

Church & Village News

Baconsthorpe • Barningham Winter • Edgefield • Hempstead
Matlaske • Plumstead • Saxthorpe with Corpusty

October 2019



Harvesting at Baconsthorpe Castle
Photograph by Norman Allen

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www.churchandvillagenews.org.uk

Parish Council Chairs

Baconthorpe	Jonathan Cooper	577527
Edgefield	John Seymour	587504
Hempstead	Paul Sanders	713217
Matlaske & Barningham	Sara Buxton	577207
Plumstead	Nick Fulford	577433
Saxthorpe & Corpusty	Imogen Waterson	587610

Parish Council Websites or Email Addresses

Baconthorpe	http://baconthorpepc.wixsite.com/baconthorpepc
Edgefield	http://edgefieldnorfolk.co.uk/theparishcouncil.shtml
Hempstead	hempsteadpc@gmail.com
Matlaske & Barningham	http://matlaskeparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk
Plumstead	http://plumsteadparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk
Saxthorpe & Corpusty	https://corpustyandsaxthorpeparishcouncil.wordpress.com

Local MP

Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP
Unit 4, The Garden Centre
Nursery Drive, Norwich Road
North Walsham, NR28 0DR
norman.lamb.mp@parliament.uk
<http://www.normanlamb.org.uk/>
Office hours are Monday - Friday 9am – 5pm
01692 403752 daily between 10am – 1.30pm

County Councillor

Steffan Aquarone
steffan.aquarone.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk
01603 327827

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District Councillors

Corpusty, Edgefield, Saxthorpe

Andrew Brown 587250 / 07745 907774
andrew.brown@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Baconthorpe, Hempstead, Matlaske & Barningham, Plumstead

Dr Pierre Bütikofer 838306
Pierre.Butikofer@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Church People

Rector Revd Canon David Longe	577252
Assistant Priest PTO Revd Brian Faulkner	577868
Lay Minister Gill Peat	734226
Lay Minister Judy Rosser	587584
Church Wardens	
Baconthorpe	Tessa McCosh 577611
	Harry Steel 07711 890360
Barningham Winter	Amelia Courtauld 577250
Edgefield	Emma Cletheroe 587049
	Angela Turner 587292
Hempstead	Ann Udale 713656
	Su Summers 710702
Matlaske	Thomas Courtauld 577250
Plumstead	Eleanor Faulkner 577868
Saxthorpe	Judith Banks 587319
	Cathy Stern 587014

What's On

OCTOBER

Fri 4	7.00pm	Matlaske Quiz	The Old Stables, Barningham Hall
Sat 5	7.00pm	Edgefield Bingo Night	Village Hall
Sun 6	3.30pm	Matlaske Benefice Jerusalem Talk	Hole Farm, Hempstead
Fri 11	6.00pm	Baconsthorpe Book Club	Village Hall
Sat 12	3.00pm	Saxthorpe New Sheringham Singers	St Andrew's Church
Thur 17	7.00pm	Baconsthorpe Quiz Night	Village Hall
Fri 18	3.45pm	Hempstead Music - Wind Trios	Village Hall
Sun 20	11.00am	Saxthorpe Harvest Service	St Andrew's Church
Wed 30	3.45pm	Hempstead Music - English Madrigals	Village Hall

NOVEMBER

Sat 9	11.00am	Edgefield Toads & Amphibians Presentation	Village Hall
Mon 11	7.00pm	Baconsthorpe PC Meeting	Village Hall
Fri 15	3.45pm	Hempstead Music - Rheinberger Nonet	Village Hall
Fri 15	7.00pm	Baconsthorpe Bingo Night	Village Hall
Wed 20	7.30pm	Matlaske PC Meeting	Church
Fri 29	10.00am	Saxthorpe Christmas Tree Festival	St Andrew's Church Hall
Sat 30	10.00am	Saxthorpe Christmas Tree Festival	St Andrew's Church Hall
Sun 1	10.00am	Saxthorpe Christmas Tree Festival	St Andrew's Church Hall

Holt Deanery Environmental Forum

How do we respond to the issues and challenges of climate change?

Sunday 13th October 2pm-5pm

St Andrew's Church, Holt, Meeting Room

COME ALONG, LISTEN, ASK, DISCUSS & ACT

Chair: The Rt Revd Jonathan Meyrick, Bishop Suffragan of Lyn

Professor Keith Tovey: University of East Anglia

Delaval Astley: local organic estate owner

Jake Fiennes: National Farmers Union Environmental Officer

Enid Barron: General Synod Member, London Diocese

Sam McCready: Environmental Scientist & Youth Representative

Clash Diary

2020

Dec 1	Saxthorpe Christmas Tree Fest	June 27	Hempstead Open Gardens
Dec 7	Hempstead Christmas Party	June 28	Hempstead Open Gardens
Dec 7	Edgefield Festive Event		
Dec 8	Matlaske Christmas Party		
Dec 9	Plumstead PC Meeting		
Dec 15	Baconsthorpe Christmas Party		
Dec 15	Edgefield Carol Service		
Dec 21	Matlaske Sing-Along		

If you are arranging an event please check with Corinne Youngs that there is not already an event being held that day:

577263 / corinne@avyoungs.com

Regular Village Hall Events

BACONSTHORPE

Tuesday	10.00am - 12noon	Country Mice Play Group
Tuesday	7.30pm - 9.30pm	Carpet Bowls - 711320
Third Thursday	10.30am	Community Coffee - All welcome
Last Friday	6.00pm - 10.00pm	Pop-Up Pub

CORPUSTY

Second and fourth Monday	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Bure Valley Quilters & Stitchers
Tuesdays during term time	5.45pm - 7.15pm	Brownies
Second Tuesday	10.00am - 12noon	North Norfolk Knitters
		Rita Taylor 587507 k2togp1@btinternet.com
Friday during term time	9.30am - 11.30am	Toddler Group

EDGEFIELD

Third Monday	7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting
First Tuesday	2.30pm	Tuesday Club
Second Wednesday	2.00pm	Ladies Club
Last Thursday	10.30am	Coffee Morning

HEMPSTEAD

First Monday alternate months	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday	10.00am	Charcoal Drawing £4 - Mike Thody 711282
First Wednesday - bi-monthly	7.30pm	Play Reading Group
Third Wednesday	7.30pm	Film Club
First Friday	10.30am	Coffee & Gossip

Mobile Library Van

24 Oct / 21 Nov / 19 Dec / 16 Jan

Matlaske	11.40	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	12.25	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Hempstead	3.40	NR25 6TL	Telephone kiosk
Baconsthorpe	4.05	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
	4.20	NR25 6LG	Old Post Office
	4.40	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows

3 Oct / 31 Oct / 28 Nov / 23 Jan

Saxthorpe	4.10	NR11 7BL	Old Post Office
Corpusty	2.45	NR11 6QP	School
	3.40	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cott's
	4.30	NR11 6QJ	Adams Lane
	4.50	NR11 6QL	16 Council Houses
Edgefield	1.55	NR24 2AL	The Memorial
	2.15	NR24 2AX	The Street

Times and dates sourced from Norfolk County website:
<https://bit.ly/2AJdSGA>

Post Offices

Baconsthorpe Village Hall

Tuesdays	1.00pm - 4.00pm
Fridays	10.00am - 1.00pm
All services	

Corpusty Stores 587202

Monday-Saturday	9.00am - 12.00noon
All services including Euros	

Holt Library 712202

9 Church Street, Holt NR25 6BB	
Mon Wed Sat 9.30am-1.00pm	
Fri 9.30am-6.00pm	

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Church & Village News. Apologies if contributed material is not published due to space constraints. All facts are believed to be correct at the time of going to press.

Letter from the Rector - Revd Canon David Longe

577252 / 07881 950294 / djhlonge@gmail.com

Dear All

As summer sun fades, and autumn arrives, the church pauses and gives thanks for the Harvest and the beauty of creation. Harvest suppers are beginning to happen in the parishes. For the church, worldwide, the season of Harvest is becoming known as the season of celebrating creation.

Caring for creation has been a central aspect of the Anglican tradition. Back in the 80s, the Anglican Church spoke powerfully of how the church must care for God's creation; and now with our concerns increasingly raised by the environmental situation, churches across the globe are stepping up to the plate. Eco-church, Eco-Diocese are becoming common phrases: reduce plastic, use alternative sources for energy...even the Bishop of Dorchester recently purchased an electric car.

Caring and loving creation is not new for the church: how can it be when the beginning of the Bible describes a story of creation of how the spirit of God hovered over the waters.

On 4th October the church remembers the saint quintessentially associated with caring for creation, St Francis. Francis, the son of a wealthy merchant, had a miraculous conversion, feeling called to build the church. He did this literally by placing bricks, and through following Jesus's call to care for the poor. He felt called to love all even those who others shunned and was once so moved he kissed a leper he met in the road. He is said to have preached to the birds and the animals; and rumoured to say that we should always preach as a last resort, as our actions are more important.

Indeed, what the church says and what the church does is crucial. How can the church speak about caring for creation, without also practising what it preaches?

Yet the church is not an expert and so needs to listen to the scientists, to the farmers, to the next generation - yes the voice of Extinction Rebellion is important too - to the sceptic and to the campaigner. And from this, it will learn the truth and how to respond.

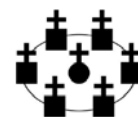
On Sunday 13th October at 2pm, an Environmental Forum is being held at St Andrew's Holt. Speaking at this event will be Jake Fiennes (Environmental Spokesperson for the National Farmers Union and Holkham Estate Manager), Dr Keith Tovey (Environmental Scientist, UEA), Sam McCready (Environmental Science Student), Enid Barron (Church campaigner) and Delaval Astley (Organic Farmer).

You are all warmly invited, to listen, to learn and to question, as we as a community (church and village) learn more about how we can respond and care for the incredible gift of creation that we enjoy day by day.

If you would like to come do please email me and also look at the informatin on page 4.

May we all delight in the beauty of God's creation,

David



The Benefice of Matlaske Church Services for October

6 th Trinity XVII		
9.00	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
Preacher: Revd Dr Yazid Said; Officiant: Bishop David Gillett		
11.00	Renderings of Torah, Qur'an & Bible	Baconsthorpe Castle Barn
4.00	Interfaith Dialogue	Hole Farm Hempstead
Rabbi Natan Levy, Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra and Revd Dr Yazid Said		
13 th Trinity XVII		
9.00	Eucharist	Hempstead
9.00	Eucharist	Matlaske
11.00	Eucharist	Edgefield
5.30	Evensong	Barningham Winter
20 th Trinity XVIII		
9.00	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe
11.00	Eucharist	Plumstead
11.00	Harvest Thanksgiving	Saxthorpe
27 th Trinity XIX		
9.00	Eucharist	Barningham Winter
11.00	Matins	Hempstead
5.00	Evensong	Matlaske
2 nd Nov All Souls		
5.00	All Souls	Matlaske
3 rd Nov All Saints		
9.00	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe
11.00	Eucharist	Edgefield
5.00	Evensong Patronal Festival	Hempstead
With Benefice Choir		
10 th Nov Remembrance Sunday		
10.45	Remembrance Services	All Churches

October Mid-Week Eucharist Services

Saxthorpe 9am Wednesday 2nd / 16th / 30th Followed by coffee and tea
Matlaske 10.30am Thursday 24th Followed by coffee, tea and cake

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Baconsthorpe

200 Club

£25 Jonathon Cooper, £10 Joy Thirtle, £5 Russell Harrod

Community Coffee - Village Hall - Thursday 17th October 10.30am

This is a free event open to everyone and sponsored by the Pop-Up Pub.

Pop-up Pub - Friday 25th October food is cottage pie



Playground

Recently the wooden gazebo in the playground
has been vandalised - this has been reported to the
police. Two of the sides had the wooden boards
ripped off and these boards have then been burned
and the burnt boards thrown onto the grass. If you
saw who did this of have any information regarding
this vandalism please contact the Parish Council on
07767 494369.



Corinne Youngs
577263



Heydon Walk

Information boards have been
installed at Baconsthorpe Castle and
St. Mary's church explaining how
both sites are linked to the Heydon
family and encouraging people to go
from one site to the other.



These boards have been produced by English Heritage in conjunction with the PCC and paid for
for the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Baconsthorpe Book Club

We're delighted that there has been interest in starting a book club in the village. The first meeting
will be held on Friday 11th October at 6pm in the Village Hall. Books are kindly lent by the mobile
library. Please feel free to join us even if you haven't yet been in touch.

Village Hall News

After the busy events of August, with the Jumble Sale and Fête, September has been quieter at the
Village Hall. However, we have the ever-popular **Quiz Night** returning on **Thursday 17th October**
at 7pm. To book a table please call Emma Youngs (07884 432412) as this event is generally very
busy. There will be food and you are welcome to bring your own drinks. £6 per head.

On **Friday November 15th** at 7pm there will be a **Bingo Evening**, so do note this in your diary too.

We are very pleased to welcome Sarah Wilson, who joined the Village Hall Committee at our
September meeting. If you would like to get involved with helping at any of the events please let
me know. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Piers Warner

Village Website: www.baconsthorpe.org



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Barningham Winter

All quiet on the Barningham Winter front last month...

Edgefield

Church News

After our Harvest Festival on 22nd September, our diary seems quiet in October. In November, on Sunday 10th, we'll have our Remembrance Sunday service. We are again meeting in the Village Hall at 10.45am when David Longe will be with us, so do put that in your diaries. Also, our Carol Service will be on 15th December at 4.00pm.

Details of the Inter-Faith Gathering are elsewhere in the magazine. This should be a very interesting and informative afternoon, in Hempstead on 6th October. Do join us.



Richard Peaver
587486

Angela Turner

Village Hall News

Don't forget our annual Christmas event, which this year will be held on Saturday 7th December. It is always a happy and fun-filled evening, so make sure you get your tickets early! Further details to follow. Our yearly first prize of £100 for the 200 Club was won by Mike Sillis. The August monthly draw results: 1st Pauline Skillings, 2nd Sheila Buller and 3rd Ellie Watson.

Jim Frost

Edgefield Toads & Amphibians – A Presentation



Please join us at Edgefield Village Hall on Saturday 9th November at 11am for a presentation by John Heaser, amphibian expert and founder of Norfolk ToadWatch.

Edgefield village pond is an oasis for hundreds of toads and other amphibians including the endangered Great Crested Newt. These creatures rely on local people to help them across the roads in early spring.

John will present a fascinating and entertaining insight into this valuable part of our local ecology. Everyone is welcome - entrance free!

Hempstead

200 Club

£50 J Smith, £25 S Hawkey, £10 R Roy, £5 I Hicks, J Smith, S Thurston

Don't forget that you can join the club yourself by phoning Ian Summers (710702) as there are numbers available for £12 a year.

Coffee & Gossip – Friday 4th – 10.30am – Village Hall

This is another occasion when we meet up and put the world to rights!.

Thank You

You have a new correspondent at the helm! I hope I can be as efficient as Sharon has been, and on your behalf, I thank her for all her hard work in the last few years. From now on, please could you email me (su@linaria.co.uk) or phone (710702) news from around the village that you'd like to include in the newsletter. I'd particularly love to have news of the achievements and activities of our young people.



Su Summers
710702

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Hempstead Arts

The weekend of 31st August and 1st September saw the 7th Annual Hempstead Arts exhibition and sale. It was busy, attracting people from far and wide and the car park (playing field) packed with cars at times. Many thanks to all those who took part and helped in every way from setting up, to baking cakes, manning the kitchen, to exhibiting and more. The hall was packed at times and a record raised, in all £3,146 for Hempstead Church. Since its inception, more than £15,000 has been raised and is now being spent on re-thatching the roof which has become urgent. Special thanks to Mike Thody, Ann Udale and Su Summers who throughout this period have donated all their sales to the Church.

Francis Feilden, Church Treasurer

A note from one of our visitors: Hempstead Arts is my favourite Hempstead event. Every year many artists display fantastic works which take many forms: pottery, prints, oil on canvas, water colour, stained glass and much more. There is a relaxed yet exciting atmosphere and you are soon aware that Hempstead Arts offers everything on the art spectrum. The standard is so very high which always astonishes me as it is more usual to assume that art should perhaps cost huge amounts, and if I am honest on many occasions during my viewing, I heard myself say, "This cannot be the actual price of this piece!" The refreshments are also a welcome touch and there is something very special about the team of people who put together this event, thank you to all and I can't wait until Hempstead Arts 2020!

Sharon Hannah

Film Club

As I write this we have just had our first showing of the new season of Film Club, *The Great McGinty*. What fun it was! Hempstead Film Club is on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm and is a club in the true sense of the word, a time for meeting and chatting with new friends and old, before sitting down to watch a carefully chosen classic film. Refreshments are available before the showing, which starts at 7.45pm. We'd love to have new members joining us. Could this be of interest to you? Further details from Yvette Gibson 712460 or Mike Thody 711282.

Music in Hempstead

Following on from the success earlier this year of Music in Hempstead, Ian is delighted to present three further events this Autumn. Each entirely different but having in common a run through in Hempstead Village Hall NR25 6TL at 4pm to which you are invited. There is no charge and the doors open for refreshments at 3.45pm. It should be finished within the hour. Two of these events are in October so it's a musical month! **Friday 18th October - Wind Trios; Wednesday 30th October - English Madrigals; Friday 15th November - Rheinberger Nonet.** More details from Ian Summers on 710702 or by email ian@isdata.co.uk

Matlaske

100 Club

£25 Shaun Boyhan, £10 Michael Batterham, £5 Alan Dykes

Quiz Night

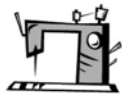
Don't forget it's the last quiz of 2019 on Friday 4th October. Everyone is welcome at The Old Stables, Barningham Hall for an evening of light hearted fun. £5 entrance fee which includes jacket potato supper. Drinks available and a raffle will be held.



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Christening

August 17th saw St Peter's Church packed for the christening of Martha Norman. Living in Oxfordshire, her parents Tom and Lucy Norman brought the christening party to Matlaske so that Martha's Great Grandma, Vera Norman could attend. After the service the party went to The Feathers at Holt for a lovely buffet and get together. Marth is the first Grandchild for Jeremy Norman of Matlaske and Roe Norman of Horsford, Great Grandchild for Vera Norman and step Grandchild for June Norman both of Matlaske.



Harvest Lunch

A lovely lunch was provided on the 8th September in The Old Stables, Barningham Hall. A big thank you to those who worked hard to put on a lovely spread.



Plumstead

Parish Council News

Do you have problems with your mobile phone signal? Is it worse than poor? (Particularly Vodafone). If so, the Parish Council are interested in your experiences. Please let them know.

Don't forget that the PC would also like your ideas about the pond and meadow area. What could be done to enhance it, make it more visitor friendly and ensure that we provide a meaningful amenity for our village for the future? The next meeting is on December 9th so there is plenty of time to mull over and get your views to Nick (Chairman) or Carolyn (Clerk).



Mary Lintott
577718

Church News

Eleanor was our sole representative for the Church Cycle Ride this year. Not only did she raise in excess of £200 but also picked 2.75lbs of blackberries and reported it was a glorious day to be out cycling! Thank you to those who sponsored her and manned the Church during the day.

Pond Life Fridays in August



A group of people in the village suggested meeting at the pond on a Friday evening in August not only to enjoy the beauty of this wonderful amenity that we have in our village (which is maintained by the Parish Council) but also to take ourselves away from the garden, the TV and all the chores that pull at us at home and have time for a bit of a muddle with our neighbours. Each of us brought drink and food to

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share. Apart from one Friday when it poured with rain all day, a gentle stroll towards the pond on a Friday evening would have been met with the gentle rumble of talking and laughter as villagers mulled over the weather, life and the latest political intrigues! It was a great success.

Trek 24 for East Anglian Air Ambulance by Alastair & Julie Brown



Well, with your help we smashed it: £2,002 plus gift aid of £270! A long day began with leaving the car at Holkham Hall at 6.30am and then bus to the Roman Camp at West Runton. The start saw one or two spits of rain, but clear skies followed with fresh winds. Downhill into Sheringham but significant steps up Beeston Bump and fantastic views along the coast. A windy walk to Weybourne with the sun out gave no impression of the hard work to come. The stretch between Weybourne and Cley (three miles) was shingle all the way and like walking in treacle – very, very hard work.

Cley came as a relief and brief stop. We were lucky on route to meet Adrian and Martin – one ex-Army and Martin who had suffered a cardiac arrest in 2014 and been saved by the Air Ambulance. They were great pace setters and we followed in their slipstream for the remainder. It was very worthwhile to see the Air Ambulance fly by late afternoon and subsequently see that it was off to help somebody. The final nine miles found all of us having very sore feet and it was a joy to leave Wells and enter Holkham Park with a mile down the drive to the finish in front of the hall. We started at 8am and finished the 24 miles at 4pm which, taking into

account the three miles of shingle, we thought was a good effort. A very big thank you to all our sponsors. We really appreciate your support.

Saxthorpe with Corpusty

Thieves About

Your correspondent has this month heard of three thefts within or around our villages. They appear to have been targeted, and carried out in the early hours of the morning. One involved motorbikes and the other two power tools. Please be vigilant and lock outbuildings and garages. If you see or hear anything of concern, call 101, the non-urgent police number, unless there is an ongoing crime, in which case call 999.

Traffic Survey

The Parish Council wishes to express its thanks to villagers, who not only completed the survey, but also made so many positive suggestions. The response rate of over 30% is regarded as exceptional for such surveys. The survey results will be raised with the Highways Authority. Our county councillor, Stephan Aquarone, is taking a personal interest in achieving measures to control traffic risks. Progress will be reported.



Sophia Hodgson
587510

St Andrew's Church – Harvest Festival

Please help us in celebrating the ancient festival of Harvest Thanksgiving at 11am on Sunday 20th October, at Saxthorpe Church. All offers of non-perishable grocery items will be gratefully received as we aim to share with others who are less fortunate through the Cromer Food Bank initiative; or why not get creative with flowers, fruit and corn dollies to help decorate the font in celebration of the food grown on our land?

St Andrew's Church – Sheringham Singers



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In support of church repair and maintenance

If you join us on Saturday 12th October at 3pm you will be inspired, soothed and amused by heart-warming songs. Tickets £7 (under 12s free) on the door, or in advance from the PCC. Raffle and refreshments in support of church repair and maintenance.

Village Hall Committee

They say that it is the simplicity, natural beauty and tranquillity that makes rural life unique and special. A village hall always adds to that distinction. To that end, the Corpusty/Saxthorpe Village Hall Committee, a registered charity, is looking for new members to assist the charity in the betterment of the community. We meet just once every two months. If interested, please contact either Bob Stern (rsstern8@gmail.com) or Diane Oliver (notrobena@yahoo.co.uk).

End of Holiday Hog Roast

It had been planned as a follow-up to the Holiday Club run in the first week of the school holidays. How many children were we

expecting? Hopefully 10. On the afternoon there were 32 and with parents and friends there totaled almost 100 for the hog roast. Many games were enjoyed, including an obstacle race, a three-legged race, an egg and spoon race, bean bags in the bin and a tug of war. To add to the enjoyment, it was noticed that a little cheating by the adults occurred in the Tug of War. Thanks must go to the Rector, planners, helpers, The Duke's Head, the Spar Shop, the straw bale provider and the delicious sponge cake baker. Thanks are also due to Graves the butchers. Many people at the event, or who sampled the hog later, agreed it was well worth waiting for. Graves did us proud. Some comments from those who attended included "A great village event"; "Very good to see all the children taking part in the games and enjoying themselves"; "The tug of war was fun"; "Same again next year?" and "Perhaps on a Sunday, so more could get involved".

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The Village Gardener

To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow



As I write this, I can only describe our Indian Summer as patchy! With any luck by the time you read this maybe we will have had a few more good days... hopefully!

First stop today are the borders. Keep an eye on any exposed dahlias and once the foliage has died down, lift the tubers and remove all the soil then cut back the stems and once dry, label (!) and store in boxes of compost for the winter. I will admit to not doing this but that's because our walled garden rarely gets badly frosted. Let's hope this is not the year when I get caught out. By now all your roses should be pruned, and if you've only got your ramblers left, do make sure they are done by the end of the month. If you've any perennials that have got a bit too large or if you fancy splitting your existing plants, then October is a great time to split and divide because the plants are dormant so they will cope much better with being moved and are much more likely to slowly establish over the winter. The best way to divide perennials is to use two forks back to back to gently tease the plant in half. Do make sure you water them in well.

Now for the veg patch! Mostly harvesting here, although you might just be able to sneak the odd row of winter salads in if you are prepared to cover them up to protect them. It can feel a pain to get winter salad seeds in to sow, but it's always worth it. Keep watering your pumpkins if you're after a monster for Halloween and remember to sit your pumpkins on straw so they don't rot. Failing that, cardboard will do nearly as well if not as well aesthetically!

Finally the lawn: if you want to give it a head start for next year then take time out in the autumn to scarify it well and if drainage is an issue on your lawn, then again take time out to spike it, remembering to back fill the holes with either grit or sharp sand. Check to see if your lawn edges need repairing, if they do then cut a section out and re-lay it after turning it 180 degrees, so the damage is now further in the lawn, as it's much easier to reseed a patch in the lawn than a damaged edge. You will thank yourself come next summer when you have a happier lawn!

This month's question is from Frank Daye, who is worried about his rhubarb plants. Mine have got rather congested, too, which can affect their productivity. Split the crown in half and re plant them both, but with a good amount of space around each. You should notice a big difference in them by next spring!

Do keep the questions coming in! Email me at redmaple@btinternet, and, as ever, the most interesting question will be published next month.