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The **Fen Edge Community Association** is a charity promoting and supporting Clubs, Groups and Societies in Cottenham, Landbeach, Rampton, Waterbeach and Willingham.

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f fenedge news

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE



It was with great sadness that we made the decision to postpone the 2021 Fen Edge Festival. I hope we will be able to run the event as normal in 2022. It would have been neither practical nor fair to ask the

Committee to work on an event that is well beyond the parameters of what is currently allowed legally. I am very conscious that the decision will disappoint everyone who was looking forward to enjoying the weekend.

What is not so immediately obvious is that the postponement will also create problems for some of the charities and community organisations that have benefitted greatly from the fundraising opportunities that the Festival provides. In previous years, we estimate that the weekend generates towards £15,000 in surplus for all the organisations involved. For some organisations, it has been a key event in their fundraising cycle. The Festival also enables organisations to showcase their activities and get new people involved. Therefore, please do take the time to read this News and see what our organisations are doing. While many of them have modified how they operate, there is still a lot that they are doing and it is even more important that they are supported in their activities as much as possible.

The Fen Edge Community Association has continued to provide financial support to organisations that are working in the community. Sport and outdoor activity are increasingly precious

and vital for our young people and we have helped the Cottenham Colts to purchase floodlights for winter training sessions. It is considerably easier to play football when you can see the ball! On a similar basis that it is difficult to play bowls on long grass, FECA also contributed to a new mower for the Bowls Club in Willingham. We are delighted to have been able to help both groups.

I am particularly pleased that we were able to make a very significant contribution to the new audio-visual equipment at Cottenham Village College (CVC). This will also be able to be used by community groups such as Cottenham Theatre Workshop. I believe that this is the largest grant that FECA has made and reflects the core part that CVC can play in the community. FECA is a central part of the founding ethos of the village colleges and our area of activity matches the catchment area for CVC. In the past few years, the connection between FECA and CVC has not been as strong as it could have been, but I am very pleased that with the new management team at CVC we have re-energised the relationship and I am hopeful that we will be able to build on this in the future.

As this is the last edition before the Christmas and New Year holidays, on behalf of FECA, I would like to wish you all as much of a festive time as the rules permit. It has been a challenging year but one of the lessons from it has been the important role of community in our lives. We have learned that community spirit and activism is very strong in our villages and we should all be very proud and pleased to be part of that. I would particularly like to thank all of the leaders and volunteers of our charities and community groups for the work that they do and have done over the past year. It has not been easy to keep these groups going through Covid times but never have they been so important. Please keep up the good work.

We wish you and your family a very happy holiday and hopefully we can all look forward to a less eventful 2021.

Neil Gough, Chair

DIARY/FECA IN COTTENHAM

What's on and when in the villages

DECEMBER

Sun 6 4pm All Saints' Church – Service: *Christingle by Zoom* (p7)

Sat 12–Sun 13 4–6pm Cottenham Baptist Church – Alternative Grotto (p7)

Sun 13 10.30am Cottenham Baptist Church – Virtual service (p7)

Sun 13 4pm All Saints' Church – Service: *Blue Christmas* at All Saints' Cottenham (p7)

Sat 19 4–6pm Cottenham Baptist Church – Alternative Grotto (p7)

Sun 20 10.30am Cottenham Baptist Church – Virtual service: *Nativity from Scratch* (p7)

Sun 20 3.30pm All Saints' Church – Live Nativity at All Saints' Churchyard, Cottenham (p7)

Tue 22 7–9pm Cottenham Baptist Church – Quiet Space: *The church will be open as a space for people to reflect and pray on their own.* (p7)

Thu 24 7.30pm All Saints' Church – Midnight Communion at All Saints' Rampton (p7)

Thu 24 9pm All Saints' Church – Midnight Communion at All Saints' Cottenham (p7)

Fri 25 8.30am All Saints' Church – Communion: *Book of Common Prayer* at All Saints' Cottenham (p7)

Fri 25 10.30am Cottenham Baptist Church – Christmas Day Family Service (p7)

Fri 25 10.30am All Saints' Church – Family Communion at All Saints' Cottenham (p7)

Sat 26 10am Fen Edge Footpath Group – Boxing Day Walk: *Leaves Cottenham Broad Lane / High Street junction* (p53)

COTTENHAM GARDENERS' CLUB

The gardening club continues to be on hold. Franklin Gardens Community Room, where we meet, is not yet available for hire, and it is not big enough for our members to be sufficiently spaced out to meet current regulations. We are hoping that activities may resume at the end of February with our AGM, scheduled for Friday 26 February, but time will tell. Existing members will be informed of the start date, but anyone else is welcome to ring me nearer the time.

Meanwhile, in our garden, we have created a new planting opportunity. Our shed roof had started to leak, so rather than buy new felt, we decided to install a green roof. The benefits of a green roof are numerous: it provides habitat for insects and slows the rate of water run-off when there is a heavy downpour; it insulates the structure underneath – our shed gets far too hot in summer – and it should look pretty. Nigel Dunnett, professor at Sheffield University, has written several books on the subject. Based on Nigel's own garden shed we commissioned a carpenter to put pond liner on the roof, then a grid of compartments supported at each corner with a stout post. My husband, Tony, then lined each compartment with more pond liner, perforated at the lower edge to allow drainage.

This, we hope, will protect the wood from wet compost to a degree. He reinstated the gutters on each side and checked that water would still drain off the roof into the existing butts, then ordered a lightweight substrate containing expanded clay pellets and filled each compartment to a depth of 4 inches (10cm).

The plants are my department. Most are either sedums or sempervivums (house leeks), which are widely used on green roofs, but some more unusual plants have been given to us by the nursery where we have our vegetable plot. We have been watching Gardeners' World, and found inspiration from one of the viewer's home videos. The green roof shown was a flat roof (ours is sloping), but the depth of substrate was the same, and the three plants which had done well this year were lady's bedstraw, spike speedwell and wild marjoram. I took notes and ordered plug plants of these. It is all experimental – we'll abandon plants that die and plant more of the ones that flourish – but it's an exciting project! I am half-way through the planting and really enjoying the process. We look forward to seeing how it progresses.

For further gardening club information please contact Sarah Dumont, Tel: 01954 260482



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FECA IN COTTENHAM

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH COTTENHAM WITH RAMPTON



Throughout lockdown and as things have changed since, we have continued to offer help and support to those in need. Both Churches are currently open for quiet time and private prayer. In Cottenham we are holding Sunday services with all the

necessary social distancing measures in place.

As time moves on, we know people will be starting to think about Christmas. This will undoubtedly look a little different this year. We won't be holding our Carol Services, which typically attract very large numbers. There will be a mix of some in-person services, some on Zoom and others pre-recorded and available on YouTube. Please check Facebook or our website for the most recent information.

We hope there will still be something for everyone this year and we will be able to offer some light and hope during difficult times. We are particularly

excited about holding a Live Nativity in the churchyard of All Saints' Cottenham, with live animals and all the characters you would expect to see as we retell the Christmas story.

Sunday December 6 at 4pm – Christingle by Zoom. Christingle making kit to be home delivered to those taking part.

Sunday December 13 at 4pm – Blue Christmas Service at All Saints' Cottenham

Sunday December 20 at 3.30pm – Live Nativity in All Saints' Churchyard, Cottenham

Christmas Eve – Communion at **7.30pm at All Saints' Rampton** and **9pm at All Saints' Cottenham**.

Christmas Day – 8.30am BCP Holy Communion and 10.30am Family Communion at All Saints' Cottenham

Online Carol Service will be available from **Monday December 21**. Why not watch it as usual as a family on Christmas Eve?

*Cottenham
Baptist
Church*



This year due to the restrictions put in place for Covid-19 we are unable to hold large gatherings to celebrate Christmas together. We would, however, love to share this time with you and so have put on a number of events, virtually and in person, which we hope you can enjoy.

Alternative Grotto – All ages are welcome to come and visit our alternative grotto@church to see the Christmas story through

various artistic presentations. Walk through the grotto and spot the clues to complete our Christmas treasure hunt ending up with a 'goody bag' for everyone who comes. The grotto will be open on **Saturday December 12, Sunday December 13, and Saturday December 19** from 4–6pm. Slots must be booked in advance and Covid-19 safety measures will be in place.

For more information and to book a slot go to www.cottenhambaptist.org.uk or find us on Facebook.

Quiet Space – The church will be open on **Tuesday December 22** between 7–9pm as a space for people to reflect and pray on their own.

Virtual Services (all on Zoom at 10.30am)

Sunday December 13 – Christmas Carol Service

Sunday December 20 – Join us for our Nativity from Scratch. See our website for how to make props and become part of our recreation of the nativity. Everyone welcome – props and dressing up are optional.

Friday December 25 – Christmas Day family service

Everyone is welcome to join us whether you have joined before or this is your first time – go to www.cottenhambaptist.org.uk for log in details.

New Year – In the New Year we will continue to hold services on Zoom. For more information about all our events, if you would like prayer or help, or need details about foodbank look at our website or Facebook page or call us on 01954 252378.

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FECA IN COTTENHAM

COTTENHAM UNITED COLTS FC

After taking our time to get back to training in a safe and appropriate manner, most teams were able to start their season 2020/21 on the weekend of 19–20 September. This restart included competitive fixtures for the first time for our U7 side.

It's great to be back and we enjoy the beautiful game while we can and working within FA Guidelines. Credit here must go to our Chairman, Ben Holmes, and to Steph Wright and committee for all their hard work to put in place a fantastic track-and-trace QR system with excellent match day instructions.

So highly regarded was it locally that Cambridgeshire FA put a number of big clubs/teams, including Cambridge City, in touch with us for advice and education. Well done all! This is just another example of why Cottenham United Colts FC won Cambridgeshire FA *MacDonalds Grassroots Club of the Year* in the Summer.

We have managed to restart our highly successful FA Wildcats programme and the response has been phenomenal yet again. We now have an U16 girls' side (see front cover), 2 U13 girls' teams, a U9 girls' side and an U8 girls' team in development.

We have experienced fantastic growth from nothing some 4

years ago driven by former chairman Simon Rose. We now have parents stepping forward to create a new U6 mixed group in readiness for the future, which continues to be promising, despite the best attempts of this pandemic! Many clubs from grassroots up to and including the English Football League are struggling financially. We have applied for and, with the assistance of Cambridgeshire FA, received a *Sport England Grant Award* and a *Football Foundation Pitch Preparation Fund Award*. We have also received funding from Fen Edge Community Association towards portable floodlights to enhance our winter training facilities and keep pitch hire costs down. Cottenham Co-op continue to support us with community funding too. Without this wonderful support and with ever-increasing costs, we would struggle to make football accessible for all.

I'd like to take this opportunity too to thank some very kind businesses who have paid for and sponsored new kits for the boys and girls. These include Marshall's Seeds of Huntingdon who have paid for a full strip and track suits for U16 girls (see front cover), Bellway Homes and Persimmon Homes for sponsorship of 2 team kits, Agility Life Sciences, Giuseppe Piran, Arnold Clark Motors and Jackson Fire and Security for their support of our U7s.

David Burkett, Lead Coach, Cottenham United Colts FC, d.burkett07@icloud.com



U13 girls



U9 girls



U7 boys



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FECA IN COTTENHAM

COTTENHAM CRICKET CLUB

At the time of writing this in October, it is, of course, impossible to say what the situation will be like as regards the pandemic as we move into 2021. We can only fervently hope that things will be much better than they were in 2020!

We have to be optimistic, though, and, as some competitive cricket was sanctioned at the end of last summer, we have to believe that we will still be able to play when the 2021 season comes around in May. Who knows, we may even have some positive news on a treatment or vaccine by then! Fingers, indeed everything, tightly crossed!

As things stand, the club is planning to run our usual two adult men's sides. We also hope to have some junior teams, from the U15 age range downwards, playing in the school summer term. Our club is one of the oldest in the county and provides the opportunity for all ages to take part in our great game. We want to reach out to local cricketers not currently playing for Cottenham to join us. We feel this is important, especially in the extremely difficult times that we are living through right now. Please do get in touch – you'll be most welcome.

We are planning to start our indoor net practice for the senior teams as well as Junior coaching in mid-March – see the *Club News* section of our website for details. And anyone interested in finding out more about what's going on can contact any one of us as outlined below.

Take care everyone and stay safe.

Contact: cottenhamcc@yahoo.co.uk

Secretary: David Chaplin (01954 250075)

Chairman: Ralph Lambie (01954 250313)

Vice Chairman: Dave Partridge (01954 203210)

Junior Teams Coordinators: Dave Partridge and Alan Raven (01954 250388)

www.cottenham.play-cricket.com

Twitter: @CottenhamCrickt

COTTENHAM UNITED FC

Despite all the intrusions of the pandemic into our 'normal' life, the club is continuing to run two adult men's teams, a 1st team in the Kershaw

Senior A League and a Reserve side in the Kershaw Division 3B League.

We are extremely grateful to the Cambridgeshire FA and Cottenham Parish Council for all their help and advice in enabling local football to continue to be played on the recreation ground with all its associated Covid rules and regulations. It's been a huge boost to the physical and mental wellbeing of everyone connected with the Red and Blacks family. Long may it continue!

Training sessions - take place weekly.

The 1st team training on the outdoor, all-weather surface at Northstowe College, **8.15–9.30pm on Tuesday evenings**. The Reserves on the similar outdoor facilities at Cottenham Village College, **8–9pm on Wednesdays**. All are most welcome. You can be assured of a very friendly reception so please do come along if you are interested in playing. You may be new to the village and looking for a chance to play closer to home or already living here and wanting to get started again. Please just contact us by email at cottenhamunitedfc@hotmail.com

COTTENHAM WI

We are all very lucky to live in a lovely supportive village and the WI have been pleased to play their part in this. Some of us have been making scrubs/kit bags for the NHS or care homes, others have been walking for charity. Baking was done for VE day, squares knitted for the ICU at Addenbrookes, prescriptions collected for the elderly and people who were self isolating, vegetables grown and shared, shopping collected and delivered.

Due to being quite a large group we are not able to hold Zoom or Skype meetings for the full group but some of the members have connected in smaller groups by Zoom or Skype. We managed briefly to meet on the Green for a socially distanced gathering. We are now, as is everyone else, waiting for the end of all this. In the meantime the committee will keep ringing all the members each month, to keep in touch. For more information please ring Margaret 01954 488427.

Happy New Year everyone.



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FECA IN COTTENHAM

GIRLGUIDING – COTTENHAM DISTRICT

Girlguiding needs you!

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK. Being involved in guiding is a fantastic opportunity, although currently most meetings are virtual.

In Cottenham we have 2 Rainbows, 3 Brownies and 2 Guide units.



Brownies and Rainbows in Cottenham need your help. Cottenham currently has spaces for leaders in a Rainbow unit and a Brownie unit. Girlguiding welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds, ages, cultures, faiths and abilities.

Please think about volunteering. You would make new friends, become part of a world-wide organisation, learn new skills and share the things we enjoy with the next generation. No experience needed and this volunteering looks great on your CV. We can offer flexibility and a fully supported training scheme.

For an informal chat and to talk through what's involved, please contact Dani Wykes (wykes21@gmail.com 07803 203633) or Deanna Raven (deannaraven@btinternet.com 07899 961355).

COTTENHAM COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Cottenham CLT Limited may seem dormant at present but we are still looking to build a number of locally-affordable homes for Cottenham people in Cottenham. We have a couple of candidate sites in the village and expect a few more when the landowners offering their sites into the next Local Plan realise that their dreams of making a large fortune are more fantasy than possibility in their lifetime. They should talk to us about a small, but realisable, fortune.

Why only a small fortune? We want to deliver homes that local people can afford – within rents or mortgage payments of around 3-4 times household income for residents who do not qualify for social housing.

Why not now? We would if we could but we probably rely on a renewed government grant for our development costs and work on Covid-19 is distracting most of the attention of Her Majesty's Government. Covid-19 is likely to still be slowing everything down, or worse for some in 2021, but we hope to make some progress quite soon.

COTTENHAM CHARITIES

Free Christmas Voucher

Christmas vouchers have been given by Cottenham Charities for many years to help individuals and families on low income to meet the cost of Christmas. Cottenham Charities and the Fitzwilliam Charity provide the funds for the scheme. Residents of the Parish in receipt of Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Universal Credit are eligible. We are not able to consider those receiving Jobseeker's Allowance.

In order to keep everyone as safe as possible this year's scheme will operate slightly differently from previous years. Previous applicants in 2019 have already been contacted about this year's scheme.

New applicants should apply using the application form available on the Cottenham Charities website www.cottenhamcharities.co.uk

If you, or someone you know, could benefit from a little help this Christmas the application form will be available from Monday 23 November and must be returned by Wednesday 9 December. Proof of eligibility will be required and only one application per household can be accepted.

If you are unable to go online a relative or family friend can apply on your behalf. If you need support to complete the online application form please contact Cottenham Charities (Malcolm Dee 01954 250387 or Bob Turner 01954 250082) and we will be pleased to help.

Additionally, those families in Cottenham and Rampton that are experiencing financial difficulty due to the Covid-19 pandemic can contact the Cottenham Covid Support Team via Councillor Neil Gough or Councillor Eileen Wilson for possible additional assistance:

Eileen: 07825 770899 eileenwilsoncrw@gmail.com
Neil: 07919 990299 neilgoughcrw@gmail.com



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FECA IN COTTENHAM

GARDENING

Looking forward – by Ken Ellis

At this time of the year, we usually spend time reflecting on the year gone, looking after plants inside and maybe watching programmes about gardening from the comfort of a warm chair. The fact that we've all had one of the strangest gardening years might come into play, but let's not go there. Rather, let's look forward.

With the lack of natural daylight through this period, it's important to take the opportunity to get outside if and when the moment comes. There is evidence that even a small amount of exposure to natural light will help to put you in a better place so, if you can, go take a walk when you can. A good few of us manage to go on some sort of post-Christmas walk, but try to keep up the habit.

I'm guessing that most of you have access to a garden, so let's go there first. Have a look at your patch. What do you see? Now look closely. Is there an unexpected clump of leaves? Maybe a hedgehog is hibernating there. Have a look at the colours on what leaves that remain, and look for signs of things to come. You'll be reading this in the dark months of the year, but the days are beginning to lengthen, and plants are moving. Give yourself time to stop and enjoy the smell of the garden, the winter sounds, and the signs of things to come. Aconites are the first things to flower in our garden; their dainty little flowers unwinding as if they're waking from a long sleep. Trying to spot the first one is a bit of a competition, and there's one particular bunch that seem to be out just after Boxing Day. Whatever you have though, enjoy your patch, and make a mental list of satisfying jobs that you can do, if you so wish. If you look in any gardening book, there'll be a list of winter tasks, from pruning trees to sowing seeds in pots. A little more on those later.

If you don't have a garden of your own, go and enjoy some of the open spaces and walks that there are around. On a sunny day, it's surprising what's out and about, from flying insects to ground dwellers taking advantage of the weak sunlight to give them energy to hunt for food. Enjoy the sights that you can see and smell, from the scent of winter box to the early rhododendrons. Browse the pot plants when you're out shopping, and see if there's anything that you fancy taking home. The general rule with indoor

plants at this time of the year is to keep them in bright light, and cool. Try not to put them directly over a radiator, and place them far enough back on the window-sill to avoid getting warm air directly from the radiator. Keep everything moist, which is less than damp, and don't feed anything until the clocks go forward (as a general rule). Remember, because of the lack of heat and light, most plants will stop growing, and will just rot in too much moisture, and get spindly and sick if you try to feed them. Chickweed is an exception. Don't ask how I know.

Also, think about the summer. What seeds can you find to plant soon? Planting in the ground is not a great idea until around March, but you can start sowing seeds from the back end of February. I know that you can technically sow earlier, but my experience is that the seeds aren't fooled and will wait until they feel like coming, thank you. If you've no garden, plant hardy annuals in pots. Place them where you can see them, but not inside.

Finally, a word about The Way Things Are. Planning the future at present has been likened to trying to nail jelly to the wall. The National Garden Scheme want to open gardens, but are working on just how to do it. The National Trust have been opening estate gardens, and their system works well. Take the trouble to support any open garden event that you feel able and comfortable to go to. Pre-booking is almost a requisite, and it's worth checking before travelling. Enjoy your spring, whatever you manage to do!



Viburnum Bodnantense, which flowers all winter and has a heavenly scent

Ken Ellis is a member of Cottenham Gardeners' Club

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FECA IN COTTENHAM

SUSTAINABLE COTTENHAM



Reflections on becoming a vegan – I became vegan last year for the same reason I became vegetarian 12 years ago – my love for animals and the realisation that I no longer wanted or needed

harm to occur for the sake of my tastebuds.

This remains, however much more has come of my journey than I initially anticipated.

Starting my vegan journey opened my eyes to the damaging environmental impact we have on our surroundings and on other species, through food and by other means.

Resource use is a problem in a diet of excessive consumption of things like dairy, meat and fish.

‘... it takes less land to grow food directly for humans, than to feed animals, which humans then eat. Just 1kg of chicken meat takes 3.2kg of crops to produce. By eating mostly plant-based food, we could feed more people – with all the calories and nutrition needed for a healthy diet – without destroying forests.’ (Greenpeace).

I am also now making more conscious decisions in the packaging and products I use, in and out of the kitchen. I am much better at cooking. This is likely down to the fact that I have been replicating a few meals I have always eaten.

Sometimes you can buy readymade, but homemade is always my favourite. I can now whip up a pie, stew or a batch of cupcakes in no time at all.

I’ve chosen veganism at a particularly good time. There are many options in restaurants, supermarkets and other resources that have made it all easy for me. My meals are still hearty and my baking is still loved by my Grandpa and the rest of my family. I learnt quickly that I didn’t have to ditch old recipe books, instead I replaced items e.g. cream to vegan cream. Top tip – when using a search engine for a specific meal, type in ‘simple’ or ‘low ingredient’ before your chosen option, it helped me a lot financially and with food waste!

I remember that we all start somewhere. There

are many reasons people genuinely struggle with their diet (financial, issues with food and being nervous of doing things a new way, to name a few) so I believe that kindness and education is really important in all aspects of life, including introducing others to veganism. This is prominent to me as I am unsure if I would have transitioned to vegan without my vegan friends consistently being kind, showing me great food and sharing knowledge. I am passionate and will happily discuss my diet with people who are respectful. I remember I used to eat meat and dairy too but I am content I no longer do.

Veganism isn’t about being perfect. I already know there is no such thing as perfection. There are animal products hiding in lots of things, I’m just trying my best to avoid them. I am constantly learning and very importantly finding a lot to enjoy about this new lifestyle.

Clare Adamson (founder of The Village Vegan Markets, based in Cottenham)



Cottenham Eco Eats

While plans for Sustainable Cottenham’s Eco Eats festival are on hold until next October, we’ll be active on the sustainable eating theme over the coming year. Through our link with Cambridge Sustainable Food’s *Food for our Future* campaign, we’ve been highlighting ways to reduce food waste over the past few months under the tag #SusCottWasteNot. Looking ahead, January (or ‘Veganuary’ as it’s widely thought of now) is the time for something new. Why not take a hint from the article above and try switching some of the meat and dairy products in your shopping basket to planet-friendly plant-based alternatives?

For info, tips and recipes, go to www.sustainablecottenham.org.uk/eco-eats

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FECA IN COTTENHAM



As Autumn draws in, we reflect on a strange year for tennis as well as for many aspects of our day to day lives. After the initial lockdown (when play was stopped altogether) we were fortunate that tennis was

a sport that was permitted to restart, albeit with some restrictions. We were doubly fortunate with the long hot spring and summer which made outdoor play a real pleasure.

This was written in October but you will be reading it later, so who knows what the state of play will be then? Please bear with us as we set out our plans, realising they might all change with government guidelines. Like the rest of the world, tennis is in the hands of a tiny virus!

Temporary move to grass courts – Surprisingly tennis has had a bit of a boost during the pandemic, being one of the few sports which has been permitted after the most severe lockdown ended. In Cottenham we were lucky to have the grass courts at the King George V Recreation Ground available to play on from June to August. This became our temporary venue as the Village College Sports Centre remained closed until mid-August. We are grateful to the Parish Council for enabling us to use the Rec courts, and particularly to Jo Brook who helped us organise the booking system. Bookings are via the tennis club website, enabling anyone to book a court, thereby avoiding having to wait for a court and allowing the club to hold social tennis and coaching at the grass courts. Booking and playing remained free to anyone. We reverted to the CVC courts in September, with their slightly more predictable bounce, and the availability of floodlights (of sorts). We are delighted that some remedial work is about to be carried out to these lights during the October half term so we should be able to use all 4 courts (without a headlight!) from November onwards.

There is some hopeful news about the courts at the King George V field. The Parish Council has agreed to apply for a grant, which, along with some fundraising, would enable the grass courts to be converted to tarmac. If this is successful and if

we can get planning permission to get floodlights fitted, we should be able to play there all year round, and during school hours when the Village College is unavailable.

As a club we were delighted to see how many people have been using the King George V courts during the early summer. We are delighted to report that the renewed interest in tennis led to more club members joining Cottenham Tennis Club when we reopened in September. We would also like to give a big shout out to Andrew the groundsman for all the work watering, mowing and white-line painting he has done. While we wait to hear when and if work can go on to convert the grass courts, Andrew is continuing to prepare them for next year.

Memberships paused – Since the club could not operate from the Sports Centre, we did not take membership fees in the spring or summer. The LTA gave us a Covid Grant which helped with the fees paid to the Parish Council by the club to use the grass courts. As a result, there was no need for anyone taking part in social tennis or coaching to become a member of the club. If you enjoyed any of these sessions, perhaps now that the club has reopened for a half year membership you will be tempted to come and join us.

Half price memberships – When the club reopened in September it was with a half year membership to run until April 2021. Coaching courses will again be available. Any new players who have been going to the grass courts sessions or the children's summer camps will be most welcome to take advantage of this offer. Membership will be arranged directly with the club in future, rather than with the Sports Centre.

Half price children's membership – We received a grant from Cambridgeshire Lawn Tennis Association to subsidise 15 young people's membership last year, and since this has not been used, we have rolled it over to April 2021. We will publish details nearer the time.

Free rackets and balls for teenagers – The club was successful in bidding for free rackets and balls from "Living Sport" and these were given to 6 students from Cottenham Village College, the aim being to get young people active and healthy and engaged in tennis. Hopefully this will set them on a

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FECA IN COTTENHAM

continued from page 19

journey where they get involved in coaching and ultimately join the club. We would love to see more teens in the club and with half yearly prices at just £12 now is a good time to join.

Coaching – We were not able to coach the youngest players (age 4–6) during the pandemic, but otherwise coaching at the grass courts was very successful. It was also great to see our new adult beginners class start up.

In September we restarted our child and adult coaching programme at CVC, details are on www.gamesettennis.co.uk, clubspark.lta.org.uk/CottenhamTennisClub and facebook.com/cottenhamtennis. In the winter, October–March, ages 4–6 will be able to be coached in the indoor sports hall, which will be much more suitable for their age, and enable play even in wet weather.

During August we held 2 weeks of tennis camps for children aged 5–16 at the Sports Centre. These were well attended and feedback has been hugely positive. The youngsters played lots of fun games and learnt some new skills! We hope that they have been

inspired to continue with tennis.

We have not been able to restart the breakfast clubs at Willingham and Cottenham Primary Schools in the Autumn, but hope to do so as soon as feasible, to get more people in the Fen Edge Area playing tennis locally and in schools. Details will be published on the coaching, club website and Facebook page as soon as we have firm plans.

All coaching is booked via our head coach Toby Jackson at www.gamesettennis.co.uk (toby@gamesettennis.co.uk 07972 149874).

Welfare officer – Cilla Hughes has taken over from Benoit Maçon as welfare officer. Any concerns about the well-being of an adult at risk or children should be made without delay to the Club Welfare Officer, whose contact details are on the club website.

Social evenings restarted in July at the King George V fields and were well attended when weather permitted. These returned to CVC sports centre when it reopened in August.

It was a strange year but, Cottenham Tennis Club are full of plans and optimistic for the future of tennis in the Fen Edge area. Why not come along and give tennis a try?



5 of the 6 CVC students with their rackets courtesy of Living Sport

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FECA IN COTTENHAM



Volunteers – Volunteering at the Coffee Shop is a great opportunity to meet people, learn new skills and be part of a very worthwhile community facility. Please come and have a chat with Jane, our manager Tel: 01954 202109 or manager@cottenhamcc.org

Trustees – Please consider becoming a trustee to assist with the smooth running of the Community Centre. The trustees are hands-on as well as making key decisions. Do let me know if you would like to know more via bookings@cottenhamcc.org. The health and safety of customers, staff, and volunteers are vitally important to us and there are new Covid-19 arrangements in place so your patience will be much appreciated.



Photo: Andrew Fell

The Coffee Shop – We are open - The Coffee Shop looks different and, subject to changing Government advice there are fewer tables and chairs available. The rule of 6 applies and social distancing should be observed. It is open 10am–2pm Monday to Friday and we are hoping to be able to open on a Saturday in the near future.

Face coverings must be worn at all times unless seated at a table. There is a QR Code to scan on the NHS App on entry or alternatively contact details will be taken. A clearly marked one-way system is in place. Orders are taken at the till point, prepared and served to you at your table. Contactless card payment is preferred. The Coffee Shop is also offering takeaway orders. To reserve a table or to place a takeaway order you can call us on 01954 202109 during opening hours. Jane, Tricia, and the team look forward to welcoming you.

Come and enjoy a great coffee, delicious scones and cake or lunch from our menu. Please note that the Coffee Shop will be closed from Thursday 24 December to Monday 4 January inclusive for Christmas and New Year holiday.

Office available – Ready to take on an office? From 1 April we will have an office (in the heart of Cottenham) available on licence. Very good Wi-Fi. Do get in touch if you are interested. bookings@cottenhamcc.org

Events – Community Cinema on the first Sunday of the month including Sunday 6 December, Sunday 10 January and Sunday 7 February. Films start at 7.30pm.

Funds and membership – We welcome your support. Membership is just £10 for an individual with a loyalty bonus of a free beverage after you have bought ten drinks. You will also get a 10% discount on one-off room hire. Please download a membership form here: cottenhamcc.org/membership. Your membership card may make the contact details process much quicker on entry to the Coffee Shop.

Art and Shopping – All the artwork hung in the Coffee Shop is for sale and all sales help the Community Centre.

If you are shopping online, please consider using (it costs you no more) *Easy Fundraising* or *Amazon Smile* for Cottenham Community Centre: easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/cottenhamcc and smile.amazon.co.uk/gp/chpf/about

Classes – Some of our classes re-started in September. Social distancing and clean equipment and hand sanitisation and face coverings on entry is needed. See “classes” on our website cottenhamcc.org/classes (where you will find times and contact details). Do check with the class leader whether spaces are available.

Room Hire – Subject to the Covid rules at the time, there are three rooms (main hall, studio, coffee shop) for hire (Full entertainment licence etc held).

Our wonderful new back kitchen facilities are great even for a pop up café.

We encourage community activities and welcome organisations looking to try out new community projects.

For other enquiries see the website or email bookings@cottenhamcc.org

Please DO NOT come to the Community Centre if you feel at all unwell, thank you. www.cottenhamcc.org

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FECA IN LANDBEACH

LANDBEACH TITHE BARN TRUST

500 years is a long time to wait to spend a penny! Landbeach Tithe Barn is about to take the next step in becoming more user-friendly and accessible by installing eco-friendly, low

maintenance toilets. £30,000 is what it will take to make the Tithe Barn fit for 21st century visitors.

To make this a reality, local group the Tithe Barn Trust is launching the *Spend a Penny* campaign to raise the £30,000 needed to purchase and install two remarkable, eco-friendly toilets. The Kazubaloo doesn't require any water, electricity or chemicals. They are self-contained, easy to maintain and look good, which makes them ideal for the Barn and its future uses. The Barn is around 500 years old and a penny spent in the year 1500 (when Henry VIIth was king) is the equivalent of over £5 today so we are asking our members, supporters and the community to donate a minimum of £5 each to enable the installation of these high quality environmentally-friendly loos.

Landbeach Tithe Barn has come a long way in the last 12 months – from a state of near collapse to a structure fit for use by the community for many

**Tithe
Barn
Trust**



Landbeach Tithe Barn view

years to come. By installing these toilets, we will be moving even closer to the goal of not just saving the Barn but ensuring its future as a vibrant, popular, friendly space for all to enjoy. Donations can be made online via our Total Giving page:

www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/TitheBarnTrust_spendapenny

Other ways to support the Barn

Visit – Covid-19 notwithstanding there are events throughout the year with the *Oracle* Art installation in October, Outdoor Gym in November and Carols at the Tithe Barn still to come before the year end. Visit tithebarntrust.org.uk/learning/2020-events/ for details.

Volunteer – Make new friends, work in an amazing place and know that you're helping a great cause – three fabulous reasons to get volunteering. We are looking for people to help out on open days and also to contribute as Event Volunteers or Learning Volunteers. If you'd like to get involved do get in touch. Email tithebarntrust@gmail.com or see our Do-it.org volunteering page to find out more about our volunteering opportunities.

Befriend the Barn – As a *Friend* of the Tithe Barn Trust you will be directly supporting the Barn and helping to ensure its future. Annual membership starts from just £20.

Email tithebarntrust@gmail.com to find out more or visit tithebarntrust.org.uk/join-get-involved/become-a-member/ to download a membership form.

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Kazuboo in position – artist's impression



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Waggle Bumz is lovely. Patch enjoys going and meeting friends. I feel so relaxed leaving Patch in your care. I would definitely recommend you and to my own clients as I'm a dog walker!

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FECA IN WILLINGHAM

WILLINGHAM WI

At the time of writing we are still not able to hold our regular monthly meetings due to the existing Coronavirus social distancing regulations, and it is difficult to predict when we will be able to re-start. We are currently trying to arrange our programme of Speakers for 2021, so that once we can begin our meetings again, we will be well prepared.

Despite what has been a difficult and unprecedented time for everyone, we believe our WI remains a great asset to the village and once we begin our meetings again new members would be very welcome. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm in the Social Club in Willingham. If you would like to join us please email willinghamwi28@gmail.com and we will be able to keep you up to date with details of when we will be re-starting.

WILLINGHAM ACTION GROUP

Sustainable Willingham – preparing minds for an (un)certain future

Willingham Action Group has taken it upon itself to do its bit, hoping we might open eyes to the huge ecological and environmental challenges ahead. As individuals we might feel our actions are futile in the face of the major polluters and greenhouse gas emitters or indeed against the size of the (imaginary) heating element required to raise the temperature of the vast volumes of water in our seas and oceans by even a couple of degrees, laughably regarded as an acceptable threshold.

We started this work five years ago when we planted 1,300 trees in a new community orchard and around the village, but many things have changed since then as the true scale of the problem confronts us daily. At the beginning of this year we widened the scope of our Environment Group; our goal of starting a Repair Café is now on hold due to the pandemic. Instead we have asked residents to sign up to a *plastics pledge* encouraging them to reduce the amount of single-use plastics they use. At the same time, we are publishing information about plastics on our

website (willinghamlife.org) including the ease or difficulty of recycling particular ones and the toxicity associated with the process.

Our attention at the moment now focuses on food and the contribution food production adds to climate change. We are hoping the information we put out will encourage people to change to help. Agriculture has a notable impact on the environment. In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, 23% of total human-generated greenhouse gas emissions from 2007 to 2016 derive from Agriculture, Forestry and other land uses. Livestock farming also requires a lot of land for both animals and feed production resulting in the deforestation of many woodlands and rainforests, increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Today, 37% of all available land surface in the world is used for pasture. However, eating meat is an important part of many people's diet. It provides many nutrients for our bodies and provides a livelihood for many, yet we can't ignore the environmental dangers caused by meat production. We are hoping that we will all try to eat less meat.

Another issue about our food consumption can be researched by visiting a supermarket, and looking at the source of the food you buy. Broccoli is good for you (possible origin Kenya 4,300 miles away), as are vegetables like green beans (Guatemala 5,500 miles away) or you could splash out on asparagus (Peru 6,400 miles away). Buying more food in season would help a lot and would perhaps discourage supermarkets from sourcing frozen foodstuff from the other side of the world with the ensuing pollution problems and unnecessary use of fossil fuels.

These projects are ongoing and we will add new ones too. We are all microscopically tiny. And we all have our lives to lead, our drives to heed. But, to quote *What if we stopped pretending* by Jonathan Franzen (Google it! – once read, you cannot unsee it): “If collective action resulted in just one fewer devastating hurricane, just a few extra years of relative stability, it would be a goal worth pursuing.” The massive global, top-down humanity reboot required is utopian, but billions of micro-reboots may just be within our reach – hence our attempt to introduce a number of modest initiatives.

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FECA IN WILLINGHAM

WILLINGHAM GARDENING CLUB

Over the Garden Fence

Virtual Horticultural & Craft Show 2020 – As both the Gardening Club and the Village Horticultural and Craft Show had to be stood down this year due to the Covid-19 virus we held a Virtual Show in September. Thanks to all those who contributed photographs of their gardening and craft efforts to the Virtual Show. More of you are taking to the outdoors and engaging with the practicalities of growing vegetables and flowers as well as enjoying the physical and mental benefits of gardening in lockdown.

Photographs and articles were featured in the October edition of the Willingham News whilst more photographs and anecdotes are to be found on the extras section on the Willingham Life website.

Planning ahead – If you were too late with planting your own bulbs for Christmas flowering, don't worry, pots of Hyacinths, Narcissi, Amaryllis and Cyclamen will be available at garden centres and in the supermarkets.

One of the most spectacular blooms at Christmas are the Amaryllis which can also be bought as a cut flower. Buy cut amaryllis flowers at least a full week before Christmas to ensure the buds have enough time in the warm to fully open. They are only sold in bud because this allows them to be safely transported. Once the flowers have opened, they bruise very easily. Take care not to damage them by laying their stems across a table with their heads like heavy croquet mallets hanging over the end of the table as you arrange them. Choose a heavy vase and mix with branches of birch, twisted willow or dogwood for example.

Wrap several rubber bands around the cut stem ends. This will stop the stem spitting and curling upwards. Because the stems are hollow, slide a thin cane up each one and then plug the stem end with cotton wool to hold the cane in place. This will help the stem support several flower heads.

Never waste money on buying moss, instead grab a springbok rake and scarify your lawn. You'll be amazed at how much beautiful woolly moss you end up with. Lay it out on a tray before bringing it inside

to give any insects a chance to decamp. It will be perfect for pot dressing. Be aware that some amaryllis varieties will dribble nectar once they are open. Keep this in mind when placing their pots around precious furnishings.

Gather festive stems – Cut some stems from the garden to make a seasonal display. Evergreens, such as Portuguese Laurel, Myrtle, Eucalyptus, Sarcococca, Winter Jasmine and Mahonia, with its foliage and flower buds, make a great base. Use berries to make up for the shortage of flower colour at this time of the year. Rose hips last really well. Plunge cut stems straight into a bucket of cold water and keep them cool before arranging in vases or flower foam. Shop bought flowers could be added a little later. Do remember to strip off all foliage leaves that will sit below the waterline. Clear and refresh the water in your container every few days to keep things fresh.

Help your wildlife survive the winter – Make habitat piles, piles of sticks, leaves and logs for insects, small mammals and amphibians to shelter in. Avoid burning waste as you'll undoubtedly burn insects among the waste matter. Leave borders intact. Clear your borders in spring rather than autumn. Insects such as ladybirds will sneak into seed heads and hollow plant stems, taking advantage of the safe, dry shelter. Birds will take seeds from plants left over until Spring.

Feed the birds – Hang feeders to keep birds visiting your garden. Feeding now when natural supplies of seeds and berries are low builds up their strength for the winter and to survive the cold nights. Providing additional food is essential. Choose peanuts, sunflower hearts and suet. The more calories the better. They'll nest nearby in spring and be ready to eat insect pests when they appear next year. Think about planting berry bearing trees or shrubs. Guelder Rose, Rowan, Hawthorn and Cotoneaster are ideal.

Gardening jobs to keep you busy over the next few weeks – enjoy browsing the plant and seed catalogues and planning our next year's gardening strategy; clean and disinfect the greenhouse, plant pots, gardening tools and cutters, etc. Prepare to help your wildlife survive the winter.

continued on page 41

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FECA IN WILLINGHAM

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Trees shrubs and flowers: check on a regular basis that all is well, strong winds can damage and untether climbers, so keep them securely attached to supports. Ensure tree ties, stakes and guards are securely in place and not biting into the bark, and gently re-firm the soil around the root ball if frost heave looks to have lifted new plantings. If we have snow, remember to shake off the covering before it weighs down branches, particularly conifers.

Cut down border perennials selectively, leaving those with colour and structure. Leave grasses such as *Miscanthus* and seed heads standing for the winter, your garden wildlife will appreciate it. Don't be too tidy; leaving some perennial stems offers a winter home for insects.

As plants die back and new viewpoints emerge in the garden, consider moving objects such as containers, garden sculptures or birdbaths to make new focal points.

Don't prune shrubs/topiary in midwinter as fresh cut stems are vulnerable to frost. Don't prune acers and birch after December – they may bleed from the cuts. Leave until April/July to avoid silver leaf disease. Don't cut the grass if there is a frost on the lawn surfaces. Avoid walking on it, too, in cold wet conditions.

WILLINGHAM BOWLS CLUB

With the New Year coming we hope for a very different year in 2021.

Our plans for the Willingham Bowls Club Community Scheme had to be put on hold due to

the Covid-19 pandemic. By the time the season starts around April we hope there is a different theme in the World, getting back to normal.

We still have plans to instigate the scheme as soon as we can, our plans will be to offer rehabilitation patients the opportunity to meet up with old and new friends, working with Over and Willingham Surgeries. We also hope to help those who are suffering from loneliness and mental stress by organising coffee and bowls mornings, this will be available free of charge thanks to our sponsors. We are still looking for more sponsors as we hope to offer the opportunity to those who have some form of disability but we need extra equipment to make it suitable.

We have had some excellent sponsors including FECA, South Cambridgeshire Community Chest, Willingham and District Ploughing Association, Uttridge Accounting, The Duke, The Porterhouse and Eastern Marquees.

We were unable to play in any outdoor leagues during 2020 due to the virus but managed to arrange some friendly matches and roll ups, social distancing observed. There is hope that we might be able to put a team into the Chesterton Indoor league, permission has been given to play so we plan to start if there are no changes.

We welcome new members and we had some new members during 2020 who enjoyed the club roll ups. We are a friendly club and we welcome anyone who wants to try bowls.

If you need any more information, please contact our Secretary: Ian Bissett ianbissett@gmail.com



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seeing you soon!*

PARISH COUNCILS

COTTENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Major Building Developments – Now that the Bellway site is almost complete and Persimmon and Redrow have started work on their sites, there is still a substantial amount of road works in the pipeline around Oakington Road and Rampton Road over the next year or so.

This Land, the County Council's developer, were somewhat surprised (read: shocked/angry) to be refused approval of their *Reserved Matters* application next to the Recreation Ground. They seem to have completely ignored both Cottenham's *Neighbourhood Plan* and *Village Design Statement* when designing the house styles and layouts plus a few other things. Once they have reflected on what went wrong, they could submit a modified plan, taking account of our suggested mitigations or try an appeal based on their failure. Watch this space!

Village Hall and Nursery update – The Recreation Ground should now be looking much less like a building site by the time you read this. We hope to be putting the finishing touches to the Nursery prior to its opening properly in early 2021, providing a safe environment for working parents and carers to leave their young children for longer.

Similarly, the Hall is much larger and better-designed than the old hall with flexible event space downstairs, a bar and kitchens and a bigger upstairs room, which offers fantastic views from the balcony. If you would like to know more about what facilities we now have to offer then please get in touch or check our website for details.

Tennis courts – We were overwhelmed by the number of bookings to use the Recreation Ground tennis courts over the summer period. A decision was taken at our October Full Council meeting to apply for a grant to turn the existing grass courts into hard courts, therefore making them usable year-round. Working closely with Cottenham Tennis Club we've been able to submit an application and will know the outcome in March 2021.

Zero Carbon Communities Grants – At the time of writing we're waiting to hear whether our applications to SCDC have been successful for 3 separate projects via their *Zero Carbon Communities Grants* scheme. The projects submitted are for tree planting at WARG Field, cycle racks at WARG Field

and Fen Reeves and works to improve access at Fen Reeves.

Jo Brook, Parish Clerk PSLCC,
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WILLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

During these very strange times, whilst dealing with the issues that the pandemic has brought, Willingham Parish Council has continued to work on various projects, including the following.

Highways – Traffic through Willingham has been and still is an area of concern for both parishioners and the Council. The Council have installed additional interactive speed signs which are portable and can be moved around the various hot spots. We successfully applied for a *Minor Highways Improvement* bid which resulted in the 30mph speed limit being extended on Station Road and have worked with South Cambridgeshire District Council for tighter control over Northstowe heavy commercial vehicles to ensure they are following their correct routes.

The Council have also recently submitted a second minor highways improvement bid for a 40mph buffer zone along with associated works before you reach the 30mph limit on Earith Road. We have been working with the team from the A14 Legacy Grant and hope to soon see work start on a footpath along Earith Road to the orchard. This will enable residents to gain access to this popular open space more safely.

Environment – Following feedback from hall users and a recent energy survey the Council have submitted a grant application to South Cambridgeshire's *Zero Carbon Communities Grant* scheme for an infra-red heating system in the Ploughman Hall. If successful, this will make the hall a more pleasant environment for users during the winter months whilst at the same time reducing carbon emissions and costs.

On the same theme of energy saving in buildings, the local Energy Advice Partnership is offering local residents free advice on energy saving measures in the home. Eligibility criteria include low income, poor health, and vulnerability. Further details can be found at www.applyforleap.org.uk or by phoning 0800 060 7567

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PARISH COUNCILS

continued from page 43

Council operations – During the Covid outbreak, it is important that residents can access social activities where possible and with this in mind, the Council is working hard with local groups and hirers to enable them to return safely to the halls and pavilion. We have recently opened the hall to regular hirers and the pavilion for the football and cricket teams. Whilst access is limited it does allow the various groups to get going again. Unfortunately, we are unable to take one off bookings at the moment. The Council office is manned four mornings a week. Members of the public may be asked to remain at the internal door upon visiting. Council meetings are still taking place monthly and these are currently being held remotely via Zoom. Members of the public are very welcome to attend these meetings and log in details are provided on the agendas which are posted on the Council website willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

MR VIRUS

By Vanessa and Andrew Lacey, Landbeach.

Who do you think you are kidding, Mr.Virus,
If you think we're on the run?

We are the boys (and girls) who will stop your
little game,

We are the boys (and girls) who will make you
think again.

So who do you think you are kidding, Mr.Virus,
if you think old England's (and Wales, Scotland
and Northern Ireland's) done?

Mrs. Brown can't go to town or shop at M&S,
But now she drives a lorry to supply the NHS!

So who do you think you are kidding, Mr.Virus,
if you think old England's (and Wales, Scotland
and Northern Ireland's) done?!

(To be sung to the *Dad's Army* theme tune.)



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FEN EDGE GROUPS

Rotary Cambridge-South Rotary Club

Club members continue to meet weekly using Zoom with fascinating speakers, often from overseas, talking about environmental issues such as Offshore Wind energy (did we all know that the UK leads the world in implementation) or climate change.

Sadly, most of our activities and projects have had to be postponed/cancelled because of Covid. This includes Peace activities, *Memory Café* and *Christmas car parking*. We have been able to contribute to some good causes locally including *Kids Out Christmas Box* appeal.

Rotary has 1.2 million members across 200 countries and at an International level, Rotary's effort continues to progress the eradication of Polio worldwide. Working with the World Health Organisation and thousands of volunteers, Rotary are getting ever nearer worldwide eradication with the whole of Africa being declared Polio (wild virus) free in August. This just leaves Pakistan/Afghanistan.

Rotary launched the campaign back in 1985 when there were 350,000 cases worldwide each year. A 99.9% reduction has been achieved and Rotary has continued with moral leadership throughout and over \$2 billion (protecting 2.5 billion children) as well as bringing in the Gates Foundation and many of the national leaders and of course countless volunteer hours. Even in the UK there are still 120,000 polio "survivors", many of whom are now suffering not only with a disability but with post-polio syndrome, which makes even basic functions (e.g. bathing, dressing, making a cup of tea) a gruelling routine.

The immunisation campaign has restarted after the Covid lockdown and of course immunisation has to continue around the world until it is eradicated (like

Smallpox which is the only one to be eradicated to date). Rotary regards these activities as *Polio Plus* and it has given, and will give, the infrastructure for many medical benefits including, we hope soon, Coronavirus Covid-19 immunisation.

You may have seen publicity about *Polio Plus* on 24 October (*World Polio Day*).

Our club has planted purple (purple is the symbol for *Polio Plus*) crocuses on Queen's Green, Cambridge as a reminder and has raised funds and contributed to Rotary's charity for this cause. Do think of the *Polio Plus* campaign when you admire them in the Spring.

If you just want to know more about Rotary or to consider joining, do get in touch. We are a welcoming club that has fun putting "service above self".

Mike Smith, Rotary Club of Cambridge South

smithmichaelstanley@hotmail.com



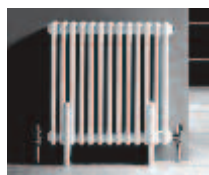
Photo: Sian Franklin

CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB

The club is for everyone interested in birds in Cambridgeshire and beyond. Visit cambridgebirdclub.org.uk for up-to-date information on our activities and the *What's About?* page with details of interesting sightings. We also have a stunning gallery of photos by our local, highly talented photographers.



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FEN EDGE GROUPS

FEN EDGE TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Twinning in Lockdown

For over twenty-one years, the Fen Edge villages of Cottenham, Landbeach, Rampton, Waterbeach and Willingham have been twinned with Avrillé, in the Loire Valley, France; great friendships have been forged in that time. Regrettably, 2020 is the first year that no visit to or from France has happened. Nevertheless, we have been able to keep in touch with our French friends during lockdown and our first (very successful) Zoom meeting took place on the evening of 7 May.

The visit of our French friends to the Fen Edge in 2020 had been planned to coincide with the VE-Day celebrations. Postponing an event is always sad, but this year was particularly hard as we had been offered a very substantial grant from FECA to help us to mark the occasion with a bespoke guided tour of Duxford. Depending on the global situation, we are aiming to get the twinning visits back on track in 2021 and if you're interested in taking part, please keep the dates Thursday 13 to Sunday 16 May 2021 free. Activities will be planned closer to the time and we hope to be able to treat our guests to a great experience. Autumn would normally be the time for our ever-



An evening with: "Partez-vous bientôt en France?"

popular annual quiz evening. This will also be hopefully rescheduled in 2021 but in the meantime, we have been keeping in touch socially via Zoom. We enjoyed a chat over French cheese and wine from the comfort of our own homes to mark Bastille Day on 14 July.

As always, the association is keen to welcome new members so, if you are interested in helping our cultural exchanges, as a host, as a visitor or simply with interest and moral support, please contact juliagwilt@gmail.com or fenedgetwinning@gmail.com



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FEN EDGE GROUPS

STITCHWILD

Pockets – A Politico-Feminist Issue?

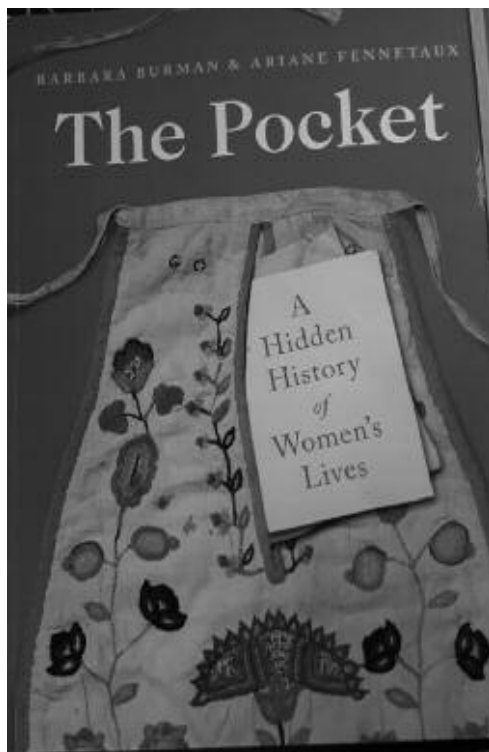
by Diane Cowell

StitchWild meetings are still in limbo at the moment, so here are some of my observations made during lockdown on a subject familiar to us all, the pocket! I happened to have the television on while I was sewing one day; a familiar programme about wedding dress fittings was on; and the bride-to-be was extolling the virtues of the dress she was trying on, because it had ... pockets! That got me thinking about something I had seen at a textile art show last year, where a poem was featured in an artistic piece of work that spoke of 'pockets of sedition'. Apparently, women weren't allowed pockets in their clothing during the suffragette movement, lest they stuff them full of seditious pamphlets to be handed out

advocating the granting of suffrage (voting rights) to women.

And then what should come across my desk but a mention of a book entitled *The Pocket — A Hidden History of Women's Lives*, by Barbara Burman and Ariane Fennetaux. This lovely and interesting book covers in great detail the evolution of the pocket in women's clothing from the 1600s to the present. It includes information on the beautiful craftsmanship of richly embroidered pockets, as well as some of the legal and social issues related to these deeply evocative and personal belongings; and is full of interesting stories and anecdotes about pockets as they related to both the rich and the average woman. I'd highly recommend it to anyone with an interest in historical embroidery and stitchery!

Contrary to today, women's pockets used to be much bigger than they are now; and at one time were much more spacious than even men's clothing could offer. In medieval times, both women and men had pockets separate from their clothing, which came in pairs; and were usually worn on a belt around their waists. However, to prevent pickpockets, or so-called 'cutpurses' these paired pockets soon were worn under the top layers of clothing, and were accessed through slits in men's jackets, and in women's petticoats. Men had easy access to their pockets, but women often had to nearly undress completely to reach their pockets hidden between and underneath numerous layers of clothing! It was only late in the 17th century that for men, pockets became integral parts of their clothing, permanently sewn into their coats, waistcoats and trousers. Women were still burdened by the large, bulging tie-on pockets worn within their layers; safe but heavy and difficult to carry and to get to, both by cutpurses and the woman herself! Things were set to change after the French Revolution. The many yards of wide, showy, fancy fabrics making up the skirt and also showing off the wealth of the wearer were replaced by skirts pulled in



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closely to the body, with the waist creeping upward into the 'empire' waistline, making a slender silhouette. This neoclassical vision left no room for the huge pouches, but women still needed to carry their belongings with them.

Thus appeared the reticule, a small, highly decorated little purse, often on a small chain with a ring in the middle to fit upon the hand. Because these purses were so small, men were often pressed into duty carrying women's belongings in their pockets for them.

Women's bags had evolved from the private spaces that they carried into the public independently with increasing freedom, bringing with them their precious or secret belongings, into these tiny little bags that could carry, at most, a few coins and a handkerchief. The less women could carry, the less freedom they had. Take away their large pockets and women's ability to navigate public places with their private writings, and to travel unaccompanied was hindered.

Enter the Rational Dress Campaign! Founded in 1891, the Rational Dress Society called for women to dress for comfort and for health, discarding corsets in favour of boneless stays and bloomers, loose trousers, all of which allowed for free movement. It hit its peak around the turn of the century, when men's suits had an average of 15 pockets and women's had none. Pockets became politicized and women fought for 'pocket equality.' According to the New York Times in 1899, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, civilization itself was founded on the pocket! 'As we become more civilized, we need more pockets. No pocketless people has ever been great...and the female sex cannot rival us while it is pocketless!' More seriously, women felt that they should have an equal political and financial standing with men. Fussy, female clothing was impractical, while the Rational Dress code allowed women to swagger about with their hands in their pockets, standing their ground instead of standing, blushing and shy. Printed instructions for how to make functional clothing and to sew pockets into them were widely distributed. By 1910, suffragette suits boasted 7 or 8 pockets, all in plain sight and

offering easy access for the wearer. However, societal anxiety lingered – not only were women able to stand with their hands in their pockets, on point to challenge men, their pockets could carry something secret, something private, or even something deadly. In the 1920s, women's clothing became form fitting and again, pockets spoiled the line of the dress and disappeared again. During World War 2, when women took up deployed men's jobs in factories, women's clothing again became more functional, including the wearing of trousers with pockets. But as soon as the war ended, women were expected to hand their jobs back to the men returning home; and fashions again became very feminine, with fitted bodices and wide gathered skirts. Pockets interfered with these silhouettes and started to shrink and then disappear. Even today, most office wear for women today lacks functional pockets; handbags are required, keeping the handbag industry thriving. Even so-called active wear for women, with a few notable exceptions, tends to have pockets too small for even a mobile phone; if it has any at all. But due to demand, there is a new push among designers to prioritize storage in in women's apparel and there is hope that pockets will further evolve for the better in the future.

Dangerous Coats

Someone clever once said
Women were not allowed pockets
In case they carried leaflets
To spread sedition
Which means unrest
To you & me
A grandiose word
For common-sense
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Dangerous coats
Made of pockets & sedition

Sharon Owens



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FEN EDGE GROUPS

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One Step at a Time – Dancing is something that everyone can do, it is movement to a beat. Taking part is recognised as a great form of exercise both for the body and the mind. We teach a form of dancing that involves two people learning to dance together. It is simple and fun, and can be done at your own pace. If you're interested in taking part in an active, stimulating and rewarding activity this may be just what you are looking for.

Stepping into the Light – Freedom and social interaction are an important element of human life. Without both, people get lost in a very dark place. Learning to adapt to a change in our environment is a crucial skill that can help overcome any adversity. When a single issue is examined in detail the bigger picture is often overlooked. This is something the government had struggled with but once discussions began with organisations, such as those that support local government, mental health and recreational activities, the importance of leading a free and healthy life has been acknowledged and steps taken to provide opportunities.

In the last few months, a lot of work has been carried out to ensure that activities in community centres can return. Most of it involved making sure that the facilities are clean and safe to use.

Whirl & Twirl, has also been involved in this work and in September reopened its doors, allowing some very keen dancers to return. We would like to let you know that our doors are always open and we would welcome anyone who would like to come and have ago.

The dance steps are simple, fun and can be learnt at your own pace. Our instructor Suzanne calls out the individual steps while the music plays. We dance many rhythms enough to suit everyone's tastes.

Absolutely no experience is necessary. So, take a step forward and brighten up your day, give Suzanne a call, she is free in the evenings and at the weekend.

Round Dance at Cottenham Community Centre – It's called a *round dance*, with a caller who tells you the sequence of steps, so you know what you should be doing. It is not too serious, is great fun and is good for your health into the bargain!

Why not come and take a look, or join in on a taster session at Cottenham Community Centre at 7pm on Wednesdays.

07958 545 754 (Suzanne), whirltwirlrdc@gmail.com
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FEN EDGE ORCHESTRA

Fen Edge Orchestra is a friendly, amateur orchestra, which was formed over 10 years ago. It has always rehearsed in Cottenham Village College on Wednesdays during term times. Members come from Cottenham itself, but also from the surrounding villages, as well as Cambridge and even further afield.

Under the direction of Evan Turner, the standard has improved steadily over the past few years. Two concerts are given each year – usually a winter concert in the warm and pleasant surroundings of Histon Baptist Church, and a summer concert in Cottenham Parish Church, where there is always an enthusiastic welcome.

The orchestra performs a varied menu of music; classics, such as Beethoven and Haydn symphonies, some early music, and some more contemporary repertoire. A lighter programme is usually devised for the biennial Fen Edge Festival.

There are no auditions to join the orchestra. Many members arrive after a long break from playing, or when they are learning an instrument and have reached the stage when they are ready to play with other people.

On the website below there is more information and a contact page, and interested players are invited to get in touch. If there is a place available for the instrument in question, then you would be asked to come along and join in a Wednesday rehearsal. If there is no place at the time of the enquiry, you will be put on a waiting list and contacted when there is a vacancy.

At the time of writing (October 2020) the orchestra is just about to start rehearsing again, carefully following government Covid guidelines. Risk assessments are in place, and we are raring to go. Things may change of course, so please check the current situation on the website.
fenedgeorchestra.wordpress.com

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information visit our Facebook page or our blog (feagblog.wordpress.com) or website (feag.co.uk).

FEN EDGE FOOTPATH GROUP

The Fen Edge Footpath Group will hopefully be walking again in the coming year. The walk schedule for 2021 will be the walks that were scheduled for 2020, which sadly we were unable to complete. For the full list please refer to the website (sites.google.com/site/fenedgefg/home) for details.

Please register your intention to join us a week before the walk. New residents to the village are very welcome to join us.

As this is written in October no one knows what restrictions will be in place for Christmas.

Nevertheless, the **Boxing Day walk** is scheduled to go ahead as planned at 10am from Cottenham Broad Lane and High Street junction. For this walk only please phone 07751 599826 before turning up.

FEN EDGE ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

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