

ASSHINGTON

NEWS



DECEMBER 2022

CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS (useful numbers)

If your club or organisation is not listed here and you would like to be included, then please let me know on 01787 210354 or email bronwenstacey@btinternet.com

Allotments Secretary	Claire Osborne	07920 800108
Assington Baby and Toddler Group	Rev Tricia Box	01787 227528
Assington Books, Village Hall (see post office for times)	Michelle Bourner	07954 221773
Assington Farmshop	Maxine Gardiner	01787 211610
Assington Post Office, Village Hall	Mon 1.30-3.30,	Wed 9-12
Assington Village Charity Secretary	Claire Osborne	07920 800108
Boxford CEVC Primary School (office@boxford.suffolk.sch.uk)	Head: Mrs J Davies	01787 210332
Brownies, Boxford	Moira Grant	01787 211513
Church - Organist	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
Church - Reader	Dr John Symons	01787 211534
Church - Secretary	Emily Cartlidge	07976724266
Church - Treasurer	Ian Clark	01787 211133
Churchwarden	Roger Britcher	01787 211021
Churchwarden	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
Community Choir	Nettie Osman	07957 394780
County Councillor (james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk)	James Finch	01473 264993
District Councillor (Assington)	Lee Parker	01787 376073
Doctors surgery – Sudbury	Hardwicke House	01787 310000
Doctors surgery – Bures	Bures	01787 227529
Footpath Wardens	Paul & Cynthia Hollingsworth	01787 211620
Horticultural Society	Bryn Hurren	01787 210854
Leavenheath Cinema	Marion	01206 263301
Member of Parliament (james.cartlidge.mp@parliament.uk)	James Cartlidge	020 7219 4875
Parish Council	Simon Thorogood	01787 227400
bronwenstacey@btinternet.com	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
whitemkevin@me.com	Kevin White	07477 580561
tony@howcroft.net	Tony Howcroft	
hwallace58@gmail.com	Helen Wallace	01787 211162
i.jordan741@btinternet.com	Ian Jordan	
andrewpeterhill@hotmail.com	Andrew Hill	01787 827112
Parish Council - Clerk, (assingtonpc@yahoo.com)	Christine Hargan	01449 674727
Pub – The Shoulder of Mutton		01787 210334
Vicar (vicar@parishchurch.co.uk)	The Revd Daniel Whiffin	01787 228292
Village Hall – Bookings	Karen Wiles	07983 002072
Village Hall - Caretaker	Paul Battle	07473 933320
Womens Institute, Boxford (annie-phillips@hotmail.co.uk)	Annie Phillips	01787 211729

The Assington News is a community magazine funded primarily through adverts and donations, for which we are always most grateful.
ADVERTS. RATES pa : £20 for 1/8 size page advert, £35 for 1/4 page advert, £60 for 1/2 page advert, £120 for a full page advert.
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 Please make cheques payable to the Assington Association.

The ASSINGTON NEWS NOW IN COLOUR ONLINE at <http://assington.onesuffolk.net/assington-news/>

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS

*Wishing everyone a very happy and healthy time over this
Christmas Season and New Year 2023*



*YOU ARE REMINDED THAT THE ASSINGTON NEWS MAY BE VIEWED ON LINE IN COLOUR.
GO TO : assington.onesuffolk.net and select Assington News from the strap line at the top*

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TIM HARRIS

We are deeply saddened to report the recent death of local figure and the village's oldest resident, Tim Harris.

Dear Tim will be sorely missed by all who knew him in the local community, and we shall miss seeing him and chatting with him at all the main village events.

We understand that a private family cremation is planned, followed by a Celebration of Tim's life, which will be held at the church of St Edmund King and Martyr, Assington, on Monday 5th December at 1.30pm. All friends will be welcome.

We hope to publish a full Obituary in the next edition.



Our beautiful church in the Autumn.

Thanks for the photography to Jeff Stacey and Mrs J Gilbertson.



THE HAPPYSOUNDS CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

We are delighted to announce that our local community Happysounds Choir, under Nettie's excellent leadership, will be performing a Christmas Concert in **Assington Church at 3.30pm on 3rd December.**

They are very excited to be able both take advantage of, and show off, the wonderful acoustics in the church building.

The Choir will be singing an entertaining mix of Carols and Christmas pop songs, with a few carol singalongs for good measure. We always look forward to these concerts: when the Choir performs, you just cannot avoid wanting to join in - it is such a great sound.

There will be seasonal refreshments available during the interval.

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone in the audience, for a great start to your jolly Christmas run-up.

For tickets please email
janette.gunn@yahoo.com

Adults £5, under 12s, £2.50





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PARISH CHURCH NEWS



*Letter from the
Rev Daniel Whiffin,
Vicar of
Bures with Assington
and
Little Cornard*



Dear friends

As I sit down to write this letter, I have just received the wonderful news of the safe birth of a new baby. Of course, at Christmas we celebrate the birth of a baby so important that the good news of his birth is still proclaimed over 2000 years after it took place. Nowadays, parents preparing for a birth are encouraged to write a 'birth plan'. In one of these, decisions around the circumstances of the labour and birth can be thought about beforehand. Any parents with previous experience know that such a plan must be almost entirely flexible, as the process of birth is not something even modern medicine is able to control.

Have you ever wondered at the 'birth plan' made by the Heavenly Father? Not subject to our limitations, God's designs always come to pass. So, the circumstances of Jesus' birth must have happened entirely to plan. It was God's design that his Messiah (eternal saving king) was to be born to low status parents from a backwater town. God intended a scandal to be in the air, as the not-yet-married young woman was found to be with child. Due to the political self-serving manoeuvrings of human rulers, the parents would have to go through the great upheaval of travelling to live in a different town, miles away, just as the birth was due. Even then, the family guest rooms were already full, so the most-notable birth and subsequent nursing had to happen in the place for keeping animals. Caesar's orders and this lack of a room were vital pieces of God's perfect birth plan. As was the guest list for the baby king's first visitors: those who occupied one of the least admired jobs in Bethlehem society. Then, rather than returning home, God's plan was for the family to become refugees in Egypt in response to King Herod's design against the child's life.

Why would God plan the Saviour's birth to be this way? What difference does it make? Well, it means everything for ordinary people with lives never too far away from challenges or hardship. God was demonstrating that his love was not just for those with high status and well-turned-out lives. The divine birth plan makes it clear that the gift of becoming God's child is not for the rich and powerful who might be able to purchase it. No, it's even for those whose families might have scandals, or live at the whim of politicians, or through lack of means or even international events, are unable to live secure in a home of their own. The manner of Jesus' birth is the great leveller. Absolutely anyone, no matter where they come from or what their lives are like, can receive forgiveness and eternal life as the most amazing Christmas gift. Anyone, that is, who is ready to celebrate the life of Jesus Christ as their own best news in the world.

May you know God's richest blessings this Christmas and in 2023.

Your servant

Daniel

Vicar: Daniel Whiffin 01787 228292
email: vicar@parishchurch.co.uk

Associate Priest Rev Simon White
07572 418555

Reader: Dr John Symons 211534
Churchwardens:

Roger Britcher 211021
Bronwen Stacey 210354

Organist: Bronwen Stacey 210354
Secretary: Emily Cartlidge 07976 724266
Treasurer: Ian Clark 211133



Saint Edmund
King & Martyr
Assington



Assington church has its own website. The full address is
<https://assingtonchurch.org.uk>

DECEMBER SERVICES IN ASSINGTON CHURCH



4 DECEMBER @ 10.30am CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

**18 DECEMBER @ 5pm CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE
DO COME ALONG, EVERYONE INVITED.
Please bring a torch**

**25 DECEMBER @ 10.30am CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE
with Holy Communion**

JANUARY 2023 SERVICES

**1 JANUARY Benefice Communion Service at Bures
@ 10.30am**

15 JANUARY ASSINGTON @ 10.30am HOLY COMMUNION

**29 JANUARY @ 10.30am Benefice Communion Service at
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ASSINGTON'S REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE

At 10.30am on Sunday, 13th November the Remembrance Service took place in Assington Church.



As on previous occasions, David Wiles paraded the British Legion Standard from Rose Green, starting at 9.45am. He marched along the length of The Street, accompanied by a number of local residents who walked behind David to end up at the church for the Service.

During the service, which was conducted by John Symons, the names of the fallen who had lived in Assington was read out from the wall memorials; their age when they died, and the place and date of their early demise was given, reminding us of the permanent loss to friends and families, and indeed the whole community.

Once again, we tuned into the BBC radio Cenotaph Service, to feel in unity with the entire country as it paid tribute 'Lest We Forget'. The British Legion Standard was presented and was dipped in an act of homage, at the two minutes' silence and following Reveille.



Directly following the service another wreath was laid at the WWII grave in the churchyard.



Members of the congregation came out to see this final part of the Remembrance Ceremony, before popping back into Church for refreshments.



THINGS TO DO

HAPPYSOUNDS CHRISTMAS FUNDRAISER CONCERT

**Saturday 3rd December at
3.30pm**

in Assington Church

An entertaining mix of Carols and Christmas pop tunes, with a few Carol singalongs.

Tickets £5 per head (Under 12's
£2.50)

Please email janette.gunn@yahoo.com
for tickets

JANUARY AT THE QUAY THEATRE

- 3rd Mrs Harris Goes to Paris (Cinema)
- 5th Midwinter Revel (Music)
- 7th Free and Co: Free and Bad Company tribute band
- 13th Graffiti Classics (Music)
- 14th The Complete Stone Roses tribute band
- 17th The Railway Children (Cinema)
- 19th Scotland Yard Investigates (Drama)
- 21st Essex County Band (Music)
- 24th See How They Run (Cinema)
- 25th ROH Season: Like Water for Chocolate (Live Cinema)
- 27th Women In Rock (Music)
- 28th An Audience With Arthur Smith (Comedy)



CHRISTMAS By Sir John Betjeman

*The bells of waiting Advent ring,
The Tortoise stove is lit again
And lamp-oil light across the night
Has caught the streaks of winter rain
In many a stained-glass window sheen
From Crimson Lake to Hookers Green.*

*The holly in the windy hedge
And round the Manor House the yew
Will soon be stripped to deck the ledge,
The altar, font and arch and pew,
So that the villagers can say
'The church looks nice' on Christmas Day.*

*Provincial Public Houses blaze,
Corporation tramcars clang,
On lighted tenements I gaze,
Where paper decorations hang,
And bunting in the red Town Hall
Says 'Merry Christmas to you all'.*

*And London shops on Christmas Eve
Are strung with silver bells and flowers
As hurrying clerks the City leave
To pigeon-haunted classic towers,
And marbled clouds go scudding by
The many-steepled London sky.*


*And girls in slacks remember Dad
And oafish louts remember Mum,
And sleepless children's hearts are glad.
And Christmas-morning bells say 'Come!'
Even to shining ones who dwell
Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.*

*And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?*

*And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissue'd fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,*

*No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare -
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*





Assington Baby
and Toddler
Group

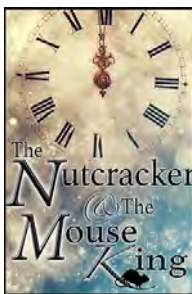
Thank you
for all your support
and
for making it
such a friendly
group.

We all love
meeting together!

Mums, dads, grandparents, carers and childminders living in and around Assington ... bring your little ones to a group for accompanied babies and toddlers in the lovely, airy Village Hall. Great toys and play followed by stories, lots of singing, then snack time. Good coffee too!
Held twice a month, Thursdays 9.30 - 11.00 am, at £3 per family.

Here are the dates for autumn/early winter:
November 10 and 24 December 8 January 12 and 26

Do contact me, Revd Tricia Box: 01787 227528 or 07747 124592




**This is My Theatre performance of
The Nutcracker and the Mouse King
is being performed at St Mary's
Church on the Chilton Industrial
Estate** near Sudbury.

It's nearly Christmas and Maria receives an early gift of a beautiful wooden Nutcracker soldier. Little does Maria know that his wooden figure was once a real child and when the magic of Christmas is strongest, the Nutcracker comes to life. Can Maria help the Nutcracker to defeat the horrid Mouse King and break the curse. Join us in a journey to magical kingdoms with music, puppetry and characters that the whole family will love.

The performance will take place on
Thursday 8th December at 7pm with doors open at 6.30pm. Tickets are £15 for adults and £10 for under 16s.

For more information and to book tickets:
<https://www.thisismytheatre.com/chilton>



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CHRISTMAS PAST.....

Who doesn't like looking through "old photographs"?

We always like to see whether we recognise any of the people from times gone by, when they were much younger, and then to recall memories of this or that person, or the particular occasions which everyone attended.

On these pages are some photographs of Assington approximately 60 years ago, perhaps in the early 1960s.

Thanks to Mrs June Thompson, who made these available to us, (and who appears on one of them).

The social history aspect is of great interest: I believe that some of these photos were taken in the Village School, (now L'Ecole), which of course was then attended by all the younger village children.

The Village Christmas Party (pictured directly below), was possibly held in the old Village Hall. It appears that all the children sitting around the table are little girls - I wonder, was there a separate table (or party?) for the boys? Or was it a Sunday School party, and not many boys attended Sunday School?

Looking at the adults surrounding the table, there was a wide age-range of people who attended this Christmas Party.

I can still recall such events when I was a little girl, - similar chairs, and numerous "little old ladies" some of whose names I never really knew, although I recognised them by sight. In my village growing up, there was a higher proportion of "old ladies" (who probably were not really very old, says she!), because of the number of men of a similar age who never came home from the first World War.

On the following page, the beautifully-dressed and well-behaved children are playing 'pass the parcel'. The same occasion is depicted in the third photo, where children have been eating their party food on a blanket and it shows nine adults; were they all staff at the school, or had some additional helpers been drafted in for the occasion?

I feel sure that some readers will be able to put names to some of the faces.





NATURE WATCH

I was interested in THE NATURE WATCH item in the November Edition, about the two species of Oak.

I think it's worth mentioning a third species, the Turkey Oak which is a non-native that's spreading in the area, and beginning to produce hybrids with the Pedunculate Oak.

Though at first sight, the Turkey Oak looks no different from the other two, it is said to produce worthless timber, and a glance at a twig will show the tips are orange and scaly, with abundant little leafy bracts. The acorn cups are unmistakable, being covered in small spikes, hedgehog-style.



Turkey Oak is a tree that grows vigorously, reaching a height of 40 metres. The Turkey Oak was introduced into Britain in 1735. Like other oaks, it belongs to the Beech family (Fagaceae). The tree is native to an area from south east France across to the Balkans and Turkey.

Turkey Oak is host to a parasitic wasp that also forms galls on native oaks. In its natural range, it is a pioneer species and can quickly colonise open areas, and in that respect, it is useful in terms of erosion control and soil conservation. It can

also tolerate air pollution and drought (to a degree) so it may be planted as an ornamental tree in urban areas. However, some regard it as an invasive species and

seek to remove it from woodland. The turkey oak is not home to the variety of species that are found in the native oaks.

The leaves (which are arranged alternately) are distinctive and different from those of the native oaks (sessile or pedunculate). Whereas the leaf of the latter is quite broad, the leaf of the turkey oak is 'narrow' and more 'angular'. The top surface of the leaves is a dark, rich green but the lower surface is paler, and a leaf stalk, or petiole, is clearly visible.



Turkey Oak

The biggest specimens in our area are along the roadside near the Church, and the greatest number are in the small wood between Gedding Hall and Spouses Grove, where the new bench has a view over to Moors Farm; they look to be around 100 years old. The seedlings are cropping up everywhere, but not in Arger Fen - the big tree there could be a sterile hybrid?

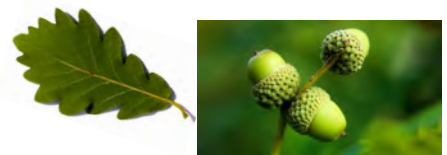
Not so common in our area are the various planted species of evergreen, or Holm Oak, (*Quercus ilex*) and red-leaved Oaks, which really do look different. The Holm Oak (below) is



an evergreen broadleaf tree that can grow to 20m and develop a huge, rounded crown. It was introduced to Britain in the late 1500s. The bark is black and finely cracked, and twigs are slender and covered with light brown felt-like hairs.

The Pedunculate and Sessile Oaks can hybridise, and one such specimen is planted at The Croft in Sudbury, in Edward VII Avenue (from this name, you can know its age); due to hybrid vigour, it is bigger than its neighbours, and now held together by cables.

Sessile Oak (see November edition of The Assington News)



is widely planted in the woods around Colchester, and is considered more ornamental because the leaves don't suffer much caterpillar damage.

Our nearest relative to the oaks, is Sweet Chestnut.

Nick Miller & BS

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ASSINGTON ADVENT WINDOWS

From Emily Cartlidge

Once again, after the huge success of last year, we are hoping that the village will take part in the Assington Advent windows during December.

For those of you who are new to the village, each day in Advent sees a house 'reveal' a decorated window, like the little doors on an Advent calendar. The date your window is revealed is made a feature as part of the decoration.

There are still a few dates which have not yet been taken.

If you would like to take part, please email me at ec@emilycartlidge.com with your name, chosen date and your address.

FOR EXAMPLES/ INSPIRATION, See below:

A selection of Assington Advent windows from last year - Editor.



ASSINGTON RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

Bill Milner (rainfall)

and Bob Cowlin (temperatures)

HISTORY annual rainfall :

2016	599.5	2017	571
2018	559	2019	597
2020	636	2021	582.3

2018	mm	max	min
AUG	83	35°C	6°C
SEP	29	25°C	-0.5°C
OCT	30.5	23°C	-2°C
NOV	75	13°C	-4°C
DEC	57	13°C	-5°C

2019	mm	max	min
JAN	23.5	9°C	-8°C
FEB	19.5	16°C	-5°C
MAR	44	19°C	-3°C
APR	18.5	24°C	-3°C
MAY	54	26°C	+1°C
JUNE	94.5	29°C	5°C
JULY	36.5	34.5°C	6.5°C
AUG	31.5	31°C	7°C
SEP	37.5	24°C	2°C
OCT	90	18°C	-2°C
NOV	69.5	12°C	-5°C
DEC	78	10°C	-5°C

2020	mm	max	min
JAN	33.5	10°C	-5°C
FEB	56	11°C	-3°C
MAR	21	14°C	-5°C
APR	22	23°C	-1°C
MAY	5.5	27°C	-2.5°C
JUNE	50	28°C	+2°C
JULY	58	30°C	6°C
AUG	109	32°C	4°C
SEP	25.5	27°C	5°C
OCT	110	14°C	2°C
NOV	33	14°C	-4°C
DEC	102.5	10°C	-5°C

2021	mm	max	min
JAN	89	10°C	-5.5°C
FEB	34	14°C	-7°C
MAR	26	20°C	-3°C
APR	1	15°C	-5°C
MAY	78.1	25°C	-2.5°C
JUNE	55.2	30°C	+3°C
JULY	72	28°C	7°C
AUG	29	24°C	5°C
SEP	28.5	27°C	3°C
OCT	74.5	18°C	1°C
NOV	27	13°C	-3°C
DEC	68	12°C	-6°C

2022	mm	max	min
JAN	7	12°C	-6.5°C
FEB	46	13°C	-4°C
MAR	29	18°C	-2°C
APR	9.5	22°C	-6°C
MAY	37	25°C	0°C
JUNE	33.5	30°C	2°C
JULY	5	36.5°C	6°C
AUG	11.5	32°C	7°C
SEPT	25	25°C	1°C
OCT	63	18°C	0°C

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OUR 'GOOD SHEPHERD' WINDOW



A few weeks ago I received a call out of the blue, making enquiries about one of the stained glass windows in the church:

"Was I familiar with the 'Good Shepherd' window?"

Fortunately I was, and therefore able to respond to the various questions with some credibility, although not all the answers.

The caller had shared a deep interest - nay passion - for stained glass windows of certain repute from a friend of his who had sadly passed away, and he felt compelled to continue his research and accumulated knowledge on the specific subject.

In Suffolk he has been trying to identify workshops, other than the well-known ones in Norwich, responsible for the region's stained glass in the 15th century. This connects to local glass-painters in the early 19th century whose restorations of medieval glass have seldom been identified.

In this instance, he was most interested in two of the Victorian stained glass windows in our church, both of which were made by James Powell & Sons, of Whitefriars, London in 1863: our large West window, and in particular, our Good Shepherd lancet window.

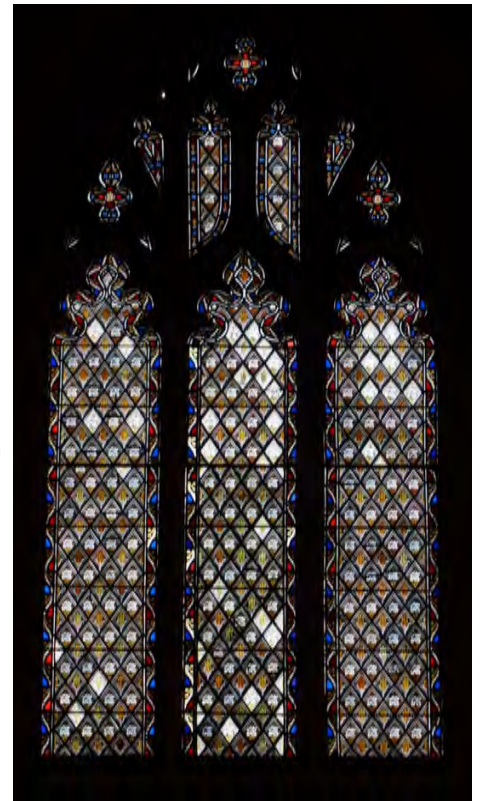
This date ties in with the Victorian refurbishment and restoration of many parts of the church at that time, which was undertaken by the incumbent, the Rev Philip Gurdon

(younger son of the Gurdon family of the next door Assington Hall). At that time he rebuilt the West Tower, in an almost exact copy of the original, and also added the North Vestry and re-roofed and re-seated the Nave (ie put in the Victorian pine pews we see today).

The style and manner of production of these stained glass windows is very special, and is no longer able to be made or reproduced. Their pressed quarries generally followed medieval prototypes, and therefore any necessary repairs are extremely difficult to manage correctly, which often results in less-than-perfect outcomes.

The designer of the Good Shepherd was the artist Jules Bouvier (1800–1867), whose design was then produced as a stained glass window, in glorious rich jewel-colours by the Whitefriars company of James Powell & sons.

Interestingly, stylistically, the face of the sheep on a painting by Jules Bouvier (see right) does have a great similarity to the face of the sheep in the window. I suppose one could argue that you have seen one sheep, you have seen them all.....



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SESAW NEWS

What a cheek! Last month Ollie mocked me 'writing' our news for ten years when I claim to be eight? Well, the laugh is on him because he was older than me when he arrived in 2013! Our resident black cat was found nearly dead, came in after a week at the vet's, broke out of a pet carrier and headed straight for the house. We get on alright really and he gives a different view of SESA W life which is still very busy. Only last week two lovely tabby cats came in when their owner sadly died. They have always been together and they are used to living with two big dogs.



We also have Signe, a ten year old Eurasier spitz type of dog that was living in a car with her owner when they lost their home. She is used to having company all the time so needs a loving human companion, maybe with another dog.

At this the time of the year we express our appreciation for those who support the work of SESA W in many different ways. The list is endless but you know who you are and we send you a massive THANK YOU. That includes the shops and vets that host our food collection bins and the lovely Bronwen, Editor of this magazine, for giving us a 'voice' to talk to you.

As we all face the future during such a worrying time everyone at SESA W wishes you peace, good health and happiness, including me, Kenny (the Boss) Chihuahua. Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Registered Charity No.1124029, Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. Tel: 01787 210888, www.sesaw.co.uk



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Ryes college community clear up.

As part of our student's community project programme, we have been litter picking around the village with our latest pick being on the 22nd September 2022.

We are fortunate enough to have the ongoing support from the community wardens of Sudbury town Council. It is clear to see there is a remarked difference in the amount collected, which hopefully signifies that our termly litter pick is having a positive effect on keeping the village tidy.



To celebrate the students ongoing enthusiasm, a member from the parish council will be presenting certificates to celebrate their achievement.

With the support and supply of equipment from Babergh District council you may see us around more often. So please stop and say Hello!




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THE VIEW FROM AROUND THE BEND

Truly a callamitous week, my trip to Sudbury did not go well. I did stand the correct side of the road on the right day and I did catch the right bus and it was even going in the right direction.

I had directions to the veterinary surgery and walked there on time for the operations which only took half an hour and then the troubles began. The nice nurse stated that they no longer accepted cheques from strange people which was most upsetting and suggested that I should go back to the town and visit the post office to get cash. This was not on I explained as I do not have any money in the post office or any of the banks she named that remain it town, after a stand off for half an hour and much tooting and froing, a distinguished gentleman vet, I presume the one who had done the deed, came out and said he would take a cheque from me as I looked honest and give the same amount of money to the nurse in cash. Why I could not have just given the cheque to the nurse and not involve him at all, I will never know.

However when all this was done I grabbed the two cats in their carrier and walked, no trotted as fast as I possibly could back puffing to the bus station, to my disappointment, an old man, even older than me that is, told me my bus had left fully 30 minutes before. Panic was setting in, especially when another driver called out, Don't worry mate there will be another one tomorrow, I asked other drivers if they were going any where near Assington but alas no was the answer, it seemed that we only have one bus from the village now and that returns before anyone has had time to do anything. The day was saved when I asked the driver of a Gosmart community bus and he said he would take me home as he had another pick up in Boxford and could combine the journeys. What a relief, I did not think that he would take a cheque either so I promised him payment and a cup of tea on arrival home and I raided the sweet jar to pay him when we duly arrived. He came into the front parlour room while I got the money and made tea and kept blinking and staring around in ashtonishment, I am not sure why but presume he was just not used to bright colours and he left without drinking all of his tea. Oh what a terrible day, I feel I have aged five years which would make me, god forbid nearly seventy, perish the thought.

I have decided to call the young Tom cat Bravo Tango as that is what the caller on the bus radio called the driver who acted so kindly towards me and it will remind me of something good in such a terrible day. Bobbie visited later to check on the cats and bring some food for them and I noticed that nowadays she always puts her dark sunglasses on as she comes into the house and takes them off again when she leaves, very strange, I would have expected it to be the other way around. Maybe I will suggest she visits the opticians.

Apart from this awful adventure, the month has gone very quickly and peacefully, I have been introduced to our new vicar who seems very nice and takes a good service without the blood and thunder sermons I remember as a kid, these terrified me and put me off going to church for twenty years but enjoying my occasional visits now, also I have been visiting various churches around here on the old bike, I tend to wear an old mac when I go out and shorts and blazer upon my return so that the neighbours up the road do not recognize me as the same person.

Catching up also with more gardening and have dug a new patch around the side of the house for more cropping and growing, have piled all the rubbish in a heap and will try to grow an even bigger marrow next year, was planning to dig some of the weedy bit along the front in the dark evenings but rain has truly stopped play.

Henriette and Bravo Tango seem to be recovering quickly from their snips and pining to go out but not yet as the nice vet said to keep them in for two weeks or until the fur grows over

the wounds, although I cannot see any on Bravo Tango, he must be scarred somewhere.

Bobbie has suggested that we go away for a little holiday after Christmas to give her a little break from her work, this terrifies me as I have never been away anywhere before, not even as a child or youngster growing up. I have always preferred my own bed and home comforts. However she is a very attractive young lady and I am maybe coming around to the idea but maybe not during this coming year, just too much to do.

We will just have to see how big she can make my marrow grow during this coming season.

The way to a mans heart is definitely through his garden.

They tell me that it will be Christmas at the end of the month and there is no mag early next year so I hope you all have a Happy Easter and spring harvest of what you have sown.

Happy New Year. From **Esra**.

YOUR VILLAGE HALL, PLAYING FIELD AND PLAYGROUND

The Management Committee of the Assington Village Charity (Reg No1076737) is looking for volunteers to join the organisation.

The committee is responsible for the upkeep of the Village Hall, Playing Field and Playground, for the benefit of the village and surrounding area.



Three members of the committee are standing down in 2023.

If you are interested in maintaining our wonderful village asset and feel you can contribute to the community in some way, please contact

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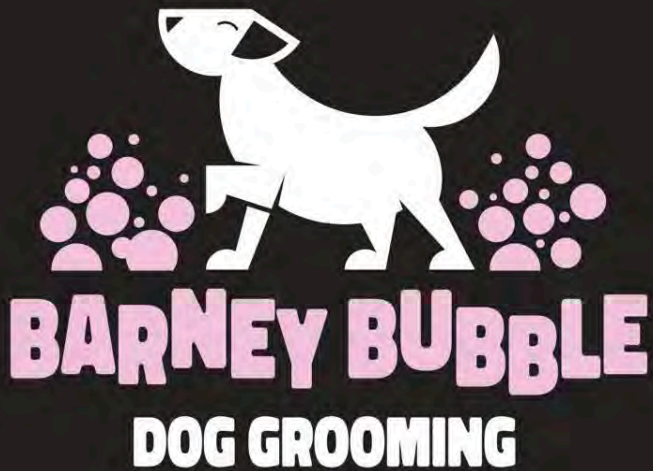
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