

Easton Village Newsletter

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Issue 191

FARMER BURTON'S COUNTRY TALK



What a relief it is when the combine rolls into the fields and harvest starts! Our Winter Barley was the first to be harvested, an unusually named variety called Gimlet, which is grown for animal feed. This crop was sown at the end of October last year so I have been tending it for the last 9 months with fertiliser and spray applications. I was pleased with how the Barley came in; most of it was still standing in the field, after several heavy storms, making it a lot easier to harvest than when it is flat on the ground. The yield was average but the bushel weight was good. A 'bushel' is the old Imperial weight to measure volume, with a good bushel weight indicating well-filled quality grains, and a poor 'bushel' would mean that the grains are thin with no weight to them. The volume of a 'bushel' is equal to 8 gallons or 34.4 litres, hope that's clear,

I'll test you on it later!! Grain density is now measured in Hectolitres but the term 'bushel' is still often used.

The weather has given me a stop start harvest for my Firefly Winter Wheat variety. Firefly is a Group 3 Wheat meaning that it is better than a feed variety and may have the quality to be made into biscuits. As I write I only have another 5 acres to combine so will have it all finished by the time this newsletter is delivered around the village. It is yielding quite well, varying between 3.5-4 ton per acre and coming in fairly dry. The Farmers Weekly have reported that farmers are struggling to get grain collected from farms because of the shortage of HGV drivers. Some farmers, with lack of storage, need to sell their first crop straight after harvesting it, to make room for their next crop to be harvested.

We have had our Wheat straw baled this year which is unusual. We normally chop it with an attachment on the combine and then incorporate it into the soil, as this helps to improve and lighten my heavy clay. The straw bales have gone to be burnt at the Ely power station. I have started to plough the fields (the scattering will come in a later article!). You may have seen Jeremy Clarkson's farming programme and now appreciate the small window of opportunity there may be to get the land worked up and ready to drill the Winter crops. In a wet year this can be very short so I am going to crack on while the ground is relatively dry before the weather changes and I can't get on our land.

HARVEST FESTIVAL



Easton PCC

Please do join us for our Harvest Festival Service on Sunday September 12th at 6.00 p.m. in St Peters Church. All are very welcome, particularly children. Light refreshments will be served afterwards. We would be most grateful for gifts of fresh fruit and vegetables, also any jars, tins or bottles, all of which will be given to The Manor Cheshire Home in Brampton, who are always

very appreciative of our support. Gifts may be left in the church porch on Saturday September 11th or brought to the service, during which there will be an opportunity for children to take theirs up to the altar. If anyone would like to help to decorate the church on the Saturday afternoon, we would be most grateful.

(N.B. At the time of writing, we are asked to wear masks in church when singing.)

A BIG THANK YOU to Peter and Marie who very kindly cleared all the weeds from the church path and provided new gravel. It has made such a difference and the main approach to the church now looks much more cared for.

EASTON CHRISTIAN AID COLLECTION

Mike Baker

(With apologies to Mike, who asked for this to be included in July).

Last May the sum of £335 was raised from the house-to-house collection. Many thanks are due to the collectors – Charles Nixon, Pam Bell and Peter Gould – and to the members of the village who gave so generously.

Recent collections:	2017	-	£367
	2018	-	£244
	2019	-	£307
	2020	-	No collection due to Lockdown
	2021	-	£335

With gift aid added, the total for 2021 will be about £400.

THE EASTON A14 JUNCTION

Mike Baker

After the opening of the new A14 section from Ellington to Fenstanton and the lifting of the lockdown, the volume of traffic on the road has significantly increased. The result is greater difficulty in both leaving and joining the road for village people living adjacent to the Brampton to Thrapston section.

In March our local M.P. organised a virtual meeting with all Parish Council Chairmen from Ellington through to Keyston. A great variety of suggestions were made, such as a 50 m.p.h. speed limit, but this was not favoured by the Highways Agency representative at the meeting. I argued that the most dangerous manoeuvre was leaving the Westbound carriageway to come in to Easton or at the similar junction at Keyston where HGV drivers coming up behind vehicles had no idea that traffic would have to slow down to take the sharp turns. There was overwhelming agreement about this from others at the meeting.

It was agreed that the Highways Agency should have on-site meetings at each of the junctions and these were held on 14th June. I argued for 3 immediate improvements:

- i) A deceleration lane on the Westbound carriageway, but I was told there was no money until 2025 at the earliest to do any “land take”;

- ii) White lining in the central reservation to give people leaving Easton and crossing the Westbound carriageway priority over those turning into the village from the Eastbound carriageway;
- iii) Cutting back of vegetation to improve sight lines.

I was asked what the view of the village would be over closing the central reservation and I said I thought most would be against closure. If there was a formal suggestion along these lines, the Parish Council would seek the views of all villagers, as we did some years ago.

We were promised that a report on the consultations would be given to Parish Councils before the end of August. As yet, this has not been received. Following the publication of this report there will be another meeting with the M.P. and the Highways Agency and I will keep people informed of progress. The Parish Council is very anxious to see significant safety improvements on the road.

LAWNMOWER!



The churchyard lawnmower is reaching the end of its useful life. Does anyone have an old mower in working order which they do not use any more and which could be donated for use in the churchyard, please? Any offers to Peter Gould please – 01480-891043.

CHURCH SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

With effect from 5th September and subject to some minor adjustments, church services will return to their pre-pandemic schedule. For Easton, this means a service at 9.30 a.m. on 2nd and 4th Sundays in each month – but please take special note of the article above regarding Harvest Festival! When there is a 5th Sunday, the seven parishes will combine for a joint service in one church, by rotation. Holy Communion will continue to be celebrated at 10.30 a.m. every Wednesday in Kimbolton, and every week there will be a service in St. Andrew's Kimbolton at 10.45 a.m. For further information please see the website www.kymchurch.org.uk .

The deadline for the October newsletter is 24th September