

\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\*

*LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL*

*PARISH COUNCIL  
NEWSLETTER*



**JANUARY 2010**

Calor England Village of the Year 2008

[www.levington.org](http://www.levington.org)

\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\* ~\*

Dear Villager - Welcome to the first newsletter of 2010 and a warm welcome to any new residents to our parish . Two Welcome Packs have recently been delivered to new householders.

---

**MESSAGE FROM THE PARISH CHAIRMAN (David Long)**

Well done! You successfully made it through another Christmas to face 2010 and the year now stretches ahead with new opportunities and challenges. 2009 was another good year in the village with many people volunteering to help with clear up days, forming a 'Levington Bloomers' group so that the village could be entered into the Anglia-in-Bloom competition and coming away with a Silver Award.

And here we are at Issue no. 40 of the Parish Council newsletter! What started as a simple one page of A4 has come a long way since the early days of 2003!

I am delighted to report that Nick Hopkins, a resident in this village, has agreed to be co-opted to the Parish Council following a parish councillor vacancy. *[More on this elsewhere in the newsletter].*

I hope during this very snowy, wintry weather you have all managed to keep warm and well. Operation Stack on several days added to our problems as access to the village by the back roads has been difficult. The police realised the Stratton Hall road into Levington was pretty poor since their own police land rover struggled in places and they said they would ask the County Council if they could send a gritter round. Gritting lorries did make the journey into Levington from Nacton to try and keep the village open but even so some villagers struggled to make the hill up into the village. I was pleased to see that the Police supervising Operation Stack were able to show some flexibility by escorting local traffic through during those very poor weather conditions. Before Christmas the Parish Council requested road gritting and continues to press those responsible for highways for high priority road treatment during periods of Stack.

*[David Long - Parish Council Chairman]*

## THE RHYTHM OF VILLAGE LIFE in Levington

Levington has a strong sense of community which is partly due to the seasonal calendar of events which give rhythm to our village life.

Our yearly calendar includes our:

- Monday morning coffee hour in the Village Hall
- Monthly Luncheon Club
- Easter celebrations and fantastic spring bulb displays in the village
- Annual Flower Show
- Regular WI, Gardening Club, History Club meetings
- Harvest Festival and Harvest Supper events
- Regular clear ups in the parish, on the foreshore and churchyard
- Regular church services throughout the year
- Christmas church services and Christmas Eve midnight service.

In addition we have an excellent Village Hall which underwent extensive renovation a few years ago and is now a welcome and comfortable place to hold events. We have a well organised set of village organisation committees. We have our village church which is well maintained with so much voluntary assistance and help so that weekly services and other events can continue to be held. Both venues remain the hub of our village life.

The Parish Council is at the forefront of collaboration and involvement. It continues to be able to produce an extremely well-read village newsletter; welcomes new residents to the village; and has a reputation in the area that it stands up to be counted when issues arise to threaten our community or our way of life. We continue to work hard at finding a permanent solution with local authorities regarding Operation Stack and have recently asked for a meeting with County Councillor Guy McGregor since Stack has now been 'temporary' for nearly two years. Councillors have also forged very strong two-way relationships with the village and our local businesses, both small and large.

So as we start another year here in this special village of Levington, the rhythm of village life will continue into 2010. HAPPY NEW YEAR!



## LEVINGTON GARDENING CLUB

The Gardening Club meetings for 2010 are now fixed so do fill in your diaries with the dates given below. All meetings start at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Everyone welcome. Come and enjoy another Gardening Club year with interesting speakers, demonstrations and outings.

**Wednesday 20 January:**

Gardening for Wildlife (with Karen Kenny).

**Wednesday 17 March:**

Our organic garden (with local residents Nancy and Mike Matthews)

**Wednesday 19 May**

Speaker - local personality Peggy Cole

? **June** Guided tour of Nancy and Mike's lovely garden at Greenways,  
Levington (to be arranged)

**Saturday 17 July:** Levington Flower and Produce Show (Village Hall)

**Date to be confirmed:**

Visit to the gardens at Parham Hall (Mr. and Mrs. Paul's garden)

**Wednesday 15 September:**

Giant vegetables - with Dave Cole

**Wednesday 17 November**

Winter colour in the garden (Park Green Nurseries)

*Further information can be obtained from:*

*Marian Rose (01473 659638) or Caroline Young (01473 659547)*

## WE WELCOME A NEW PARISH COUNCILLOR



**NICK  
HOPKINS**

We are delighted to announce that Nick Hopkins has agreed to be co-opted to the Parish Council to fill one of the vacancies on the team.

Nick, with his wife Sue and two boys, moved to East Anglia in 1987 whilst he was working for the Nationwide Building Society. They initially settled in Nacton with a move to Felixstowe Road, Ipswich prior to settling in Levington in 1994.

He is currently Chairman (and Secretary!) of the Red House Walk Residents' Association in the village. Red House Walk is a private road, not adopted by the County Council, and as such residents and owners of properties have a responsibility (both manually and financially) to upkeep not just the state of that road but also its footpaths and grass and planted areas including the grass verges. When a hot, dry weekend is forecast in the summer, Nick has been known to organise everyone in Red House Walk to come out onto the Green and have a communal B-B-Q.

Nick has been one of our local Scout Masters having served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Orwell Scouts for 7 years as Group Scout Leader and Treasurer. He is also on the Friends of St. Peter's committee and helps out with the grass-cutting in the churchyard and on clear up days.

His profession is within Financial Services, currently working as a Business Development Manager with a major Bank. Those of you who know Nick will know he enjoys the outdoor life, spending free time taking long rambling walks with his dog or long rambling walks with his golf clubs! He's also a member of the David Lloyd club at Ransomes. Compensating this healthy lifestyle is a great love of food & fine wine.

Nick attended his first Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January and has been appointed to the Planning committee.

**LEVINGTON and STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**AIMS FOR QUALITY STATUS!!**  
*A commitment to excellence for our community*

The '*Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme*' Scheme was launched in 2003 following the *Government's Rural White Paper, 2000*. It has played an important role in improving the quality of management and administration of parish and town councils. Councils have been encouraged to seek accreditation. The aim of the Scheme is to provide benchmark minimum standards for parish and town councils. The Scheme is supported by six National Stakeholders, the Commission for Rural Communities, the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Local Government Association, the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks. In order to achieve Quality Status we must demonstrate we have reached the acquired standard by passing several tests! These are:

- Electoral Mandate
- Qualifications of the clerk
- Council meetings
- Communication and Community Engagement
- Annual Report
- Accounts
- Code of Conduct
- Promoting local democracy and citizenship
- Terms and conditions
- Training

### **Quality Parish or Town Councils are expected to:**

- be representative of and actively involve all parts of their community
- be effectively and properly managed, with members and officers upholding a high standard of conduct
- work closely with voluntary and community sector groups, and articulate the community's needs and wishes through effective communications, which might include the production of parish plans or other similar documents and
- work in partnership with other local authorities and agencies and, depending on their size, be able to deliver local services which give the best deal for the local community.

### **Benefits to the parish or town council itself:**

- greater credibility in the eyes of the local community, voluntary and private sectors, and principal local authorities
- greater civic pride
- more representative of the local community
- better ability to articulate the needs and wishes of the local community
- more will be achieved by working in partnership with other organisations
- ability to demonstrate that it is effectively and properly managed, which will instill greater confidence in the community
- can deliver more local services - if the council wishes to
- greater involvement by the voluntary and community sector and by principal local authorities (e.g. developing community led plans, market town health checks etc.)
- a better informed community
- a well trained clerk, through the Certificate in Local Council Administration

**SO WATCH THIS SPACE and see if your parish council can succeed in making Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council a recognized 'Quality Status' council! Marian and councillors will be working hard at it!**





## REMEMBRANCE IN THE VILLAGE

Our November newsletter was printed just before Remembrance Sunday on the 8<sup>th</sup> November and Armistice Day on 11<sup>th</sup> November last year but we thought you might like to see some of the photographs from both those occasions. Over 40 people attended the Remembrance Day afternoon service in St. Peter's Church. Many started off at the Village Hall to join the procession down Church Lane to the War Memorial in the churchyard.



Here the two minute silence was observed before Derek Girling laid a poppy wreath on behalf of the Royal British Legion and David Long laid a poppy wreath on behalf of the parish.



## ARMISTICE DAY - 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009

Over 20 people attended the short Armistice service of prayers and readings at the War Memorial at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour on 11<sup>th</sup> November led by the Rev. Christopher Courtauld who lives in our village. A two-minute silence was observed after Max Ralph, the Royal British Legion standard bearer had lowered the Standard.



Villagers very much welcomed others joining with them on this occasion, namely, the manager of The Ship, Mark Johnson and his staff and Ted, the bricklayer, who had been renovating the church wall that morning. Passers by also stopped and paused whilst the short service was underway.





## MONDAY MORNING COFFEE MORNINGS

Monday Morning Coffee Mornings in the village hall finished on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November for 2009. Heartfelt thanks to Jo, Len and Mags for giving us another very successful season and we thank everyone who has supported this event. How will we survive until next Spring without our Monday morning chatter and delicious home-made produce to buy? In the meantime, our organisers do need a little break but we hope they will start up this most social of occasions again in the Spring.

-----

### TED - THE BRICKIE! RENOVATION OF THE CHURCH WALL



Many of you saw and spoke to Ted, the contracted bricklayer for the Friends of St. Peter's, who worked diligently on renovating the east church wall over a period of weeks during last October and November. His work is to be much admired and if you have not seen the finished result do have a look when you walk past the church. Ted, aged 70, said this was his last job as he was retiring. But what a legacy of work to leave! Hopefully, his handiwork and this renovation will last for another 100 years!

## POWER OF WELL BEING

Congratulations to Marian Rose, our new Parish Clerk, who successfully completed 'the Power of Well-Being training' last November.

*Power of Well Being* you may ask? What's that?

'The Well Being Power' was introduced through the Local Government Act in 2000. It is a new power offered to Parish Councils, which enables increased expenditure on items which would not be allowed under existing legislation. Such items might be a Community Shop or Post Office; cycle lanes; sea defences; car parks; Affordable Housing schemes (part funded).

The new 'Power' increases local authorities' capability to act on behalf of their areas. It allows them to do anything they consider likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area unless explicitly prohibited elsewhere in legislation.

If Parish Councils wish to use this 'Power' they must have:

- a qualified clerk
- a minimum of two-thirds of vacancies on the council filled at the last ordinary elections
- eighty per cent of councillors trained in the use of the well-being power; and
- published a statement of intent as to community engagement

The Parish Council will discuss whether they wish to pursue achieving 'The Well Being Power' status and whether it would be of advantage to our parish.

## THE VILLAGE DIARY

Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> January	12.30pm <b>LUNCHEON CLUB</b> (Village Hall) <b>(NB: CANCELLED DUE TO POOR WEATHER)</b>
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> January	6.30pm <b>WI</b> (Village Hall) Party night – sit-down meal and entertainment from the Stage Door Theatre Co.
-----	-----
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> January	11.00pm <b>MORNING PRAYER</b> (St. Peter's Church)
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	10.45am <b>Mobile Library</b> (Bridge Rd layby)
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> January	7.30pm <b>GARDENING CLUB</b> (Village Hall) 'Gardening for Wildlife' with Karen Kenny
-----	-----
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> January	10.00am <b>MORNING SERVICE</b> (St. Peter's Church)
-----	-----
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> January	<b>NO CHURCH SERVICE AT LEVINGTON</b> but All welcome to attend the <b>BENEFICE SERVICE</b> at Kirton Church
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	10.45am <b>Mobile Library</b> (Bridge Rd layby)
-----	-----
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> February	10.00am <b>FAMILY COMMUNION</b> (St. Peter's Church)
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> February	12.30pm <b>LUNCHEON CLUB</b> (Village Hall) (Booked places only – contact Jo Wenham on 659509)
-----	-----
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> February	3.00pm <b>EVENSONG</b> (St. Peter's Church)
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> February	10.45am <b>Mobile Library</b> (Bridge Rd layby)
-----	-----
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> February	11.00am <b>MORNING PRAYER</b> (St. Peter's Church)
-----	-----
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	10.00am <b>MORNING SERVICE</b> (St. Peter's Church)
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	10.45am <b>Mobile Library</b> (Bridge Rd layby)
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	7.15pm <b>PARISH COUNCIL</b> meeting (Village Hall)

## **SUMMARY OF PARISH COUNCIL 5th JANUARY 2010**

The Chairman welcomed the District Councillor and 1 villager who observed the business of the Council and participated in the village forum at the end.

### **County Councillor's Report (Mrs O'Brien).**

Mrs. O'Brien thought it prudent not to attend as she had a cold. She sent an email to say she was mindful of the contact between the Parish Council and the County Council regarding Operation Stack and advised that Local Authority Reorganisation in Suffolk was still a major issue.

### **District Councillor's Report (Mrs. Falconer).**

Mrs. Falconer attended and wished everyone in the parish a very Happy New Year. She advised that Suffolk Coastal District Council was facing a tough year aiming to make savings of at least 20% to the net Budget over three years. The recession had created a drop in income for the authority e.g. fees that the District Council charge for Licensing, Planning and Building Control etc. However, on the plus side partnership working with other Councils and organisations is helpful and proving to be extremely beneficial.

Mrs. Falconer reported on the Local Government Review and that those Suffolk residents who wanted to see three unitary councils in the county had not been successful. The District Council appealed but after a Court of Appeal the decision was announced that the District Council had lost. The District Council are now looking at the possibility of taking the case direct to ministers, bypassing the Boundary Committee and may also appeal to the Supreme Court for a final decision. As Vice-Chairman of the District Council, Mrs. Falconer had attended various functions over the Christmas period and had chaired for the first time a Full Council meeting.

### **Police Report**

Our new Safer Neighbourhood Team police officer (Paul Smith) was currently on sick leave with an injured arm but hoped to be back on light duties soon. Therefore Sgt. Peter Street had sent an update. He reported that police had called at the car and black caravan sometimes seen on a daily basis at the large lay-by near Levington railway bridge. The vehicle(s) are legal and doing nothing legally wrong in being in the lay-by, no matter how often it is there, unless someone is actually living in it, which does not seem to be the case. Peter then re-iterated that unless members of the public actually witness an act of indecency and complain to the police about it as soon as possible then there is nothing the police can do. Prostitution going on would also enable the police to act but, again, there is no evidence of this. Peter could currently shed no light on Levington's damaged telephone box in Church Lane as whoever crashed into the box during the middle of the night recently had seemingly left the scene quickly.

<b>Finance</b>	<p>Parish councillors agreed that there would be no increase in the 2010/11 parish precept and would notify the District Council accordingly.</p> <p>The finance report from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31 December 2009 was reviewed. The Parish Budget and Projects Programme for the current year 2010/11 was also reviewed.</p> <p>Councillors approved various payments including the Clerk's salary and expenses.</p>
<b>Parish Council Planning committee</b>	<p>Nick Hopkins, the new Parish Councillor, has been appointed to the Planning Committee to replace Jane Timmins who recently resigned.</p>
<b>Local Authority Re-organisation in Suffolk</b>	<p>Councillors noted the new recommendations now published by the Boundary Committee which have gone to the Secretary of State. The proposals are: A unitary council comprising the whole of the existing two-tier area of Suffolk; or a two-unitary pattern comprising an Ipswich &amp; Felixstowe authority and a Rural Suffolk authority comprising the remainder of the county.</p> <p>However, the Secretary of State will eventually take a decision on whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To implement the original (Ipswich Borough Council's) proposal, with or without modification;</li> <li>To implement either of the two Boundary Committee's proposals, with or without amendment; or</li> <li>To take no action at all.</li> </ul> <p>Like other authorities, the Parish Council has been asked to make comments on this latest round of consultation by 19<sup>th</sup> January. After deliberation, it has decided to respond by saying they prefer the continuance of our current local arrangements that work well for this parish. Change will incur huge costs not thought to be a good idea in the current financial recession. Its second choice would be for a single unitary Suffolk authority. The Parish Clerk will relay the Parish Council's comments and decision.</p>

<b>Planning Applications</b>	(1)	Application for reservoir at Stratton Hall drift <i>[District Council confirm this has been withdrawn]</i>
	(2)	Possible breach of planning control: Erection of stables: Location: field north west of 17 Red House Walk, Levington. <i>[The District Council planning officer has contacted Mr. Gosling at Orwell Park Estate. The Estate own the land and it is rented out to an employee for the keeping of horses. The District Council confirm that as the stables do not have foundations -ie they are built directly onto the ground and are moveable and no horse jumps have appeared &amp; the caravan parked there is only there whilst the stables are being erected and will be removed on completion - then currently everything from the planning point of view is in order. However, in the future if jumps do appear or foundations laid then planning consent will be required]</i>
<b>Correspondence</b>	Various items of correspondence were noted or dealt with incl: Suffolk Coasts & Heath Connect scheme grant; new Electoral register for 2009/10 available from the District Council; Boundary committee advice to the Secretary of State on local government review; acknowledgement from the Royal British Legion for donation and poppy wreath; the Sustainable Communities Act & lobbying for amendment to Bill to allow input by Town and Parish Councils.	
<b>Councillor reports</b>	<p>Cllr. David Pryke reported on the recent Village Hall AGM and also on the Essex Shoreline Management Plan seen at the recent Stakeholder event.</p> <p>Cllr. Pat Pryke reported on public transport and the Suffolk Assoc. of Local Councils AGM at which the Levington DVD was shown and a presentation on winning England village of the Year.</p> <p>Cllr. Angus said important fire protection &amp; health &amp; safety improvements had been made to the Almshouses. There could be a vacant Almshouse soon &amp; the Trustees would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in occupancy.</p>	



## VILLAGE FORUM

(1) A resident asked if Suffolk County Council Highways would extend the gritting in icy/snowy weather from the village hall T-junction to the church and The Ship to keep access open for both places. *[The Parish Council thought this was unlikely to happen unless the gritter went right through to Stratton Hall due to turning round problems in the road at that point. They were currently pursuing this in respect of Operation Stack. To help ameliorate the situation, the Parish Council said they would look into purchasing two grit bins - one to be placed near Trickers Wood and one near the pub].*

(2) Concerns and questions were asked with the Parish Council about the observation of horses exercising on Church Field and whether this is allowed. *[The Parish Council said horses were not allowed on Church Field as there was only a permissive footpath across the Field and horse riders should also not be using Pilots Way as it is not a bridlepath but a public footpath. Additionally, as children are seen playing on Church Field at times they and horses are not compatible for Health and Safety reasons].*

-----

### PARISH COUNCIL REQUESTED 30mph SPEED LIMIT ON BRIDGE ROAD TO BE EXTENDED TO LEVINGTON RAILWAY BRIDGE/OLD A45 ROAD

Following a request, for safety reasons, by the Parish Council to Suffolk County Council to create a speed limit on Bridge Road from the existing 30mph plate to the railway bridge/old A45, the request has subsequently been assessed by the County Council against their guidelines. The outcome of the assessment has been reported to the Speed Limit Assessment Panel for determination. The panel was comprised of senior officers from the County Council and the Traffic Management Officer from Suffolk Police. The panel met on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at which they discussed a speed limit on Bridge Road. After their deliberations their response was that: "The road alignment along the proposed route of the 30 mph speed limit extension is quite bendy and does not invite higher speeds, which was supported by the speed survey data gathered. Apart from the large commercial properties, which are set back along way from the road, there is very little roadside development along the route. There has been no injury accidents recorded in this section during the last 3 years. The proposal (from the Parish Council) does not meet speed limit criteria, and is not supported."  
*[Subsequently, at Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January, Cllr. Ian Angus agreed to have one further attempt to change the County Council's decision by speaking direct to the Highways Officer involved on the effect of Operation Stack and whether this had been taken fully into account].*



## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

### Telephone scams

In the last Neighbourhood Watch report the subject of dealing with doorstep traders was covered. Another problem encountered at home is the incidence of various telephone scams: some are like the bad penny that comes back time after time, for instance you have won the 'lottery', or 'a holiday' please forward 'x' amount so that we can process your 'winnings'. **Beware, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.** Another scam circulating recently involves persons claiming to be from a money collection service (in this case BT) in attempt to obtain credit card details. A further one known to occur appears to be an attempt to get a person away from the premises by claiming that a friend or relative has been involved in an accident and has been taken to hospital. In all these cases the advice is:-

- ✘ Do not provide ANY personal information to anybody who 'phones you.
- ✘ Check the information provided by the caller by obtaining the name and address of the company, the name of the caller and include a 'phone number. These can all be checked independently.
- ✘ If you have not agreed, nor have any recollection of agreeing to a contract question the caller and ask for proof or for confirmation of details in a letter.
- ✘ If it is to do with debt that you know nothing about request that they forward a copy of the relevant contract.
- ✘ Lotteries DO NOT ask for payment to process winnings. Remember if it sounds too good to be true it probably is.

If you have access to a computer there are several websites that may be of use including, [www.spamlaws.com](http://www.spamlaws.com) & [www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk) In addition the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has two useful advice booklets: '**Scam Busters**' and '**Scams advice for carers**' both of which can be downloaded or ordered via the OFT website.

*[Contributed by Bob Hardwick Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator]*



## ROY LEDGERWOOD

It is with sadness that we report that Roy Ledgerwood of Red House Farm (Livery), Bridge Road, Levington passed away peacefully at St. Elizabeth Hospice on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December. Roy and his family took over Red House Farm about 10 years ago and there then followed a period of intense activity and renovation to bring the farm and yard up to the standard we see today. Many of you will have chatted to Roy when buying fresh eggs from the basket at the end of the farm drive. This Parish Council has reason to be thankful to Roy for his community spirit in allowing one of the Village noticeboards to be placed on the edge of his land.

Our thoughts remain with Margaret his wife and all his family and friends at this difficult time.

The funeral service was held here in the village in the Christmas bedecked St. Peter's Church on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Every seat was taken with some people standing in the porch. A letter from Roy to his family was read out during the service and his young granddaughter Charlotte sang beautifully, despite much emotion, 'Somewhere over the Rainbow'. Interment followed in the churchyard.

---

## VILLAGE HALL

At the Village AGM held on 26<sup>th</sup> November, the current Trustees were voted in again en-bloc. A decision was made not to increase hire fees for the coming year. The Trustees were thanked for continuing to ensure the Village Hall is well maintained and run. Mary Wake, the bookings secretary, was thanked for all her efforts during the past year and for ensuring the Hall was always ready for hirers. David Pryke gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed extension to the Hall and fund raising and grant applications are ensuing.



## LEVINGTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

2009 saw several ladies come and try Levington WI for the first time and we recruited some new members which was great. So if you haven't tried this thriving organisation yet do consider coming along. You are all welcome at our meetings. Come as a visitor and get to know us, then you may like to join as a Member. The WI has much to offer as well as friendship.

### **The 2010 programme for Levington WI is:**

- 13<sup>th</sup> January - Party night - 2-course meal and entertainment
- 10<sup>th</sup> February - 'Codes, Ciphers & Enigmas' (with Joyce Kimber)
- 10<sup>th</sup> March - 'Garden Birdwatch' (with the British Trust for Ornithology)
- 14<sup>th</sup> April - 'Wildlife & Botanical Illustration' (with Sandra Pond)
- 12<sup>th</sup> May - 'Resolutions' meeting (when we listen, discuss and debate important issues) and competition
- 9<sup>th</sup> June - 'The Work of a Magistrate' (with Angela Pratt)
- 14<sup>th</sup> July - Garden Party (at a member's house) or a Day out at the 'Felixstowe Hut'.
- 8<sup>th</sup> September - 'The History of Fish and Chips' (with Andy Malcolm)
- 13<sup>th</sup> October - 'Flowers for Autumn' - a flower demonstration (with Pauline Squirrel)
- 10<sup>th</sup> November - AGM plus 'The World of Toys' with Tony Buckland
- 8<sup>th</sup> December - 'A Christmas Audio Visual Presentation' (with Michael Stagg)

All meetings are on Wednesday nights and start at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. For more information or any queries, you can contact Pat Owen (President) on 659331; or Diane Willstead (Secretary) on 659257.

## FROM NACTON SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

"Thank you to OOCL of Levington who has been sponsoring us in going green! They have raised £40 by recycling ink cartridges and plan a "pay to park" day to raise funds for the school. With the £600 already contributed by OOCL in the summer, we plan to buy vegetable planters and a seat to go along by the fence.

Reminder: we also re-cycle mobile phones and computer cartridges, collect cereal Box tops and collect Times newspaper vouchers, all of which can be handed in to the School Office or to Ian Angus at Walnut Tree Cottage, Church Lane, Levington."

-----



### MOBILE LIBRARY DATES

The Mobile Library will continue to visit Levington in 2010 calling at Bridge Road layby between 10.45am-10.55am on the following dates:

5<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> January  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> February  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March  
13<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> April  
11<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> May  
8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> July  
3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August  
14<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> September  
12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> October  
9<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> November  
7<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> December

You can contact Christine on the Mobile Library (07721-879853) at any time. You can order books, spoken word, CDs and DVDs on the mobile or over your home internet connection and collect them from the mobile library or any other branch library. You can also purchase postage stamps, cards and eco-library bags on board the van.



## LEVINGTON LOCAL HISTORY CLUB 2010 MEETINGS

Meetings coming up in the village Local History Club this year are:

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> March   | Dr. John Blatchly on "Houses and Estates on the Banks of the Orwell" |
| Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> May     | AGM and Members' Interests   |
| Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> July     | Mark Mitchels - "Characters of East Anglia"                          |
| Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> October | Pip Wright on "Suffolk Witches"                                      |

All meetings start at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

### EVERYONE WELCOME

On the door £3.00 non-members; £1.00 Local History Club members  
(to include refreshments)

-----

### OTTER IN THE CREEK



Villager, Brian Barker, reported having had a surprise a few weeks ago. Whilst walking with his dog, Sukey, by Levington Creek, an otter appeared in front of him on the bank, near the sluice. It was not unduly worried but slipped back into the water and disappeared. Suffolk Wildlife Trust and others are aware of otters in the River Orwell. On the 'Felixstowe Birding' website (under Recent Reports) an otter has been recorded as having been seen at Loompit Lake on New Year's Day. Perhaps the same one that Brian saw.



## **PUBLIC TRANSPORT NEWS**

### **Two new schemes on the Ipswich Park and Ride**

(1) A Park and Ride 'loyalty card' will be available from 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2010. The cards are absolutely free and can be picked up at any of the Park and Ride sites. For every return ticket purchased, passengers will get a hole punched in their card. Passengers who buy ten return journeys at £2.90 will get their eleventh journey for free!

(2) The second new scheme is aimed at commuters with the idea of reducing town centre traffic during rush hour. The 'Early Bird Commuter Special' is a new pricing strategy that will be on trial between 2<sup>nd</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. Between 07:00am and 09:00am, passengers on the Ipswich Park and Ride will be able to get a return ticket for: £1 for one person in a car; £2 for two people in a car; and £2.90 for three to five people in one car.

-----  
The bus companies apologised for the lack of the 163 service on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December due to the large falls of snow and icy conditions. Cllr. Pat Pryke was able to telephone the village bus passenger regulars to advise there would be no service that day. This was caused by drivers not being able to reach their depots, getting the vehicles out of the depots and the atrocious road conditions in many parts of rural Suffolk and the many major disruptions on our 'A' roads.  
-----

### **OPERATION STACK AND THE PUBLIC BUS SERVICE**

The First Eastern Counties bus company has made the decision to only send the no. 75 Ipswich/Felixstowe and v.v. buses through any Operation Stack. Others such as the 75a, 76, 77 will be diverted onto the A14. The main issues with First relates to the timekeeping and frequency of buses along the route when Operation Stack is in force. During the core part of the day there are 4 buses per hour, each way and on frequent occasions buses do not have the potential to pass each other along the old A45. First is committed to keeping to their published times and they consider waiting for vehicle escorts at either side of Operation Stack and the slow speed along the affected route, will lose them valuable minutes and impact on timings elsewhere en route and the journey loop with the potential for complaints. The Parish Council finds this regrettable but since First is operated on a commercial basis neither it or Suffolk County Council can influence that decision.



**LEVINGTON LOCAL HISTORY CLUB**  
*(Next Event)*

*Eminent local historian:*  
**DR. JOHN BLATCHLY**

will tell the story behind the establishment and history of the great houses and estates which line our river.

**'HOUSES AND ESTATES ON THE BANKS OF THE ORWELL'**

**7.30pm THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup> MARCH**  
*in the Village Hall*

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

On the door £3.00 non-members  
£1.00 Local History Club members  
(to include refreshments)

**OVERVIEW OF LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES**

The website [www.oneplace.direct.gov.uk](http://www.oneplace.direct.gov.uk) is the place to view an independent overview of local public services. For instance you can find out information on Suffolk Coastal District Council and Suffolk County Council and see their performance ratings.



# The Annual tidy up

## Keep Levington tidy

**Saturday morning 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

The **Spring Litter Pick** will be held on the above date. Do make a note in your diaries. If you can spare some time on that Saturday morning to help tidy up our village, please be outside the Village Hall at 9.30am. There'll be black bin bags, rubber gloves and litter grabbers for you and just follow your team leader's instructions! That's Ian Angus for the uninitiated! It's a worthwhile job, and you may be surprised how much fun you can have whilst getting involved in a community activity



---

### PARISH PRECEPT AND BUDGETS

The Parish Council has set a target of the budget being met entirely from precept by 2010/11 thereby eliminating the need to rely on reserves for operational purposes. Once again managing the budget well has resulted in no increase in the precept for another year to parish council tax payers in the village which must be welcome in this difficult financial recession. We have been able to manage no increase in the precept since the 2004/05 financial year. However, as all will be aware, prices and costs have gone up since then and although we will work hard to maintain the status quo it may be a different story next year.

## OUR SCARY 'TRICK OR TREATERS'! on Halloween night last November



*[George, Jessica and Lauren] Photo contributed by Marian Rose*

Many youngsters look forward to a night of dressing up and filling a basket of sweets whilst going from door to door on Halloween night. Well, imagine opening your front door last Halloween night and finding these scary 'trick or treaters' on your doorstep dressed as ghosts and witches complete with bats etc.! This picture was too late to be published in our November newsletter but we thought you might like to see our 'Halloween trio' as they called on some of the houses in the village. Under their brilliant disguises are George and Jessica Stirling-Yeatman and Lauren Byford. Well done to all three for dressing up so well - even with painted faces! We know you enjoyed 'trick and treating' and we are sure you will like to see your picture in our village newsletter!

-----

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The 6 affordable houses are currently being built off the main street at Nacton on land between Amberfield School and the Orwell Stores. Two of those houses will become available for those with a connection to Levington either for rent or part-ownership. Do remember to be considered you must have your name and details registered on the Housing List at Suffolk Coastal District Council. Contact tel. no: 01394 383789.



## THE VILLAGE BUS by Nancy Matthews

Want to improve your 'Green Footprint'? Save on petrol? Save on parking fees? And help keep the village bus for residents who rely on it? If every resident in Levington and Nacton used the village bus once in a while all the above would be achieved.

The village bus which Pat Pryke fought to preserve is in danger of disappearing if it is used at the present rate of between nought or two passengers a day. I am a car owner but I regularly use the bus to go into Ipswich. The bus stops at the end of my drive at 10.30am and I am in Ipswich by 11am. This gives me two hours shopping, cup of delicious coffee at Café Nero then the bus home at 1.10pm. During school term time there is a later bus leaving Ipswich at 2.05pm giving an extra hour shopping if you need it. Sometimes I get off at Sainsbury's to shop and my husband picks me up from there by car thus avoiding the current parking chaos.

Going the other way you can also take the bus into Felixstowe at 9.22am from the village, returning at 12.15pm or 15.50pm the latter only on Saturdays and non school days, ideal time to take the children to the beach in the summer.

Often I am the only passenger. And I wonder how long the bus will keep running with this paucity of passengers. We have to show the bus company that this service is well used if they are to consider it viable. It's such a good facility especially for those residents without a car.

If you are a pensioner you can travel all those miles for free. Do make use of your free travel card or the government may take that away too.

So please for one day a week/fortnight/month, leave your car at home and use the village bus. It can save you money and you will be making a small but important contribution to combating global warming and saving a diminishing oil resource.

**Make it a New Year's Resolution that you can keep. Wishing you a greener New Year - Nancy Matthews**

*NB. The bus will normally stop outside Red House Walk/Red House Farm, or Bridge Road Layby or the Village Hall junction - just put your hand out and flag the bus down.*



**LEVINGTON GARDENING CLUB**

7.30pm Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010  
in the Village Hall

**'GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE'**

With BBC Radio Suffolk's Karen Kenny  
**EVERYONE WELCOME**

*[Gardening Club contacts are Marian Rose 659638  
and Caroline Young 659547].*



**FELIXSTOWE WASTE DISPOSAL SITE**

Do note that the Felixstowe tip will be closed for improvement works (for new road markings and walkways etc.) on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January.

-----

**PROJECTS PROGRAMME - BIRD BOXES**

Cllr. Ian Angus reports that the bird boxes made by local youngsters a few months ago will hopefully be put up in Trickers Wood, Church Field and the churchyard later this month. Consultation will take place as to the most suitable sites.

-----

Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Councillors wish all residents a Happy, Healthy, Peaceful and Prosperous New Year! We will continue to work for the benefit of the village community during 2010.

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

*The next*  
**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

*is in the Village Hall on*  
**WEDNESDAY 3<sup>d</sup> MARCH 2010**

*[pre-agenda forum between*  
**7.15pm-7.30pm]**

*[Council meeting from 7.30pm]*

*[Open Forum at the end]*

**[ALL WELCOME]**

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

**PARISH COUNCILLOR DETAILS**

David Long (Chairman) 659342  
David Pryke (Vice-Chairman) 659554  
Ian Angus 659249  
Nick Hopkins 659273  
Pat Pryke 659554  
Linda Sharp 659771  
Parish Clerk - Marian Rose 659638

---

Mrs. Patricia O'Brien (County Councillor) 01394 448228  
Mrs. Veronica Falconer (District Councillor) 01394 448263

---

Village Hall Bookings (David and Mary Wake) (01473) 659627  
Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator (Bob Hardwick) (01473) 659631  
Area Police Beat Officer Pc Paul Smith (01473) 613500  
Safer Neighbourhood Team/Sgt. Peter Street (01473) 613500

*Published by Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council*  
*[Member of SALC -the Suffolk Association of Local Councils]*