

BENHALL & STERNFIELD NEWS

August 2026

The Wadd

In July, The Wadd had its annual mowing, and this year we were fortunate enough to have all three areas cut in succession. All areas were walked prior to cutting, to carry out ecological checks for birds nesting. The western dry area was cut first, with the arisings placed in habitat piles around the edges. The middle, damper area had been requested as donor hay for habitat enrichment at SZC Benhall Fen Meadow, so on the Wednesday, five trailer loads of arisings were cut and collected for spreading. We anticipate good news that the hay was successful with good results next year. Finally, the wettest area to the east was cut and collected, with the vegetation placed in habitat piles.

The Parish Council pays for the cutting each year, so with this year's mowing of all three areas of The Wadd being paid for by the donor site, this has saved the Parish Council a considerable cost. A huge thank you to SZC.

The ecology of the site brings about a great challenge in cutting the wetter areas, requiring specialist machinery adding greatly to the cost. The timing and cutting of the site were in accordance with The Floodplain Meadow Partnership and also advice from Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Back in May, The Suffolk Wildlife Trust carried out a botanical survey of The Wadd, which reflects what a wonderful biodiverse site it is. Do visit the Parish Council website to have a look at the results.

Finally, in June, we were lucky enough to be contacted by a local ecologist with an expertise in bats and acoustic monitoring. Four monitors were placed around the Parish which recorded an amazing variety of bat species. Again, check out the website to see these results.

We are so lucky to live in such a beautiful, rich and diverse area. If you have any suggestions for enriching or extending our local biodiversity, please do contact the Parish Council clerk.benhall@gmail.com

East Suffolk Tree and Hedgerow Draft Strategy Consultation closes 5 August

Go to the website so your comments are included and we get the right trees in the right place for our environment! <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/engagements/east-suffolk-tree-and-hedgerow-strategy-consultation>

Nature Notes

The drought and high temperatures have been the main environmental feature of recent weeks and as ever, supplying clean water to our wildlife is vitally important. Hopefully we will have some rain soon and thankfully, the temperature has dropped recently. This year may be one of the best for butterflies for some time as a result of the mild early Spring. Certainly, there have been large numbers of certain species such as Painted Ladies, Peacocks, Small Tortoiseshells, Red Admirals and Common Blues. On the Green, there are good numbers of Gatekeepers, Small Heaths and Meadow Browns and earlier in the year, there were a lot of Brimstones and Orange Tips. It looks as though it may be a bumper year for blackberries as well! Higher up, we have groups of Swifts screaming and there are reports of several Swift nests in roofs in the village. However, the number of Swallows seems lower than in past years and House Martins are very scarce locally.

In the sea, because of the temperature rise, octopuses have been raiding the lobster pots and eating the lobsters [*Crabs and scallops too!* – Ed.] and there has been a plague of jellyfish, particularly it seems, at Aldeburgh where swimming has been problematic unless wearing a wet suit!

Garden waste bins

As these are paid by individual subscription, the PC has asked, with the help of our District Councillor, for an extension of 2 collections as compensation for the problems. This is likely to come to each individual as an extension when you pay next time: please let the PC know if this doesn't happen.

Benhall & Sternfield What's On and Club News

Saturday 8 August: Annual Flower Show – 80th anniversary event! Arguably our village's premier event! And an extra special one this year – it's been going 80 years!! Opening ceremony 2pm (bar open 12 mid-day) – clowns, sports, stupendous raffle, tarot readings, book and bottle stalls and teas ice creams and wonderful arts and crafts! Not been great growing weather but it's not too late to get your entries in!

Please also note that the Flower Show Community Fund is open – keep an eye out for posters around the village or look on Facebook if you want to see how the Flower Show can help fund your community activity.

Sunday 9 August Open Mic 2-5 pm Bring your voice and instrument and have a go!

Saturday 15 August Karaoke 7pm Another chance to show the world that Benhall's Got Talent. Or, if you're genuinely talentless, just come and "sing" anyway – nobody minds!

Saturday 22nd August Bingo Tombola Returns – Eyes Down 7.30 pm Following the success of previous evenings, our popular Bingo Tombola is back! Join friends and neighbours for a fun-filled evening with plenty of chances to win prizes. Whether you're a regular player or trying your luck for the first time, everyone is welcome.

Sunday 23 August The Manette Baillie Afternoon Tea 3 pm Join us as we celebrate the remarkable Manette Baillie's 104th birthday with a special Afternoon Tea event. Guests can enjoy a delicious selection of sandwiches, cakes, and refreshments at £10 per head (while helping raise funds for Breast Cancer UK and the Club). This promises to be a memorable occasion celebrating an extraordinary milestone while supporting important community and charitable work. Please buy your tickets ahead of time to avoid disappointment – we need to plan the catering!

Monday 31 August (Bank Holiday Monday) Children's Bank Holiday Fun Afternoon Bring the family along for an afternoon packed with fun and entertainment for children of all ages. The Village Club's annual Children's Fun Afternoon will feature games, activities, laughter, and plenty of opportunities for youngsters to enjoy the Bank Holiday festivities. Watch Facebook for more details.

Return of the Thai Pop Up Following the tremendous success of our previous Thai Pop-Up event earlier this year, we are delighted to announce their return for two dates: **16 September** and **25 November 2026** (guests to arrive by 7pm). Join us, Aof & Rob for another unforgettable evening of authentic Thai cuisine, featuring an exciting *new* 5-course tasting menu especially created for these autumn dates. Expect vibrant flavours, fresh ingredients, and beautifully crafted dishes that showcase the very best of Thai cooking. There will be a Five-Course Tasting Menu, different each night!

Cost is £35 per person and reservations can be made to Mark and Helga by telephone 07880 854415 or email: helga_mark@btinternet.com. Please note places are limited and the previous event sold out quickly, so we strongly recommend booking early to avoid disappointment. NB Vegetarian and dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice.

Club Survey closed 17 July –this newsletter went to print too early to report the findings. A summary will be published in the September issue – Ed.

How to contact the Club: call 01728 768140 at any time and leave a message For Club updates through the month: Club website: www.benhallclub.uk; OR Facebook www.facebook.com/benhallclub; Nextdoor: <https://nextdoor.co.uk/pages/benhall-and-sternfield-ex-servicemens-village-social-club-saxmundham-gb-eng/>

How to contact Benhall and Sternfield News: do tell us your news, thoughts and ideas. We can list your local event (Benhall & Sternfield) and report on it. Email ben-sternnews@gmail.com

For Benhall & Sternfield Parish Council: Noticeboards, www.benhallandsternfield-pc.gov.uk

Facebook: Benhall And Sternfield Community Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/900786860888023/>