

# Brixworth Bulletin

Including Draughton, Hanging Houghton and Lamport

Issue No.20, March 2009

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN NORTHAMPTON ROAD



Genesis Housing Association has two building sites in Brixworth with 14 units built on the Holcot Road and 34 units being built on the Northampton Road which should be completed by July. All these units were to be offered either for shared ownership or for rental. Currently all the rented accommodation has been occupied but due to the economic situation, mortgages are difficult to obtain and the shared ownership sales are sluggish.

D.D.C. recommend to Housing Associations that approximately one third of the affordable housing should be offered for shared ownership and two thirds be offered for rental. There is a third alternative which DDC advises could be offered by a housing association i.e. an intermediate step whereby a house could be rented for three years and converted into shared ownership when and if the economic situation stabilises.

Normally rents are based on 80% of the potential selling price of the property. Selling prices for the properties on the Northampton Road will not be announced until one or two months before the properties are completed.

*Harvey Fox*

### BRIXWORTH BULLETIN WEB SITE

Past issues of the Bulletin including the missing issue 3, can be viewed online on [www.brixworthbulletin.com](http://www.brixworthbulletin.com). Messages can be sent to the editor using a pre-set addressed e-mail format.

## SCHOOL CROSSING ON NORTHAMPTON ROAD

In June 2008, we reported that Highways were ready to install the long awaited zebra crossing near the housing development on the ex-Rigiflex site. They had the funding and manpower in place to commence the installation as soon as the developers of the building site had installed the utilities to their site. The developer has still not installed their utilities link, but Highways have decided to commence work on the crossing on the 16th March 2009 and hope to have it operational within two months. When the developer carries out the connection work for his utilities supplies to the site, they will have to make good any damage to the crossing that may be caused.

In Bulletin 18, Shirley Harrison of the School Crossing Dept. said that she would only advertise the vacancy for a 'lollipop' person when the crossing is complete.

*Harvey Fox*

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## BRIXWORTH BLIZZARDS



### Conversation in falling snow

The first week in February is normally cold and quite often snowy. This February is no exception and Brixworth has received five considerable dumps of snow between Monday 2nd and Tuesday 10th of the month. Schools were closed and cars abandoned during this period but children enjoyed the rare opportunity of using their sledges. Dire stories have appeared in the press about the billions of pounds lost by businesses due to workers being unable to get to work throughout the UK or having to look after their children due to school closures. No doubt these stories are exaggerated and the cost of these few days will soon be made up. However as soon as the cold weather becomes warmer, the energy companies will get round to reducing the 40% hike in utility prices which have existed since the autumn. We hope the two photographs shown in the article and other snow photographs elsewhere in this issue, will be a reminder of what we have been through. It is supposed to be two decades since we have had so much snow, followed by very cold temperatures.

*Harvey Fox*



### Deep snow at bottom of Froghall

# Hidden Places in Brixworth (Where are they?)



**NEXT PHOTOGRAPHIC  
COMPETITION**  
The Subject will be 'SPRING'  
**WINNER WILL RECEIVE £25**  
**ENTRIES BY END OF APRIL**



**VILLAGE HALL QUIZ**  
The annual quiz will be held this year  
on Thursday 2nd April 2009 at the  
Village Hall.  
The Anglicans are considering  
throwing down the gauntlet to the three  
times winners Brixworth Christian  
Fellowship. Nothing like an  
interdenominational battle to generate  
heat and fevered brows!



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# A RETURN OF AN ANCIENT ART TO BRIXWORTH



Fleur Fields Vineyard

Fine wine making is alive and well in Brixworth.

Bill and Flora Hulme created and run the Fleur Fields Vineyard in Brixworth, possibly following in the footsteps of the Romans. It is said that Julius Caesar brought the vine to England but that story is almost certainly apocryphal. They were certainly brought to England by the Romans. It is likely that there was a vineyard at the monastery in Brixworth in the middle ages.

It all started for Bill and Flora Hulme following a holiday in Tuscany. Flora wanted to move to Tuscany but the compromise was that they looked to see if they could create a vineyard here in Brixworth. Bill set to researching and, as it turned out, their meadow was a perfect combination of altitude, soil, drainage and orientation for vines.

It appears that the secret of good wine is hard work. It took 18 months of hard work to get the meadow ready before the first vines could be planted. 1,000 vines in 33 rows with 5 feet between each row, covering 2/3 acre were planted by family and friends. This arrangement creates an ideal microclimate that can increase the temperature by up to 5°C. It is also important that there is sufficient air movement to moderate humidity and protect the crop from mildew.

The vines at Fleur Fields Vineyard are hybrids, specifically designed to give the best crop for the conditions in England. Bill and Flora planted three types of vine: Seyval Blanc and Phoenix to produce white wine and Triumph d'Alsace. In case anyone has a yearning to become a winemaker, the Seyval Blanc makes up 90% of the crop and is used to produce quality and bulk in the wine and the Phoenix provides the bouquet. The Triumph d'Alsace is used to make the sparkling rosé wine. These choices of vines were made to produce a wine similar to Pouilly Fumé, a favourite of Bill and Flora's.

After all the hard work of preparation and planting, the vines need to be tended for three years without grapes to establish a good root system. Pruning the vines to ensure a good crop is another essential but time consuming task for the vineyard. Each vine has to be pruned each year to preserve, for the generation of the next year's fruiting canes, two canes and two spurs in the "Double Guyot" system used at Fleur Fields. This pruning system, named after Dr Jules Guyot,



Bill Hulme

a 19th century French scientist, is widely used in Bordeaux.

Their first harvest, a test of all their efforts and almost 5 years waiting, was in October 2004. They picked ¾ ton of grapes from which they made 600 bottles of Fleur Fields wine.

Harvesting of the grapes is done around October or November when the sugar and acid have reached the correct level in the grape. Harvesting is a fun time, family and friends gather to do the picking and are fortified by a wonderful lunch provided by Flora.

The next harvest produced even more, giving three tons of grapes. This made 2,400 bottles of Fleur Fields wine. The next year produced yet even more, producing 4,600 bottles of wine. It looked as if things were going from strength to strength but disaster struck the following year. The weather was not good and there was not sufficient crop to make any wine. Things have picked up with 300 bottles being produced again last year.

Bill takes the grapes to Three Choirs Vineyards in Gloucester for them to be made into wine. Initially, Martin Fowke, Winemaker of the Year, from Three Choirs made the wine but recently Bill has made it himself at Three Choirs.

According to Bill, "Wine making is, in essence, very simple, although a lot of hard work. The expertise is in knowing what you want from the wine and then how to deal successfully with the problems that occur along the way."

Fleur Fields Vineyard produces high quality, boutique wines for people who appreciate quality wines and want to experience something different. They produce three types of wine: Fleur Fields, a crisp, fresh, still white wine; Champs d'Amour, a sparkling, aromatic white wine; and Champs d'Amour Rosé, a sparkling, rosé wine with a fruity bouquet.

Marketing of the wines is the most difficult part of the whole process. Fleur Fields' wines are sold at food shows, through quality wine bars and retailers and direct to the public.



Wine bottle sculpture

They are continuing to grow and develop the vineyard and their son, Justin, has recently planted 4,000 vines of five different varieties, on the East of the bypass, on the upper slopes leading down towards the reservoir. This not only increases the amount of wine that can be produced in Brixworth but, by having five varieties of grape that mature at different times, reduces the risk of catastrophic loss of a season's whole crop of grapes.

This resurgence of growing of vines and making of wine in Brixworth links today's high-tech viticulture and the industry of family and friends with the past of Brixworth, where the monastery's monks and their servants may have grown vines to produce wine for sacramental and social purposes

Fleur Fields is named after Bill and Flora's youngest daughter, Fleur. It can be found at the edge of Brixworth at Hill Farm House on the Northampton Road. It is an exciting local entrepreneurial business helping to keep Brixworth a living village.

If you want to buy any Fleur Fields' wines you can contact them on 01604 880197 and [info@fleurfields.co.uk](mailto:info@fleurfields.co.uk)

If you want to have a tour of the vineyard tours are free for individuals and £6 per person for groups, this includes a free glass of Fleur Fields' champagne like, sparkling wine.

*Richard Monk*



# A BRIXWORTH RESIDENT'S DREAM ECO-HOME



## 1. Introduction

With the turmoil of windmills in the mind, the Eco-Home, where does one begin?

In Britain our housing has generally been frozen in a range of styles strongly influenced by our attitude to domestic energy management and the use of bricks.

Initially it was a plentiful supply of wood for fuel and for the last 150 years cheap coal has been plentiful. Thus the fireplace was the focal place for cooking and heat. The solid fuel range generally disappearing in the 50's and the dependency for heating changed with the advent of North Sea Gas for central heating in the 70's

So although we sacrificed our dependency on coal to a reliance on the World Market providing cheap Gas and Oil; the cost has been initially cushioned by our own short lived supplies. In this energy 'market', houses are still built to a criteria that reflects a style of living that has probably passed away for a majority of people and of course this is high carbon living, because of the significant CO2 component produced during the manufacture (bricks), construction and operation (gas oil).

A strange relic is here in Brixworth, the need to have completely artificial chimney pots made of plastic on new houses.

So house style has always had influential energy component but the management of this was rarely implemented in a fully practical sense, not since the Romans!

Until about two years ago any pressure on the building industry to change was fairly tactical politics and relatively superficial in practice, so even now the majority of houses being built are a long way from being 'eco' having only a few modest improvements in insulation but are built by conventional methods using traditional materials. Most of these houses are conservative in style and the configuration of their living space.

Most people may still see the 'EcoHome' as the province of enthusiastic Greens, architectural eccentrics and people with more money than sense.

But now the pressure is on for the industry to progress to the time when every new home will have to embrace ever more significant eco-standards.

For within the next ten years all future houses must embrace in their specification highly efficient energy management and use an increasing proportion of sustainable and/or low energy materials.

Why?

Some of the reasons:

- The erosion of our positive balance of payments in energy as the North Sea sources decline
- Shortfalls in electricity production as our atomic power stations become obsolete and have to be phased out.
- Long term inflation in world energy costs if demand continues to drive supply
- Increasing vulnerability of our fuel/energy supply to foreign political pressure and price manipulation.
- And of course the challenge of Global Warming and the need to cut CO2 emissions to save the planet for our future generations.

Thus, we need to use LESS ENERGY and the energy we can AFFORD to use far more efficiently.

Probably, along with the average Brixworth householder, I might ask myself, where does that leave me?

In my own case:

- Downsizing.
  - A need for a smaller but life-enhancing living space.
- Save money.
  - My current house is a typical 90's estate house, not particularly economical in use of resources (water, gas, electricity and tax) especially for one person.
  - The management and maintenance of my house and its facilities are relatively expensive
- Convenience and car use
  - However, my current home is in a reasonable low energy location for it is in easy walking distance of most of the amenities (relatively good village shops, library, local authority offices, nice countryside and leisure facilities, as well as access to reasonable daytime public transport). Travel in the evening is unfortunately based on having a car.

So how can my choice of eco-house achieve my domestic and strategic goals?

- Cut my domestic budget by being very efficient in use of energy and have its own sources of heat and electricity along with reduced water consumption.
- Small footprint an enjoyable and practical environment..
- Built as far as possible from sustainable materials.
- Low maintenance and general running costs.
- Capable accommodating seasonal and long term climate change
- If possible capable of zero carbon outcome in build, maintenance and operation
- Capable of being easily upgraded as new

economical technology components emerge

- Site at a similarly convenient location as my current home.

As a result, my choice has focussed on a 'self-build' timber house from Potton. The model is the Kingspan Lighthouse – Britain's first certified (Building Research Establishment) zero carbon house.

Although it has a very low carbon rating (zero to negative), I must stress that this option is not a low cost from a construction viewpoint, for the cost of the project is likely to work out at more than twice the average cost per sq ft of that for a self build standard house. But clearly as the rate production of similar designs steps up, then the relative cost will improve significantly.

So what are the differences between this choice and a mere eco-friendly or conventional self-build timber frame house and how does it fulfil the zero carbon specification and how relevant is this development to an average new homeowner of the future?

## 2. The Code for Sustainable Homes.

The relevance the difference is the emergence of building standards which are described below and will apply to all new build and be implemented in phases over the next ten years when Zero carbon will become the mandatory requirement.

The Code for Sustainable Homes is a world leading all-round measure of the environmental sustainability, ensuring that new homes deliver real improvements in key areas such as Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions and water use.

\* The Government's objective for the Code is that it becomes the single national standard for the design and construction of homes, and that it drives a step-change in sustainable home building practice.

\* The aim is to make the system of gaining a Code assessment as simple, transparent and rigorous as possible, a process that inspires confidence in Code assessors, home builders, product manufacturers and, crucially, consumers.

\* The Code supersedes EcoHome and with it, it lifts the standards required for energy and water consumption.

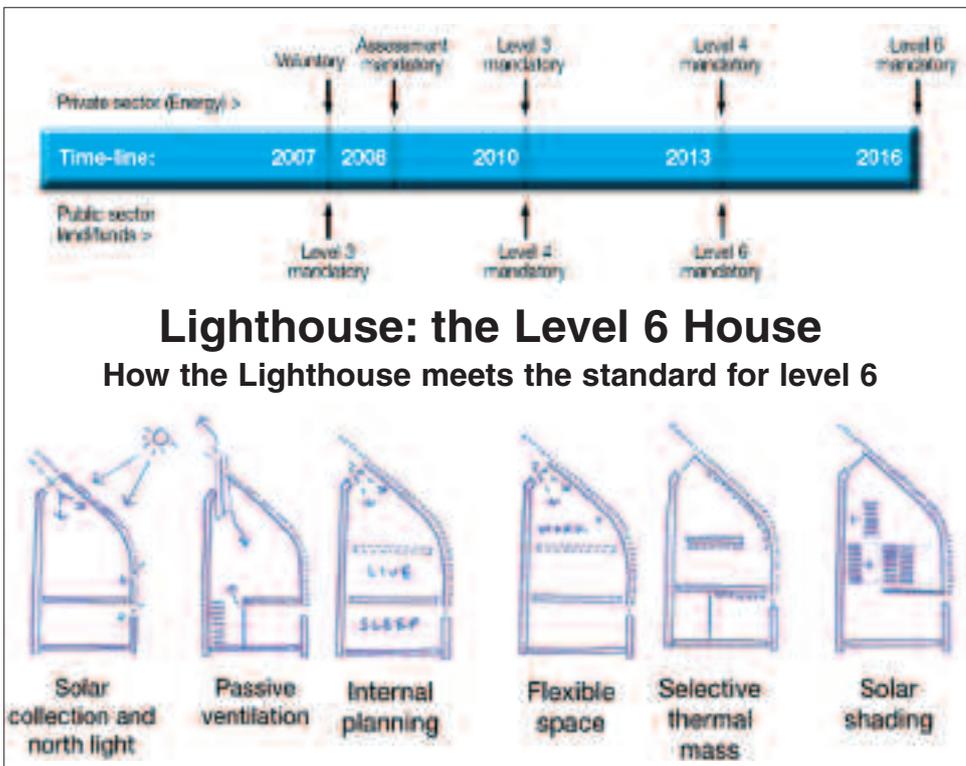
The Government has indicated its intention to use the code as the basis of future Building Regulations Part L (1A) changes, proposing it as a route map for new homes to become net-Zero Carbon by 2016.

The Code defines 6 Levels of environmental sustainability:

\* Level 1 is set just above 2006 Building Regulations.

\* Level 6 is 'net-Zero Carbon' for homes in use, including appliance and occupant energy use.

An increasing proportion of credits are needed to satisfy each level, of which



- I have my plot for the construction of of my new home.
- I have now almost completed my revised design base on the prototype Lighthouse.
- I have submitted my outline Planning Application.
- If I get through the Outline Planning stage, then the next phase will involve me in the submission of the detailed design and site plan for Full Planning Application approval.

However, I am viewing the future with significant caution because of the conservative reputation of the UK's L.A. Planning Departments and Committees in relation to the approval of innovative architectural design.

But the inspiration of my future home makes it worth giving it a good try.

*Mike Hall*

mandatory proportions are energy and water, reflecting the growing importance of climate change and potable water availability.

This code details can be viewed on [www.communities.gov.uk/archived/publications/planningandbuilding/futurecodeconsultation](http://www.communities.gov.uk/archived/publications/planningandbuilding/futurecodeconsultation)

### 3. Outline House Description

My choice of design is the Lighthouse. The name for the design comes from the fact that it has been designed to be significantly light inside. This is achieved despite having 40% less window area than a house of similar accommodation. A very well thought out window placement strategy has been employed throughout; in particular, the contribution of the void between the gallery top floor and the first floor living space allows the large northern light Velux windows in the top of the roof to be so effective on two floors.

Moreover, the overall layout is quite unconventional. Starting with the ground floor, which has a front door vestibule area (west side) with a big walk-in wardrobe and under the stairs is a boiler room with a wood-pellet burning unit; also on the north side is a shower-room and toilet; while on the other side of the back door vestibule (south side) is the bathroom with bath, separate shower, basin and toilet. As well, along the south side are two spacious double bedrooms with large built in wardrobes.

The 1st floor has, along the south side, all the main living area, a kitchen with space to breakfast, a dining area and a sitting room. On the north side behind the kitchen is a walk in store room, airing cupboard and utility room. There are outside balconies at both ends on this floor.

The 2nd floor is intended as a study/work room and library and also has the main equipment for the mechanical air



management system. There is also an outside balcony.

The house as part of meeting its level 6 requirements has to be a lifetime design, so doors are planned with easy access for wheel chairs and stairs for stair-lift adaption etc.

The outside will be faced with timber slating on the 1st and 2nd floors (Birch or Larch. The prototype has Sweet Chestnut). The ground floor outside will have a white finish stone appearance.

### 4. Project to date

My project is based on a revised version of the zero carbon design currently a prototype at BRE Watford:-

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# More Wintry Photographs

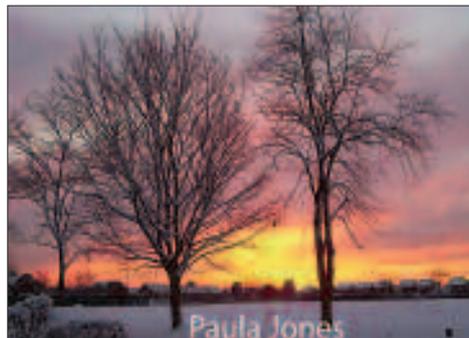


George Hammerschmidt

**CONTACT DETAILS**

Editor: Harvey Fox	880337
Sports Editor: John Blason	880229
Advertising Manager: Sue Verallo	844774
Art. Ed. & Ad. Design: George Hammerschmidt	880212
Distribution Manager: Jane Nell	880618
Treasurer: Sheila Jenner	881173

Postal address:  
 The Pound House  
 Harborough Road, Brixworth NN6 9BX  
 e-mail: brixworthbugle@aol.com



Paula Jones

## Sunny Socks Nursery School is celebrating a 20th special birthday in March



Maureen Turney & her husband Richard have lived at Park Farm for many years. Out of the blue one day Maureen received a phone call from Maggie Childs asking whether the farm had any redundant buildings. Maggie was working as a teacher in a lower school at the time but had a dream of setting up & running a nursery school. The project took a year to develop. The nursery school is housed in a stable block that the pair renovated. They used a local builder Richard Shakeshaft to do the major work & then recruited friends & family to help with painting walls, laying carpet & purchasing the necessary equipment ready for the opening day on March 1989.

They had an official opening with the MP Rosie Barnes & the late Lady Christian Hesketh attending along with members of the local community & education authority. Twenty years later the nursery is still going strong, accepting 44 children between the ages of 18 months and school age.

Maggie & Maureen have seen many changes during that time. When they first opened they were one of only a few private full day care settings in the county and after a period of 4 years running Sunny Socks Brixworth they were also given the opportunity to open a second setting in Duston.

“ We are extremely proud of what we have created in our 2 nursery schools. We have an excellent reputation countywide for top quality childcare”.

Thousands of children from across the county have attended one or other of the settings & they are now accepting the children of people who once attended Sunny Socks themselves, they have become nursery grannies!

Maggie & Maureen have an excellent team of staff but also fondly remember the many women who have worked for Sunny Socks over the years. The nursery has offered excellent training opportunities to staff & students many of whom have gone on to become excellent practitioners, teachers, nurses & open their own settings.

“ We consider ourselves to be extremely lucky, there is no better job than working with children, every day is different yet hugely rewarding it's been a fantastic experience for both of us”.

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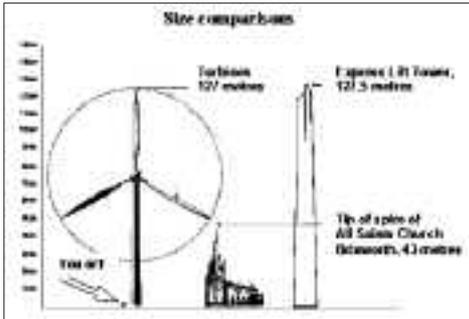
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## In the Wrong Place

At a meeting on Tuesday, 27th February Brixworth Parish Council voted by 10 – 0 (with one abstention) to recommend that Daventry DC turn down the Bolsterstone application for six turbines at Lodge Farm. Together with all the surrounding villages they opposed the windfarm on planning grounds, because of the visual impact on the Special Landscape Area and on the setting of historic hilltop site of Brixworth's Anglo-Saxon Church.



The proposed wind turbines would be seen from within Brixworth village, dwarfing views of the church which the Brixworth Design Statement (2004) recommended should be protected. From the surrounding villages and as far as Cottisbrooke Hall these turbines would destroy the views so valued by local people. The photo montages in the Bolsterstone application distort the impact of the turbines on the landscape. Their application refers to "high roadside hedges obscuring views" and the allegation that "the majority of villages are within dips in the landform limiting views". During the meeting Bolsterstone failed to address these issues raised by the public.

Stop Brixworth Windfarm Group have raised many other issues; flicker and ice sheer and intrusion on the Brampton Valley Way spooking horses, and destroying the settings enjoyed by walkers and cyclists; the possibility of low frequency noise affecting local residents; and the problems on the fast stretch of the A508 during and after construction.

Then there is the danger of industrial creep into a rural area and the temptation to use an area with easy access and hard-standing for future development.

The energy provided by the windfarm would be far from "free". Indeed its manufacture, import, transport, the thousands of tons of concrete foundations, its construction, the laying of 6.5 km of underground cable, its maintenance and subsidy represent a huge carbon-foot print. Bolsterstone exaggerate the contribution the windfarm will make to renewable energy. This is a low wind area. It will operate with luck at 25% efficiency. We would need 500 windfarms such as this to equal the output of one traditional power plant.

As Chris Millar, our County Councillor, said at the meeting "this proposal is in the wrong place". We can and should contribute to carbon savings, but not at the expense of the best rural areas in the county. The landscape is a heritage bequeathed to us by past generations – it comes to us free to spoil or to preserve for future generations.

We need to continue opposition to this application and to make the strength of our feelings clear to the District Council. Paula Jones on behalf of Stop Brixworth Windfarm. [www/stopbrixworthwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.stopbrixworthwindfarm.co.uk)

## Bolsterstone versus Balderdash

Having attended a recent meeting of the Parish Council (Jan 27th) during which the main topic was the proposed Windfarm, I noted that the general opinions expressed by the Parish Councillors with one exception and other speakers were of total opposition to the scheme.

## 'A' The Visual Impact upon the Rural Scene

As a lifelong resident of the village I recall the existence of :- An overhead bucket conveyor from Scaldwell to Brampton Valley Way where a calcine furnace was alight 24 hours a day. 4 Narrow Gauge railways also to that same destination and obsolete quarry workings. The future of this area could possibly become the location for many acres of Biofuel (elephant grass) whilst much of our food is now imported from overseas in a world that is increasingly suffering starvation. The possible site which offers good access and drainage facilities for an expansion village (I understand that D.D.C is committed to providing several thousand new dwellings in the next 10 years) and desperately needed work for our local building industry.

## 'B' Horses

Horses when passing on Brampton Valley Way may be disturbed by the noise from a nearby Wind generator. I assume here that these horses are never exposed to traffic on the local road and therefore a hazard to passing walkers.

## 'C' The Chairman

The chairman (who is occupied in Aviation) stated "Shard of Ice displaced by centrifugal force from a propellor tip could reach the speed of sound 740MPH" This interesting statement will no doubt be passed on by those present at the meeting in conversation with their friends as a statement of fact and may even reach the local press. He omitted to mention that for a tip speed of that magnitude would require with a blade length of 5M (say 15ft) to be rotating at 685 RPM and that ice of any apparent thickness would only occur upon a static object i.e. No Wind in which case an 'out of balance' situation would trigger a shutdown.

## 'D' Brixworth Church

'It will obstruct the view of our Historic Church'. Our church is worthy of being viewed from a point much closer than Hanging Houghton. *R.Beaumont*

Dear Editor

I can't tell you how disappointed my husband and I are, having read your front page of issue No. 19. We feel that you have not given fair representation to the very large number of Brixworth residents who are horrified by Mercedes' plans to erect two enormous wind turbines so close to their homes.

I am not sure that the front page of the Brixworth Bulletin should be so one sided on this issue, rather than offering a more balanced view. It is such a shame that you did not cover the demonstration which was attended by many Brixworth residents. We were on the BBC news and had coverage in the local newspapers too. Are you planning to cover the objectors' point of view in the next issue? I do hope so. I know that great copy would be supplied to you by the 'Stop Brixworth Windfarms Campaign' if you were to ask them. Please contact them on [www.stopbrixworthwindfarm.co.uk](http://www.stopbrixworthwindfarm.co.uk). These wind turbines are of absolutely no benefit to anyone other than Mercedes and a large number of people do not want them in Brixworth. *Daphne Turpin*

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# BULLETIN BOARD

## KNITTING GROUP

Is anyone interested in joining a knitting group?

Our meetings are held in Pitsford every two weeks on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Wednesday of each month between 1pm until 3pm. Attendance is free and not only do we knit, we are also doing some crochet and tapestry work.

We have two superb 'ninja' knitters and several complete beginners – so all levels are welcome!

Please contact Mrs Kimbell on 01604880576 or 07813308301 if you require further information.

## NORTHAMPTON & LAMPORT

### RAILWAY 2008

#### SPECIAL EVENTS MARCH – MAY

Day out with Thomas May 3rd, 4th & 5th  
Community Day May 11th  
Teddy Bears' Holiday May 25th & 26th

## BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

Over the last three years, the following amounts have been collected in Brixworth for the British Legion Poppy Appeal.

2006	£1319
2007	£1094
<b>2008</b>	<b>£1513</b>

Thanks are given to Jonty Myles for acting as organiser. As Jonty has moved away from the village, a new organiser will have to be appointed.

## BRIXWORTH GARDENING CLUB

### PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS

#### MARCH – MAY 2009

<b>March</b>	<b>Discovering Day Lillies</b> Talk by <b>Gerald Sinclair</b> with slides.
<b>April</b>	<b>Hardy Perennials</b> Talk by <b>Anita Thorpe</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>Creating Glorious Summer Containers</b> Talk by <b>Morris Rust</b> Frost Garden Centre Woburn Sands

For more details contact **Pam Pettit** on **01604 880666**

## BRIXWORTH OLD SCHOOL REUNION

We are having a buffet lunch £5.00 per head at the George Public House, Brixworth on Monday 23rd March 2009 at 12 noon. Partners are very welcome. If anyone is interested, please telephone Joan on 01604 460391.

## ATTENTION ALL CHILDREN!

AN

### EASTER EGG HUNT WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 13th APRIL 2009

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There is quite a large Exhibition area upstairs in the library which has lift access. The library supervisor would like to encourage more local artists and/or groups to display and also sell their work. There are several boards and wall rails for display and two glass display cabinets for hire at a reasonable rate (min £40 plus VAT per month for area and facilities). For further details, phone Jill Barber, Library Supervisor on 01604 882153.

The library is now open every weekday Monday to Friday from 10a.m to 6p.m. & Saturdays 9a.m. to 1p.m.

Other regular free events in the library are Rhymetime for the under 5's every Friday morning from 9.45 – 10.20a.m; War hammer Club for 9 yrs plus Tuesday & Thursday evenings 4.30p.m. - 6p.m; Brixworth Book Club usually meets every 2nd Monday of the month from 2-3p.m., next meeting 9th March – special meeting on 20th July when author Sally Spedding will be coming to the Book Club's discussion of her novel 'A Night with no stars'.

There are free drop-in advice sessions for parents & young people with Time2 Talk, every Tuesday from 12-5p.m. & free advice & support on such issues as housing, tenancy, benefits etc with Bromford Support on last Thursday of the month.

The library is offering 'Beat the Credit Crunch' one-to-one hour long advice sessions for £7.50 on how to save money.

# PLANNING STATUS REPORT

REFERENCE NO. & DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	P.C. RECOMMENDATION & DDC DECISION
DA/2007/1400 Buckton Fields, Boughton. Residential development consisting of approx. 1250 dwellings.	PC 29/1 Traffic increase objections. Now amended but still PC concerns.
DA/2008/0941 Froghall Farm, 4 Froghall. Alterations to house, single storey extensions and barn conversion.	PC/ 30/9 PC Objects. DDC Approved
DA/2008/0949 The George, Northampton Road. New Signage	PC/30/9 PC has no observations. DDC Approved
DA/2008/0997 Mercedes Technology Centre, Morgan Drive. Two wind turbines, foundations and ancillary equipment, new access to site.	PC/3/11 PC strongly object Application withdrawn
DA/2008/0979 Mercedes HPE, Morgan Drive. Construction of a new exhaust stack and below ground carbon filtration.	PC/ 28/10 No Objection. DDC Approved
DA/2008/0994 Unit 1 Ferro Fields. Conversion of garage to office.	PC/28/10 No Objection. DDC Approved
DA/2008/0996 The Manor, Harborough Rd. Guest wing comprising flat, function and games rooms with roof terrace.	PC/28/10 PC objects. DDC Refused
DA/2008/1088 43 Brackenhorough Retrospective application for conservatory at rear of building	PC 24/11 No objection. DDC Approved
DA/2008/1042 George Inn Northampton Rd. Replacement pub signage.	PC 3/11 No objections DDC Approved
DA/2008/1085 Pharmacy, 4 Hunters Way Illuminated fascia sign & projecting sign.	PC 3/11 No objection DDC Approved
DA/2008/1159 36 The Knoll Two bed bungalow	PC 15/12 No objection DDC Approved
DA/2008/1204 Saxon House	PC 5/1 No objection DDC Approved
DA/2008/1234 CPL Fragrances , Quarry Rd. Permanent retention of two temporary storage buildings.	PC 5/1 No objection
DA/2008/1252 6 wind turbines between Brixworth and Hanging Houghton	PC 27/1 PC objects

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# DRAUGHTON NEWS

The work on the extension to Draughton Club Room is progressing well. When it is finished we shall have our long awaited kitchen and toilets.

Carole Davies, the treasurer/secretary, applied to Chris Millar (Daventry District Council) for a grant to purchase new furniture and we are pleased to report that we now have 40 new chairs and 6 tables ready for use in the refurbished Club Room.



A Spring Fayre is to be held on 10th May for Club Room Funds.

NUON will soon be applying to Daventry for planning permission to erect 7 wind turbines on the old Harrington Airfield. They will be in the parish of Draughton. If you have an opinion, for or against, please let your feelings be known to the Council.

## RAMIC TELEMARKETING FERRO FIELDS, BRIXWORTH

Ramic has recently gone carbon neutral with the help of Future Neutral. They calculated Ramic's carbon footprint and then planted the appropriate number of trees in the UK to offset the carbon – a nice legacy for future generations to enjoy.

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3. To demonstrate our ethical and responsible credentials.

The best thing is that it actually cost much less than we thought. *Mike Soames*

# HANGING HOUGHTON AND LAMPORT NEWS

## LODGE FARM WIND TURBINES PLANNING APPLICATION

A meeting took place on the 15th January to discuss the above proposal. The meeting was attended by the full parish council and 14 local residents.

The proposal was discussed in detail, and was unanimously rejected by all present. A letter reflecting the views of the meeting has been sent to D.D.C. who will make the final decision on this matter at a planning meeting to be held in March or April.

All attendees were encouraged to personally write to D.D.C. to make their views known.

*Mike Philpott*

*continued on page 13*

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# COUNTRY EYE

by Brian Webster



## The Invasion of the Halophytes.

It's a tough old business being a halophyte. So what's a halophyte (say haylowfight) when it is at sea, I hear you ask? The phrase 'at sea' is pretty near to the truth, as it turns out. The answer is it's a plant that can cope with salt, in its roots and other tissues. Far from an easy way to earn a living, and only a handful of specialists are able to thrive at the ocean's edge. Not only do they have to put up with the salt burden but the soils that they live in are often starved of food and of salt-free moisture, so many of them have roots that can travel great distances in search of them. Many of them also tend to have greyish leaves that are heavily felted, and can be furled, which are both devices to protect them from the blistering wind-driven salty sprays that would be lethal to most other plants.

You may not be surprised to learn that these halophytes are a pretty unspectacular bunch. Sensibly many of them keep their heads down to escape the worst of the winds. They creep low along the ground. It would not be a good idea either to have showy flowers to attract pollinating insects, so they tend to have greenish ones that rely on the wind to pollinate them. At least two of these plants turn out to be the ancestors of valuable vegetables that we take for granted in our gardens. One is the beetroot, a group that also includes the spinach beet and the chard. Indeed the wild sea beet looks very like spinach, and tastes like a ready-salted version of it! The other is the wild cabbage, from which most of the garden varieties, from cauliflowers to kohlrabi, and from Brussels sprouts to the ornamental flowering cabbages, are descended. What would we do without these stalwart vegetables?

Another species is proving to be valuable in street planting schemes. This is the sea buckthorn, a hardy shrub that is common on sand dunes around our coasts. Tough as old boots, its grey-green leaves enliven many a scheme around our town streets, while its

abundance of bright orange berries seem to glow on a dull winter's day. As a bonus they are sought out by hungry birds, while its ferocious spines deter the most determined pedestrian looking for a short-cut. Russian gardeners are busily developing new varieties with extra-large berries, because although very tart to our tastes, they are edible and a valuable source of vitamin C. Look out for these 'new' fruits coming to a garden centre near you.

As long ago as 1980 one of these halophytes, an obscure sea grass, turned up on the verges of the M1 and the A1 main roads, while the construction of the A14 has brought a minor invasion of these coastal plants into our county. Another was Danish scurvy-grass (not a grass despite its name). At least four plants in total have been found, all of them on road verges. To complete the story, at least two have turned up in our parish, on the edge of the A508 by-pass, and along the reservoir causeway along the Holcot road. It seems that the seeds of these unlikely invaders arrived as travellers in the treads of motor vehicle tyres, while the constant deluges of salt applied during winter to keep our roads open is another necessary part of the equation.

While I am pleased to see how quickly nature can respond to new situations, I feel less sure about the long-term effects of this on our native flora and fauna. At the very least these new arrivals are shouldering aside the plants that would otherwise colonise our road verges, together with the other organisms that depend on them. The chemical cocktail of salt-laden run-off, and residues from tyres and vehicle exhausts draining into our watercourses, even our drinking water reservoirs, is something that I think no-one has looked at. Should we be worried? Who can tell.

Not for the first time I seem to have stumbled on a good pub-quiz question. What's a halophyte? Answer: angels scrapping over their place in the heavenly order. Perhaps not.

## 10th ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF BRIXWORTH'S LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

On the 30th April 1999, Neil Kinnock performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the new library and community centre on the Spratton Road. A fortnight later, the PC Chairman, Sue Verallo opened the 'Olive Branch' café and paid grateful tribute to Mrs Julie Davenport, from the Horne Foundation, for the gift of the library and community centre and for her tireless efforts in bringing the project to its very successful conclusion.

The village is marking the occasion with the installation of a flag pole at the front of the building. The flag will be flown for the first time on Saturday 25th April 2009 at 10.30a.m. Mrs Julie Davenport from the Horne Foundation will be here to fly the flag.



Neil Kinnock cutting the ribbon with Julie Davenport on his right at the Opening of the Library/Community Centre in 1999



Sue Verallo, Chairman of the P.C. with Julie Davenport opening the Olive Branch Café in 1999

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**Sarococca Confusa**

Greenery and evergreen shrubs make their importance known during the bleak winter months, providing colour and shape. They also create a foil for spring flowering bulbs to enhance their colour and beauty.

Ivy, often regarded as a nuisance or even a thug, when controlled can create an attractive green carpet below trees or an attractive curtain effect across a plain wall – it's berries are much favoured by blackbirds, and it creates a cosy hiding place for small birds and insects.

Bay (*laurus nobilis*) the aromatic leaves of which are used in bouquet garni to flavour soups, stews and stock, can be clipped or left naturally as with box (*buxus sempervirens*). The evergreen with tiny highly scented flowers throughout winter and spring followed by black berries is 'sarcococca' which grows well in shade to three feet in height. Holly also plays an

important part in winter and another plant that can grow as a natural bush or tree or lends itself well to shaping if so required.

Bulbs are now coming into their own. Snowdrops will still be in flower now closely followed by the earlier flowering narcissi – the shorter varieties favoured if in exposed sites as wind damage will not be so severe, - tête à tête, jumblye, or jet-fire and of course 'hosts' of daffodils.

Crocus planted en masse look wonderful where sunlight strikes them and they open to show off their many different colours varying from white through to cream, yellow and all shades of mauve. Crocus *tommasianus*, most commonly a silvery lilac, self seeds readily, taking approximately three years to flower from seed, as with snow drops (*galanthus*)

Tulips follow later in spring. As with daffodils and narcissi, height varies and should be considered when choosing according to planting position. Tulips, as with all bulbs, can be a wonderful sight planted in one single colour or a Persian carpet mixed effect.

Hellebores perform at their best now. With their foliage removed, the flowers will be standing proudly. They prefer rich moist soil in partial shade. Flowers range from white, mauve, pink and yellow to green. These plants self-seed easily too, hence such a colour variation.

In March the dark pink buds of *Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postill' a small evergreen shrub with yellow edged (*aureomarginata*) leaves begin to open to clusters of rosy-pink white highly fragrant flowers.

In this article I have mentioned but a few of the performing plants at the beginning of the year, but have hopefully proved it is as eagerly awaited as any other.

### MERGER DATE FOR LOCAL SURGERIES

The report in the September 2008 issue of the Bulletin stated that Guilsborough and Brixworth surgeries hoped to complete their merger in 2008. The new date is 1st April 2009, the delay arising due to problems with the computer system, which the management of the surgeries is hopeful will have been resolved by the new date.

Public meetings were held in July 2008 at Guilsborough and Brixworth and at those meetings; Dr Catti Moss reminded the public that the merger was essentially a return to a previous situation, two to three decades ago when both surgeries were part of the same practice group. She stressed that there would be absolutely no need for any patient to travel from their current surgery to see their GP of choice. The majority of patients at both meetings indicated that they were in favour of the merger.

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## BRIXWORTH and DISTRICT U3A UPDATE

Membership has continued to grow steadily, and now stands at over eighty, with members drawn from quite a wide area outside the village. In order to maintain the present friendly atmosphere, the committee has decided to restrict membership to one hundred for the time being with the position to be reviewed in due course.

The December meeting at the community centre was of a seasonal social nature with a beetle drive and culminating with complimentary mince pies and sherry. Unfortunately, the community centre doesn't have blinds on the large windows, which meant that on a number of occasions members have been unable to see the presentations. As many of our speakers use audio-visual equipment for their presentations we have been forced to relocate our regular monthly meetings to the village hall where we can control the light. As usual the meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month commencing at 2p.m. with a raffle and tea and biscuits after the speaker. We have had presentations on words and art so far this year and future speakers will cover dolls houses, garden birds, and at the AGM in May we will have a guest speaker and complimentary tea and cakes.

All the established groups meet once a month apart from the art and table games groups which meet twice monthly. Lunches have been held at The George, Brixworth, (preceded by a guided tour of the village), Royal Oak, Walgrave (Christmas), Stags Head, Maidwell and The George, Great Oxendon. Rambles have been successfully undertaken, starting and finishing for lunch at the Stags Head, Maidwell, The Wharf at Bugsbrooke, The George at Brixworth and The Foxton Locks Inn at Foxton. The Genealogy and Conversational French groups continue to flourish and the Away Days will recommence at the end of March. An away break is being organised in Tuscany in June and some places are still available.

Our first full year is nearing a successful conclusion and memberships are due for renewal from 1st April. The committee continues to meet bi-monthly to review progress and we would like to hear from any members with an interest in any subject that may form the basis of a new interest group.

*Gerry Dobson*

### SNOW CLEARANCE IN HANGING HOUGHTON.

Our thanks go to Tom Saunders of Manor Farm for keeping the road in and out of the village clear during this time of severe snow and ice. Tom has had to clear the road twice so that local residents could get out of the village.

I wonder where the local council was at this difficult time? *Mike Philpott*

## HIGHLAND CATTLE GRAZING IN A FARMER'S FIELD IN BRIXWORTH



### ALL SAINTS' CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAYRE



On the 29th November 2008, All Saints' Church, Brixworth held their Christmas Fayre at the Spratton Road Community Centre and raised over £800 towards church funds. Morris dancers performed outside the centre to publicise the event.

### 'The Hollow Crown' By John Barton

Brixworth Drama Group will be presenting 'The Hollow Crown' on Saturday 18th April 2009 in All Saints' Church, Brixworth at 7.30p.m. in aid of the refurbishment of the church.

The piece is described as 'The Fall and Foibles of the Kings and Queens of England'. Depicting some of the colourful characters of the English monarchy, including William the Conqueror, Charles II, James Stuart and Queen Victoria, contemporary writers and observers tell the story of the men and women who were born to be Kings and Queens of England, showing their humanity through comic and tragic situations.

The play will be performed by actors/readers who take the roles of the Kings and Queens and those who wrote about them.

Tickets: Adults £6.00, Concessions £5.00 which includes a glass of wine or a soft drink. Tickets will be available from Lovell's Hardware, Spratton Road, Brixworth.

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# POLICE REPORT BY SGT. JACQUI HARRIS



PC Claire Salmon

The Safer Community Team's newest member is PC Claire Salmon. Claire joined Northamptonshire Police in March 2004 after working in business and IT for a number of years.

She has worked as a first responder in the Incident Resolution Team covering South Northants for most of the time since she joined up and is looking forward to the challenges she faces in her new role. Claire is a real bonus for the team as she comes from a farming background, has a keen interest in equestrianism and has a good understanding of the needs of a rural community.

The Daventry Rural North Safer Community Team also has a new Sergeant in Jacqui Harris. Jacqui joined Northamptonshire Police in 2005 following a



Sgt Jacqui Harris

successful career in Humberside Police and is legally trained and also a qualified nurse so she has plenty of transferable skills to bring to her new role.

Jacqui has 24 years police experience covering many specialist areas including community cohesion and community safety which are great assets for this current role. Jacqui has also spent time as an acting Inspector in South Northants so is aware of Rural Policing issues, she is looking forward to working in partnership in the area and is keen to work on youth related partnerships.

## Local news in Brixworth and surrounding villages

During the past few months, police have carried out very successful operations at Licensed Premises in the Daventry area accompanied by our partners at Daventry Council, whereby passive drugs dogs are used to seek out members of the public who may have had any association, be it handling or taking of drugs.

Last Friday a visit was carried out in the Daventry Rural North villages, which again had a very successful outcome and an example of good partnership work. These operations are on going and others are planned within the Northamptonshire area over the coming months.

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# BRIXWORTH DRAMA GROUP

## VILLAGE HALL BABES

It was a cold January afternoon when we took some of our grandparents to the Village Hall to see Brixworth Drama Group's pantomime, Babes in the Wood. We got there early and it was a good job we did because the hall soon filled with a lot more excited children and their grown ups.

Grandpa says that this was only a story which was first written down in the 16th century. That was a very long time ago, probably before even Grandpa was born. (But not Grandma, she's a lot, lot younger). The story is about two young children whose Mummy and Daddy die and they are put in the care of their Wicked Uncle. This Uncle was the bad and horrible sort of wicked and he had a very shiny badge which said Sheriff because he was also the Sheriff of Nottingham but looked more like the Sheriff of Dodge City. He was very very nasty and we all shouted Boooo very loudly at him. Then we shook our Teddy Bears at him and that made him look a bit worried. Later on someone said he was a Cycle Path but we didn't know what that meant.

After that a big round lady made her appearance. She was called Nursey and she was supposed to look after all the children. She told us some funny stories but we laughed most when she turned round and we could see that she had put her clothes on in too much of her hurry. Nursey was very proud of her curtsy, so every time she came on after that we had to shout "Show us your Curtsy, Nursey" We liked doing that. Later on we saw Nursey trying to teach her class but some of the class especially Diddy and Doddy were quite naughty and threw things at her when she wasn't looking. Nursey tried to find out who did it but didn't know if it was Diddy or Doddy did it and Doddy said Diddy did it and Diddy said Doddy did it but really both Doddy and Diddy did it.

Then the Sheriff kept shouting at everyone and threatening them with his sword but he drew it once to often and it fell apart and then he carried on as though that was meant to happen which we thought was quite clever. The Sheriff and his nasty men were chasing the poor children through the woods and when it got dark there were some horrible white ghosts who kept trying to creep up behind them. They had funny names like Spectre Morse and Spectre Clousseau and there was a third one with round glasses and a shiny little moustache called Herr Ghoul. The ghost not the moustache! But Nursey came and frightened them away so that was alright.

Later there was a big fight scene between the Sheriff and Robin Hood then the children's father came back from the crusades and everyone got married. The End.

We really enjoyed the pantomime which had lots of laughs and was very exciting. We especially remember the Sheriff played by



Stuart Cooper, Nursey played by James Skeggs, a very pretty Maid Marion played by Suzanne Truby, the good singing voice of handsome Alan a Dale played by Dave Harris and the naughty Diddy and Doddy played by Caroline Monk and Libby Bowers. It was written by two clever people from the village Mike Culverhouse and James Skeggs with a cast of more grown ups and children than we could count (25 Ed.).

**Mia and Talia Coles (aged nearly 4)**

## FORTHCOMING PRODUCTION

For the next summer production, Brixworth Drama Group will be presenting two brand new one-act comedies written especially for the group by Stuart Cooper, their current chairman. The first, set in a village hall somewhere in rural England, involves the trials and tribulations of an amateur dramatics society who can't agree on their next play. They finally agree to do 'Manor from Heaven' written by their Chairman. In the second half of the evening, we see a performance of 'Manor from Heaven' set in a dysfunctional hotel where nothing seems to go right. The plays will be performed at Brixworth Village Hall on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 18 -20 June 2009 at 7.20p.m. The usual cabaret-style seating will again be provided. Tickets for the summer production will be available from the start of May from Lovells Hardware and Libby Bowers

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# SPORTS PAGE \*\*\*\*\* SPORTS EDITOR: John Blason

## BRIXWORTH BADMINTON CLUB

Brixworth Badminton Club goes from strength to strength. There are seven league teams and senior membership approaching fifty. Unfortunately, the gender balance needs correcting. To achieve this, we need more ladies. Since obtaining the Sports England 'Clubmark' award, our junior section has grown to such an extent that we now have 20 – 25 youngsters between the ages of 11 and 16 being coached every Friday and there is now a waiting list for membership. The juniors entered the new county tournament in November at Caroline Chisholm School and two teams won their age groups and the other team came second.

Our aim is to get all three first teams into division 1 of their respective league. Our doubles team is there already and we are hopeful that the men's team will join them at the end of the season, as it has only lost one game so far.

We have many family orientated social events, the next of which is a day out in Birmingham on March 7th, where 35 of us will be watching the world's best player at the All England Badminton Championships and enjoying a meal afterwards.

If anybody, especially ladies, are interested in joining us, please telephone our

membership secretary, Tony Blackwell on 01788 822697.

## OLYMPIC SILVER MEDAL WINNING ROWER – DEBBIE FLOOD



Debbie Flood who won a silver medal for rowing in the Olympics held in Beijing last year was in Brixworth on Saturday 15th November to talk about her life, sporting achievements and her strongly held Christian beliefs.

She talked about her Olympic experiences in Athens and Beijing and answered questions from the children about her life, inspirations and hopes for the future.

She is pictured here with the children and helpers from the Brixworth Christian Fellowship and Reynards Way Church, Northampton after a meal and discussion held in the Brixworth Community Centre.

## BRIXWORTH ALL SAINTS FOOTBALL CLUB

The season so far has left both the 1st team and reserves at the higher ends of their respective leagues. The reserves have not lost a game so far and are progressing extremely well in all cup competitions. The 1st team have had a great run in the league and the manager (Adam Knight) received the Managers award for the month of January. Weather has caused havoc with fixtures, which means numerous evening games are likely to take place at the end of the season.

We are still looking for additional members to assist in duties like match-day nets, line marking, assistant referees, fund raising and general support. Training is at 6.30p.m. every Wednesday all year round. The end of season presentation evening has been arranged for the 1st of May, at the Broomhill hotel and all supporters are welcome.

The Boxing Day fundraising spectacular was an enormous success and we raised £602 on the day, of which 50% collected was presented to the Air Ambulance campaign.

I would like to thank all involved for their exceptional efforts so far this season and if you would like to contact me for any reason, my details are below:

*Nigel Eldred – Chairman BASFC*  
07812609095 or neldred@hotmail.co.uk

## BRIXWORTH JUNIOR FOOTBALL

A busy season continues apace with the younger age groups, in particular, enjoying success with a special mention for the U8's who are undefeated so far this season.

The club has over 150 children from the village who are training and playing matches which is only possible due to the commitment of the coaches.

It's at this time of the year that we begin to make preparations for the **Brixworth Juniors Tournament and Fun Day** which will take place on **Sunday May 17th** at St. David's playing fields. This is the third year we've run a junior tournament and all the Brixworth teams will be represented. In addition there will be stalls and attractions, including football skills, tug of war, bouncy castle, candy floss, burgers and hot dogs. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy the day. All the proceeds will go towards the running of the club

*Jon Howarth* Chairman BJFC  
e-mail: jon@thewigwamcompany.com

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