

# Gunton Woodland Community Project

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## NEWSLETTER

January February March 2009



### The Church Field

We make no apologies for making this our lead item again. The possible takeover of the Church Field (Site 190) for relocating the Lowestoft and Yarmouth Rugby Club would change the entire Gunton environment and we believe it would impact severely on our Gunton Wood project. Here is our understanding of the position as at the end of January:

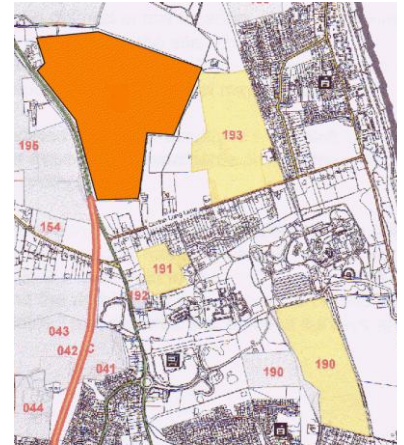
1. On 7<sup>th</sup> January GWCP submitted to WDC a formal letter of objection to the selection of Site 190 and proposed instead an alternative site East of the A12, North of Corton Long Lane (marked in orange). We believe this would meet all the requirements of the Waveney Core Strategy, whilst having sufficient space for the Club's future expansion and would cause minimal disruption to wildlife or residential areas. The GWCP letter can be found on our website [www.guntonwoodland.org.uk](http://www.guntonwoodland.org.uk).

2. We understand that the Rugby Club originally identified nine possible relocation sites. These were reduced to a short list of five and then later to two 'preferred' sites by the Council. One of the first four sites that were rejected by the Council was, in fact, the Rugby Club's preferred site and is the very same location as that identified independently by GWCP.

3. We do not know the reasons why this site was originally discounted and we are making every effort to persuade the Planning Department to re-evaluate its merits. The time constraints are severe as the Final Preferred Sites Development Plan Document is due to be issued in June, after which only minor amendments can be made before it goes to the Government Inspector for approval.

4. We would like to thank all those members who submitted comments to the Council before the deadline of 12<sup>th</sup> January. The Planning Department expects to have acknowledged all comments before the end of February. Their analysis of the results will be available on the WDC website in due course.

5. We intend to give over much of the time at our AGM on 4<sup>th</sup> March to an open discussion on this subject so that everyone has a chance to express their views. The Rugby Club has agreed to attend to present their vision of the future but, disappointingly, the WDC Planning Department have declined.



### The Winter Scene

On most Thursdays the weather has allowed our work parties to get on with the essential trimming, chip spreading and weeding jobs, except for one wet day when our intentions to help Suffolk Wildlife Trust plant 2000 hedging whips in the new Nature Reserve were washed away. Saturday work has concentrated on felling many diseased elms considered to be dangerous following a joint inspection by WDC and ourselves. Our fencing gang has been busy on the A12 boundary of Foxburrow Wood and they are now repairing the fence to Wildwood which has deteriorated with age.

The most severe Winter for many years with prolonged spells of sub zero temperatures has delayed everything by several weeks. Myriads of icicles on twigs and holly leaves caused by hoar frost present a challenge to the photographer that's hard to resist. At last the woodland floor is beginning to reveal splashes of yellow and white flowers and strong green shoots as



aconites, snowdrops and daffodils burst through, a sure sign that Spring is not too far away.....

## Outings

### ***Snape Christmas Spectacular, 18 December 2008***

“Even better than last year” was the general feeling after the amazing show put on by the Co-Op Juniors. While statistics give an idea of the size of the production (over 100 dancers and singers, 30 scenes, many costume changes, 150 back stage helpers and so on) it was the quality of the performance and the enthusiasm of the youngsters that was so impressive. All of this was enjoyed from the best seats in the attractive setting of the Snape Concert Hall. Unfortunately, there was one problem. At the last minute, Belle Coaches were forced to provide a substitute vehicle which was in poor condition and this did spoil the journey for some passengers. We would like to pass on Belle’s apologies to those affected and extend our thanks to David for organizing yet another wonderful start to the Christmas festivities.

### ***Anglesey Abbey, 11 February 2009 (fully booked)***

Although the snowdrops are several weeks late this year we are assured of a spectacular display at the world famous Winter Garden. The restaurant will have a varied menu available and the only thing needed to ensure a great day out is decent weather. National Trust members should bring Membership Cards for free admission. A comfort/coffee stop is planned at Elveden Estate *en route*. To avoid traffic problems we have to make an early start and we would ask everyone to assemble at St Peters Church, Gunton Church Lane, **by 7.30 am please!**

### ***Cornwall in Spring, 26 – 30 April 2009 (cancelled)***

For the first time in the history of GWCP, we have to announce a cancellation. David and others have tried their utmost to enlist sufficient numbers to make this holiday a viable proposition but we are still several short of the minimum required. This is in spite of Belle offering to continue with a much smaller load factor than normal. The reasons for the low uptake seem to be a combination of illness, credit crunch and the fact that many prefer the thought of a Continental holiday rather than one spent in the UK. We know this will be a big disappointment to those who have pre-booked and we can only apologize. This experience underlines the fact that the continuing success of our social programme is totally dependent on the support of you, the members.

## **Tree Planting Saturday 14 February**

Essential culling of some of our semi-mature elms that have succumbed to Dutch Elm disease has left a few areas that will benefit from in-fill planting. So, on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February, weather permitting, we invite all members and friends, and particularly children, to help plant 220 small tree and hedging whips. We will meet in the centre of Gunton Wood at 9 o’clock. If possible, bring a spade and a tree label if you would like to add a child’s name so that you can follow its progress. This year, we will protect the new trees with spiral guards and canes instead of our conventional plastic tubes in the hope that these will be more resistant to mildew problems. Providing our plans materialise we hope to reward all participants with our usual sausage sizzle. If weather looks doubtful call Barry (562527) or David (515944) for confirmation. Looking forward to seeing you!

## **GWCP AGM**

Attached to this Newsletter is the formal Notice of our 12<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting to be held at Gunton C.P.School, Gainsborough Drive on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009 starting at 7 pm (for refreshments) with the meeting beginning at 7.30 pm. Members and non-members alike are warmly invited to the meeting which will concentrate on the relocation plans for the Lowestoft and Yarmouth Rugby Club and their potential impact on the future of our Project.

## **Cuttings**

- **Rats** In an effort to combat this problem while still providing our bird population with essential food in these harsh weather conditions we have begun fitting our feeder tables with protective guards. We would appreciate feedback from members on their effectiveness in keeping rats away from the seed.

- **Damage to Main Gates** The case against the individual concerned came to court at the end of January but was deferred for a further hearing in a month’s time.



## **Nature Notes The Snowdrop ..... magic and mythology**



The most widespread member of the *Galanthus* genus is *G. nivalis* of which there are more than 500 cultivars alone, quite apart from its many hybrids with other species. At gatherings of fanatical Galanthophiles, you might see a single plant changing hands for many hundreds of pounds. This simplest of tiny plants played a crucial role in Greek mythology, as immortalized in Homer’s *Odyssey*. When the witch-goddess Circe turned half of his crew into swine, Odysseus began his rescue attempt. Fortunately, the messenger-god Hermes was watching and gave Odysseus a potion called *moly* distilled from the **snowdrop** plant. It gave him resistance to Circe’s magic, they became lovers and the crew were released from her spell. Today, we are still seduced by the snowdrop’s charm as it emerges through the snow and leaf litter foretelling the coming of Spring.