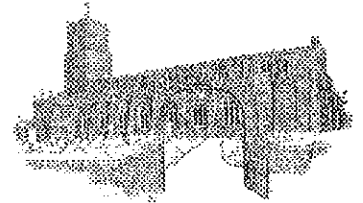


BLYTHBURGH PARISH NEWS



CHARLES AND CAMILLA WOO BLYTHBURGH

It had all the expected trimmings of a royal visit with a police detachment closing off the White Hart car park long before the expected arrival time of the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. When the cavalcade appeared almost to the minute, amidst flashing blue lights, they were greeted by landlord Michael Davis, resplendent in a new blue pin stripe suit.

Mike was clearly delighted at the visit to mark the importance of the shop and the White Hart, which is part of the Prince's the Pub is the Hub scheme. He said: "Prince Charles goes all over the country so it's very nice to have him here. A lot of villages are going down and down with pubs and shops closings, so it's very nice to have somebody on your side."

Prince Charles asked Mike if he stocked Adnam's new East Green beer, which he had sampled at the Southwold brewery: "It was rather good, at least it was cold." The Duchess was also aware of the heat but said that Blythburgh with its sea breezes was much more comfortable than windless Sandringham.

Waiting to greet them in the shop was Heidi Ray. Looking particularly smart in white blouse and smart dark trousers, she managed a discreet curtsy, before telling the Prince that the post office, which escaped the recent cull, was kept busy.

Moving on to meet Andrew Blois, whose father Sir Charles is the main landowner in Blythburgh, Prince Charles said he would like to learn more about the threat of flooding to the village and surrounding area and would like to be kept informed of any developments. "That was the best I could hope for," said Mr Blois, who will now make contact with the Prince's office.

Once the formalities were over the royal couple were in no rush to leave and chatted to villagers among a crowd of 100

or so: they were particularly taken by tales of crabbing from Rachael Doran and her brother. "Do you know, darling," said the Duchess, "they caught 125 in a morning."

One of the handful of Blythburgh regulars in the crowd said: "I saw it as an excuse for a lunchtime pint."

It was just as well for many intended diners and lunchtime drinkers were waived on past the pub. Even the delivery man for Walker's crisps had to park on the other side of the A 12 and deliver the boxes by hand.

David Tytler

A CLEAR VIEW OVER THE MARSHES

The overhead power lines across Blythburgh Marshes have been removed, nearly three years after Blythburgh Parish Council gave its full support to the £300,000 plus project to remove three kilometres of cable and about 40 supporting poles, writes David Tytler.

EDF energy worked with Suffolk Coasts and Heaths, local residents and landowners on the Blythburgh project, the pilot scheme for a £2.9million East of England programme, funded by Ofgem, the industry regulator. The funding will be used over the next five years to remove eyesore lines from open countryside rather than towns and villages.

Individual schemes in the region are vetted by the four Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the region (Suffolk Coasts and Heaths, Norfolk Coast, Dedham Vale and the Chilterns) and the Broads Authority using criteria designed to ensure that the work is achievable, cost-effective and will have a positive impact on the landscape. The impact on Blythburgh is unarguable; a beautiful view has now been made spectacular.

Neil Lister, projects officer with Suffolk Coasts and Heaths, said: "The removal of these power lines will enhance one of the most beautiful parts of the Suffolk AONB. I am delighted to see the project reach

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The next meeting of the
 Parish Council is on
Monday 8th September
 at 8pm in the Village Hall

*Everybody is welcome to attend
 and to raise their own concerns
 and questions at the
 Open Forum from 7.30pm*

EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Colin Huggins and Chris Madden, friends who are keen photographers, but not professional at this stage, have got together to exhibit their work in Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, Monday 11 August to Sunday 17 August. The images will cover a wide range from traditional landscape, flowers and birds to more contemporary work, available as framed and unframed photographs along with greetings cards. One or other of the photographers will be on hand to chat every day. Open daily 9am until 6pm.

ART GARDEN PARTY

An Art Exhibition with a difference - two and three dimensional art in a garden marquee - will be held at Rickyards, Mill Road, Wissett, Halesworth, Suffolk, Saturday, August 2 to Sunday August 10. Open, 10.30am to 6pm weekends, 2pm - 6pm weekdays. Artists include Mary Gundry, Blythburgh artist, and six talented artists in ceramics, stained glass, wood sculpture, paintings and drawings.

For further details: marygundry@tiscali.co.uk

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• CITY AND GUILDS QUALIFIED

TRUST SET UP TO HELP THE PARISH

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust was set up at the July meeting of the Parish Council to consider awarding grants to anybody in the parish who can demonstrate a need. The trust will use the proceeds of ticket sales to Latitude, the arts and music festival held in Henham Park, currently standing at around £3,000.

The Parish Council is extremely grateful to the organisers of Latitude, who for the last two years have donated 25 tickets for each day of the festival, which the council has sold to parishioners for £20 each. Six extra tickets were given this year to meet the demand for Saturday tickets. It is hoped that the generous provision of tickets across the weekend will continue.

The trust will have a minimum of three and a maximum of five trustees, two of whom will be parish counsellors. The council appointed Lucy Clapham and David Tytler as its representatives; the council appointed

Jenny Allen and Michael Nicholls as representatives from the community. A fifth trustee will be co-opted as the final trustee at the first meeting of the trust, when it will also elect a chairperson. Jim Boggis, Parish Council clerk, has been appointed trust administrator. Apart from the council representatives, all further appointments will be made by the trust.

The trust will be a free-standing body able to make its decisions independently of the parish council. It will be responsible for the available funds and will publish annual accounts, although awards will remain confidential. The trust will publish its award guidelines as soon as possible and it is hoped to make the first grants in the autumn. Once it is finalised, signed and witnessed, the trust deed will be published on the Parish Council website,

onesuffolk.co.uk/BlythburghPC/Parishcouncil and noticeboard.

The new trust is the first to be set up in the parish since Neale's Charity was established by Thomas Neale's will in 1701. His memorial inscription in Holy Trinity, Blythburgh, describes him as "one of the best of magistrates". An annual payment of £3 came from an estate in Bramfield, £2-10-0d (£2.50) to be used for teaching five poor children of the parish to read and 10 shillings to buy bibles or other religious books for young persons. By the late nineteenth century it was customary for the Blythburgh School Board to distribute the funds and when the Parish Council was formed it appointed trustees and managed the charity until inflation wiped out the real value of the bequest and the charity was closed.

Mrs C reports from Latitude – pages six and seven



Your Parish Councillors

Chair

David Tytler, Telephone: 478521

Vice Chair

Chair, finance sub-committee
Ro Williams

Chair, planning sub-committee
Robert Benson

Councillors

Binny Lewis, Lucy Clapham,
Alan Mackley, Cliff Waller

Blythburgh Carpet Bowls

Beryl Stringer

Horticultural Society

Secretary: Jenny Allen 478314

Neighbourhood Watch

Robert Benson 478047

Village Hall

Henrietta Maslen 478438

Bookings: 07850 140581

Blythburgh Society

Chairman: Alan Mackley 478438

SUPPORTING FAMILIES IN NEED

Home-Start Suffolk Coastal, a registered charity, offers help to local families who have at least one child under the age of five. Friendly flexible support and an extra pair of hands or ears, is available to families who feel they are in need of some additional support. Last year the voluntary scheme, which costs close to £100,000 a year, supported almost 60 families.

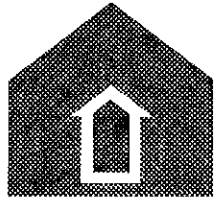
The charity is currently in need of volunteers to join the fundraising committee, which meets

monthly and organises events with the proceeds directly benefiting the scheme.

If you are interested in joining our fundraising committee, would like to find out about any other voluntary positions with Home-Start, would like support from Home-Start, or make a donation contact:

01394 389402

office@homestartcoastal.co.uk



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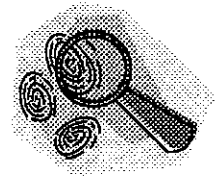
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MRS CLAPHAM INVESTIGATES:

THE LATITUDE CIRCUS ROLLS INTO TOWN



Aldeburgh Festival invades our church every summer, cables dripping from BBC lorries, cars carving up our front field and lane, disgorging some of the most arrogant people it's been my pleasure to cross the road to try to run over. Blythburgh is of no interest to them - just meet, hoot and leave. So when our own festival rolls in to town, I, for one, greet the Latitude circus with genuine pleasure.

In return for three nights of thumping bass wafting over from Henham estate, they fill our pub, calm the traffic. They listen to our Parish Council - which is why we have cheap tickets and shuttle buses and why the village will have it's own speed gun, courtesy of Latitude.

Good for them. And us.

But Latitude is no village fete. Their modest boast that "it's more than just a music festival" should add the health warning - "it's an endurance test". Having queued to get to the festival site, we then queued in the rain for our wrist-bands before queuing to get on to the campsite, ready for three days and nights of non-stop entertainment.

No, Mr Clapham and I hadn't learnt our lesson from last year's experience (I guess it's like that forgetting-the-pain-of-giving-birth-or-you'd-never-do-it-again syndrome) but we were a little more prepared. A large tent, camp-beds and, for little Miss Precious here, ear-plugs and a Hollywood-style eye mask.

The cheery volunteers on hand to help put up tents were a welcome sight for starting-to-be-sore eyes. We moored our monster tent as close to the car park and as far away from the loos as possible. Not as daft as it sounds, it takes weeks to get that distinctive stench out of the airways.

Apparently, there were enough loos to accommodate fifty thousand revelers (hmm...) so it appears that the festival has almost doubled in size in its' first three years. It certainly felt like it.

You know those dreams which start off quite sensibly, then move on to weird and impossible until you wake up wondering where you are and what day it is...

Well, first there was the *bride of the dead* dripping with blood and accompanied by zombies limping through the woods towards the lake where pink and purple sheep were grazing. Nearby, the RSC was doing its stuff alongside a little ballet from Sadler's Wells.



'I LOST SIGHT OF MY BELOVED

Actually, this magic spot was a life-saver - Pimm's apart - a little haven on the river, one of the few areas you could escape the maddening crowd, as they say.

Picture yourself in a boat (punt) on a river with tangerine trees (coloured spotlights) cellophane flowers of yellow and green, towering over your head...more like giant metal daisies as a matter of fact...but you get the picture.

As we followed a couple sporting tutus and pushing an infant in a yellow wheelbarrow, we came across Paul Merton being asked if he had a pass to get into the Radio 4 tent for Just a Minute. "I have," he said, "been doing the show for twenty years, will that help at all?"

Holding on tight to Mr C (for fear of being separated by the crowds) we struggled past a group wearing dinner jackets and horses heads, towards the nearest bar, which turned out to be a red double-decker bus that served only Pimm's as you relaxed in giant deckchairs.

This is the calm before the storm.

Once over the river, the main arena looms - and from then on you are bombarded with sound - poets, comics, bands, lunatics, generators and always that booming bass somewhere in the background that rumbles its way up from toe to eyeball.

Drifting through the humid air came the smells of frying - people as well as food, strange substances, babies, stale beer and, of course, long-drop loos. On each of these, some wag had pasted the sign Don't Look Down - sound advice, if you were mad or desperate enough to use the things.

There was no peace for the eyes either - luminous Peruvian rugs, fluorescent fairy wings and rainbow-coloured hammocks (these hammocks were brilliant when you're feet gave out - strong enough to accommodate a whole family).

And there were plenty of these - kids everywhere. They had a huge area all to themselves but were more often than not to be seen sitting on dad's shoulders, waving small fat arms to the likes of Franz Ferdinand or Nizlopi. My favourite small girl was sitting on the ground, eating a pancake, napkin at the ready like a duchess, oblivious to the massive, late night crowd stomping around her.

After a few hours of blind panic it gets easier to adjust to thousands of people, hurrying from Arena to bar, bar to Arena and so on...you learn to swerve around each other, without tripping over prone bodies or toddlers grubbing in the dirt, with all the deftness of a bat in the dark.

Not so much cat-walk stuff this year, sadly. Ubiquitous wellies, naturally (another steamy smell) but the newest girlie trend of denim shorts rolled



up to your armpits wasn't a great look for everybody. One bonus was lots of sequinned falsies - eyelashes, that is - but mostly the crowd looked as if they'd fled from the scene of a disaster and thrown on the nearest clothes, not necessarily their own.

So many people does mean you can't get near the acts you want to see without camping there a few hours in advance - couldn't get within football-pitch distance of Blondie or Bill Bai-

ley and even at two in the morning Mr C couldn't get close enough even to hear the Buzzcocks.

I'd taken to my pit by then, having spent a delightful time watching the amazing holograms, provided by Radio 4, from Alice in Wonderland, lighting up the river.

Unfortunately, this was followed by a mass exodus (from the brilliant Icelandic band Sigur Ros) who stampeded across the bridge, sweeping me away in to the darkness.

Being vertically-challenged, I lost sight of my beloved and had to hide in a corner until the herd had finally reached the water-hole.

Did you ever lose your mum in the supermarket? Well, you'll understand why it was such a happy reunion over an hour later - the synchronised "where the hell have you been?" came with a huge bear hug.

Our tent was another safe haven, although far from sound-proof.

We were most puzzled, in the wee, small hours to hear, what sounded like, a yelping terrier in distress. This continued for a couple of minutes until a loud 'yes' brought a round of applause from all the neighbouring tents.

Well, who can resist a performing animal?

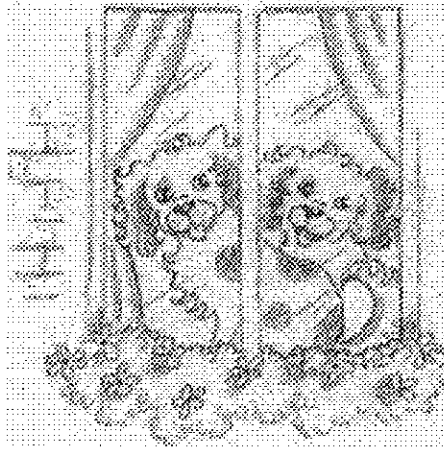
'YOU LEARN TO SWERVE AROUND EACH OTHER, WITHOUT TRIPPING OVER BODIES OR TODDLERS'

EDNA WOODGATE 1911 - 2008

Edna Woodgate lived in Forge Cottage, Priory Road for nearly fifty years. Born in 1911 in Worcester, she was the daughter of Alfred Price, a leading light in the establishment of the Forestry Commission. This involved the family moving around the country before finally settling in Dunwich in 1934.

Here she met local boy Robert Woodgate, marrying in 1938. Sadly, Edna was widowed at the age of 35 when Robert, a naval officer, having come through the war, died of a burst appendix, leaving Edna to bring up son, Alfred, and daughter, Gillian, on her own.

In 1959 Edna moved to Blythburgh to live next door to her great friend Margaret Grubb (later to become Hubbard) who owned The Priory and several surrounding cottages. Edna and Margaret were devoted to animals and birds - Edna's tortoises moving to Forge Cottage with her and daughter Gill, Alfred having followed in his father's footsteps in to the Navy. I am pleased to report that Speedy and Georgie are still going strong



and have now taken up residence in Gill's garden. There was always a brace of King Charles spaniels to be seen on Edna's windowsill and a pile of hay in her garage (where the blacksmith once plied his trade) for Margaret and Ken Hubbard's donkeys. Many villagers will have a vivid picture of Tommy Cooney, sitting on a hay bale, passing the time of day with the donkeys as they grazed the pretty orchard triangle opposite Forge Cottage.

After Margaret's death, Ken and Edna remained firm friends, united by their shared love of animals. Every Wednesday and Sunday evening he would pop round to Edna's for a gin-and-tonic (large for him, watered down for her - sherry being her preferred tippie).

Until her death at the age of 97, Edna remained independent, with the help of Gill and her husband Peter, making daily calls to her grandchildren and putting all her energies in to caring for this unspoilt corner of Blythburgh, which she and Margaret had spent so many years preserving for their beloved creatures.

Lucy Clapham

SUSAN WATSON 1942 - 2008

Susan (Sue) Watson was born in High Wycombe in 1942, the daughter of Eric and Beth Webb, and became a life-long supporter of Wycombe Wanderers. (The reception after the funeral service was held at the club.) Her son, David, still lives in High Wycombe and has inherited his mother's love of the football club.

Sue loved travel, and did it in style on Concorde and the QE2. Amongst her favourite destinations were New York, Rome and Barbados, but she also loved visiting Wales, North Norfolk and Suffolk. She and her husband, local solicitor David Watson, moved to Blythburgh in 2001. She died on June 11 this year.

Like her parents, particularly her mother, Sue enjoyed the good things of life, such as Tiffany, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Covent Garden and the prancing horse Ferrarri. But she also liked the greasy spoon café and what she described as "slobbering it".

She was passionate about her dogs, now Lizzie and Sidney who followed on from Penny, Sam, Henry, Megan, Prince and Dudley. Sue and her dogs went together: probably more important than the two Davids and certainly, she would say, better trained.

As a friend, you could not have hoped for anyone

better. She was one of those friends who you know will support you in whatever you do, give you space when needed and greet you as if you have never been away. A good listener, non-judgemental, great sense of humour and game for everything.

Sue found one of her oldest friends on the terraces of Loakes Park, the Wycombe Wanderers' ground, in the late sixties. A classy lady, who was more used to the boardroom, she was always happy to rough it with the true fans on the touchlines. Together they drove many miles in all weathers and power cuts to find grounds all over the country.

Sue was adventurous and resilient and loved New York and the QE2. In a gale force 10 she and a handful of like-minded souls remained on deck refusing to be beaten whilst others stayed below. To be fair, she was in the bar and did not want to leave her drink, which regularly passed at a 45-degree angle.

Susan Watson has been described as one of life's little gems. The gem concerned would have to be a Tiffany diamond and a very big one.

This article has been written from the three tributes, including one from her husband, that were read at Susan's funeral earlier in the summer

BLYTHBURGH CHARACTERS

RICHARD HARNELL—*LITTLE DICK*

Time: 15 April 1801. Place: the Old Bailey, London's Central Criminal Court. Prosecuting: the Attorney General. In the dock: Richard 'Little Dick' Harnell. Little Dick was in big trouble. Two indictments alleged his involvement in smuggling. The first related to events in May 1792 when he was accused of firing on an excise boat from a heavily armed craft off Sizewell. There being insufficient evidence to link him specifically with the crime, he was acquitted. But Dick's luck did not hold. The second indictment was in July 1797. He had obstructed excise officers in their attempts to seize 500 gallons of foreign geneva (Dutch gin), during a violent confrontation at Henham.

Acting upon intelligence, Burdett and Gooch, two excise men, tracked a party of 20 to 30 smugglers, travelling south with seven or eight carts carrying a large quantity of Dutch gin that had been brought ashore at Lowestoft. Three carts were seized and, later, 60 or 70 casks unloaded from the ones that got away were discovered in Henham Park. While the revenue men were loading the contraband into hired wagons, the smugglers reappeared with their carts coming up the hill from Blythburgh White Hart. "Damn your eyes," shouted Dick, "We want the tubs and the tubs we shall have."

The surrounded excise men had to fight their way out with swords and threatened to open fire if the casks were moved. "Here is a breast to shoot at,"

declared a sailor, unbuttoning his shirt. The parties battled for half an hour using guns, pitchforks, clubs and stones. With ammunition low, a deal was struck: the excise men would take only 20 casks. "Damn your eyes, I will mark you," was Dick's parting taunt. But the excise men knew him well and declared he would have to answer for the whole.

In spite of having a £50 (£20,000 in today's money) reward on his head, four years went by before Little Dick found himself in the dock. His defence was mistaken identity. He claimed, supported by witnesses, that on a number of occasions the excise men had failed to recognise him. One such moment was at The Halberd public house in Ipswich - it's still there - a notorious haunt of smugglers where the landlord was known as The Telegraph.. Unfortunately for Dick, a key defence witness broke under cross-examination. He admitted he was a former customs officer, dismissed for fraud. His testimony was deemed wilful perjury and he too found himself in the dock.

Dick was found guilty and sentenced to three years hard labour in a hulk - a prison ship. Bad enough, but it could have been worse. Little Dick was, after all, allowed to live another day.

Alan Mackley

With thanks to Martyn Elmy for drawing my attention to Little Dick

DASHING HERO SAVES DAMSEL IN DISTRESS

Early one July morning the phone rang in one of Blythburgh's most popular addresses, calling for instant help. A worried mother, already at work, reported that her daughter was in great distress, trapped in the house by a bird. This immediately interested our hero. A bird...

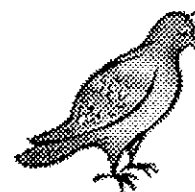
He took instant action, dispatching one of his female colleagues to deal with the crisis. She was soon back to report that the bird in question was a pigeon, whose flapping wings kept her at bay. It was not a dead blackbird as she had been led to believe.

There was nothing for it. Blythburgh's own Superman took off his glasses and sped into action. The pants, mercifully, stayed beneath the trousers. "It was terrifying," he said later, "It was huge and it

was difficult to escape the talons, which dug through my clothes. It was more like a pterodactyl than a pigeon. Without my glasses I couldn't see a thing, but I did not hesitate and grabbed it in both hands before releasing it into the morning sky."

In reflective mood our hero said: "Do you know, I am beginning to believe all that stuff myself."

Still the damsel in distress was indeed rescued, although accounts of the deed increase in daring-do at each telling. Our hero, forever modest, has asked not to be named. But in the interests of press freedom, Blythburgh Parish News is prepared to unmask him. He is none other than the White Hart's Edward Green, now known as Eddy the Pigeon.



COUNCIL OBJECTS TO NEW CHICKEN FARM

The Parish Council decided at its July meeting that it could not support a planning application to erect new barns for an intensive poultry production unit for about 340,000 birds, an admin/staff lodge, farm manager's temporary home and associated landscaping.

The council's understanding of the proposed operation is that it involves industrial-scale production of a price-sensitive commodity. The council believes that the scale and nature of the proposed development are inappropriate in such a context. It believes that as a new project it does not satisfy the requirements of the local plan. The contribution to local employment opportunities is very small.

The potential for smell from the ventilation of barns, the removal of dead birds, the handling of chicken manure, and polluted water is a serious concern. Thorington, Blythburgh is in the direction of prevailing south-westerly winds. In addition to a restaurant, there are two other established commercial activities, a shooting school and a golf course, nearby. These outdoor activities and local residences would be seriously affected by any smell or noise.

In relation to the Environmental Report attached to the application, one councilor managed a brief look at the site and raised the following points:

The area is part of the main water catchment area of Westwood Marsh, in Walberswick National Nature Reserve, the largest and most important reed-bed site in Britain. This site holds many national and international designations.

The report covers some groups well, but others inadequately. No specific surveys were carried out for breeding birds and protected species such as skylarks. The flora survey is quite limited. It does point out that bee orchids are present in some numbers, but a number of additional species can also be seen.

Another important factor omitted is the suitability for solitary bees and wasps, one of Britain's most threatened and endangered groups, it is possible that a number of species are already present and these should be surveyed.

Other planning matters: English Heritage has refused permission to install a storage shed for the Village Hall. An appeal has been raised against the refusal of the erection of two two-storey dwellings on land opposite Priory Lodge, Priory Road, Blythburgh. The council had no objection to the erection of a single bay timber cartlodge with side store at 6 Angel Lane, Blythburgh.

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VILLAGE ACTION PLAN TAKES SHAPE

Councillor Ro Williams, the Parish Council's representative on the Parish Plan Steering Group, told the July meeting of the council, that a successful needs analysis event had been held in May, attended by more than 50 parishioners.

Issues raised at the event, submitted anonymously, including thoughts and concerns about Blythburgh, the way it was managed and what could be improved, have been considered by the committee and will form the basis of a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be tested on a sample of parishioners over the next few weeks. Once it is established that the questionnaire is easy to understand and complete, it will be delivered to every home in the parish.

The committee requires volunteers to deliver and collect the questionnaire and those prepared to do so are asked to contact Brenda Motley on 01502 478289. The committee is now working on a questionnaire for the under 16s.

Councillors expressed were some concerned that the questionnaire should cover issues raised by those who were unable to attend the May event. Councillor Williams said there were constraints on what could and could not be included. It was pointed out that committee members were also parishioners and were entitled to contribute their own ideas.

Siobhan Quinn, chair of the steering committee, said the views of the council would be taken on board. Councillor Lucy Clapham surprised the meeting when she resigned from the committee. She said she felt there was a conflict of interest between her role on the committee and her duties as a parish councillor, a view not shared by Councillor Williams. Councillor Clapham's resignation was accepted with regret. It will now be up to the Parish Council to decide whether or not to replace her.

David Tytler

NEARLY READY TO TAKE TO THE ROAD

The manufacturer of the laser speed gun has confirmed that delivery will be about four weeks after the order is placed. The cost remains £2,100 plus VAT, which the Parish Council can reclaim. The organisers of Latitude have agreed to pay for the gun.

The two mobile road signs have been made by the county's highways department and are ready for use. They will be collected by the six volunteers when they go to Suffolk Police Headquarters in Martlesham for photo ID cards and to be trained in the use of the laser gun. The date will be confirmed shortly. With a little luck the volunteers will be on the road in September/October, about 12 months after the council decided to support a Community Speed Watch Campaign in Blythburgh.

Latest figures from the Suffolk RoadSafe Board show that in 2007 41.7% of fatal road accidents in Suffolk were caused, to some degree, by excessive speeding.

A question was raised at the last Parish Council meeting about the cost of an electronic road sign in comparison with the laser speed gun. There is actually very little difference between the two: the electronic sign sells for £1,945 plus VAT plus delivery. It can be programmed and pre-set for a particle speed, for example 30mph. As a vehicle approaches doing

more than the set speed it will flash a neon sign: SLOW DOWN.

Permission to place the signs on verges or footpaths has to be given by the highways department. The problem with most signs is that they run from a small motorcycle battery, which lasts for between five and seven days before requiring to be re-charged. There is also the risk of leaving equipment unattended by the side of the road. The general consensus from the police is that the random laser gun would be more effective for the needs of Blythburgh than the static electronic sign.

Many thanks to everybody for their untold patience in getting this scheme off the ground. **Binny Lewis**

COUNCILS SAVE £1MILLION

A partnership of three Suffolk councils has struck an important deal to help make collective savings of over £1 million. Suffolk Coastal, Waveney and Babergh wanted to see if joint working could help them negotiate a better deal for their insurance costs and their efforts will realise huge savings on insurance premiums across the next five years.

NOTES FROM DAISY BANK XXXIII

I hate to say it but I was really quite impressed with John Selwyn Gummer when he made an appearance at Blythburgh Village Hall a few weeks ago to talk about the flooding issue. I still couldn't vote for him but I think I've always been aware of his commitment as a good constituency Member of Parliament for Suffolk coastal.

His main point was that we must hold what we have and be prepared to spend money on doing so. To give up will only burden future generations with even bigger bills to keep the sea from flooding our part of East Anglia. He used the analogy of not letting ivy get into your guttering and even worse into your roof with the consequent financial cost to get rid of it. Coming back from the meeting and looking at the ivy beginning to cover our roof, come autumn I now realise something will have to be done. Thank you Mr Gummer on both counts.

At one point in the meeting a member of the audience from Walberswick questioned Mr Gummer's integrity. The withering reply from Mr G would have put the malevolent Sir Alan Sugar to shame. Talking of which, what are we going to do on Wednesday evenings from now on? In our case, I suppose just wait for next year and another round. It's bad enough doing without Celebrity Big Brother.

Clara and Clarissa spend a lot of time with us now. Perhaps they're having a holiday? More probably it's due to an excess of sexual harassment from Barnaby who still pops by from time to time to check on his missing hens. It's true they believe in dust bowls rather than neat lawns and a tasty new shoot from a just bought plant will occasionally cause anxious cries from the residents, but hey ho.

There's an endless supply of

wild birdseed from hundredweight bags and there's no prejudice from Murphy the Siamese or Ginger Molly so why not? Babs the brown hen has recently joined them so let's hope they're still laying next door or their owner might consider their hols to be finally over. We haven't seen Oscar the pheasant for a while but from time to time we hear him, which is reassuring.

I see the floodwater has now turned green. From our kitchen window it looks like a strip of astro turf laid neatly between the reeds. I quite like it but if we have to have flooded marshes then I must admit I prefer the reflective qualities of water. Evidently the good people of Walberswick have banded together to fill their breaches with sandbags numerous. I hope it works but something tells me that if we have another November storm like last year, they'll be sandbagging again.

Stand on our breach and see and hear the power of tons of water thundering through the gap at high tide and you understand that nothing, absolutely nothing stops water when its made its mind up. Evidently in a hundred years time, Cambridge will be a port and they'll be talking about Blythburgh and Southwold as they do now about Dunwich. When I left the sea I thought at least I wouldn't finish up with a watery grave. But now it seems I will, whether I like it or not.

In the recent exhibition we had at the church when it seemed to rain continuously for the whole of the two weeks, one art critic was heard to say that in his opinion "It", the exhibition, "had all been done before". And to a certain extent I suppose it had but at least he, the 'art critic' hadn't done or indeed had the ability to do anything before, now or ever after.

Paul Bennett

