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# SocietyReview

Winter 2020

## Covid-19 puts paid to 2020 Millennium events

The Millennium Celebrations of the foundation of the Abbey of St Edmund have mostly been postponed into next year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

But the launch of the programme of events has been marked on St Edmunds' Day this year.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral celebrated its patronal festival for St Edmund on November 15 and observed St Edmunds' Day on November 20 with a special service of Vespers.

The Patronal Festival recognised St Edmund as a King of East Anglia who "won the hearts of his subjects by his care of the poor and his steady suppression of wrong-doing. When attacked by the Danes, he refused to give over his kingdom or to renounce his faith in Christ."

The Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership and the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology & History will run the first of four pre-recorded talks at 2pm on Saturday, November 28, "From Rise to Ruins" on the Cathedral's Facebook page: [facebook.com/stedscathedral](https://facebook.com/stedscathedral)

Dr Richard Hoggett will talk about "The Abbey, the Antiquaries and the Archaeologists."

The other online talks will be by Dr Abby Antrobus on "The Relationship between the Abbey and the Town" on January 23, by Professor Sarah Foot on "The Patrons and Benefactors of



*The Abbey ruins with St Edmundsbury Cathedral in the background.*

St Edmund's Abbey" on February 27 and by Professor Mark Bailey on "The Abbey of Bury St Edmunds and the History of Suffolk" on March 27. The Abbey 1000 Coordinating Group is rearranging its programme of events to run from April to November 2021.

Events planned for next year include the Cathedral organised Pilgrimages

from Norfolk and Ely, the gathering of Benedictine Monks and Nuns, the Exhibition of Abbey Manuscripts and a series of Abbey Crypt Sculptures running from April to November.

The Suffolk Philharmonic Concert will now be staged in May as part

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# Two awards for Bury in Bloom



Bury in Bloom has been awarded two certificates by Britain in Bloom with The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS): The Recognition Award and Inspiring Others Award. They came at the time that the latest Outstanding Achievement in the Community Award was presented to Simon Dedman for his Enchanted Garden at the West Suffolk Cre-

matorium. As the Bury in Bloom co-ordinator I want to pass on my own immense gratitude, as well as the gratitude of the Bury in Bloom officers and committee to the not insignificant army of people who continue to support us or have come to our aid.

You have all helped out or continued to support us in a multitude of ways, even when you had more important problems on your agenda and I have been humbled by the level of goodwill.

Kay Clark, of the RHS, said: "This year an amazing sense of community spirit has enabled people to face the difficulties of this dreadful pandemic together. We know that people have

felt closer to nature through lockdown and valued access to green space so much more, and we have heard that people are valuing your work more than ever before.

"At the RHS and the Bloom Regions we have been incredibly moved by your stories of courage, creativity and ingenuity in helping your wider communities through this time and are still an important part of a wider movement to make all our communities stronger, greener and happier. We want to recognise how important you all are and how valuable your work is with these certificates in 2020."

*David Irvine*

*Bury in Bloom co-ordinator*

## Three awarded Certificate of Merit

There have been three Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Achievement awards handed out. The newly introduced accolades have gone to Simon Dedman and his team at the West Suffolk Crematorium for their Enchanted Secret Garden, seven-year-old Otis Bligh for clearing up litter at the skate park in Olding Road along with raising money for a litter bin, and the Howard Estate Green Hearts, a community group that

set up the "Safe to Knock" scheme where anyone in need of assistance can find help by looking for a house with a Green Heart displayed. Families can now look out onto the Secret Garden at the crematorium as they sit in the chapel for the service. Royna Hill, the manager, said: "We are aware that families may be looking out into the garden during the service with their thoughts and memories and we wanted to make it a lovely space. When the new chapel

was added in 2018 a wall was built that changed the look of the garden slightly, so when Simon, one of the chapel attendants who has a great love of gardening, offered to improve it, we accepted."

Simon worked over several months as he transformed the space, bringing in tree ferns from his garden, and finally designed and installed a simple sculpture to represent "The People" to complete his vision.

Green Hearts was originally created by Johnny Chandler, Aaron Goodman, Scarlett Brabrook and Liam Hayes, who have now been joined by Vicki Brown and Naomi Hamer to form a committee of six.

Green Hearts were also active during the first few months of lockdown, collecting goods for NHS care packages and some members also carry out small repairs around the estate caused by vandalism.

Green Hearts are planning Christmas care packages for vulnerable residents and have just received confirmation that a new outdoor playground gym will be built in early 2021 for which they have so passionately fought.

*David Irvine*

*Bury in Bloom co-ordinator*



*Simon Dedman at the Enchanted Secret Garden at the West Suffolk Crematorium.*



# Crowning Glory wins virtual campaign

Bury in Bloom's entry into the Anglia in Bloom virtual campaign that replaced the main 2020 Anglia in Bloom competition has won Best Entry award for the "Best use of Recycled Materials."

Crowning Glory, by Michelle Freeman of the Crafty Foxes, was commissioned by Bury in Bloom and sponsored by Treatt & Co, Greene King, Glasswells, along with councillors Trevor Beckwith, Patrick Chung, Lisa Ingwall-King, Joanna Rayner and Ann Williamson. The crown was constructed using 500 decorated "jewels" made from single-use plastic bottles and decorated by families, adults, care homes and schools during the darkest days of lock-down. Other products included discarded plumbing pipe, old tennis raquets, chicken wire and tin cans.

David Irvine, of Bury in Bloom, said: "We had an overwhelming response to the social media request for help when it was launched, and it became a community focus project co-ordinated by the Crafty Foxes. Rounding up the 'Jewels' by bicycle in the still deserted streets during lockdown was very weird."



*Pictured at the Crowning Glory display in the Abbey Gardens are, left to right, David Irvine, co-ordinator of Bury in Bloom, Michelle Freeman, from the Crafty Foxes, Alesia Miller, who was the winner of the most popular 'jewel' on the sculpture for her NHS 'jewel' and councillor Patrick Chung.*

He added: "This project has really captured the imagination of everyone in the community and it's been really special to be involved. This was always going to be a community project and I am very grateful to Michelle at Crafty Foxes for all her work and the sponsors for putting up their hands so quickly

to support it, especially in the dark days of lockdown."

Crowning Glory was situated in the Abbey Gardens until late September but it has now been stored to be used in the Abbey 1000 celebrations in 2021.

**David Irvine**  
*Bury in Bloom co-ordinator*

## Silver lining to the dark days of lockdown

The results from the Bury in Bloom Certificates of Merit (also known as Front of Gardens Scheme) saw judges hand out over 1,800 awards - nearly 25% more than last year - and more than that nearly 100 people received the cherished Highly Commended Award, a staggering 53% increase on 2019. This is the silver lining to the dark stay-at-home days of lockdown in April and May and the judges said how much they enjoyed looking at the lovely gardens.

Tom Hoblyn, the RHS triple Gold medal winner, joined this year's team of judges.

Jane Hamblin, the Certificates of Merit co-ordinator said: "Nearly 100 judges and team leaders visited every part of the town in a careful-



ly co-ordinated plan to ensure that every residential and non residential property was visited, and given a chance to win a Certificate of Merit. "We also had a non-residential"

category that involved judging churches, businesses and offices for example, anywhere with a garden on show so it was a wide brief."

David Irvine, Bury in Bloom co-ordinator, added: "Isolation and lockdown saw so many people with more time on their hands turn to gardening.

"We wanted to acknowledge their work making our town a more attractive place to live.

"We are immensely grateful to our small army of judges, not only for the work they do but their patience this year."

Organising the Front Garden scheme this year has not been without its problems as Bury in Bloom struggled to comply with government regulations.

# Difficult to find a parking place

Bury St Edmunds has an unusual but most attractive town centre layout with many timber-framed houses along a rectangular grid of narrow streets.

These streets were not thought of as narrow when first laid out in the 12th century or even in the last century when traffic was light and cars were smaller. Now these streets are having to cope with through traffic as well as residents trying to find a place to park. At least the streets in our (Churchgate Area Association) area are mostly one-way: a fairly recent innovation.

Another recent innovation (April this year), Civil Parking Enforcement, means that our regular traffic wardens have the power to issue tickets for illegal, yellow-line parking.

In one respect this has been a great success, with the problem of dangerously parked vehicles eliminated from our streets.

On the other hand it has taken away the ability for residents to park on yellow lines where they would cause no obstruction.

Many extra spaces (about 30 in all) have been long promised as additional residents parking spaces in the Zone D area.

They are badly needed but the date keeps being moved. It is now promised for next April.

Bury Town Council are planning



*Churchgate Street which has to cope with through traffic making it difficult for residents to find a parking space.*

another review of residents parking zones which is good news for Zone D. At almost four to one, Zone D has a far higher permits-to-places ratio than any other zone in the town.

Several other town centre traffic and parking issues have been raised with our town, district and county councils and although important to our 300 members they are not treated with any urgency even though in many cases they involve not much more than changing a sign. And then there is pedestrianisation of the Buttermarket which is part of the Town Centre Master Plan and should be easy to implement which we are told is only

a medium term priority.

Perhaps Bury is hoping to be awarded the last town in the country to have its town centre pedestrianised.

*Alan Broadway*

## Various events being planned for next year

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of the Bury Festival. Guided tours to explain the history of the Abbey of St Edmund will be available throughout the summer. West Suffolk Council aims to mount the Moyse's Hall Exhibition and to run the Abbey Gardens Fun Day planned in July. Various other events are also being considered.

The Cathedral is working to stage the Noye's Fludde Opera by Benjamin Britten in October. The St Edmund Lecture will follow and the Spectacle of Light Finale will be presented around St Edmund's Day on November 20. The developing programme of events can be found at <https://www.visit-burystedmunds.co.uk/abbey-1000>

## Work at the rail station due for completion in next few months

External refurbishment of the station master's house is due to complete later this year and the new access from the car park on the north side, including changes to the entrance hall, are programmed to finish by autumn 2022.

Also under way is the preparation of tender documents to obtain costs for a Conservation Management Plan for this historic building.

Hopefully, this will include the water tower and the signal box.

We look forward to the government

publishing the Williams Review as it would help us to move on to the next stage of work.

Looking to the future, it is inevitable that we will see a reduction in passenger numbers in the short term. However, in the longer term, the railway's future looks more assured because of the scale of new development planned along the A14 corridor as well as the line's importance as a major freight route from Felixstowe to the rest of the UK.

*Roderick Rees*

*Richard Summers*



# Revised plans for some developments in the town but another quiet period

Inevitably, another quiet period on the planning front - although there has been some activity updating existing approvals.

Members may recall that in 2018 we were concerned about the conversion of the former **Health Centre, on Looms Lane**, into 16 flats – especially its external appearance.

The applicant has now come back with a revised design for the façade, which we consider to be a big improvement, so we wrote in support.

We also wrote in support of a revised application for **Palmers on the Buttermarket** which seeks to subdivide the ground floor into two shops and convert upper levels into eight flats.

Part of the ground floor will be raised to provide a level sales area throughout.

Members may recall a similar application was approved earlier this year with the upper floors proposed as offices.

At the time, we thought flats would be a better option, so we were pleased to see these new plans.

The Society commented upon an application to infill an opening opposite the former **St Louis Middle School access, on St Andrews Street South**.

The site serves the main house on Guildhall Street. Although we do not normally comment on matters of detail, we considered it appropriate as this site occupies such a prominent location.

Changes from commercial use to residential use continue with an application to convert **Whitworth Architects' offices, on Hatter Street**, into a dwelling.

Approvals were also granted for the conversion of the **hair salon (and former Post Office) on Churchgate Street** into residential use as well as the conversion of **Ashtons vacant offices on Guildhall Street**.

Regarding earlier applications, the Society had commented upon the



external appearance of nine new houses alongside **St Andrews Castle on St Andrews Street South**.

Revised plans have now been submitted and await determination. Members may also recall the Society objected to an application to demolish a bungalow on the **junction of Vinery Road and Hardwick Lane** and build eight flats.

Alternative plans have now been submitted for three two-bedroom houses which go a long way towards addressing our previous concerns. Plans for a new 334-space open car park on **Robert Boby Way** have been withdrawn.

We commented upon the council's application to amend the design of the **Post Office** but after objections, the council went back to the original design - and building works have now commenced.

We also wrote in general support of the council's plans for a new **Business Hub, on Western Way**.

Looking to the future, preparation

of a **Local Plan** for the new West Suffolk Council has begun, but still no date has been set for the **Cornhill Walk** appeal hearing.

Something interesting on the horizon is an application to change the empty **Market Cross art gallery** into a performing arts centre for dance, art classes, Pilates and yoga. Finally, one wonders what the impact might be on the town if homeworking becomes the new norm. Might city commuters choose to live in more attractive market towns such as Bury, perhaps traveling to work just once or twice a week?

There would be a greater opportunity to get to know your neighbours and locality shops might prosper. However, somewhere private to relax could become a priority and for those living in the town centre we suspect it could also mean more pressure on daytime street parking.

*Roderick Rees*

# Message to celebrate the season

Now then, who was it in the Summer Review that mentioned that the last thing that the economy needed was another Covid 19 spike? Mmmmmm. So, here we are again in another lockdown and this time it is both easier and harder.

Easier in that we know what we are doing this time around and hopefully it will have the desired effect of limiting further the spread of the virus, but much harder too in that we are in the winter period when it is dark early, colder and with less opportunity to get out and about and see the world.

As a committee member on the Bury Society membership and events team, we have tried our hardest to put on some events for the membership during this difficult time as I know we are all missing the social interaction that the Society usually offers.

We are looking at events such as online quizzes, talks and a carol concert that our members can access virtually to get as many members involved as possible.

The economy will undoubtedly take a bit of a battering this time around as we head into the important Christmas period.

We have already lost the important Christmas Fayre this year; love it or hate it, the Fayre raises the profile of the town nationally and as a tour guide, I meet lots of visitors who visited Bury for the first time because of the Fayre then returned in the spring or summer to stay longer and enjoy all of the facilities that the area offers.

At this time of year, I am usually surrounded by boxes of Christmas cards at the Cards for Good Causes Christmas card charity shop in Olivia Benn, on Angel Hill.

Unfortunately, the virus beat us this year as we couldn't ensure social distancing in such a small space and then find alternative space in the town centre. Most of the landlords of any vacant shops in the town centre are holding out for a long-term lease rather than a pop-up such as ours, so we unfortunately had to call it a day in Bury for the 2020 season.



*The Post Office redevelopment is in full swing and will provide modern units and much better links between the Cornhill and the Arc Shopping Centre.*

I've ended up doing the Cambridge shop this year, in the Grafton Centre, which we set up only to be told that we were then going into the second lockdown and had to temporarily close.

The challenges continue but Bury is fortunate to be in a much healthier state economically than many comparable towns and cities nationally. Having such a broad base of national and local companies plus our location in the centre of the region with (good) transport links ensures that we are not reliant on one or two major employers. The announcement of the huge distribution centre deal on the ever-growing Suffolk Park highlights that Bury can, and will, weather the storm. The deal will bring one of the region's largest warehouses to the park and will act as a catalyst for more investment. Other companies will want to be sited adjacent to such a large development and the economic boost will be big.

On a nearby site, Aldi and Jaynic (the developers) have withdrawn plans for a supermarket before the planning application was decided,

as current policy is for retail to be town centre based where possible and with access by public transport to the fore.

With, currently, essential shops only in operation, the town centre again feels slightly surreal although this time around we have been fortunate to retain the hugely important markets which give the small local traders a fighting chance. As mentioned before, this time of year is of the utmost importance to retailers and food and beverage outlets as most make the bulk of any profit in the last three months of the year, leading up to Christmas.

Hopefully, businesses large and small will be able to capture some of that spend before the big day or we may see further failures in the New Year, indeed, January has become notorious lately for retail closures on the back of poor Christmas and sale trading.

Amongst the challenges, we have to remember how strong Bury is compared to many local towns and cities and that there are always new businesses willing to give it a go on

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# in whichever way you can

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the back of a very loyal and mostly affluent catchment area. Signs show that there is renewed interest in Bury, and on the ground, we can already see positive moves.

J D Sports are continuing to fit out their new much larger store in the Arc with a projected opening before Christmas, the long-awaited Post Office redevelopment is in full swing and will provide modern units and much better links between the Cornhill and Arc, the former Carphone Warehouse and upper floor of the Market Cross on the Cornhill are both under offer and Carluccio's restaurant in the Arc has been bought back by the company to reopen.

Work to reconfigure Palmers fashion store continues apace and the upper floor residential plans will see more people live in the town centre, keeping it active after 5.30pm.

The planning appeal process on the Cornhill Walk redevelopment is expected soon and there is positive interest in many of the vacant units throughout the town centre. We are fortunate to have a low vacancy rate compared to many towns.

Looking at various property websites and talking to agents, we should be welcoming at least four new businesses into the town

centre over the next few weeks, which shows commitment by businesses to invest in the town even in these most difficult of times. I know that the OurBuryStEdmunds and Bury St Edmunds & Beyond teams have been very active during the pandemic to support and publicise the town and it was heartening to see the traditional Christmas lighting and trees being installed as usual, sponsored by Mark Cordell and the BID, something that will brighten the town centre as always, even without the big switch-on. Winter hanging baskets supported by Bury In Bloom have gone up and will bring another splash of colour to the town centre.

We all need to support our local businesses more than ever, when shopping in town, don't forget to visit the fantastic traders in Risbygate Street, St Andrews Street, Hatter Street, Whiting Street, Angel Hill etc, who all provide that extra customer service and a chance to discover something unique. Many shops are offering a Click and Collect service from their windows or combining their physical offer with online.

Whilst out and about, take a look at the wonderful Christmas window displays in the town; this year - for the first time - the Christmas window competition will be voted on by the public via the OurBuryStEdmunds Loyal app, so if you see a window that you really like, you can now vote.

You can also support local traders by

buying a Bury St Edmunds gift card, again available on the OurBuryStEdmunds website and app.

This time around, I will not jinx the country by mentioning another spike in Covid-19, but I think we can all agree that most of us will be mightily happy to say farewell to 2020 and hope for a better 2021.

Christmas hasn't yet been cancelled and the town is striving to celebrate in whichever way it can, for example the Theatre Royal team are producing an outdoor version of "A Christmas Carol" on Angel Hill and what better a location than in front of the Angel Hotel, a hostelry frequented by Mr Dickens himself.

So the message to finish must be to celebrate the season in whichever way you do and I hope you all stay safe at this challenging time. We have a huge amount to look forward to next year. The Abbey 1000 celebrations delayed from this year and a return to a packed events programme from the Bury Society.

Don't forget to keep up to date with both the Bury Society and Bury In Bloom on their fantastic new websites which are more interactive and informative.

A very Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous 2021.

*Stephen Moody*

## Decorations on trees for Stars of 2020

The Bury Society along with the town council plus district and county councillors have helped to fund The Crafty Foxes to create the Stars of 2020.

Pupils at the Guildhall Feoffment, St Edmunds Catholic and Tollgate schools were asked to think about all the good things that happened during the first lockdown and the public have also had the opportunity to give the Crafty Foxes their special memories of their time during lockdown. Now the words have been printed and placed on more than 200 ceramic stars and decorated on the four trees round the town.



*Work to reconfigure Palmers fashion store continues apace.*

# Minutes from the Society's

**The meeting was held on Thursday, May 23, 2019, at the United Reformed Church, in Whiting Street, at 7pm.**

## ***1 Welcome and introduction by the Chairman***

Those attending were welcomed by Society Chairman Martyn Taylor who introduced the speaker Dr Richard Hoggett, from the Abbey Heritage Partnership.

## ***2 Talk by Dr Richard Hoggett***

Richard Hoggett presented an illustrated talk on the Abbey and its Heritage. On the conclusion of the talk, Richard Summers (AHP) gave a brief explanation of the background and aims of the Abbey Heritage Partnership. The AHP was set up in 2016 and is led by St Edmundsbury Cathedral and West Suffolk Council in collaboration with nearly 20 other public, private and voluntary organisations. A conservation plan has been completed which has identified policies and potential projects for the future. Both were thanked by Martyn for the presentation and comments.

## ***Presentation of The Bury Society Architectural Awards***

Two Bury Society Architectural Awards were presented to George Wells, representing Hartog Hutton Limited, and Paul Scarlet, architect, for the conversion of the former Radio Saxon/Leonard Machin Grocers building in Long Brackland into apartments. These were well received.

## ***3 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING***

### ***3a Apologies for absence***

Apologies were received from Roderick Rees, Kerr Clement, Jos and Susan Bird, Catherine Buchanan and Chris Minett, Paul and Teresa Collard, Bob and Linda Mingay, Isobel Ashton, Colin Taylor, Brian and Barbara Milner, Brian Coley, Margaret Charlesworth, Sandie Taylor, Christopher Spicer, Patricia Mackie, Gerry Tavers.

### ***3b Approval of the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting***

These had been circulated previously in the Review and were subsequently

approved with no matters arising.

### ***3c Chairman's Report***

Martyn Taylor reported that the Bury Society membership is still holding its own with current numbers around 635, sadly having lost some prominent members in the past year. However, the unstinting work carried out by Sue Savage, Membership Secretary, continues to keep the membership buoyant. He thanked all present for supporting the Bury Society; the more members we have, the louder our voice can be heard, and asked that everyone please spread the word about the society. He gave grateful thanks to Melanie Lesser, the now retired co-ordinator of Bury in Bloom, and said that in Stephen Moody we have a more than adequate replacement. His role as Events Organiser has now been taken on by Terry O'Donoghue. Recent events this year included an informative talk by Adrian Tindall on Bury at War, a very successful annual lunch, another well supported coffee morning and a trip to Woodbridge. The Society operates a Reserves Policy to ensure that the retained funds are used appropriately. During the year grants were made of £1,000 to St Edmundsbury Borough Council towards the purchase of new litter bins and £500 to the Bury Water Meadows Group to assist in the purchase of a Gazebo. Other grants included £400 to the Guildhall Feoffment Trustees towards refurbishing the rose beds on College Square and £100 to the woodturners who fashioned the new post finials at the Abbey Gardens. As 2020 celebrates the millennium of the Abbey's foundation, the Society feels that it should be marked in an appropriate way and is in discussions with West Suffolk Council and other interested parties to decide how this should be done. With Richard Summers at the helm the Partnership held a very successful conference earlier this year and £500 was given by the Bury Society to the Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership. Martyn reminded members that subscriptions were due on 1 June. He paid tribute to the generosity of the former St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Bury St Edmunds Town Council and the many County, Borough and Town Councillors who have supported the Society with funds and their time during the year. Although political structures have changed, he

felt sure that the Society will retain the support of and involvement with the new West Suffolk District Council. With the help of grants, the Society had commissioned the (very difficult) cleaning of the Ouida Memorial. Martyn also thanked the commercial and private sponsors for their support for Bury in Bloom projects including the roundabout and hanging basket sponsorship schemes.

Project expenditure during the year has included landscaping works at Tollgate Primary School, the Buzzing Bees Project, the Poppy bollards and banners to celebrate the Town's success in the Anglia in Bloom and Britain in Bloom competitions. The ending of the 1914-18 war was commemorated by several projects built around the making and display of poppies together with their meaning and historic significance. A new roundabout sculpture was commissioned to celebrate the cyclist James Moore and workshops were held to allow students to decorate cycle wheels and to understand his contribution to the development of European and international cycling.

The Young, Busy and Senior Green Fingers events allowed both young and older citizens to demonstrate their gardening skills and the ever-popular Certificates of Merit scheme allowed the town's residents to exhibit their own individual horticultural skills.

Monitoring planning issues has always been to the forefront of the Bury Society ethos and Martyn thanked Roderick Rees, the Society's Planning Officer, for his guidance in reviewing planning applications, which can be somewhat challenging, notably that of Cornhill Walk.

Commerce in the town is also suffering at times from the same malaise the country is going through however, with the many tourists that continue to flock to the town, hopefully the trend can be bucked.

Martyn thanked all those involved in the work of the Bury Society Executive and Bury in Bloom Committees, especially Tim Page, Doug Beardon, Melanie Mills, Robin Burnett, Elizabeth Clement and Russell Cook. The Bury Society Review, proof-read by Sarah Nunn and Judy Broadway, is really good in colour and contributors are always welcome. He ended by thanking all those present for attending.

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# 48th Annual General Meeting

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## **3d Planning Officer's Report**

In the absence of Roderick Rees the Planning Report was presented by Tim Page. Over the past year the town centre has been the focus of several controversial applications. The Society expressed strong reservations about the redevelopment of the empty Cornhill Walk precinct behind Moyses Hall because of the scale of the development and the viability of largish shops at this location. There was also concern about the redevelopment of the former Health Centre on Looms Lane with flats and offices because of its over-bearing bulk and monolithic appearance – but the plans were approved. There were strong objections to plans for 16 flats (four underground) on St Andrews Street South between Neptune and Denny's because of over-development – but once again the plans were approved. The Society supported the redevelopment of the burnt-out Cycle King premises on Angel Hill with a replacement shop and four flats – and groundworks have now started. The Society also supported the conversion of the Argos premises on the Buttermarket into a shop with flats behind. Building work has started on 135 private apartments on Station Hill and the affordable homes at the former Lucky Break premises on Tayfen Road. Works are also well advanced on the conversion of Palmers Homeware premises on St Andrews Street whilst the new Travelodge and Starbucks on Etna Road are virtually complete, despite very real concerns about road safety. The new apartment building over the car park at the rear of Cancer Research, on Lower Baxter Street, is also nearing completion (though the Society remains unconvinced about the view from Angel Hill) – and Greater Anglia have lodged plans for a 74 space car park at the railway station.

## **3e Treasurer's Report**

The Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet for the financial year ending 31 March 2019 were circulated. Doug Beardon explained briefly how the Society raised and spent its money. He reported that 2019 had been a relatively subdued year financially and the Society are mindful that 2020, with the attendant celebrations of the millennium of the Abbey, might not be so. He thanked Robin Burnett and Stephen Moody for the let-

ting of, on the day of the AGM, another roundabout. He predicted a challenging and stimulating future for the Society.

## **3f Appointment of Trustees and Officers**

Tim Page announced the appointment of Trustees and Officers. Sarah-Jane Stebbing and Colin Taylor are standing down as Trustees. The following were all unanimously re-elected: Martyn Taylor (Chair), Doug Beardon (Treasurer), Tim Page (Secretary), Roderick Rees (Planning Officer), Sue Savage (Membership Secretary), Robin Burnett (BIB Chair), Kerr Clement, Sarah Nunn, Patrick Chung, Russell Cook (Review Editor). Tim Page thanked all present for their participation in the election. Martyn Tay-

lor gave thanks also for their confidence in the Executive Committee.

## **4 Questions from the floor/open forum**

Richard Summers thanked the Bury Society for their support of the Abbey Heritage Partnership. In particular Martyn Taylor, Tim Page, Doug Beardon as Treasurer and Jackie Burnett as Meeting Secretary.

Martyn Taylor closed the meeting with thanks to all who had contributed towards the evening's AGM including all members of the Executive Committee and the many willing volunteers who help at and support such Society events.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

# Annual General Meeting

**The 49th Annual General Meeting of the Bury St Edmunds Society will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2021 – To be held online via Zoom.**

All members are welcome, and encouraged to attend, see joining instructions below.

## AGENDA

- 1 Welcome and introduction by the Chairman.
- 2 Talk – Mark Cordell – How COVID is changing Bury's town centre.
- 3 Annual General Meeting.
  - a Apologies for absence.
  - b Approval of the Minutes of the previous AGM (May 2019) and any matters arising.
  - c Chairman's report.
  - d Planning Officer's report.
  - e Treasurer's report.
  - f Appointment of trustees and officers.
- 4 Questions from the floor/open forum.

Joining instructions: This is a meeting for members only. To register your interest please e-mail: [events@brysociety.com](mailto:events@brysociety.com)

Log on details will be sent out to all those who have registered interest, one week before the event date.

The minutes of the previous AGM are printed in this issue of the Society Review and a summary of the accounts is printed separately and distributed with this issue of the Society Review.

# Bury's pivotal role in the outcome

The often written-about times when the great Benedictine Abbey, in Bury St Edmunds, exerted power and influence on the national stage has tended to overshadow another influential period in the town and Suffolk's history – the English Civil War, where it was at the very centre of regional and national politics. Between 1642 and 1649 Bury was to play a prominent role in the eventual outcome.

The Civil War did not start with the King raising his standard at Nottingham, but more local to Suffolk at Newmarket in March 1642 when representatives from Parliament met with him at his racing lodge demanding surrender of his armed forces. His response was short and sharp: "By God not for an hour. You have asked such of me that was never asked of a King."

Thus commenced a sequence of events which led ultimately to Charles's execution in 1649 and England feeling the shocks for decades.

From the outset Bury St Edmunds was recognised as being of strategic importance to the Parliamentary cause being the gateway into the heartland of Suffolk.

Whilst the townspeople and their leaders, including the Bacon family and Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston (reputed to be the richest man in Suffolk), were sympathetic to the Parliamentary cause, some powerful local families were firmly in the Royalist camp – the most vociferous being the Jermyns of Rushbrooke. At the start of hostilities the Guildhall in Bury was embroiled in the politics with an order sent out from Parliament to the town Burgesses to ensure control of the building, saying: "We have been in great fears a long time by reason the magazine (arsenal) of this part of the county was in an inconvenient place and the key in untrustworthy hands."

This was not an over-reaction and the painting of James I, which hangs in the building, still bears the scars of the deep divisions in society. The "J" for James has been crudely altered to a "C", as though a Royalist



*General Thomas Fairfax.*

with access wanted to demonstrate support for King Charles I. By early 1643 Parliamentary militia groups from as far away as Lincoln were training in the fields around Bury, under the direction of Robert Chaplin.

The town itself quickly became the regional centre for the Suffolk Committee of the Eastern Association, one of a series of regional associations to raise money, men, horses and arms for the Parliamentary struggle.

The town being much smaller than Ipswich, the Suffolk Committee met in Bury continuously between 1642 and 1648.

It was the most successful of the committees per capita, raising over its lifetime some £337,971 for the Parliamentary cause.

It was responsible for all aspects of life, not only the needs of the army but the safety of transporting money to London, supporting soldiers' widows, paying alehouse keepers for quartering men and horses and even the manning of the coastal beacon at Felixstowe.

It also met to sequester money and property for those showing Royalist sympathies and, with puritan zeal, purge the Suffolk churches of what were considered "Scandalous Ministers."

Here often charges arose following the preaching of what were considered treacherous sermons, frequently reinforced with reports of drunkenness and immoral behaviour.

One such local minister was the Rector of Bradfield St Clare, Paul Gosnal, who was accused of preaching in support of the King's army and hoping that the Parliamentary army "might rot from their shoulders."

The charges went on to read: "He is reported to be a common drunkard and haunter of tavernes."

Such scandalous ministers were stripped of their parish and the "good folk" were to appoint a new minister of sound character.

Other local men of the cloth to face similar charges were the Rector of Woolpit and the Vicar of Mildenhall.

One rather extraordinary hearing by the committee on March 11, 1645, was the trial of a pirate, one Captain Whiting, who was captured off the coast of Suffolk and brought for trial in Bury, subsequently being fined and imprisoned at the county gaol in the town.

One of the results of the importance of Bury in the region's affairs was the impact on accommodation and prices, one complaining to the committee: "Are so many knights and gentlemen in Bury away from their own houses, raised the price of victuals in the town?"

In the middle of all the national turmoil, we have one of the infamous Witch Trials which came to a climax with the execution of 18 supposed witches (including two men) on Thingoe Hill on August 27, 1645. Most of the charges concerned bewitching women and children and causing crop failures, but one, an elderly parson, confessed to bewitching a ship near Harwich causing it to be swept away and "by this meanes were swallowed up by the merciless waves."

Over 120 more souls languished in prison awaiting trial, many dying of starvation.

*Continued on next page.*



# of the English Civil War

The town was not slavish in following the Parliamentary cause and, like the Eastern Association's leader the Earl of Manchester, it held relatively moderate views and had the expectation that Charles may yet reach an accommodation with Parliament and once again reign by consent.

Therefore when the Earl of Manchester took up in opposition to the forming of the New Model Army (basically a national army replacing regional militias), the Suffolk committee met on January 30, 1645, and voiced its concerns to London that it feared being disbanded, or the retraction of its primary aim of "mutual assistance," and therefore Suffolk men becoming embroiled "in remote parts" to the expense of the defence of the town and county.

In this they were ultimately unsuccessful and Manchester, once head of all the parliamentary forces and victor at the battle of Marston Moor, resigned.

This one act by the Parliamentary side created a monster and the army became a threatening force to both Royalists and Parliamentarians, dictating the course of the politics and preventing any idea of the restoration of Charles to the throne.

By early 1647 Fairfax, now titular head of Parliamentary forces, needed to restore discipline in his Model Army.

Bury was to play a pivotal role in events as they reached a climax.

The officers of the existing regiments were very unhappy at the outstanding back pay owed and the order by the new Parliamentary Army Council to disband.

In all 200 officers, selected from all the regiments and known as "Agitators" met with Fairfax in the Guildhall and other buildings in the town over several days in late May.

The outcome was Fairfax and Cromwell having to meet with the greater part of the army which had converged on Newmarket Heath (Kentford) on June 4 where the "Solemn agreement" was sealed legitimising an Army Council, under Fairfax, and promising to take the army's grievances to Parliament.



*The altered coat of arms of James I.*

All of this was against the backdrop of King Charles finally being brought under arrest to Newmarket. These hardenings of attitude, including the authoritarian power of the army and increasing puritan influence, did not sit well with the inhabitants of Bury and the surrounding area and unrest inevitably followed. At Christmas 1647, in what is known as the apprentice riots, young men of the town took to the streets armed with clubs threatening traders who refused to shut on Christmas Day (the puritan authorities considering the Christmas holiday as being popish). There was a violent confrontation with one shopkeeper, but a compromise being the introduction of a curfew appeased both sides, each claiming victory.

Worse was to follow.

In May, 1648, May Day celebrations were again considered popish and banned. However, supported by Jermy's Royalist followers and others from outside the town, a maypole was raised and 600 cried out "For God and King Charles."

The Royalist mob seized the town magazine and posted guards at the town gates whilst others assembled both in St Mary's and St James's church.

A Parliamentary army under Colonel Whalley was sent to the town to quell the tumult, and thinking the whole town was against him, nearly clashed arms with loyal Parliamentary forces within the town, who themselves thought Whalley's army were Irish mercenaries fighting for the King.

This incident of mistaken identity and similar nationally, resulted in the British army wearing red for over 200 years.

The mutiny finally ended with the Royalists surrendering their arms, it is believed at the Market Cross, under a supposed amnesty, but not until two of the town lay dead.

The town continued to play a major role throughout the balance of the second Civil War, the prisoners from the last set piece battle at Linton, Cambridgeshire, being brought to Bury for interrogation and trial, including two prominent Royalists Sir Thomas Peyton and Mr Swan who were captured hiding in the town. Many of the local men on trial originating from Newmarket, Exning and surrounding villages pleaded that they had strayed into Royalist hands whilst lost and forced to fight for the Royalists.

Others had been captured in a deadly skirmish at the King's Arms, in Newmarket.

Despite seven years of conflict, the Commonwealth ultimately failed and Bury's last word on the whole story was on February 21, 1660. Knowing that Charles II was to be restored to the throne, it was reported: "That bonfires were lit in every street, soldiers carrying off the fuel were stoned, and taunted that the citizens would soon be strong enough to declare for King Charles and end the rule of rogues like the soldiers."

Thus came to an end this chapter of Bury's history, although shock waves were to continue to bring violence and distrust to the town beyond the Glorious Revolution of William and Mary in 1688, another bloody episode and another story.

*Terry O'Donoghue*

# Original plaque drew strong criticism

Members might be interested to know that shortly after the Daniel Defoe plaque was first put up on the original 1693 Macro home (known as Cupola House, *pictured right*, since the 19th century), it drew strong criticism from the Rev S H A Hervey, author/editor of the invaluable Suffolk Green Book series.

When he published Volume XV on Whelnetham parish registers in 1910 he took the opportunity to include a few comments about “Tablets on Bury Houses.”

He wrote: “The Mayor and Corporation come up carrying a long ladder, they set it up against this house, they go up it as solemnly as if they were walking up the aisle of St Mary’s Church, and they affix to the house this fib about Defoe. This tablet that tells a fib all day and every day to everyone that passes by; they could be expected not to put up such a tablet without having some evidence of its truth, and of such evidence they had not the smallest scrap.

“I would humbly suggest that they again proceed to this house carrying their long ladder, again solemnly go up the ladder but this time to take down the tablet, and then proceed with it to one of the refuse heaps that are smoking and smouldering outside the town, and cast it in so that it may fib no more.”

I worked for Paul Romaine on the restoration of Old Cupola in 2003. When he asked me about the plaque he was somewhat taken aback when I made a similar response to that of the Rev Hervey. By that time I had amassed firmer proof of the “fib” it was perpetuating. At least it is no longer on display to passers-by, although its inclusion inside today’s premises in the Traverse is also



questionable. Sadly one “fib” has been replaced on the exterior of the present building with another greater and, to my mind, more serious one. This is the one created by Historic England’s approval of a replica weathervane bearing the date 1693 and the initials of Thomas and Susan Macro instead of insisting on one reflecting the new steel-framed build’s date of 2012-16. Moreover, there is nothing to indicate to the casual observer either inside or, more importantly, on the exterior, that the current Cupola House is overwhelmingly a new build.

Consequently, people are being deceived as to its true historical and architectural identity. This is something that Martyn Taylor, I and others are concerned about. Efforts have been made to get the owners to rectify the matter – to no avail.

With little salvaged from its predecessor, modern construction methods and materials, plus significant changes to the interior, the Grade I status deservedly awarded Old Cupola as “the high house” of the Macros can, thankfully, no longer be applied to the New Cupola.

This change of status however, required an application by a member of the public to initiate it.

It transpires that Historic England (English Heritage rebranded) does not automatically review and revise the listings of buildings which have undergone significant alteration since their original grading.

Due to the persistence of Graham Gosling and detailed reference to material in the private Romaine/Mur-

rell archive, Historic England finally agreed in June 2019 that the Grade I listing was no longer applicable to the New Cupola, which was completed in 2016. Whether the property merits the Grade II it now bears is, again, open to debate.

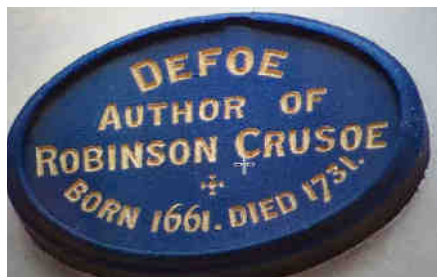
Turning to Daniel Defoe he did stay a few days in Bury St Edmunds. Released from Newgate jail in November 1703 he arrived in the town in September 1704. This was while he was touring the country as a political agent/spy for Robert Harley.

Lord Harley was one of Queen Anne’s ministers keen to find ways of influencing the electorate. With a general election pending in 1705 Defoe was engaged by Harley to use his dissenting connections to establish a countrywide intelligence system. While at Bury St Edmunds Defoe requested Harley to address any letters to him under his alias of “Alexander Goldsmith at Mr John Morley’s.”

In 1704 Morley was a leading member of the town’s Presbyterian congregation and probably a near neighbour of the Macro family. In a census taken in 1695 John and his wife Mary lived across the way from the Macros on the west side of the Great Market (now known as the Cornhill).

A prolific writer Defoe made use of his early travels in his tour through Great Britain published in 1727. This includes personal observations on Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk’s other political constituencies and the county generally. Worth reading – there are various modern editions available.

*P E Murrell*



*The plaque to Daniel Defoe.*



# Book maps out Baptist Church role

The Baptist church in Bury St Edmunds celebrated its 220th anniversary in July.

To commemorate the occasion, a new book presents the church's role in the town, across East Anglia, and beyond over more than two centuries.

Key local events are interwoven in the narrative of "The History of Garland Street Baptist Church" to set the context for what was happening in the church.

Written by local resident Terry Tyrrell, the chronology starts in the mid-1600s by describing how various non-conformist groups first appeared on the scene in Suffolk.

It would be a century and a half before Baptists formed their own church—Ebenezer Chapel—in what was then called Nether Baxter Street. The original 10 members were baptised on the day the chapel opened in July 1800.

Under the leadership of a succession of four pastors over its first 23 years, membership rose to 49.

The slow growth of the church began to change dramatically when Cornelius Elven, a 26-year-old native of Bury who worked as a tanner and leather-cutter, became pastor in May 1823.

Rev Elven led the church for 50 years, and membership increased to nearly 650.



*The Baptist Church in Garland Street.*

The chapel was enlarged in 1828, but within six years, the building was no longer sufficient for the rapidly growing congregation. Garland Street Baptist Church opened in May 1834 to accommodate Sunday worship attendance that eventually topped 2,000 during three services.

In addition to ministry throughout the town, the pastor and members took part in outreach far beyond Bury. Between 1824 and 1852, they established 47 "preaching stations" in villages around Suffolk, with as many

as 12 operating concurrently through the years.

He also was a mentor to the well-known Charles Haddon Spurgeon when the teenager started his career as a Baptist minister in Waterbeach, near Cambridge.

To order a copy send an e-mail to the author at [history@garlandstreet.org.uk](mailto:history@garlandstreet.org.uk)

It is well worth the read and interspersed with numerous relevant illustrations.

*Martyn Taylor*

## Bury Society events calendar

### **Wednesday, December 9, at 7pm.**

"Nurse, screens please". The history and characters of the old West Suffolk Hospital. A 50-minute virtual illustrated talk on Zoom by Terry O'Donoghue. To register interest and receive access link e-mail [events@burysociety.com](mailto:events@burysociety.com)

### **Saturday, December 12, at 6.30pm.**

Guildhall garden (access via 79 Whiting Street). Classic Femme singers providing an evening of Christmas songs and Carols. Includes a glass of wine (or soft drink). Event should last just over an hour.

This is a free event. Numbers will be limited and we would ask for social distancing to be respected and face masks worn until positioned in the garden (seating can be arranged for those requiring seating). The event is subject to ending of current lockdown restriction and favourable weather conditions. Booking is essential via [events@burysociety.com](mailto:events@burysociety.com) or telephone 01284 765048

### **Thursday, January 21, at 7pm.**

Digital Annual General Meeting via Zoom Webinar. This will be our formal AGM deferred from 2020. A full programme for the AGM will

be published very shortly. This is a meeting for members only and to register interest e-mail: [events@burysociety.com](mailto:events@burysociety.com).

Log on details will be sent out to all those who have registered interest, one week before the event date.

Details of other talks, the Spring Lunch and planned excursions will be published in early 2021.

For those members who are concerned about the technology of our virtual events, please contact Terry O'Donoghue via e-mail: [events@burysociety.com](mailto:events@burysociety.com) or telephone 01284 765048.

# Heritage Partnership to consult with residents over its plans for the Abbey

The Abbey of St Edmund Heritage Partnership is currently consulting its partners and the heritage agencies on its draft Overarching Plan which will provide a broad context for its future work and for various future funding applications.

The Bury Society is being consulted as one of the leading partners. It will no doubt support the local community consultation next spring which will ask about the proposals to care for the Abbey and to tell its story to local people and visitors.

The Heritage Partnership was launched in 2016 and brings together numerous local and regional organisations. It has already prepared a Heritage Assessment and a Conservation Plan with funding from the then Borough Council and Historic England. The ideas from these consultancy studies were discussed at a major conference at the Cathedral in early 2019. The introduction to the draft Overarching Plan says that the Abbey of St Edmund lies at the heart of Bury St Edmunds. It binds together St Edmund, the first Patron Saint of England, and Magna Carta. We will tell the story of their roles in national and international history. The draft Overarching Plan proposes that the mission of the Heritage Partnership will be to encourage people to experience the international significance of St Edmund and the historic Abbey. It declares that the



*The Abbey ruins in the Abbey Gardens.*

10-year vision for the Abbey of St Edmund will be to inspire all its visitors through excellent conservation, learning and community engagement. The mission and vision set the context for five interlinked key themes:

**1 Inspiration** ... including spirit of place, spirituality and well-being;

**2 Conservation** ... including repair and maintenance of the historic fabric;

**3 Connections** ... including accessibility and connections with surrounding areas;

**4 Learning** ... including heritage experience, research, education and information

**5 Engagement** ... including volunteering and local community involvement.

The draft Overarching Plan concludes that the future work of the Heritage Partnership will be to develop these broad ideas into more specific plans and projects. This work is already beginning and includes joint collaboration with English Heritage. It will include how we fund and deliver a programme of projects in stages during the next 10 years.

The present consultation on the Overarching Plan will help to develop a wide consensus amongst the many different interests represented on the Heritage Partnership across the complex Abbey of St Edmund area that is three times the size of the Abbey Gardens. We hope that the local community consultation next year will strengthen that consensus.

The future work of the Heritage Partnership will be to build on the Millennium Celebrations of the foundation of the Benedictine Abbey of St Edmund by King Cnut in 1020. The Heritage Partnership is a member of the Abbey 1000 Coordinating Group and it expects that the events in 2021 will raise public interest in improving the Abbey.

We hope that the Bury Society will help to raise public interest in improving the Abbey of St Edmund and continue its enthusiastic support for the work of the Heritage Partnership.

## Changes made to the website

The new Bury Society website went live at the start of September, following the Bury in Bloom element earlier in the summer. Now Bury in Bloom shares our Bury Society website and in some ways attracts different audiences and interests. Our Facebook and Twitter pages are now much more closely co-ordinated. The team from the Membership Communications and Events Committee continues to consider what the

website should do in the context of all the recent changes to our lives. If you have any views on this, please let me know. The most important planned change is that of online payment. We want to make paying subscriptions easier than it has ever been. We want to ensure that our subscriptions system uses the most appropriate provider for our membership.

*Alan Baxter*

*Richard Summers*



# Radical reforms set for the country's planning system with new rules

Last month the Bury Society responded to a Government White Paper entitled "Planning for the Future" which seeks to radically reform the planning system.

This consultation document claims the current regime does not supply enough new homes, so there will now be a "top down" ambition for 300,000 new homes each year. There will also be a focus on simplifying Local Plans and areas will be zoned for different levels of redevelopment.

Conservation Areas are generally exempt.

The Society's response stressed the importance of community involvement with the planning process and local input from amenity groups such as our own in a market town containing a large conservation area.

We were also unsure about increased direction from central government rather than decisions being made locally – and we worry that there is an emphasis on our voice being heard at the Local Plan stage rather than when an individual application is lodged.

The Society generally supported Section 106 agreements and Community Charge levies being replaced by a nationally set Infrastructure Levy.

We also supported a new system of "Environmental Assessments" to reduce carbon emissions by 2050 and a "Sustainable Development Test". However, we expressed reservations about how the new ratio of future affordable housing was to be calculated.

The Society further supported the introduction of local Design Codes and the appointment of a Chief Officer for Design as well as the promotion of high-quality design and "fast track for beauty".

The paper claims it will be quicker

and easier to adapt historic buildings and improve energy efficiency.

## NEW PLANNING RULES

In September, the Government also introduced new planning rules which extend permitted development rights so that householders can now add two new floors to a two-storey detached house (one floor only for terraces or for bungalows).

Two extra floors can also be added to a detached three-storey block of flats. Plenty of conditions apply, including the building must have been constructed between 1948 and 2018 and windowless accommodation is banned (thank goodness).

Prior approval is required from the council which looks like it will be the only opportunity for neighbours to comment.

The planners can refuse the application if they consider the design to be of poor quality, will look out of place or neighbours will suffer loss of light/outlook or privacy.

The change does not apply in conservation areas or to listed buildings so the impact in Bury is more likely to be on the edge of town rather than the town centre.

Also, "Change of Use" is now allowed between shops, offices, cafés, restaurants and gyms without the need for planning permission.

The key change is the creation of a new Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) which will combine all the above.

This means that it will be easier to convert vacant town centre shops into new homes.

You will still need planning permission for conversion of pubs/bars, takeaways, cinemas, live music venues etc. - and Listed Building Consent is also required.

*Roderick Rees*

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# Working to clear up The Scrape

You may be forgiven for not knowing that there was a water feature in Ram Meadow until this year.

Yes, there are lots of ditches, some of them very old, as Ram Meadow was part of the original gift of land to the Abbey by the Saxon King, Edward the Confessor.

But nettles have dominated the site for decades and these have hidden the shallow body of water called The Scrape, which was created in the 1990s.

It was intended as an area of open water to augment the habitat for wet-land species present in Ram Meadow and to mitigate flooding when Tesco was built.

Over time with little or no management, willow started to dominate along the edges, introducing shade and contributing to the drying-out of the area. Successive dry summers have also helped to dry out The Scrape. By the start of 2020 there was only 15% open water and the habitat was less attractive for reed and sedge warblers, water vole and dragonfly and damselfly species, all of which have all recorded there in the past.

Bury is fortunate that, although it is now an urban town of some size, kingfishers, otters, and water voles all still exist on some parts of the Lark. Over three days in October and November, Bury Water Meadow (BWMG) volunteers began to put our part of the new management plan agreed with West Suffolk Council (WSC) into action.

## Frank Bright article

The story about Frank Bright in the Summer edition contained an error which said he was born in Bury St Edmunds and in fact it was East Dereham, Norfolk, where his father was the minister.

## Copy deadline for next edition of the Review

**The copy deadline for the next edition of the Bury Society Review is Monday, March 29. Email copy to the editor Russell Cook at [russellcook@sky.com](mailto:russellcook@sky.com)**



*Volunteers from the Bury Water Meadows Group clearing up The Scrape. Pictured, left to right, are Mark Dewsbury, Julian Case, Ian Campbell (in the water) and Richard Counihan.*

This plan, called the Green Book, prescribes habitat management in detail for all the different areas in Ram Meadow. For the scrape, a rotation of willow clearing and reed-pulling is taking place over a number of years and this will have the effect of opening up the water to light and air and aid the return of the wildlife. Volunteers went into The Scrape and pulled the excess reed, put it on a raft and then those on the land, pulled it out and left it in habitat piles on the side of the scrape for grass snakes and other reptiles to shelter over the winter. One volunteer chainsaw oper-

ator coppiced many of the willows at water level and dragged them to the dry land, others then cut the trees and left them in wood piles and brash - more habitat for small creatures. Another well overdue job was removal of the smaller white poplars immediately to the south of The Scrape. These were too big for volunteers to bring down so the WSC tree officer stepped in. We think we've been able to make a big difference already and we have only completed year one at The Scrape.

***Jillian Macready, BWMG***

**Don't miss the opportunity to add your weight to the Bury Society team. Apply for membership now.**

**Either use the website: [burysociety.com](http://burysociety.com) to download a membership form from the Home Page by clicking the "Join Us" panel or telephone the membership secretary Sue Savage on 01284 719243.**

**Contributions to the Review do not necessarily reflect the views of the Bury Society.**