



No. 69—Autumn 2020

Parish Councillors Urgently Sought

Waldringfield Parish Council is **urgently** seeking **3 new councillors** to co-opt, with only 6 of 9 possible councillors currently serving. This is a worrying situation that could lead to cancelled meetings or insufficient votes on important local matters.

Being a councillor does not take up large amounts of time, but the time you give will be invaluable to your community. Waldringfield Parish Council meets once every month in the Village Hall (currently via video-conferencing), on the second Tuesday. Meetings start at 7.30pm and generally last around 2 hours (depending on the agenda).

As a councillor, your task would be to bring local issues to the attention of the council and help it to make decisions on behalf of the local community using powers granted by Parliament. Parish Councils have a number of statutory powers and responsibilities, within which they are free to choose what actions to take. The Council is responsible for managing its budget and allocating spending to enhance the amenities of the parish, towards such items as playing field equipment, benches or road safety measures, and can provide grants to local organisations. It sets an annual Precept (sum of money), collected from residents through the Council Tax system which – together with grants available from other bodies such as Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council – provides the council's income.

Parish Councils play a vital part in representing the interests of the communities they serve and improving the quality of life and the local environment. Furthermore, they can influence other decision makers (for example, by having a statutory role in commenting on local planning applications) and can, in many cases, deliver services to meet local needs. Waldringfield Parish Council (assisted by the Clerk) liaises and cooperates with East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council to ensure the effective delivery of services to the local community.

Your Parish Council is a tier of local government and, as closest authority to the electorate, serves to represent the needs and concerns of all Waldringfield's residents, ideally reflecting the broad spectrum of the community's make-up – from 18-year-old new-voter upwards. There are few restrictions on who can serve and no requirement to be a member of a political party – all current councillors sit as independent members of the council.

Please be assured that a full range of training is available and you would be supported in your role by the current councillors and the Parish Clerk. Waldringfield Parish Council is part of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils. The Clerk can provide some useful publications before you make any commitment, or visit <https://beacouncillor.co.uk/> Skills can be developed and experience comes with time. What Waldringfield Parish Council requires **RIGHT NOW** are interested people who would like to become a voice for the village and who could strive to make a difference for their neighbourhood.

This is a great opportunity to shape the future by making decisions which will directly affect the area; to gain satisfaction from being part of something that can make a difference; and to help Waldringfield to become an even better place to live, work or visit.

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR CONTACT DETAILS

WALDRINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Your Parish Councillors:

Ian Kay (Chair)
Janet Elliot (Vice Chair) Chris Lyon
Serena Gold Colin Reid
Colin Archer

To contact the Clerk:

Rebecca Todd
5 St George's Terrace, Church Road,
Felixstowe IP11 9ND
Telephone: 01394 271551
E-mail: pc.waldringfield@googlemail.com

Next meeting: 8th September

This will be via Zoom
(video conferencing)

Meeting Dates for 2020

8th September, 13th October,
10th November, 8th December

ALL PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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Next Copy Date – 13th November

(for publication 1st December)

Waldringfield Church Field

I think many of us have been glad of Church Field to walk or run round during the summer. There is always something to see with the bird and insect life carrying on regardless of human problems. Soon the swallows and house martins will be gathering to leave for Africa after fattening up on the insects flying about over Church Field no doubt.

The very hot and dry summer so far has meant that parts of Church Field have been looking very dry and dusty recently. However there are still lots of interesting things to see – butterflies, dragonflies, lots of grasshoppers, different species of bees. On 24th June I did the big butterfly count and counted 3 Large Whites, 7 Small Whites, 6 Gatekeepers, 7 Meadow Brown and 1 Red Admiral in a space of a quarter of an hour. I have also seen several Common Blue butterflies up there (and a Small Copper in the playing field). The Ox Eye daisies were all out in June as usual. These are spreading to new areas.



Ox Eye daisies in June



Currently the bright pink Centaury is flowering. It has healing properties and the centaur Chiron is said to have used it to cure an arrow wound.

Centaury

This year the Annual General Meeting at the end of November may be a virtual meeting. However this, like many things, is undecided! Announcements will be made on Waldringfielders, or in the next newsletter.

Christine Fisher Kay, Chair of the Trustees
736384

Suffolk County Council Report



Suffolk CoronaWatch launches

Suffolk's Public Health Knowledge and Intelligence Team has produced a suite of resources called CoronaWatch. The online 'Coronawatch' dashboard, which launched in the week of 11th July, gathers all publicly available data on COVID-19 in Suffolk into one place. This data is in the public domain and free to access and use. You can visit the CoronaWatch dashboard at www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/jsna/coronawatch.

You will be able to access national and local data, including confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19), deaths from coronavirus, care home outbreaks, and Google social mobility data. You can also access a series of briefings which have been produced on related topics, all from publicly available sources.

Visit Suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus for health advice, service changes, business support and schools' guidance. Keep up-to-date on the latest guidance on Covid-19 from central government here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Council proposes unprecedented environmental plans in response to climate emergency

In response to its declaration of a climate emergency, Suffolk County Council aims to lead the way with an unparalleled range of activities and policy changes to support its ambition of being a 'net zero' authority by 2030. At its meeting on 14th July 2020, the council's Cabinet reviewed and agreed an extensive programme of recommendations to achieve this ambition. The plans include dozens of changes and new ways of working, from making its pool car fleet all-electric, to making it mandatory for all future committee decisions to consider the net zero ambition.

Being 'net zero' means that the council will remove its carbon emissions where it can; if it is unable to do so, it will compensate for those emissions. The council will adopt a more detailed method to measure its carbon emissions output, so that it can more accurately track its progress on an annual basis.

In March 2019, Suffolk County Council was the first authority in the county to declare a climate emergency. One of the council's priorities after this declaration was to set up a policy development panel (PDP). The panel met regularly, discussing the changes and challenges the council faces in reducing its carbon emissions. The panel included councillors from outside the Conservative group and invited experts to share their experiences and insights. It is this panel that has compiled the recommendations.

Amongst the recommendations, Suffolk County Council will continue its work with all other local authorities and agencies, under the umbrella of the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership, which was formed in 2007. With all local authorities having now declared a climate emergency, they will use their combined powers, duties, influence and leadership, continuing their work together to achieve the net zero ambition for emissions from all of Suffolk.

Full details of the recommendations can be found in the Climate Emergency Policy Development Panel report (see <https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/> 14th July).

Next steps to improve the region's rail service

A rail scheme to improve passenger rail service frequency between Ipswich/Norwich and Cambridge, and to provide a new direct rail service to Oxford, has moved a step closer with the commissioning of work to develop a business case for the Eastern Section of the East West Rail Main Line.

Consultants Steer have been appointed by the East West Rail Consortium, which has membership from local authorities across Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, to develop a business case for enhancing rail connectivity. The business case will be used to demonstrate to the Department for Transport the economic benefit of improving the frequency of passenger rail services between Ipswich/Norwich and Cambridge (known as the Eastern Section of the East West Rail Main Line) and of providing a new direct passenger rail link from Suffolk/Norfolk to Oxford. If the business case is successful, the funding will be used to develop the next stage of the project, which is to assess the rail infrastructure requirements and develop a preferred rail infrastructure option.

The East West Main Line will run from Oxford to Ipswich/Norwich via Cambridge and comprises three sections – Eastern Section (the existing line between Ipswich/Norwich and Cambridge), Central Section (a new rail route between Cambridge and Bedfordshire) and Western Section (a new rail route between Oxford and Bedfordshire). Both the Central Section and Western Section have received funding commitments from Government to construct new rail links. Although a new rail link is not needed on the Eastern Section, it is anticipated that rail infrastructure is required to improve the frequency of passenger rail services to Cambridge and onwards to Oxford.

The development of the business case for the Eastern Section is anticipated to take six months, after which it will be submitted to the Department for Transport for consideration to fund the next stage of the rail investment process.

The Hold moves a step closer to completion

Monday 20th July marked the practical completion of The Hold on Ipswich Waterfront and the 'handover' of the site to Suffolk County Council. When finished, The Hold will be the new home for Suffolk Archives' Ipswich branch, safely housing the bulk of Suffolk's nationally and internationally significant archives.

Although the majority of the construction is now complete, work will continue on site for the next few months with contractors and staff focused on building fit out, installation of furniture and IT equipment, and staff training, to ensure the site is operationally ready.

With the steady relaxing of the Coronavirus pandemic restrictions, it is likely that The Hold will now have a phased and gradual opening. With health and safety plans under development, it is hoped that the building could be ready to welcome members of the public to the opening of its first exhibition towards the end of this year. With more than 900 years of the county's rich and diverse history to discover, when it opens this exciting new building will allow people of all ages and backgrounds to step inside and discover more about where they live and their own heritage.

The Hold will be open to everyone, offering not only archive specific services in the searchroom, library, and education room, but also state-of-the-art public facilities and teaching spaces for staff and students from the University of Suffolk. An exhibition gallery, café, shop, and garden will complete the visitor experience.

The Hold is a partnership project between Suffolk County Council and the University of Suffolk. It has received funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, other national organisations, and local Suffolk heritage groups.

Vans, trailers and trade waste now accepted at nine of Suffolk's recycling centres

As of 1st July 2020, people with vans, trailers and trade waste can now book to visit nine of Suffolk's 11 recycling centres. All visitors will need to pre-book an appointment online, where they will be asked what type of vehicle they will use and whether they are bringing household or business waste. To prevent queuing on neighbouring roads, people without a booking will not be able to enter the site. Social distancing measures also operate on site. Currently, appointments for vans, trailers and trade waste are unavailable at Haverhill and Leiston Recycling Centres. These are smaller sites and have fewer appointments available.

There are a number of restrictions in place to help support social distancing at sites and to make sure waste is dealt with efficiently. These include:

*Vans with trailers will not be allowed on any site.

*Only one visit per household or vehicle within seven days. This allows more visitors on site, while maintaining social distancing and protecting the health and safety of site staff and users.

*Trailers must be no more than 750kg max gross weight, single axle and unbraked. No other trailer size or type is permitted.

*All waste should be pre-sorted to make your visit as quick and simple as possible and to maximise recycling.

The easy-to-use booking system is available at www.suffolk.gov.uk/recyclingcentres. If you do not have access to the internet call 0345 606 6067. Residents must not arrive on site more than five minutes before their allocated time. Appointments are released on a rolling seven-day basis.

Suffolk granted more funding for emergency walking and cycling schemes

On 1st July it was reported that Suffolk has been awarded more money than expected from the Department for Transport (DfT) to support our plans for emergency temporary walking and cycling schemes. Back in May, the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced a £250m investment in swift emergency interventions to make walking and cycling easier and safer during the Covid-19 pandemic to avoid overcrowding the transport network. The interventions ensure those people who need and want to make essential journeys and take daily exercise by foot or bike can do safely while maintaining social distancing.

£337,000 had been allocated to the County Council as the first tranche of its funding. But, following its proposed plans being assessed against the DfT criteria, it has now been given £376,501 as its proposals were particularly strong.

In line with the guidance from the DfT, Suffolk County Council has already made temporary emergency changes to road layouts in Ipswich by closing off sections of roads to motorised vehicles, widening existing footpaths and cycle lanes, providing temporary footpaths and cycle lanes, and changing traffic signal timings to reduce waiting times at puffin and toucan crossings. Work continues with other schemes being considered in Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket, Beccles, Felixstowe, Stowmarket and Sudbury. For a full list of the proposed schemes please visit suffolk.gov.uk/walkingandcycling

Not all of the schemes will be delivered by the County Council from the first tranche of its funding from the DfT. However, there is the potential for a second tranche of funding at a later date.

The Government has asked that evaluation and consultation are included as the emergency interventions are put in place, so that authorities can make temporary measures permanent where possible. This will enable a long-term shift to active travel as the economy moves from restart to recovery. To provide feedback on any of the schemes, please visit suffolk.gov.uk/walkingandcycling.

Suffolk County Council Report Continued...

Cycling promoted

Suffolk County Council's Bikeability team is now offering free cycling sessions to provide practical skills on how to cycle on today's roads. Everyone is welcome to take part. The sessions are aimed at those who want to cycle more regularly, whether to keep fit, to commute to work or school, or to visit friends. A session lasts between 2 and 2.5 hours and is delivered by a fully-qualified Bikeability Cyclist Trainer. The trainer chats to you first about what you are trying to achieve and tailors the session to your specific needs. Suffolk County Council wants to encourage more people to get out and about by cycling and walking for their short journeys. The aim is to embed active travel as part of a long-term habit and reap the associated health, air quality and congestion benefits.

Schools – most children eager to return

The months out of school will doubtless have had a bigger impact on some pupils than others, thus there will be gaps in learning. The Education and Learning team at Suffolk County Council is committed in its work with all schools to help them bridge these gaps. Where parents have particular worries about their child's education and the impact of the lockdown, they are encouraged to talk to their child's school. Staff at the school will be best placed to offer advice about how individual children can be supported in the post-lockdown period, how learning topics can be prioritised and how parents can support their children.

Teachers across the childcare and education sector have played a huge part in the Covid-19 pandemic response and their hard work in getting everything organised and ready for the start of term is hugely appreciated by Suffolk County Council. The council has made preparations to ensure all pupils who are eligible for funded school travel are transported to school safely for the start of term. Suffolk County Council transports approximately 12,000 pupils, which is around 12% of the school population.

The majority of eligible pupils travel to school on dedicated, closed routes. This means that the vehicle only carries school children. On these routes, social distancing will not apply. Some children travel to school on shared routes. This is where most passengers are pupils going to school or college, but there are also a few members of the public travelling on the vehicle. Suffolk County Council has worked closely with operators to ensure that there is enough space on these shared transport routes. Pupils should observe social distancing guidelines with members of the public and sit in the seats marked; they can sit next to members of their family or fellow pupils. On these routes, face coverings will be mandatory unless a child is exempt from wearing one, in line with guidance. For pupils who travel to school by public transport, where routes are used mainly by the general public, social distancing will apply and face coverings will be mandatory unless the child is exempt from wearing one. For further information visit www.suffolkonboard.com.

Highways

Suffolk Highways has completed its 1,000th resurfaced mile, following the council's commitment to relay new road surfaces on a quarter of Suffolk's road network. In 2017, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet committed to resurfacing 1,000 miles of road across Suffolk over a four-year period; in a bid to improve the quality of roads, reduce the number of potholes and to help stop potholes from forming in the first place. The commitment also makes sound financial sense, as preventing the deterioration of road surfaces by machine surfacing or surface dressing helps reduce the need to spend more money on reactive maintenance repairing potholes now, and in future years.

Apprenticeships

There will be a great boost for apprentices in Suffolk and Norfolk, as a Recruit, Retain and Reward package launches, providing £1,000 grants for businesses taking on new and/or redundant young apprentices, aged 16-24. The new incentive scheme will complement and enhance the Government apprenticeship incentives announced recently by Chancellor Rishi Sunak (£2,000 for 16-24-year-olds, £1,500 for 25+), and also the existing age incentives of £1,000 for 16-18s (19-24 with an Education Health Care plan). It is hoped that the project, which is sponsored by the East of England Employer Ambassador Apprenticeship Network, will encourage apprenticeship starts across Suffolk and Norfolk, post Covid-19.

Patricia O'Brien

WRUFC'S Buy the Church Appeal



Woodbridge Rugby Club has an opportunity to purchase the property adjacent to its Rugby Ground, which for the last 30 years has been run as Faith Baptist Church. The Church has indicated its willingness to sell the property, which would provide the Club with much-needed playing field areas for its Junior Section and a training base for its Wheelchair Rugby squad. Other local community groups would be able to hire the space.

With several youngsters and adults (past and present) who are members of the Club coming from the Waldringfield parish, we are seeking help to raise funds for this good cause. The Club is actively fundraising to purchase and develop the land and buildings, and has an urgent appeal as the Club would like to progress with Phase 1 as soon as possible, since work to prepare pitches for

use in 2021 will need to be started this autumn.

Woodbridge Rugby Club is a Community Amateur Sports Club and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Club was founded in 1969 and over the last 51 years it has built a superb clubhouse with grounds for 2 men's teams, a women's team and squads for around 350 children from U7 to U18 of both sexes. In 2013 the Club became the first Rugby Club in the UK to set up a Wheelchair Rugby squad. It raised funds and was able to purchase 10 competition wheelchairs for a squad of disabled players who train locally every Sunday and compete in National competitions.

Since their formation, Woodbridge Wheeled Warriors have had to move location 3 times and are currently renting the use of an Army Sports Hall at Rock Barracks. This is not ideal as players and spectators have to give 5 days' notice of attendance to the Barracks, thereby limiting the ability to attract new members.

Please help us raise funds by making a personal or family donation for this good cause.

Just Giving page – <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/buythechurch>

Bank Transfer or Cheque – Woodbridge Rugby Union Football Club Limited

Sort Code 20 98 07 – A/C No. 10775916 – Reference 'Church Appeal'

I do hope that you may be able to help the Woodbridge Rugby Club community to raise the necessary funds that will kick-start this great opportunity.

Many thanks,

Jonathan Brooks (Wayside) – WRUFC Team Manager

Email: brooksj@willis.com

Check out what's on at www.woodbridgerugbyclub.co.uk

All Saints' Church



Closure of churches has made indescribable differences, as one may imagine, to many communities and parishes throughout Britain, and, of course, elsewhere. Easter was particularly sad, the most important festival in the year of the church, one in which so many families share and a time when we can feel a great sense of hope renewal, especially important in 2020.

Waldringfield is now one of eight parishes in the Orwell and Deben Rural Benefice led by The Reverend Canon Ian Wilson, based at Nacton and helped by assistant curate, the Reverend Sarah Jenkins, based at Kirton. We have been so fortunate that Ian and Sarah have made amazing efforts to 'go digital' with services, addresses and readings.

Some of the other eight parishes have now reopened their churches. Waldringfield Parochial Church Council has, however, after discussion, decided that All Saints will remain closed for the time being, with a first service to take place on 6th September. Reasons for this decision, not lightly taken, are mostly that when a church does reopen the PCC is responsible for repeated cleaning, monitoring etc on what would seem to be an almost daily basis, an impossible task, especially as summer is the time when lots of visitors look in at our church. We are now equipped with sanitising gels and face masks.

Our wonderful and historic church and its tranquil surroundings take a lot in terms of interior and exterior maintenance; hefty insurance, fire prevention, cleaning, electricity etc and we are responsible for the church hall in all these aspects plus its water charges. We also have to pay our benefice share of clergy expenses and payments to the Diocese. All these costs are, naturally, on-going, and we are using hard-won reserves. At the start of lockdown, the PCC took the decision not to appeal for funds during this period, our thinking being that many charities would be at severe risk, and it seemed inappropriate for us to appeal at that time. We have currently a very limited income indeed, coming solely from our donors who give by Standing Order monthly or quarterly. Our major fundraising event for 2020, our wonderful Auction of Promises, had to be cancelled, as did the Annual Yachstmen's Service, proceeds from which are historically shared between a chosen charity and our church once the fairly hefty expenses have been paid, for example £150 for the Woodbridge Excelsior Band.

At the moment, we are not formally appealing for donations, although, of course, contributions would be greatly appreciated. We are simply saying what our somewhat worrying current situation is. Full-time parishioners are entitled to be married or buried here, with baptism at the Rector's discretion, and the church belongs to us ALL, whatever paths we choose to follow.

SUFFOLK HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST The annual Ride and Stride in aid of all Suffolk historic churches, including ours, WILL go ahead this year on Saturday 12th September and full details for participating and/or sponsoring are obtainable from Margaret Quantrill.

We hope that everyone will still continue to enjoy the wonderful grounds of the church for peace and reflection, a place in which these two vital things may still be found.

Waldringfield Parochial Church Council

Martlesham Heath Surgery – Practice and Patient Group

Martlesham Heath Surgery is open for business as normal. The previous arrangement with Kesgrave Surgery during the height of the pandemic has ceased. Unfortunately, the front door must remain locked in order to manage the number of patients entering the waiting room at once. To attract attention, please knock on the door. The reception staff will hear you, even if they can't come to the door immediately e.g. if they are on the phone to another patient. We have asked if it's possible to install an intercom so they can let patients waiting outside know what's happening. If you are asked to wait outside, please tell them if you have difficulty standing. It's best not to turn up too early so you don't have to wait outside too long.

At our PPG meeting this month, we discussed a variety of topics including patient communications in paper format (leaflets aren't being issued just now, but we can display information in the window), greater use of text and email for keeping patients informed and usability of the website, especially when viewed on small screen such as mobile phones. If you have any feedback about using the website or need information which you can't find, please send your comments to MartPPG@gmx.com. Please don't send us any confidential information about yourself.

PPG Chair

Two incidents on Saturday 18th July 2020 illustrated care and competence in the Maybush, by emergency services, and Tony Lyon's and Mark Barton's service to our community, visitors and visiting yachtsmen too.

An off-duty nurse and police officer enjoying some time on the Maybush Inn's patio, leapt into action when a guest collapsed. They used the Waldringfield defibrillator from the back wall of the Maybush and called an ambulance that took the patient to Ipswich Hospital. The Suffolk Air Ambulance also stood-by in a local field in case the casualty needed to go to Addenbrooke's.

A little later, after a disturbance ashore which alerted Harbourmaster, Tony Lyon, a rowing dinghy capsized with its two passengers in the ebbing tide that was running at about 1.5 knots – a risky situation. Fortunately Mark Barton (owner of Waldringfield Boatyard), standing by in his launch to assist immediately if necessary, recovered one of the people from the river and took them to their motor-cruiser; the other person, who could not be hauled aboard the launch, was thrown a line and pulled ashore (through glutinous mud) by Tony, who then ferried them to their boat on the Harbourmaster's launch. Mark had wisely radioed the local Coastguard who in turn sent the Harwich in-shore lifeboat. The Coastguard was informed the casualties were safely recovered but they required a welfare check before standing down. Tony went in the lifeboat to speak with the couple aboard their cruiser, and once they confirmed they were okay and required no further attention, everyone was stood down. How fortunate they and we are!

Supplied by Neil Winship

 **Emergency**



Waldringfield History Group



Project 2020 Vision & Book Orders

You will already be aware of Waldringfield History Group's project to create a record of life in the village in 2020. If you have not yet returned your questionnaire and family photo, there is still time. Please return all questionnaires to Deben House, Cliff Road or

return electronically to waldringfield2020@gmail.com

If you have mislaid your questionnaire and would like another copy, please contact Jane Hall at waldringfieldhg@gmail.com

Waldringfield History Group is soon to publish its long-anticipated book about the village entitled, 'Waldringfield, A Suffolk Village Beside the River Deben' currently expected to be published on 29th September. If you would like to register an interest in placing an order for this book in advance, please follow the following link. You will then be contacted to make a firm order as soon as the exact price is known.

<https://sites.google.com/view/waldringfieldhistorybook/>

Details of a WHG online shop for book purchases will also be advertised in the next month or so.

Waldringfield Sailing Club

We're afloat! Of course some people have been sailing for months. These are single-handed sailors and people sailing with someone from their own household. More recently, Government and RYA guidance changed and two people from different households may now sail together, tempting many more back on to the water. As a result we are organising sailing on Saturdays and Wednesdays though, sadly, the clubhouse is still shut so no gorgeous teas!



Assessing the risks of transmitting Covid-19 seems to have become a way of life for all of us, so you won't have been

surprised by the reminders on club land about social distancing. We have also adapted our procedures to make the risk of transmitting the disease as low as possible, and are keeping the procedures under regular review.

Meanwhile next year is the Sailing Club's centenary so all kinds of plans are being formed. We have members who have been in the club for at least 70 years so we are planning to draw on memories old and new. Watch this space!

Anne Spalding (Rear Commodore)



Photos by Alexis Smith 2020



Waldringfield Wildlife Group – Saving Suffolk’s Swifts

Historically, our Swifts nested in natural nooks and crannies in cliffs and tree holes, as indeed they still do in some northern and eastern areas of their range. Since Roman times, however, they have taken advantage of the built environment to find nest sites in the eaves and beneath the tiles of buildings and in church towers. In Suffolk, as elsewhere in the UK, Swifts have become a communal urban nester.

A summer visitor – with us for just four months – they entertain us with their daring flying antics, low level acrobatics and screaming gyroscopic flights around nest sites. They feed, sleep and can even mate on the wing, landing to fashion a minimal nest cup and breed, with the adults taking turns to brood and feed their young. Research has shown that breeding adults are extremely faithful to their nest sites, returning to them in early May. Juveniles are believed to follow the adult birds back to where they fledged, identifying their own site in year three prior to nesting in year four. It is in year three that available nest sites, coupled with the attraction of Swift calls, can be decisive. The birds are curious and will investigate possible sites, whilst screaming around in tight flocks at low level. Once established, Swifts pair for life, usually producing a single brood of two or three chicks each year and if they survive their first year, can live to almost 20 years. Very few species apart from the Hobby can predate a fit, agile adult on the wing: Swifts are the fastest bird species in level flight, measured at up to 111kph.

Modern building techniques do not favour Swifts. The requirement to achieve an efficient, air-tight built environment with minimal heat loss and sound transmission reduces the nesting opportunities for wildlife. Meanwhile, renovation and conversion of older buildings results in loss of existing nest sites. Nesting locations are not legally protected outside the breeding season and so can be lost whilst the Swifts are away. The Swift population in SE England halved between 1994 and 2007, with a further third of remaining birds lost between 2009 and 2016. Swifts are in serious trouble and are now ‘Endangered’ as a British breeding bird.

Save Our Suffolk Swifts, a joint campaign between SBG and SWT, was established in 2014 with the aim of reversing this downward trend. Working alongside a nationwide network of Swift support groups (including Dick Newell’s ‘Action for Swifts’ and Edward Mayer’s ‘Swift Conservation’), SOS Swifts organises talks, walks and events throughout the county, encouraging and supporting the establishment of local Swift groups. Support includes surveys of suitable nest sites and recommendation of appropriate call systems, as well as education and advice about Swift protection, to expand existing colonies and create new ones.



Groups are encouraged to put up Swift nest boxes ahead of the arrival of the birds; to play Swift calls as the birds arrive in May to advertise the sites; and then to log sightings of these distinctive, entertaining ‘screaming parties’ of birds – and their actual nest sites.

There are currently two places to log sightings. The Suffolk Swift Survey website, hosted by Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (suffolkbis.org.uk/swifts) plays a vital role locally because it can influence local planning decisions. Suffolk County Council has classified Swifts as a Suffolk Priority Species in their Biodiversity Action Plan. If a Swift population is already identified in an area set for development, District and Borough Planning Officers are able to set a planning condition to include Swift bricks (specially designed brick inserts for new-build houses that mimic the nooks and crannies favoured by Swifts) in the requirements for the new development and oblige architects and developers to include them in their designs.

The Swift Mapper app, available to download free for smartphones, also logs your records and location and helps provide a nationwide picture. The app has been updated ready for this current Swift season and will automatically transfer any data to a new interactive RSPB Swifts website, also under development.

Local groups have had remarkable successes. Alan and Christine Collett run 'Aldeburgh's Amazing Swifts' and their group has installed over 100 boxes and gives talks to school children across East Suffolk. Simon Evans has been very active around Bury St Edmunds getting boxes into church towers, with 23 boxes now occupied on St. John's Church. All Saints Church in Worlington boasted 34 out of 43 boxes occupied in 2018. Andy Rouse has fitted 20 Swift boxes on church towers in Ramsholt, Sutton and Shottisham, whilst David Lowe has arranged for 40 nest boxes to be installed on houses throughout Nayland.

Woodbridge Swift Group has put boxes up on the swimming pool and cinema, as well as Farlingaye High School, leading to a school project; Felixstowe has engaged with the library to install nest boxes, a call system and an educational display inside. This is all in addition to the work of numerous individual Swift supporters who put up boxes, play calls and log sightings. SOS Swifts helps local groups build on best practice. Groups in places such as Hasketon, Framlingham, Beccles and Bungay are growing in support.

Waldringfield Swifts

Several of our WWG members have put up Swift nest boxes on their property with a call system. Saving Suffolk Swifts is one of the projects that WWG supports as members have noticed their presence declining in the village over the years. This summer, once Covid restrictions were eased, we did a socially-distanced Scout for Swifts Walk around the village with Eddie Bathgate from SOS.

We had been noticing Swifts flying above The Quay, lower Cliff Road and Deben Lane and had seen screaming parties of Swifts swooping low which suggested there were nest sites nearby. Swifts are amazing to watch, especially around dusk when they do their acrobatic loops before disappearing into the nest site. They are quick and are easy to miss. We now know that in lower Waldringfield there are two established Swift nest sites under the eaves of two domestic buildings. It is important that these colonies are both protected and hopefully extended. We can do this by either erecting more Swift boxes as close to the existing colonies as possible and/or by integrating Swift bricks into new build/renovation projects. Swifts are very clean birds so residents do not need to worry about bird droppings smattering over the entrance to their front door. In many cases, unless you are looking, their presence can be easily missed. Ideally Swift boxes are best situated on a north east elevation which allows an unobstructed flight access and a minimum of 4 metres high. However, we do have available boxes with a white lid which can be installed on any elevation. To attract either adult Swifts who have been displaced from their nests or the three year old juveniles checking out potential nest sites for the following year to new Swift boxes it is necessary to include a Swift call system. These can be either integrated into one of the Swift boxes or played via a CD recording or bluetooth speaker via a smart phone twice a day morning and evening. Good potential sites in Waldringfield start from lower Cliff Road upwards and School Road facing towards the road but there are many more possibilities

WWG hopes that village residents might be interested in putting Swift boxes on their property or designing Swift bricks into the architecture of new builds and renovation. WWG has Swift boxes available to install between now and next May when the first of the adult swifts arrives to the UK after their long flight from Africa. Please get in touch with Linda Wilkins linda.thequay@btinternet.com to discuss your interest. This includes contacts from the school or other village public buildings that might be suitable for nest boxes. If you are interested in supporting Swifts it is possible to help in other ways, such as helping residents to install their boxes who have long stable ladders and a head for heights or by sponsoring a nest box in our village. Please also report your sightings either via WWG or direct through The Suffolk Swift Survey website, hosted by Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (suffolkbis.org.uk/swifts).

*Linda Wilkins
Waldringfield Wildlife Group Coordinator*



Photos courtesy of Suffolk Bird Group

Salvation Army Food Parcels

For the last three months, Jane Burley and Liz Lord {Sullivan Place} have organised a collection of food parcels, donated by the residents of Waldringfield, to be taken to the Salvation Army Hall, Woodbridge.

Thanks to the generosity of our residents, items including tins, jars, packets and boxes of food, boxes of fresh garden produce, toiletries and nappies have been delivered to the Salvation Army Hall to coincide with the last Thursday of each month. It is heart-warming to see the good work that is carried out by our local Salvation Army.

The task is huge but very well managed. One hundred individuals and families are catered for to date. Unfortunately the numbers are expected to rise because of the pandemic and resulting unemployment.

It is hoped that we can continue our monthly collections aided by the generous support of the kind residents of Waldringfield.

Liz Lord



Waldringfield Village Hall Trust Lottery

The Village Hall Lottery makes a valued contribution to the finances of our hall. This year you will all know that much in our lives has been turned upside down. The hall has lost its income from lettings but the lottery continues. It has of course been a difficult time collecting in subscriptions during the lockdown period. I would like to thank the collectors who have delivered my letter, requesting subscriptions and inviting new players, to every household in the village. I now wish to thank all of you who responded by paying up with cash or cheque and the large number of you who have completed the standing order form. I



I can now say to all of you who have forgotten to pay – it's never too late! Just pop an envelope addressed to me, Nigel King, in the hall letterbox with the payment and clearly state your name and address – job done!

To anyone who would like to join in from the September draw, just pop £10 in an envelope addressed to me, Nigel King, in the hall letterbox by **11th September** (clearly stating your name and address) and I'll take off the rest. If you would like a standing order form or would prefer to pay by BACS, please do contact me.

I am looking forward to when the monthly draw can take place at the Coffee Mornings but there is no knowing when they can begin again. I shall continue to advise the results on 'Waldringfielders' but if you would like a personal email with results, just let me know. Any other questions etc, please do get in contact. Stay safe.

Nigel King - Promoter, WVHT Lottery

01473 736060 – 07703 569364 – ngking@btinternet.com