Barker was invited to speak to the PC. The proposed plan is to apply for a

‘Pride of Place’ grant from ECDC to fund:

A Spring planting spree in early 2024 in Swaffham Prior’s green spaces to enhance them for pollinators

Plug planting of native wildflowers on banks and bases of hedges/walls

A planting project in the cemetery in the area containing graves but very few grave markers.

The planting would be carried out by a team from Prospect’s Trust, the application would be made by Mike and administrated through the CLT. The areas to be planted would be identified in a survey by Mike, a member of the Prospect’s Trust and a member of the PC, then confirmed in advance by the PC in early 2024. Surplus bulbs and plants will be given away to parishioners.

The PC approved the plan and agreed that the Clerk would write a letter of support.

Response to CCC’s changes to their weed-spraying policy and a petition opposing them.

Cambridgeshire County Council have stopped spraying weedkiller to reduce environmental and financial impacts. Cllr Greenfield explained that this had been done without consultation, leaving the onus on individuals to report hazardous vegetation.

Cllr Kent-Phillips noted that it was not made clear if ditches would still be cleared and that weed removal by strimming would avoid the use of chemical herbicides.

Cllr Latchford stated that lack of weed removal would lead to long-term maintenance problems, e.g. drainage disruption.

DG proposed that he write a letter on behalf of the PC, outlining the opposition to the policy change and potential problem, to be circulated to the PC for suggestions and agreement before being sent; seconded PH, passed unanimously.

To agree joint action with Wicken PC regarding the urgent need for repairs to the road out of Wicken towards Swaffham Prior.

Cllr Charlotte Cane explained that a consortium were seeking central government funding for repairs to the fen roads as the works will be hugely expensive. The PC agreed to support Wicken PC regarding the need for repairs to the Swaffham Prior road.

The Heating Scheme – Cllr Greenfield reported.

Regarding the issues raised last month by members of the public:

Lighting issues – these had been viewed and a contractor had ordered downlights and daylight sensors to be installed as soon as possible.

An expert has been commissioned to identify problem noises, where they are coming from and what needs to be done. DG to update the PC once the work is done.

Generator – this will be removed as soon as practicable.

Soft landscaping – this was in the planning application so will take place. There have been difficulties where equipment has been moved on site which delayed permanent planting in some places. Interim steps are being considered, where sections with no impediment are planted.

Turning circle – this will be reinstated as soon as possible.

Cllr Hart asked if the road closure on the Burwell Road was connected with the cable being run from the solar farm to the Heating scheme? Cllr Greenfield confirmed this.

Clerk's Report.

Allotments – one person viewed the new allotments on Saturday 14th, one person on the waiting list has asked to be removed and the other will not be ready to take on an allotment for another 12 months, leaving at least 3 allotments available. The PC confirmed that the rent for the new plots will be £25 a year. Cllr Latchford had suggested that agricultural ground cover be used on the new plots to suppress weed growth.

Playground – the new equipment was installed on 27th-29th September and is being well used.

The Clerk had attended Playground Inspection training in order to be able to carry out routine checks efficiently and as a result is now classed as a competent person to do so. The course highlighted the need for an annual check and three-times-a-year operational inspections. – the clerk to get quotes for these.

Cemetery – one of the laid-down grave markers is due to be reinstated after ownership of the appropriate grants had been claimed by a living descendant.

Parish Councillors' Reports

Cllr Kent-Phillips reported that the Burwell Cricket Club Bonfire night would be taking place on Saturday 4th November, with a half hour firework display starting at 7.15pm – for information.

Cllr Durrant noted the trees on the Village Hall driveway need pollarding - Clerk to get quote from Eastern Tree Surgery.

Cllr Greenfield reported that County Fibre had enough interest/commitment to install fibre in the village (including along Heath Road and into the Fen), although they don't currently have any fibre networks nearby. Gigaclear have fibre networks in Swaffham Bulbeck already and are looking to move into Swaffham Prior in January/February 2024. Some ducting under the roads is known to be blocked and will need replacing before being used, otherwise the plan is to use current infrastructure, with some overhead wiring where necessary.

NAAFI Break Coffee Morning

The NAAFI Break coffee morning for Veterans and their families is almost one year old and it would not have succeeded were it not for those that come along on the first Wednesday of each month for a brew and a laugh. I would like to take this opportunity to express my huge gratitude to all who have supported me and my fellow comrades enabling us to feel connected within our community. Special thanks

go to the Bottisham Medical Practice for allowing us to promote this in the Village magazines, to the Social Prescriber Chloe who has provided support, along with Steve and Jenny from the Patients Group. None of the above would have happened if it wasn't for Anglesey Abbey who allowed us to meet there so we veterans had a welcoming safe place to meet, all the staff have been kind and helpful and make us feel very welcome. So, a massive thank you to everyone and I wish you all a very merry Christmas and look forward to a successful 2024.

Next: 6th December at Anglesey Abbey Redwoods Restaurant 10am

Gary



News from Wicken Fen

Winter Wildlife Watching

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

Father and Mother Christmas

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

Wicken Fen's Twelve Creatures of Christmas

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

Can you spot all the animals from each line of our carol? Games and activities to enjoy along the way.

No need to book, drop in with family and friends to enjoy some festive fun.

Christmas and New Year Opening

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

Wicken 125 project: Future Artefacts ceramics exhibition

We had a great response to the ceramics workshops held over the summer at a variety of locations including Wicken Fen, Ely Market and Burwell Carnival. Over 300 artefacts were created, and we are holding an exhibition at Babylon Gallery in Ely for the month of January. You'll be able to see the artefacts and artwork by local creatives that were inspired by Wicken Fen and the fen landscape. If you came to a

workshop, your piece will be displayed at the gallery, and there will be the opportunity to collect your artwork at the end of the month. See our website for more information about the exhibition.

**Julia
Hammond**



FREecycle



Everything is free and nothing is expected in return.

If you have any offers or wants, please contact me by the 14th of each month by phone (01223 813362/07980 423210), e-mail (junthompson44@gmail.com) or drop a note through the letter box (23 Longmeadow).

Please let me know if you would like anything repeating in subsequent issues.

Offers

Stamp collection. Started over 58 years ago. Many countries and UK definitive. Loose leaf albums, hinges, tweezers etc. Also Catalogues showing perforations, rarities and other fascinating facts about stamp collecting/philately. My grown up children are not interested in them for my grandchildren, which is what I had hoped for. Different generations I suppose... but there has got to be a little budding collector in the village!?

Two Wicker Linen/Storage baskets. Large: 22"x11" smaller: 18"x9"

Light bulbs: from candles to regular. Various wattages. 15+ in total bayoneted and screw types.

Twenty Double Duvet sets - used, clean, wrapped, excellent condition. Various colours.

32" Panasonic. Excellent condition with remote. Full working order.

Tevion DVD/CD player. Full working order.

Wicker fruit bowl with handles. 10" diameter

Alessi Ceramic and glass steamer - BNWT Never used. Would be ideal as a wedding / Engagement or New Home gift.

Alessi Electric Casserole/Slow Cooker. BNWT. Never used. Again, would be a superb Wedding/Engagement/ New Home gift.

KINSALE lined draw/back curtains. 46"x54" (150 to 199cms) in beige, terracotta and cream shades.

Side table. Formica. Lightweight. 14"x14"x 18" apx

Large garden patio planters and a couple of troughs. Ideal for bulbs for the Spring! There are about 12.

All above are: Theresa 01223 813222

Wooden students drawing desk with shelf. Matt 07788951875

Small outdoor climbing frame, good for young children; Cot bed; Camping cot. Catie Whiteley 07880 730265

Dell 968 copier, scanner, printer in good working order but does not interface with latest iMac. Carol 01223 812007

Wants:

Garden storage cupboard or chair. Theresa 01223 813222

Swaffham Prior Village Hall

December

Are you looking to try something new - why not try some of the regular activities below?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
		<u>PhysiOptima Pilates</u>	<u>Walking in your shoes</u>	<u>Eastern Counties Tai Chi for All</u>
		09:00 - 09:50	Dementia care & support	10:00 - 12:00
		Contact Kristin on	10:00 -16:00	Contact Sharyn on
		Tel 07799323867	Contact Mike on	Tel 0774017917
			Tel 07884042590	
		<u>SF-Fit Pilates</u>		
		10:30 - 11:30		
		Contact Sarah on		
		Tel 075999072008		
PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
<u>WI Meeting</u>	<u>SF- Fit Pilates</u>		<u>Slimming World</u>	<u>SF- Fit Yoga</u>
19:30 - 21:30 (3rd Monday of each month)	17:00 - 20:00		From 17:30 & 19:00 (Two groups)	17:00 - 18:00
Contact Margaret on;-	Contact Sarah on		Contact Sharon on	Contact Sarah on
01638 744390	Tel 075999072008		Tel 07760192638	Tel 075999072008

Swaffham Prior Village Hall is an important local asset which is used by many groups and functions and entirely run by volunteers. We need your help in order to continue to keep it operating. If you can spare a few hours a month and would like to help please contact Philip Blackburn on 07501230256

For availability, prices or to make a booking go to www.swaffhampriorvillagehall.co.uk For anything else contact Philip Blackburn on 07501230256

Services in December 2023

Sunday 3 December – Advent Sunday

- 9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Bottisham
4pm Countdown to Christmas, Worship in the Village Hall, Quy

Wednesday 6 December

- 8pm CbyC, a contemplative service, online on Zoom

Sunday 10 December – Second Sunday of Advent

- 9am Online service on Zoom
Holy Communion, Quy
10.30am Christingle Family Worship, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 17 December – Third Sunday of Advent

- 9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Bottisham
3pm Carol Service, Quy
4.30pm Carol Service, Swaffham Prior
6.30pm Carol Service, Swaffham Bulbeck

Thursday 21 December

- 3pm Carol Service, Lode

Friday 22 December

- 10am Crib Service with Toddler Group, Lode
6pm Carol Service, Bottisham

Sunday 24 December – Christmas Eve

- 9am Online service on Zoom
6.30pm Holy Communion, Bottisham
11.30pm Holy Communion, Swaffham Bulbeck

Monday 25 December – Christmas Day

- 8am Holy Communion, Quy
10am Holy Communion, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 31 December - First Sunday of Christmas

- 9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

Each Thursday (except 28 December)

- 10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

The Benefice is currently without a vicar. Please contact Brenda Wilson, Churchwarden, on prior@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01638 743937

All are welcome to services in any church in the group. Please be in touch if you would like a lift to a service.

Please check <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7378/benefice> for current information; or email admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk, also the address to request the Zoom link.

Dates for Your Diary December 2023

Sat	2	Bulbeck Christmas Fair, 10am—12 noon. St Mary's, Bulbeck [24]
Sun	3	Advent by Candlelight, 4pm, St Mary's & St Cyriac's [8]
Sat	9	Cantilena Singers, St James', Lode, 7.30pm [8]
Sun	10	Christingle, St Mary's, 10.30pm [6] Burwell Repair Café, Mandeville Hall, Burwell, 2-5pm
Wed	13	VH Carol Singing, VH, 6.30-8.30pm [7]
Thu	14	Mothers' Union, 2.30pm, Lode Church, Lode [22] PC Meeting, 7.30pm VH
Sun	17	Candlelit Carol Service, St Mary's, 4.30pm [6]
Sun	24	CHRISTMAS EVE Holy Communion, Bulbeck St Mary's, 11.30pm [6]
Mon	25	CHRISTMAS DAY
Tue	26	BOXING DAY Boxing Day Hockey, 10.45, The Denny, Bulbeck [11]
Thu	28	Crier Copy Deadline
Sun	31	NEW YEAR'S EVE
Mon	1	NEW YEAR'S DAY

Numbers in square brackets indicate page number of an accompanying article

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS			2 nd Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Tim Doe	01223 861083	Variable		
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 st Weds of month	8:00pm	Kent House
Village Gardeners	Ruth Scovil	743720	3 rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Margaret Joyce	744390	3 rd Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall