



# Pettistree People

Issue 106

March 2025

Pettistree Parish Council Newsletter

## Dog walkers' delight

We know Pettistree residents love their dogs. Now there are even more pooches of every shape and size to be seen in the village. This is why... page 3



The Church has been very kind...see page 7

## Whisky and Forensics

Jim Jarvie had his Burns' Night well organised. What he didn't expect were visitors who were not on the guest list: a very unwelcome opportunist and a Suffolk Police forensics team. See page 11

## What's On

Easter Egg Hunt: 20 April

Pettistree Parish Council meeting: 7pm  
Thursday, 13 March at the Village Hall.

Annual Parish Meeting: 7pm Thursday 24 April  
at the Village Hall

Table tennis: 5.30pm on third Wednesday in  
the month at the Village Hall

Coffee morning: 10.30am first Wednesday in  
the month at the Village Hall

Bell ringing practice: 7pm, Wednesdays at the  
Church

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



Leaving Home? Where are these two off to?  
See page 8

## NIMBY or NIOVT?

*Sue Jones*

**Chair, Pettistree Parish Council**

*Pettistree People* is not noted for its political commentary, but occasionally local issues become part of a bigger picture. And sometimes the bigger picture intrudes into village life.

I've added local and central government policies initiatives to this issue and Councillor James Hayward has more to say about Government plans for farmers on page 10. I'm picking up what I'll call the NIMBY brush off. You know how it goes: families who have invested in land and homes in a village or town suddenly find they have a business park, pylons or very large housing estate on their doorstep. Anyone who objects to this is a NIMBY according to the Government or, in their understanding, someone who says: Not in My Backyard because I'm a selfish, backward-looking yokel.

*The Times* of 23 January carried an interview with the Prime Minister in which he is quoted as saying he would put: "*the country's future prosperity ahead of the whims of nimbys who have been holding us back for too long*". Those 'whims', in my experience, are often about doing the job of town planners: ensuring adequate infrastructure for new estates and development, and mitigating industrialisation of the countryside.

Instead, the PM has promised to curb legal challenges to big building projects and restrict the rights of campaigners and residents to bring judicial reviews against developments. These are pretty much the only way the public can challenge government decisions. Developers, if refused planning permission, have recourse to the Planning Appeals Tribunal and ultimately the Secretary of State.

Of course, the infamous £100million 'bat tunnel' of the HS2 rail project is being used as an example of nonsensical protection of wildlife. My question is: how on earth can a tunnel cost that much?

At the very least we should update the soubriquet to NIOVT or Not In Our Village. Thanks, just to make the point that we don't tend to sit in our backyards peeling sprouts.

And on to parish council business.

Sad for us, happy for Chris. Councillor Chris Cook was married before Christmas but retired from the parish council in January. I'm very grateful to Chris for his wise counsel during my time as council chair. He was asked several times to stand for chair or vice-chair but had the great good sense to say 'no'. In the 10 years he has volunteered his time and experience for the benefit of the village, he would have seen many changes in membership. Thank you, Chris for being an exceptional member of the team. We'll miss you!

In January we had to consider the precept for the 25/26 year. This is the council's budget and pays for staff salaries - for our Clerk and our Responsible Financial Officer - the print run of *Pettistree People*, subscriptions, our annual audit and general maintenance costs.

The precept forms part of your council tax. This year we have had to raise it again to keep up with salary increases and set aside at least 25% as a general reserve. So, the request to the district council will be £7,740 which will mean a property in Band D will pay £57.54 of its council tax to the parish council. This will amount to a 3.62% increase of the parish element on council tax bills.

Those who follow our exploits (all minutes available on the website) will know that we have a large amount of money in the bank from the Community Infrastructure Levy CIL - yes there are some upticks from new development - but that can't be used for running costs. Ideas on how to spend it are still welcome but no it won't be enough to build a wall around Pettistree.

An exchange of views with ESC's planning department about taking more interest in the lack of infrastructure and the impact on local homeowners, when approving change of use from farm buildings into industrial units, produced this (to the nimby):

*"... [the] opportunity to re-use agricultural buildings for business purposes have expanded even further, under national permitted developments, so in many cases planning permission may not even be required and Council's (sic) have even less control.*

I've become a great believer in referenda.

## Power Off

We had two power cuts in eight days in January but UK Power Networks soon had the lights back on. Alice Over kept us briefed about what was happening but Cllr Mary Chilvers of Stump Street had a particular reason to contact the company.

*Mary Chilvers*

I had a pacemaker fitted at the end of May 2024 and a machine at home monitors it to send information to Ipswich Hospital. If anything goes wrong with the pacemaker I get help straight away.

I rang UK Power Networks on 21 January to say our power had just gone off. The lady I spoke to told me that I was on their Priority Services Register\* which would mean they would get us back on power as soon as possible. They kept in touch all the time power was out.

If anyone needs support in the event of a power cut, you can find links to their Priority Services Register on their website:

[www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut](http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut) or if you have any questions, you can ring **0800 3163105**. The same goes if you have a monitoring machine at home.

\* UK Power Network is the electricity distributor for the SE of England, East of England and London. Properties in the same street are often supplied by different cables so if one is damaged homes can be re-routed to another cable. The company supplies extra support for those with medical disability and of pensionable age. If you are on their Priority Register then you will receive a 24-hour number to call in an emergency plus home visits, hot meals where needed and incident updates.



*Emma Floyd Jayne Roberts Jasmine Hall*

## Where there's a will....

Jayne Roberts is a rescuer of cats and dogs. She owns a cattery in Debenham but the dogs she was rescuing had to be boarded at pound kennels at considerable cost. And then, a supporter willed her charity - Suffolk Animal Rescue - money which enabled her to buy White House kennels in Pettistree.

The charity moved in during the Summer of 2024 and drew up plans for renovation. Jasmine Hall now lives on site and manages the team dedicated to saving dogs who often need medical care.

Jayne said: "We'd been searching for months to find kennels and very lucky to have found them in Pettistree a place I know from my own dog walking.

"The accommodation isn't perfect yet, a priority was to make an exercise/training area, but we will add proper roofs to the kennels and some sound-proofing to reduce noise".

The kennels will house 48 dogs eventually and some cats. There is also a special room for 'oldies' who need an extra bit of comfort. Volunteers help to walk the dogs and an Open Day is planned. **More volunteers would be appreciated.**

Check on Facebook for updates on what is happening at the kennels. The charity has a shop in Felixstowe Road, Ipswich and donations and bequests are always welcome!

### Search for sites

The district council is looking for more sites for its *Nature at Work* project. Groundwork East will be engaging with schools and parish councils to help nature to thrive. If you have, or know of, suitable sites please let your parish council know.

## Bulbs on The Green

*Cllr Olivia Smith*

Last year, the Parish Council was successful in its bid to receive flowering bulbs from East Suffolk Council as part of their *East Suffolk Blooms* scheme.

On a very cold November morning, I popped down to the depot in Ufford to collect the goodies. I was delighted to receive 2 big bags, totalling 700 bulbs: Bees Mix – Chionodoxa, Crocus, Muscari, Ornithogalum, Tulipa, Puschkinia and Narcissus and Butterfly Mix – Camassia, Allium, Ornithogalum and Gladiolus. Now, to get them planted...

When I asked my sister, if she would like to watch me planting the bulbs, I knew that she would, and I knew that she wouldn't just watch. A suitable day presented itself for the task so we set to work. First job - mow the grass to mark out the area for planting – a triangle in the middle of the Green and a small circle around the white road sign.

Second, place the bulbs: this started with carefully placing them, then throwing them about, then spacing all the clumps that had decided to just sit together. Third, poke them in! Sister armed with a proper dibber and me with an ancient iron tent peg thing, we were off, one at each end, bum in the air.



*Cllr Olivia Smith at work*

We expected to meet in the middle. Of course, I was the winner and got more in. Pleased with ourselves, we headed in for a well-earned cuppa. Now just to hope that we get a good show in Spring.

## Looking at land use

The Government is consulting on how land is used in the UK. About 70% of England's land is currently used for farming but Environment Secretary Steve Reed has said about 9% of that (1.6million hectares) will need to be converted to forest and wild habitat by 2050 to meet legal environmental and climate targets. His department believes productivity gains on the remaining farmland will maintain food production at current levels.

A new land-use framework will make it less likely that high-quality farmland will be lost to housebuilding, says Defra. And the best farmland will be less likely to be used for solar sites. Under the plans woodland would cover 16.5% of England's land by 2050, with an extra 500,000 hectares of new or restored "wildlife-

**Your chance to have your say...**

**The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7pm, Thursday, 24 April 2025 at the Village Hall**

**The meeting is open to all residents and is your opportunity to meet parish councillors**

**Want to put something on the Agenda?**

**Please contact our clerk, Andrew Staples [clerk@pettistreeparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@pettistreeparishcouncil.gov.uk)**



### It happened!

Chris Spinks and Chris Cook were married just before Christmas at Ufford Park. Jim Jarvie and his kilt gave away the bride who was radiant in blue velvet. A reception followed for family and a few friends. We wish these two an extremely happy future. X

## A brrrbarbecue for singing

Christmas seems rather a long way away now but 2024 saw a return to our popular *Carols in the Barn*. The barn this time was at The Laurels with thanks to Alun and Zoe Davies for hosting.

A barbecue for Christmas seemed a bit ambitious. Nevertheless, we were hoping for a light sprinkling of snow rather than a drench or a drizzle.

No matter, Jim Jarvie and Tony Franklin did an admirable job of feeding about 70 people.

Carols and music were arranged by our resident musician, Rita Smith of Church Farm.

The evening - and a Christmas Bring and Share lunch at the village hall - raised **£396** for the East Anglian Children's Hospice and Suffolk Prostate Cancer Support Group.



More charity collecting was going on during the Tractor Light Parade. Especially fine this year and attracted a large crowd along the Main Road near the Three Tuns.



## Farewell to a well-loved 'postie'

*Mark Etheridge*

On the 8 November 2024 our community lost one of its more vibrant characters when Chris Etheridge (he was also known to many as Ethel or Lord Etheridge) - my brother - sadly passed away following a year-long battle with cancer.

He was born, in Ipswich, raised in Wickham Market, and seemingly bypassed the requirement to “grow-up” anywhere but eventually settled in Loudham Hall Road, Pettistree.

Even though he wasn't with us for long enough - I believe the highest age he ever claimed to have reached was 28 years old - he packed plenty into his life, taking part in a tandem skydive, abseiling and racing around at track days being some of the more adrenaline filled adventures.

Going to school locally he started the first of many friendship groups that would stay with him throughout his life. It's safe to say that an academic life never really suited him, so much so Chris would often say that his proudest achievement at school was the fact that he obtained a higher grade in French than he managed in English.

After school he moved on to college to study mechanics, and this proved to be a much better fit. Whilst he spent 12 years working as a mechanic, he was always putting his skills to good use with his own cars and motorbikes or helping friends with theirs. He had a love of speed from a very early age. He started learning to ride a horse from age 4, but his time as a mechanic channelled it into motorsport. When he had had enough of getting filthy underneath cars for work, he made the move to Royal Mail. During his time as a postie he was unleashed on many local villages covering most of the rounds on offer over the years at one time or other.

He was a lively character with an excellent sense of humour which he put to good use in a variety of ways whenever the opportunity arose. What else can you say about a man living in the UK who owned upwards of 60 pairs of sunglasses, beyond 'optimistic maybe'! Nobody was safe or situation out of bounds for his sense of humour. Plastering someone's front door with post-it notes or plotting to decorate part of someone's house in his beloved Aston Villa's claret and blue whilst they were away on holiday were just a couple of examples. Yet behind all the mischief was also someone who was very kind, caring and always looking out for those around him.

During the 12 months of his illness he remained calm and fought with a brave determination throughout chemotherapy, radiotherapy treatments and surgery, always getting himself to and from appointments. He was adamant right from the start nothing should change. He didn't want fuss or sympathy he just wanted to get on living his life and that is exactly what he did. He certainly didn't let it slow him down, managing four holidays abroad, trips to London and, of course, getting on one of the motorbikes last Summer.

The no fuss policy continued to the end. Chris would often grumble about how people would want to visit him in hospital, mainly because he felt was a waste of their time, but also because it could also interrupt his busy schedule of sport viewing!

Ultimately, I don't think he ever had the slightest idea of the extent of the reach and impact he had on the people in his life. But like it or not he did reach an incredible number of people across a range of common interests, be it sport, work, bikes or the motorbikes last Summer. He is very sorely missed by them all.





## Barney and Bernice - homeless migrants find accommodation in Pettistree

*Martin Corrall*

In January two members of Suffolk Bird Group visited the churchyard and installed a splendid new Barn Owl Box on a Sycamore tree which stands on the border between the churchyard and Dick and Rita Smith's cow pasture.

The church paid for the box and it's installation by Rob and Sally of Barn Owl Support Suffolk. They will continue to monitor the box to check for feathered residents in the future.

Barn Owl numbers in Suffolk are struggling as the availability of suitable barns in the rural environment has diminished. Barn Owl boxes go some way to make up for that loss. The owls mate for life, and have extremely sensitive hearing which allows them to identify their prey of voles, shrews and mice within the rough grassland which is their preferred foraging territory. Dick and Rita's meadow is ideal.

We also installed a smaller overnight bachelor box in a Hornbeam tree on the northern boundary of the church yard as, while the wise and happy couple are raising their offspring, the male is not allowed to stay the night. His job is to hunt and provide food for his growing family.

Barn Owl facts:

- One of the only nocturnal predators that are white. Research suggests that their white feathers reflect moonlight, creating a ghostly appearance that startles prey
- They have near surround vision, swivelling their heads up to 270 degrees, far beyond a human's 170 degrees.
- They make eerie screeches, unlike the gentler hoots of other owls, adding to their reputation as formidable predators.
- Barn owls have soft, fluffy feathers that help them fly silently. These feathers are covered in tiny hair-like structures that trap air and break up turbulence.
- In January this year 12 countries attended a Barn Owl conference held in Athens which had as its theme "Barn Owls: The Nature-Based Solution for Pest Rodent Control in Agriculture" – over to you James.



Dick Smith *left* keeps an eye on installation





**Tom and Alice Over are moving out of Pettistree and into Loudham. Alice reflects on her time in the village**

## Saying Goodbye to Home Farm

*Alice Over*

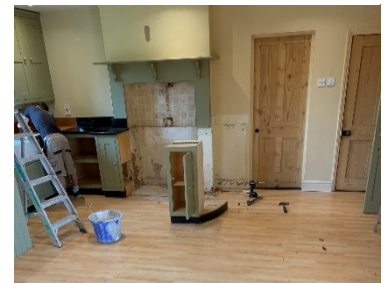
Home Farm isn't just a house to us it's a place where we've created memories, watched our children grow, and witnessed the beauty of each changing season. As we reflect on our time here, we are filled with enormous gratitude for the experiences, the laughter, and the love this place has given us.

Tom and I stumbled upon Home Farm in June 2018. It was the same week we were getting married at Pettistree Church and, having

grown up in Loudham, we knew how rare it is for Pettistree houses to come on to the market. We had to do everything we could to buy it! The moment we stepped foot into the house, we were in love: the charm of the Victorian high ceilings, the endless potential of the garden, and the peaceful, picturesque setting. Even though the house and grounds needed a lot of TLC, we knew we could breathe new life into it and turn her into a happy home. We moved in the week of Christmas 2018, which we wouldn't recommend as everything and everyone goes into festive hibernation including oil deliveries, brrr!

Once we were settled in, the work began. Restoring Home Farm was a labour of love, one that we undertook with excitement and determination and with a hint of naivety. We started by uncovering the original floor tiles in the hallway and the original wooden floors in the dining room. They were worn in places but held such character and stories from the past. We have been fortunate to have wonderful neighbours Brad and Olivia of The Woodlands who have been instrumental in helping us with DIY and plumbing projects and keeping the garden tamed. Thank you, Brad and Olivia you have been great neighbours, and we are so grateful for all your help. Brad your famous tractor shelves in the playroom are going to be sorely missed by Angus!

We also want to thank Pat and Louis Deliss at Home Farm Barn our immediate and wonderful neighbours. We officially won the neighbour lottery living next door to Pat, Louis and little Tilly. From the very beginning, they welcomed us so warmly with lots of coffee and conversation and we have adored the



beautiful bunches of homegrown sweet peas from Pat's garden and the bounty of homegrown vegetables from Louis's vegetable patch especially the marrows and runner beans! We will really miss looking out of the window and seeing Louis on his blue tractor and Pat going for a walk with Tilly. Pat and Louis, thank you so very much for your kindness and warmth, we will really miss living next door to you both. P.S Angus still talks about the helicopter landing in the paddock!

Angus arrived in 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 lockdowns. The first year of his life was spent tucked up at Home Farm, and while the world outside was uncertain, Home Farm became our little sanctuary. As soon as restrictions lifted, Angus, our loyal yellow Labrador Mango, and I began to explore the footpaths that surround us. We have always had a favourite walk, which we named the "wild garlic route". This is a walk along the footpath at the bottom of Grove Farm and back around to the other side of the village. Note though, the hill on Byng Lane on the way home is a real leg killer. Not long after, we welcomed Toto, our gentle giant fox-red Labrador, into our family and I'm sure many of you





## Pettistree People March 2025



heard his joyful “woof!” as he greets you at the paddock gate. Matilda (Tildy), our youngest, surprised us with her rather eager arrival in March 2022. Born at Home Farm, she entered the world very unexpectedly but healthy and happy, and her unplanned arrival at Home Farm felt so special to us all.

Angus and Tildy have adored growing up at Home Farm a place where they’ve created memories that will stay with them forever. We’ve watched with joy as they both took their very first steps in this special home and the sound of their first giggles filling the house with pure happiness.



They have loved grabbing their wellies and spending hours in the paddock picking blackberries and creating mud pies with a cocktail of garden produce while whizzing around on their little gator with Mango often hitching a ride too. They have always been outside whatever the season. Springtime in particular has always been a favourite of theirs with the ducks returning each year to Pat and Louis’s pond which became an annual event in the Over household. Angus and Matilda have loved feeding them, even sneaking them into the house with slices of bread when we haven’t been looking only to hear the strange sound of webbed feet on the kitchen floor. The moments spent watching the two Mummy ducks proudly showing off their ducklings to us and then demanding their breakfast have all been so precious. Tildy has loved being woken up by the springtime morning chatter of ducks outside her window and it will forever be a cherished memory for her, even if it was

sometimes a little noisy! We have loved hearing the brilliant church bells ring every week and a sound which we will miss very much in Loudham. We were particularly moved listening, while enjoying a G&T in the garden, to the special peal in memory of my darling father who passed away in August 2023, and thank each and every bell ringer for their kindness.

As the time came to put Home Farm on the market, it was important to us that it would go to a family who would love it as much as we have. After much thought and consideration, we are thrilled that Sam and Meg, along with their children, will be moving in at the end of February. They’re the perfect family to carry on the happy family home legacy of Home Farm, and we feel confident that they will cherish it and make their own memories here.

Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who has been a part of our journey at Home Farm. Your kindness, support, and friendship have meant the world to us. We will miss walking through the village with our little crew and chatting with neighbours, that we meet on our way which makes this place so wonderful. While we’re saying goodbye to Home Farm, the memories we’ve made here will stay with us always.

There’s a huge sense of excitement and nostalgia as we prepare to move to Loudham, the place where my story began. I feel such excited gratitude returning to the home that I grew up in and we cannot wait to make wonderful new memories with our own family there. Angus and Matilda are thrilled that they have a slightly bigger gator track now!

**Thank you Pettistree we’ll always treasure the time we’ve spent here and look forward to continuing our friendship, just a little further down the road!**



# On the Farm

*James Hayward* – Bristol - February 2025

## Pettistree First

A lot has changed since my last article. President Trump appears set on causing global uproar, the Labour government has a strategy of 'tax everyone' and we're all left wondering what next? At the same time, nothing has changed.

The introduction of inheritance tax on agricultural land continues despite our tractor rallies. Prior to the election Mr Starmer was adamant that "farmers would be left alone...". I'm not saying that landowners should not pay IHT. But there are reasons why this is short-sighted. Land prices have soared in the past 40 years as developers have built in rural areas. High earners have taken advantage of the lack of IHT on inherited farmland and bought it to pass onto the next generation tax free. Farmers typically do not sit in either camp. Even a small farm is worth far in excess of the £1mn cap imposed by Labour. The next factor is the lack of farm profitability. The price of wheat is the same as it was in the 1980's – adjusting for inflation that's 4x less, against a headwind of increased wages (2x), fertiliser (1.5x) & spray (1.5x), fuel (1.5x) and machinery (5x) costs. As a result, farms are not nearly profitable enough to cope with 20% taxation upon death.

For those lucky enough to pay for advice, the answer will be to pass land on through a Trust. But anyone who knows a farmer will know one who's family has not always seen eye-to-eye! I know plenty of farmers in the latter stages of their lives for whom this is not an option. Their choices are to pass land on now and hope to outlive the 7-year tax-free-gift clock or sell up.

New entrants to agriculture generally cannot stump up the approximately £5m needed for a viable farm, buildings and machinery. Even if they could, buying a farm is not a particularly prudent investment when they are unlikely to yield more than 4% income (in a good year, 1% on average) at significant risk to their capital. So, we have wealthy hobby farmers buying farms and a dramatic reduction in productivity. There ought, at least, to be a grace period for people to get their affairs in order and not penalise the older generation who could not have seen this coming. And for any taxation to be affordable, farms need to become profitable again. This means food prices need to increase, and profits get back to the producer.

What would Donald Trump do about it? Make Pettistree Great Again! Buy locally, reduce the miles and middle-men our food goes through, look for the Red Tractor label which guarantees your food is of the highest quality. If we all made a conscious decision to buy beef from Cheshire and lamb from Wales and bread made with wheat from Suffolk, we could make a real difference. Not only would this support farmers, make them more profitable and increase tax revenues. It would also create jobs, reduce the airmiles of our food and the carbon footprint.

We're about to enter my favourite time of the year. The days are getting longer, crops will begin to outgrow the cold and constant grazing by pigeons and rabbits and the countryside will turn ever greener and full of life. Amidst this idyllic backdrop, it's important to consider the bigger picture if we want to ensure the longevity of the beautiful countryside we call home.

Thanks for reading. I'm just popping down to the estate agents to sell the farm and buy a stake in Mar-a-Gaza...

*Pettistree Pith: The power of a Springtime Walk is in a sense of gratitude*

## Robert Burns meets Crimewatch

*Jim and Pauline Jarvie*

We hosted a *Burns Night* in the Village Hall on 1 February. The event was not widely advertised as we are limited to numbers. Details were circulated by word of mouth to attendees of our coffee morning and those who came last year. We were forced to have a reserve list but luckily, we were able to fit everyone in that wanted to attend.

The day was going so well. The carrots and swedes peeled, cooking away nicely and the haggis in the oven. Most of the raffle prizes were down in the hall so I was able to relax, with my feet up watching the rugby (Scotland v Italy). At the final whistle I went down to the hall and to my horror there had been an attempted break-in. A side and bottom panel on the kitchen back door had been smashed but thankfully, they had not managed to enter the hall.

Dave Caudwell came down to the hall and we managed to contact Pettistree's 'Mr Fixit', Brad Bye, who was able to repair the door. Cath Caudwell reported the incident to the police and just as I was warming up my bagpipes outside the Scenes of Crime Officer arrived. Some of the door panels had been thrown over the hedge and Dave managed to retrieve them. On initial examination a footprint was identified which potentially could identify a suspect.

Although not the date of Burns Night: the first ever was two weeks after the poet's death and should have been celebrated on 25 Jan. A full house at the hall enjoyed a three-course meal of cock-a-leekie soup, haggis, neeps and tatties followed by



cranachan. There was a plentiful supply of gravy (whisky) to moisten the haggis. I piped it in with a Burn's tune *A Man's A Man* and my brother Ian recited the address. Following the meal and a fair few drinks the tables and chairs were stacked away and the dancing began. Our caller, Cath Caudwell successfully led us through the dances although the consensus was we should have started the dancing before we started drinking!

We had some terrific donations for the raffle including a Scottish themed hamper provided by Clare Signy. In total, with the raffle and tickets we raised **£950** plus £60 I received for one of my talks (UA3 Felixstowe) for Riding for the Disabled (Woodbridge). Our community should be justifiably proud of this effort. My thanks to all those who provided the food, helped on the night and for donating the raffle prizes (no bath salts).



## CHURCH NEWS

*Maggie Hallett*

### New Vicar

The Rev. Charlotte Wallington was to be Instituted, Inducted and Installed as Vicar of the Benefice on Thursday 27 February at All Saints Church. We very much hope that many will have come to welcome her at that service and look forward to getting to know her in the coming months. Her first service in Pettistree is on Sunday, 2 March at 9.30am.

### Church Redecoration

I remember writing the Church report for *Pettistree People* in November 2014 with great enthusiasm as I was able to say that the Church Nave redecoration was complete, and that we were looking forward to decorating the church for the Christmas service. Sadly within a few weeks the first signs of the paint peeling were appearing and since then, as regular readers will know, we have been struggling to get the work redone.

Finally, 11 years on the legal ruling of the Diocesan Chancellor is being carried out. A sympathetic architect has been found and specification agreed, tenders have been received and a contractor appointed for the work of removing the Nave plaster, re-plastering with lime plaster, and then using several coats of limewash to cover the surface. These traditional products allow moisture to escape from the walls which is essential in such an old building.

This work will be covered by the insurers of the original architect so the church will only be responsible for minor specification improvements. At the time of writing, we have a provisional date of early March for the work to start and it will take around five months which ideally should be carried out over the summer months.

### Services

While the church is closed for public use, Sunday morning services will be held in the Village Hall at 9.30am. There will be a notice on the churchyard notice board explaining where other services will be held. The first major service likely to be affected is Mothering Sunday on 30 March when flowers will be distributed to the congregation. Following the Easter Sunday service on 20 April we hope to hold the usual Easter Egg hunt for children, but this may not be practical from the village Hall.

The arrangements for holding the monthly Evensong and mid-week communion services have not yet been finalised but will be added to the notices in due course.

### Parish Room Upgrade

The *Give to Go Green* fund-raising initiative during six weeks in the Autumn was a huge success and was publicised throughout the Diocese. Pettistree raised a total of £23,910, including match-funding and gift aid, to revamp and update its Parish Room, which was built in the churchyard in 1891.

The building is being fully insulated and a ramp installed for disabled access. Churchwarden Martin Corral told the Diocese Net Zero Carbon Officer: *“The idea is for it to become a useful community resource and bring it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The objective, to reduce our carbon footprint and make the parish room a warmer and cheaper to heat, a place for the wider use of the community, was simple to understand and very well supported”*.

Now Pettistree’s success is being used to encourage other Suffolk parishes to apply for match-funding from the central Church of England funds. We appreciate that fundraising will need to continue to cover the costs of upgrading the Parish Room and grants have been applied for.

# watching wildlife with Darren Tansley


## Superb Owls

Sue (Tansley) recently pointed out an amazing trend on social media to mess with the sports fanatics looking for the Super Bowl. The hashtag #superbowl is being used to display thousands of pictures of Superb Owls on the internet.

One of the perks of my job at the Wildlife Trust is that I get to visit farms all over Essex and advise them on how to bring wildlife back and certainly one of the remotest this winter was out on the Dengie Peninsula just next to the wind farm at Bradwell. It's hard to imagine Essex being remote but the huge skies, flat saltmarshes and water filled borrow dykes of this area feel as far from Southend as the Brecon Beacons. While trekking across the grazing marsh with the landowner (in between releasing sheep caught up in the thick briars of the brambly hedges) we were transfixed by the sight of a Short-eared owl quartering the field. I rarely get to see these relatively large owls so it was a fantastic privilege to watch it swooping down on an unsuspecting field vole.

Closer to home I have recorded three owl species in Pettistree, Barn Owl (The Ghost Owl), Tawny owl (famous for its haunting Twitt Twoo call) and the Little owl; not a native to Britain but well established across England since arriving in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. So here are my Superb Owl Top Trumps. Which ones have you seen?

### SHORT-EARED OWL




<b>40</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.4</b>
LENGTH CM	WINGSPAN CM	UK PAIRS Thousands	WEIGHT KG

**TOP TRUMPS FILE** *Did you know?*

Seen hunting in daylight on moors and marshes, mostly feeding on field voles and small birds. Although they are about the same size as a barn owl they have longer wings for flight in more open habitats

*"Shorties" nest on the ground in scraped out hollows that they line with grass and downy feathers*

### TAWNY OWL




<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0.6</b>
LENGTH CM	WINGSPAN CM	UK PAIRS Thousands	WEIGHT KG

**TOP TRUMPS FILE** *Did you know?*

The main prey of Tawny Owls are bank voles and wood mice. They are known for the classic "twitt twoo" owl call and are commonly known as the brown owl. Typical lifespan is 4 years and the females are larger and heavier than males.

*By autumn the young tawnies will already be holding the territories that they will live in for the rest of their lives*

### BARN OWL




<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0.5</b>
LENGTH CM	WINGSPAN CM	UK PAIRS Thousands	WEIGHT KG

**TOP TRUMPS FILE** *Did you know?*

The soft feathers along the leading edge of its wings make it silent in flight. Young are born days apart and if food is scarce the larger nestlings will often cannibalise the younger ones. Barn owl pellets are regurgitated remains of their prey.

*Its ears are different sizes and offset in its heart shaped face to pinpoint even the tiniest of sounds of movement from a mouse or vole*

### LITTLE OWL



<b>22</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>0.2</b>
LENGTH CM	WINGSPAN CM	UK PAIRS Thousands	WEIGHT KG

**TOP TRUMPS FILE** *Did you know?*

Can be seen perched in the day in trees or on posts but is most active dawn and dusk. Feeds mainly on crickets, grasshoppers, beetles and earthworms as well as small mammals. The call is a plaintive 'kew kew' and a loud 'wherrow'

*Prior to the breeding season a little owl's territory may be as large as 40ha but as they start feeding the young this reduces to 2ha*

Suffolk police have a Digi Desk, to speed up non-urgent responses, staffed from 7am to 10pm every day. It manages *Tell us Reports* from the force's website and monitors messages on its Facebook and X. Real time Live Chat enquiries are available every day from 8am until 9.30pm. <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report>

**Solar and housebuilding targets** Millions of homeowners will be given grants and cheap loans to convert their properties to solar power as part of the Government's attempt to hit its 2030 clean energy pledge. Ministers are drawing up plans to subsidise the cost of fitting solar panels and batteries. The money will come from the government's £6.6 billion *Warm Homes* scheme and is due to be allocated in next year's spending review.

More than 1,000 extra homes a year will be required of Suffolk under new Government rules. East Suffolk Council has the biggest target: 1,644 every year. Councillor Mike Packard, the authority's planning lead said this was "entirely unrealistic". The council is struggling to meet its current target of 905.

## Views on solar

Residents were given a second chance to meet the potential developer of a solar park in Loudham. An exhibition was held in the Village Hall of the latest plans for the site between the A12 and around Sandpit House. There was an excellent turn-out.

Changes have been made since the first application for planning permission was made more than three years ago. An area in the flood plain of the River Deben has been removed but four parish councils, including Pettistree, have made objections. The latest consultation was the result of a meeting between East Suffolk councillor Sally Noble, the chairs of Pettistree and Ufford Parish Councils, Anne Westover of Wickham Market and representatives of British Solar Renewables (BSR). The company was told it had not done enough to publicise its plans and mitigate views of the park which will take 60 acres out of food production.



BSR had already received planning permission at an ESC planning meeting last May. But that decision was quashed following a legal challenge by Loudham Hall Estate. To get a new decision BSR has been obliged to supply a heritage assessment considering the impact on Loudham Hall. This it has done so it will come before the planning committee again soon.

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### The Welsh want to preserve their language. Why not Suffolkans? We asked an old 'un

*Ray Whitehand*

Many of you Pettistree residents have now lived in the village long enough to be thought of as *Locals*, but you get a prodigal son like myself returning to my homeland and it seems I speak with 'foreign tongue'.

When I apologised for being '*slightly on the drag*' getting to a barbeque recently, my turn of phrase was met with bewilderment. Then there was the recent fundraising draw when two people both claimed to have a winning ticket, I merely stated '*thas a rumon*' but these were just two examples of the way folk tawkt when I was a lad. The Suffolk dialect can be a challenge to understand. '*Slightly on the drag*' meant I was a little late and '*thas a duzzy rumon*' simply a variation on that's unusual

*'I dussent tell marther I'd just cum orf me bike'*, translates into '*I dare not tell mum I've fell off my bike*'. My dear sister, God bless her, used to '*dawdle*' to school (go slowly) because she didn't want to go. But then after school '*she wholly went faster acumin hum*'. In other words she came home a lot faster than she went to school.

When the four of us went out on a Sunday evening for a bike ride, if sister and I got up to the main road ahead of them, Dad would holla '*howd yew tew hard a minute 'til we get there*'. meaning wait by the roadside before you cross the A12. Then there were some *owd fook's* tales about the weather. '*Never cast a clout until May is out*' meaning always have a coat with you until the end of May. Though it's also thought to mean until the hawthorn 'May' is in flower

Then a seasonal one: '*Ash before oak we'll be in for a soak. Oak before ash we'll just git a splash*'. This relates to which of those trees come into leaf first.

Sometimes extra words can be added without reason: '*Happen I'll 'go an do Gormer's garden this Monday, but if it rain then it'll hata dew*' (have to do next week). So next time you find yourself in conversation with us oldies, rather than just think we are talking a load of old *squit* give us the chance and we just might be able to educate you younguns as to how we used to *tawk*.

**Ray's new book on his life in Pettistree is available and he can be contacted through Pettistree WhatsApp Group**

## The Bellringers



*Mary Garner* - Pettistree Tower Captain

A dozen or so of us gathered at Thong Hall for the Pettistree Ringers' 39th AGM at the end of November. Chris and I remember the first one clearly, where we were all seated around the Hallett's kitchen table. Accounts and reports were presented, officers elected and, as ever in the Winter, heating was discussed. A date for the Anniversary peal attempt and another for the Christmas dinner were also fixed. This was achieved in less than an hour and then we had a party!

The 38th Anniversary of the re-hang and re-dedication of the bells was celebrated in fine style with a peal on 7 December, followed by drinks in the pub. The bite-sized mince pies were delicious! A quarter peal was rung before the Christmas Carol Service on 22 December. New Year's Day was a Wednesday and we marked the occasion with some afternoon ringing and then some time in the pub. Several of us had also been 'Ringing out the old and ringing in the new' in various towers around and about.

Despite the cold, the closed roads and so many temporary traffic lights our practices have continued to be well supported by 12 and 18 ringers most weeks. A problem with Winter ringing can be very stiff, damp ropes which are tricky to hold and handle. Since Christmas several churchgoers have been perturbed by the black bag hanging below the spider in the ringing chamber. This contains a bag of silica gel which absorbs moisture and leaves the ropes soft and pleasant to handle. We have our newest member Gavin to thank for this. So far it works a treat.

We held our Christmas Dinner, traditionally, in February. Twenty-four of us dined at The Wilford Bridge. We were surprised to travel through swirling snow to get there but a good evening was enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Chris McArthur for organising it.



**There are many views about the building of Sizewell C and nuclear power.**  
*Jack McNulty*, a 14 years-old half-term visitor to Pettistree gave his:

Sizewell's visitor centre offers an interesting chat on how nuclear power plants provide huge amounts of energy sustainably. It also offered great hospitality: tea, coffee and biscuits. Ferlin, our guide, was very kind and reassured us that nuclear energy was really safe and had a small carbon footprint. For young people it can be a great opportunity as it offers many kinds of jobs. We found out that Sizewell still uses steam in the process of generating energy. At the end there's a fun physics challenge involving balancing many nails on top of one nail. It was easy when someone showed us how! I think Sizewell's visitors centre was a good experience.

## WhatsApp Pettistree

The WhatsApp Group now has **58** members 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*  
chair@pettistreeparishcouncil.gov.uk

## The Story of Poo

A short litter pick along The Street, Main Road and Rogues Lane yielded several bags of dog poo. This is doubly unacceptable because it takes a biodegradable product - poo - and wraps it in plastic ooh!

If the parish is lacking dog bins at convenient points, please tell us and take your bag to the nearest one.

Also, horse manure is being cleared from the lanes - great - but some is also being stacked in the grooms. Please don't, these channels must be cleared occasionally to let excess rainfall run into the field ditches.

As Winnie often said:  
"Oh bother!"

## CONTACTS

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**Vice Chair** Tom Over 07767 111267

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vacant

Olivia Smith 07866 652062

James Hayward 07500 818121

Will Harrison

**Footpaths:** Judy Steventon

**Planning:** Tom Over

**Trees & Infrastructure:** James Hayward

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**Safeguarding:** Mary Chilvers

**Village hall rep:** Chris Cook

**Environment:** Olivia Smith

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**Pettistree People editor:** Sue Jones

**Pettistree News editor:** Cath Caudwell

**Whats App Group administrators:** Alice Over and Sue Jones

**Website**

www.pettistreeparishcouncil.gov.uk

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### Church

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Wardens:

Carolyn Westrope 746139

Martin Corral

Bellringers: Mary Garner 746097