Pettistree People

Pettistree Parish Council Newsletter

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Fallow deer: Lucy Carter

ISSUE #112 | SEPTEMBER 2026

Parish Council News

Sue Jones

The Parish Council had the Summer off after meeting in June to approve the 12 Finance and Audit reports on the Agenda. It really does seem, at times, that officialdom is only interested in how we're handling a relatively small sum of money (the Precept) and whether councillors are behaving correctly. Yes Sir! Thanks to our RFO we got through the audit with flying colours.

We also met our new Green county councillor, Stephen Molyneux – seems keen - and were able to quiz our district councillor, Sally Noble, about bins, the collection of which is still hit and miss. Sally was able to tell us that East Suffolk Council is working its way through the new system and that eventually the food bins will be collected weekly. Well done those who've kept up the pressure on the council to sort this one. I'm still chucking vegetables into our compost bin and keeping the food container as 'pending'. Hot bins will take any food for composting but cost £200 to £300. Ouch!

Nick King from Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch came to promote the scheme which had rather faded into memory. The association is keen to revive it and get engagement from, well, everyone. If you register through its website, you will get alert messages from Suffolk Connect and can report issues. Happily, councillor Olivia Smith, volunteered to be Pettistree's co-ordinator (see page 11).

Work on the solar site at Loudham is starting and several people are checking that planning conditions are being met. The developer, BSR, has offered a community benefit grant and we are discussing what we should do with it. It will be a while before the money is in our coffers (amount still to be agreed) but if anyone has any ideas, particularly for Loudham, please let us know.

We are pursuing the installation of a 'Not suitable for HGVs' sign at the Rogues Lane junction with Main Road. Not many make the mistake of using it, but SatNav does present it as an alternative to The Street so let's hope the sign overrides the desire.

Approval has been given by East Suffolk Council for using CIL funds to provide a map-board of our footpaths on the village green, but we've decided to replace the current scruffy noticeboard with something larger and capable of displaying a footpath map. We're also looking at renovation or replacement of the bus shelters; the glass one is losing its footing.

A planning application has been made for a café and loos at Suffolk Plants. The PC is not objecting to this. Many garden centres have cafes and it would provide another place for a natter. It still needs approval from the Big Planners, however, so don't order tea and toast yet.

Sweltering in 35 degrees the prospect of Christmas doesn't seem that onerous. Let it snow…let it rain…before our gardens wilt with shame. The Lavender's OK though.



The Mount Meadow Gate: Sue Tansley

Village Hall this Summer

Jim Jarvie

After lengthy discussions with the Charity Commission and the lawyers representing the residual beneficiaries (five deserving charities) the Village Hall Committee has received £50,000 from the Mike Watts' legacy.

Dave Caudwell took on the role as project manager (hoping he would not suffer the same fate as the PMs on The Apprentice!). Brad Bye started the work on the hall at the beginning of July when most of the classes were taking their summer break. The large window in the lobby has now been replaced and the condensation fixed in two of the panes. The majority of work will involve the fitting of a new kitchen. The kitchen floor, and a new fire door have been fitted and all units and work surfaces are being worked on. We are hoping to have broken the back of the work by mid-September when we will welcome back our regular users.

We agreed the hosting of our coffee morning was so important to our community and thanks to Brad's flexibility, we were able to meet in the main section of the hall and sample the delights Mary Chilvers' baking. Hopefully, we will all soon be able to enjoy our refurbished hall.

What happens in the Village Hall?

Monday:

Art Class with Sue Tansley 10am to 12noon

Pilates with Sam Whitfield 4.30pm - 5.30pm & 6pm to 7pm

Tuesday:

Willow weaving 10am to 1pm fortnightly with Jo

Upholstery with Stella 7pm to 9pm

Wednesday:

Coffee Morning 10.30 to 12 noon first Wednesday of the month.

Table Tennis once a month.

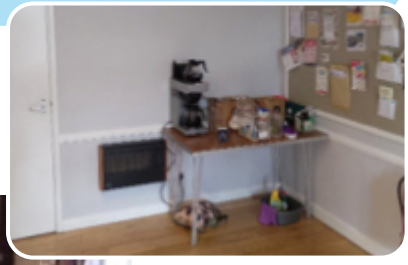
Thursday:

Art Class with Sue Tansley 10am to either 12noon or 1pm

For Village Hall bookings contact:

Pauline Jarvie 01728 754030

paulinejarvie@yahoo.com



Above: The Village Hall's temporary kitchen area



Right: The coffee mornings have kept going during the refit

Harvest: A reminder to think long-term

Patrick Spencer MP

As we travel around our towns and villages it is difficult to miss the signs of harvest. From Creeting St Mary to Great Glenham, fields that were green only a few months ago have turned golden, combines are at work, and tractors once again become a familiar sight on our country roads.

Harvest is a wonderful reminder that worthwhile things rarely happen overnight. Long before a crop is gathered, someone has prepared the ground and planted the seed. There are months of work in between, much of it unseen. There is uncertainty too: the weather cannot be controlled and not every seed that is planted will flourish. Yet without that decision to plant in the first place, there can be no harvest later.

I think the same principle applies to our communities. Many of the things we value today are the result of decisions made years, sometimes generations, ago. Someone planted the trees we now enjoy. Someone established the village hall, sports club or community organisation that brings people together. Previous generations built our churches and schools and created businesses which continue to provide local jobs.

Our responsibility is not simply to enjoy that inheritance, but to ask what we are planting for those who come next.

That means supporting our young people and giving them opportunities to build their futures here in Suffolk. It means looking after our villages and neighbourhoods while allowing them to grow and adapt. It means supporting local businesses and agriculture, caring for our countryside, and making sensible long-term investments in the services and infrastructure our communities will need in the years ahead.

The benefits of those choices may not always be immediately visible. In a world which increasingly expects instant results, that can be frustrating. But farmers understand better than most that planting a seed today does not produce a crop tomorrow. Some things require patience, persistence and trust in the future.

As harvest is celebrated across Central Suffolk and North Ipswich this autumn, it is an opportunity to be thankful for what previous generations planted for us.

But perhaps it should prompt another question too. What can we plant today that somebody else will be grateful to harvest tomorrow?

If you need support or want to keep up with my work, you can contact me at:

Patrick.Spencer.MP@Parliament.uk

01728 726612

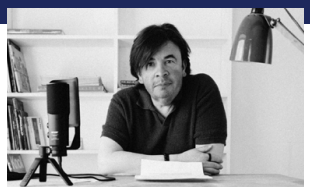
Sign up for my e-newsletter at:

www.patrickspencer.co.uk.



Harvesting: Lucy Carter

Business Training Workshop for Small, Local Business Owners



Nic Pandolfi is an award-winning communications and media consultant based in East Suffolk, known for turning complex digital trends into practical, jargon-free advice for businesses, sole traders, and charities.

Nic says: *"My goal is to take the 'tech-overwhelm' out of your workday and replace it with a clear plan of digital action."*

Wickham Market Parish Council, with support from East Suffolk Council, has invited Nic to lead a morning workshop designed specifically for small business owners.

EVENT DETAILS
Date: Friday 25 September
Time: 9.00am–1.00pm
Venue: Conference Room, Roland Group, Roland Terrace, High Street, Wickham Market, Woodbridge IP13 0RF
Cost: £15 per person
Refreshments: Included
Booking is essential.
To book, please visit...
https://visitwickhammarket.co.uk/events/

What You'll Learn

GOOGLE: Your Digital Front Door
- Optimise your Google Business Profile to improve local visibility.
- Create a "Perfect Profile" using photos, services and keywords.
- Generate more customer reviews and understand profile analytics.

AI: Work Smarter, Not Harder
- Discover practical AI tools that can save time and boost productivity.
- Learn effective prompting techniques for marketing, emails and planning.
- Identify business tasks that can be automated and create social media content more efficiently.

VISUAL STORYTELLING: Instagram & Threads
- Build a stronger visual brand without professional photography.
- Use Threads to engage customers and humanise your business.
- Manage both platforms with a simple, time-saving workflow.

Supported by

For further information, contact the Deputy Clerk at **deputyclerk@wickhammarket-pc.gov.uk**



Get YOUR business listed for FREE!!!!

Your business can be listed for free at
https://visitwickhammarket.co.uk/business-directory-category/wickham-market-business-directory/

We will list it for you, please send a photograph and information to deputyclerk@wickhammarket-pc.co.uk

Keep up to date with the news
www.visitwickhammarket.co.uk
www.instagram.com/visitwickhammarket
www.facebook.com/visitwickhammarketsuffolk
Or use the QR codes here...

Website Instagram Facebook

Wickham Market

Suffolk's Historic Market Village in the Heart of the Deben Valley

Church of St Peter and St Paul, Pettistree

Christmas Card

We need you!



Please send your images; drawing, photographs, prints, paintings, etchings, linocuts to Carolyn Westrope for consideration for the Christmas Card 2026.

Please send by Friday 6th November

send to: carolyn@westrope.co.uk

ST PETER & ST PAUL PETTISTREE HARVEST FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER



TEA & CAKES

AT 4.30 P.M.

IN THE

CHURCH PARISH ROOM

FOLLOWED AT 6.00 P.M. BY

HARVEST EVENSONG

IN THE CHURCH

Church News

Carolyn Westrope

The concert given by Kirbye Voices on June 27th was very good and well-attended, raising money for the choir and the church.

The summer seems to have gone by very fast, and we have held our usual 9.30 am services each Sunday and Evensong with the Benefice Choir on 23rd August. Even the church has been hot inside!

Church events coming up:-

The Suffolk Historic Ride and Stride event will be taking place on 12th September throughout Suffolk.

The Remembrance Day service will be held as usual on Remembrance day 11th November in the Churchyard by the War Memorial, at 10.45am. The service will be led by Charlotte.

We invite you to join us for our Harvest Festival on 27th September with tea and cakes in the Parish Room at 4.30pm followed at 6pm by a Harvest Evensong in the church with our very talented Benefice Choir. You are most welcome to come to the tea and cakes and/or the Harvest Festival. We look forward to seeing you.

Our children's Harvest service, when we are joined by the Presmere Day Nursery children and staff, will be held on Wednesday 30th September at 10.30am. This is a service particularly aimed at young children and everyone is welcome.

Churchyard News

We are planning to resurface the main paths to the church from the Greyhound and the side gate to make the church and churchyard more accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

The apple trees have produced a very good crop this year, the grass has been cut to enable easier access to the trees.



Church car park

The chain has been removed from the entrance. The storage container has finally gone and we are still trying to resolve the car parking issue for the church.

Christmas

Just a quick note about Christmas – can't believe we are thinking about that time of year again!

The Christingle service will take place on 15th December at 10.30am and the Carol Service at 9.30 am on 20th December, more details to follow in the next edition of Pettistree People.

Can you help the Church?

WANTED: TREASURER

Pettistree Church is in need of a treasurer.

The Parochial Church Council of Pettistree Parish Church are seeking a competent treasurer to carry out all aspects of the role, either on a voluntary basis or with rates negotiable. This is a part time position with hours varying across the year. If interested, please contact one of our Church Wardens for more information.

Mr Kevin Blyth - kevin.blyth@btinternet.com

Mrs Carolyn Westrope - 07974 675761 carolyn@westrope.co.uk

Vicar of All Saints Wickham Market & SS Peter & Paul Pettistree cum Loudham

Rev Charlotte Wallington: revcharlotte@outlook.com

Pettistree Bells at 40!

Mary Garner

Back in 1985/6 Pettistree Parochial Church Council began a huge fundraising effort to restore the tower and rehang the bells, which had been silent since 1937, apart from a victory ring in 1945.

Many village and church folk were involved. The Suffolk Guild of Ringers was contacted and an informative and entertaining talk was given by George Pipe. Mike Whitby, then SE District Ringing Master, undertook to teach a band to ring. I think almost 20 of us started learning in June 1986. At first we used tied bells at Ufford before moving on to open bells at Burgh and Ashbocking, because ours were away at Taylors in Loughborough. By the Rededication on 14th December 1986 six of us were able to ring rounds during the service, which was conducted by the then recently retired Bishop, John Wayne. It was quite a weekend with a concert held on the night before.

Since then the band has gone from strength to strength. Mike Whitby is still teaching us; two of the original learners and one of Mike's helpers are part of the Pettistree Band, and a few others who learnt then are still ringing. Over 40 years all but one or two services have been rung for with various national events marked too. Only a handful of Wednesday practices have been missed.

We are planning a celebratory weekend 11th - 14th December. The exact plans are still a bit fluid. There will be ringing of course, our traditional annual peal attempt, hopefully a quarter peal rung by the class of '86 with a social on Saturday 12th, inviting all those past and present who have been involved in any way. I am sure that the band will be well represented at the service on Sunday 13th.

Date for your Diary

11th to 14th December 2026

Pettistree Bells at 40!

A Wednesday practice night in July



An update from the Cafe

Open 8.30am - 2.30pm Monday - Saturday | 9.30am - 1pm Sunday

Now Open Under New Ownership

Welcome to CAFEVIDA!



Kate & Lucy are delighted to welcome you to CAFEVIDA

Come and enjoy a delicious Butterworth's Coffee, alongside our freshly made in-house cakes and bakes. We also have a tempting selection of morning pastries, plus freshly prepared brunches, toasties, frittatas, and salads served throughout the day.

- 🍞 Fresh Bread Delivery - Every Tuesday and Saturday, we're proud to stock freshly baked bread from **Black Dog Deli**.
- 🌿 Relax in our beautiful outdoor seating area, perfect for catching up with friends or enjoying a peaceful coffee.
- ♿ We also offer accessible walkways and free parking for your convenience.

We can't wait to welcome you—pop in and say hello!

Mount meadow

Dick Smith

This year has seen a massive proliferation of Star of Bethlehem in the Mount Meadow. This flower, often thought to be a garden escapee, had been present in this field ever since we've lived here. It was present in 17th century gardens so may have originated from The Lodge in the time of Hunn Wyard but has now established itself here. This is an area of poor grassland and the wet Winter followed by the very dry Spring seems to have suited it.

I have always known it as Star of Bethlehem, but it has many other names, such as 'Jack go to bed at noon' and even 'Sleepy Dick', so called because the flowers close up at mid-day. Although thought to be poisonous, cattle I had grazing this area never showed any symptoms, but don't go eating the bulbs which are toxic. Strangely it does appear as a component of some human health



'medicine' – with properties yet to be verified. The picture shows its extensive spread and it seems that if global warming progresses we could see it spreading even further, giving us such a lovely display in Maytime.

Meet the Luckings

Sue Tansley

Nick and Becky Lucking purchased Green Farm back in 2018, but they've only just moved here. What's been going on?

I had a chance to catch up with Becky Lucking and Willow the dog, at Cafe Vida, to find out about the renovation of Green Farm and their move from Bermuda, 8 years after buying their house.

Becky, originally from Bradford in Yorkshire & Nick, originally from Wivenhoe near Colchester, both work in the world of Insurance. Becky tried to explain the difference between underwriters and brokers; suffice to say I probably don't understand but I do know Becky is a broker & Nick is an underwriter, but used to be a broker. They met and spent many years working in Bermuda but wanted to settle back in the UK for their son Theo's education. Theo is 14 now and just started at his new school.

Green Farm is one of Pettistree's larger houses and in my own research of our home, Well Cottage, discovered it was originally tied to Green Farm. Becky and Nick had a heritage report made on Green Farm before any work could commence, as well as a bat survey. The house is Grade II listed and is a lime rendered timber framed farmhouse dating back to the 17th century, with later 18th century additions. Becky said there is a fresco of grapevines painted straight onto the lime in Theo's bedroom.

Green Farm was known as the location of a physiotherapy practice which used the swimming pool. Becky said she has met people who say they learned to swim there. Green Farm was a pig farm at one time and the pig stys are still there. A project





for later, said Becky. There are barns, one converted to a dwelling, on the site and some gone which Becky and Nick were able to use as inspiration for their new kitchen. Green Farm was once a huge estate and parts of it have been sold off, but it still has a substantial garden.

Back to the story of the long wait to move in. Delays because of planning, architectural drawings, builders, an ineffective project manager and then the bats! The bats have a lovely new bat house; dealt with correctly, of course. Then Covid meant Becky and Nick could not come over to get things moving. Underpinning of the barns came first and then finally the house renovation could start!

It turns out even after all this time and Theo starting his new school Becky does not feel she has been able to unpack yet. The house is different in style from what they have had before; they are still working things out like furniture. I asked when she felt Suffolk might feel like home, she said: "When I've finally unpacked". I asked if Green Farn was going to be pink again; Becky thinks probably not. Perhaps Ray Whitehand can find out if it was any other colour in its history?

They do still plan to go back to Bermuda in holidays. But when they are here, Becky is keen to get to know everything so if you see her about, give her your recommendations for must-see places in Suffolk. She is keen to join things and be part of clubs. They are keen golfers, and Becky has joined a local canoe club. I'm sure she'll try many of the activities Suffolk has to offer.

Now they are finally here; I hope they feel the wait was worth it! I'm sure they will enjoy some of the Pettistree events in what I've always felt is the friendliest village.

Doris and Joan Heron from their 1995 memoir

Provided by historian Ray Whitehand

The "Heron Family" lived in Potash Cottages, Byng Hall Lane from 1937 but moved to Coopers Cottage, Stump Street in 1941 when 9 cottages shared the same drinking water well. Well Cottage consisted of three separate dwellings, Coopers Cottage and Potash Cottages were both two. The remaining houses were Brycot and the Bungalow on Byng Lane.

When Mr Brooks at Well Cottage died, Mr and Mrs Woodley and sons came to live there. At "Brycot" there was Mr and Mrs Fuller and daughter Betty. Mr and Mrs Bardwell lived in the Bungalow. Ethel and John Smith moved into Potash after us, then Mr and Mrs Frank Barham Whitehand with their two children. Mr and Mrs Dunnett and daughter Daphne lived in "Sunnyside" bungalow. Down Stump Street at Town Cottages; Ginny Goddard and her brother Bob Boon had one each.

Father worked for John Lawn at Green Farm before working for Horace Last at Church Farm. Potash Cottage was tied to Green Farm, which is why he had to move to Coopers Cottage. Potash Cottages were three up and three down, shingle-dashed and tile roofed. A sink in the kitchen and tap water, as well as electric lights, but an outside toilet. Coopers Cottage was stud and plaster, heavily beamed with a thatched roof, but only two rooms each storey with separate staircases. The water was drawn from the well at Well Cottage and the toilet was outside.

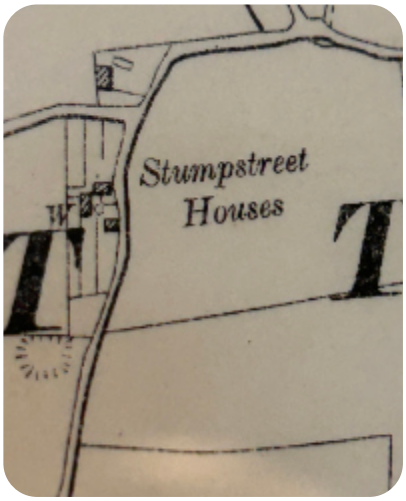
Cooking at Potash Cottages was on a black coal fire range, but Coopers Cottage had no electric, we had to use oil lamps when darkness fell with an oilstove (Rippingills) and a wall oven for cooking. Wood was used for the fire and heat with oil (paraffin) bought from Florrie Stannard's house at the corner of Rogues and Walnuts Lane.

Our family was our parents and four children, Margery, Clifford, Doris and Joan. Margery being the eldest, left school when we moved to Pettistree and worked away. My brother went into the forces and I (Doris) went to Bury Hospital. After the war my brother and I returned home. There were no barracks in Pettistree but we did have soldiers about sometimes practising manoeuvres down near Town Cottages.

We did not home brew, but jam, marmalade, chutney, were made and fruit was bottled. Runner beans, red cabbage, onions, and rhubarb were all preserved with eggs put down in a large brown earthenware pot in water. Apples, pears (cooking and eating) were laid out on shelves. We



Potash Cottages pre-Nursery School



had a big garden at both houses, we were never short of fruit or vegetables in their season.

We used to amuse ourselves with a skipping rope that was tied to garden railings. Hopscotch, tracking, dances and whist drives were all held in the Village Hall, and Christmas parties were good fun. We had a village Rabbit Club with a show every year where prizes were awarded. We kept pigs, plus two dogs, a pastime father was particularly fond of. Summer was a time for fruit picking - red and black currants at Gordon Holland's farm (The Grove). This was pocket money for us, but the foreman, Mr Bob Fryett, would check the baskets to ensure they were the correct weight before accepting.

Sunday School was held in the Reading Room and taken by Mrs Lawn and her companion Miss Johnson in the morning and afternoon. Our hymns were sung from the book "Golden Bells". We were in the Wickham Market Brownies and Guides because Pettistree never had a pack. This was run by Mrs Caller, the vicar's wife. One occasion we stayed at Glemham Hall, home of Lady Blanche Cobbold, for a weekend. Good Friday evening we went to Wickham Market church to the slide show. The Rev Caller also had the benefice of Pettistree and Dallinghoo but we mostly attended Pettistree Church.
(Edited from extracts of Doris & Joan's Memoir)

Reinvigorating Neighbourhood Watch across the parish

Olivia Smith

The Police tell us that crime is 20% lower in Neighbourhood Watch areas. This is powerful and a real incentive for residents across the parish to follow the steps shown in the leaflet.

A parish-wide Watch scheme has now been mapped, in cooperation between the Parish Council and the Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association and our ambition towards a stronger and safer community.

You can find and join our scheme by going to:

www.ourwatch.org.uk

and doing the postcde search under the tab "Find my local NW".

If you have any questions or need help email:

enquiries@suffolknwa.co.uk



On the farm: Pressure cooker

James Hayward



My last *On the Farm* article ended with a plea for rain. After the light sprinkling we received at the start of May, farmers dared to hope that April's drought would give way to a more typical mix of sunshine and showers through May and June.

Unfortunately, that brief shower proved to be both the first and last meaningful rainfall between March and what turned out to be an exceptionally early harvest in mid-June. Even the few showers we've seen over the past week have been fleeting. Winter crops have been starved of water during their critical spring growing and grain-filling stages, while spring crops never really got going at all. At a time when farmers would normally be midway through harvest and preparing to plant again, the crops are already in the shed and the ground resembles concrete, too hard to work.

For farmers across the UK, the drought has been nothing short of disastrous. In many areas, conditions have been even worse than during the previous two years, with yields down by as much as 50% and water supplies all but exhausted. We have certainly been no exception. The winter wheat, barley, oilseed rape, bean and maize harvests finished a full month early, with overall yields around 45% below average. A third consecutive year of losses now seems inevitable.

The remaining crops to be harvested are seed potatoes and sugar beet, due in October and November/ December respectively. If we receive substantial rainfall soon, followed by continued warm weather, both could still recover towards average yields. However, that remains a very big "if".

The challenge extends beyond this year's harvest. The baked earth is now so hard that it is preventing us from cultivating fields and establishing next year's oilseed rape and cover crops. We need at least a week of sustained rainfall before the soil becomes workable again. Once that happens, we will have to move quickly to complete planting before what already feels likely to be a wet and stormy winter to come. Forecasters suggest the current El Niño weather pattern could bring a particularly wet autumn and early winter, making it imperative to hit the narrow window between soil becoming workable and fields turning back into mud.

Torrential autumn and winter rainfall followed by prolonged dry spells through spring and summer increasingly appears to be the new normal in eastern England. That reality points ever more clearly towards the need for on-farm water storage, i.e. reservoirs. If we can no longer rely on spring rainfall, we must capture surplus water during the winter months and use it when drought inevitably returns in summer. There is, realistically, no other long-term solution if food production is to remain viable.

Unfortunately, reservoir projects remain expensive and slow to deliver. Planning alone can be lengthy and costly, while construction typically starts at well over £100,000 and can easily exceed £500,000 for larger schemes. The UK Government recently announced an additional £15 million of support to help farms combat drought. While welcome, spread across more than 200,000 farms nationally, it equates to around £75 per farm; both literally and figuratively, a drop in the ocean!

This year, the impact is far from limited to the UK. Drought conditions have affected large areas of Europe, raising the very real possibility that demand across Western Europe could outstrip supply. Normally, any shortfall would be supplemented by grain exports from Ukraine. However, that supply chain appears increasingly fragile, with both Russia and Ukraine continuing to target grain terminals and shipping infrastructure around the Black Sea. Unless conditions improve significantly, food prices are likely to continue rising.

Back in May, I warned that if the rain failed to arrive, farmers could find themselves spending twice as much - driven by higher fuel and fertiliser costs as a result of the Iran war - to produce only half as much. Sadly, that prediction has proved to be accurate. Once again, farming has become an exercise in managing rising costs against declining output. Our crops have spent much of the year growing in what has effectively been an oven, and running a farm business increasingly feels like operating inside a pressure cooker.

At times like these, I am extremely grateful for the diversification projects we have developed over the years. They provide resilience when, as seems to happen with increasing frequency, our primary revenue stream from arable farming falls short. It is difficult to see how many agricultural businesses can remain viable in the future without multiple income streams. For us, the MOT centre in Pettistree, the Memorabilia Shop at The Old School, rooftop solar energy generation and our rental horse paddocks all make an important contribution.

Looking ahead, we hope that the vineyard off Stump Street will become another reliable source of income, particularly during hot and dry summers such as this one. In wetter years, the cereal and root crops, along with our willow plantations, should perform more strongly, while the commercial enterprises provide the most consistent income regardless of the weather.

Even keeping the vines alive this year has been a challenge. James M and Martin have spent long periods watering them every other day, as the irrigation system simply was not designed to cope with heatwave after heatwave. Hopefully, the worst is now behind us. If the forecast rain arrives this week, it should help the vines establish stronger root systems and become increasingly resilient in the years ahead.

For now, we wait for rain. Until October, when it probably won't stop!...

Grove Farm update

Karen Carter



Our renovations are going well for our larger farm stall. In May we pulled our old railway carriage off the farm and into the workshop. We stripped all the old wood off, had Suffolk Sandblasting shot blast, prime and paint the frame, had windows and doors installed and have started cladding the outside. We are hoping to be open in November, and will advertise once we are ready. Although it looks nearly done, we still need to do electrics, install a floor, fridge and freezer, decorate the interior and do finishing touches!

We are really excited to share this with you all, and as always, we will still be supporting British farmers and local producers.

You can follow our progress on our Instagram page ***@grovefarmstall***

Bananas!

Sue Tansley



Steve and Pam Hind live in Flint Cottage, the former Sweet Shop of Pettistree. This summer they had a surprising find in the garden; bananas!

Steve has a beautiful garden full of interesting plants, a large pond and even a bar. But growing bananas is not supposed to be possible in the UK, and yet here they were, doing just that. Steve has a few of these Musa Basjoo, hardy Japanese Banana plants in his tropical garden. The flowers are huge and look like something created by a prop maker for a SciFi, but the fruits are rare to be seen in the UK, outside of a glasshouse.

As such Steve had his 15 minutes of fame featuring on the local BBC Radio Suffolk, talking to Wayne Bavin and subsequently featured on BBC TV news. Steve dealt with his newfound fame and talking to camera like a pro. You can still read all about it on the BBC News website.



Sadly, the fruits are inedible, according to RHS. But it's still amazing to see these growing outside in a garden in Pettistree. What other tropical fruits can we try and grow in these hot dry summers?

I also enjoyed finding out more about Flint Cottage and its history in the village. Steve has since been in touch to say the banana tree is still growing new flowers in September; it's that warm.





Watching Wildlife: A thief in the night

Darren Tansley

We had been wondering what was taking the plums off our little tree at the end of the garden, assuming it might have been the blackbirds that also love picking over the windfall apples and pears. Our garden used to be an orchard and some of those old fruit trees over-produce, supplying a feast of food over the autumn for an array of birds, mammals and insects.

So imagine our surprise when I accidentally mis-aligned our wildlife camera one night only to find that a fox had been climbing into the branches to feast on the juicy fruits hanging there. This is just one instance where a wildlife camera, either at work or home, has come back with surprising results.

Wildlife cameras (also known as Trail Cameras) are now relatively cheap and provide a wonderful glimpse into the nocturnal world and lives of animals we rarely get a chance to see, especially once the nights start drawing in. Most cameras allow you to film in full colour during the day and then switch to night vision during the hours of darkness, triggered by motion or temperature sensors. Recently a camera set to monitor water voles on a Suffolk river captured the amazing sight of an otter squeaking in alarm as a beaver swam up to it. Our apex river predator was literally chased off by a rodent!

You may not have otters in your back garden (although a couple of Pettistree residents have had this pleasure) but you can still see some amazing interactions. We have recorded more than a quarter of all the terrestrial mammal species of Suffolk on our garden camera over the past 11 years; many only through setting it up at night. As well as the ubiquitous herds of fallow deer nibbling the hedge we've spotted field voles, bank voles, wood mice, yellow-necked mice, hedgehogs, badgers, foxes, pipistrelle bats, common shrews and brown hares

Domice visit an Essex garden bird feeder



to name a few. Along with a complement of toads, frogs, newts and grass snakes we have an absolute abundance of nature and it's a joy to review the night's videos and see what's been going on while we were fast asleep.

If you're interested in setting up your own camera then I can wholeheartedly recommend checking out the amazing range at **NatureSpy.org**. Not only do we use them at The Wildlife Trust because they reinvest their profits into nature conservation, but their customer service is second to none. You may make some surprising discoveries and I'm always happy to review footage or photos (email darrent@essewt.org.uk) or to give advice on the features available on wildlife cameras.

Happy wildlife night-watching!

Otter meets beaver at a Suffolk water vole raft



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About Pettistree People

Pettistree People was founded in February 1996 and is funded by the Parish Council. It has had many editors and contributors over the years and is now compiled and edited by Sue and Darren Tansley who moved to the village in July 2015.

Please send us your photos, articles, stories, poetry and promotion of events or any other topics you'd like us to cover. We really want this newsletter to reflect the village, the people in it, and to be a useful resource for the community.

We'd like to send a huge thanks to all this issue's contributors and photographers, the volunteer distribution team and to Mary Garner for help with proof-reading.

Sue & Darren Tansley

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Next Issue

Deadline for contributions to the next issue is:

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