

your Wimbotsham

Welcome to the Wimbotsham News!

October 2021



Produced by Wimbotsham Parish Council

Keeping you informed of village life

Deadline for next issue: 20th January 2022

This newsletter is produced by Wimbotsham Parish Council. Every effort is made to ensure that information is accurate at the time of going to print, but no liability will be accepted for losses caused by inaccurate information.

100 Acre Trust Drainage Works 2021

In recent years we have had a number of areas within the Hundred Acre Common Charity land which has become waterlogged, particularly noticeable in the exceptionally wet periods, such as in late 2019 when two 'lakes' were visible for some time. Contrary to popular belief, the fens are not as flat as you might think, fields in the fens typically undulate by a couple of meters which gives scope for waterlogging in the low spots.

Like many fields, especially those in the fens, the fields are under drained to prevent waterlogging and make the fields more productive. Under draining usually consist of a network of slotted pipes below ground which lead to the surrounding ditches. Traditionally these were clay pipes, short sections often laid by navvies in parallel at intervals across a field to the adjacent ditch. You will sometimes see stakes alongside a ditch to mark the outlet of each pipe.

Over time these become decayed or new areas become waterlogged, then the fields become under productive as excess water washes away seed and fertiliser.



Drainage machine approaching across a cropped field

As part of our ongoing management responsibilities, as landlord, in 2018 we took the decision to look at improving the drainage with some new land drainage to the affected areas. Having obtained quotes

for the works we intended to carry out the works in 2020. However, the land was too wet for the contractors machinery at the time and so we approached another contractor with larger specialised machinery, who undertook the work in July this year.



A number of lengths of land drain were installed diagonally across the fields to the adjacent ditches. In the 21st century, slotted plastic pipe has replaced clay and now comes on large reels installed by heavy duty tracked machines, which install the pipes in narrow trenches, backfilled with large stone to capture the water and feed it into the slotted pipework below.

At the time of installation the fields were cropped, so the scars across the fields are obvious. As the machine progresses the front part digs the narrow trench, the central part lays the pipe from the reel backfilling with stone as it proceeds. Cutting through the soil at depth the machinery is very noisy.



The machine passes, backfilling as it goes, the rear part housing the shingle.

The depth of the pipework below ground is controlled by laser level, falling gradually towards the ditch, the undulating ground level effectively means the pipe depth varies across the field. The whole process took two days to complete.



Two operatives operate the machine as it is a concentrated job. Shingle being filled into a hopper from the tracked shingle cart.

Scar across the field after installation of the drainage pipes.



Reels of pipework are loaded on the front of the machine and fed into the ground at the centre behind a deep trenching blade which cuts through the ground

100 Acre Trust

Wimbotsham Coal Dole makes payments to assist the poor of the village with fuel costs

Dating from 1911, the 100 Acre Common Charity was established to assist the ‘poor inhabitants’ of Downham Market, Stow Bardolph & Wimbotsham through the distribution of fuel. This generally being coal. Hence the name **Wimbotsham Coal Dole**.

Today the charity makes payments each December to assist the poor of the villages with fuel costs as coal is no longer used by most to heat their homes.

As general guidance, pensioners existing solely on the state pension, single parent families, those on sickness benefit, income support or job seekers allowance could apply. This list is not exhaustive but gives a general idea of those who the Coal Dole expect to help. This guidance is in keeping with the aims of the Charity, and the terms of the Trust Deed, *to benefit the poor inhabitants*.

Funds are distributed at the discretion of the trustees based on the information provided by applicants.

To apply for funds, please complete the application form on the next page of this newsletter together with any additional information you feel appropriate and return to one of the addresses below:

88 West Way: 35 Church Road:

Application for 100 Acre Trust funds 2021

(To be returned by 30th November 2021)

Please answer questions accurately and honestly to the best of your knowledge, providing as much supporting information as you feel appropriate. Please provide the basic information required below and additional information on a separate sheet.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Marital Status: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

How long have you lived in Wimbotsham: _____ Do you live alone: _____

Any dependents: _____

Please specify why you feel you are eligible and what you wish to use grant monies for (please continue on a separate sheet where required):

Do you find it difficult to meet yours or your family's basic needs? E.g. Providing clothes, food, electricity, gas etc.

Details of the following will assist in assessing your application:

Details of your/household income/benefits/savings/investments:

Do you own/rent your own home:

ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION - Details which you feel may be helpful to us:

DECLARATION BY APPLICANT

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the statements I have made are full and correct in every respect and that no relevant information relating to my circumstances has been withheld. I also accept that all applications are considered at the discretion of the trustees and it will be their discretion as to whether this application is successful. I accept that I may be required to provide further evidence in relation to my financial information.

Signed..... Date:
(Signature of Applicant)

Parish Council

Contacting the Parish Council

The best way to contact the council is via the Parish Clerk.

Please remember to provide your name, address and telephone number.

Clerk to Wimbotsham Parish Council: Pippa Winson

37 Ullswater Avenue, South Wootton, King's Lynn, PE30 3NJ

wimbotshampc@hotmail.co.uk 01553 674382

Parish Council Meetings

Meetings are held in the Methodist Church Starting at 7pm

Everyone is welcome to attend

If you would like to address the council there is an opportunity to speak
Agendas & Minutes are published on the village notice boards & on website:

Wimbotsham.com

Meetings:

26th October 2021

Your councillors are:

Bates, Simon	The Beeches, 2 West Way	01366 386607
Cable, Ian (Vice-Chair)	Stow Corner Farm	01366 386704
Chilvers, Dean	45 West Way	01366 386211
Fendley, David	12 Millers Lane	01366 383436
Mingay, Steve	14 Church Road	07714 761871
Squires, Jackie (Chair)	88 West Way	01366 386370
Smith, Anne	30 Church Road	01366 389729

Wimbotsham Village Hall

The village hall continued to remain open throughout the lockdown at the beginning of 2021 in order to host a Nurturing Baby & Me course run by The Romalution – Revolutionary Parenting Education. We were really proud to be able to host this course to provide post natal support for new mothers' and their babies. It was considered an exempt activity under Covid legislation and is one of the only courses like this in the West Norfolk area. Since then, the hall has reopened fully, some new activities have started, some have yet to restart and some decided not to restart for various reasons. All current regular activities are listed in the What's On



Photo – West Norfolk Calm Families Community Hub

West Norfolk Calm Families run a Community Hub on a Tuesday morning. This parent, baby and toddler group supports parents, carers and expectant parents in the West Norfolk area by providing free access to evidenced based information on all aspects of parenting and child development. They also run a sling library. On the last Thursday of the month they run a new Home Educating Families Monthly Social and Free Play group. For more information on either group please visit their Facebook page West Norfolk Calm Families or contact Roma Malone on 07753209722.

Horizons Academy provides quality, engaging and friendly classes in and around Ely, Cambridge and Downham Market. The Downham timetable (now at Wimbotsham & Stow Village Hall) includes Ballet, Tap & Jazz for children from three years of age all the way through to adults. Opportunities include the option to take part in IDTA exams, Shows, Festivals & Performances, proudly encouraging all young dancers, whatever their ability and goals. Horizons welcomes recreational dancers who love their weekly classes as well as supporting dancers who wish to dance professionally in the future. A friendly and inclusive school where every single child matters, we are extremely proud of the positive dance community that we are building together. For more information, please contact Stephanie Mills at Stephanie@horizonsacademy.co.uk or 07793815720.

Little City Norfolk is an inclusive, fully mobile role play experience for all children. Designed for confident walkers no older than 5, (extended to age 6 in the school holidays) the purpose built street includes a supermarket, hairdressers, garage, police station, vets, Doctors and more. With uniforms, dress up and ride ons too, there is something for everyone and it's perfect for parents and carers to get involved! For more information go to <https://www.littlecityuk.com/norfolk> or call Anna on 07500 936384/anna@littlecityuk.com.



Photo – Little City

Village Hall Bookings

For all village hall enquiries and bookings contact Kate: 07876 473896 or wimbotshamhall@hotmail.com. If there is no answer, please leave a message, your call will be returned!

Village Hall What's On

- Monday: 8:00pm – 9:30pm Ouse Washes Molly Dancers (Phil on 07878000175/01328701254)
- Tuesday: 10:00am – 12:00pm West Norfolk Calm Families Community Hub – restarting September (Roma Malone on 07753209722)
3:30pm – 9:30pm Horizons Dance Academy - restarting September (Stephanie Mills Stephanie@horizonsacademy.co.uk or 07793815720)
- Wednesday: 7:30pm – 10:00pm Downham Market Amateur Dramatics Society (dadsdramauk@gmail.com or 07387 158883)
- Thursday: 10:00am – 11:00am Keep Fit (Pat Lowing 01553 840121)
12:30pm – 14:30pm Home Educating Families Monthly Social and Free Play group -restarting September, last Thursday of month (Roma Malone on 07753209722)
- Friday: 7:30pm – 10:00pm Downham Market Amateur Dramatics Society
- Saturday: -
- Sunday: Little City Norfolk (morning sessions, one Sunday a month, Anna on 07500 936384/anna@littlecityuk.com)

Footpath improvement on Low Road



The crossing from Low Road onto the footpath that crosses the fields into the rear of the recreation ground has always been event that could be entered into the Olympics! However, through consultation and some help from the County Council, steps have been installed to make it much safer experience. Thank you to Mary Davies for the photos and lets hope that the footpaths are as well beaten in future as they have been in the last 18 months.



ALLOTMENT UPDATE

The allotments are looking good this year and lots of produce is being enjoyed. The extended period of lockdown has given plot holders more time to work their plots and enjoy the peace and quiet of the site.

We have a waiting list of people who wish to take on a plot, and plots will be allocated at our AGM which will be held in October. If you are interested in having a plot please contact Liz Wing on 01366 388954

Dog fouling continues to be a problem and we would like to remind dog owners to ensure they pick up and dispose of their dog waste in the appropriate bins. We have several young families working plots and it is particularly unfair for irresponsible owners who do not clean up after their dogs.

Wimbotsham History Group

Following on from our November news, we have been bowled over by the responses to the puzzles we needed to solve. Of course, the current pandemic has meant we have been working online or by telephone but hopefully that situation will improve.

Firstly, we received a response from Ron Rushbrooke in the Scottish Highlands. Ron lived in our village from 1956 -1970 and very kindly took us on a guided walk following the steps of the enumerator for the 1939 Register. He filled in details of the people he remembered and where they lived. He also found "Bottom Wells" on an 1888 map. An L-shaped building was situated very close to the border of Downham Market, behind the Richardson's plantation accessed by Short Drove. A full copy of Ron's descriptive walk is now in our archives.

Secondly, in December, Roy Docking contacted us and has since then provided some very interesting articles for our archives. Roy lived in Wimbotsham from the age of 2 until his career took him elsewhere in Norfolk in early 1960s. We will be sharing his memories in future editions. Roy has given a lengthy account of the Lancaster Bomber that crashed between Millers Lane and Tinkers Lane in 1943. We have been investigating ever since and have accumulated information to create an interesting article in the next edition of "Your Wimbotsham".

Thirdly, Christine informed us that the change in house numbers and road names in Wimbotsham occurred in the middle of 1967 and each householder would have received a letter detailing their new address. We have now been able to list the old and current home addresses. Our study of the 1939 Register has been married to the data held within the 1911 Census.

We have been joining up the dots from hints in various paperwork handed to us and believe we have discovered (to within a few yards), the site of the Wimbotsham Poorhouse. (1) An online article identified it as two small cottages. (2) The 1841 Tithe survey listed it as Plot 107. (3) a Church booklet mentioned the use of the old Poorhouse by the Clerk of Works when renovating St Mary's Church in 1853. (4) Doris Boughen made mention of the back of a resident's garden in Church Road. This Poorhouse supported not only the inhabitants of Wimbotsham but of many surrounding villages. It is believed it probably went out of service after the Downham Workhouse was built in 1837.

We have been researching the Four Manors, Abbot of Ramsay's Ingaldesthorp, Tonwells and Bardolf. Their history can be traced back to the 9th century and the village name indicates a Saxon origin. The translation reads as "a piece of land surrounded by paling to defend against water with pasture land". In Saxon times the high tide level is thought to have been 5 metres higher than today.

It has been a great pleasure to talk to many residents about their memories of Wimbotsham. Being able to copy the photos and documents offered is immeasurable in compiling the village history. We still need more and if anyone has documents, memories or photos, please do get in touch.

Carolyn Seymour - Tel: 01366 381099

Email: Wim.villhistory@btinternet.com

Chris Smith - Tel: 01366 389729

Email: chris201251@sky.com

Cattle at Lower Farm

As many of you will have seen, livestock have returned to the grazing pasture around Lower Farm to the south of the village. Albanwise the landowners replaced the stock fencing around the fields earlier in the year and have subsequently let the grazing to a Wimbotsham resident to graze their newly acquired herd of 16 South Devon X Limousin, from a local farm. The 8 heifers and 8 steers are all from same herd aged between 12 and 14 months old and were turned out in mid-April. These young store cattle will be brought on ready for slaughter.



New fencing, gates and signage



New gates and signage have been placed where public footpaths cross the fields. Some of the informal pathways that had appeared are therefore no longer accessible for obvious safety reasons. It is important to keep to the public footpaths when crossing the fields, beware of cattle and treat them with respect. They can be inquisitive, but can also be easily frightened, which is when they are most unpredictable. And most importantly, keep dogs on a short lead at all times.

We had the 16 Limousin X South Devon (Mid Brown) on the field which have been steadily grazing since April, a few

have left the field, the villages will have noticed some additional cattle join the herd these are cattle from another Norfolk farm, these are British Blue X Limousine and Aberdeen Angus, the animals will graze on the field through to mid October we hope the villages have enjoyed the grassland having livestock on the grazing land in the village, to have cattle on the grassland improves the grassland and helps additional wildlife to thrive, the cattle can sometimes be frisky especially if dogs are around, we welcome the villages to use the footpath that crosses the field via the small wooden bridge, but would kindly ask if all dogs could be kept on leads and remember the rules on clearing up dog waste as this can create problems with cattle.

Please remember:

Beware cattle grazing.

Shut the gates behind you.

Keep dogs on a short lead.

Please pick up after your dog.

Do not approach the cattle, they can be cute but are not trained animals and can be frightened too! So, it might be best to take a look from behind the fence

Magpie Centre News



HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL VISITS MAGPIE CENTRE

Monday July 12 saw an action-packed afternoon at the Magpie Centre, Wallington Hall, home of West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled Association, when Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal, RDA President, arrived to tour the Centre and open the Sensory Garden.

On arrival, Her Royal Highness was greeted by Mr James Bagge, Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk, Mr John and Mrs Tian Plaxton, owners of Wallington Hall, Mr Peter Tobitt, RDA Norfolk County Chairman and Mr Colin Perriss, West Norfolk RDA Chairman. After touring the stables, meeting and chatting to groups of staff, riders, volunteers, and some horses, Her Royal Highness watched a riding lesson in the indoor school.

Highlight of the visit was a trip to the Sensory Garden, created to support the Magpie Centre's Tea With a Pony initiative. This enables care home residents, people living with dementia and other sensory impairment to socialize over tea and cakes and meet some of the ponies. While in the Sensory Garden, her Royal Highness met World War II veteran Mr John Moran, from Kings Lynn Residential Home, and his carer, Ms Julie Godfrey, before unveiling a plaque commemorating the official opening.

To celebrate carriage driving, which the Magpie Centre offers in addition to riding, RDA carriage driver Mr Aynsley Calvert, accompanied by Carriage Driving Instructor Ms Jody Voigt gave a display in an adjoining paddock, weaving expertly through a course of cones.

Finally, a group of students from West Walton School presented Her Royal Highness with a posy, before she departed by car.

Said Mr Perriss: 'We were delighted to welcome Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal to the Magpie Centre to formally open the Sensory Garden, which is an integral part of our Tea With a Pony experience. It was a great opportunity for her to meet our dedicated staff, riders, volunteers and supporters, including those who created the Sensory Garden.

'We are extremely grateful to Her Royal Highness for taking the time to visit us, to learn more about what we do and how the support of so many people and businesses from the local community helped us through the difficult periods of lockdown,' he added

Magpie Centre

NEW TABLES FOR THE MAGPIE CENTRE Official opening of the Sensory Garden at the Magpie Centre, home of West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled Association, is drawing closer, and the garden will be of particular benefit to Tea With a Pony participants, many of whom are living with dementia or sensory impairment.

Tea With a Pony mornings, which will re-commence in September, enable people, many of whom live in care homes, and their carers, to enjoy a social get-together, with tea and cakes, and meet some of our lovely ponies.

Thanks to the work of loyal volunteers, the planting is almost complete, and the flowers and shrubs have taken well, helped greatly by the recent unsettled weather.

However, to complete the Sensory Garden project, we need two hardwood tables, around which wheelchair users and their carers can be accommodated. These cost £600 each, so donations with these in mind would be much appreciated.

Also, Magpie Centre Yard Manager, Natalie Dade said: 'Some of our yard equipment is coming to the end of its useful life, so we need to replace it.' Items needed are: grooming kits, manure scoops, brooms, shavings forks and clipper blades.

'Many of our ponies are cobs, with heavy coats,' she explained, 'so they need clipping regularly to keep them cool and comfortable in work. At up to £45 a pair for clipper blades, their maintenance does not come cheap,' she added.

Donations, however large or small, will be gratefully received. For those who still have cheque books, cheques payable to WNRDA and sent to Magpie Centre, Wallington Hall, South Runcton, PE 33 0EP are welcome. Or, please call the Centre on 01553 810202 for (bank transfer) BACS details. Donations can also be made via our website: www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk

And, finally, thank you so much to all those who have offered their services as volunteers. The response has been amazing. Magpie Centre phone has been ringing off the hook, and our office manager is responding to calls as fast as she can. If you do not receive a response in the next few days, please bear with us and you will receive a response shortly. We really do appreciate your interest.

Magpie Centre needs Volunteers Are you healthy and active? Might you be able to give us a hand?

Activities at the Magpie Centre, home of West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled Association, have been returning to normal, in line with the gradual lifting of lockdown restrictions.

Riders have returned with great enthusiasm, and the Centre is currently awaiting delivery of three new mounts: two ponies and one horse, a weight-carrier for adult riders. The horse will be privately-owned but on working livery at the Centre.

Now the hunt is on for volunteers to help with the rides, which run from Monday to Friday lunchtime.

If you enjoy fresh air, the countryside and making new friends, while helping the community – this one's for you!

The Magpie Centre, situated in the picturesque grounds of Wallington Hall, near Downham Market, and which has an indoor school, provides more than 100 riding and carriage driving lessons a week to people of all ages, who are living with a wide range of physical and learning disabilities.

We need volunteers who can lead a quiet pony in lessons, and/or who would be prepared to 'sidewalk'. The role of the sidewalker is very important. He or she walks beside the rider to help them maintain balance and helps to communicate the instructor's directions to the rider.

No previous experience is necessary, as all training will be given, so if you have a couple of hours to spare each week, please call the Centre on 01553 810202, visit our website: www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk or email magpiecentrewnrda@hotmail.co.uk to find out more.

We look forward to hearing from you and can promise you a friendly welcome!

Recreation Ground

SAVE THE DATE!

**Carols around the Christmas Tree is back!
Saturday 18th December from 6.30-7pm.**

We will be in the fresh air and as we haven't been able to sing for so long it will be great to sing along to some Christmas carols. It will be brilliant to see as many people as possible so please save the date and see you there.

Bike Meet Bank Holiday Monday

The Chequers Public House very kindly held a bike meet in the absence of The Fenman Classic Bike Show. Kim and Dave organised a small bike meet which was well attended. During the course of the event they held a raffle and the proceeds were equally divided between The Village Hall and The Recreation Ground. The committee are very grateful and extend their thanks to Kim and Dave.



Barry Lawrence

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Wimbotsham New Village Hall Project Update

On the 4th August over 40 villagers attended a presentation by the Architect Swann Edwards on the findings and recommendations of the Feasibility Study for a new village hall. All had a chance to ask questions and the majority completed a feedback form.

Here is a summary of the Feasibility Study for your information.

Since our last update in May 2020, Swann Edwards have completed their stage 1 Feasibility Study for a proposed new village hall. The study was funded by the Parish Council and a consultant was used to ensure the study was independent. The study developed from the information gathered from the Community and User group survey and reviewed the village the village as a whole, identifying a number of sites for initial feasibility appraisals.

Option 1 - Refurbishment of Current Building

Option 2 – Build new hall on existing Site.

Option 3 – Build new hall on Recreation Ground.

Option 4 – Build new hall on Land Adjacent to the Recreation Ground.

Option 5 – Combine facilities with The Chapel, in Chapel Lane.

Option 6 – Combine facilities with The Church.

Option 7 – Build new hall on Land Adjacent to the Church.

Option 8 – Build new hall on the land behind houses between Church Road and Millers Lane.

Option 9 – Build new hall on Land Opposite Recreation Ground.

Option 10 – Other Sites.



The study took into consideration the above options with regards to current and future requirements/usage including, accessibility, size of building needed, financial costs, future up-keep, building regulation, likelihood of planning approval etc.

Option 1 –This was discounted due to the limited life of the structure itself, regardless of any refurbishment.

The study recommended that option 3 provided the best opportunity for delivering the proposed facility, followed by option 2 if option 3 proved to be unsuccessful.

Option 2 –To demolish the existing hall and build a new hall on the existing site, (this was the preferred option as taken from the residents/user’s survey results).

Option 3 - To build the new village hall in the recreation ground adjacent to the existing pavilion and linking the two, or to demolish the pavilion and build a new combined facility.

Options 4,7,8,9 and 10 – These were not considered viable as the land would need to be Purchased, in addition to the new build and services.

Options 5 and 6 – Since the Church Survey results were published, a virtual meeting has Taken place between the NVHWG and the Church Wardens for St Mary’s Church to ensure both groups are not trying to achieve the same goals. It was clear from that meeting that the church intends to remain primarily a place of worship and not to replace a village hall.

Our next step.

To hold a community consultation event when lockdown re-strictions allow so residents can air their views as to which option to take forward to a design stage.

In the meantime, thank you for your support and for more information, please

Contact: WimbotshamNVHWG@gmail.com or call 07498 566175.

All relevant documentation has been added to the Parish website please go and have a look.

<https://wimbotshampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/village-hall-working-group/>



**Wimbotsham New Village
Hall Working Group**

For results of surveys to date please refer to NVHWG page on **Wimbotsham.com**

WIMBOTSHAM METHODIST CHURCH

For further information and latest updates
please contact Mary Davies on 01366
388660

**Weekly Sunday morning services at 11 am
have now resumed, following the Govern-
ment and Connexional guidelines. All are
warmly welcome!**



Did any of us ever realise a year ago how the pandemic would change the regular routine of all of our lives in such unimaginable ways? As well as times of much loss and suffering, through the darker days of many challenges, there have also been – often unexpectedly – times of blessings too. In faith we know that “God is with us. We are not alone.”

For a short period towards the end of last year between lockdowns and under Covid regulations, we welcomed the opportunity to re-open our doors for Sunday worship before having to suspend these again.

But brighter days are back with us again! We rejoice in resuming our weekly services and look forward to welcoming all to our little Chapel in times ahead.

We are delighted that we are now able to resume our regular meetings whilst continuing to follow relevant Covid restrictions for the foreseeable future.

We warmly welcome back old friends and making new ones! Please join us and see our newly renovated Schoolroom too!

Sunday Morning Services Every Sunday at 11 am

Monthly Coffee Mornings 10 am - 12 noon on the 3rd Saturday of each month.

Bible Study/Fellowship Fortnightly 10.30 am - 12 noon on Tuesdays

Our Schoolroom is also available for hire to groups and meetings on an hourly rate.

For further information, please call Mary Davies 01366 388660

St Mary's Church Wimbotsham

St Mary's congregation meets regularly on the fourth Sunday of every month at Holy Trinity Stow Bardolph for the Eucharist. We meet socially distanced, wearing masks. The Revd. David or Nigel brings the Communion to us in our pews and since we have been able to sing hymns again (July) we sing behind our masks at half effort. It works fine. There are still many people who feel vulnerable and we decided that this is the best way forward. We also meet by Zoom for Evening Prayer each Sunday evening at 6pm.

All St. Mary's Wimbotsham Christenings, Weddings and Funeral services are taking place at Stow. Wimbotsham churchyard is open for tending graves, burials and the interment of ashes. The fire did not affect the churchyard.

Post-fire meetings of St Mary's PCC during the restricted periods have been difficult, just as all meetings have been difficult. We have been holding meetings over Zoom but nothing substitutes meeting together in person. We held our first public PCC on July 20th. It was good to be able to discuss things in a more natural way.

St Mary's was insured for up to £5 million on a 'like-for-like' basis. A costing exercise has been happening for the past year and we are just about to agree the fourth draft of this document. As with all insurance policies we will be awarded a sum in line with the rebuilding costs but we expect the award will not be the full amount. We are insured with Ecclesiastical Insurance Group (EIG) and have had many meetings with their loss adjusters Crawfords. We hope the level of award will be known to us fairly soon.

Some of you will know that St Mary's is now one of twelve parishes under the care of Revd. Dr. David Karoon. David, as well as being Rector of Wimbotsham is also Rector of 11 other parishes, Watlington, Wormegay, Tottenhill, Shouldham, Shouldham Thorpe, Runcton Holme, Fincham, Marham, Stow Bardolph, Stow Bridge and Nordelph - The West Norfolk Priory Group. He is, as you would expect, very busy. In July 2020 we welcomed our Curate, Nigel Moat to help David with his workload and to complete his training. Nigel and Heidi live in Watlington. He has been with us a year and was 'priested' at Ely Cathedral in July.

Kerry Motor Services

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The Bicentenary of the Eau Brink Cut

Two hundred years ago, Wimbotsham residents were looking forward to a more secure future. As long as anyone remembered, their livelihoods could be lost at random by floods from the River Great Ouse which ruined vast areas of rich farm land, animals and homes.

Local landowners wanted to straighten the river's course to speed its flow and improve drainage but this met bitter opposition from merchants who argued a straight river would result in currents so violent that ships in Kings Lynn's harbour would be endangered, together with the vital transport system provided by barges on the River Great Ouse and its tributaries.

Eventually, the radically conflicting opinions of eminent engineers were resolved. This led to an Act of Parliament in 1795 which authorised the Eau Brink Cut and a bridge over the River Great Ouse at Kings Lynn, but progress was delayed by the higher priority of defending Britain against Napoleon's threat to invade.

The Poor Employment Act of 1817, a measure to counteract social unrest after the Napoleonic Wars by funding employment for thousands of men returning from war on public works, finally enabled Commissioners to finance the Cut.

The shallow semi-circular course of the River Great Ouse around Marshland was directed into a short straight channel from Eau Brink at Wiggshall and conveyed directly to King's Lynn and out to sea. The bridge opened on 28th June 1821, and the Eau Brink Cut on July 31st 1821, both to great celebration.

Three Million Wheelbarrows also gives voice to the River Great Ouse itself, and its resistance to man's control, describing the frailty of those humans who tried to control its troublesome waters. Now, the river continues to offer a cautionary message about the consequences of man's activities on our environment.

Three Million Wheelbarrows - The story of the Eau Brink Cut, by Kathleen Saunders, will be available from early June and may be pre-ordered from Bittern Books <https://bitternbooks.co.uk/> or Mousehold Press <https://www.mousehold-press.co.uk>



July 2021

Dear Villager,

As you will be fully aware the pandemic is still with us, and the news has been full of talk about opening up society again. This has been driven by the very high percentage of the UK population have been vaccinated, but there is still a risk that we must all consider.

As a responsible committee we have a duty to consider the safety of the village and the visitors to the Fenman classic bike show. At the time of our last committee meeting there was still a lot of un-answered questions around the spread of the new Delta variant and what practical measures we could put in place to safely hold the classic bike show this year. We all took the decision that the safe and responsible thing to do was to cancel the show for the second year running.

We know and fully appreciate that this will be very disappointing to a large number of people and to the local charities that benefit greatly from this event. However the safety of everyone involved and the goodwill of the village must always take priority.

Thank you for your understanding on this matter and for your continued support over the years. Let's all stay safe and look forward to 2022

Yours faithfully,

The Fenman Bike Show Committee

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