

**BRETENHAM
MAGAZINE**

**DECEMBER 2023
No 431**

Happy Christmas



Welcome...

... to the Christmas edition! Hold on to your hats, this is going to be a busy month with plenty of festive village events to put the sparkle into your celebrations. But, be warned, it's not just Christmas that's going to be busy. There is a packed programme of events that will be taking place throughout 2024 to raise money for the Raise The Roof campaign for the church. See pages 16 & 17 to find out more.

As always we are very grateful for your contributions, news, photos, jokes and anything else of relevance, so please keep them coming to: brettenhammagazine@outlook.com.

The Editorial Team wish you all a very happy Christmas !



Little Ernie Winners November

1st Maasai the Dog

2nd Michael Buckmaster

3rd Pat Harpley

Brettenham fungi, photo by Lynne G

Dates For Your Diary

Friday 1st December—Village Inn 7.30pm

Tuesday 5th December—Coffee morning 10.30-12.00

Friday 15th December—Mobile Library (see info opposite)

Sunday 17th December - Sunday Village Inn

Tuesday 19th December—last Pilates class of the year

Sunday 24th December—Christmas Eve pre carol service drinks

Sunday 31st December—New Years Eve party featuring Funkshed!

Friday 5th January—Village Inn 7.30pm

Monday 8th January—BVA meeting

Tuesday 9th January—Coffee morning 10.30 –12.00

Sunday 21st January—Sunday Village Inn

Saturday 27th January—Charity Village Quiz

Thursday 8 February 2024.— Parish Council Meeting 7.30pm

Village Noticeboard

Village Hall

To book contact Julie or Ozzie on
07810434470 or email
bvahallbookings@gmail.com
To request a licenced bar
contact Peter Truin 07799
640326 or petertruin@aol.com

Village Website

www.brettenham.onesuffolk.net
If you would like to see
something new on the website
please contact Michelle Brown
dan.michelle@hotmail.com

facebook 

Where to get Village News?

Check out the latest village news on the
BVA Facebook page
Facebook.com/pg/BrettenhamVillage/posts
If you would like anything added to
the page contact Greg Potter at
greg.potter66@me.com
If you would like to receive regular village
email updates or be part of the village
whatsapp group please contact 
chairbva@gmail.com

Mobile Library

Stops at the village Hall
12.45-13.05
Church 15.20-15.35
Friday every 4 weeks
Next visit– 15.12.23

January

Mag Deadline:

15th December

*Brettenham magazine is published and edited by the Brettenham Magazine
Editing Team (brettenhammagazine@outlook.com) on behalf of
Brettenham Parish Council. The views expressed by the contributors to the
magazine are not necessarily those of Brettenham Parish Council. As well as
the printed copy, the magazine is available online, in full, via the village
website: www.brettenham.onesuffolk.net*

Brettenham Parish Council

Have your say...

Coronation Tree – a big thank you to Andrew Gooderham and Emily Wood who have so kindly donated a beech tree to celebrate this year's Coronation. We hope the weather will allow it to be planted on the village field in the next few weeks and look forward to seeing it flourish in the years to come.

Flooding - Although farmers and gardeners alike are happy to have some rain after a couple of drier years this has brought the return of some inevitable flooding problems throughout the village, given its geography and environment. I am in frequent contact with our Highways Department who assist us in keeping an eye on the problems and potential remedies which has improved matters to an extent. In addition I am sure you will be aware that among the councillors and some of the residents in the village there is a real hands-on approach to looking at flood points with a view to clearing and longer term problem solving. Many thanks to them and hopefully their efforts will go some way to easing the problems where they crop up.

Neighbourhood Plan– The draft received full council approval at the November meeting and therefore will move to the next stage. This is the first round of local consultation so please look out for updates and information on what help we need from you to take it to the next step. The Plan is the chance for residents to have a louder voice in the shaping of our village in the future.

Finally a reminder that Della does circulate reports, agendas and minutes for the Parish Council. If you would like to be added to the circulation email for these please contact her on the below email address and let her know. In addition, all our updates, plus reports and information from District and County Councils can also be found on the village website.

The next Parish Council Meeting is Thursday 8 February 2024.

A safe and happy Christmas to all from your Parish Council.

Alyson Wilson, Chair
07798 633044
Parish Clerk
Brettenhamparishcouncil@btinternet.com

Help shape the future of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts Our consultation continues on what matters most to our communities in order to help shape future plans.

Flood support Emergency council teams worked to support areas impacted by floods last week in the wake of Storm Babet, offering practical support, as well as information and advice on what to do if your home or business was affected. We also paid tribute to our local heroes and the huge show of community spirit following the worst flooding for years in our districts.

Your new council website Last month saw the launch of our new council website, and we are keen for your feedback on our new look.

£1.3m boost for Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities Town and parish councils in Babergh and Mid Suffolk received more than £1.3 million in developer contributions last month.

Suffolk councils delivering project to improve private rented housing sector 'Safe Suffolk Renters' is an initiative to support private sector tenants, landlords and other stakeholders.

Councils' set out commitment to increase EV chargers Babergh and Mid Suffolk agreed to implement a new joint Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Implementation Plan.

Free net zero advice for Suffolk businesses and organisations The councils partnered with an environment charity to deliver expert energy advice to businesses.

Have your say on polling arrangements Councils are asking residents for feedback on polling districts and places across the county.

Incredible moving cinema bringing unique movie experience to Sudbury Our partnership with Sudbury Town Council and Abbeygate Cinema has brought a unique cinema experience to the district.

Councillors serve up improvements to community squash courts Two ward councillors stepped in to breathe new life into Sudbury's only squash courts.

Full article with links can be accessed on the village website

Food Bank Update

As Christmas comes round again it comes as a shock to learn that there is actually an increase on the number of families who are being assisted by the food bank in the area covered by the BCS. With little let up on the cost of living front, all donations, however small, will be greatly appreciated.

Financial aid continues to be accepted by cheques payable to Bildeston Community Support or via BACS to Bildeston Community Support, Account No 49886479, Sort Code 52-30-31.

Food donations can be left in the church porch or in the box next to the woodstore on my drive at Spinney Cottage, Brettenham.

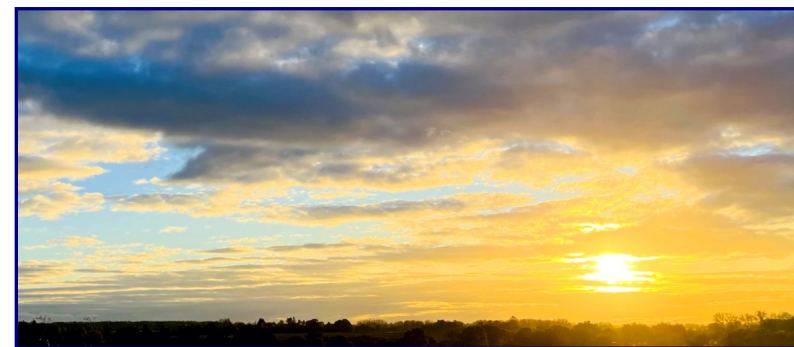
Individuals/families do not need to be referred by the authorities. Locally, for either help with giving or receiving donations, please contact in confidence:

Alyson Wilson, Spinney Cottage 07798 633044

Anne-Marie Hodgkiss 07818 286770

If you would rather contact the Foodbank directly you can do this through Facebook messenger from the Bildeston Foodbank Facebook page, email or call: Bildestoncsg@gmail.com Tel: 01449 257136

Please don't forget to support this worthwhile locally run charity. Local families and individuals in need can access this food bank easily and the more we can support the food bank the more we are directly supporting them.



Winter sunset, photo by Pete Knight

Village Inn Menu Friday 1st December

Mains

Dhansak curry with basmati rice, dahl, tomato relish, cucumber raita, mango chutney and poppadom (GF) £10
Tuscan chicken with peas £10
Vegetable pasta bake with garlic bread £10

Puddings

Cheats tiramisu £3.50
Fruit crumble £3.50

All proceeds from this evening to general church funds.

Brettenham Xmas Coffee Morning

Come along for tea, coffee and Mince pies.
More importantly a chat and a laugh with
fellow villagers

Tuesday 5th December from 10.30 till 12.00.

Hope to see you there!

Val and Michelle

For more info contact:

Val 07711 562520 or

Michelle 07535 814939



Christmas Eve Village Inn



Sunday 24th December, 2.00-6.00pm

**Come and enjoy a pre-Christmas drink with
friends and family**

**(The bar will close in good time for the Carol Service at
Brettenham Church at 6.30pm)**

Please note that the BVA has designated this to be a non-dog friendly event

The Village Inn – 25th Anniversary

The Village Inn is celebrating its 25th birthday this month, so perhaps some history might be appropriate. It first opened on December 5th 1997, but perhaps the real beginning was September 7th 1978, or more accurately 2:45 the following morning. This is when Brettenham Crown closed for the last time. Eighteen years later, Ted and Pat Harpley who were living at the old pub decided it would be a good thing to open it up for the weekend on the anniversary of its closure. To say this was a success would be a huge understatement. We had five casks of ale (on sale or return) and one keg of lager, but at the end there was nothing left to return. The opening was repeated in the spring of 1998, and again it was a hugely popular event, so much so it was suggested, "Why don't we open the Village Hall as a pub once a month?" and so the Village Inn was born.

Overcoming Adversity

In 1998 our Village Hall was very different to how it is now. The kitchen was very poor, the toilets were worse and the bar could not be locked separately, it had no stock, and glasses had to be washed up by hand in the

awful kitchen. Despite all this the Inn was hugely successful right from the start, but it did require a lot of work from volunteers to set it all up each time. I wasn't involved with preparing and serving the food, but it must have been very difficult for the chefs. As for the bar, our only facility was a lockable cupboard, which we used to store the drinks, along with other paraphernalia that was needed for other events in the hall. Running the Village Inn was difficult for all, and very labour intensive. Basically, it was a triumph for desire over adversity.

Village Hall Modernisation

Fortunately in 2004 it became necessary by law to install toilets suitable for use by the disabled. By this time the Village Inn had made a lot of money for the Hall, so it was decided to completely demolish the toilets, kitchen and bar, build new ones, extend the Hall and a few years later install a nice new floor as well. Would any of this have been done without the Village Inn? I doubt it very much indeed.

Special and Precious

The Inn continues to be very popular, but it must always be remembered that its success is entirely down to the volunteers who staff the bar and work in the kitchen, without them, there would be no Village Inn. We do need more volunteers to join the bar staff rota please, so do contact me (details below) if you think you might be able to help. The work is enjoyable, but we do need a large pool of volunteers to ensure the Inn is always going to be able to open. Please don't take it for granted, it's a very special and precious thing.

Birthday Celebrations

Many other villages now have pub nights in their village halls too, but Brettenham was first, and it's still the best. There is no village hall in a small community anywhere near here with a bar even half as good as ours, but despite that, we are hoping to refurbish and improve it next year to ensure it remains the best for the next twenty five years. To celebrate all this and the Village Inn's silver anniversary, your first drink will be free of charge (Brettenham residents and Village Inn regulars only) and I'm hoping there will be other surprises too. I look forward to seeing you there on Friday 1st December.

Peter Truin, Bar Manager

07799 640326 petertruin@aol.com

Message from the BVA Chair

As Christmas approaches quicker than a cow on ice I thought I'd pop in with a seasonal greeting ahead of time and wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

December presents itself as another busy month for us all with the usual Village Inns and the additional Xmas Eve soiree in the hall to lubricate those singing voices in preparation for the Carol Service. For this particular gathering, I have it from a much higher authority that silly hats and Xmas costumes will once again be very welcome in the church, if only to add comedy value and a colourful atmosphere. Also, the much anticipated New Years Eve party featuring Suffolk's hottest events band, 'Funkshed', will hopefully help us slip into the New Year in spectacular style. Tickets are still available but there are limited numbers remaining. Before I sign-off from this brief monthly message I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have made contributions to the activities which help to make Brettenham such a fabulous place to live. The success of the BVA and all the associated clubs within our community would simply not function without your continued support. Thank you all and have a great Christmas and New Year. **Ozzie**

Village Inn Sunday 17th December
The bar is open from 12.30pm.
Drinks only. Come along for a relaxed chat with
friends, neighbours and family.

Village Hall Hire Rates

	Residents	Non-residents	Commercial
All events	£8.50	£12.50	£15
Community organisations: Parish Council, PCC, Gardening Club	No charge		

Bigger Ernie

Don't delay, renew your Bigger Ernie subscriptions for 2024 or join for the first time. For the benefit of any "newbies", Bigger Ernie is our village lottery - the cost is a meagre £12 per year per ticket, and you can purchase as many tickets as you like. There are monthly draws with first, second and third prizes - the amounts depend on the number of tickets purchased but in previous years monthly prizes have been £30, £15 and £10, plus the occasional bonus draws, normally in June and December.

50% of the funds raised are allocated to prizes and 50% contributes to BVA funds, this 50% forms a vital part of helping to maintain the village hall and contribute towards BVA activities and events. The draws are made at the monthly Friday Village Inn, with results being published in the monthly magazine.

There are now 3 different ways to renew or purchase your ticket/s, I will start with the easiest option:

1. Electronic payment – make it payable to 'Brettenham Village Association', bank account number 49882120 and sort code 52-30-31. Once you have made the payment, please email biggerernie@outlook.com stating the bank transfer date, amount and ticket holder names – *I have previously quoted the standard BVA account so please make sure you do transfer your money into the above account specific to the Bigger Ernie.*

2. Cheque – if you have a normal Bigger Ernie collector then pass your cheque to them along with the ticket holder names or place your cheque along with this information into an envelope and post it through the letterbox of 29B The Street. Cheques should be made payable to 'Brettenham Village Association'

3. Cash – as above if you have a normal Bigger Ernie collector then pass the cash along with the ticket holder names or place the cash along with this information into an envelope and post it through the letterbox of 29B The Street

On behalf of the BVA, thanks in advance for your continued support.

Emily Woods

St Mary's Church Brettenham

Rev'd Sharon Grenham-Thompson

Tel: 07894 467157

Email: rectorrattlesden@btinternet.com

Church Warden Annie Tavener:

Tel: 01449 736412 Email: annie_tav@hotmail.com.



December Programme of Services in the Benefice

3 rd December: 1st Sunday of Advent		
Rattlesden	9:30 AM	Holy Communion
Hitcham	11:00 AM	Morning Prayer
Brettenham	11:00 AM	All Age Service
Thorpe Morieux	6:00 PM	Advent Carols
10 th December: 2nd Sunday of Advent		
Rattlesden	9:30 AM	Morning Prayer
Hitcham	11:00 AM	Morning Prayer
Brettenham	8:00 AM	BCP Holy Communion
Thorpe Morieux	10:00 AM	All Age Service
17 th December: 3rd Sunday of Advent		
Rattlesden	6:00 PM	Carol Service
Hitcham	3:00 PM	Carol Service
Brettenham	8:00 AM	BCP Holy Communion
Thorpe Morieux	11:00 AM	Morning Prayer with Carols
24 th December: 4th Sunday of Advent		
Rattlesden	4:00 PM	Crib Service
Rattlesden	11:30 PM	Midnight Mass
Hitcham	3:00 PM	Christingle Service
Brettenham	6:30 PM	Carol Service
Thorpe Morieux	10:00 AM	Morning Prayer

25 th December: Christmas Day		
Rattlesden	9:30 AM	Holy Communion
Hitcham	11:00 AM	Holy Communion
Brettenham	11:00 AM	Morning Prayer
Thorpe Morieux	11:00 AM	Morning Worship
31 st December: New Years Eve		
Rattlesden	9:30 AM	Benefice Service



Rector's Reflection for Christmas

I wonder what your favourite Christmas music is? Maybe it's a carol like Silent Night, or perhaps it's a supermarket staple like the Slade classic Merry Christmas Everybody (there's no accounting for taste!) Personally, I've always been fairly fond of belting out Hark the Herald at the carol service.

But I'm afraid I haven't been in much of a jolly singing mood for a while. Our family has had four significant bereavements in as many years, and Christmas always makes loss that much more poignant.

Sadly, I know it's not just me who will be struggling in the next few weeks – there are so many of us who anticipate jingle bells with a gulp and a tear, or a wrenching feeling deep inside. There are so many reasons we might feel that way - bereavement, for sure, but also loneliness, fear, anxiety, illness, regret, anger, despair. There are people all around who will find Christmas decidedly un-merry. Once you start noticing, you realise that not everyone is carried away on a happy tide of Yule.

With everything that's been going on in the world too, all the war and bloodshed, the division and anger, it would be easy to feel pretty hopeless.

But I'm reminded of a piece of music I particularly like. It was written by the English composer Sir John Tavener and was first performed in 1987.

It's called 'God is with us' and is based on words from the prophet Isaiah. The first few lines are:

"God is with us. Hear ye people, Even to the uttermost end of the earth.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The people that dwell in the shadow of death, upon them the light has shined."

Not only is it an incredible piece of music, but those ancient words really strike me every time I hear them. They're even more meaningful on the days when I feel like I'm alone somewhere at the 'uttermost end of the earth'.

If you're feeling like that, or know someone else who is, then listen with me to that first line: God is with us.

And God is Love.

Not an old guy with a long beard and a nightie sitting on a cloud. Not a vengeful git. Not a neglectful parent. Not someone sitting there and hating you and condemning you and smiting everything in sight. Also, I'm afraid, not a Being who makes everything all OK again – we're not promised an easy passage through life.

But God, the Divine, the Reason, the Foundation - whatever you want to call him/her/them/it – is Love.

And Love never leaves us. Never dies. Even in the deepest darkness, or at the furthest end of the earth, or when we feel most alone. Not even when we're convinced it's gone.

Whether it's someone you have loved, or still love, or whether it's love you can show to someone else, that's the light that shines in the darkness. That's the light that dispels the shadows in our hearts and minds, even the shadow of death. That's the everlasting light. Love.

And that Love is what Christmas is all about. The purest precious love, come to live in this messy, messed up, difficult world. Come as a vulnerable baby and called Jesus. A gift for every human on earth, whoever and wherever they are.

So however you will be approaching Christmas this year, go looking for the gift of Love – you may well find it in the most unexpected places. And when you find it – don't forget to share!

Reverend Sharon Grenham-Thompson

Save the date...and your books!

In aid of 'Raise the Roof' we will be holding a second-hand book sale in the village hall from 10am - 12 noon on Saturday February 10th. There will be teas, coffees, cakes and a fantastic array of books at bargain prices. What better way to spend a winters morning?

In the meantime, If you are having a clear-out either now or after Christmas, we would be very grateful for any books you would like to donate.

Please leave at the back of the church, or contact: Jo Buckingham or Lizzy Keoghane directly – johart82@hotmail.com

Ride and Stride Champion

We have found our village champions! Thanks to some keen cyclists we now have two people to take on the historic churches ride and stride event in 2024 on behalf of the 'Raise the Roof' campaign. All we will need to do is raise as much sponsorship as possible in support of their efforts! Watch out for the sponsorship appeal next year.

Annie Tavener



Dressed for the season, photo by Mick Kelly



An Auction of Promises



Coming February 2024

Our amazing auction of promises is back! All funds raised will go to the Raise the Roof campaign.

To make a start on the auction we need to have a range of items or services people are willing to donate. We are now ready to take details of promises.

Please send The title, contact e-mail address, description of the promise, a reserve price, if any. Location (i.e. within certain radius, specific location or if item will be delivered to the winner), and photos or an image of some sort if possible to

promise@brettenham.org



Raise the Roof Fundraising Group

Thank you to all readers who have felt able to respond to our urgent appeal for individual donations towards repairs to the roof. We are pleased to announce that we have already made a good start , now with more than **£9000** in the account. Thank you to everyone who has supported the fundraising efforts including last months 'last minute' village inn which raised just over £600.

We are pleased to say that the village quiz has already sold out, so your next opportunity to support this good cause may be the February Village Inn. February also sees the Big Brettenham Book sale and our fantastic Auction of Promises! 'Raise the Roof' are planning more events in the coming months, some of which are listed below.

Please support however you can and save the dates!

January	27th	Brettenham Charity Quiz
February	2nd	Village Inn
		Auction of Promises
	10th	Book Sale
March	1st	Village Inn
	16th	'The Dig'—film showing
	23rd	Charlie Haylock talking about 'The Dig' plus meal
April	5th	Village Inn
	19th	Talk on Faberge
May	10th	'Summer in February'—film showing
	23rd	Christopher Garibaldi presents 'Alfred Munnings'
June	29th	Village Summer Fete (some stalls for RTR)
July	6th	Brettenham Open Gardens
	TBC	OBH event

Nature Notes

The European mistletoe is a member of the sandalwood plant family. As we know, it's a parasitic plant that relies on a host tree to survive.

It has separate male and female plants and it is the female plants that produce the berries. It can grow on over 400 different tree species, but the more common ones are hawthorn, poplar, lime and apple. These trees can support several mistletoe plants, but over time they can weaken even the healthiest of trees.

It provides a valuable food source at a time when other sources of food are scarce. Each mistletoe fruit contains four seeds in a sticky glue like substance. They are poisonous to humans, but are enjoyed by thrushes, redwings and fieldfares. They eat the whole fruit, which passes through their digestive system before being deposited upon another host plant. Other smaller species of bird such as blackcaps eat the sticky pulp and wipe the seeds, which are stuck on their beaks, onto other nearby branches.

Beetles and the caterpillars of moths are supported by mistletoe and in the UK there are six species that are entirely dependent on mistletoe. One of these is the mistletoe marble moth which is an endangered species in the UK. Believe it or not there is also a tiny insect 2mm in size, called a kiss me slow weevil, which during the summer lives inside the stems of the mistletoe plant.

There are many different stories about the reasons why we kiss under mistletoe. There is much folklore surrounding mistletoe. Here are a few of them. Mistletoe is considered a symbol of life because even when its host is leafless, it is evergreen and bares fruit in the winter. The word mistletoe is thought to stem from Saxon mistletoe-tan, meaning "different twig". Druid priests thought mistletoe to be a sacred plant because it didn't grow from roots in the ground. When they found some growing on an oak, their most sacred tree, they considered it to be the soul of the tree. The high priest would climb the tree on the sixth night of the new moon after the winter solstice and cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle. Worshippers caught the pieces in their long white robes or on a white cloth spread under the tree because it was bad luck to let even the smallest piece touch the ground. The faithful would wear mistletoe charms for good luck and protection from witches and evil spirits. Sprays of mistletoe hung over the

doorway ensured that only happiness could enter the home.

In Britain, the idea of kissing under the mistletoe arose among servants in the 18th century, an echo of ancient rites. Then folklore developed. A single girl not kissed would remain unwed for another year. Mistletoe placed under her pillow would generate dreams of her future soulmate. Christmas mistletoe burned on Twelfth Night ensured that those who had kissed under it would marry. The tradition spread into 19th century society and became incorporated in Christmas celebrations across the English speaking world.

Pucker up!

David Golding



The Brettenham Flyers

If you're considering a new challenge, or just fancy joining us on a morning jog/walk around the village for a little exercise (approx. 5.7K), come and join the Brettenham Flyers for a Sunday morning lift.

Every Sunday at the Village Hall

Walkers / Dogs—08:50

Runners / Cyclists—09:00

All ages, abilities & animals welcome

For more info contact Ozzie:

chairbva@gmail.com



Farming Focus

WARNING Farmer complaining about the weather!! I said last month how lovely conditions were looking for wheat establishment – I think I need to apologise to all farmers for jinxing things as the weather has now well and truly messed up a lot of our hard work of recent months! We've barely had three consecutive dry days since then and fieldwork has more or less ground to a halt across the whole country.

The trouble started with having had such a wet July, meaning that the ground never really dried out over the summer. This meant that the machinery traffic on the land through harvest and the autumn caused a bit of soil compaction, particularly on the headland where all the turning takes place. This wouldn't have been much of a problem in a normal year other than a slightly reduced yield in places but with the amount of rain we have had it means that the water can't move down through the soil profile as quickly. Seed can put up with sitting in waterlogged soil for a few days but not for weeks on end, so there are a lot of bare patches where the wheat has died.

The other big problem with having so much rain so quickly is that rather than the pre-emergence herbicides staying where they should be on the surface of the soil, they will have washed into the top few centimetres of the seedbed where the seed and developing roots are, so as well as having to put up with deoxygenated and waterlogged soil, the plant is also taking up herbicide, stopping it from growing away quickly as it wants to. You may have noticed that some of the wheat looks unusually yellow and sick, these are mostly fields which were sprayed before the heavy rain started.

I was worried at the beginning of October as having been so warm, the earliest drilled wheat and barley emerged before I had a chance to do the herbicide application, although in hindsight this was probably a good thing as it now looks quite healthy compared to the crops which had been sprayed. These fields were eventually sprayed once the crop was fully emerged - the only concern now is how much of a blackgrass problem I will have in these fields as a result, as there is no way of controlling it once it is established.

The remaining couple of fields which I had been hoping to drill at the end of October are still sitting undrilled as it has been too wet to get on the

fields to drill them without doing more harm than good. I expect these will now be drilled with spring barley instead as the seedbed has been ruined by the rain and the long range forecast doesn't seem to show the settled spell of drying weather it would take to be confident of establishing a good crop of wheat on these fields. This isn't really a problem but I am a bit worried about whether barley will be worth much next harvest as there will be a huge amount drilled by people who have been unable to get wheat in the ground. Fingers crossed Camgrain will still be able to access good markets if we can get good malting quality.

Although none of this is ideal, we've fared a lot better than those in the north and west, where people have had hundreds of hectares under water as well as all those who have had houses flooded etc. I also have friends who are trying to harvest sugar beet, potatoes and onions which is obviously a bit of a nightmare this year!

As we near the middle of November, I've now got most of the spraying up to date, so field work is starting to come to an end for the year. It's now time to clean up all of the machinery and carry out repairs etc ready for when things get busy again in the spring. It has also been useful to have some wet days to finally get in the office and get all of the paperwork and admin up to date which always gets overlooked during harvest and cultivation work.

Tom Tavener



Finally, a beautiful early morning to spray the barley!

Photo by Tom Tavener



Following our success in malting Peter's high-quality barley and wheat, my attention turned to brewing this malt, with my homegrown hops and those gathered from the hedgerow opposite the village hall, to produce our second Gyle of *Roof Raiser*. Sadly, the price of purifying Lindsey's well water and sending it to be analysed for its mineral compounds proved too exorbitant, leaving me with Anglian Water supplied through my tap - which could be considered local!

Like malting, there are a few stages when brewing beer. It begins with sterilising all implements then filling the mash tun with water, to which you add minerals to create a suitable water profile for the bitter, this is then heated to 66°C. The grain is then poured in, stirred to remove dough balls, and mashed for 1 hour, to transform the cereal starches into sugar.



Mashing the grains



Dan sparging his American IPA

After mashing, the grain is lifted out of the mash water in its basket & is sparged for 1 hour. Sparging passes mash water through the grains at a higher temperature (76-78°C), helping to release the remaining sugars and collect errant grain detritus in the basket. After the sparge is complete, the grains are removed & the steam condenser affixed to control the release of vapour during the 1-hour boil. This sterilises the wort, precipitates proteins and releases hop flavours when bittering buds are added at the start of the boil and aroma hops after 45 minutes.

The wort is then cooled down to 75°C and the flavour hops are added and steeped for 15 minutes in the hop stand, to draw out the woody flavour profiles that complement the bitter ale style.



Boiling wort with steam condenser



Taking original gravity reading

Following the hop stand, the wort is swiftly cooled to 20°C, and decanted into the fermenting vessel. A hydrometer is used to test the gravity by recording sugar levels in the beer, from which the alcohol by volume can be calculated following fermentation. To ferment the beer, yeast is added to the wort and the lid secured, and then placed in my fermentation chamber (temperature-controlled fridge with heater), which holds a constant temperature of 20°C, keeping the yeast healthy.



Temp. controlled fermentation chamber



Fermentation of the wort

After nine days, the beer is dry hopped using the buds gathered from opposite the village hall, adding a wonderful aroma, after fourteen days the beer has finished and is decanted into a polypin, then left to condition for around 14 more days, when it is ready to drink, Cheers!

Thanks very much to all of those who contributed to raising the roof, the bar took a total of £98.00. I hope you enjoyed drinking a pint of *Roof Raiser*, Gyle 2 described above, will be on tap in December's Village Inn!

Tim Schofield

Christmas Red Cabbage.

I love the smells and the hustle and bustle of a Christmas Kitchen. But why give yourself lots of stress. This recipe can be made in advance, perfect for a stress-free Christmas. It can be frozen for up to 3 months and can then be reheated in the microwave or a saucepan on the hob.

- 1 Large red cabbage finely shredded
- 3 Eating apples, peeled cored and diced
- 1 Large onion, chopped.
- Knob of butter
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 3 tbsp brown sugar
- 3fl oz red wine vinegar
- 2 tsp redcurrant jelly or cranberry sauce (optional)



Heat the butter and gently fry the onions, add the cabbage and fry for 3-4 mins. Stir with a wooden spoon until the cabbage is slightly glossy.

Add the sugar and spices with the red wine vinegar and stir well. Add the apples, mix well. Cover with a lid and allow to simmer for 30 minutes. Add the redcurrant jelly or cranberry sauce and cook for a further 10 mins.

If not using redcurrant jelly or cranberry sauce it might be a good idea to give it a taste. If needed, you may need to add a little more sugar.

Season with sea salt and freshly ground pepper.

Michelle Harvey

Brettenham Gardening Club

Apologies for cancelling the planned meeting on Monday 6th Nov. With lots of COVID around the village and myself very unwell I thought it safer for everyone all round.

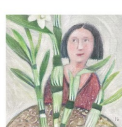
Date for the rescheduled meeting TBA

I hope you will agree, the gardening club has had a very successful year with some new events/activities alongside the older ones.

Please keep your eyes open for events and future activities for 2024.

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2024. **Michelle Harvey**

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Heart of Suffolk
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Jocelyn Hollis
Jon Warnes
Judith Glover
Lucy Perry
Lucy Scott
Pauline Manders
Rebecca Moss Guyver
Sally Pirkis

Pop up cafe and prize draw
to benefit Project 21



Heart of Suffolk
in Thorpe Morieux
December 2nd & 3rd, 2023
10am-4:30pm

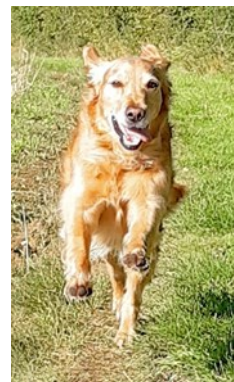


Annabel Ridley
Caroline Davidson
Caroline Fish
Dale Devereux Barker
Dominica Yannaghass
Douglas Page
Emma Buckmaster
Fiona Camp
Jane Lewis



PROJECT|21

Rambling with Gus



Preston St Mary route 2: Distance 2.80 miles.

Time approx. 1 hour.

Start at the church in Preston St Mary.

You may remember that I featured a walk at Preston St Mary some time ago, but it is a place I keep going back to as it is so close to Brettenham and has a good, well-kept network of paths. Many have beautiful views across the valley towards Kettlebaston and Monks Eleigh, and you can walk all the way to Lavenham. Most of the paths are along farm tracks or grassy headlands, so passable all year round.

However, this walk is just a short stroll for a Sunday afternoon constitutional (possibly after a good roast lunch). It is an easy walk mainly on grassy field headlands with a couple of short sections on quiet roads. It starts and finishes at the church in the centre of the village where parking



is easy. There is also the added bonus of a good, dog friendly pub, The Six Bells, just opposite, however, do check for opening times before you go.

With the church on your right, walk up the lane past the churchyard and take the path to your right. Follow this until you come to another path on your right through a hedge that takes you into the grounds of Preston Hall. Follow the path downhill to the road (Whelp Street) that runs along the bottom of the valley.

Turn right onto the road. Ignore the road that comes in on your right and continue along the valley road until you reach a sharp left bend. Here take



You can find this walk at explore.osmaps.com.

footpath that comes in on you right. At this point, there are two paths quite close together, make sure you take the one on the left. This path now winds alongside hedgerows back to Preston but there are a few junctions with other paths along the way so keep an eye on the map.

At the road in the centre of Preston St Mary, turn right. Walk along the road for approx. 200m then take the footpath on your left. Shortly this reaches a T junction with another path, where you turn right. This then takes you back to the church.

Carrie Dye

Pilates Tuesdays 6pm—7pm in the village hall

This is a friendly group with an experienced teacher. It is suitable for all levels of fitness (unless pregnant or injured).

Please note, the last class before Christmas is on 19th December. Classes start again on the 9th January 2024.

Classes cost £7 a class, pay-as-you-go.

For more information, contact Leonie on 07866897651



This month, Citizens Advice give tips about how to shop safely online...

"I do most of my shopping online. I am always on the lookout for a bargain, especially with the festive season coming up but I'm worried about scammers. What should I look for, to avoid getting caught out?"

Look on the village website to find the answer, read the piece in full and get the Citizens Advice contact details:

www.brettenham.onesuffolk.net

Stowmarket Christmas Tree Festival At St Mary's and St Peter's Church

24th Nov—23rd Dec

Open: Tuesday—Saturday 9am—3pm

Entrance: suggested donation £2 per adult

Approx 300 trees, many lit up

Refreshments

Icanho-Ho-Ho Christmas concert:

Wednesday 13th December 6.30pm, tickets £8 pp, book at [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)



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CHADS, Bildeston's premier drama group are back again with another zany panto. Oh yes they are!!

Robin of Loxley arrives back in Nottingham to find that the evil Sheriff has stolen his castle and is taxing the local people beyond their means. Robin soon becomes a wanted criminal and ends up joining a band of outlaws who live in Sherwood Forest. Unfortunately, Robin isn't the sharpest arrow in the quiver and things soon take a turn for the worst.

Another cracking pantomime for all the family with great music, superb costumes and the funniest script in Nottingham!



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Hitcham Village Hall

There are many regular activities at Hitcham Village Hall that are open to everyone, including:

Yoga, line dancing, art, gardening, crocheting, floral workshop, pub night, bingo and much more..

All activities are very reasonably priced. For more information look at the Hitcham Village Hall page on Facebook or email hitcham@aol.com or call 07774744723

W.A. Deacon

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