

Wickhambrook Recorder's Report for 2025

As ever, the weather was an issue this year with drought and extreme heat making it a challenging season for growers and gardeners. The installation of cables by Cityfibre has made it a tricky one for drivers as the many road closures led to journey times having to be recalculated. The village is in good heart and feels like a community, as shown by the good turn-out for village events such as the VJ Day and Fete.

Ongoing

The WI celebrates 100 years in 2026, so many plans are being made. The new young committee have run many successful events this year as well as their monthly meetings and walking, reading and craft groups.

A film club, a dance session, a tour of Greene King Brewery, an evening with Madhav Sharma the actor who lives locally, a Paint and Fizz evening, trips to Audley End and the Houses of Parliament, a quiz and a celebration of VE Day were enjoyed by members and friends.

In conjunction with the Parish Council and the Woodland Trust, the WI have started planting a community orchard on a piece of land near the tennis courts. Hedging has been planted and paths marked out and fruit trees will arrive next year.

The History Society continues to hold monthly meetings and arranged excellent summer visits as did the Gardening Club. History Society membership is down, gardening membership is up, a sign of the times.

Sadly, the Bowls Club has had to close down. Fewer members meant it was too difficult to pay for the upkeep of the Bowling Green.

The Greyhound held a music event in September 'Wickfest' and continues to be open Weds –Sunday for food and drink. The opening hours were tweaked to make good use of the garden in hot weather but winter closure over New Year was not popular. We all know that pubs are struggling and are happy that they are still trading.

In the news

Warm Winter Wednesdays took place over six weeks in January and February. Amanda Lavelle and her team provided soup, bread and cakes for a small donation to anyone from the village who cared to attend for warmth and company. Pupils from the Primary Academy helped with serving and washing up. The team were awarded the Alf Hicks Biscuit Barrel for their contribution to village life.

Small parcels of land belonging to the Dennis family around Grove Farm have been put up for sale. They are all near roads which has started a rumour about house building, so far unconfirmed. One plot now belongs to Philip Judge who deals in straw and whose huge lorries now use the lanes.

A memorial bench and trees were dedicated at High Point, Stradishall to the Ugandan Asian families who came here in 1972 after being thrown out of their country by Idi Amin. This was facilitated by Wickhambrook Local History Society who were invited to the event. The event was reported on by ITV News Anglia.

There was a large attendance at the War Memorial for Remembrance Sunday, Numbers seem to be going up each year and it is heartening to see how many youngsters from the school, Cubs and Beavers now attend.

David Di Guilio whose family have sold vegetables at Coltsfoot Green on Sundays for many years died this year. End of an era.

The Village Plan Referendum took place in November and was adopted. Voting turnout was not huge, but those concerned about future development of the village are happy about it. It will allow a small development of 42 houses and some commercial property off Bunter's Road. If we must have new housing, this is the most sensible place to have it. Almost immediately, a local builder has applied to build the houses.

Wickhambrook Stores has changed hands. After a year of negotiations Susie Patel retired and went to live near her daughter in London. A family has taken over, with two of the youngsters running the shop day-to-day. There was a hiccup with the takeover of the Post Office which meant erratic opening hours in December but it was sorted out before Christmas.

After 22 years of being managed by Maria Sumner, the village website has been passed on to be run by the Parish Council. It will take a while for everything on there to be transferred but hopefully nothing will be lost in the process and the new site should be simple to navigate.

The Wickhambrook Facebook page continues to be the main link for what is going on in and around the parish and the excellent publication the Parish Pump is still being produced every month by a group in Denston. The Scene, the Wickhambrook publication, is now only online and bi-monthly.

Dorothy Anderson, Village Recorder