



Pettistree People

Issue 102

March 2024

Pettistree Parish Council Newsletter

What's On

1 March - opening of Harvey & Co bakery and coffee shop at Vida Haus

15 and 16 March - Love Co market with vintage mid-century furniture, ceramics, preloved clothing and silver jewellery at Vida Haus

21 March 2024 - Parish Council meeting 7pm Church Room

23 March - Easter egg hunt in churchyard

20 April – Bellringing Open Morning

25 April – Annual Parish Meeting in the Village Hall at 7pm

Bell ringing practice: Wednesdays 7pm at the church

Coffee mornings: First Wednesday in month at the village hall

Table tennis: third Wednesday of the month at the village hall

Pettistree People is published in the first week of: March, June, September and December

It's Spring!



This little cutie was a rare visitor to the village but his hosts were more keen that he was elsewhere – page 9



What was Jim Jarvie doing with a Tina Turner lookalike? Showbiz news on page 10

Solar Sights

Sue Jones

Chair Pettistree Parish Council

The most exciting items on a parish council agenda are the planning applications.

We agreed, in February 2022, that a proposal for a solar park on Park Farm's land in Loudham did not warrant an objection: *"Pettistree Parish Councillors have considered the application and do not find it necessary to make any adverse comment. No adverse comments have been made to us by Pettistree residents"*. There was, after all, a solar park already well established on other land in Loudham.

But two years on, objections by nearby residents and parish councils in Ufford and Wickham Market, have toughened. Pettistree Parish Council was asked to reconsider its 'no objection' position and heard from objectors at our January meeting. Four councillors then made a site visit. As the deadline for comments is 11 March we will hold an extraordinary meeting on 8 March to consider revised plans submitted by the developer, BSR.

Their stated aim in putting forward a new plan is to take on board some of the matters raised by those who oppose the park. A key change being the removal of a water meadow which, not surprisingly, is prone to flooding and dramatically so during recent rains.

There are now 162 documents to consider on the ESC planning site including 9 arboriculture reports. Objections relate to: the loss of farmland for food production; changing the land from agricultural to industrial use; significant adverse impact on the River Deben valley landscape; and the visual impact more generally of photovoltaic panels across an undulating landscape and a public right of way. FP7 cuts through the site. The plans include hedgerow screening for the footpath.

Not unusually in politics, local and national, decisions have to strike a balance

between achieving a general public good and the impact on individuals. Is it a parish council's job to support a national need or to protect community assets such as landscape? Industrialising farmland is something we are encountering more and more, but farming itself has involved development of land, though far more aesthetically pleasing.

Parish council meetings are open to the public so if you have a view you would like to share with us, please participate. We will also be discussing the application for more self-storage units on The Nursery site on Main Road.

Back to more mundane matters. In January we approved the 2024/5 council budget and the precept (the amount requested from council taxpayers) we will need for the year. ESC will be asked for £4,740 which would result in a charge of £55.53 for a Band D property and a higher or lower rate depending on each council tax band. It is an increase on last year – all be it a small one in actual money – but has been necessary because we are trying to make up for past years when the precept was largely unchanged. The PC's greatest costs are for employing our officers and yearly increases in salaries. We have also had to put 25% (the minimum) of our precept into a General Reserve fund.

As the parish council cannot pay for clearing ditches on privately-owned land, and SCC Highways is reluctant to clear mud from the roads, it was agreed that a schedule of work be drawn up and a request made for Community Payback help. If you don't ask you don't get...

Support was received from our county councillor Alexander Nicoll for placing a sign at the entrance to Java Lodge Road from Main Road stating 'Unsuitable for HGVs'. Hopefully this will stop large sat nav truckers from using the winding single track.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 25 April at 7pm in the Village Hall. If you have an issue you would like to raise, please let us know or just turn up on the night.

New arrivals

Garden House

It took a while, but the Hesseys are home. Millie and James with Lexi 7 and Max 5 moved into the Garden House on The Street in mid-February. But they first saw the house in October 2022 and exchanged contracts six months ago.

Before that they were living with James' parents in London where he is director of a commercial property firm. Millie grew up in Aldeburgh. "Lots of our friends were from Suffolk and were moving back here. We wanted the children to enjoy a Suffolk childhood," says Millie. The children will be heading for Woodbridge School.

London will still be the centre of their professional lives: Millie works in sponsorship and marketing for Formula 1.

But she loves gardening and is looking forward to cycling, walking and getting involved in village life. Do they have plans for Garden House? Yes, a lick of paint and sorting out the drainage outside their drive, says James.

There is another member of the family getting used to the space in their new home: Tiggy the cat.



Palegate Cottage

Jessy and Charlie Warburg were new arrivals in Loudham when another new arrival appeared. Arabella joined sister Cleo and parents at their new home, Palegate Cottage.

The couple were living in London when the decision was made to move to Suffolk. Both have links with Aldeburgh but the cottage in Loudham was for sale at exactly the right time. Charlie's family own land in the village and their cottage was the original farmhouse on what had been the dairy farm.

"We said to the owners, Therese and Paul Bailey, if you ever want to sell, please let us know," says Charlie. "They decided to move at just the right time for us."

A large part of leaving London was to ensure their three-years old daughter, Cleo, would have better care. A still to be diagnosed illness has compromised her growth and ability to feed. But Cleo has her own WhatsApp fan club with more than a hundred followers. Jessy and Charlie say they have had a brilliant welcome from neighbours and friends – Alice and Tom Over - and excellent care for Cleo.

The family is busy: Charlie runs a London-based construction company and plays badminton with the Thorpeness club – now meeting in Wickham Market - Jessy is training to be a counsellor and will qualify next Summer. They do have a dog: Mildred the cocker spaniel who wasn't at all keen to be photographed.

How did the cottage get its name? Most likely a reference to the milk pails of the dairy farm but the spelling of Palegate seems to have morphed.

A brilliant Burns

They came from all over and as far away as Scotland for the village’s annual Burns Night. The village hall was buzzing with 60 guests sitting at tartan tables and anticipating great food.

Pauline and Jim Jarvie and Cath and Dave Caudwell were the management team. Jim claimed to have orange fingers from helping Pauline to prepare the neeps and tatties. The whisky ‘gravy’ disappeared fast but not necessarily onto the food.

In tradition, Jim played his bagpipes to pipe in the haggis carried by Cath. Jim’s brother, Ian, gave a rousing rendition of a Burn’s poem *Address to the Haggis* and the night was away. After tipsy lairds – made by Rita Smith, Chris Spinks and Sue Jones - the raffle was held and contributed greatly to the sum being donated to Riding for the Disabled. Mary and Roger Chilvers (pictured below) won the main prize, a hamper, donated by Clare Signy.

Then the room was cleared for some lively Scottish dancing, much appreciated by the grandsons of Alan and Judy Steventon visiting from Inverness.

All in all they gie it laldy (with gusto).



Alan and Evelyn Whitfield

Burns Night raised £930 for Riding for the Disabled



Unexpected things happen

Jim Jarvie, chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee, received a letter which raised some questions. It was from the solicitor handling the will and bequests of the late Mike Watts of Burways.

Mike, a former parish councillor and editor of PP, had stipulated in his will that the Committee should receive £250,000 to rebuild the Village Hall within 5 years of his death. If declined the money should go to five charities named in his will.

The Committee is now looking into what might be feasible under the terms of the will. The hall, a 1928 building gifted to the parish by the original owners, Pettistree WI, is in the conservation area and has been extensively renovated over the past 10 years. Interestingly, Wickham Market was considering a new village hall until locals objected to a new building and said they wanted an improved one instead.

Sizewell update

Construction Work started on the Sizewell C nuclear site on 15 January. But developer, EDF, is still trawling for investors. Obtaining funding for the £20bn development is the biggest challenge in a sceptical investment market. The Government is helping out: an additional £1.3bn has been given which brings the current funding by taxpayers to £2.5bn. The money will support road and rail infrastructure projects.



Climate and Energy Champions
Groundwork East are running training sessions online for volunteer Climate and Energy Champions. The training will cover reducing personal carbon footprints, energy efficiency, how to carry out a DIY home energy audit and the funding available to make changes for the better. Contact Groundwork East.
[Thursday 7 March 10am-3pm](#)
[Thursday 14 March 10am-3pm](#)

The 'blueness' of Pettistree

Sue Jones

Advice on how to live a long life is everywhere. Invariably it shakes down to exercise and diet but can it be affected by where you live?

American author, Dan Buettner* visited six places in the world where centenarians are many and active. He called them the Blue Zones and his purpose was to find out what the long lived were doing. His conclusion was that the places and communities had commonalities. No one set out to reach a 100 it just happened because of their lifestyle:

- they walked and moved all day
- grew their own food
- cooked from scratch and ate just enough
- slept enough
- they had purpose and, usually, a dog
- they socialised a lot.

It made me think of the parish's population now and in the past. Graves in the churchyard suggest something special because so many former residents lived beyond the average age for their time.

So, is it something in the air or the mindset? Do we just like living in our small rural village? One of our 81-year-olds, Kath Hilton, is quite clear about this: "I just refuse to be old". She's not alone given the number of 80plusers walking and exercising daily. May 2022 figures showed that 36.5% of the parish's population were over 65 and 39 individuals were over 70 or, to put it another way, people of the Third Age. That could be why the village has such a lively community spirit.

We are in good company: the number of centenarians in England and Wales has more than doubled over the past 20 years according to the Office for National Statistics. More than one in six were born in 1920.

There is also some news about longevity in dogs. Smaller ones with pointy noses live the longest according to research for the Dogs Trust. They have an average life span of 13.3 years. Not sure what the pointy nose has to do with it, but brachycephalic (flat faced) pooches only manage nine years on average. Even if you can't manage a long life perhaps a good life will do.

**Blue Zones: Secrets for Living Longer*



Congratulations to the most senior of our seniors. Joan Peck had an exceptional birthday in January. No not quite 100 but a lady does not reveal her age.



A friendly pool of wellbeing

An Open House at the Three Tuns wellness centre, Vida Haus, introduced visitors to a group of therapists and the centre's range of activities.

Organised by owner, Bilyana Dawson, the event buzzed with ideas and plans for the year ahead. These include a monthly film night to get some lively discussions going. Bilyana says: "We want to show films that are inspiring, make you think and bring new ideas to discuss". Simple food will be available for a small donation.

On 15th and 16th March Vida Haus hosts a Love Co market with vintage mid-century furniture, ceramics, preloved clothing and silver jewellery.

Guest teacher, Lisa Pauley, offers crystals tone sound baths and aromatherapy on dates in March and May.

Regular classes and treatments at Vida Haus have a range of yoga at the core but pilates, jazz dance, meditation and cranial facial reflexology are also on offer.

Two therapists from Wickham Market are also holding weekly sessions at the wellness centre. David Bescoby is a medical herbalist (Thursday clinics) and Rachel Bescoby offering Reiki* sessions every Friday. Bookings can be made for all activities on the Vida Haus website.

Bilyana gives some advice on how to relieve anxiety and stress on page 15

*Reiki is a Japanese technique used for complementary healing, stress reduction and relaxation.

Get your sourdough here!

Harvey & Co are opening an artisanal bakery and coffee shop at Vida Haus from 1 March.

Keeping foliage fit

For those looking for useful exercise the Green Gym may be the answer. The group has been planting trees and hedges around Pettistree and Wickham Market for many years and is always on the lookout for more volunteers.

The Gym has its own WhatsApp group to keep volunteers informed about opportunities to join planting events. Leader, Anne Westover (pictured) is particularly keen to do further work on Pettistree's Java Lodge Spinney. We hope this will include fruit and nut trees to add to the 140 oak, horse chestnut, field maple, dogwood and hawthorn planted last year.

If anyone would like to donate saplings please let us know. If you would like to join the group please check out calls for volunteers on the village WhatsApp.



Trees have been planted on the boundaries of the Wickham Gate development.



Gabriel's Wood

Liisa Beagley

In 2023 we looked into starting a tree planting project in the field adjacent to Pettistree Grange. We felt we wanted to do something environmentally positive providing a habitat for wildlife (and Nick's bees) as it seems more and more building is happening around the area. Not only that, as the granddaughter of forest farmers in Finland I love trees and always want more to look at!

We contacted the Woodland Trust and applied to their *MOREwoods* scheme to plant a hectare of trees as a joint venture. They visited the site and drew up a plan for us and just before Christmas 1400 bare root saplings 40-60cm tall, a mix of native broadleaf tree species - oak, birch, rowan and others - and shrub species such as dog rose, hazel and hawthorn were delivered.

They were very efficiently planted, 2.7m apart and protected with spirals, tubes and stakes, by a team from the West Country in very wet and windy conditions. It is already keeping Nick busy hammering in any wayward stakes whenever the wind blows.

The planting was completed on the 18th December which is the 20th anniversary of losing our dear nephew Gabriel to leukaemia at the age of 5. It seems apt to call it Gabriel's Wood, particularly fitting as he was an avid collector of sticks.

Activities at the Village Hall are in good health. The latest to be added is a second art class led by Amy Drayson



Students' work



Amy Drayson



Art at Pettistree

Hello, my name is Amy and I teach art classes at Pettistree Village Hall on Mondays. The first Pettistree class was in 2019 and then of course we were interrupted by the pandemic.

With student help, my teaching moved online and I taught a hybrid course with students participating from Pettistree and my Ipswich Institute classes and then through word of mouth, we were joined by new people too.

As well as giving us structure and purpose at this difficult time, it also gave us an opportunity to try things we couldn't or wouldn't have done in the classroom or hall, like making land art, kinetic sculpture, and creating installations to name a few. The experience changed the approach of those participating, their art became more confident, experimental and determined and it changed my approach to teaching too. Whilst many leisure learning courses struggled to survive the pandemic, I was very fortunate to find I had more students and classes afterwards than before. Now I have two classes at Pettistree.

I rarely teach 'techniques', instead I try to focus on encouraging students to find and gain confidence in their own creative voice which leads to more a meaningful and personal outcome. In class we look at the work of other artists, but we also spend time looking at and discussing each other's work and this is really valuable. I think of all my students as artists, even if that isn't how they see themselves!

My own work comes from a melting pot of memories and imagination, biblical, mythical and fictional stories. Sometimes I'm responding directly to a narrative, at other times I find a story is unfolding and telling itself as I draw. Mainly I'm painting, drawing and printmaking, but making things is also important to me and helps me to think through ideas or make props for paintings. I exhibit my work regularly and my next show is at Breaker's Gallery, North Kensington as part of the Royal Drawing School. When I'm not teaching or painting, I can be found reading or gardening, or possibly procrastinating and daydreaming.

If you are interested in joining the Monday 1-3pm Pettistree Art Class, my email is amydrayson@msn.com and you can see my work on Instagram at [_amydrayson](https://www.instagram.com/_amydrayson) or on my website at www.amydrayson.com.

The adventures of Tricky Mouse

Darren Tansley

Well Cottage is full of holes. The oldest part is 15th century, one of the little group of dwellings at the top of Stump Street; the original King’s Highway. As with most old timber-framed buildings there are many ways for a hungry wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* to get in and Hoover up any food scraps that the human or boxer inhabitants leave lying around.


We keep all our food in sealed containers but that doesn’t deter mice from exploring the kitchen or appearing behind the TV set. Every winter I break out the Longworth traps and relocate these beautiful chestnut brown and white mice into suitably scrubby habitat, well away from human habitation. But this winter for the first time we have been visited by the much rarer, Yellow-necked Mouse *Apodemus flavicollis*.

This was one of the last UK mammal species to be formally identified* as at first glance it looks like a big wood mouse. But the chestnut brown band around the neck and its much larger size sets it apart. Yellow-necks are generally found south of a line joining the Wash to the Bristol Channel with some in Wales too but they are poorly distributed in comparison to wood mice. Being much more reliant on ancient woodland and naturally thick hedges for tree seeds, they have been impacted - along with farmland birds, hedgehogs and other species - by the post-war grubbing out of hundreds of miles of hedgerows and the arrival of the mechanical box-flail.

This year we named one particularly large yellow-neck ‘Tricky Mouse’ after he worked out how to get into the trap tunnel, eat the bait, then reverse out. I would sometimes find all 4 trap doors closed with no sign of anyone inside. We filmed Tricky doing this on many occasions whilst he grew fat on a diet of sunflower seeds leaving me wondering whether I would have to resort to setting a water vole trap! But this morning, after a month of free dinners, he finally made a mistake. The door went down and we caught him. And what a beautiful animal! Pure white belly, chestnut brown on top, large black eyes and a tail longer than his entire body; fantastic for balancing whilst climbing around in bramble and tree canopy. So, with that we can finally announce that Tricky Mouse has left the building... until next year.

*Pipistrelle bats were reclassified into two distinct species the ‘soprano’ and ‘common’ pipistrelles in the late 20th century.

WOOD MOUSE



1	8	10	5
SIZE	AGILITY	UK RANGE	DEFENCE


TOP TRUMPS FILE

The nocturnal wood mouse can live in a wide range of habitats from grassland to woodland and even sand dune systems. It feeds on a wide variety of seeds, fruits and berries but will also eat insects, snails and other invertebrates.

Did you know?

The wood mouse is also known as the long-tailed field mouse and is the third most common UK mammal.

YELLOW-NECKED MOUSE



2	8	2	6
SIZE	AGILITY	UK RANGE	DEFENCE

TOP TRUMPS FILE

Yellow-necks require good quality ancient woodland and species rich, thick natural hedges. They feed on tree seeds, nuts and berries, using their long tails for balance whilst climbing through undergrowth. They store piles of food in tree hollows.

Did you know?

Despite the chestnut collar and weighing 50% more than a wood mouse it was not a known species until 1894.

Hedgehogs online - Wednesday 20 March

This is a free talk online about hedgehogs, hosted by Dedham Vale National Landscape, the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape, and Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The one-hour event will cover everything you need to know about hedgehogs, plus tips and advice on how to support them and how to make your garden or green space more hedgehog-friendly.

Applications are being invited for The **Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Funder** which is available to charities, community interest companies, parish councils, voluntary groups and other not-for-profit organisations, whose projects contribute to Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan.

CARRYING ON CRUISING

And standing in for Angela Rippon

Jim Jarvie

It all started when I was asked by Jenny Barnes to give a talk to Ufford WI about my career as a crime investigator for the Border Force. Once over the challenge of Powerpoint I was able to present some of the criminal cases I was involved in (from the law enforcement side obviously!)

A couple of weeks later I was approached to give a talk to the Ufford Probus Business Group. There it was suggested I contact Carnival (P&O and Cunard) about guest speaking. Pauline and I were cruise novices, but I was offered an audition. Two weeks later we were offered a cruise on Oriana, a P&O liner, from Southampton to Venice.

When we boarded we were taken to a very small, twin-bedded, inside cabin in the crew section. We then had to participate in the crew watertight door demonstration which added to our anxiety and disappointment. Our cabin was not ideal (understatement!) but we enjoyed other aspects of the cruise and our second was transatlantic from Southampton to New York on the Queen Mary II.

Before my first talk I'd had a restless night but when I got on the stage my nerves disappeared. A guest informed me we'd arrested his cousin. This had solved a puzzle: the cousin drove around Cardiff in a Rolls Royce and the family didn't know where he got his money. After my talk I told him "now you know".

We've been offered voyages to several locations on our bucket list: the Med and Canaries several times, the Caribbean, South America (The Amazon and Rio), the Arctic Circle, the Baltics, and Russia. We always wanted to transit the Panama Canal which we have now completed east to west and west to east. Our around the UK cruises have just heightened our sense of what a beautiful country we live in.

Friends in Pettistree have been 'press ganged' to join on our cruises and we really enjoyed being on the high seas with Maggie and Jeff Hallett, Chris Cook and Chris Spinks and Steve and Jill Wassell.



We have also been lucky to have met some interesting celebrity speakers. I have been 'on the bill' with journalists Kate Adie and Jane Corben, dancer Wayne Sleep, Mr. Motivator, musician Jools Holland and 'The Dark Destroyer' Shaun Wallis from The Chase. On our last cruise in the Caribbean we met Nick Hower (pictured) from the Apprentice and Countdown. He was a real character and was travelling with his wife. They were both very friendly and down to earth.

In September 2022 we were cruising on the Queen Elizabeth II when our Queen passed away. It was very poignant to be onboard a ship named after her. Angela Rippon was onboard as the celebrity speaker. She had to return to the UK immediately to be part of the TV coverage. I was asked if I could give an extra talk in her place, which I did. Not many people can claim they stood in for Angela Rippon. Funny enough the situation did not arise during Strictly Come Dancing!

A new Spring market will be held at Stonham Barns Park for Easter on Saturday 30 and Sunday 31

Pettistree Tower Open Morning

Saturday 20th April, 10-12

Our bells

Read, watch, have a go

"Coffee & Cake" please come.

For more information contact

Mary Garner 07791 585127

On the Farm

A dispatch from Vancouver Airport

James Hayward

“You can never have enough thermal underwear”

I’d had enough of rain, so I joined two friends in Revelstoke, British Columbia for a few weeks skiing in a bone-chilling -38C.

This is the first holiday I’ve had of more than a week for 7 years of working for Darktrace and running the farm, so I plan to take full advantage.

Whilst I’m away I’m hoping the mini dry spell continues and we can lift our sugar beet and - with a little luck – turn the land around to drill winter wheat and beans immediately after.

Every Suffolk farmer has a very busy Spring ahead. Land designated for winter crops now must be made ready and a huge amount of drilling needs to take place, followed by a carefully constructed spray programme. If we don’t get rain in April, May and June, there will be a lot of crops out there lacking moisture.

While it’s always very easy to moan about farming in the UK, we do seem to be slightly ahead of our European cousins in this period of ‘farming transition’. This is a general Western philosophical change where farmers are no longer being subsidised to grow plentiful food but instead, are being offered grants to farm more sustainably. Losing our Single Farm Payment (area-based subsidy) is undoubtedly painful but it is forcing every farming business to think outside the box and we do at least seem to have an ever-more viable alternative: the SFI. DEFRA have made rapid progress with their Sustainable Farming Incentive programme and many UK farmers – including us – have signed up. This programme offers payments to farmers to grow cover and catch crops. These are non-cash crops designed to capture nutrients and add organic matter to soils in-between our wheat, potatoes, onions etc. They use minimal tillage systems to plant more, look after our hedgerows better and use fewer herbicides and pesticides.

Many UK farmers have already been operating with these techniques and, if executed well, the SFI could have a great impact by enabling UK farmers to produce at least as much food as they do today, but in a far ‘greener’ system. Despite all of this, there is still



work needed to ensure fair prices are paid to farmers for the food they produce; otherwise, the far easier option will be to take fields out of production in favour of environmental schemes. That could lead to us becoming a net importer of key foods which we could easily produce ourselves such as wheat, barley, sugar and veg to name a few. It’s noticeable going abroad anywhere in the world that food in England is extremely cheap compared to wages and this is not sustainable.

Alongside implementing generally greener practices, R Hayward & Son has recently been awarded a grant by the Suffolk Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme which will go towards installing solar panels on the south-facing roofs of our new grain stores in Pettistree. The panels will generate up to 42.5kW/hr and will supply electricity to the farmyard for lighting, grain drying equipment, hopper & grain dressing equipment as well as to the tenants of our converted redundant farm buildings. This will ensure that 100% of the electricity we use is produced on the farm.

One place where innovation and sustainability were on display in abundance was the Oxford Farming Conference. I was lucky enough to be invited at the beginning of January by the Farming Community Network (FCN), a mental health charity I volunteer for, which is focused predominantly on the agricultural sector. The theme this year was diversity and it was amazing and inspiring to see and hear from so many people of all ages, genders, ethnicities and backgrounds who had made a success of agriculture. I left the conference confident in the future of the sector as long as we continue to innovate.

I was also constantly reminded of the importance of diversity in all businesses. Thinking outside the box is far easier if you employ and engage with people who’s ‘box’ is utterly different from your own, thanks to their upbringing and unique situation.

As representatives of the FCN, I was also fortunate to have a forum with Princess Anne prior to her keynote speech. As always, HRH was extremely grounded and easy to talk to. We discussed the need for longer-term thinking (beyond whatever Boris Johnson is having for lunch next Tuesday, or whatever hair-brained scheme Elon Musk is dreaming up next), which all governments should be tasked with furthering. As a start: energy, food and water security and healthcare provision over the next 100+ years. Obviously, I also put in a good word for Pettistree!

Good News

When the Parish Council was considering what to do with the CIL money from the Wickham Gate development, we were in favour of helping to renovate the Church Room, also known as the Parish Room, in Walnuts Lane. But we then discovered that parish council cannot donate money to the church according to the 1894 Local Government Act. This was being challenged by church authorities.

Happily, new legislation has clarified that parish councils can use their discretionary power to fund repairs to church property. S. 82 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 came into effect on 26th December 2023 and removed the restriction. But (there's always a 'but') expenditure can still only be incurred when:

- a council has the general power of competence; or
- a specific statutory power exists; or
- **where the council decides the expenditure will benefit the area/inhabitants**, using s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Parochial Church Council is investigating with a local builder what needs to be done and possible costs. The PCC is said to be very keen to have the room used for regular heritage exhibitions and meetings.

A giant at Loudham

In 1810 a giant oak was felled in Loudham Park the body of which was drawn by 16 horses to Manthorp and Sons' timber wharf in Woodbridge.

History archive now online

Cath Caudwell, Pettistree Heritage Trust

Pettistree has a significant amount of historical and archive material housed at the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich ('The Hold'). These records were the result of the hard work and dedication of Joan Peck of The Den in researching the history of the village houses and land. The archive was expanded with the help of the Pettistree Heritage Trust.

Ray Whitehand volunteers at the Suffolk Record Office and has been organising and cataloguing our records into their system and we are now very pleased to report that the Joan Peck Collection can be researched online so that you can see what is available and arrange an appointment to go into the Record Office to view them. The link to the general collections at the Record Office is <https://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk/collections/>

The link to the Joan Peck Collection directly is https://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk/collections/getrecord/GB173_HD3083

DIY MP

Therese Coffey MP has started reporting potholes to Suffolk County Highways herself which suggests a hint of frustration. Some of the parish's potholes have been reported to Suffolk Highways but there is an 8-weeks wait time for the work to be done - when they agree to do it. Reporting is easy. Just find the Suffolk County Council website and reporting tool. It will tell you which potholes have been reported already. Uploading a photo helps.

SCC has employed a new contractor for road maintenance and the contract has been changed so that more holes near deep ones should be fixed too. Strangely this is progress as up to now Highways would only fix those reported even when there were obviously more candidates for repair nearby.

Our MP reports that SCC is conducting inquiries into flooding after the highest ever incidents in one year. One factor has been silt coming off fields.

She is also running a petition to stop the closure of bank branches in Suffolk and is applying for a banking hub.

Muddy Menace

Incessant rain has brought problems everywhere. No-one has had property flooded in Pettistree and Loudham – as far as we know – but the roads are looking distinctly ropey because of mud washed from verges.

This problem seems to be getting worse because of the size of vehicles using the lanes of our country village. The mud on the road in Rogues Lane has been reported twice to Suffolk County Highways without action. The authority says it doesn't have responsibility for clearing up if the mud is caused by vehicle operators. It referred us to ESC for road cleansing.

The photo of Rogues Lane shows what happened to the verge during hedge work. Elsewhere, vehicles have flattened verges causing drainage grips to collapse and block water passage into ditches.

Mud on roads can cause accidents so it is not just a visual nuisance and a hazard for walkers. We do have laws that should help rid us of the nuisance. Section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 makes it an offence to deposit mud and other materials on the highway that would interrupt other users of the highway.

Section 161 of the Act states: "If a person, without lawful authority or excuse, deposits anything whatsoever on the highway in consequence of which a user of the highway is injured or endangered, that person is guilty of an offence."

The act also gives the highways authority the power to recover any expenses incurred from having to clean an obstruction on the highway. It pays to have an agreement with contractors about who is responsible for mud left on the road and ensure suitable public liability insurance is in place.

Have a suggestion for village improvements: Please let the Parish Council know: clerk@pettistreeparishcouncil.gov.uk



Clear the footpaths!



Thousands of public footpaths are being fenced off or blocked by overgrowth, according to a survey by the BBC. Walkers are prevented from accessing public rights of way in nearly 32,000 places across England and Wales and the problem is growing.

Councils have a statutory right to ensure access to footpaths, bridleways and byways but cite a lack of funding for their inability to keep footpaths clear or to maintain features such as kissing gates or stiles.

In Pettistree & Loudham we are lucky to have warden, Judy Steventon, checking on the state of our footpaths and reporting any in need of help. The rains have made one or two impassable but in general they are in good shape.

If anyone would like to describe a favourite walk please let PP know. Otherwise, the intention is to describe and put a number to each of the pathways so that new residents and visitors will become familiar with them. The one on the left – **FP27** - is the start of the original pathway to Presmere Pond from The Street. It crosses the old ditch network near Strawtop and runs along the backside of Green Farm and the houses in Presmere Road, skirting a Hayward's field until it reaches Java Lodge Road junction and Presmere Pond. A short and easy walk with a mostly farmland view. **FP20** from Village Hall to Thong Hall Rd makes a sometimes muddy route skirting farmland but giving a lovely panoramic view of the border houses of WM and All Saints Church. Turn left on Thong Hall Rd towards the village green. Turn right and the choice is to continue the path or walk to WM.

Church News

Maggie Hallett

Record attendance The Christmas services seem to be a long time ago but were all very enjoyable. There were over 80 at the Christingle service which is a new record attendance, and Jenny Catchpole was understandably quite concerned to have more than 28 preschool youngsters holding lit candles for a short time. The Carol service on Christmas Eve was also well attended and the congregation very much appreciated the music, both from the Benefice choir and the Handbell ringers.

Churchyard barriers Surveying work was carried out on the chancel wall buttresses and some investigations into the roof drainage were completed towards the end of the year. Unfortunately, the stone cross on the gable end of the chancel roof was found to be unstable. It was not possible to repair this at that time due its height, so we have been advised to cordon off the area of churchyard immediately under that section. The repair will probably mean lifting off the cross and inserting a new iron post before reinstating the original cross. This is likely to be quite expensive, but we have not yet had a definite quote for the work. The PCC hopes to have details of the cost and the timescale in the next few months. In the meantime, please take care when walking past the east end of the church.

Church redecoration The PCC is very relieved that we have finally had the ruling from the Chancellor of the Diocese about the way forward for the problem of the paintwork in the nave. He has ruled that the correct way to proceed is to remove all the plaster on the walls of the nave, to replaster and then once that is dry, to apply several coats of limewash to re-cover the walls. This work will be funded by the previous architects' insurer as he was found to be liable for the initial paint failure. The PCC will now employ a new architect to enable this work to be done and will keep the village informed. We know that it may be several months before any details will be available of when this is likely to start and how services will be relocated.

Car parking Please continue to keep the church car park free for church and churchyard visitors, particularly at service times. People visiting the village for The Greyhound or for a walk can park at the village hall.

Diary dates

March 10th. Mothering Sunday, Family Holy Communion at 9.30 am

March 23rd. Easter Day Family Communion at 9.30 followed by an Easter egg hunt in the churchyard



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
Will be held on

25 April
7pm Village Hall

Everyone welcome

Pettistree Tower Open Morning
Saturday 20th April, 10-12
Our bells

Read, watch, have a go
"Coffee & Cake" please come.

For more information contact
Mary Garner 07791 585127

Bellringing News

Mary Garner

Our 38th AGM was held at the end of November where we elected officers and planned forthcoming events, including Christmas and New Year Ringing and the Annual Dinner. The Birthday Peal was rung on December 9th, taking just over two and a half hours. Each week a shorter piece (quarter peal) has been rung and before the Carols in the Churchyard on December 17th and before the Carol Service on Christmas Eve.

Twenty five of us gathered at The Lion, Little Glemham for our Annual Dinner (pictured below). We had a comfortable space to ourselves with sensible lighting and plenty room to move around between the tables. There was plenty of chatter amongst the congenial company and no need to compete with canned music. The food was great, served quickly and piping hot. Our speeches were minimal highlighting thanks to Kate for organising and Avril, the landlady, for the lovely meal. Our annual award, Mary's Plate went to Elaine Townsend. Whilst not listed as a Pettistree ringer, she is a regular at our weekly practices, and has stepped in many times at short notice so that we can ring planned quarter peals. Altogether it was an excellent evening.

Our practices have been quite well supported during the winter months despite the vagaries of the weather, but we are looking forward to lighter evenings and more warmth.

Our next village event, an Open Day, is planned for the morning of Saturday April 20th, from 10am. It will include information on the history of our bells (our oldest are c1410) and ringing, plus the opportunity to watch a bell turning up aloft, a chance to have a go and, of course, "Coffee & Cake". Please do come.

For further information please contact Mary Garner, 07791 585127, marysgarner@tiscali.co.uk

Stressed? Try this

Bilyana Dawson

Activating your vagus nerve will activate the parasympathetic nervous system to lower anxiety, stress and pain overall.

Sit in an upright position with your spine erect and in a neutral position, feet firmly on the floor (as an alternative to sitting on the ground with your legs crossed or extended).

Keep your chin parallel to the floor with your gaze straight ahead. Turn your head to the right, keeping your chin parallel to the floor. Deep your chin diagonally down towards the right armpit - swallow and yawn. Turn your head slowly through the centre and then to the left, still being aware of the positioning. Deep your chin diagonally down towards the left armpit - swallow and yawn. Slowly come back to the centre.

Using your fingers find the occipital bone at the back of your head (the bulged bone at the bottom of the skull just behind your ears) and slowly move the skin to the right and to the left. You should take at least 5-10 deep breaths after performing the sequence. You could start your day with it and end it in that way. Use very slow and conscious movements coordinated with your breath.



WhatsApp Pettistree

The WhatsApp Group now has **38** participants and is open to many more residents of Pettistree and Loudham.

The messaging service is particularly useful when help is needed: either to alert us to the floods or recommendations for tradespeople.

If you would like to join please send a WhatsApp message to Sue Jones on 07725197654

About Pettistree People

The Parish Council funds this newsletter but it is **Your** record of news and events. Do contact me with ideas for articles and pictures. Or anything you think the Parish Council or the editor should know.

Editor - Sue Jones, Holmleigh
chairman@pettistreesuffolk.org.uk

The taking over scam

It is possible for scammers to take over your computer and mobile phone. There are software packages such as TeamViewer that enable this and they are useful when you have a tech problem someone is helping to solve remotely. But if you get a cold call, particularly about investments, please check out the caller before downloading an App. Those claiming to be a financial firm will appear on the Financial Services Register of the Financial Conduct Authority if they are legitimate. If not, they are most definitely the opposite...

Pettistree Pith

The Art of More: when you have enough power, abuse it.

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