

DIARY DATES

Friday 30 November	
Thursday 6 December	Christmas Bazaar, 6.00-7.30pm, Finborough Primary School Candlestick Club Christmas Dinner, Noon, Buxhall Village Hall Garden Club , 7.30pm, Pettiwald Hall
Tuesday 11 December	FHOBS Lunch Club Tea Party, 3pm, Buxhall Village hall
Thursday 13 December	Community Carols, 6.15pm, Finborough Primary School
Friday 14 December	Pram Service Party, 2.15pm, Church Room, Onehouse
Saturday 15 December, Sunday 16 December	Crib Festival (details inside), St Andrew's Church, Finborough
Wednesday 19 December	Primary School Nativity and Carol Service, 10am, St Mary's Church, Buxhall
Thursday 20 December	Charity Bingo, 6.30pm, Pettiwald Hall
Tuesday 1 January	Onehouse Ramblers Short Walk, 11am, Church Room, Onehouse
Sunday 20 January	Onehouse Ramblers Short Walk, 2.30pm, Church Room, Onehouse Sunday Explorers, 4.30 – 5.30pm, St Andrew's Church
Monday 21 January	Community Council Inaugural AGM, 7.30pm, Pettiwald Hall
Monday 28 January	Pram Service, 2.15pm, St Mary's Church, Buxhall
Tuesday 29 January	FHOBS Lunch Club, approx. noon, Buxhall Village Hall

Services at St Andrew's in December and January

Thursday 6 December	10am	Holy Communion
2 December	11am	Holy Communion
9 December	4.30pm	Christingle Service
Saturday 15 December	4.30pm	Carols for Christmas
16 December	11am	Holy Communion
Thursday 20 December	10am	Holy Communion
23 December	6.30pm	Nine Lessons and Carols
25 December	10.30am	Family Service followed by Holy Communion
Thursday 3 January	10am	Holy Communion
6 January	11am	Holy Communion
13 January	4.30pm	Celtic Evening Prayer
Thursday 17 January	10am	Holy Communion
20 January	11am	Holy Communion

CHURCH SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE FOR DECEMBER

Priest-in-charge: The Revd Lindsay Llewellyn MacDuff, The Rectory, Onehouse: 01449 616010

Weekday Morning Prayer 8.00 - 8.30 am Monday: Onehouse; Friday: Great Finborough

2 December

Isaiah 2.1-5; Romans 13.11-14; Matthew 24.36-44

9.30 am	Sung Eucharist (1)	Buxhall
9.30 am	Reflective Morning Prayer	Shelland
11 am	Holy Communion (1)	Finborough
11 am	Matins	Harleston
6.30 pm	Holy Communion (1)	Onehouse

Thursday 6 December 10 am Holy Communion (1) Finborough

9 December

Isaiah 11.1-10; Romans 15.4-13; Matthew 3.1-12

9.30 am	Matins	Buxhall
9.30 am	Holy Communion (2)	Shelland
11 am	Holy Communion (1)	Harleston
11 am	Family Service	Onehouse
4.30 pm	Christingle	Finborough

Thursday 13 December 10 am Holy Communion (2) Shelland

Saturday 15 December 4.30 pm Carols for Christmas Finborough

Advent Sunday

Buxhall
Shelland
Finborough
Harleston
Onehouse

Second Sunday of Advent

Buxhall
Shelland
Harleston
Onehouse
Finborough

16 December

Isaiah 35.1-10; James 5.7-10; Matthew 11.2-11

9.30 am	Poems, Prose and...
11 am	Holy Communion (1)
3.30 pm	Carols by Candlelight
4 pm	Carol Service

Thursday 20 December 10 am Holy Communion (1) Finborough

23 December

Isaiah 7.10-16; Romans 1.1-7; Matthew 1.18-25

9.30 am	Holy Communion (2)
9.30 am	Holy Communion (1)
9.30 am	Holy Communion (1)
6.30 pm	Nine Lessons and Carols

24 December

Isaiah 52.7-10; Hebrews 1.1-4 (5-12); John 1.1-14

4 pm	Crib Service
4 pm	Carols
11.30 pm	Midnight Mass

25 December

Isaiah 62.6-12; Titus 3.4-7; Luke 2 (1-7) 8-20

9 am	Holy Communion (2)
9.30 am	Family Service
10.30 am	Family Service followed by Holy Communion (1)
10.30 am	Holy Communion (2)
10.30 am	Family Communion (1)

Thursday 27 December 10 am Holy Communion (2) Shelland

30 December

Isaiah 63.7-9; Hebrews 2.10-18; Matthew 2.13-23

10.30	Benefice Eucharist
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Third Sunday of Advent

Shelland
Finborough
Onehouse
Buxhall

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Buxhall
Harleston
Onehouse
Finborough

Christmas Eve

Buxhall
Harleston
Buxhall

Christmas Day

Shelland
Buxhall
Finborough
Harleston
Onehouse

First Sunday of Christmas

Onehouse Room

CHURCH SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE FOR JANUARY

Priest-in-charge: The Revd Lindsay Llewellyn-MacDuff, The Rectory, Onehouse
Telephone: 01449 616010

Weekday Morning Prayer 8.00 - 8.30 am Monday: Onehouse; Friday: Great Finborough

1 January 11 am Welcoming the New Year Buxhall

Thursday 3 January 10 am Holy Communion (1) Finborough

6 January

Isaiah 60.1-6; Ephesians 3.1-12; Matthew 2.1-12

9.30 am	Sung Eucharist (1)	Buxhall
9.30 am	Reflective Morning Prayer	Shelland
11 am	Holy Communion (1)	Finborough
11 am	Holy Communion (2)	Harleston
6.30 pm	Evening Prayer	Onehouse

Epiphany

Thursday 10 January 10 am Holy Communion (2) Shelland

13 January

Isaiah 42.1-9; Acts 10.34-43; Matthew 3.13-17

9.30 am	Holy Communion (2)	Shelland
11 am	Baptism & Time2Worship	Harleston
11 am	Family Service	Onehouse
4.30pm	Celtic Evening Prayer	Finborough

Baptism of Christ

Thursday 17 January 10 am Holy Communion (1) Finborough

20 January

Isaiah 9.1-4; 1 Corinthians 1.10-18; Matthew 4.12-23

9.30 am	Reflective Morning Prayer	Buxhall
9.30 am	Matins	Shelland
11 am	Holy Communion (1)	Finborough
11 am	Family Communion (1)	Onehouse

Third Sunday of Epiphany

Thursday 24 January 10 am Holy Communion (2) Shelland

27 January

Eccles 2.12-end; 1 Timothy 6.12-16; Matthew 10.28-39

10.30 am	Patronal Festival	Shelland
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Charles King and Martyr

Notes to services: Holy Communion (1) = modern rite (order 1)
Holy Communion (2) = BCP (order 2)

December 2007

This newsletter comes with good wishes to all for Christmas and the New Year. It is also put together with very mixed feelings on my part – although I am looking forward to the 'spare time' that I may have each month I will in many ways miss the regular contact with the contributors.

Many thanks to all for your support over the past few years and to all who have contributed material over that time. I am delighted that a new editor has come forward and wish Sally well as she develops the newsletter. It has a long history in the village and I know is appreciated by many in the community.

Trudy

Report From Parish Council Meeting, 5 November Temporary site access, Valley Lane

37 residents attended the last Parish Council meeting when the Council considered a petition from residents in Valley Lane and Jack's Lane, expressing concern about the temporary access for construction purposes to the development site between Valley Lane and Middlefield Drive. Councillors – who have an obligation to act on behalf of the whole community, without fear or favour – considered the various points made by residents from all around the site and agreed the following actions. To:

- Contact the road safety officer for advice
- Contact Peter Blemings to provide road signs for the site
- Consider an in/out route via Valley Lane and Middlefield Drive in consultation with Highways and the developer
- Contact SCC re a traffic management survey/ plan
- Request pavement outside The Old Forge
- Ask for a final date for the conclusion of the project
- Request access to the lower fields so children can play safely there
- Ask the developer to provide a temporary car park before developing the rest of the site
- Advise residents in Valley Lane and Middlefield Drive of the action agreed and follow up in the next newsletter.
- Put future Parish Council meeting dates in the newsletter"

The Parish Council has no hesitation in confirming that the access to the development site is indeed temporary: apart from the fact that the access is subject to a two-year licence from the Highways Authority, the guarantee of its temporary nature is that there will be a footpath between the new development and Valley Lane, which will be passed to the Parish Council to administer on completion of the development.

The matter will be considered further at the full Parish Council meeting on Monday, 7 January 2008 at 7.30pm in the Pettward Hall.

Enforcing the village speed limit

The Council also considered speeding through the village following a potentially serious accident involving a member of the village school teaching staff. It was agreed that we should pursue new options to enforce the speed limit through the village, ideally leading to the prosecution of offenders to give a clear message that speeding in Great Finborough is not an option and we are in contact with the Police in this regard.

Parish Council Meeting Dates 2008

Parish Council meeting dates throughout 2008 will be as follows – all on Mondays at 7.30pm in the Pettward Hall:
7 January, 3 March, 12 May, 7 July, 1 September and 3 November

New Editor – Village Newsletter

I am delighted to announce that Sally Gooch, who lives at Park Cottage has volunteered to take over editorship of the village newsletter from Trudy Gray. This is great news as it assures the future of the newsletter, so we look forward to its development under Sally's stewardship (contact details below), which begins with the February 2008 newsletter.

Finally, all our thanks are due to Trudy for the excellent contribution she has made over the last nine years to edit the newsletter. Few realize the unpaid effort that is required to keep this important part of our community going and to do it for nine years is worthy of our grateful recognition.
Thanks, Trudy.

Richard Brice, Chairman, Parish Council

Contact details for Editor

Sally Gooch, Park Cottage, Great Finborough IP14 3AD

Tel: 01449 677940

Email: sally.gooch@btinternet.com

Sally looks forward to being contacted with items for the February Newsletter (deadline 15th January)

2007 Number Quiz

Once again Christmas is approaching so it's time for the annual Number Quiz in aid of St Mary's Church, Buxhall. The idea of the quiz is to fill in the missing words that relate to the numbers and initials given, for example: 1666 *GF of L – Great Fire of London.*

The person with the most correct answers will be the winner. In the event of a tie a draw will be held. There will also be a spot prize which will be given to the first entry drawn out of a hat from all the entries received. So don't worry, even if you only get one correct answer, you may still win a prize, provided you return your entry form!

First prize (for the most correct answers) - £10; Spot prize – a bottle of wine
Quiz papers, price £1 each are available from Chaplins in Great Finborough, Chris Childs (736093), Lavinia Biles (736297) and Ivy Friston (736541).

Entries to be returned to Mrs Ivy Friston, 2 Fourwinds, Mill Road, Buxhall, Stowmarket, IP14 3DS by Monday, 7 January 2008.

Correct answers and the names of the prize winners will be published in the February 2008 editions of the Buxhall and Great Finborough Newsletters.

Judith Hickman

St John's Adult Table Tennis

Sessions will be held on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month in the Church Room, Onehouse, 7.30-9.30pm. on the following dates:

10th, 24th & 31st January, 14th & 28th February, 13th & 27th March

This is not a closed club, but is open to anyone who would like to come along and play. We cater for beginners and experienced players and coaching can be given. It costs £1 each session.

Why not come and join us? Further details from Derek Ames (Tel. 613328).

Onehouse Ramblers

There will be no walk in December, but two in January!

Tuesday 1st January at 11am for a 2 hour stroll

Sunday 20th January at 2.30pm for a fairly gentle walk of about an hour.

For each walk, meet at the Church Room car park on Forest Road.

All welcome to join the wallies in wellies!

Further information from Derek Ames (Tel. 613328)

Great Finborough CEVC Primary School

On Friday 30 November the Friends of Great Finborough will be holding a Christmas Bazaar in the School from 6.00pm and all will be welcome to come along!

We are doing three Christmas performances this year called 'It's a Party!' The dress rehearsal is being held on Wednesday 5 December at 10.00am and we shall be inviting the residents of Finborough Court and the children from Finborough & Buxhall Under 5's to attend. The other 2 performances for the Parents and Carers of the children will be held on 6 & 7 December.

After our Christmas Dinner on the 13 December Blue Class will be attending Finborough Court in the afternoon to sing some carols/songs. That evening there will be Community Christmas Carols at the school at 6.15pm (details elsewhere in the magazine) and all are welcome to attend.

The whole school will be attending St Mary Church at Buxhall for a Carol Service on December 19th at 10.00am and all are welcome.

After a busy half term we finish school on the 19 December and return on January 4 2008.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all the pupils and staff of Great Finborough CEVC Primary School to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2008.

Best wishes
Stephen R Dodd, Headteacher.

Candlestick Club: Over 60's

A small but dedicated band turned up for the November Bingo evening at Great Finborough. Over £60 was raised to go into club funds to help with outings and events in the future.

Our next meeting is the annual Christmas dinner. This is on Thursday December 6th, 12 o'clock for 12.30 sit down in Buxhall Village Hall. All members are very welcome – and if there is someone out there who is unsure whether I have you on the list please contact either Hilary (615492) or Keith (736598). Anyone who would like picking up for the dinner again contact either Hilary or Keith. Please also don't forget your Christmas gifts – these will be given out as you leave.

I know it sounds very early, but to all members have a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year. New members are always welcome to join. We like to have varied programme of events to keep you entertained. Let's have a 'LEAPING' time in 2008.

“WE MUST FIGHT FOR OUR POST OFFICES – THE LIFEBLOOD OF OUR VILLAGES!”

DAVID RUFFLEY MP

Rural post offices are the lifeblood of our villages. Yet they are under threat. The Government has ordered that 2,500 post offices must close nationwide. The public consultation on closures in our part of Suffolk commences in March 2008 but we must begin the campaign to protect our postal services now. As your local MP I want to do all I can to ensure that you continue to have access to post office services in your area.

I have set up a petition, which I will present to Post Office Ltd, to enable people to express their support for their local post office. It can be signed at your local post office or online at: www.tell davidruffley.com
In some cases Post Offices will be replaced with so-called 'outreach' points that offer part-time postal services in, for example, village halls, pubs or mobile units. Nice idea – but will they work in practice?

Charity Bingo Christmas Bonanza

We will be holding a charity bingo on thursday 20th december at pettiward hall, Great Finborough. There will be bingo as normal (with surprise prizes!), A raffle at £1.00 a strip, a lucky dip for the children and refreshments with mince pies.

We will be starting at an earlier time of **6:30pm** so children will be able to come and join in with their parents.

Any questions please fill free to ring Sharla Goldsmith(678480) or Mari Green(770032).

Everyone one welcome.

LETS – friends helping friends

LETS stand for LOCAL EXCHANGE TRADING SCHEME. We trade skills, produce and favours for Talents instead of money and yes – it is legal!

We meet regularly on the second Friday of most months and have a full programme arranged. The AGM on 12th October reported another successful year and we were able to persuade a few new faces (and some old ones!) to join the committee.

14th December is our Christmas party, when we bring festive food to enjoy with the usual glass or 2 of wine, along with our usual trading which will no doubt have a festive theme.

Looking ahead to next year we have some fun with a pancake party **on Friday 8th February**.

Are you new to the area and need some neighbourly help? Come along to our meetings and meet a whole new group of friends. Plants, books and produce feature high on the trading list but the skills vary from babysitting to plumbing! All members receive a membership directory detailing skills and needs and a regular newsletter so you can still trade and play an active part, even if you cannot attend our get-togethers. However they are friendly informal affairs and we welcome visitors to come along and find out all about LETS.

Alternatively you may ring Elaine Bailey on 01449 677206

Stowmarket and District Camera Club

The Club has had an exciting last few weeks. We had an open competition on the 22nd October with an excellent response with prints and slides, lots of new material being shown. Saturday 10th November we hosted the East Anglian Shield Competition with 21 clubs participating from all over East Anglia. The Judge Vic Attfield from

Amersham had a hard task with judging such a high standard of work. The joint winners of the evening were Wymondham and Shillingdon & District Camera Clubs. Monday 12th November we had a tripod competition against Wymondham and Framlingham clubs at which Wymondham were 1st, Stowmarket 2nd and Framlingham 3rd.

Our annual dinner and presentation evening is being held at The Trowel & Hammer at Cotton on Monday 3rd December. We have an exciting programme lined up for the new year and its not too late to join up. For further details contact Paul Mothersole on 01728 724 077.

Community Council

All are invited to the Inaugural Annual General Meeting of The Village Amenities Committee of Great Finborough, Suffolk (Charity number 246643), which will take place at 7.30pm on Monday, 21 January 2008 in the Pettward Hall.

The Village Amenities Committee (the Charity) or as we now informally call it, the Community Council, is designed to manage all the community facilities owned by the village, i.e. including the Pettward Hall, the Village Greens and, in future, the village car park, the children's play area and the 5-side football pitch. The object of the Charity is "the provision, development and maintenance of the village hall and such land, buildings and equipment as may accrue for recreational purposes, for use by the inhabitants of the village without distinction, including use for a) meetings, lectures, classes and general entertainment; b) sports and physical recreation; c) the conservation of flora and fauna."

The primary purpose of the meeting will be to establish the Charity as a legal entity and to elect a Committee of Management, the members of which will have legal obligations as Trustees of the Charity. All parishioners of Great Finborough aged 18 years and upwards are entitled to attend the meeting and vote. If anyone would like more details either of the Charity or the role of Trustee, please call me (676249).

The first meeting will be chaired by the Chairman of the Parish Council as custodian trustee. The agenda for the meeting will be as follows.

AGENDA

1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Object of the Charity & Powers of the Management Committee
3. Election of four elected members
4. Notification of one member appointed by the Parish Council
5. Appointment of up to two Co-opted members
6. Committee to elect chairman and vice-chairman
7. Committee to appoint secretary and treasurer
8. Schedule of meeting dates during 2008
9. Consideration of the formal name of the Charity
10. Any other business

Richard Brice
Chairman, Great Finborough Parish Council

Great Finborough and District Royal British Legion

The total collection this year amounted to £290.85. My grateful thanks to all those who contributed and to those who kindly allowed Poppy Trays to be displayed.

John Biles, Chairman

St Andrew's Church

Details of the activities over Advent and Christmas are scattered through the newsletter. We very much look forward to welcoming many in the community to St Andrew's over the next few weeks – perhaps to join us in worship or to drop in to the church over the Christmas period. As many of you know the church is normally open during the day.

The Crib Festival and display of Nativity figures (details elsewhere) will be an opportunity to see Nativity sets from various parts of the world and to enjoy some of the work produced by local children. Do come along if you can.

Details of the Community Carols at the Primary School are opposite.

4.30pm Sunday 9 December
Christingle Time 2 Worship

We would love to welcome you to our Christingle service – the candle-lit family celebration that will raise money for the vital work of The Children's Society.

Come and hear how the 'Christingle' symbolises the light of Christ's love.

The service should last about 45minutes.

Refreshments will be served after the service.

There is a space at the back of the church with toys for younger children.

St Andrew's Parish Church contacts

Priest in Charge:

Revd Lindsay Llewellyn-MacDuff, The Rectory Onehouse 01449 616010

Assistant clergy:

Revd Trudy Gray, The Old Police House Gt Finborough 01449 674819

Revd Chris Childs, 3, Chapel Close Buxhall 01449 736093

Churchwardens:

Mrs Lesley Cass, Valley Farm 01449 675970

Mrs Brenda Grimaldi, Gardenside, 01449 612440

Lay Elder:

Nigel Brown, Onehouse, 01449 675344

All the clergy of this benefice are available for pastoral care - to offer a space to talk informally, to offer support and prayer.

Information from Suffolk County Council

Reconstruction of Edgecomb Road Culvert, Stowmarket

- Stage 1 - Single lane of vehicles on Combs Lane controlled by traffic signals.
- Stage 2 - Combs Lane to be closed for a 2 – 3 day period, where the Contractor will be working extended hours to minimise traffic disruption. The road closure is currently programmed to begin on the 3rd December. There will be no left turn out of Edgecomb Road for the duration of the road closure.
- Stage 3 - Single lane vehicles on Combs Lane controlled by traffic signals. There will be no right turn into Edgecomb Road from Combs Lane and no left turn into Combs Lane from Edgecomb Road.

The alternative route for vehicles while Combs Lane is closed will be via the B1115 Finborough Road – Tavern Street – Station Road West – A1308 Gipping Way – C439 Needham Road and vice versa.

For any further information contact Stuart Hearsom, 01473 264999

News from Your District Councillor – John Matthissen

This month's report is all about recycling, inspired by a visit to the Material Reclamation Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham. A huge quantity of materials is flowing through every day, and Mid Suffolk's recycling rate is now 40% of household waste. Sounds good, and it is one of the best in Britain, but to match the continental rates of 65% to 70% we have a long way to go.

There are two ways of improving our recycling :

1. Everyone remembering to put all their paper, card, cans and plastic food containers into the Green Bin
2. NOT putting in the Green bin the materials that cannot be sorted by the impressive machinery at the MRF. The particular items that cause confusion include carrier bags, plastic bread bags, crisp packets, shredded paper, plastic toys, computer disks and cassettes, and anything that is very dirty. Tetra-paks are not wanted, but can be taken to the Household Waste site at Stowmarket when you have saved a lot of them.

Sometimes a whole lorry of recycling materials is rejected by the MRF because there is too much "contamination" by which they mean the wrong materials. That whole load goes to landfill

It is a sad fact that most of the people working at the MRF spend their time removing wrong materials such as those listed, so that they do not clog the many clever machines that actually sort the contents of our bins into separate streams that can be baled up and sold – paper, cardboard, three types of plastic, steel and aluminium emerge separately from the MRF, and successful recycling also significantly reduces our carbon footprint.

WILD BIRD SEED

Thanks to all of you who purchased seed in September as a result of which Great Finborough and District Garden Club were able, once again, to make a **donation of £95.00 to E.A.C.H.**

We will be placing our next order in December and we are offering this to non members at the prices shown below.

Wholesale prices of Sunflower seed and it's mixes have increased but everything else has remained about the same.

Please note that the price for Sunflower Kernals is based on 25kg sacks, as we buy by the tonne and never know what size sacks we will receive, if it's in smaller sacks a cash refund will be made when you collect. The 10kg approx price is correct as they will be weighed by us.

Product	Weight	Price
Wild Bird Mix	20 kg	£7-80
Finch Mix (no corn)	20 kg	£9-50
Ground Feed Mix	20 kg	£12-50
Mixed Corn	20 kg	£7-00
Peanuts (superior quality)	25 kg	£19-00
Peanuts (half sack)	12.5 kg approx	£10-00
Black Sunflower Seed	15 kg	£8-00
Sunflower Kernals	25 kg	£22-00
Sunflower Kernals	10kg approx	£9-30
Niger Seed	20 kg	£16-50
Niger Seed (half sack)	10kg approx	£9-00
Fat Balls	Pack of 6	90p

The next order will be placed on December 7th and, should you wish to order any, the seed will be available for collection, from Abbey Farm Cottage, Buxhall Rd. Great Finborough. by about the 12th.

If you would like to place an order please let me have your requirements together with a cheque to "Great Finborough Garden Club", it is also essential that I have your telephone number so that you can be advised when seed is ready for collection.

Orders may be posted or delivered to Abbey Farm Cottage (IP14 3AU), or if its more convenient delivered to either 1, Valley Lane or 8, High Rd and must be received by 6th December

Thank You, John Davey

Garden club members please use your normal order form, which should have been delivered by now. If you haven't got one please give me a ring

**Pop in For Coffee at St Andrew's
Every Saturday Morning**

from 10.30am to Noon

**On Saturday 8th December why not come along and help to make the
Christingles?**

This is an informal opportunity to have coffee and a chat - perhaps when you're passing on a stroll around the village or visiting the churchyard.

There may even be an opportunity to buy some garden produce!

**Come and join in with Community Carols
6.15pm Thursday 13 December
Great Finborough Primary School**

Carols around the Christmas Tree

Wrap up warm and bring a torch!

Mincepies and Hot drink afterwards in the school

All will be welcome

Great Finborough and District Garden Club

At last Mother Nature seems to realize that winter means storms and frost and they are slowly starting to inflict themselves on our gardens. A time to start perusing the seed catalogues and planning what to do in the garden next year; that is when all the cutting back, clearing up of debris and piling of leaves into leaf mould heaps is completed.

The November meeting was entitled, "All you wanted to know about apple trees, but were afraid to ask". Graham Proctor from Crown Nurseries brought some apple trees of varying sizes and shapes and in a very practical, yet entertaining and informative talk showed us how to understand, prune and care for our trees so they remain the size we want them to be and naturally, be as fruitful as possible. Following his enthralling presentation we have few excuses for sad looking trees, unless you miscounted the buds during pruning, because you were not wearing your glasses!

The next meeting will be the ever-popular Christmas party to be held on the 6th December. As always this takes the form of a light-hearted quiz, with nibbles and mulled wine. Please ensure that you return the December function slip to Mary Smyth as soon as possible or let John or Judy know your intentions.

The last birdseed extravaganza produced a £100 donation to our nominated charity, EACH. The next birdseed order will be placed on the 7 December so that our feathered friends can celebrate Christmas too, and with luck we can make another contribution to the Children's Hospice. For information see the separate notice elsewhere in the newsletter.

Finally, if you are interested in joining the garden club or would like to join us for any event you will be very welcome. Membership is only £10 per household per year. For further information contact either: John Davey on 674401 or john@abbeyclassics.co.uk or Judith Cameron on 672978 or janandjudy@beeb.net

St Andrew's Church Great Finborough Crib Festival

Saturday 15 December: 10.30am to 4.30pm

Sunday 16 December: 12pm to 4.30pm

*Come and see a display of
Nativity Scenes and Christmas Cribs
includes work by local Pre-School and Primary School*

Admission Free Refreshments available

A Carol service for all ages

Saturday 15 December at 4.30pm

Sunday Explorers

Now meeting Third Sunday each month
4.30 – 5.30pm

St Andrew's Church, Finborough

No meeting in December

Next Session: Sunday 20 January

Games, crafts, stories, singing (and who knows what else!)

Open to all between 7 and 12 years, if you'd like more information just contact Trudy (674819) or Nigel (675344).

Some Songs to Sing,
a story to listen to,
a drink and a biscuit!

You will be very welcome at the Pram Service
In January: Monday 26th
2.15pm at Buxhall Church

If you'd like to come along small children are not essential!

Enquiries to Lindsay (616010) - who will be bringing her children along!

**"On the Edge" in the Church Room, Onehouse
Sunday 2nd December 11am**

"Has consumerism overtaken the spirit of Christmas?"

Sunday 6th January 2008 11am

"There is nothing new under the sun". How do we square this with a New Year, new school, new job and new shoes?

All welcome to come for coffee & discussion.

This is not a service. We don't sing hymns or pray. It is a discussion over coffee for those who want to know more about the Christian faith.

Play your part to keep safe on darker nights

Falling crime figures show Suffolk is getting even safer, but the darker evenings can make us feel more vulnerable, especially those who live alone. During the busy festive season we need to be extra careful to keep ourselves, our households and our neighbours safe and secure so that we can all enjoy the celebrations.

Here are some seasonal safety tips and useful contacts:

Your home

- ❖ Don't leave your home in darkness – leave a light on using a timer switch and draw the curtains at night.
- ❖ **Fit a visible burglar alarm and outside lighting. Keep shrubs and hedges cut back.**
- ❖ **Lock all doors and windows and secure fences, gates and sheds**
- ❖ Dispose of present boxes carefully – don't advertise what's new in your house
- ❖ Check smoke alarms, electric blankets and festive lighting are working properly.

Personal Safety

- ❖ Never open your door to unexpected callers, without checking they are genuine. Ring a neighbour or the police first if you are unsure.
- ❖ **Keep your mobile phone battery topped up and put in a taxi contact number. Consider buying an audible attack alarm.**
- ❖ **Make sure you are visible to drivers – wear reflective clothing, use cycle lights or carry a torch**
- ❖ **Limit how much money and valuables you carry. Avoid using cash machines late at night. Have your keys ready when you are approaching your car or home.**
- ❖ **Park in busy, well-lit car parks near CCTV cameras. Keep valuables out of sight.** www.saferparking.com lists police approved car parks
- ❖ **Where possible, don't walk alone after dark. Plan your route. Avoid isolated stops and sit near the driver or other passengers. Never accept lifts from strangers.**

Contacts

To contact your area Safer Neighbourhood Team visit www.saferuffolk.org.uk or call Suffolk Constabulary on 01473 613500. Neighbourhood Watch news and crime prevention advice is available at www.suffolk.police.uk

For safety advice about bogus callers, electric blankets, festive lighting, smoke alarms contact Suffolk County Council Trading Standards on 01473 264859, or visit the county council website at www.suffolk.gov.uk

*Issued by Suffolk County Council Community Safety Unit: 01473 264288 email
communitysafety@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk*

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funeral at Ipswich Crematorium

Olive Durrant, aged 84 30 October

Funeral and Burial at Finborough, St Andrew

Victor Alan Davis, aged 69 31 October

Funeral at West Suffolk Crematorium

Patricia Audrey Armstrong, aged 79 31 October

Baptism at Buxhall, St Mary

Jennifer Lucy Nelson 18 November

Ladies' Lunch

Church Room, Onehouse

12.15pm, Thursday 6th December

Speaker: Christine Amjad-Ali

A Christian woman in a Muslim country at Christmas

There will be an offering to cover expenses

Please book places with Arlene on 676123 by 3rd December.

Keep this evening free!

Friday 7th December

Come and join us at

SHELLAND'S FESTIVE EVENING

from 7pm at Shelland Hall

Tickets £6 – more details later

Carols in The Shepherd & Dog, Onehouse

8.30-9.00pm, Friday 21st December

with singers from St John's Church, Onehouse

Do come & join us

From the Team

Dear Friends,

As I write, as yet I have picked up none of the usual rows that crop up during December about whether charity shops should put up nativity scenes, or conversely how Christians can protect their feast from the nasty commercialisation of Christmas; but I am confident that it will come.

But it occurs to me that the blurring of one mid-winter feast into another is as old, probably, as the human race. Many of you I'm sure already know that much of what we recognise about Christmas was put together by the Roman Emperor Constantine in the 4th century AD who conflated the Biblical accounts with many of the pagan practises of the two major Roman midwinter festivals including the Roman festival of light. (The element of decorating the house with various forms of evergreen is of course taken from the paganism of northern Europe.)

Constantine's intent, as I see it, was that as human beings we find the darkness of winter deeply depressing, even in these days of plentiful artificial light. We need lights and jollity and a party to cheer us up as I think some primeval part of us still fears that the sun may not ever grow strong again. Constantine however rooted that need for light and hope in the birth of Christ who is, as John's Gospel writes, "The true light, which enlightens everyone"¹. "What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."²

¹ John 1.9

² John 1.3b-5

The darkness that gets under our skin as the longest night approaches is a darkness that we can flee from in any form of jollity – decorating the house, open fires, parties, singing, presents and as much light as we can resource (neighbours permitting!) and it doesn't really matter what the excuse is. But there is another kind of darkness, the darkness of the soul, of selfishness, pride, violence and "man's inhumanity to man"³. It is from this darkness that Christ offers us relief. *For to all who receive him, who believe in his name, he gives power to become children of God.*⁴ And it is in the hope of this that amongst all the business of Yuletide, we come to church to celebrate the night that God entered the darkness of this world so that we might enter his light.

Have a blessed Christmas,



For your Information

A Guide to Christmas and Advent Services

You will find the full list of services elsewhere in the magazine but here is a handy guide to some of the highlights! With five parishes in our benefice there is plenty of variety. Somewhere in this list you should find just the services to suit your taste.

Christingle Service – 9th December at Finborough

A lovely service of light. A Christingle is a symbolic fruit made from a decorated orange surmounted by a candle and the climax of the service is the moment when all the Christingles are lit. Take your Christingle home and place it in your front window to burn throughout the Advent season, the season of waiting with longing and expectation for what is to come.

Celebrating the Christmas Story

There are several opportunities to join in retelling the Christmas story in words and in music. We hope that you will be able to join in on one or more of these occasions, each of which will be different in atmosphere. But all of these will be an occasion for remembering and celebrating God's love.

Carols and a Story: Saturday 15th at Finborough

At Great Finborough, a celebration for all the family, an informal telling of the Christmas story with a mixture of Carols, old and new.

16th December

At Shelland Carols for Christmas

In the morning, an opportunity to sing a selection of carols and hear a selection of readings.

At Buxhall a Village Carol Service

Informal service of carols and readings for all in the afternoon

At Onehouse a Candlelight Carol Service:

Suitable for all the family from the very youngest to the not so very young, as the darkness gathers in the afternoon.

23rd December

Nine Lessons and Carols at Finborough

In the evening the traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols. If you're wondering whether children can come, the answer is "yes, of course", but they probably need to be old enough to concentrate and take in the very special atmosphere created by lovely carols and scripture readings which lead us through the story of God's love for us from the very beginning until now.

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is particularly special.

Blessing of the Crib and Carols at Buxhall is a short but moving service designed to involve and capture the imagination of very young children or indeed anyone below the age of ninety-nine! The children help tell the story of Christmas as they gather round the crib, we sing some carols and songs, and go home in time for tea.

Carols and Readings in Harleston provides a relaxing mixture of singing and listening.

The Midnight Eucharist at Buxhall is a very moving service which leads us into the events of Christmas Day. It combines solemnity with celebration as we worship God together and give thanks for the birth of Jesus Christ.

³ Robert Burns from *Man was made to Mourn: A Dirge*, 1785

⁴ from John 1.12-13

Christmas Day

On Christmas morning we continue the celebrations with **Holy Communion** at **Shelland** at 9am and at 9.30am a **Family Service at Buxhall**. Later in the morning at **Onehouse** and **Finborough** we celebrate Christmas Day with a relaxed service for all the family, which includes a **Family Festival Communion** for those who wish to receive. For those who wish to slip away, there will be a chance to do so.

We hope that many of you will be able to join us at one or more of these celebrations.

Pram Service Party

Mince Pies, squash, some Christmas songs and maybe a game or two -

Come and join us in the Church Room, Onehouse

Friday 14th December

At 2.15pm