

June  
2011



# North Stifford Village NEWS

June 2011  
Issue No. 13

North Stifford Village Community Group  
*Working together to improve our village*

## Village Fete

Saturday 25th June

Starting at 12 noon on the Village Green

Not to  
be  
missed



Bouncy castle

Birds of prey

Cake stand

Dog shows

Food &  
refreshments

Burger bar

This years charities are:-  
Macmillan Nurses, RNLI and the Pancreatic Cancer Association.  
We would welcome donations for prizes;  
New items, unwanted gifts, bottles, home made cakes etc.  
Help urgently wanted on the day to set up/take down/run stalls  
or help in the kitchen - Please call Maureen on 372757

# North Stifford Village Community Group



Darren Jones - Chairman

## A message from our Chairman Darren Jones

Welcome to this edition of our newsletter. Hope you all had a relaxing Easter break and enjoyed the long awaited sunshine! Thank you to all of the villagers who attended our AGM on the 20th April - brilliant to see such a strong turn-out. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new members onto the NSVCG Committee. It's really great to see so many people with an interest in making this village a great place to live. I also want to thank our out-

# Committee Members - 2011 - 2012

going Chairman, Gordon Roberts, for all his hard work over the last year. Gordon has worked really hard in introducing new initiatives to the village and of course keeping all of us in order!

We have an exciting couple of months coming up; the annual summer barbecue is on the 1st of July with the unveiling of our village sign by our MP for Thurrock, Jackie Doyle-Price. We are always keen to hear any new ideas for events or projects for North Stifford from all of the villagers so please contact either myself or any of the Committee members with anything you want to discuss or join us at our next meeting. Contact can also be made via the village website [www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk](http://www.northstiffordvillage.co.uk) Happy Summer 2011 - Here's hoping for a warm one.....

*Darren Jones* Chairman NSVCG

42 Birchfield, RM16 5UX.



Dennis Brockhurst  
Vice Chairman



Pat Dance  
Treasurer



Maureen Nicholas  
Secretary



Graham Butterfield



Cliff Cowin



Lee Fullbrook



Andy Higgs



Kevin Hooper



Catherine Hooton



Arthur Ince



Gordon Roberts



Margaret Vale

## Unveiling of our Village Sign & Barbecue Evening Friday 1st July

Following a couple of years of research, preparation and fundraising we are now ready to install our very own Village Sign.

The unveiling ceremony will take place at 6 p.m. on Friday 1st July. We will have a number of dignitaries present including our MP Jackie Doyle-Price.

The celebrations will continue with our barbecue evening featuring Diane Moore a very versatile singer from TV and radio, plus a disco.

Once again the Barbecue Evening will be free entry for all village residents and their guests as a thank you for your support throughout the year.

Burgers and Hot Dogs will be on sale and the Cricket Club bar will be open. You can also bring your own food and drink.

### *Special* Litter Picking Day

A few extra hands would be appreciated on Saturday 18th June for a general tidy up before the Village Sign unveiling and BBQ evening.

Meet at the Village Hall at 10.30 a.m.

Lets make our village nice and tidy for this special day when we will have a number of dignitaries and media present.

Belhus CC v. Lashings World X1  
North Stifford Village Green.  
Friday 10th June 2011 at 2.15 p.m.

### Pony killed, Stifford Hill

Most people in the village will have seen newspaper articles about the horrific crime which took place on Monday 9th May, resulting in the death of a pony.

I do not intend to repeat the grizzly details again here, as I do not want to distress those affected any further.

I am sure all our village residents were appalled at how evil some people can be and on behalf of the Community Group and residents I would like to send sincere sympathy to the Brown family.

I understand that the men allegedly responsible have been arrested and lets hope the culprits get the punishment they deserve.

Anyone with information should contact the Serious Crime Team at South Ockendon police station on 0300 333 4444.

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## GREAT FOOD, GREAT PRICES

### PUB CLASSICS

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cheese  
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TAGLIATELLE WITH PORTABELLO MUSHROOMS

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<small>Golden whelms flavoured tomato. Served with chips, peas and a portion wedge.</small>	
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<small>Chicken breast fillets coated in a spicy southern fried coating. Served with rice and french fried potato.</small>	
SMOTHERED CHICKEN	£3.99
<small>Chicken breast fillet topped with onion, pork, bacon and a tangy BBQ sauce. A mouth watering hot date. Classic meal. Served with chips.</small>	
DOUBLE SMOTHERED CHICKEN <small>DOUBLE CHICKEN</small>	£5.59
<small>A double portion of the classic dish.</small>	
BEEF LASAGNE	£3.49
<small>Beef, egg, mozzarella topped with British cheddar. Beef, sausage, onion, tomato sauce and butter. Cheddar cheese. Served with garlic bread slices.</small>	
HAM, EGG & CHIPS <small>CRISPY CHICKEN</small>	£2.99
<small>Two slices of ham and a fried egg. Served with chips and peas.</small>	
SAUSAGE & MASH	£3.29
<small>Three crisp sausage. Mashed potato on a bed of fluffy potatoes. Served with red onion gravy.</small>	
VEGGIE SAUSAGE & MASH	£3.29
CHILLI CON CARNE	£4.09
<small>Chilli con carne. Served with rice, soft cheese and fresh chips.</small>	
FIVE BEAN CHILLI	£4.29
<small>Oddin piece with beef, black bean, corn, kidney, pepper and onion. Served with rice, soft cheese and fresh chips.</small>	
TAGLIATELLE PORTABELLO MUSHROOMS	£4.29
<small>Tagliatelle pasta in a creamy Portobello mushroom, pepper and mushroom sauce. Topped with hard Italian cheese. Served with garlic bread slices.</small>	
ALL DAY BRUNCH	£5.49
<small>Two grilled pork sausages, two slices of back bacon, two fried eggs, grilled mushrooms and tomato. Served with fresh baked bread.</small>	

NEW BREAD OPTION  
99p extra charge for a salad or jacket potato.

SERVED DAILY

## BURGER & DRINK

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GRILL AND A DRINK, SERVED ALL DAY

## GRILL WEDNESDAYS

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ROAST AND A DRINK, SERVED ALL DAY

## SUNDAY ROAST

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ROAST CHICKEN, CARROT, POTATOES, BEAN CURRY, PEAS, GRAVY, BREAD, BUTTER & CHEESE

## DRINKS

Choose any of these drinks as part of our deals. Tea and coffee also available.

**SEE DEAL PRICE**

DRINKS & SNACKS ONLY AVAILABLE WHEN ORDERED AND ONLY ON SELECTED TENDERS. VOUCHERS NOT VALID FOR DRINKS. OVER 18 ONLY. PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

## 700 year old Yew Tree in North Stifford

Tim Hills, a tree expert said "Having spent 10 years studying old yew trees you would think there were no surprises left, but I have never seen anything quite like this and I am not sure what to make of it".



(Jackie Luff kindly allowed me to photograph this beautiful tree in her garden in Marian Close. Ed)

In St Mary's Church records of 1871 reference was made to this Yew tree and at that time it was considered to be 600 years old, so it would now be in excess of 700 years old. This could make it the third oldest Yew tree in Essex.

It is likely that this amazingly convoluted trunk is a fragment of a once much larger girthed tree maybe damaged by wind or a lightning strike.

Marion Close was built on the grounds of the old Rectory so this tree was once in the Rectory garden.

Most parts of the yew tree are toxic. The foliage remains toxic even when wilted or dried. Horses have the lowest tolerance. Fatal poisoning in humans is very rare, only occurring after eating a lot of yew foliage. The wood is also poisonous. Yew was the wood of choice for longbow making in medieval times. Some bow makers are reputed to have died from the frequent handling of the wood in their craft.

The yew is often found in church yards. It is sometimes suggested that they were either planted as a symbol of long life, or as trees of death. An explanation that yews were planted to discourage farmers and drovers from letting their animals wander into burial grounds, with the poisonous foliage being the disincentive, may be intentionally prosaic. A more likely reason they were planted in church grounds is that fronds and branches of yew were often used as a substitute for palms on Palm Sunday.

One of the world's oldest surviving wooden artefacts is a yew spear head, found in 1911 at Clacton-on-sea. It is estimated to be 450,000 years old.

The precursors of chemotherapy drug Paclitaxel can be derived from the leaves of European Yew

In the ancient Celtic world, the yew tree had extraordinary importance; a passage by Caesar narrates that Catuvolcus, chief of the Eburones poisoned himself with yew rather than submit to Rome.

## Village Plumber

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# Cookery Corner

Although there are a vast range of cookery books on the market, we thought it would be good to share some 'favourite recipes' to enhance our culinary skills and enjoyment of cooking and eating. It may be that you have an old family recipe tucked away somewhere or could offer an alternative cultural delight. It would also be of interest if you have a story of where the recipe originated. Recipes for any type of meal or for cakes, jams, chutney or pickles, would be welcome.

So next time you are enjoying one of your favourites, why not email the recipe to the North Stifford web site, or drop the recipe off to Mo, 6 Browns Cottages, High Road, so we can share these culinary delights with all our neighbours through these news magazines.

## Melting middle chocolate fondant puddings

By Catherine Hooton

Makes 6

### Ingredients

100g Dark chocolate  
10g Cocoa  
100g Butter  
2 Eggs  
70g Caster sugar  
50g Flour  
1/2tsp baking powder

### Method

Lightly butter 6 ramekins

Fill a large saucepan 1/2 full of water, then place a bowl containing the chocolate and the butter into the water. Heat gently to melt and stir well together.

Whisk together eggs and sugar until mixture is pale, creamy and fluffy. Fold into the chocolate melt then add flour, cocoa & baking powder. Continue to fold until smooth and even.

Divide mixture into the ramekins and chill for an hour or so.

Preheat oven to 210°C

Cook for 6-8 mins.

Serve warm in the ramekins.

Delicious served with berries and ice cream/double cream. Enjoy!

Next issue -  
How to  
lose weight?

## Readers letter

Re: Pirate's grave (December 2010 issue)

For the first 63 years of my life I lived in north Grays and I was Churchwarden of St. Mary's Church for nine of those years. Friends in Grays send me the Stifford Village News so that I can keep up with all the happenings now that I live in Sussex. Of course, there is a time delay but I have now seen the article on the pirate's grave. The truth is not so exciting and much more prosaic, I'm afraid.

I do not think that this type of memorial was restricted to Freemasons or had much, if anything to do with them. I believe it is actually the grave of a lady of the C18 - the Church records may be able to clarify this - but the carving is so worn it is hard to tell. The skull and crossbones were often put into memorial stones because of the, then, prevalent belief that incomplete bodies would not rise on judgement day. This meant that being beheaded was a particularly abhorrent punishment. However, if you had your head and your leg bones, you were complete enough to rise. Hence, the practice of showing the necessary completeness on the memorial.

This belief must have been of long duration because Dickens has a character - Silas Wegg - in *Our Mutual Friend*, searching the dust heaps owned by Boffin (the Golden Dustman) for his amputated leg so that he might 'complete himself and be seen as respectable,' although I cannot think that God would be so picky when calling souls to salvation.

Please keep up the good work. I find the 'News' delightful and a lovely reminder of my previous home.

Yours sincerely, Mrs Jill Rogers



On the wall inside church tower



On the left as you approach church entrance

## Message from Cllr. Simon Wootton



Through your newsletter, can I take this opportunity to express my very sincere thanks to residents of North Stifford for electing me as the local councillor for the Chafford Hundred and North Stifford ward, alongside Councillor Garry Hague.

It is an immense privilege for me to represent the community in this role for the next four years. You have my assurance that I will work hard and do my very best to represent all residents' interests effectively.

During the campaign, I have had the opportunity to chat to many of you. I have also attended the councillor surgeries on the first Saturday of every month. You have given me a clear indication on matters that concern you and it is a delight to see the pride and interest you all take to make North Stifford a great place to live.

I look forward to developing the very positive relationship, which I know already exists with the Village Community Group, and to build on the good work it already does.

If you would like to contact me, my mobile number is 07766 781998.

Alternatively, e-mail me at [swootton@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:swootton@thurrock.gov.uk)

Simon Wootton  
Ward Councillor for Chafford & North Stifford

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### Councillor Surgeries - First Saturday each month

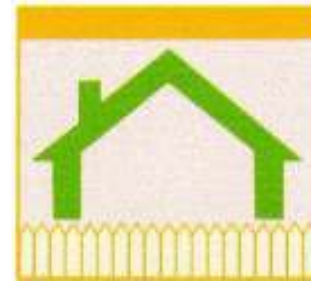
North Stifford Village Hall 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
Councillor Garry Hague and Councillor Simon Wootton

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### Village sign feature on Village Green

Terry Croarkin (advert opposite) has been installing the village sign foundation and paved feature on the corner of High Road and Sherwood. This will soon be ready to accept the village sign.

We will also be adding three barrels with plants in the coming weeks.



(Terry Croarkin T/as)

# "OddJob"

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## Davy Down Walk - Sunday 20th March



The Davy Down walk organised by the NSVCG was well attended and the weather was kind to us, being dry and bright.



Our thanks to Stephen Mitchell the Davy Down warden who kindly agreed to be our guide. Steve is very knowledgeable and pointed out the best places to see the various species of wildlife etc.

Our walk took us through the ancient woodland where Steve pointed out some of the wild flowers; wild Primroses and Anemones.



Steve said that people taking flowers from the wild is a big problem.

He said he once noticed a lady digging up some wild primroses. When approached she said she was digging them up to put in her garden so that she could protect them from the vandals!



We saw a fungus called King Alfred's Cakes. Legend has it that King Alfred, when in hiding from the Danes, once burnt some cakes by failing to take them out of the oven. These fungal growths, which look as if they have been burned, are a reminder of his poor cooking skills and hence are nicknamed 'King Alfred's Cakes' but their correct Latin name is *Daldinia Concentrica*.

We were also privileged to see the first butterflies of the season; the Yellow Brimstone.

We ended the walk back at the pumping station for refreshments and for those interested, a look at Steve's snakes. The children in particular were fascinated.



## Davy Down Litter Pick Sunday 8th May

We had a very successful litter pick. Around 20 people volunteered and we collected 30 + bags of rubbish and one bicycle dredged from the Mardyke.

Stephen Mitchell sends his thanks to all those who attended and a big raspberry to those who didn't.

Also thanks to Thurrock Council for their co-operation in taking all the rubbish away

## Time Capsule for North Stifford?

Mick Murphy in association with the North Stifford Village Hall are planning to bury a time capsule in St Mary's church yard (subject to church permission). This is a unique once in a lifetime opportunity for villagers to be part of this project.

For a small fee of just £10 you can have your own specially printed envelope to privately include two photographs and a message.

The money collected will pay for the Time Capsule and stone inscription. Ownership of the Time Capsule will be passed to the Thurrock Museum with instructions for it to be raised and opened on a future date.

Any excess money collected will go to Southend Chemotherapy Unit.

If you would like to purchase an envelope for £10, contact any of the following:-

High Road etc. - Mick Murphy

Tel: 07956 248728 or email: [mjmurphycontracts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mjmurphycontracts@hotmail.co.uk)

Clockhouse Lane - Graham Butterfield

Tel: 07866 433791 or email: [gbut@sky.com](mailto:gbut@sky.com)

Stifford Green - Darren Jones

Tel: 07813 318315 or email: [darrenjones@fitnessfirst.com](mailto:darrenjones@fitnessfirst.com)

(Payment by cheque only please, made payable to North Stifford Village Hall)

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## Advertising in the Village News

We are now accepting a very limited amount of advertising in the 'Village News'. We print 300 magazines each quarter (March, June, September, December) and a copy is delivered to every property in the village.

The Village News is also archived on the village website.

Advertising Rates: Half page £25.00 per issue or full page £40.00 per issue. All proceeds from advertising will go into the NSVCG funds to be used for village projects.

For more information about advertising or contributions to the Village News please contact:- Cliff Cowin [editor@northstiffordvillage.co.uk](mailto:editor@northstiffordvillage.co.uk) 01375 376483

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## North Stifford Village Hall

Enquiries and hall bookings can only be made in person at the Village Hall on Monday evenings between 8 and 9 p.m. (Please use the side door).

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## Mobile Library

The mobile library parks in Clockhouse Lane on Mondays  
12.25 p.m.—12.55 p.m.

Ditch the workout - join the PARTY!



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**NO classes in North Stifford Village Hall throughout August**  
(due to refurbishment). Temporary relocations to be confirmed

For full details/updates, check out:

[www.zumbacc.com](http://www.zumbacc.com)

or text/call Elaine on 07525 835 611

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## Election results for Chafford & North Stifford 5th May 2011

Simon Ernest Wootton, Conservative 857

Gus Nwanze, Labour 449

James Donald, Liberal Democrats 127

Adrian Philip Short, UK Independence Party 120

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## Please support our advertisers

We would like to thank all those who advertise in this magazine.

Now that funding has been withdrawn from community groups the advertising revenue received has been very welcome.

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## Crime Prevention

Meet your Neighbourhood Policing Team to get crime prevention advice. If you are having problems or you are a victim of crime please DO report it. If we do not hear from you then we cannot help.

If you need any help do not hesitate to contact us on:-  
0300 3334444 ext 70164 NPT Mobile 07779319907

or by e-mail. [james.preston@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:james.preston@essex.pnn.police.uk)

Neighbourhood Specialist Officer: NSO James Preston

Police Community Support Officers:

PCSO's Stacie Williams - Jackie Ball - Samantha-Joanne Harrington





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### **The Blenheim Suite**

The Blenheim Suite also features floor-to-ceiling Georgian-style windows overlooking the gardens. This suite can seat up to 80 guests for a wedding breakfast or reception with a private bar area. The Blenheim suite can cater for up to 140 for a evening reception.

### **The Garden Suite**

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