



What's On?



The Newsletter of Bulmer - December 2011
(Including Bulmer St., Bulmer Tye, Finch Hill, Batt Hall, Upper & Lower Houses, Church Rd & Hedingham Road). View in colour at www.bulmersex.co.uk

Preparations begin for the Diamond Jubilee

Following a gift to the Parish Council from Braintree District Councils' 'Green Heart scheme' (A campaign to make the district one of the cleanest and greenest in the country) an Oak Tree was planted on Plough Green at Bulmer Tye on the 2nd December with the assistance of children from Bulmer St. Andrew's Primary School.

A time capsule was also placed which contained: - The Times newspaper of the day, the current edition of the Suffolk Free Press (which included an article announcing this event), Bulmer School prospectus and Home/School Logbook, photo album of school events, a coin, a letter to the finder, an article about current events, individual photos and notes from the children.

All the children from Owl class were able to take in turns to place earth around the roots. The reason for the planting taking place so early is to give the tree the best opportunity of survival by planting at this time of the season. We are planning for a plaque to be attached during our jubilee celebrations in June! It is hoped this tree will survive longer than one planted on Plough Green in honour of the coronation of H M Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.



~~~~~



## Freedom of the Parish



Certificates were presented to Margaret Mills, Peter Rowe and Barbara Rawlins for their dedication and long service to the Parish (a combined total of 65 years) by this years chairman Mike Crome. The presentation took place at the home of Cllr Chris Leigh & Kevin Leigh who very kindly laid on a wonderful afternoon tea in the presence of other councillors & their wives and our new Clerk.

A huge thanks to Chris and Kevin for their hospitality, and for holding the celebration in their beautiful cottage.



### VILLAGE HALL NEWS

A big thank you to all who supported our last 3 fund raising events. The Barn Dance held in October was, as usual, great fun thanks mainly to

Ron, our caller for the evening, who always puts people at their ease.

The Ferret Race evening was well supported by race goers and Ferrets alike who appeared to enjoy the experience. Our thanks go to The Fox and Splinters Catering for sponsoring the races.

A Quiz Night was held in November and had a few surprises. A chocolate round was included with 10 different chocolate bars being given to each team for them to identify. Many were eaten before they could be identified! A plasticine-modelling round was also included and artistic talent really came to the fore. Our thanks to Dave and Becky for all their hard work. The raffle was held on behalf of Children in Need and £100 has been sent to the charity.

Fund raising still has to be done to maintain the building. The kitchen has just been given a "make over" with new worktops, more cupboard space and a new coat of paint. We hope you approve.

Our best wishes go to you all and our thanks to those who support our efforts either through our events or through the lottery. If you wish to know more about the lottery or wish to join please contact Dawn at the Post Office.

May we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

~~~~~

VILLAGE LOTTERY WINNERS

The Lottery still provides 3 lucky winners each month. It is a vital fundraiser for your village hall. Are you a member? The more members the more funds for the

Village Hall and the bigger the prize! Please support your village hall and contact Dawn at the Post Office (376676) if you would like to join.

Month	First	Second	Third
Oct	Mrs L Fulcher	Mr & Mrs D Willock	Mr R Atkins
Nov.	Mr & Mrs S Carpenter	Mr A Skipper	Mrs J Steed
Dec.	Mr & Mrs P Maynard	Mr & Mrs M Raymond	Mr J Cutter

~~~~~

### BULMER SKYLARKS

We have had a very varied year at our meetings with interesting speakers, Royal Wedding celebrations, fun horse racing, cream teas and two trips out. We have also welcomed many new members.

At our last meeting for the year in the Village Hall we welcomed the Friendship Dancers who entertained us with folk dances from around the world. We were even encouraged to join in a couple of the dances! We are all looking forward to our Christmas lunch at St. Andrew's School, which is being held on 13<sup>th</sup> December. This will be the third year that we have

been invited to the school and we thank Mrs Mortimer and all her staff for making this possible. However the highlight of our lunch is being entertained by the wonderful and very talented children. They really bring the spirit of Christmas to life.

2012 will begin by us welcoming Peter Rowe on the **24th January** who will be showing us some of his lovely wildlife photographs.

Nina Harding will be with us on **28th February** continuing the story of the "Shoe Box Appeal".

On **March 27th** Michelle T Jay will be demonstrating various art and craft techniques.

Skylarks is open to all, if you would like to meet up and have a cup of tea and a little entertainment on the fourth Tuesday of every month why not come along. Age does not matter, we have young members and more mature members and we are all very lively. If you would like to know more please ring Barbara on 370845 or Maggie on 374758.



~~~~~

BULMER NATURE DIARIES



This beautifully seasonal picture of a frost encrusted teasel head, was taken by Jess Davies. You may remember her striking wildlife photographs on the back of the last "What's On".

What Jess probably doesn't know, is that there may be a secret hidden within that frost bejewelled seed head. There is a moth, rejoicing in the impossible name of *Endotheria gentianaean*, which lays its eggs inside teasel heads. Until a few years ago, this was considered uncommon, as the moth is not attracted to the light of moth traps and was therefore under recorded. However, someone thought of cutting into random teasel heads to look for the larvae. Surprise, surprise! it was found to be present in most locations

where teasels grow. We have discovered them in Bulmer.

There has been a swarm of insect related matters this Autumn. Quite a few people in the village have had their homes invaded by a plague of flies. Some of these were the usual house fly, *Musca domestica*, but most were cluster flies, which belong to the blowfly family. They have an unusual lifestyle, being parasitic on earthworms. They lay their eggs alongside worm burrows, when hatched; the fly larvae enter the wormholes and infest the worms. This usually results in the death of the worm. In autumn, the adult flies invade our houses, seeking a warm place to spend the winter, little dears.



A strange little fly waved at us from our window, only about half an inch long, with a broad dark band round the edge of each wing. (See picture) It appeared to be signalling in semaphore, waving first one wing and then the other. Appropriately this is known as a wing-waving fly and apparently is quite common, although I don't recall seeing one before.

Although we weren't plagued with wasps this summer, we have had an unusually large number of queen wasps turning up around the home and garden lately, as Wendy found out to her cost when she dived her hand into a bundle of cloth, only to grasp a queen which, although drowsy, was awake enough to administer a painful injection!

Cleaning out our Blue Tit's nest box I was amazed to find the shells of hundreds and hundreds of earwigs. At first I thought them to be the remains of the blue tit's meals, but closer inspection showed them all to be complete even down to their pincers. The answer, I discovered, is that earwigs take a year from hatching to grow into adults. As they grow, they shed their skins a total of five times and these empty skins are what I found. The tits didn't vacate the nest box till the end of June, so they had accumulated there in less than four months.

Dates of the comings and goings of migrant birds in and around Bulmer. Last years dates in brackets. Summer migrants, last dates recorded by me: - Swift 11th Aug (3rd Aug) Whitethroat 11Sept. (22nd.Sept), House Martin 11th. Oct. (5th. Oct.), Swallow 15th. Sept. (7th. Oct.) Chiffchaff 24th Sept. (8th.Oct), Autumn migrants,

first dates: - Redwing 10th.Oct. (11th. Oct.), Fieldfare 23.Oct (20th.Oct).

Another couple of notable bird records, on October 14th we had an extraordinary number of Goldfinches around. A flock of about 20 were in the garden, when another flock flew round which must have been at least 40 strong. Then, during November we twice had Lesser Redpoll feeding off seed-heads on our silver birch, four of them on the second visit. One of our smallest finches, they are very acrobatic, often hanging upside down to get at their food, as Blue Tits do.

A bit of excitement -

A Sparrow Hawk chased a small bird into our fruit cage, which managed to dodge it's would be killer and make its escape. The hawk was not so lucky, becoming well entangled in the netting. Donning



thick leather gloves, I managed with difficulty; to disentangle it's menacing beak and death dealing talons from the thin nylon mesh. Most of this time it had one of it's talons clamped firmly on my finger. Even through the thick leather I could feel it's vice-like grip. Safely enclosed in my hands, it was marvellous to be able to study the bird at such close quarters. Those eyes, bright yellow, fiercely defiant, with a cold-blooded stare, which pierced through you with all the intensity of a laser! They must put the fear of God into any small bird unlucky enough to take their fancy. Opening my hands, the bird rocketed off, speeding away down the field, scattering a few wood pigeons in its wake.



Weeding the strawberry bed, I was a bit taken aback, when a small frog launched itself on to my hand.

Surprisingly it made itself quite at home there. I called Wendy to go and get the camcorder. The frog was still sitting there quite happily when she arrived, at least a couple of minutes later, with the camera. Hence the picture of one contented frog!



A smallish bird, which hurtled down vertically to our pond, startled me spooking a pigeon, which took off in a fluster. Equally startled, the smaller bird aborted it's landing and sped away, revealing itself to be a Snipe.

A most unexpected visitor, and such a fleeting

glimpse, as it vanished as dashing as it had appeared.

Taking a walk beyond Upper houses, towards the Brickyard, we came across a sizeable flock of birds, feeding on a field that has been left as winter stubble, instead of being ploughed in. Fifty or more Skylarks got up, mixed in with about 25 Linnets and a few Meadow Pipits. Other people have reported flocks of Yellowhammers, Greenfinches and Chaffinches around the same field. This field has been left unploughed by farmer Ashley Cooper as part of the environmental stewardship scheme, which he has introduced to the farm. This stubble field will provide food throughout the winter for a host of small birds. Ashley is delighted that it has worked so well.

Seasonal greetings to all,

Peter Rowe

~~~~~

### Message from Brooks Newmark MP

I was first elected as an MP in 2005, and in 2010, after boundary changes, my constituency changed to include Halstead and over forty villages. Over the past six and a half years, I have enjoyed attending local events, visiting schools, walking around our beautiful villages and meeting and chatting with many individuals and their families.



As you know, my role in the House of Commons is Government Whip. As a whip, I am responsible for getting Government legislation through Parliament and liaising between MPs and the Government. I am required to be at the House of Commons whenever it is sitting, so I have to be in Parliament from Monday morning until Thursday evening. However, I also do my best to attend local events, Parish Council meetings, visit local schools and businesses and meet my constituents.

Although being a whip does give me additional duties in the House of Commons, this doesn't mean that my work for you changes in any way, my priority will always be to represent your interests in Parliament. I am available for you to contact me at [brooks.newmark.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:brooks.newmark.mp@parliament.uk) or on 01376 512386 if you have an issue that you would like me to help with or if you wish to share your views.

Having a strong local community is important, and I know that our Parish Councils are at the heart of this powerful link. A community that works together can achieve good results for their local area, and parish councils provide a wonderful forum for this community collaboration. I'm proud of the strong local community spirit that we have in our area, working together to deal with difficult issues, like calling for better transport links and broadband access in our rural communities, opposing the threat

of giant pylons in and around Twinstead, opposing the closure of both the Post Office and Senior Citizens Centre in Halstead and continuing to push for a rail loop near Cressing amongst other issues. I look forward to continuing to forge a strong working relationship with the Parish Councils, and representing the interests of all my constituents.

~~~~~

Dates for your diary

The Bulmer Cycle Road race organised by Hackney Cycle Club is to return in 2012 on Sunday 19th May, which is planned to be even better than 2011. Also before then Braintree Cycle Club are to hold a similar event on the Sunday 25th March. A chance for children & adults to join in before the main event.



~~~~~

### PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



#### YOUR COUNCILLORS

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Mike Crome (Chairman)         | - 01787 378155 |
| Peter Fulcher (Vice Chairman) | - 01787 269935 |
| Stephen Morgan                | - 07973 341048 |
| Chris. Leigh                  | - 01787 378133 |
| Bethan Cook                   | - 01787 370435 |
| Phil. Bennis                  | - 01787 371600 |
| Rose Raymond                  | - 07813 205743 |

Hannah Fraser (Parish Clerk) - 01787 374310

#### DATES OF FUTURE PARISH MEETINGS

All meetings are bi-monthly, normally held on the second Friday of the month in the Village Hall at 7:45pm

|                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13 <sup>th</sup> January       | 9 <sup>th</sup> March    |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> May incl. AGM | 29 <sup>th</sup> June    |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> September     | 9 <sup>th</sup> November |

All parishioners are welcome to attend and there is a 15 minute slot for questions from the floor.

#### **DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at the Village Hall, at 7.45pm**

**These minutes are unapproved until the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

**Present:** Cllrs. Bennis, Cook, Crome, Fulcher, Leigh, Morgan, Raymond; Mrs H. Fraser (Clerk); Cllr. Finch (Essex County Council); 5 members of the public.

*A minute's silence was held before the meeting opened to mark Armistice Day.*

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Apologies had been received from Cllr. Swift (Braintree District Council) and from Peter Darlington (Village Agent).
- 2. Declaration of Interests**  
Cllr. Fulcher declared that he was a member of the PCC, which is involved in a project to bring

broadband to the village (item 14). Cllr. Morgan declared that the development in Brundon Lane involves one of his customers (item 10).

**3. Public Question Time:** No questions were raised.

**4. Approve the minutes of the meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2011:**

Acceptance of both sets of minutes was proposed by Cllr. Leigh and seconded by Cllr. Fulcher; the vote was 6 in favour and one abstention due to that councillor not being present at the meetings in question. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

**5. Matters Arising:**

- i. Parking on the corner of Church Road: The Chairman had received 2 calls from the same member of the public, about the parking of up to 5 vehicles at a time. Monitoring of the situation is to continue. Residents are to be encouraged to contact the appropriate authorities.
- ii. Internal Auditor: Cllr. Bennis is to ask Stephen Coombes.

**6a. Cllr. Finch – County Council Update**

- ECC has balanced the budget for next year, working on a 0% council tax rise.
- Highways has restructured, with a new contact centre and fewer staff, as part of a 10-year partnership with Ringway Jacobs Ltd. The council has prepared for a harsh winter.
- Adult services (social care) have won 2 major awards. Childrens' Services are steadily improving.



Cllr. Finch invited questions:

- Cllr. Fulcher asked about broadband provision (item 14). Cllr. Finch said that ECC was working with UKBD to improve speeds etc over the next 5 years, but that it would be sensible to continue with parish council plans.
- Cllr. Leigh asked about the development at Brundon Lane (item 10). Cllr. Finch suggested that the Chairman could request a heavy traffic assessment from Highways.
- A member of the public asked about possible cuts to subsidised bus services. Cllr. Finch advised that there may be a redefining of services that are not good value for money, and that in each case there would be a consultation process.

**6b. Village Agent Update:** On behalf of Peter Darlington, the Chairman informed that the Village Agent scheme had full funding until July 2012 and partial funding thereafter.

**Cllr. Finch** left the meeting at this point.

**7. Coe's Meadow Report:** Cllr. Leigh circulated her report. The RoSPA inspection report is excellent, the clerk will circulate. The Stour Valley Volunteer Project Group did maintenance work on the pond, brambles, avenue and willow den. Cllr. Fulcher was thanked for

arranging the day, and the clerk is to write to thank the group. Any 'green piles' left on the meadow are intentional habitat piles. The gates are to remain locked during the week, and open at weekends. The CMMC has voted unanimously not to enclose the children's area. CMMC is part of a larger village committee working on a Diamond Jubilee event, and is researching the possibility of a brazier-type beacon on the meadow. Cllrs. Bennis and Cook confirmed they are unable to attend the event for retiring councillors and clerk.

**8. Allotments report:** An email report had been circulated by Cllr. Morgan. One rent for 2011/12 is still outstanding; this has been promised within 7 days. It was discussed and then proposed by Cllr. Morgan that the cutting of the allotment perimeter hedge should be put to tender for 3 quotes, by a firm that could use an 'over-reaching' method, rather than coming on-site. This was seconded by Cllr. Fulcher and the vote was unanimously in favour. The spoil removal has been completed although there has not been sufficient rainfall as yet to test its efficiency. Cllr. Fulcher proposed that allotment holders be asked to report drainage problems at the time they occur, and monitor such issues over the winter. This was seconded by Cllr. Leigh and the vote was unanimously in favour.

**9. Clerk's report:** The clerk had circulated a chart showing progress on actions from the last meeting, a timesheet of hours worked and a draft schedule of meetings for 2013. The clerk raised the issue of shredding financial working documents. After discussion, it was felt that the volume of sensitive documents was too small to require a shredder. The clerk is to book the village hall for the meetings for 2013. The clerk is working an average of 7 hours per week, as opposed to the contract hours of 4 per week, and requested that change was considered. It was noted that this would make a significant impact on this and next year's budget. It was noted by Cllr. Morgan that the clerk has not yet taken over the allotments administration. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr. Leigh that the clerk should continue to log her hours, but that the budget for 2012/13 should include the figure of 7 hours per week. The vote was unanimously in favour. The clerk was advised to use technology where possible to speed up the work, and the councillors were directed by the Chairman to give feedback to the clerk about circulated items that were not of interest, and to pass envelopes on promptly. The contract of employment for 4 hours per week was signed.

**10. Planning**

- Ranworth: work on trees – granted.
- Bulmer Brick & Tile Co.: amendment to materials – granted.
- Holland Hill: two-storey side extension – no objections from BPC.
- Stour Valley Business Centre – 2 applications; B/11/01265 is in circulation, for B/11/00689 Bulmer PC was not consulted.



- i. Application B/11/01265 was discussed. The clerk is to request a heavy traffic assessment from Highways.
- ii. The **Allocations Development plan** (review of Village Envelope - proposal only) was discussed. There are 4 areas that have been identified. Cllr. Fulcher pointed out that the recently completed VDS democratically represents the views of the parishioners. It was agreed that the map and an explanatory note would be put on village noticeboards and the village website. Councillors are to talk to local residents to gauge their views; the clerk will draft a reply to BDC for councillors to approve before the end of November.

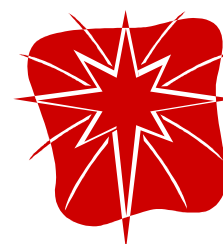
**11. Receipts and Payments**

- i. A 'balance in hand' sheet had been circulated. The cheques were signed.

was used, information from CMMC has already been received. The clerk was asked to find out next year's allotment rent increase. The councillors voted in favour of reducing the contingency budget to £500. It was noted that the precept has not increased for several years, and that it will need to start rising at the same time as other councils, in order to avoid a sudden large increase.

- iv. EALC can provide 2-hour evening training sessions on any given subject for a cost of about £200. The clerk is to get further information, and adjust the budget accordingly. A charity budget was discussed. It was decided that individual cases would be decided on their merit, as they occurred within general correspondence.

| <b>Receipts</b>           |                 | Invoice no. |                  |            |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Allotments - rent 2011/12 |                 |             | 3,281.87         |            |
| Precept (part2)           |                 |             | 2,250.00         |            |
| Interest: HSBC a/c 6693   |                 |             | 5.30             |            |
| Interest: A&L a/c         |                 |             | 20.93            |            |
| BNA                       |                 |             |                  |            |
| BVHMC - kitchen worktops  |                 | 2           | 984.00           |            |
| Interest: A&L a/c         |                 |             | 21.64            |            |
| BNA                       |                 |             |                  |            |
| <b>TOTAL (£)</b>          |                 |             | <b>5,443.49</b>  |            |
| <b>Payments</b>           |                 | chq. No     |                  | in budget? |
| M&B Print                 | VDS brochures   | 51          | 1,068.00 inc VAT | yes        |
| Mortimer                  | Grass - Sep     | 52          | 1,134.00 inc VAT | yes        |
| Mill Kitchens ltd         | BVHMC worktops  | 53          | 1,180.80 inc VAT | reimbursed |
| Barclays                  | storage charge  |             | 1.00             | n/a        |
| B. Rawlins                | stationery      | 54          | 9.72 inc VAT     | on         |
| Cllr. Crome               | travel          | 55          | 101.40           |            |
| H. Fraser                 | salary          | 56          | 310.00           |            |
|                           | expenses        | 56          | 26.97 inc VAT    |            |
| EALC                      | Chairman t/d 3  | 57          | 60.00            |            |
|                           | Baker book      | 57          | 52.50            |            |
| J. Doe                    | spoil clearance | 58          | 720.00 inc VAT   | over       |
| Chilton OS                | VDS letter      | 59          | 18.00 inc VAT    |            |
|                           | newsletter      | 59          | 80.64 inc VAT    |            |
| ROSPA                     | inspection      | 60          | 157.20 inc VAT   |            |
| Mortimer                  | Grass - Nov     | 61          | 300.00 inc VAT   |            |
| <b>TOTAL (£)</b>          |                 |             | <b>5,220.23</b>  |            |



- ii. Capital investments were reviewed and all agreed that there should be no changes.
- iii. The Budget/Precept for 2012/3 was discussed. It was agreed that the RoSPA fee should come under the CMMC budget, and that Anglian Water would come under Open Spaces. Cllr. Benns was keen that useful capital projects were prioritised, rather than day to day running costs. The grants to BVHMC & CMMC were discussed as a way of reducing the Councils outgoings. To this end, it was agreed that the clerk should ask BVHMC for a breakdown of how their grant

**12. Water bills and rental income for the allotments:** Information had been circulated. Water is currently paid for by Bulmer PC. Last year's sudden rise was attributed to the dry summer and a leaky tap. Sprinklers are already banned on the allotments.

**13. Standpipe on Coe's Meadow:** The standpipe on Coe's Meadow is never used. It was proposed by Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr. Leigh that this standpipe be removed, and the vote was all in favour. The clerk is to investigate the cost.

**14. Broadband in Bulmer – update:** A document has arrived from County Broadband and will be circulated. The Chairman gave examples of speed

and prices. It was agreed that Cllr. Cook would carry out a survey of parishioners to evaluate the need in the village. The clerk is to forward her the draft survey form.

**15. Publishing of draft minutes on noticeboards:** It was proposed by Cllr. Benns and seconded by Cllr. Fulcher, that draft minutes of parish council meetings should be put on village noticeboards, after the clerk had circulated them to councillors for checking. The vote was unanimously in favour.

**16. Public feedback and meeting frequency**  
Cllr. Benns proposed that there be a short public feedback session at the end of meetings so that the council could check that it was 'going in the right direction'. It was noted that the public have the right to feedback to the council via the clerk at any time. This was seconded by Cllr. Raymond. Cllr. Benns requested the voting be recorded as per Standing Order item 1.s. The voting was: Cllrs. Benns, Raymond and Morgan in favour; Cllrs. Leigh, Crome and Fulcher against; Cllr. Cook abstained. The Chairman applied his casting vote against the motion, and therefore the motion was not carried. No decision was taken on meeting frequency. It was suggested to put copies of the agenda on the chairs used by the public.

**17. ECC Corporate Vision Response:** Cllr. Fulcher had prepared a response, which had been circulated. It was approved by all present.

**18. Jubilee Beacon:** It was agreed that CMMC will continue to pursue this project, with the assistance of the clerk.

**19. BT Hedingham Road pole:** The clerk was asked to write to Highways explaining the situation, and to BT confirming they are aware of the safety issue.

#### **20. Correspondence and Notices**

**1.** The ECC salt has been delivered. Thanks were given to Cllr. Raymond for storage. The clerk will complete the risk assessment form. The salt is for refilling the salt bins around the village. Other requests should be made via the clerk.

**2.** The clerk was asked to contact Greenfields to obtain a list of vulnerable residents, for the emergency plan.

**28.** The Jubilee Oak will be delivered on 15<sup>th</sup> November to Jenkins. It is planned that it will be planted on Plough Green on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, with the school attending and constructing a time capsule.

**30.** The clerk circulated a response from Highways regarding the speeding on the A131 – Bulmer Tye is now under consideration for a speed limit reduction. The clerk was asked to continue work on the data protection issue.

#### **21. Items for the next agenda**

1. A second tap on the allotments
2. Jubilee update

The meeting closed at 10.17pm.



#### **PARISH PATH WALKS - Autumn/Winter 2011**

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October was the beginning of another seasons ramblings for the parish path walkers when Margaret lead us around the paths and tracks of Wickham St Paul. By now thoughts of the odd shower with the accompaniment of falling autumnal leaves wouldn't normally be far off the conditions for an October walk, but as we gathered at Butlers Hall we were preparing ourselves with sun cream, peaked hats and sunglasses. There was a slight breeze but that gave little respite from the burning sun as we crossed fields offering no shade. However, some of the tracks Margaret had chosen did takes us through small wooded areas where the protection formed by



the leafy tree canopies was much appreciated. The ducks on the pond by the green at Wickham looked to be grateful for the shaded spots of the water too, as with most other species that day. Considering the amazing weather we hardly saw another soul be it man or beast.

Mid November we did a return to the paths of Brundon, Borley and Bulmer when autumn had decided it would grace us with its presence. It was yet another beautiful afternoon where between the shortening hours of daylight the sun was still managing to give out a little warmth. Enough for us



to remove our coats when we'd got moving, but not enough to penetrate through the carpet of recently fallen leaves, which was keeping the undergrowth permanently damp now whilst waiting for the winds to arrive and dry it out. From the crest of Finch Hill clear skies and the afternoon sunshine opened up the landscape for miles around leaving the views from

our path down to Brundon mostly unhindered, except only by the odd hedgerow still clinging on to its very last few leaves. The change in weather also seemed to bring a change in the number of people getting out and about compared with Octobers walk as Brundon Mill was a hive of activity, all admiring the autumnal scenery and the familiar feeding frenzy of the swans on the mill pond. Leaving Brundon we looped back round via Melford Road through the grounds of Borley Hall and Borley Mill before getting onto the bridle path that comes out to run parallel with Barford river. Crossing the bridge we came to the final stretch of our walk ascending Finch Hill with the sun departing, turning the air cool and damp and the countryside into a backdrop of silhouettes awaiting darkness.

Darkness was almost the setting for Decembers walk as we set off on another moonlit walk around Bulmer. As with our previous evenings walk which we did a few years ago the conditions were perfect, clear skies and a fantastically bright moon. It was pretty cold too which made most of us wonder why when shivering on departure from the village hall we'd left the comfort and warmth of our sofas to jaunt around the countryside. After less than a mile when our sight had become accustomed to the relative darkness and we'd warmed up a little we began to see why we'd been tempted out in the first place. The countryside seemed to take on a whole new mystical enchantment with shooting stars and distant fireworks helping to light up the skies, as well as brightly lit landmarks which you wouldn't necessarily give much heed during the day. Even the path through Wesborough Hill was lit well enough as to not need our torches. We didn't see any of the badgers though or any other nocturnal species, but that may have had something to do with the noise from our enthusiastic chatter even though only six of us did brave the cold, but if the future holds another moonlit walk it's one I'd thoroughly recommend.

Our thanks as ever go to Margaret for her time in organising and leading the walks and giving us the inspiration to get out into our beautiful countryside alongside her.

*Lisa Sandford*

~~~~~

PARISH PATHS WALKS

It is quite difficult, after so many years, to find new routes to walk but all our footpaths have different guises throughout the year. Put your boots on and see for yourself! All the walks are suitable for adult accompanied children. Dogs must be kept on a short lead.



Monday 26th December 10.30 am

A Boxing Day walk to Middleton & Henny. About 5 miles . Some stiles. Meet on Plough Green, Bulmer Tye.

Monday 2nd January 10.30 am

'Walk West' - A healthy start to the year. A 5 mile walk to Gestingthorpe. Meet at Bulmer Village Hall.

Sunday 29th January 2.30 pm

'Borley Green' 4 miles via the Rookery, Forty Acres & Eyston Hall. Meet at Finch Hill end of Smeetham Hall Lane.

Sunday 26th February 2.30 pm

'The Twinstead Tee' – and other powerlines About 4 miles. Meet at Henny Church

Sunday 25th March 2.30 pm

'Borley Green to Foxearth' About 4½ miles. Meet at telephone box on Borley Green.



As always, adult accompanied children will be welcome. Dogs must be kept on a short lead. Further details from Margaret Mills (telephone 269377)



~~~~~



**Christmas Wordsearch**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | I | R | T | H | W | P | J | F | E |
| A | E | D | H | O | I | D | S | K | M |
| B | H | T | S | U | S | U | D | A | Y |
| Y | K | W | H | N | E | B | R | C | R |
| R | I | V | E | L | M | Y | E | B | R |
| S | U | S | E | J | E | Q | H | X | H |
| E | D | T | P | D | N | H | P | O | J |
| S | T | A | B | L | E | Y | E | L | U |
| F | J | R | D | O | I | G | H | M | E |
| O | Y | A | N | G | E | L | S | D | P |

Can you find these words in the above grid?

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| ANGELS    | MARY      |
| BABY      | MYRRH     |
| BETHLEHEM | SHEEP     |
| BIRTH     | SHEPHERDS |
| DAY       | STAR      |
| GOLD      | STABLE    |
| JESUS     | WISEMEN   |

~~~~~

Editors Note: A very Happy Christmas & New Year to you all, especially those who continue to contribute items for publication. New contributors are always welcome.

The next edition will be published at the end of March 2012. Can I please have all your pictures and articles, please by the 15th March. Call 378155 or email mike@mcrome.fsnet.co.uk Mike Crome