



What's On?

The Newsletter of Bulmer - March 2012

(Including Bulmer St., Bulmer Tye, Finch Hill, Batt Hall, Upper & Lower Houses, Church Rd & Hedingham Road).

View in colour at www.bulmersex.co.uk

BULMER Diamond Jubilee celebrations

The following programme of events is planned for the weekend of 1st to 5th June.

However, to make this a success it will depend on your support either by attending the events or if you are able to help with the organisation or running a stall, the committee (contact overleaf) would ***be pleased*** to hear from you.

Friday 1st June to Tuesday 5th June

In St. Andrew's Church will be a **Jubilee themed Flower Festival** for everyone to enjoy.

Saturday 2nd June

In the evening in St. Andrew's Church there will be a '**Celebration of Life**' service for all those wishing to celebrate the life of our Queen, relation or friend. Light refreshments will be served afterwards.

Sunday 3rd June

Join in Bulmer's '**Big Sunday Lunch**' on Church Meadow 12noon onwards (weather permitting), including a bar. Please bring your **food to share**. Plates, cups and cutlery will be provided.

After the lunch at 2pm there will be the '**Village Funday**' run by Coe's Meadow committee with stalls for all the family to enjoy on Church Meadow. During the afternoon will be your chance to join in **Father Eoin's Jubilee themed Fancy Dress**, with a prize for the best-dressed child and also for the best dressed adult. Afternoon tea & cakes will be available in the Village Hall, served by the Village Hall committee. From around 4pm there will be a **bar-b-cue** in the bar tent.

Monday 4th June

There will be a **family service** in St Andrew's Church.



Portrait of the Queen, taken in 2002
© John Swannell/Camera Press



A commemorative bone china mug is to be given free to Bulmer children aged up to and including 16. An inscription of "**Bulmer Village 2012**" will be printed on each mug. To claim the mug, please complete the form over the page to register your child/children, and hand this slip to Hannah Fraser (Parish Clerk) Yew Tree House, Bulmer Street by the 27th April.

Should you wish to obtain a mug for someone not living in Bulmer or yourself, the mug can be purchased at a cost of £5 each. Please state how many mugs you require and give your payment to Hannah Fraser (Parish Clerk) cheques should be made payable to Bulmer Parish Council.

Please remember to complete the following form **by the 27th April**, otherwise you maybe disappointed.

The following procedure is necessary to enable the right quantity of mugs to be ordered.

To claim the commemorative mug, please complete the following to register your child/children, and hand this slip to **Hannah Fraser Yew Tree House, Bulmer Street by the 27th April.**

Your Name.....
Child/Children's Name.....
 Your Address.....
 Telephone No.....

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 To purchase the mug at a cost of £5 each, please state how many mugs you require and hand your payment to **Hannah Fraser by the 27<sup>th</sup> April**, cheques should be made payable to Bulmer Parish Council.

No. Required..... only complete if for yourself or not a Bulmer resident.



**For these celebrations to be a success they need your support**, if you can help in anyway now or on the day please talk to Mike Crome (378155), Maggie Skipper (374758), Chris Leigh (378133) or Paul Maynard (269285)

**VILLAGE HALL NEWS**

This summer the Village Hall Committee will be working with other organisations in the Village to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. It is hoped that the weekend will be full of various activities to be enjoyed by the residents of Bulmer.

We will also be holding two events this spring. The first is an Antiques Roadshow to be held on Friday 30th March at 7.30pm and will be conducted by Barrie Stevenson. Tickets £3.50 including light refreshments. Please bring 1 item only for discussion and valuations will not be given. For tickets please ring 374758.

The second event will be an evening with **Charlie Haylock**, who will be presenting his very entertaining one-man show "**AN ECCENTRIC LOOK AT SUFFOLK**". If you have never seen Charlie or read any of his books then this is a "must" for you. This will take place on **Friday 20th April at 7.30pm** and tickets are on sale at £5.00, which will include light refreshments. To book, please ring Margaret on 312915 or 374758.

**Date of AGM Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May.**

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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!

Month	First	Second	Third
Jan.	Mr & Mrs Fraser	Mrs S Toy	Mrs S Herring
Feb.	P J Dutson	Mr A Skipper	Mr L Raymond
Mar.	Mr R White	Mr & Mrs J Duck	Mr & Mrs E Wood

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

BULMER SKYLARKS

We have had a good start to the year and our members have braved the very cold afternoons to attend our meetings. We began the year with a superb film show of wildlife around our area given by Peter Rowe. It was lovely to hear the birds singing and flowers in bloom and cheered up a very dull, rainy afternoon. Nena Harding was our speaker in February who spoke about her work with the Samaritans Purse charity. It was heartbreaking to realise the awful poverty that there is in this world but people like Nena are doing their best to make life a little brighter for many.

We are looking forward to the next busy few months. Our speaker on **24th April** will be Nelson Brunton who will be enlightening us on **the value of alternative medicines.**

On **22nd May** we will be welcoming Andy Malcolm from the **Deep Sea Fishermans Mission** who will be speaking on the history of Fish and Chips and, it is rumoured, can be persuaded to sing a few sea shanties!

Our June meeting will be a 1950's party to celebrate the Queens Diamond Jubilee and in July we will be holding our annual "Ladies Day at Bulmer Races" followed by a cream tea.

The first outing this year will be to **Aldeburgh on May 1st** so we will be hoping for some good weather.

We will be holding a Fashion Show at Edinburgh Woollen Mills in Sudbury on 23rd May. This is a "not to be missed" event as our members act as models. The men are usually the stars of the show and we look forward with anticipation of seeing them in shorts and swimwear this year! For tickets please ring Barbara on 370845 or Maggie on 374758. Following the show there will be an opportunity to purchase garments at a reduced price.

If you are interested in joining Skylarks or want to know more please ring Barbara (370845) or Maggie (374758). Everyone is welcome.

POLICE RESTRUCTURE



Following the restructure of Police teams serving our area, the following information was given at the last Neighbourhood Action Panel (N.A.P.) meeting: From 1st March there will be no Police Officers working from Great Yeldham.

- Initial response teams for 999 calls will be working from Stanway.
- All non-emergency calls will be handled by officers under Sgt. Wright at Halstead.
- Neighbourhood Specialist Officers PC Smith and PC Simpson will also be working from Halstead.
- For non emergency calls or to contact PC Smith or PC Simpson please dial 101 and follow instructions given for Essex.
- Please use 999 for emergencies only.

BULMER NATURE DIARIES



Jess Davies took this fine study of a Roe Deer trotting proudly across a Bulmer field.

Our plant group held it's traditional New Year's Day survey, this year at Little Cornard. We found 23 species of wild flower actually in bloom, including Red and White Dead Nettles, Red Campion, Primrose and Rough Chervil. Last year when we met in Bulmer, we only recorded 13 species in flower, but of course that was after we had suffered the coldest December on record. What a contrast this year. Apart from the heavy snow and Arctic temperatures of early February, this has been a remarkably mild winter. A practically frost free December provided two out of season "firsts" for us: - a perfectly good field mushroom, found on Christmas Eve and later still, a succulent tomato picked from our unheated mini greenhouse in late January. Not delicacies you can bank on finding so late in a normal winter. Two notable birds of prey turned up in mid January. Close to "New Barn" on Goldingham Hall's land, Graham Martin had good views of what was almost certainly a Hen Harrier; his quite detailed description of it seemed spot on. On 22nd Jan, I could hardly believe my eyes, when a Peregrine Falcon cruised across the backfield, no more than about 50 yards

off. Later on I was told of another Peregrine catching and eating a Wood Pigeon over at Foxearth, in late December. It's very unusual for either of these birds to be seen in our more agricultural landscape, but they do turn up on the marshlands around our coasts. Both the Hen Harrier and the Peregrine are much persecuted, particularly on Grouse moors, where they are seen as a threat to the game birds. Peregrines chicks are also stolen from nests for use in falconry. The RSPB bring several prosecutions each year for a number of these crimes.

We had a cock Pheasant behaving very strangely in the garden the other day. It rushed around head down, tail as stiff as a poker, scuttling around the plots in a most frenzied manner, blustering into anything that was in it's course. It was careering around for a good couple of minutes, criss-crossing the ground at considerable speed, frequently bashing into things. Eventually it calmed down and settled down by the fence. Whether it was being tormented by some parasite, or was suffering from a sudden brainstorm is anyone's guess, but it was most strange behaviour. A cock Reed Bunting paid a brief visit to the garden the other day, which is a first for us, as far as I can recall. We are sighting Buzzards from home more and more frequently. Several times in the last month we have seen a couple, soaring effortlessly over, with hardly a wing beat.



I'm never too sorry to see the back of January and February. For me, spring burst forth (or was I being over optimistic) on the 11th of March. It was a gloriously warm sunny afternoon and we took the Watch Group children to Rodbridge. One of the first things to greet us was the song of a Chiffchaff, the first of our returning summer migrants. We had great views of it as it hunted for flies in a pussy willow, which was buzzing with honeybees and the odd bumblebee. Watching a Long Tailed Tit collecting lichen, we followed it to a bramble thicket, where we spotted its nest, about half built. The nest is a masterpiece of camouflage; the outside covered with lichen, woven in with moss and entwined with spider webs and hair, and then lined with hundreds and hundreds of feathers. Let's hope we have a few more such days to look forward to!



Peter Rowe

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The Bulmer Cycle Road race organised by Hackney Cycle Club is to return on Sunday 19th May, starting & finishing at Finch Hill, planned to be even better than 2011. A chance for children & adults to join in before the main event.



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**FOXEARH OIL BUYING GROUP**

This group has been set up to use the power of bulk buying to save money on central heating oil and is open to any resident of Borley, Foxearth, Liston, Pentlow and now **Bulmer**.

To become a member all you need to do is send details as below when agreeing to join. An order is placed once a month throughout autumn to spring and once in the summer.

**The group works as follows: -**

When you need oil, check the order dates below and e-mail with details of your requirements (**min 700 litres**). You do not need to order each month, only when you need it! Your order will be acknowledged by e-mail. If no response is received within a couple of days it is probable your order has not been received, please resend.

When the cut off date has passed contact will be made to various suppliers and the groups order placed with the cheapest one. When the order has been placed you will receive an e-mail (whether you have ordered or not so you can see the way prices are going) with the name of the supplier, the delivery date and the agreed price (which is the same for everybody regardless of the quantity you order- provided it is **at least 700 litres**).

That is the end of the group's involvement. The supplier will contact you regarding payment and delivery. You pay them direct. Most will accept debit/credit cards.

**If you want to join, send an e-mail to Barrie Phillpotts [barrie.phillpotts@cbb4u.co.uk](mailto:barrie.phillpotts@cbb4u.co.uk)** confirming: - Your wish to become a member; Your full name, Full address including post code, Tele numbers- landline and mobile, The quantity your tank holds (if known), The position of the tank (front, back, left side, right side, of house etc) Your e-mail address (this can be your work if the boss allows it!)

| Order dates for the remainder of 2012 are as follows |                                  |                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Month                                                | Cut off date to place your order | Delivery expected (but not guaranteed) |
| April                                                | Saturday 7th                     | 12th/13th                              |
| June                                                 | Saturday 2nd                     | 7th/8th                                |
| October                                              | Saturday 6th                     | 11th/12th                              |
| November                                             | Saturday 3rd                     | 8th/9th                                |
| December                                             | Saturday 1st.                    | 6th/7th                                |

**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

|                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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 9<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at the Village Hall, at 7.45pm**

*These minutes are unapproved until the next council meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012*

**Present**

Cllrs. Crome, Fulcher, Morgan, Raymond; Mrs H. Fraser (Clerk), Peter Darlington (Village Agent), 4 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs. Bennis, Leigh, Cook, Swift and Finch.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

Cllr. Fulcher declared that he was a member of the PCC which is involved in a project to install a broadband aerial on the church tower (item 12). He also declared his membership of the PCC in respect to item 17 correspondence no. 79 and his intention to leave the room when this item was discussed.

**3. Public Question Time**

No questions were raised.

**4. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012**

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr. Morgan; the vote was unanimously in favour. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

**5. Matters Arising**

- i. Internal Auditor: The clerk has contacted Stephen Coombes and will meet him towards the end of March. Cllr. Crome suggested the clerk look at the Audit course run by EALC.

**6. District & County Council Update**

Cllr. Finch's report had previously been circulated. Cllr. Swift's report was handed out at the meeting. The Chairman wished to record the parish council's congratulations to Cllr. Finch for his recent national LGIU award, which was well deserved.

- Peter Darlington, Village Agent, gave a brief report. He is now working in tandem with Greenfields, and also Suffolk NHS to resolve cross-border problems. He

noted that debt was becoming a frequent problem amongst the elderly, and that he is trained in debt management. He stated that he was also happy to promote any Jubilee events that the village may be holding.

Peter Darlington left the meeting at this point.

### 7. Coe's Meadow Report

Due to Cllr. Leigh's absence, Cllr. Fulcher gave a verbal report. Fun Day activities will take place during the Jubilee weekend, but on Church Meadow.

Research on the car park re-surfacing is still ongoing, with the aim of resolving the matter by the summer. Cllr. Fulcher has the agreement of Highways to take some of the surplus road planings on Hedingham Road, with the proviso that the amount is stated and that our County Councillor (Cllr. Finch) signs it off. Cllr. Swift has offered a tractor and trailer. CMMC is to investigate the planning issues with this surface. There was some discussion over whether this surface would be durable. The chairman directed that it was a matter for CMMC to decide, but that the clerk could write now to obtain the permission for the planings, if the other councillors agreed. They were unanimously in agreement.

### 8. Allotments report

A report had been circulated by Cllr. Morgan.

- i. Dog fouling is again a problem. The Chairman has contacted the dog warden, who has agreed to and will supply signs, the council is to supply posts. The clerk is to get estimates for 3 posts.
- ii. Flytipping should be reported to the Green Team at Braintree District Council.
- iii. Drainage: the levelling around the manhole has been completed. Since the weather has been dry it has been harder to evaluate the drainage, however in the recent downpour the ditches were working well. All agreed that further monitoring should take place before any work was planned.
- iv. Hedge cutting: The clerk has received a verbal quote of £125 from J. Doe for handcutting the inside of the hedge. The approximate income from the side strip would be £25-30 per annum. Cllr. Morgan noted that there was not really demand for renting out this strip, but that he would ask the one person on the waiting list if they were interested. The Chairman noted that the rental agreements for plots next to the hedges included maintenance of the hedges. All agreed that J. Doe should carry on cutting all hedges as before (with the tractor on the inside).
- v. A working party was suggested to clear brambles and litter. The parish strimmer could be used for the weeds on the outside strips.

### 9. Clerk's report

The clerk handed out a list of actions from the last meeting and a timesheet of hours worked.

- i. It was proposed by Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr. Morgan that the updated contract for 7 hours per week be agreed and

signed. The vote was unanimously in favour, and the contract was signed.

### 10. Planning

- Stour Valley Business Centre (B/11/01265: this has been passed, with the condition B8 which restricts it to storing and transporting archive material. Further evidence would be needed to request a heavy traffic assessment.
- Allocations Development: All four areas in Bulmer Parish were rejected by the panel at Braintree District Council. The recommendations go out for public consultation in September and applicants may appeal.
- Bulmer Brick & Tile Co.: There were no objections to this application to extend clay extraction on the current site.

### 11. Receipts and Payment

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Balance in hand (£) | 108,870.14 |
|---------------------|------------|

#### Receipts

|                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Interest: A&L<br>a/c BNA | 17.33        |
| Interest: A&L<br>a/c BNA | 16.22        |
| <b>TOTAL (£)</b>         | <b>33.55</b> |

#### Payments

|                   |                             | chq.<br>No |                 | in budget? |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| EALC              | training: Cllr Morgan       | 66         | 40.00           | over       |
| M. Rogojan-Rush   | Deposit refund minus rent   | 67         | 1.90            |            |
| H. Fraser         | salary                      | 68         | 542.48          |            |
|                   | backdated pay               | 68         | 697.44          |            |
| R&R<br>Lawnmowers | repair & service            | 69         | 86.94           |            |
| K. Mills          | stationery & petrol (P3)    | 70         | 24.14           |            |
| G. Martin         | labour at Dean Spinney      | 71         | 30.00           |            |
| M. Crome          | travel for planning courses | 72         | 50.70           |            |
| <b>TOTAL (£)</b>  |                             |            | <b>1,473.60</b> |            |

- i. A 'balance in hand' sheet had been circulated. The cheques were signed. Cllr. Fulcher requested that the total balance in hand figure should be added to the minutes.
- ii. Capital investments were reviewed and all agreed that there should be no changes.

### 12. County Broadband proposal

A question and answer session had been held prior to the meeting with Lloyd Felton of County Broadband. It was proposed by Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr. Morgan that the proposal be signed. All were in favour, and the proposal was signed. County Broadband will now call a village meeting to establish interest and will organise a survey. Mr. Felton confirmed that if there was not sufficient interest in

the village, the proposal agreement would lapse with no repercussions. The clerk will return the proposal and be the point of contact until any volunteers come forward from the community.

### **13. Jubilee events - update**

The Chairman informed the council of the current diary of events:

- Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June: Ball in aid of St. Andrew's School PTA, in a marquee on Church Meadow. The Church will run a flower festival from Friday to Tuesday.
- Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June: The Celebration of Life service in the Church, with refreshments.
- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June: The Big Lunch in the marquee on Church Meadow, drinks provided, bring food to share. In the afternoon, Fun Day stalls etc., and Fr. Eoin's Fancy Dress Competition. Tea and coffee in the Village Hall. In the evening, a barbeque and live music.
- Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June: The formal Jubilee Church service.

The chairman noted that if the PTA hired the marquee for Church Meadow, they would incur VAT. He proposed, and was seconded by Cllr. Fulcher, that the parish council hire the marquee and the school reimburse. The PC would share the cost of a generator. The marquee will need monitoring over the Saturday. All were in favour of this proposal. He then proposed, and was seconded by Cllr. Fulcher that the village obtain Jubilee mugs for children of the parish, and showed a sample. A form is to go in the next edition of *What's On*, and the cost to those who order will be £5 per mug. It was noted that CMMC is donating £250 towards the Jubilee celebrations, and the Village Hall is seeking to contribute £200. It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr. Fulcher, that the PC donate up to a maximum of £500 (from a ringfenced sub-account), to specifically cover 50% of generator costs and the initial outlay for the mugs (£373). All agreed.

### **14. P3 – Footpath representative**

The Chairman wished to record the council's thanks to Margaret Mills for her diligent years of work looking after the footpaths under the P3 scheme. Due to medical reasons she wishes to stand down, but will still continue to lead the Parish Walks. The council agreed that these should still be called 'Parish' walks. Cllr. Raymond volunteered to be the new P3 Representative and will contact Margaret Mills. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Raymond and noted that there was some required training and also equipment. Cllr. Fulcher would like to attend the First Aid training. The clerk will book him on the course providing there is no cost.

### **15. EALC Evening Training**

All councillors present agreed that this training would be worthwhile, if all could attend. They suggested it would be useful for the clerk to be present as an observer. Friday evenings are possible, the clerk is to try and arrange a date, probably a Friday evening in May. The modules proposed by Cllr. Raymond and seconded by the Chairman were 2, 3, 6 & 7 with module 5 as a backup, and all were in favour.

### **16. War Memorial Maintenance**

The clerk had circulated a leaflet about the above. Cllr. Fulcher noted that the memorial was last refurbished about 5 years ago. The clerk is to check with the previous clerk and in the files, and also with the History Society.

### **17. Correspondence as circulated**

Correspondence nos. 1-28, 30-36, 38-64, 67-70, 72, 74 & 78 had already been covered under previous items.

29. Dog incident at Ryes Lane: The matter remains in the hands of the Dog Warden.

37. Activity Days: The Clerk is to return the forms.

65. Baker's Field lease and St. Andrew's School: The Clerk is to send the lease to the solicitor for amendment.

66: Mrs. Brett has queried why she pays water bills and cuts the hedges on her paddock, when the allotment holders do not. It was confirmed that grazing and allotments have different usages and therefore different agreements. It was agreed that the clerk should add to the July agenda the proposal that the water bill for the allotments is apportioned between the allotment holders. On the matter of installing electricity, the council agreed to consider it again, if Mrs. Brett would get comparative quotes for mains supply versus a more powerful generator. It was suggested that the rent would be increased as a consequence of any changes.

71: Entrance on A131 – this is under observation, use of this entrance or parking on the pavement or road should be reported to the clerk who will report in turn to PC Nicholas Smith at Essex Police or Planning Enforcement, if the entrance is being used. On Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March there was a vehicle parked in the entrance.

73. Disposal of Yeldham Police Station: The council did not wish to add anything further to Cllr. Finch's objection.

75. Highways consultation: Councillors felt there was no sense of progress in items reported; updates would be appreciated. Clerk to respond to ECC.

76. It was agreed to renew the CPRE membership, which had been budgeted for.

77. Letter from ECC about Old Church Lane Bridleway. The clerk is to reply; stating that the PC's understanding is that the bridleway was wrongly downgraded to a footpath, that the barriers were removed but that the downgrading was not applied for, and that it should be restored as a bridleway. In addition the deeds of Stone Cottage show Old Church Lane is a public highway until that point. The clerk should offer a meeting to clear this matter.

79. Letter from Fr. Buchanan re: churchyard grant: Cllr. Fulcher left the meeting at this point. Fr. Buchanan noted that the donation from the PC for maintenance of the churchyard only covered 45% of grass cutting costs and had not increased since 2008. The PC has already had to set a tight budget for 2012-3 and there is no real leeway. The council faces a large grass cutting bill of its own, which is almost equal to the precept, and has kept the council tax at a 0% increase for several years for the benefit of village residents. But the PC understands that the maintenance of the church and the churchyard is important to villagers, and would like to help. The

Clerk is to reply, offering to approach Mortimers to see whether the churchyard can be added to the council's contract to save costs. She is also to suggest that an increase is possible for 2013-14, and that the church should write again in November 2012 when the next budget is drafted. She will also promise that the matter is added to the agenda for the May meeting, when a full council will be present. It was felt that a small number of councillors could not in all integrity vote on going outside the budget before that financial year had actually started. Cllr. Fulcher then returned to the meeting.

80. Duck signs: A resident had asked for the possibility of warning signs about ducks and ducklings being erected at the village pond on The Street. The Chairman confirmed that the Land Registry has no record of an owner for the pond. It was agreed that in the present financial climate, the clerk should write to the resident giving permission to erect their own temporary signs, and for them to erect and take down at the appropriate hatching times.

81. Cllr. Fulcher is to supply an A4 poster about the 360 degree viewing pod in the church, and the clerk will display them on the notice boards.

**16. Items for the next agenda**

None were raised.

The meeting closed at 9.55pm.

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VILLAGE AGENTS BIT

By the time you read this it should be spring, I'm sitting in the garden writing this (must cut the grass) Over the last three months we have been away for some walking breaks, in Somerset, the South Downs and Warwickshire and had a great time (with lots of walks for me Kiri) but I can honestly say that the Colne Valley cannot be beaten.

On the Village Agent front the project is to continue, so if you need any help please contact me.

With the Queens Jubilee coming up there are going to be lots of events so if you want them publicised or any other events in your village please let me know and I can put it on the RCCE web site.

We hope to see you at village events

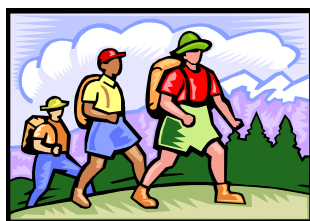
Peter & Kiri 07540 720604

peter.darlington@vaessex.org.uk

PARISH PATHS WALKS

I am leaving the heavier side of looking after our local footpaths and bridleways and would like to thank everyone who has helped in this work.

Whether it has been by cutting paths near your garden, helping with improvements, picking up litter or reporting problems – it has all contributed to making the network popular with many walkers & riders.



It pleases me to tell you Rose Raymond has volunteered to take on the task. We will be working together to begin with at least and I hope to be able to continue to organise walks each month.

Here at least are those for April and May.

Easter Monday 9th April 10.30 am

Hills and Halls – about 5 miles.
Meet at Gestingthorpe Church.

May Bank Holiday Monday 7th May

Sour Valley Path – about 7½ miles from Bures to Sudbury.

Meet at Sudbury Station about 2pm (train time will have to be confirmed later).

Later months yet to be arranged.



As always, strong footwear is advised. An adult must accompany children and dogs must be kept on a short lead. Further details from Margaret Mills (telephone 269377)

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**A DAY OUT AT THE SEASIDE**

Do you fancy a trip to Aldeburgh? Bulmer Skylarks are running a coach trip there on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May. This is a good opportunity to brush away the winter blues and enjoy a refreshing breath of sea air. We will be leaving the Village Hall at 10.30am and will be back by 5.30pm and the cost of the trip is £14.



Interested? To book a seat please ring Barbara on 370845

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DOG FOULING

It has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council that dog owners in the vicinity of the Batt Hall area are allowing their dogs to foul footpaths and in some cases in resident's front gardens. The dog warden at Braintree District Council has been informed and action is being taken.

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**PILATES CLASSES**

These are now being run by Michelle Cowcher held in the village hall every Tuesday and Wednesday mornings commencing at 9:30am.

For further details contact Michelle on 07956 256924 or [mich072005@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mich072005@hotmail.co.uk)

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GAINSBOROUGH'S VIEW

Many people contribute to the work of Stour Valley



Underground in its efforts to rid us all of the threat of

more electricity pylons, and yet they are not all horribly technical issues that are brought to us. In this article I want to tell you of one rather wonderful contribution.

We in this area are blessed with a local historian, Barry Wall, who has through his efforts added enormously to public knowledge of our local history. Amongst his initiatives he has worked to identify the locations that inspired some of our most important landscape paintings.

Here in the Stour Valley he has identified a number of locations that inspired Thomas Gainsborough in the 18th century. A little before Christmas he visited me with news of what is perhaps the most nearly intact view that Gainsborough painted.

The rather wordily named oil painting "Wooded Landscape with Herdsman Seated" hangs in Sudbury's Gainsborough's House Museum. It is a view of a gently hilly landscape with the distinctive spire of Henny Church on the horizon and the ancient Thornycroft Farmhouse set below it. The astonishing thing is that you can walk to this view today, on public footpaths. Until Barry identified it, few people realised that this valuable cultural heritage asset was there.

As can be seen from this reproduction of



Gainsborough's 1748 work, there is a young oak, left of centre and water at the bottom of the view.

Today, the view is much flattened by centuries of ploughing and agriculture. The young oak of Gainsborough's time is now old, mature, somewhat broken and yet still thrives. What was a watercourse is now merely a line of reeds in a field.

What is truly wonderful is the fact that you can visit the Museum in Sudbury and then drive just a few miles out of town to Henny, stroll along public footpaths and experience for yourself this inspirational scenery.

Opposite the gate into Henny Churchyard is a public footpath that leads down past Thornycroft farm, across a couple of styles and on to a point where the footpath splits. Straight ahead would take you toward Middleton. However, by turning left onto the other path and walking along the footpath that runs along the field boundary, you see Gainsborough's view to your left. As you walk, the relationship of the church and farmhouse change until the house is seen below the church. At this point you know you are at Gainsborough's vantage point and the oak sits in the

same relationship to the buildings as it did when Gainsborough was there 264 years ago. What greater way can there be to bring this piece of our cultural history to life.

But this view is under threat. And I do not need to use Photoshop to show you why. It is possible to gauge that threat by simply strolling up the hill behind this viewpoint.

National Grid have identified a preferred route corridor for another line of huge pylons, and that route extends either side of the existing pylons. This means that the proposed new pylons could be on higher ground, nearer the church. Where are the pylons now? Well you can see one on the horizon in the Gainsborough's View photograph, 1/4 of the way in from the left, but they are there, hidden by trees and the church. But walk up the hill and you see just what is there: a run of pylons right across the view and also disappearing into the distance, as you can see from the "view to a threat" photograph. A second line of pylons could loom larger and totally dominate Gainsborough's view from his original vantage point. To defend our countryside from the threat of pylons we have in part to show its true value. This is no easy task. After all, we never actually had to pay for it. And yet this natural beauty belongs to us all and is of immense importance, including to our inner sense of wellbeing and indeed, our economy. Such heritage assets can deliver economic and employment benefits and we already build local economic activity on cultural assets such as this. Stroll into the Henny Swan pub restaurant and an entire wall is covered by a mural reproduction of Wooded Landscape with Herdsman Seated. Thus it is that our landscape, cultural heritage and economy are all linked by this view.

National Grid's environmental consultants, TEP, are currently conducting surveys of the wildlife, cultural heritage and landscape views all along their consultation area. We all owe Barry Wall an enormous debt of gratitude for bringing this unknown natural masterpiece to our attention. Without his invaluable work this wonderful asset might never have been added into National Grid's surveys and, as a result, could have been earmarked for more pylon blighting. Barry brought his discovery to Stour Valley Underground and we have set it before the nation by having it highlighted in the national, regional and local press. National Grid must surely know: this view is not the place for more of their paraphernalia. I heartily recommend that you walk the footpath and take in this view for yourself. Just as you turn the corner to walk along the field boundary, you will pass a stone seat that is dedicated to a local lady's memory. It is further inscribed with the words "her little piece of heaven". Walk there and it will be yours also.

David Holland-Chair of Stour Valley Underground

(This article has been reproduced from the Colne, Stour Countryside Association 2012 Newsletter)

Editors Note:

The next edition will be published early July 2012. Can I please have all your pictures & articles, by the 15th June. Call 378155 or mike@mcrome.fsnet.co.uk

Mike Crome