



### **i** nformation

#### LOCAL GROUPS

Bowling	Golden Pheasant 722261
Halle Group	Jim Rankin 651170
Holly Tree Riding Stables	Gloria Robinson 722188
IT Basic Skills	David Nichols - 723837
Guild	Chapel Hall last Tuesday in month, 2.30pm
Mums & Tots	Village Hall Tues. mornings (term time)
Parish Council	Sarah Sherwood 01606 48577
Plumley Celtic FC	J Betts 01606 737602
Probus Club	Gerry Chatburn 722385
WI	Village Hall, 1st Monday in month Christine England 722283

#### LOCAL CONTACTS

Village Hall Committee Chairman	David Nichols	723837
Village Hall Bookings	Penny Allen	722259
Chapel Hall Bookings	Bert Southern	722444
Tennis Courts & Play Area	Iain McCulloch	722535
Borough Councillor	Ted Fisher	01565 873904
Newsletter Editor	Glen Godson	722811
Newsletter Reporter	Peter Frier	722140
Plumley Stores & Post Office	J. Royle	722277

Newsletter e.mail: [glengodson@plumley1971.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:glengodson@plumley1971.fsnet.co.uk)  
 Parish Council e.mail: [plumleybt.parcouncil@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:plumleybt.parcouncil@tiscali.co.uk)  
 Website: [www.plumley-bexton-toft-parish-council.co.uk](http://www.plumley-bexton-toft-parish-council.co.uk)

#### Glass recycling:

Golden Pheasant Car Park

#### Mobile Library:

every other Tuesday  
 Village Hall 9.55am  
 Ascol Drive 10.35am

**Refuse collection:** Tuesdays

**TaxiRider:** 01565 621222  
 Use it or lose it!

Please notify the Editor of any changes to information on this page.  
 Letters to the Editor to:  
 Glen Godson  
 2 Malt Kiln Road, Plumley

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**Highways:** Cheshire County Council (CCC) Highways have now completed the work relating to the speed reduction to 30 mph from 40 mph on Plumley Moor Road. Please try to keep to the new safer limit- be warned that our Speedwatch team will be out and about soon. They cannot impose fines or penalties but are there as a reminder to you of the speed limit; they let the police know details of vehicles exceeding the speed limit who in turn send a 'warning' letter but no fine or penalty.

**Community Speedwatch:** There is no doubt that the presence of the volunteers encourages drivers to reduce their speed through the village to within the legal limit. This is particularly important if the proposed speed reduction to 30 mph, which many people have asked for over the years, is to be effective. A further training course is to be held by Cheshire Constabulary, so please let Sarah know if you would like to be involved.

**Incinerator:** As you are probably aware, WRG Ltd is proposing to build an incinerator to burn domestic and commercial waste, in Griffiths Road, Lostock Gramam. The Parish Council are opposed to the plan in view of the environmental impact it will have (air pollution and traffic increase) and to this end are sending £100 to CHAIN (Cheshire Anti-Incinerator Network). We are also writing to the relevant concerns:

- 1) WRG Ltd, Ground Floor, 900 Pavilion Drive, Northampton Business Park, Northampton NN4 7RG
- 2) Cheshire County Council, Waste & Planning Services, Backford Hall, Chester CH1 6PZ
- 3) The Secretary for State and Industry, c/o Bay 2121, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1 0ET

Either one or two further incinerators, even larger than the proposed Lostock Gramam incinerator, are planned for Cheshire at Ince Marshes and/or Weston Point and CHAIN are opposing the whole scheme. If the Lostock Gramam incinerator is built, because of the prevailing wind direction, there is no doubt that Plumley will be in the direct area of fallout omissions.

Web site: [www.anti-incinerator.org.uk](http://www.anti-incinerator.org.uk). Please ring Parish Councillor Neville Baker on 722144 for further details.

**Vandalism:** We are disappointed and perturbed about vandalism in the village. We are in contact with the Police about this, so please report things to them: 0845 458 0000 (Community Action Team –message leaving service only -0845 458 6380; Emergency 999 ) It would be helpful if you would also let the Parish Council have relevant vandalism details to help us liaise with the Police.

**Fire Service:** We have received a plan of the fire hydrants in the parish but are still waiting for confirmation that all of those shown are still active and not obsolete. We hope you appreciated the Fire Service's visit in January when many fire checks were carried out and smoke alarms fitted free of charge.

**Annual Assembly:** The Parish Council are making arrangements for this which will be held on Tuesday 27 May at 8.00pm in Plumley Village Hall so please put the date in your diary now!

**Playingfields/The Parish Plan Implementation Team (PPIT):** We are moving things along as quickly as we can although we knew this would be a protracted venture!

A further meeting is to be held on 28 January. If you can help or would like to be involved please let Anne (723944) or Sarah, our Clerk, know.

**Water Supply:** We understand that some residents are experiencing reduced pressure. United Utilities will do a water pressure test, usually free of charge, but only on request by a householder. To ask for such a test, please ring United Utilities on 08457 462 200.

**Local Government Review:** We are sure you all know that the Minister decided to opt for the East Cheshire/ West Cheshire divide, rather than One Cheshire which was the Parish Council's preferred option. Plumley will fall within the Unitary authority East Cheshire, which will consist of the areas currently falling within Macclesfield, Crewe and Nantwich, and Congleton Borough Councils. We haven't had many details yet other than knowing it is planned to have a shadow East Cheshire council from April 2008 with full implementation from April 2009.

**Cheshire's Year of Gardens 2008:** The parish council propose holding a 'Best Garden' competition as our local involvement. We will let you have details later on; in the meantime please do look for further details of the on our own web site as well as on : [www.yearofgardens08.com](http://www.yearofgardens08.com) or in the press.

Some grant aid has been made available to improve the Station; Anne Panagakis is working hard to improve the garden and surrounding area. **STOP PRESS:** Plumley was give an award in this year's Best Kept Station Competition Awards Evening on 22 January- please see Peter Frier's report elsewhere in the Newsletter. Congratulations to all, but in particular to Anne & Derek Panagakis and helpers.

**TaxiRider: Just a reminder:** The arrangements have changed. It is now possible to book the TaxiRider up to one week in advance. Once a week, normally on Tuesdays, the vehicle travels to Handforth Dean for shopping (e.g. M&S). Seats are on a first come/first served basis. There is of course no charge for 60+ passengers who are in possession of a bus pass. Please remember to use the TaxiRider - 01565 621222: Use it or lose it.

**Clerk's contact details:** Mrs Sarah Sherwood: [plumleybt.parcouncil@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:plumleybt.parcouncil@tiscali.co.uk); 01606 48577; 42 Birches Lane, Lostock Green, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7SN.

**Parish Council web site:** [www.plumley-bexton-toft-parish-council.co.uk](http://www.plumley-bexton-toft-parish-council.co.uk)

We hope that you are find this useful. Amongst other items, you will find details of planning applications we have received, any proposed road works and any local information useful to the Parish. You may view the plans on Macclesfield Borough Council's own website as well as at their offices. If you would like something included on the web site please let Sarah have the relevant details.

**Next Meetings:** The Parish Council's next meetings are scheduled for Wednesday 27 February and 26 March at 7.45 pm at Plumley Village Hall. As usual, you are welcome to attend these meetings.

**Mrs Sybil Crossman (Chairman and Cheshire Association of Local Councils**

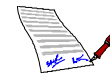
**Rural Woman of the year 2007/8, Mrs Anne Panagakis, Neville Baker and Mrs**

**Sarah Sherwood (Clerk) on behalf of Plumley with Toft and Bexton Parish**

**Council**

*The Newsletter is now partly funded by the Parish Council but principally by the Village Hall.*

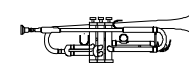
Letter from the Editor



A very happy, if belated, New Year to everyone! Excellent news about our Post Office (see P.3). Our thanks to Susan McDonald for her kind donation and continued support for the Newsletter.. Also, grateful thanks to Emma & Ray Symms for once again providing the village Christmas Tree.

Many of you have asked about having this publication available online; we are pleased to say that this is now available!

Go to: [www.plumley-bexton-toft-parish-council.co.uk](http://www.plumley-bexton-toft-parish-council.co.uk)



The recent concert by the JPD Mereside Brass, held in the Village Hall at Christmas raised the princely sum of £162 for their Training Band (Charity No. 1118220).

Thanks to everyone who gave their support.

**AGE Concern**

**GENTLE EXERCISE CLASS  
at Plumley Village Hall  
Thursday 13th March at 2pm**



**Cost: Just £2, payable on the day  
Please feel free to come along and join in!!**

Cooking

Games

**The Sunday Club**

Bible Stories

Crafts

The Sunday Club has been up and running for a few months now at Plumley Methodist Church and it seems to be going well so far.

However, if there are any more children who would like to join us you'd be more than welcome.

We are also in need of some more volunteers to help with the Club. We have a rota system so it wouldn't be every week. Experience with children would be beneficial.

If you are interested, please contact:

**Sarah Royle at Plumley Village Stores on 01565 722277**

All children aged 2 - 8 years welcome  
at Plumley Methodist Church 10.30 - 11.30am

## PLUMLEY LANES

Continuing my historical ramble down some of Plumley's old lanes.

### Sudlow, Pinfold and Back Lanes

From Parkgate Farm, Sudlow Lane continues south along the side of Tabley Park, past the gamekeeper's cottage until it crosses the line of Benstall Brook. This brook seems significant now but as small streams often did, it marks a boundary, namely between the civil parishes of Tabley Inferior and Plumley. It evidently flooded frequently as the place is marked by the Ordnance Survey as Sudlow Wash, a 'wash' meaning 'a flooding place, a flooded road or a ford'. Just beyond that the road now passes under the railway, before reaching Ullard Hall Lane. (This latter used to go right past the hall and on to the Middlewich Road but now it is split into two by the M6.) At the junction, Sudlow Lane becomes Pinfold Lane and there is another nice old finger post (*not* renovated, alas) on which the rondel is marked *Plumbley RDC* and the finger itself points to *Plumley*. (The spelling has varied greatly over the centuries but most of the 19th century records omit the letter b.) A little way down Pinfold Lane, on the left, is Wash Farm. The field opposite was called 'Wash Field' and at one stage Ullard Hall Lane was called Wash Lane, so altogether this wash must have been pretty extensive, more evidence of just how poorly drained the Moor was.

Shortly, the lane takes a sharp 'left, right and left' to pass round Wood's Tenement Farm; I suspect that originally it went right through the middle of the farm yard. At this point it crosses the line of the old 'Long Lane' (now a footpath) which started at Malt Kiln House, Plumley and almost certainly led on to Heesom Green on the Middlewich Road in Lower Peover (via Plumley Lane Farm). Also at this ancient 'crossroads' is an attractive half-timbered cottage, which is one of five such listed buildings in Plumley. The others are Malt Kiln Farm, Yew Tree Cottage and Beech Farm on Trouthall Lane and also the thatched house hiding among the architectural antiques at The Smoker junction. This last is actually listed as 'farm building', which seems fair enough since there is no sign of a fireplace or chimney.

Where the lane crosses Plumley Moor Road is the site of the old pinfold (see an earlier article) and this was effectively the focus of Plumley Moor. It is near the western end of the last part of the moor to be 'enclosed' - in 1801. The finger post at the Lower Peover end of the road indicates 'Plumley 1 mile', whereas the more recent sign alongside it gives 'Plumley 1¼ miles', clearly implying the station as the destination, rather than the crossroads. From here the lane carries on to the Peover Eye and crosses it into Nether Peover parish, in Vale Royal borough. The parish boundary follows the Peover Eye downstream at this point but just short of Cheadle Lane it turns south so as to encompass the whole of Holford Moss and eventually the Hell Brook is used as the boundary, so Ascol Drive and Holford Hall are also within Plumley parish, although south of the Peover Eye.

I have been asked how I can surmise that the lane originally led to Hulme Hall since further on it takes a sudden lurch to the right towards Lach Dennis. However, the public right of way (now only a footpath) does in fact continue straight on at this juncture, crosses Hulme Lane and Bradshaw Brook (near the motorway) and leads on to the approach avenue of Hulme Hall. Am I vindicated?

**Mike Morton**

## Plumley Village Hall

### Wychcraft Big Band: Saturday 23 February

As you may have noticed from various signs that we have posted, we will be holding another musical evening featuring the Wychcraft Big Band on Saturday 23 February. Why not come along, relax and have a drink whilst listening to the easy sounds and taking in the atmosphere of the 1940s, including the music of Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman and others? You might even be tempted to "shake a leg"!! Tickets are available from: **01565 723622** or from **The Village Stores**.

### Computer/IT Course:

Tuesday 5th February saw the second successful afternoon session of the IT course run by **Age Concern** at the Village Hall. Sessions are from 2 - 3.30pm every week and have proved very popular, so why not come along and join - it's not too late!

### Plumley Garden Party: Saturday 28 June

No sooner are we into the New Year than our thoughts turn to the Garden Party, which this year falls on Saturday 28 June. Whilst it does seem a long way off, early planning makes for a successful and enjoyable day.

We are particularly looking for offers of help before and on the day and to clear up afterwards. Unfortunately, the Committee does not have the capacity to undertake all the work on its own, so volunteers are needed to ensure this event goes ahead. Volunteers are essential and any suggestions about the event are most welcome, so please talk to any member of the Village Hall Committee, preferably before the next Committee Meeting on Tuesday 12 February. Thank You!

**David Nichols**

**Chairman**

## The Post Office



2007 was a very difficult year for all of us working in Post Offices and the worries about future prospects still remain for many. Fortunately, Plumley fell into the second group of regions to be surveyed which has saved the concerns becoming too prolonged.

I would like to thank all of you who responded to the consultation period December 2006 - March 2007 regarding your local Post Office and those of you who signed the petition against closures in the Spring of last year, which resulted in a total of 4 million signatures being presented to No. 10 Downing Street in support of local Post Offices remaining open - an amazing result.

However, the government still decided to go ahead with a sealed closure programme of 2,500 local Post Offices, phased over 18 months to December 2008. This has now taken place for our area and I am pleased to report that your local Post Office has been chosen to remain open.

Thank you for your support and concern during the last twelve months. We now look forward to serving you well into the future.

**Jonathon Royle**  
**Sub-Postmaster**

## Plumley Methodist Church



**Saturday 2nd February 10am - noon** Coffee Morning with stalls and raffle.

**Saturday 1st March 10am - noon** Coffee Morning with stalls and raffle.

*Proceeds are to Rev. Charles Makonde Charity for Children with HIV and Aids in Kenya.*

**Sunday 2nd March 2.30pm** Songs of Praise - Come along and join in by singing your favourite hymns on the newly refurbished organ. There's no need to choose one until you come and it will be an enjoyable time with no sermon!

**Saturday 12th April 10am - noon** Coffee Morning with stalls and raffle.

**Sunday 6th April 6.30pm** Circuit Home Missions Service and Re-dedication of the organ. Led by Rev. Bernard Dodd.

### Plumley Wins Again!

For the second year running Plumley has received recognition at the 2007 Best Kept Station Awards held at the Salt Museum on January 22nd. The event was principally sponsored by the Cheshire Year of Gardens '08 (CYOG '08) but with the support from local railway companies, rail groups, commerce and the County Council. It was attended by the Chairman of Cheshire County Council and the Mayors of Macclesfield, Northwich, Vale Royal and Crewe and Nantwich, together with a large number of civic and railway groups well in attendance. The awards were presented by Felicity Goodey CBE, who may well be remembered from her days with BBC TV in Manchester. The Roberts Bakery award to Plumley was received by Sybil Crossman and Anne Panagakis and is a second commemorative plaque to be affixed at the station. John Hulme, who organised the whole competition quipped that we now have a plaque for each platform! Best overall station went to Poynton, whilst a special judges' award went to Holmes Chapel, who apparently play soothing music over their tannoy system to calm passengers!

*It would be nice if **we** even had a tannoy!*

In her address Felicity praised the hard work and co-operation between station groups, councils and the railway companies (public and private) and was very impressed with the achievements she had seen. She is, as well as being President of the Lowry Trustees, the chair of Cheshire's Year of Gardens '08. The only other station to receive an award on our Mid-Cheshire line was Mobberley, receiving the same award that Plumley won last year - The Community Award. **P. Frier**

**P.S.** In the raffle Sybil Crossman won two tickets from Chester to Cardiff with Arriva Wales Trains. She expressed **her** pleasure that they were return tickets!



## Plumley W.I.



**Monday 4th February at 7.30pm** Plumley WI will be celebrating the Institutes' 54th Birthday with a Beetle Drive, followed by a shared table. The competition is for a favourite Valentine verse.

**Monday 3rd March at 7.30pm** Mr John Pass (Jeweller) will be giving a talk entitled "From Rocks to Rings". The competition is a favourite piece of sentimental jewellery.

**Monday 7th April at 7.30pm**, Bobby King (ex-Music Hall star) will be speaking on the "History and Humour of Music Hall". The competition is for a programme or autograph of an entertainment star.

All the above meetings will be held in Plumley Village Hall. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

The New Year is here and its time to make our New Year's Resolutions. How about making one of them a monthly visit to Plumley WI. Whatever the weather, be it rain, hail or snow, you are always sure of a good, hot cup of tea and a warm smile to go with it. Why not give us a try? This year's programme promises to be really enjoyable and full of surprises.

**Virginia Williamson - Tel: 01565 722260**

## The Rural Touring Network



The next production by the RTN is The Deadline on Saturday 1st March 2008 at 7.30pm in Plumley Village Hall. The Deadline is performed by the Shifting Sands Company who have visited Plumley before with their version of Great Expectations.

The Deadline is a dynamic celebration of Film Noir, of thrillers and detective films, peopled by double crossers, hard-boiled characters and women in peril, blackmailers and losers. Raymond Chandler meets Laurel and Hardy in a shadowy world of menace and bad luck where nothing is ever what it seems.

Three clowns will present a show that is by turns irreverent and moving, comic and heart-breaking. The Deadline is not a parody or spoof but clown theatre with an edge, where the games played are dark and comic.

Welcome to...Clown Noir!!

Tickets will soon be available from:

**Sarah on 01606 48577** or from **Plumley Village Stores**, priced at **£6 each**.

*These events are usually very well attended so get your tickets as early as possible.*

## Mums & Toddlers

**9.45 - 11.15 in term-time.**



Pre-school children (and babies) can enjoy toys, craft activities sing-a-longs and refreshments. New members are always welcome. Join us for a chat and a cup of tea.

**Only £2.00 for one or more children.**

Please tel: **Carolyn on 723190** for more information

### from Pat & David Evans in Charente, France...

Summer came late to the Charente last year; just like the UK, May, June and July were memorable for grey skies, a lot of rain and lower than normal temperatures and the few sunny days had to be savoured. The main subject of conversation in the village was the unseasonable weather, the worst for years and there was a lot of sympathy for the inundations (floods) in England. Even my twenty-something hair-dresser, Aurelie, who is normally only interested in fashion, celebrities and diets, was obsessed with the dreadful weather.

This year, a stage of the Tour de France finished in Angouleme, our nearest big town and a time trial passed through villages close to us. We set off to have a look. The main street of St Genis de Hiersac was lined with spectators watching the seemingly endless stream of advertising vehicles preceding the trial; children scrambling to gather up the goodies thrown from the vehicles. Further on through the village, hundreds of caravans and camping cars were parked on the grass verges. Every social or sporting event in France is an excuse for a 'pique-nique' and this one was no different. The drug-taking controversy and the rain had done nothing to dampen French passion for their favourite sport, 'Le Tour' and lunches were being set out on camping tables as the spectators waited for their favourites to pass by; every competitor greeted with applause, flag waving and cheering.

An addition to our household this spring has been Cariad, an English Springer spaniel puppy, born in charente Maritime, our neighbouring department. As new dog owners, we were quite unprepared for the wonderful way in which she has taken over our lives. Two of the main benefits she has brought are that we are much fitter, with daily walks and have both lost weight. She has an amazing effect on French men, who go weak at the knees at the sight of her and will cross the street to speak to her and then to us. Their favourite expressions are 'adorable', 'belle' and 'mignonne' (sweet). She certainly helps us to make friends.

Summer is the season of the flea market, held in every village and town in rural France - known variously as 'vide greniers' (empty attics), brocantes (second-hand goods) or bric-a-brac, they are really car boot sales without cars, held in the smallest hamlets and large towns. The largest one we've been to had over 700 stalls in the open air. They sell everything from old, rusty tools to plants and sweets. We go to one most weekends but rarely buy anything.

Annual fêtes, as in the UK, are also a summer event with neighbouring villages co-ordinating dates to avoid clashes. Ours here in Montignac consisted of events for the children, a travelling drama group and on the Saturday night, the Mayor's picnic. Tables were set up along the bank of the river, the Mayor provided an aperitif for all and everyone took a picnic supper. It was a lovely warm evening and the atmosphere was extremely friendly; people passed bowls of food around, happy to share with their neighbours. They made us very welcome and we were able to use our improving French to get to know people.

Now Autumn is nearly here, there is a nip in the air in the mornings and the swallows are gathering on the telegraph wires, planning their journey south. The sunflowers and maize growing near us have been harvested and the fields ploughed. David and I have enjoyed scavenging in the hedgerows: there have been a lot of blackberries for jam and crumbles and we've been gathering walnuts from the trees on our walks. This is nearly the end of our first year here; it's been an adventure and a challenge, getting to grips with the language, customs, way of life and making new friends but a journey we have relished and are looking forward to whatever the next year brings.

## Rail News



### Steam trains are coming back!

On Sunday May 4th the Community Rail Partnership for the Mid-Cheshire Line together with the Mid-Cheshire Rail Users' Association (MCRUA) have planned a repeat of the successful steam shuttles of 2005 and 2006.

The locomotive this time however will be an ex LMS 8F Class No. 48151 and a special attraction for enthusiasts will be riding the first steam hauled passenger train since 1968 over the freight-only Middlewich line. The train originates from Crewe, where the locomotive was built in 1942 and will shuttle between Altrincham and Chester before returning to Crewe. As we go to press, timings and fares are still to be determined. Many of this huge class of locomotive were based at Northwich up to 1968 and used for hauling the heavy stone trains from Buxton (including 48151) so there is a good slice of nostalgia as she returns to her old stamping ground. She spent 12 years in Barry scrapyard until bought for preservation by enthusiasts, rebuilt and returned to service in 1987. She is currently based at Carnforth.

On Saturday May 10th the MCRUA Spring Rail Tour is via the Somerset Levels to the privately-owned West Somerset Line at Minehead. The Severn Tunnel is closed for engineering work so the train is routed over the famous Lickey incline south of Birmingham. MCRUA members will very shortly receive their booking forms and later, copies will be available at the Village Stores. Discounted fares are available for members and past travellers. The locomotive this time will be a 125mph Class 67 of EWS hauling the usual Mark II coaches with buffet and the train will additionally call at Bristol (Temple Meads) outwards and homeward for passengers wishing to visit this city.

**P. Frier**

## Grant awarded to Plumley Station

The Mid-Cheshire Community Rail Partnership has successfully bid for funding from Cheshire Year of Gardens '08 (CYoG '08) and as a result the sum of £500 has been allocated to enhance Plumley Station.

The local medal-winning garden designer Daphne Jones has been commissioned to evolve a plan in conjunction with Plumley Parish Council.

CYoG '08 is a "feeder" project of the Liverpool Year of Culture '08 and Cheshire Tourism and all stations on our line have received grants, with youth projects identified at Northwich, Knutsford and Greenbank stations.

The success of the bid, which also includes contributions from the Mid-Cheshire Rail Users' Association, Northern Rail and Cheshire County Council is due in no small part to the Community Rail Officer Mark Willcox who is actively concerned, together with MCRUA in promoting to steam train on May 4th, referred to elsewhere in this News.

**P. Frier**

finally a travel tip...

If you're thinking of venturing to Liverpool with all that's said to be going on this year, then you'll find that, by train, it's quicker and about 40% cheaper to travel from Plumley to Chester, from whence you cross the platform and join the half-hourly Merseyrail Electric which takes you into the heart of Liverpool, rather than travelling via Piccadilly only as far as Lime Street. (The train actually forms the Liverpool Underground circling around and out back to Chester or the Wirral).

## Local Government Review

If you wish to support one-Cheshire, (see Parish Council article), you can make your views known by logging on to the petition on the Downing Street website at: <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/savecheshire> or you can write to your MP.

..from a new contributor, Stephen Wharfe, the following will form part of a short series entitled "Down on the farm".



Whitehouse Farm

18<sup>th</sup> January 2008-

Anyone who has walked the foot path through Whitehouse Farm in recent months, may well have noticed one or two changes. At various points along the way there are small notices describing some of the conservation work taking place; such as an area of pollen and nectar plants which in the height of summer attracted literally millions of bees, and was quite spectacular to see despite the appalling weather. Adjacent to this was an area of wild bird cover which has provided an abundance of winter food for all manner of birds. You may have noticed an area of uncut grass on the field alongside Plumley Moor road. This is an experiment being conducted by the RSPB, to determine the benefits associated with the fall of grass seed and the populace of wild birds.

Some of the notices explain the importance of natural features such as ditches and hedges. Passing through the farmstead you may notice to your right a large area of unploughed stubble, which has been left to provide a suitable winter habitat for many different species of birds, and a recent survey conducted by the RSPB found it to be very successful counting no less than 25 species on one day alone, three of which four are of particular conservation concern. A family of owls has also been raised.

Further along the route again to your right there is a field of winter wheat, which has a number of skylark plots, which simply means that when Paul Richardson sowed the field, he lifted the drill out of the ground at various intervals moved forwards 2 metres then carried on again leaving a bare plot 3 metres x 2 metres which we are told is the ideal size for these ground nesting birds. So we are all very optimistic that this will be successful.

The last point however is that as keen as we all are to protect wild life, we must remember that each year the world consumes 30 million tons of wheat more than it produces, this is increasing year on year, and stocks are rapidly dwindling. To us it simply means that the price of food will rise, but to tens of millions of people in third world countries it will mean certain starvation.

So a compromise has to be found. Many people see the demise of set aside as a bad omen for wild life, but I feel that the myriad schemes now in operation in this country at least, will ensure a healthy future for the environment.

## Still trying to cut down after Christmas? Here are 2 great low-fat curries!!

### Chicken Curry

#### Ingredients:

1 tbsp. oil  
10g butter  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
q medium onion, chopped  
2tbsp Garam Masala  
1 tsp ground coriander  
1/2 tsp dried mint  
4 skinless chicken fillets, diced  
200 ml water

#### Method:

Heat the oil & butter in a large frying pan. Add the garlic & onion and stir fry for 5 mins. until onion is golden.  
Stir in the Garam Masala, coriander & mint. Add the chicken and cook over a moderate heat for 5 mins, stirring occasionally.  
Add the water, stir and simmer without a lid for 10-15 mins. until the chicken is cooked and the sauce has thickened. Stir in some fresh, chopped coriander and serve with your favourite rice.

### Vegetable Curry

#### Ingredients

1 tbsp. oil  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 medium onion, chopped  
3 stalks celery, slices  
1 small apple, peeled, cored & diced  
1 tsp. each, chilli powder, ground ginger, turmeric  
4oz green beans, sliced, 4oz carrots, sliced  
4oz cauliflower, broken into small florets, 4oz potatoes, diced  
1tsp tomato puree  
1oz sultanas

#### Method

Heat oil in a large frying pan and stir fry garlic, onion, celery and apple for 5 mins. Add chilli, ginger & turmeric and continue to fry gently for one minute more.  
Add beans, carrots, cauliflower & potatoes plus 300 ml water. Stir in tomato puree, sultanas and a pinch of salt. Bring to the boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer for 35-40 mins.  
Enjoy the aroma until ready to serve - with rice!

