

# Easton Village Newsletter

## Easton Village Newsletter

June 2020

Issue 176

### FARMER BURTON'S COUNTRY TALK



Did you notice me bursting with optimism in the last newsletter? Well, I don't think that I can keep it up in this month's edition!! I got my Spring wheat, barley and beans drilled over the last couple of months and was very thankful to get 28mm of rain at the end of April, but all the crops really need another good inch to keep them growing. Without rain, you can see the crops showing stress, by being stunted in growth and turning yellow where the ground has been compacted. Spring crops do need enough rain, especially when drilled a little later in the year due to the washed-out Autumn.

Also, you have probably noticed that your lawns haven't been needing to be cut lately (which you are very pleased about!) but this is also affecting the prospect of enough hay and silage this year. I have 5 fields in Countryside Stewardship grass that haven't grown enough to mow for hay. I remember asking Geoff Prigmore to do a rain dance, in his budgie smugglers, round the village a few years ago and I fear that we may be getting that desperate again!!



The NFU has stated that, because of the Coronavirus crisis, the UK has exposed the fragility of our food chain and East Anglian farmers are presented with a once in a lifetime opportunity to harness support for British food. We have high standards of food safety and animal welfare with environmental protection but last week farmers were left frustrated when MPs rejected an Amendment to the Agriculture Bill that would have required food imports, in any future trade deals, to meet UK production standards. Farmers are worried that the UK will be flooded with imports of substandard food. We need a level playing field and to guarantee food safety so that food that would be illegal here to produce, does not enter the food chain.

Hopefully this won't apply here, but you may have seen an article in the newspapers about a family that lost 2 horses when they ate some dumped grass cuttings. They gorged themselves and the grass fermented in their stomachs, giving off harmful gasses. You'll be pleased to know that the horses will soon be coming back into our Easton field, when I've finished fencing it.



On a lighter note, we are so lucky at the farm with wildlife to enjoy but my father is being driven mad by two cuckoos that call to each other all day and Jill was lucky to see a kingfisher in Easton visiting the pond in our field.

### EASTON RAMBLES – MAY 2020

**Brian Davis**



Between autumn 2009 and spring 2010, I described five little walks around Easton in a series of leaflets, which were distributed to everyone in the village by the Parish Council, and subsequently issued to newcomers as they arrived. They gave little maps with marked points, some historical details, and a few pictures of notable buildings or interesting features that one would pass. As these descriptions are now ten years old, I thought it might be interesting to see what changes had occurred, especially as we perhaps have more time for such rambles at the moment. I say 'we' but I'm afraid my striding days are past so I really mean 'you'. I expect many of you will long ago have lost some or all of these leaflets, but these could easily be reissued to anyone who would like to take up the challenge – ask the Parish Council for copies.

The walks ranged from 1 mile (around the village), 2½ miles to Spaldwick and back, and 8 miles (to Brampton Wood and back), and I can think straight away of some changes that have occurred – such as the new houses in Stonely Road, the collapse of Sewell's Barn, and the unwalkable state of Hartham Street. Even before I put pen to paper, the idea has grown wings, as John and Judy Cresswell heard of the idea from Mike Baker and have already

scouted out Walks 1-3 and written a report, and Vicky and Brian Arbuthnot have undertaken to look at Walk 5, to Brampton Wood. I never described a popular modest walk through the fields south of the village because I couldn't think of much to say about it. Perhaps there should be a competition to see who could construct the most interesting description within the parameters of the existing leaflets?

### SPRING CLEANING IN EASTON



We owe grateful thanks to Charles (Nixon) and Peter (Gould) who no doubt managed to maintain social distancing whilst undertaking the clearing out of the Church Belfry recently. The pictures show the pair of them clearing out the sticks dropped by crows and pigeons. There were 9 (!) black bags full and in the end, they were using the large 1 m<sup>3</sup> mulching



bags from Madingley Mulch, six of which had to be carried down the narrow staircase.

The bell now sounds much clearer! Despite the vast volume of sticks, there were no crows' nests nor indeed any nest, bar one pigeon. The netting on the windows in the belfry stops the birds coming in. The sticks were fairly long - c. 6-8 inches and often half a centimetre thick. We think the crows bring them in via the very high windows in the steeple, hoping to make nests but the window sills are too narrow and the sticks just drop into the tower. We cleared the tower two years ago of a similar amount.

### CHURCH SERVICES IN JUNE

Our churches continue to remain closed but every Sunday you can access a church service, led by our own team of clergy, on YouTube. There are also daily services with "Thought for the Day" and morning prayer. In addition, for those without internet capability, the Church of England has set up a telephone "hot line" called *Daily Hope* with hymns, reflections and prayers. This is available on 0800-804-8044.

### VE DAY 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Despite "Lockdown" the village managed very passable "socially-distanced" celebrations on a wonderful, sunny afternoon:





**SAVE THE CHILDREN AND CHRISTIAN AID**

**Stephanie Silcock and Mike Baker**

There have usually been two house-to-house charity collections in May – one for Save the Children and one for Christian Aid. For reasons of the lockdown and social distancing, neither collection has taken place this year but these charities are still in desperate need of our support. There may be collections in the autumn but in the meanwhile if people would like to donate money, this can be done directly:

- Save the Children Giftline** - **020-7012-6400**
- Christian Aid Giftline** - **020-7523-2269**

In both cases, the charities will accept donations via debit or credit cards.



We wanted to give you an update on the difficult decision we have taken to keep Grafham Water closed to the public for the time being. At Anlian Water we know our leisure attractions are loved by many but the health and safety of our colleagues and visitors is our top priority. We've sadly taken the decision to close all of our water parks to the public to help limit the spread of coronavirus. We had hoped to keep our green spaces open, but the wellbeing and safety of our customers, visitors and colleagues is the most important thing at this time. Therefore, Grafham Water will remain closed over the bank holiday and during half term, and we are asking everyone to respect the difficult decision we have needed to make. We would encourage everybody to follow the Government's advice to social distance and not travel wherever possible to protect the most vulnerable in our communities. Check our Water Parks coronavirus update page for our up to date status and FAQs at: <https://anglianwaterparks.co.uk/covid-19-updates>.

**STAY AT HOME**
**PROTECT THE NHS**
 **save lives**

# SHAILESH VARA MP

Member of Parliament for North West Cambridgeshire

**I want to assure the people of North West Cambridgeshire that during the coronavirus crisis my staff and I are continuing to help and assist as many people as possible. We are working from our homes and can still be contacted as follows:**

- House of Commons**  
London, SW1A 0AA  
(Post will be forwarded as necessary)
- 01780 781224 • 020 7219 6050**
- shailesh.vara.mp@parliament.uk**
- www.shaileshvara.com**
- @ShaileshVara**

**HELPLINES**

**UK Government Guidance**  
[www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**HMRC** - Tel: 0800 015 9559

**NHS** - [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)  
please only call 111 if you cannot get help online

**Universal Credit** - Tel: 0800 328 5644

**School Closures** - Tel: 0800 046 8687

**Huntingdonshire District Council**  
[www.wearehuntingdonshire.org](http://www.wearehuntingdonshire.org)  
Tel: 01480 388 388

**Peterborough City Council**  
[www.peterborough.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/coronavirus)  
Tel: 01733 747474

**Cambridgeshire County Council**  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)  
General Enquires: 0345 045 5200  
Dedicated Helpline for vulnerable residents:  
0345 045 5219

This communication is funded by IPSA to assist Shailesh Vara MP in his parliamentary duties

**Deadline for the July Newsletter is 26<sup>th</sup> June**