

The Deben



Issue 70
Spring 2025

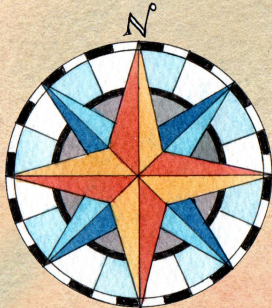
*Some of the places featured in
this issue of The Deben magazine:*

Aspall
Debenham



RIVER DEBEN

Melton
Wilford Bridge
Woodbridge
Martlesham
Waldringfield
Hemley
Kirton Creek
Ramsholt
Goseford
Bawdsey
Felixstowe Ferry
Old Felixstowe
Woodbridge
Haven Buoy



The Deben, Spring 2025

Claudia Myatt

Editor's Introduction	4	Getting Involved:	28
My Deben	6	Meteorology, Environmentalism & Volunteering	
Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP		Oscar Hayter	
Living on Board	8	Getting Involved:	30
Hollie Stebbings		Debenham Green Team	
The View from the Other Side	10	Joy Walton, Kate Scott, Jane Tempest	
Sally Westwood		and Richard Blackwell, on behalf of	
Monsters on the Rope	12	Debenham Green Team members	
Stephanie Perks		Getting Involved:	32
Artist Profile: Jeremy Young	14	Coast & Estuary Wardens	
Sarah Zins		Colin Bailey	
Walk: Two Felixstowe Churches	17	Woodbridge:	33
Jan Harber		The Home of Ambient Music	
Public Rights of Way	20	Jan Pulsford	
Sue Orme		Book Page	35
Sealspotting on the Deben	21	Julia Jones	
Co-chair's Report	22	Shipbuilding on the Deben	36
Colin Nicholson		Peter Wain	
The RDA Journal	24	Waldringfield Dragonflies	38
Obituary: Kay Yule	25	Richard Smithson	
Ruth Leach		Getting Involved:	40
Profile: Thomas Yeung	26	Women on the Water and Youth Sailing	
Tristan McConnell		Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club	
		News from the Hards	41
		Colin Nicholson	
		The River Deben Association	43

Cover art by Jeremy Young.



Jan Pulsford

Editor's Introduction

One of the Deben stories which most caught my interest last year was the challenge encountered by the Sutton Hoo Ship's Company in sourcing the final oak trees needed to complete the project. 'The Anglo-Saxons had access to much larger trees than us,' said Jacq Barnard making an appeal to landowners via the BBC. Tim Kirk, the project's master shipwright explained that the major oak forests today are in France, Denmark and Poland. Also the trees that are needed are veteran trees, 'Quite reasonably people don't want to cut them down. I understand that and fully respect that but without those trees, we don't have a ship.' Finally the Woburn Estate came to the rescue with a magnificent donation of trees which will enable the project to move to its next stage, planking the ship.

This made me wonder how old the trees used for the original ship (built in the early 7th century) would have been—100, 200 years old, more? Neither do I know where those trees grew or where the ship was built. Artefacts found at Sutton Hoo had come from all over the world. Yet leaping forward six hundred years to the 14th century, Peter Wain's research into ship-building at the lost Deben port of Goseford (p36 reveals that finding and transporting suitable timber was a challenge even then).

Today, as I think about our ongoing project to identify and list the Deben's older boats ('Pre-1950 Boats Still Floating, 2025'—see riverdeben.org/pre-1950-boats-still-floating-2025) I wonder about the materials used in them. One



Sutton Hoo Ship's Company

Sutton Hoo Ship's Company volunteers
begin to cleave the oak.

of the many beauties of a wooden boat is that smaller pieces can be replaced within the whole construction. I asked Matt Lis of Woodbridge Boatyard where they find the oak they need in the 21st century. Currently, if they need the very best quality (see *Dulcibella's* lee board p42) they use oak imported from France. However, since the burning down of Notre Dame cathedral, the price of best French oak has risen, as so much has been needed for the rebuilding. For smaller pieces, such as crooks and knees (curved pieces used to strengthen joins and angles) the boatyard is developing local, Suffolk, sources.

So much of the English landscape has historically been shaped by the need for wood to build ships (not only oak) that it's heartening to hear that the Sutton Hoo Ships Company are replanting in a 1:20 ratio at a site near Grundisburgh. It also makes me eager to hear what Matt Wilson, the National Trust Countryside manager will say about managing the Sutton Hoo woodlands when he comes to speak at our AGM (30.4.2025) Perhaps he will find areas of common interest with Jeremy Young, our cover

artist for this issue, who has recently completed a tree-photography project in Staverton Thicks, the ancient woodland from which oaks were being sold for ship-building in 1329, the reign of King Edward III.

I'll admit I felt a moment's hesitation when Sarah Zins suggested a photographer as our cover artist for this issue but (as ever!) she was right, and I commend her fascinating article as well as Jeremy Young's atmospheric images. By the time you receive your copy, I hope that the RDA volunteers who stuff the magazines into envelopes will have done grumbling about the bulk of a 44-page issue on eco-friendly paper and will be able to put their feet up and enjoy the wealth of excellent articles that have filled it. I have a weakness for Stephanie Perks's creepy-crawly subjects so I often turn to them first—and also to Sally Westwood's beautiful bird observations. I found it fascinating to learn that she notices different species from the 'other side' of the river. Yet I felt glad to read from the beginning and discover that the new MP for this area is receptive to the beauty of the river, as well as concerned for its water quality issues. Water quality matters particularly to those who live on the river—like Hollie Stebbings, who writes eloquently of the special pleasures (and challenges) of life afloat. It also matters to those of us who play on it, such as the members of FFSC with their 'Women on Water' programme, the Waldringfield Dragonfly sailors, Thomas Yeung of the DYC and Oscar Hayter of the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts, who admits to being in the river as much as on it.

Think of these last two people, who both serve on the Deben Estuary Partnership, as well as reading articles from the Debenham Green team, ANOB warden Colin Bailey, RDA Committee members Sue Orme and Colin Nicholson and you will immediately recognise the spirit of volunteering—people giving their time and thought freely, for causes they believe to be important. This includes people like Jan Pulsford, championing ambient

music in Woodbridge, and this year helping to run a Spring Equinox Festival in aid of St Mary's Church building fund (22.3.2025) as well as organising her regular festival in September. That spirit runs through every issue of *The Deben*. Even Jenny Riddell-Carpenter, in this issue, didn't HAVE to contribute, she volunteered to do so and wrote her piece over a weekend to hit the deadline. When you read Ruth Leach's obituary of Kay Yule (p25) you may think that volunteering (even when it involves hours of committee work) is part of a life well lived.

As readers, I hope of course that you'll be tempted to lay your magazine aside for a moment and set out for a walk with Janet Harber and her sister Jackie Jones, perhaps stopping to look inside two of the Deben Churches, included by Gareth Thomas in his 4-part *RDA Journal* survey last year. Digby Thorogood, a young volunteer, is currently working to develop a cycle ride that will link them all and (as explained on p35) I am keen to receive your accounts of other walks, runs, rides or paddles that connect these historic monuments.

I hope that hearing from Matt Wilson about the developing colony of grey seals at Orfordness will inspire you to record your own sightings of seals on the Deben this summer (see p21) Thank you to those people, like Hollie Stebbings, Matt Lis and Richard Smithson who have already sent pre-1950 boat details for inclusion in the Pre-1950 Boats Still Floating, 2025 project. Two of them *Cachalot* (built 1898) and *Maid Marion* (built 1925) are Dunkirk Little Ships and will soon be setting out for the 85th anniversary of Operation Dynamo. *Maid Marion*, in particular is massively built and has required very little restoration over her 100 years. I wonder where she got her oak...

I hope we'll soon meet at the AGM when those indomitable volunteers, the RDA committee, put their hands up for another year of service to the river.

You can email Julia at magazine@riverdeben.org.

My Deben

Jenny Riddell-Carpenter



Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP.

As the Member of Parliament for our beautiful Suffolk Coastal constituency, one issue that is particularly close to my heart is the health and future of our environment. Growing up in Martlesham Heath, I was fortunate to live beside one of Suffolk's most important rivers—the River Deben.

From a young age, I spent countless afternoons wandering its banks, and cycling along the estuary. Once or twice, I sailed a Topper on the Deben with School, though not that successfully.

And now as an adult, my connection to the river has only deepened, and it plays an even more important role in my life today—living in Woodbridge, its where I look to clear my head, either on a dog walk or exploring nature along the length of the estuary.

But it's my role as an MP that ties me even closer to the Deben and the nature it supports.

We are all aware of the pressures that our natural resources face. Pollution, agricultural runoff, and urban development have all put significant strain on rivers and waterways across the country. The River Deben is no exception. Over the years, I've witnessed firsthand how these challenges have affected the river's health.

That's why addressing these issues has been a priority for me as your MP. I've worked closely with environmental groups, local councils, and the Environment Agency (EA) to both champion local water quality issues, and to make sure we challenge the restrictive issues and practices of the EA that can inhibit progress on flood protection work that is underway locally. I recently met with the Minister for Water and Flooding, Emma Hardy MP, to talk about water quality and flooding issues in each of our Suffolk rivers and across our coastal towns, and particularly highlighted the River Deben. We discussed in some great length the challenges faced in protecting the estuary, and how and where Government support can be directed here in Suffolk Coastal.

I have invited her and her team down to visit the River Deben, and I hope that we can make a visit happen in the next few months—it's important that she can see how the river ecosystem is under threat in some areas, but how work underway to protect it is a good example of how improved waterways benefit everyone—people, landowners, farmers, and the environment.

In November, I had the pleasure of meeting with Colin Nicholson and Jane Haviland from your Association, both of whom are deeply

committed to the River Deben's health and preservation. Colin, as Chair of your Association, has been a tireless advocate for the river and its surrounding environment. Our meeting provided a valuable opportunity to discuss the ongoing challenges and the way forward. We focused primarily on water quality, which remains a critical issue for the river's future. I was particularly impressed by the Association's commitment to adopting an evidence-based approach to addressing the river's current condition.



Jenny and her dog by the Melton–Woodbridge stretch of the Deben.

The work the Association and its partners is doing to monitor water quality is invaluable. The data gathered has been essential in making informed decisions about how to tackle pollution and improve the river's overall health. It's a perfect example of how local communities, working in partnership with experts, can bring about meaningful and lasting change.

The River Deben is more than just an environmental asset—it is also an economic and social hub for our community—and a success story regionally. It supports tourism, local businesses, and recreational activities that many of us cherish. But none of this is possible without a healthy, clean river.

There's always more work to be done, of course. I will continue to push for stronger environmental regulations, better waste management practices, and greater investment in sustainable solutions to protect our waterways. However, I remain hopeful, having seen the power of community action and local collaboration, particularly through associations like the River Deben Association.



In Kingston Field, Woodbridge.

If you'd like to contact Jenny, you can email her at jenny.riddellcarpenter.mp@parliament.uk.

Hollie Stebbings

Living on Board

The slapping sound of saltwater against the hull wakes me in the early hours. It's another windy night on the river. Usually the sounds are muffled by the wooden shell but the gales are particularly fierce tonight! It's one of the things I love about living on a boat; how attuned to the natural world I have become. I feel every bit of weather and season in my bones, and the tides keep me in check. The shrill cry of the oystercatcher is my springtime alarm clock.

I've always been attracted to Woodbridge, and the river in particular, after many trips to the town as a child back in the day. A few years ago, I was delighted to be offered a job at Art Safari, located on Ferry Quay, that combined two of my greatest loves—travel and art. At the time I was commuting from elsewhere in Suffolk, and suddenly the time was right to relocate to this town and make it my home.

Word got out that I was searching for somewhere to rent, and within a couple of months I was living on a boat for the first time in my life with my furry shadow—Fudge the cat. And so it began. The learning curve of getting to know the quirks and ‘personality’ of the vessel; every creak, shudder, and bubbly lift as she rises and falls with the tide. My quality of sleep rapidly improved, particularly at high tide, a sensation that perhaps to the subconscious mind is akin to being cradled in the womb. I began to know and love the difference between the energy on solid ground and that of the river. Stepping aboard brings an overwhelming feeling of peace. Fudge was reserving judgement at this stage.

After 2 years onboard a retired Thames sight-seeing cruiser, an old fishing trawler came into my possession. She needed a lot of work and



Hollie Stebbings

Hollie's houseboat, built in 1949.

even more love, and so with much help from good friends and local boatbuilders, she was given a new lease of life.

Moving boats also allowed me to shave off about 30 seconds from my already short commute to the Art Safari office!

I live here happily with Fudge, who is very much enjoying life on a bigger boat, especially in the summer when he can sprawl out on deck and warm his fluffy body in the sun. He is also enjoying the novelty of currently being the only cat on the quay and has many friends in the community.

Summers on board are my favourite time too (unsurprisingly!) as living conditions are easier with less jobs to do, and more time to laze

around on deck with the cat, a good book, and a glass of wine! Suddenly, every land dwelling friend and acquaintance wants to visit and enjoy a taste of boat life which is rather handy for me as it's incredibly difficult to leave this place!

The ever-changing Deben and the rolling skies above have a habit of stealing my attention, whether onboard, or sitting in the office, where my desk looks out over the quay. It's always a pleasure to have all of the doors, skylights and portholes open, letting the breeze pass through and the sound of the river birds drift in.

Winters always come with challenges and hard graft. Hauling bags of coal and wood down into the galley certainly keeps me fit and strong!

Hollie Stebbings



Fudge.

Building a fire and maintaining it every day also takes time but worth it to keep things cosy.

Heavy rain always brings lots of intrigue, playing the fun game of 'guess where the leak is coming

from?' as new ones appear at random depending on wind direction. A common problem for many! In fact, whenever there is a gathering of boat folk, reoccurring topics of conversation include leaks, bilge pumps and different types of toilet. It never ceases to be fascinating.

The best thing about living on the river is the strong community spirit of the quay. People help each other out, whether it's providing a spare onion or nutmeg, some jump leads, or helping



Hollie Stebbings

Relaxing on the foredeck.

with a bilge pump conundrum! Every boat contains a character, and some have become close dear friends. Juxtaposed with the bird calls and general tinkling of boat paraphernalia are the melodic notes of Clara's flute, and sometimes John or Drew's guitar. In the spring and summer, the boat dwellers are out on deck, working, socialising and relaxing. In the winter we hibernate.

These days, it's hard to imagine living in a 'normal' house ever again!

Sally Westwood

The View from the Other Side

Sally Westwood



Deben poppies.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to stay in a lovely house on a fairly quiet section, of the other side of the river. Tide Mill was to my right and Martlesham was to my left. It was a contrast to my familiar side of the river, where the river path winds along the edge of the bends in the course of the river, and the river and birds, when the tide is low is fairly close for riverside walkers.

The river, from the other side was further away because there was no river path on this section of the river. In the clear light of the golden hour following sunrise, the river looked like a part of a panoramic oil painting stretching to the left and right, with the river flowing straight across behind a large meadow of sun drenched, scarlet poppies. The outer edges of my view were laced with woodland, isolated trees and bushes. A small lake with flowering lily pads in various shades of pink was nestled behind a mass of yellow buttercups. Darters, that look like chunky dragonflies flew over the lily pads. Waterboatmen scuttled across the water eating microscopic organisms. Iridescent blue damselflies landed on bushes in the woodland, adjacent to the pond and looked like beautiful fragile blue twigs. It was occupied by three Mallards, two of which were males that were staying close to a female, as she frequently upended, submerging her

head under water looking for shellfish, at the edge of the lake. Mallards also eat seeds, acorns, berries and insects. This was private land with restricted access to the river edge. Unconcerned with manmade restrictions, large herds of mixed deer travelled past, and returned daily, along established pathways, foraging for food amongst the poppies and grasses in the meadow. I saw Muntjac, Fallow and Red deer. In the river there were boats on moorings, dotted here and there. Small sailing dinghies weaved along their own pathways in the river, their white sails pushed gently on by the wind.

The mix of habitats on this section of the river attracted different birds to that of the other side of the river. I noticed a female Marsh Harrier in the hazy sunshine, gliding low over the tops of the flowers growing in the meadow. This was an unusual sight for me. I had not seen a Marsh Harrier on my side of the river. I wondered if she was hunting for Coots or Moorhens, since these water birds are a common prey for the Marsh Harrier. I had not seen these two birds either when I was out and about with my binoculars on the other side. These harriers eat small frogs, rodents and birds in their usual habitats of wetland and farmland. The meadow was a densely packed habitat for Skylarks, who like to nest on the ground. I saw a couple of Skylarks when they dropped down to fence posts after spiraling down from a great high, after singing their song, almost as if to proclaim their right to breed in the meadow below. Heathland, marshland and intertidal areas with heathland are regular habitats for these seed eaters.

It was a joy to discover the identity of a small, mostly brown bird that dropped down from a tree branch and landed on the fence. It flew along



Red Kite.

using the fence and nearby trees, zig-zagging from the branch of a tree, then to the ground to catch an insect, sometimes back to the same branch, then to the fence, and off to the next tree. It was a Spotted Flycatcher. These birds like the close proximity of mature trees and fences to support their style of hunting for insects, on woodland or farmland. They eat butterflies, craneflies, and damselflies. Flycatchers are rather like a slimmer Robin, in a lighter shade of brown, with a bobbing tail that is very often upright, when the bird lands.

A Common Buzzard was a regular visitor in the late afternoon. Like the Marsh Harrier, the Buzzard flew low over the meadow. Skylarks are regular

prey for Common Buzzards, probably the reason why the buzzard flew so low over the meadow. Buzzards also eat rodents and rabbit, and may have been looking for either of these in the density of flora growing in the meadow. They also eat large insects and earthworms. They prefer to hunt over grassland, upland, woodland and farmland. They are often seen eating roadkill. Buck hares were present in the meadow. It was a pleasant surprise to see another raptor glide over my head. A Red Kite flew over the lake, head down checking out the Mallards below. The Red Kite is slightly longer and frequently heavier than the Common Buzzard. It is 60–66cms in length and weighs 800–1,300g. Whereas, the Buzzard is 51–57cms in length and weighs 550–1,300g. The Marsh Harrier is a similar length to the buzzard at 48–56cms. Perhaps there are more opportunities for food on this side of the river for the Red Kite. Since this side has a mix of their preferred habitats of upland, woodland, and farmland, similarly to the Common Buzzard. They tend to eat worms and carrion, but have been known to take small mammals. Two Tawny owls called at dusk, followed by the mewing of a Little Owl. The smaller owl is the prey of Tawny Owls. 'Watch out! Little Owl,' I thought.

Sally Westwood is a Psychologist, works as a researcher and is a professional bird photographer.



Skylark.

Monsters on the Rope

So, you have just relaunched after a long winter in the yard and are returning to your mooring buoy. All has gone well and even drawing up alongside is straightforward. Even the boat hook grasps hold of the buoy firmly, first time. As you pull the buoy up you notice how very busy the rope underneath it is; well, you have been away since last year.

Once firmly attached to your mooring spot, you glance down at the deck, where the rope had first landed and notice a whole load of 'detritus' on the pristine deck. That is what is left of your unintentional glimpse of life in the river. It will comprise of barnacle shells and fragments of mussel shell, oyster shell, shrimps, zooplankton, phytoplankton and a whole load of small growing plants such as Sea lettuce (*Ulva lactua*). In fact, your boat rope is actually a river nursery.

As this article is about the beasties, rather than the plants, I will concentrate on the shrimps and the shellfish. The brown shrimp (also referred to sometimes as the 'common shrimp'), is a commonly discovered creature in East Anglian rivers, and the River Deben is no exception. Their rate of growth is largely dependent on the temperature



Julia Jones



A busy mooring rope.

of the water along with its salinity, with them growing to a possible seven inches, but usually less than this in the Deben. They don't often live for more than two years and reach sexual maturity when they are around five and a half inches in length. Although you may not have a full-size beastie on your deck, you will most likely have a unique selection of babes and adolescents wriggling about looking for freedom. Interestingly, a recent survey into East Anglian rivers discovered that it was not uncommon for the

shrimps to have ingested cocaine and ketamine. Strangely enough the research paper stated that although pesticides in the UK had been banned, the source of such substances ‘remain unclear’.

Although I am not able to fully address the fascinating life cycle of shellfish such as barnacles, mussels and oysters within the space of this article, I do urge the reader to investigate this area further, as these seemingly mundane creatures live busy and interesting lives (including the amazing fact that barnacles possess some of the longest penises in relation to body size than any other animal).

All three of these bivalve molluscs can be found in the Deben and the latter two are eaten not only by crabs and foraging birds but also by humans. The larvae of these creatures (known as *glochidia* in the case of mussels; *nauplius* in barnacles) form part of the rich mass of zooplankton in the river’s environment, and after a period of several weeks, settle down to attach themselves to a substrate such as a rock, a shell or, in this case, to your mooring rope. Here they are able to withstand the tides and currents flowing throughout the river and can develop into juvenile shellfish known in the oyster and mussel world as *spats*, and *cyprid* in the case of barnacles.

Mussels and barnacles live longer than the shrimps, indeed some live up to ten years. It is possible to age a mussel by counting number of rings on the shell (rather like an age of a tree). Oysters reach adulthood after three years and grow typically around one inch each year depending on the temperature, general water quality and salinity—faster in areas of high salinity. Although oysters are the longest lived of all four beasts, and can survive for

up to thirty years in the wild, they normally do not live past six years in UK rivers.

The *Semibalanus balanoides* is the most commonly found barnacle in the River Deben and feeds on zooplankton. The males’ base can extend to some fifteen centimetres in diameter, but the females grow only to one or two centimetres in diameter. They need to moult frequently depending on the water temperature and the availability of food. Consequently, during the summer months, they moult and shed their old shell material, which you will find on your deck, dropping out of the rope.

So, I have endeavoured to whet your appetite to read more about these fascinating beasts and the whole world that continues day to day under your keel. Indeed, the more you investigate into this environment, the more there is to discover, such as what occurs on the microscopic level in the galaxies of zooplankton and phytoplankton. You might even begin to look forward to seeing what comes up when your boat is lifted out again...

Dr Stephanie Perks lives on her boat and has swum in, walked by and sailed on the Deben for 30 years. She is fascinated by insects, arachnids, gastropods, and other such delightful inhabitants of our planet.



A hairy bottom.

Sarah Zins

Artist Profile: Jeremy Young

His Affection for Life: Jeremy Young's photography

One of the roles of the artist is to make the viewer look afresh at things that they may take for granted and to see their beauty. In the case of our cover photographer, Jeremy Young, this is not only about looking closely at the river but in so doing, to open our eyes to that most fundamental material, mud. He is currently working on a series of images to be published in a book which he titles *One River* made on the tidal stretches of the River Deben from Wilford Bridge to the Woodbridge Haven buoy. He says of it: "The One River series is inspired by a desire to further connect with a landscape that has shaped much of my image making. I strive to capture images of the ever-changing river landscape as my practice

delves into themes of time, memory, and the impermanence of experience."

To further reconnect his images to the materials of the river and introduce a hand-made printing technique into his digital practice, mud collected from the river is used to create a subtle layer to the surface of the prints before the now-textured prints are rephotographed. Looking at some of the photos, you will see mud in a completely new light as a moving, shifting substance, marked with the pattern of the waves and tides and bird prints and flotsam and jetsam

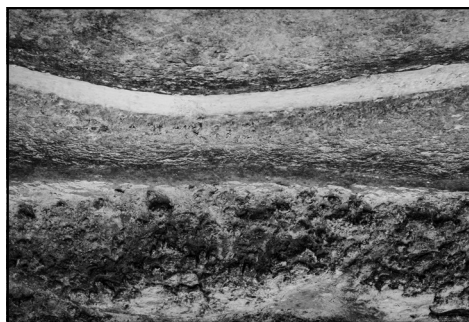
When I talked to Jeremy, I was keen to ask him explain his affinity with the River Deben.

[All photos in article] Jeremy Young



The answer is that he has been coming here since his father's job moved to Ipswich when he was 2 years old. His parents rented Deben Cottage next to the Maybush in Waldringfield (owned by the Schlee family, Rosemary Schlee being one of the founders of the River Deben Association) before building their own house in Waldringfield. He has been walking along the river edge ever since and, after time working abroad and in London, now lives permanently at Hemley with a view of the river. His daily walk takes him to Kirton Creek, where he takes in changing light, the ebbing and flowing tides, the different seasons and the bird life and other wild creatures.

Jeremy not only walks, but also sails, and he first learned to sail at Waldringfield Sailing Club in cadets and mirrors. He graduated to OKs later and, as a competitor in flying fifteens on the Alde, I can attest, with chagrin, to the calibre of the skills imparted by that sailing education.





Jeremy's love of photography started when he was small, although he was deterred at that stage from pursuing it as a career. Instead, he did a degree in Engineering Science and Mathematics and went on to conduct seismic surveys all over the world, building up as he travelled a substantial portfolio of photographs as well as the wherewithal to support a move to photography as a full-time career. He was fortunate to start work with an important photographer, Ken Griffiths, who tested him with a one-week assignment to find a suitable location to shoot a car on top of a snowy mountain. He sent back photos, arranged access and thus began his career as a professional photographer. He went on to work with advertising agencies running shoots for companies such as Volvo, Marlboro and Cunard. He also worked as a free-lancer for the Observer, Telegraph, Country Living, House and Garden and he was a frequent photographer for "A Day in the Life" in the Sunday Times magazine. He also worked extensively with architects on new builds, and one of his highlights was photographing London from many angles to help Fosters work out precisely where to locate the Millennium Bridge.

Jeremy retired from commercial photography last year, but far from hanging up his tripod, you will see from our cover that he has relocated its position

to nearer home. He is relishing the opportunity to work on his own projects and has recently published a book of images of Staverton Thicks, the centuries old oak forest in Wantisden. 10 years ago, he studied for an MA in fine art at the University of Suffolk, having never had a formal arts training, and enjoyed the chance to study other artists and prepare for an eventual return to his own projects. While commercial photography transitioned from analogue methods to digital over Jeremy's 40 years in the business, he is back to exploring both more traditional and more cutting-edge techniques, with the mud painting being just one of them. It seems fitting to end this piece with a quote which inspires Jeremy's current body of work taken from Robert Adams' book *Beauty in Photography*:

"Landscape pictures can offer us three verities: geography, autobiography and metaphor. Geography is, if taken alone, sometimes boring, autobiography is frequently trivial and metaphor can be dubious. But taken together [...] the three kinds of information strengthen each other and reinforce what we all work to keep intact—the affection for life."

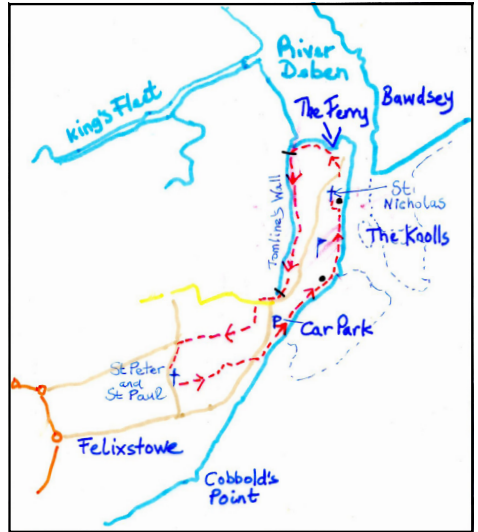
Jeremy Young will be at the RDA AGM on April 30th to show some of his recent work.

Walk: Two Felixstowe Churches

This five-mile route, a mix of coastal and suburban walking, links the churches of St Peter and St Paul in Old Felixstowe and St Nicholas at Felixstowe Ferry. The two churches are described in detail by Gareth Thomas in his *RDA Journal* series *Churches of the Deben: Part 3B*.

Starting from the Cliff Road car park, my sister Judy and I walked this in January 2025 in an anti-clockwise direction. There are several other permutations to suit wind, weather and tidal conditions. OS Explorer 197 Ipswich, Felixstowe and Harwich shows all the public rights of way.

After descending the steps near the golf club, which is currently a building site for five new houses, turn left and, with the golf course on your left, head along the surfaced Suffolk Coast Path towards the Ferry. Ahead to seaward are the ever-changing massive shingle banks that form The Knolls, shoals across the entrance to the River Deben. At low water you can leave the concrete path and explore the vast expanse of



Map of the route.

shingle beach beneath which is what was, only a few years ago, the navigable channel in and out of the river. On windy days there will likely be the spectacle of daring kite-boarders doing their thing over the breaking waves.

Beyond the Knolls to the north is Bawdsey Manor, once the cliff-top centre of innovative wartime radar operations, and now home to PGL activity holidays.

At the Ferry, turn left just before the Martello tower and then right to find the modest little building that is Felixstowe Ferry's church. Named for St Nicholas, patron saint of



The Knolls, Summer 2024.



sailors, the church dates back to Victorian times, and was originally combined with a school in a wooden hut. This building was destroyed by an air raid in 1943 and rebuilt in 1954. Inside the bright and homely church are some hand-crafted local wall hangings. Church services are held here on Sunday evenings in the summer and it is used for other events including small scale concerts by Music in Felixstowe.

Back on the coast path, depending on the season, there are attractive dry gardens fronting the villas, houses and chalets on your left. Near the sailing club, as well as racing dinghies and catamarans, you may see the Ferry rowing club's gigs *St Felix* and *St Ethelreda*. The foot ferry to Bawdsey, the boatyard, the fish shack, and two cafes make up this busy hamlet at the mouth of the Deben.

The familiar red phone box on the Millenium Green brought back memories for me. In those far off days before mobile phones you were

Tomline's Wall permissive path.

obliged to row ashore from your boat to ring home and tell them of your safe arrival. While you pushed coins into the slots and pressed buttons or reversed the charges, the rest of your crew would already be at the bar in the ancient Ferry Boat Inn, sadly closed at the time of writing.

Past the Millenium Green there is a footpath along the seawall that winds round behind the boatyard with houseboats, wrecks, mud, saltings and the river on your right. Keep along the wall until you reach a junction and a footpath sign pointing drunkenly to the right. Ignore the sign, go left, through the gate and down to a path along the Tomline Wall, which, as explained on the nearby Golf Club sign, is permissive.

Colonel Tomline, a wealthy local landowner who dug out the original Felixstowe Dock basin in Victorian times, had this sea defence built in

the 1870s to protect Felixstowe Marshes. After the 1953 flood it was reinforced so the top is a wide and somewhat wild corridor between the driving range and the main golf course. The path is overgrown, muddy and slippery in places so we were glad to have brought sticks with us. There are wide ranging views across the marshes to the west and eastward over the links to the Ferry and the sea.

When you emerge onto the road near the golf club, turn right and keep right on the bend, up the minor Ferry Road. After a short distance look out for a Footpath between the houses on the left. Follow this path, crossing Westmoreland Road, as it winds behind the housing estate gardens for about half a mile until it comes out on Ferry Road again, near the Kingsfleet Primary School. Turn left and carry on to St Peter and St Paul church on the left near the community centre.

This parish church is the oldest building in Felixstowe, it dates back to Medieval times, witnessed by the ancient wood carvings of mythological beasts on the choir stall ends. The churchyard contains interesting graves including that of East Anglian landscape and portrait painter Frederick Cotman (1850 to 1920) who has an artist's palette carved on his tombstone. Another is that of John Spencer Login (1809 to 1863) a Scottish surgeon with the East India Company who became the guardian of the then ten-year-old Maharajah Duleep Singh and the Koh-i-Noor diamond. Duleep Singh erected Login's grand marble tombstone engraved with words chosen by Queen Victoria.

At the north end of the church graveyard is the recently restored Garden

of Remembrance, designed and made by Notcutts in 1997 after the graveyard was closed. To the south is a fine lych gate and path to the church, edged by neatly trimmed yew trees.

To continue the walk, turn left by the lych gate and follow the footpath between the houses passing St Georges Terrace on your right. This row of period three-storey villas was built to accommodate visitors to Felixstowe wishing to take 'the sea water treatment.' Follow the well-signed footpath, cross Western Avenue, on through the housing estate, bear right at the open space and come out near The Dip, with the sea across Cliff Road in front of you.

To return directly to the car park turn left up the road, or take the scenic route by crossing the road near the Dip Kiosk, where you can get refreshments on most days of the year. Rejoin the Suffolk Coast Path with the colourful beach huts on your left. At the end of the beach huts you will reach the foot of the steps where you began the walk. Ascend to the car park.

A fully illustrated version of Janet Harber's Felixstowe Church walk will be the RDA Journal article March 7th 2025.



Houseboats at the Ferry.

Public Rights of Way

In Suffolk we have the opportunity for seemingly limitless walking routes. Walks around the Deben and its environs take in beautiful views, different habitats, as well as iconic features, such as Sutton Hoo.

If you are out on a walk and find the footpath is not where you expect, then it is easy to check. This can be done by referring to Suffolk County Councils Definitive Map. The Definitive Map is a legal record of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in England and Wales. There is an accompanying definitive statement updated by the local authority.

The Suffolk Definitive Map can be found on Suffolk County Council website (www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-rights-of-way-in-suffolk) or merely enter “definitive maps Suffolk” into your browser. From here it’s easy to scroll down and find each village or parish listed in alphabetical order, as well as being able to download the map to refer to on your walk. The plans, based on the Ordnance Survey, cover a larger area than the individual village or parish. From this page it also possible to follow a link to the Highway Reporting Tool to flag up any obstructions found blocking a right of way (<https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk>).

There are four different types of PRoW’s defined by local authorities generally as follows.

A **public right of way** is a right by which the public can pass along routes over land at all times. Although the land maybe owned by a private individual, the public have a right to pass along a specific route. PRoWs are highways in law. The mode of transport allowed differs according to what type it is but always includes pedestrians. A PRoW can be a footpath, bridleway, byway and restricted byway.

A **footpath** is a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot.

A **permissive footpath** does not have any rights legally and exists because the landowner is

allowing it. Usually landowners avoid accruing a legal right by closing occasionally or signing to say it’s permissive in some way.

A **bridleway** is a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot, horseback and a pedal cycle.

A **byway** is open to all traffic and is a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot, horseback, pedal cycle and wheeled vehicles including mechanically propelled vehicles, but is mostly usually used for walking or riding. Most do not have a surface suitable for motorised vehicles.

A **restricted byway** is a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot, horseback and a pedal cycle and other non mechanically propelled vehicles such as horsedrawn carriage. It may also include a right to drive animals.

The definitive maps have a key to indicate which type of PRoW the route is. On the SCC website there are sometimes old copies which are not as clear. If this is the case, open another map adjacent to the village or parish for a clearer map.

Both the owner and user of the PRoW have duties and these generally involve respecting the land and other users. If you wish to read further then there is more on the SCC website including how PRoWs are affected in Planning. The Ramblers Association also have an interesting article about the history of public rights of way. There are dedicated PRoW officers within the local authorities who are specialists in the field administering changes, working in the planning and legal framework and ensuring PRoWs are maintained safely. They can be contacted via Suffolk County Council.

Sue Orme is an RDA committee member, responsible for planning, footpaths and access.

For info on signs in the Coast and Heaths AONB visit: <https://coastandheaths-nl.org.uk/exploring/during-your-visit/waymarker-signs-and-discs>



Byway, Suffolk.



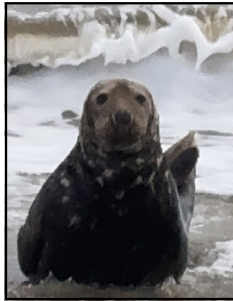
Sutton footpath, leading off a bridleway.

Sealspotting on the Deben

Andrew Lis, Waldringfield Boatyard manager and Deben Cruises skipper joked that ‘even tea and scones pale into insignificance if we can spot a group of seals on the mudflats or an inquisitive face in the water whilst out on our trip boat *Jahan*. Seals have a charm which really surprises people who aren’t used to being out on the river.’

Historically the seals on the Deben have been Common Seals but with the expansion of the Grey seal colony at Orfordness (cf. our AGM talk 30.4.2025) can we expect also to see Grey Seals on the River Deben?

In an article for *The Deben* #55 (Autumn 2017, available at <https://riverdeben.org/magazine>) Richard Verrill explained how to tell the difference between the two types:



A grey seal.

Liz Hattan

Despite the name grey seals are not necessarily grey and can vary from reddish brown to black. Overlying their background colour are darker patches and spots which are seen more on their upper side. Common seals are usually light or dark grey or brown but may take on a red colour when exposed to iron oxides in mud. Overlying their background colour they tend to have finer spots than the Grey seal.

Grey seals are often larger than common seals and have a different head shape with a more pronounced muzzle.

He then wondered whether seal numbers on the Deben were in decline. If you see a seal on the river this summer, it would be very helpful if you would note the date and place, and which type you thought it was—and, ideally, take a photo!

Co-chair's Report

Jason Alexander



Jason Alexander's Happiness Hub.

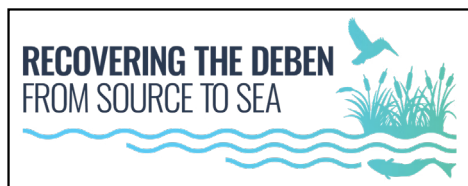
We are now well into 2025 and it doesn't seem to have been a quiet start to the year on the Deben. Issues keep cropping up and The River Deben has had its fair share of mentions (not necessarily all to be avoided) in the *East Anglian Daily Times*, *BBC Look East* and *ITV News Anglia*.

Your River Deben Association has been playing an active role as I endeavour to lay before you in my Spring 2025 Co-Chair's report below. The other half of the Co-Chair role remains unfilled, something which requires to be addressed.

Events

The RDA's inspirational **Autumn Talk**: 'Confessions of a Serial Litter-Picker' by Jason Alexander took place on Guy Fawkes's night and despite competing fireworks had over

50 attendees. Every talk should have a (true) mind-blowing statistic and Jason achieved this with his fact that cigarette butts are the most common form of litter with 4 trillion dropped around the world every year: made of cellulose acetate and take 10 years to break down! But Jason was not all gloom & doom and illustrated many practical approaches to turning the tide, particularly through education in schools. Jason's 'Happiness Hub' in the Market Hill telephone kiosk, launched last November, predated (and caused?) the news of Woodbridge being voted the happiest town in the country.



RDA Partnerships

Recovering the Deben: As words turn to action, the Recovering the Deben project of which the RDA is a member, has been the vehicle to achieving £280,000 funding to create new flood storage and wetland areas this spring, as part of efforts to reduce flooding in Debenham. The Deben Climate Centre and Lower Deben Riparian Owners Group have recently joined the project team. An independent and detailed baseline of the 'State of the Deben' is being produced by experts. Workstreams are: river habitat and estuary restoration; natural flood management; valuing our rivers and the water in them; natural edges; water quality.

Deben Estuary Partnership (DEP): As a founder member, the RDA is working with the DEP (see Page 26 for profile of DEP Chair

Thomas Yeung), to update the 2015 Estuary Plan and with landowners to address the danger of overtopping or breaches to the sea wall at 'Flood Cell 1' between Bawdsey and Ramsholt. The DEP and RDA are also working together to seek a review of 1980's Deben Estuary Bylaws, involving a survey of interested parties and the wider public.

Felixstowe Ferry Fore Shore Trust: The RDA is a shareholder in the FFFST and has been kept abreast of developments at Felixstowe Ferry such as the construction of a new public car park and the sad closure and sale of the Ferry boat Inn and we hope it reopens soon.



Left: Tony Lyon Right: Colin Nicholson

Some of the issues

Jet-Skis (or personal watercraft): A public consultation by East Suffolk Council Licensing Committee resulted in 377 responses (a record for them!) with 99.99% against the licensing of commercial personal watercraft. However, the Committee's decision against licensing will make no difference to privately-owned personal water craft. So, the DEP/RDA will, in the survey outlined above, ask whether there should be a clause banning the use of all personal watercraft on the Deben Estuary bringing this special place into line with Oulton Broad and the River Orwell. Personal watercraft took up a lot of the discussion time at the 2024 Deben Forum, facilitated by the RDA.

Water Quality: The RDA sits on the water quality sub-group of the Recovering the Deben project. The RDA monitors River Fly populations at Hawkeswade Bridge, Ufford and has contributed to the costs of a third year of an Estuary Fish Survey and of trail cameras (one

was subsequently stolen!) used to monitor Otter numbers along the Deben (RDA helped form the Deben Otter Group). The RDA also works closely with the 'Deben Climate Centre' and 'Save the Deben' on water quality monitoring, as well as the Environment Agency who rated Waldringfield Bathing Water Quality as 'Good' in its latest (November 2024) Annual Report (see online *RDA Journal* article for more info).

Governance: Your Committee now has representation the length of the river, from Debenham (article on the Debenham Green Team on Page 30) down to Felixstowe Ferry, a new Patron in Lord Deben and has had a meeting with local MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter who expressed her support of the RDA's objectives. The RDA is also looking at more actively disbursing (rather than simply saving) its surplus funds for good river catchment causes. But volunteers are always required (nothing onerous) so do step forward if you are interested in helping with River Fly/Otter/Fish monitoring or Events Management and email volunteer@riverdeben.org.



Colin Nicholson

RDA volunteers monitoring river flies.

So, thank you for catching up with the activities of your RDA and I wish you the best for the 2025 Season.

Colin Nicholson is Co-chair of the RDA and Vice-chair of the Deben Estuary Partnership. He had a varied career in the pharmaceutical industry, and was later Chief Executive of British Wrestling.

The RDA Journal

The *RDA Journal* is published fortnightly on our website: riverdeben.org/rda-journal. It offers space for RDA members with particular interests and knowledge to write at length about subjects which interest them. This is building up a significant archive of expertise. Recent contributions have included:

04/10/2024
**A Walk from
Shottisham to
Ramsholt (and Back)**
Sue Ryder Richardson

18/10/2024
**Artist and
Printmaker
Angela Harding
Finds Inspiration
on the Deben**
Catherine Lerner

01/11/2024
**Best Wishes to
Deben Sailor Pip
Hare as She Tackles**

**Her Second Vendee
Globe Race**
Julia Jones and
Nick Cottam

15/11/2024
**Where Next for
Nirvana of Arklow?**
Julia Jones, Jamie Clay,
Carolyn Gibbins,
Samantha Simpson,
Russell Read, Hugh
Browton, Nancy Clay

29/11/2024
**Confessions of a
Serial Litter-Picker:
The RDA Autumn
Talk, Nov 5th 2024**
Julia Jones

13/12/2024
**The Last Wooden
Kestrel on the
Deben?**
Ned Jones, Julia Jones
and Bertie Wheen

10/01/2025
**Pre-1950 Boats Still
Floating, 2025**
Julia Jones

24/01/2025
**Water Quality
Update**
Colin Nicholson

07/02/2025
**'Cachalot' (1898): a
'gentleman's yacht'
and a Dunkirk
'little ship'**
Steve and Beverley
Daley-Yates

21/02/2025
**Citizen Science—
Fish Survey 2024**
Steve Colcough

07/03/2025
**A Two-Felixstowe-
Church Walk**
Janet Harber

Pre-1950 Boats Still Floating, 2025

<https://www.riverdeben.org/pre-1950-boats-still-floating-2025/>

Tom Cunliffe



Cachalot returning to Dunkirk in 1990.
(See the 7.2.2025 *RDA Journal* article.)

David Hunt



Maid Marion was part of the lesser-known Operation Ariel, evacuating troops from the west coast of France. (An *RDA Journal* article is forthcoming.)

Ruth Leach

Obituary: Kay Yule

Kay Yule; a dear friend, valued colleague and a fellow Lib Dem, sadly passed away on the 19th December, 2024, after a short illness.

In paying tribute to her I would like to give you an idea of Kay's resilience and sense of humour. I sat with her in hospital the day before she passed away and played her the sounds of the recent Suffolk Tractor Light Parade as it passed through Woodbridge. She smiled and chuckled. Encouraged, I explained to her that we were making progress on resolving the Station Rd carpark flooding and she managed a 'thumbs up' and a sleepy grin.

A strong lady with a wonderful sense of humour right to the end, Kay had many 'big loves' in Woodbridge.

She supported the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts and championed the Woodbridge library and was at one stage the chair of the Kyson Fairway Committee.

She was Commodore of the DYC in 2002 and was instrumental in important structural developments.

In her East Suffolk councillor role, she represented the Woodbridge Ward and held the portfolio for Coastal Management. A big jump perhaps from her obvious enjoyment in planting up the planters in the Thoroughfare for 'Woodbridge in Bloom'. She also held the portfolio for Planning and her years of experience in that area will be missed. She previously had served the community as a Woodbridge Town Councillor.

Her private cremation was a dignified affair with purple irises and fresh yellow roses, all played out to the background music of "English country garden".



District councillor Kay Yule.

Kay loved gardening and this was a fitting tribute. Only the 'gin and tonic' was missing.

A memorial service to celebrate her life will be held on the 16th May, 12 noon at St Mary's Church in Woodbridge.

Afterwards we invite the community to 'bring a plate' and gather together to share refreshments and their personal memories of Kay.

This will take place at St Mary's Church Hall. All are welcome.

Ruth Leach is a photographer, campaigner and county councillor.

Profile: Thomas Yeung

With a background in engineering and a passion for sailing, Thomas Yeung was seemingly made to chair the Deben Estuary Partnership, one of a constellation of organisations seeking to protect the River Deben.

“The purpose of the Deben Estuary Partnership is really to provide a forum for people to come together and talk,” Yeung says, adding that the involvement of “technical experts” on subjects such as flood management, water treatment, and irrigation is critical. “It has input from people who know what they’re talking about.”

The Environment Agency set up the partnership in 2008 to draft an estuary management plan focused on more than just flood defences. Rather it would take into consideration the environmental, social, and economic values of the river and offer guidance on appropriate development and use.

The plan aimed to recognise the ecological value of the Deben’s tidal flooding and saltmarsh edges while understanding the river’s importance to a wide range of users, from sailors and walkers to businesses and landowners. At times the estuary plan, published in 2015, waxed poetic:

The thin line of a flood defence structure is the meeting point between the estuary and dry land and is where attention and emotions become most concentrated. It is where one domain gives way to another; wet gives way to dry, salt gives way to fresh. It is the margin where uses of and interests upon the river meet, where the necessity for flood risk management must correspond with the obligation to protect intertidal habitat.

The document has an important role, says Yeung, because “it sets an overall direction for where the majority of our stakeholders think the

river should be going,” although he admits that often “it’s hard to get consensus.”

A recent case was a proposal to set up a jet ski hire business on the Deben for which East Suffolk Council asked the partnership to provide an opinion. Yeung submitted a response opposing the plan on the grounds of “public safety to other river users” but was eager that wider voices should be heard, so he alerted members helping publicise the consultation.

In the end, the council received a record 377 responses, most objections, and in January the committee denied the jet ski business a license to operate.

“I’ve never learnt so much about local government since I came back to Suffolk!” laughs Yeung who attended the licensing committee meeting and spends a lot of time dealing with various councils at all levels.

The 62-year-old worked overseas for many years before returning to Woodbridge in 2018 where, despite being retired, he took a coastal erosion and flood defences job with Coastal Partnership East, a management organisation established by East Suffolk, North Norfolk, and Great Yarmouth Borough councils. “As an engineer and a sailor I thought it was important,” he says. It also provided Yeung with a deepening understanding of the Deben, its estuary, and its varied habitats, and he soon turned his attention from coast to river.

In 2023 he was made chair of the Deben Estuary Partnership and last year became commodore of the Deben Yacht Club, and keeps his well-known sailboat *The Dragon*—a 1965 Westerly 22 with tan sails and a dragonhead on the prow—moored off the Tide Mill.

Two important areas for the Deben Estuary Partnership are flood defences and dredging, both of which require a broader perspective and an integrated approach if they are to be done right, Yeung says.

“When you do flood defences you have to look at the whole river,” he says, pointing out that walls and other hard engineering might protect one part of the riverbank while sending tremendous amounts of water to another undefended section. “We like to constrain rivers, and then we suddenly realise there’s a lot of water that has to go somewhere!” he says.

It is similar with dredging, which is required to keep the tidal silt deposits from clogging up the river making it unnavigable, or shifting the channels so that jetties, quays, and other infrastructure are left stranded in the wrong place.

“People want to make sure that what was deep, stays deep,” Yeung says. “But what happens if everyone does their dredging independently, is they solve a problem temporarily, or it just becomes someone else’s problem,” says Yeung, as mud is simply shifted from one place to another.

Cooperating, collaborating, and communicating is the solution. Under his chairmanship an updated estuary plan is underway aimed at adapting to the shifts in river use and users.

“There’s a lot of change in people’s expectations of the river, and of what’s acceptable,” Yeung says. “We have a trade-off: we want to encourage more people to appreciate and enjoy the river, and yet we also want to educate them to realise the reason why it survives the way it has is because people don’t mess it up.”

“It’s a social question,” he says, “of rights versus responsibilities. People have to realise that every part of what they do on the river is related to how other people use it.”

Tristan McConnell is award-winning magazine writer, war reporter, and foreign correspondent, and a consultant writer, researcher, and editor.



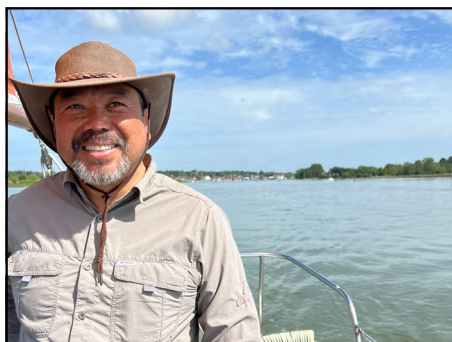
The Dragon.

Thomas Yeung



The estuary boundary.

Deben Estuary Partnership



Thomas Yeung.

Thomas Yeung

Oscar Hayter

Getting Involved: Meteorology, Environmentalism and Volunteering

Oscar Hayter



I am Oscar Hayter, 17 years old and I live near the River Deben in Woodbridge. I am very interested in meteorology and the tides which has drawn my attention towards getting involved in organizations that are set up around this wonderful river.

As a proud member of the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts, I have been involved in a wide variety of activities, from power boating to hiking and camping. My time with 5th has taught me a great deal about a range of skills that most young people don't get the opportunity to experience and utilise.

The group undertakes a yearly river clean with Transition Woodbridge which I enjoy. It always amazes me how much rubbish we get from the river and its banks in just a few hours. We have found boats, tires, and lots of polystyrene. Floating pontoons seem to be the main cause of this polystyrene which sits on the water surface and is probably consumed by wildlife. It would be great if a better material could be found and used to stop this pollution. Maybe something your members or readers could discuss.

Oscar Hayter



Being able to spend time on the river is a real privilege. I have been able to get my RYA Power Boat Level 2 at DYC and now understand more the importance of respecting the water and wildlife. There has been a lot of press recently about the pollution in the river which does concern me as I am quite often in the water and not just on it! Although I do not know of any of our Scouts getting ill from the water we should not allow these water companies to spill raw sewage in with so little care and no consequences.

Until recently my father was Group Scout Leader at 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts which has really taught me the importance of volunteering and supporting the local community. I have taken a role as a Young Leader where I support the Scouts section on a Monday with their weekly activities and planning. Working with the adult leadership team is much different from working with groups my own age.

In 2023 I fundraised and went to Kenya alongside some other pupils at my secondary school Farlingaye; to take part in a 4-week expedition and volunteering trip. Whilst I was there I



participated in building facilities, helping local communities, saw the local wildlife on Safaris, and learnt about the local customs. Spending 4 weeks away from home, in a different country taught me a lot about independence.

During my various activities with the Scouts I have met some amazing community champions. County Councillor Ruth Leach has been fighting for the rights of the Deben, safe swimming areas, and sorting the various overflowing drains in Woodbridge. Through this connection, I have become involved in the initial steps of setting up an Emergency Response Centre in case of local emergencies. It is still in the planning stages but would be great to get the training and processes in place to be able to support the local community in times of need. I am on first-name term with the Town Clerk, many Town and District Councillors as well as members from so many local groups and charities. When walking around town with my family they are always amazed at how many people I know!

I have become involved in the Deben Estuary Partnership Scheme as their youth representative where I use my age to talk to younger audiences and teach them about the river and my time with it.

My keen interest in meteorology has led to me being known at school as the Weather Boy. Even from the age of about five I would make sure I

knew what the weather was going to do for the day. Teachers would even ask me at what time it was likely to rain so they knew if we should go out! You can often find me down at the Quay Side during storms and extreme weather. There are many pictures of me walking in the high spring tides at any time of the year.

I spent a week at WeatherQuest with Dan Holley who is now Deputy Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office. The week was amazing to see the amount of computer power required to forecast just a few hours of calm weather. I spend many hours online talking to other keen meteorologists my age. During a talk at the Long Shed, I learnt how to tell the height and time of the tide by just looking at the moon. It is so important to know the tide times in Woodbridge as you can very quickly lose the water and have to do the walk of shame across the mud.

I am currently in Higher Education at Otley/ Suffolk Rural College studying Land Based Engineering Level 2 which involves the use of heavy equipment and machinery such as tractors and trailers. The course also includes the use of power tools and welders. I am going to be here until June at which time I will be looking for a full-time position somewhere. If anyone reading this knows of anyone who is looking for someone local please contact me.

You can contact Oscar Hayter via magazine@riverdeben.org.

Joy Walton, Kate Scott, Jane Tempest and Richard Blackwell
on behalf of Debenham Green Team members

Getting Involved: Debenham Green Team

Debenham Green Team (DGT) is a volunteer community environment project, evolving in 2022 from 'Debenhamlitterpickers,' formed in May 2015, with Debenham Parish Council and Babergh Mid Suffolk Council support. Debenham Green Team includes Deben Climate Centre River Sampling Team, Debenham Cycling Team and Debenham Community Nature Reserve.

We connect and work alongside other community groups and agencies to meet our aims:

- Reduce our environmental impact to protect and enrich diversity.
- Build our resilience for future energy needs and a changing climate.
- Strengthen the local economy.

In Spring 2022, DGT members attended Woodbridge Transition Conference. Guest speakers heard there have since been invited to Debenham. DGT have joined the River Deben Association—Tony Carter will be our representative.

The River Deben has become a significant focus. With financial support from Debenham



Debenham Green Team

Veterinary practice and Debenham Parish Council, DGT volunteers joined Deben Climate Centre, taking samples from the Deben once a month, from 13 points from Aspoll to Thorpe Lane and from 3 points around the sewage treatment works. Samples are tested for *E. coli*, ammonia, phosphate and nitrate levels. Results taken from the length of the Deben are shared with the Environment Agency and Anglian Water. This ground-breaking river project is a flagship for other areas of the country, hopefully leading to better water quality along the Deben.

We lead a community litter pick twice a year, though the Autumn 2023 litter pick was cancelled due to flooding. The impact of debris, including litter, on drains and ditches and the importance of not blocking and polluting water systems was brought home. Debenham High School Eco-Council litter pick with DGT termly and Sir Robert Hitcham Primary School offer equipment in the loan shed for anyone to borrow and litter pick—anywhere. Debenham Sports and Leisure Centre appreciate DGT turning out to pick up debris on and around the grounds after the firework



Water sampling.

display. We worked with 'Debfest crew' to be proactive management of waste at 'Debfest', held in September 2024.

DGT link with the Debenham Sports and Leisure centre and Debenham Parochial Council to encourage and promote cycling. Regular social rides, confidence-building rides, puncture-repair workshops and bike clinics are offered. The bike maintenance stand at Cross Green car park has been much appreciated.

Biodiversity is encouraged by Debenham Community Nature Reserve (DCNR). Our plan is for as many local gardeners and allotment holders as possible, to devote at least 3 square yards of their garden or allotment to supporting wildlife.

This could include any kind of pollinator-friendly plants as well as hedgehog homes, insect lodges, wildlife ponds, bird feeders etc. Our dream is for our community nature reserve to be composed of many pieces of private land, between which insects, birds and other wildlife can fly and thus develop sustainable biodiversity.

This idea was launched with a 'Debenham Hedgehog Friends' awareness-raising day in February 2024 at the primary school. We have continued with hedgehog information sharing and leaflet distributions. We would like to create a map to show the hedgehog highways throughout our village and indicate where hedgehogs have been spotted in gardens. In the summer holidays 2024, a well-attended and much-enjoyed hedgehog home workshop was held at



Debenham Green Team volunteers measuring 'turbidity'. By looking down a Perspex tube the cloudiness of the water can be measured—this will indicate the amount of particles hazardous to fish and other wildlife. The samples are then tested to determine the types of particles.

Debenham Green Team

the Debenham Shed. Biodiversity in gardens was highlighted at Debenham Open Gardens event in June 2024.

We offer residents help to recycle hard to recycle items at a monthly stall, where discussion occurs and initiatives such as insulation offers, hedgehog awareness, River Deben sampling and alternative Christmas wrappings are shared. Books, DVDs and CDs donated and collected via the annual jumble sale,

are taken to Hollesley Bay Prison Library, along with clothing and luggage. This has been a small but significant reuse project, unwanted items enriching another community.

The Green Energy group continue to explore options and opportunities that new technologies will enable within the village.

In 2023 Debenham Green Team (DGT) received a much appreciated Community award 'for outstanding services to the community of Debenham' from the Parish Council.

Our website gives further information on our projects, we advertise events on Facebook and we have an email membership of approx 160 members.

We look forward to projects currently engaged in, further enhancing life in our community—and also to supporting any new and inspired ideas that the people of Debenham wish to pursue that meet DGT aims.

Get in touch via debenhamgreenteam@gmail.com.

Getting Involved: Coast & Estuary Wardens

Having settled in Felixstowe after 20 years of living near the rather sterile and never changing Mediterranean I wanted to be part of a volunteering project where I could get close up and personal with the mud flats and estuaries, the beaches, the inshore waters as well as to hear my favourite bird, the curlew.

Browsing the Coast & Heaths National Landscape's web pages I was to discover there is a need for Wardens all along the coastline of Suffolk & Essex. Wardens are required to survey, monitor and to get to know their nominated stretch of coast and to report on anything they consider important to the appropriate council office by using forms provided.

There is no fixed frequency for a survey, so Wardens can integrate their normal walking activity with being the eyes and ears at ground level (sea level?) for the National Landscape reporting on litter, overflowing rubbish and dog waste bins, pollution, anti-social behaviour, damage to stiles or fences, dead marine mammals, oil spillage, etc., or anything untoward they see on their beach and, as a by the way, I have been pleasantly surprised how quickly some of my 'incidents' have been acted upon.

Beach Cleans deserve special mention and is another project operated by Suffolk & Essex Coast



T Pick

Coast and Estuary Warden.

and Heaths. Not in the slightest bit strenuous and not just picking up other people's rubbish but an organised study of what gets washed up from the tides and what is left behind by visitors. As each item is picked up, the collector records in table form its description (for example whether plastic or newspaper, fishing equipment or piece of plastic, etc) and then at the end of the event each person's

bag is weighed. All the material is then sent off for detailed analysis and appropriate destruction and sometime later all participants in the event are notified of the results of their efforts.

I find particularly satisfying having just a tiny bit of responsibility in the foreshore that I love so much so I do urge you to have a look at coastandheaths-nl.org.uk and see if there is anything you feel like taking part in.

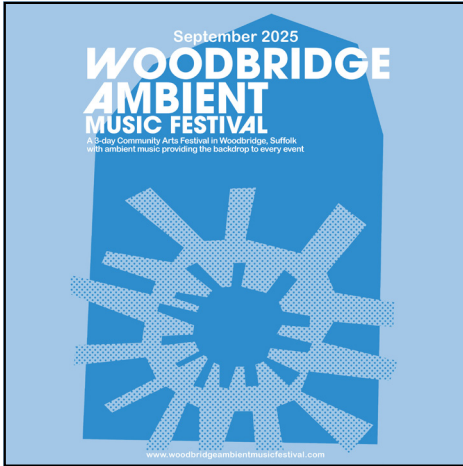


Fly-tipping, Bromeswell.

Jan Pulsford

Woodbridge: The Home of Ambient Music

Jan Pulsford



The sounds and light of the River Deben inspire many artists, writers and musicians. The soundscape of birds and boat bells accompany walks along the river as you immerse yourself in an ambient river orchestra conducted by the wind and tide. On a clear night you can see the stars, planets and moon reflected in the ripples of the water and occasionally the International Space Station floating in silence on it's way around the world.

Stop and take a moment to breath in the peace and stillness.

Jan Pulsford



Jan Pulsford



Brian Eno said how he remembered walking along the river towards Kyson Point, trying to imagine what it would be like if you could make music that was like a painting. Studying at Ipswich Art School, he was very keen on the idea of things that stayed still and wondered if there could be a music like that.

“It was really here in Woodbridge that I started imagining this idea of a kind of endless, rather still music.”

That music became known as ambient music and Brian became known as the ‘Father of Ambient Music’ He was born in Woodbridge in 1948 and

Jan Pulsford



lived his first 18 years in what he called “A very interesting little town, with 4,000 English people and about 17,000 Americans within a five mile radius. There were 11 or 12 coffee bars with jukeboxes, which had almost exclusively American, Southern, R&B music. It was an entirely different music world here than almost anywhere else in England ... an interesting place to grow up.”

Brian's life's work is an astounding list of compositions and visionary productions. He is arguably one of the most influential minds in modern music and thought. Woodbridge should be very proud. Brian's brother Roger Eno is another ambient musician in his own right. Their father and grandfather were local postmen. “We come from a long line of communication workers.”

The NHS suggests relaxation techniques, including ambient music, to help relieve stress and gain a sense of well-being. It is “Music to quiet your thoughts” or “Music that doesn't get in the way.” Brian and Peter Chilvers have written a series of apps for the iPhone using generative music which many people use for mind-fullness.

It's an interesting thing that most people who make ambient music are quite tech savvy. Years ago when someone didn't want me playing electronic music as part of their acoustic river music concert I suggested that all music comes from vibrations—a guitar string oscillates as does an electronic signal. It's all about how it's used.

For many years I have broadcast an ambient music world radio show on community radio. Around 2018 I was compiling a playlist for my Monday show and listened to an album called *Finding Shore* by Brian Eno and Tom Rogerson. There was something hauntingly familiar about the music and

Jan Pulsford



as I looked at the titles I realised it was about this area of East Anglia. “A Sense of Order at Kyson Point” became my favourite track.

Eventually I met Tom Rogerson and was so delighted to have him play at the post-Covid “Spirit of Place Festival” in 2021 at the Angel in Theatre St. The audience listened in rapt silence to his wonderful ambient piano performance.

In 2022 we launched the Woodbridge Ambient Music Festival, attracting visitors and performers from all over the UK. And now we're in our fourth year! The festival will once again be held on the Autumn Equinox Weekend, 19-21st September 2025. Centre stage is our beautiful River Deben. The annual Saturday ambient morning river walk is led by Bards Aloud with musicians, poets and story tellers scattered along the riverbank from Kyson Point to HMS Vale. The historic town will once again open up for events over the three day Community Arts Festival including the Tidemill, the Riverside Theatre, Whisstocks Place, the Angel, Octagon Room, Community Hall, Bull Inn and the Shire Hall. The Angel on Theatre Street hosts the popular Ambient Music Open Mic on Sunday and St Marys Church the Saturday afternoon “Tom Rogerson and friends”.

As Brian Eno said “How glad I am that ambient music has come back to Woodbridge.”

www.woodbridgeambientmusicfestival.co.uk

Jan Pulsford is a life long music composer and producer. Aside from preparing the 4th ambient music festival, she is currently writing music for the historic River Deben Tapestry Project, produced by Clare Perkins in the Longshed.

Also: The Spring Equinox Mini Festival will be held at St Mary's Church on March 22nd, 2-6pm.

Julia Jones

Book Page

Book Review: *Paddle the East of England*

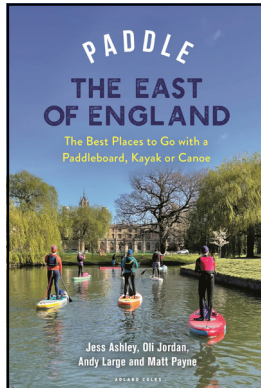
Jess Ashley, Oli Jordan,
Andy Large and Matt Payne

Paddle the East of England is written by the team who run East of England Paddlesports. They are affiliated to Paddle UK (previously British Canoeing). This is the membership body responsible for developing paddlesports in England. It also campaigns to open up access to waterways. England and Wales have some of the most restricted access to water in the world. One of the most useful features of Paddle the East of England is the guidance offered concerning the complex system of licencing, particularly for non-tidal waters. Every one of the 31 suggested routes includes a 'Need to Know' section which includes information on the licences required and where to obtain them. It also gives warning of areas used by other pleasure craft and stresses the 'Keep to the Right' rule.

This clear, well-illustrated guide suggests excursions for all levels of ability using canoe, kayak or paddleboard and covers Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Bedfordshire Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire as well as Suffolk. As you might guess, when covering such a wide area, the authors tend to choose just one or two locations on each river but these seem to have been well researched. On the Deben, for instance, they suggest Waldringfield (going with up or down

river) and on the Orwell Pin Mill. In between those two comes a paddle from Sudbury to the Henny Swan and then excursions from Bures to Lamarsh, Nayland to Wissington Weir and Stratford St Mary to the Langham Flumes.

Other counties offer different opportunities. Experienced paddlers might be excited by the prospect of exploring out from Southend on Sea to the part-submerged Mulberry Harbour or doing the Norwich City Paddle. Most of the excursions assume you will be arriving with your own paddleboard, kayak or canoe but some offer suggestions for local hire facilities. Simple maps and lavish photographs make this an attractive volume.



Adlard Coles, £17.99 (published 24.4.2025,
pre-publication discounts available)

Book Project: Visiting the Deben Churches

Last year the *RDA Journal* ran Gareth Thomas's four-part series on the Deben Churches. Gareth believes that these historic buildings, which mattered to the people who lived or worked on the Deben over many centuries, should not be ignored today. This isn't a religious plea but a challenge to our social and cultural understanding—and often to our aesthetic appreciation.

Many of these churches are beautifully located. Over this summer we would like to hear your suggestions for visiting any two or more of these churches on foot, on a bicycle (or a horse?), or by

water. These will either be shared on the website, in the magazine or (ideally) in a booklet. Every suggested route should include a simple map.

If you would like to be part of this project, please get in touch with Julia Jones (magazine@riverdeben.org) at any time between now and 31.8.2025, naming the churches you would like to link.



Gareth Thomas



Peter Wain

Shipbuilding on the Deben

In medieval times, where were the ships from the port of Goseford built? For the villagers of Bawdsey, Alderton or Falkenham a small boat would be an almost essential possession

for many of the transactions of daily life in these maritime communities. Almost certainly such boats were built on the banks of the river. However, many of the craft that sailed out of

the Deben were bound for ports all around the English coast from Newcastle to Bristol. Some went further, even crossing the tempestuous Bay of Biscay to bring wine and other goods back to England. These were the big ships of the river, the cogs and the balingers.

Where were they built?

From records, written accounts and contemporary pictures it appears that the primary requirement for ship building was simply a piece of land next to a water course, to enable the ship to be launched easily. As a result nothing survives to show this historical activity except perhaps nails dropped in the mud by the clenchers as they nailed the planks to form the hull.

However, snippets of information, put together like small pieces of a jigsaw, strongly suggest that Goseford built its own sea going ships.

Contemporaneous records give the names of many ships which are described as, for example, "of Bawdsey" or "of Goseford". The use of such locative names mirrors the practice of naming people at the time, for example, Richard de Martlesham (Controller of Customs of Wools at Goseford) or William de Goseford (Collector of Taxes in Great Yarmouth).

There is therefore a very strong suggestion that these ships were built on the Deben.

There is also some supporting documentary evidence in the records of government. In 1378 King Edward III ordered the men of Bawdsey to build a balinger (a ship with both oars and a sail). Then in 1401 Henry IV required "the good men of Goseford" to build, a further balinger. These two orders indicate that central government was aware that Goseford not only had the ability to build ships but could do so.

Oak was a principal component and used for the main structural timbers although ash, beech and elm were also used. One calculation suggested that

2715 oaks were used to build Henry V's *Gracedieu*. It might be imagined that timber would be sourced locally and the records of Staverton in 1329 disclose that a number of oaks were sold. However it seems that local supply was not always the case and there was no coherent pattern but it was rare to build ships with timber from a single source. In some cases timber was transported a considerable distance. When the King's ship *Trinity de la Tour* was rebuilt in Greenwich in 1413 timber came from all over north Kent even as far away as Maidstone. Other wood came from Colchester and Hatfield Forest. Timber was even imported from northern Europe. At the end of the Thirteenth Century it is recorded that 487 boards 12 feet long were taken from Bawdsey to Ipswich with a further 60 boards "bought from Estland" (the Baltic).

Hemp was essential for sail cloth and rope and a survey of Bawdsey identifies thirteen different fields known as "hemp grounds".

Many skilled workmen were employed in boat building and we know the identity of some of the carpenters from Goseford. In 1354 the King ordered that all carpenters should be available for his service. However the writ identified eleven carpenters whom he said should not be bound by the order. They had to complete the repair of a ship called "Godale" begun by Robert, earl of Suffolk "and his tenants of Bawdsey". The carpenters named included Robert of Falkenam, Seaman le Wright, Seaman Ailmer and Thomas Batiallle. Perhaps these eleven were exempt because they were valued for their skills.

The evidence might appear slender but it is suggested that Medieval ship building in Goseford was significant and the ships braving the Atlantic shores of Europe started their lives in the mud of the River Deben.

Historian Peter Wain's specialist subject is the lost mediaeval port of Goseford on the lower Deben. He is also a Trustee of Bawdsey Radar Museum.



Richard Smithson

Waldringfield Dragonflies

Over the years, lots of people have discovered the joy of the river Deben as it winds its way from the Old Felixstowe entrance to the beautiful town of Woodbridge. Half way along the river is the small community of Waldringfield.

Waldringfield still has a pub and many people on a summer's evening make their way to the Maybush for a meal or a pint, and to enjoy the river. Here they can watch the golden rays of the setting sun strike the planks of the wooden boats, moored near the island. Their varnished planks are set afire by the light. These boats are called the Waldringfield Dragonfly!

Often after a pint, it's lovely to wander along the shore, passing all the rowing boats. Sometimes you can get up close to a Dragonfly as an owner will be giving the boat a clean. Why not stop to have a chat and find out about the history of these

beautiful boats. They have been part of the river Deben since 1947 and have seen many changes!

The Dragonfly was built by two local boat builders, Robinson and Nunn, from 1947 till 1963. Approximately forty five were built. However with the rise of glass fibre in the boat building industry, wooden boats have fallen out of favour. As a result it is now down to a few committed enthusiasts to keep the Dragonfly on the water and racing. Out of the forty five built only twelve are left racing with a few more needing restoration.

In 2024 the Dragonfly class celebrated seventy five years since their first boats took to the water, and decided to have the first boat ever launched, number seventeen, named Stinger, restored to its former glory. The restoration was carried out at Larkman's boat yard, and took about seven months to complete. She now looks absolutely stunning.

The first owners of number seventeen were the Stollery family. They, along with other members of the Waldringfield Sailing Club in 1946, decided to commission an Irish boat designer (O'Brien Kennedy) to design a boat suitable to race on the Deben. Up to that point all racing at Waldringfield Sailing Club had been handicap racing, with many types of boats competing against each other. The idea of the Dragonfly was to have a one design where all boats are equal, and then it was down to the experience of the helm and crew to win races.

Still today, we race for the same trophies as were raced for seventy five years ago. On each trophy you can see the names of people who have loved sailing the Deben and the Dragonfly boat, as we all still do today.



Richard Smithson

Number 17 restored.



Waldringfield Sailing Club

Launch of the first Dragonfly, no. 17 'Stinger', from AV Robertson's yard, May 1949. Left to right: Frances Stollery, Roger Stollery, Cyril Stollery, Arthur Robertson. (That first summer the local boat builders could only deliver a very few boats. So many people wanted a Dragonfly they put their names and the numbers in to two different hats. The first name out was Stollery and the first number out was 17.)

Women on the Water and Youth Sailing

Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club (FFSC) is thrilled to announce the success of its Women on Water (WoW) initiative, launched in partnership with East Suffolk Community Partnership in June 2024. This programme is designed to inspire women of all ages and abilities to enjoy the excitement of sailing while connecting with others. WoW welcomes everyone, from beginners eager to learn the ropes to seasoned sailors returning to the water. Sessions, which run for three hours, focus on skill development, camaraderie, and sheer enjoyment. The initiative provides an accessible, supportive environment to encourage more women into this exhilarating sport.

FFSC remains committed to inclusivity and affordability, with a modest fee of £10 for members and £25 for non-members per session. With the initiative gaining momentum, the club hopes to make a lasting impact on the community and the visibility of women in sailing. For more information, please contact womenonthewater@ffsc.co.uk or visit Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club's website (<https://ffsc.co.uk/sailing/women-on-water>).

FFSC would also like to remind readers of its youth sailing scheme which runs on Saturday mornings from April to October. Do read Charlotte and Henry Logan's article in Deben #66. You can contact FFSC membership secretary or email youthsailing@ffsc.co.uk for more details.

Simon Scammell of Suffolk Sails, Woodbridge, is a competitive sailor and a long-standing member of the FFSC. He wrote this in his 2024 Christmas Newsletter:

The highlights of my sailing year are still sailing with my kids. I'm very lucky that nearly all the



Simon Scammell

Successful sailing.

sailing I do is on family boats. The laughter, and the sense of freedom that only a sailboat can bring. Sailing is not so much about what boat you are sailing it's who you sail with, as crew or competitors. Sailing is a chance to disconnect from the busy world, get on the water with family or friends. For me, teaching my kids to race at Felixstowe Ferry, a tricky mix of river and open water racing, is the highlight of my week. These moments reminded me of the importance of balance—that work, though essential, can never replace the joy of time spent with family. My daughter's joy winning her first trophy this year was great to see, as those who had to wait for the 'diva's arrival at prizegiving will testify... you had to be there!

(reprinted with permission)

News from the Hards

“Keep on keeping on,” is the message from the Hards this Spring—with routine maintenance being the central theme. Nevertheless there still items of note, as follows:

Melton Boatyard is commissioning a second travelling hoist to be ready for the new season. Its extended car park is now levelled, shingled and in operation.

Melton Boat Club has been digging out part of its dock which revealed the intact bare bones of a boat in rough-hewed wood. And there's more in other areas of silt.

Robertson's is a hive of activity with storage and membership for now 60 kayaks. Their popular, now electric-powered, retired lifeboat *Sarah-Ann Austin* is taking bookings—Mother's Day still available with tide-times looking good! Recent news is that the Sutton Hoo replica burial ship will be arriving in 2026, requiring an 8ft extension to their shed. With no parking, visitors will have a simple, short walk via the footpath.

Tide Mill Yacht Harbour continuing with routine maintenance but reports that the combined sewage overflow (CSO) just outside of the harbour is dry, indicating that the buffer tanks installed under the Co-op carpark must be working.

230-year-old **Woodbridge Tide Mill Museum** is working on two non-routine projects prior to re-opening: **The first** repair involves replacing the bottom part of the huge frame which supports the



Dulcibella, a Dutch 'schokker' (pleasure boat) has recently undergone extensive refurbishment carried out largely by the Woodbridge Boatyard apprentices. Notice her new leeboard, made of best quality oak (from France).

Woodbridge Boatyard

mill machinery, needed as, since the Mill was last restored 13 years ago, tides have got higher, and the foot of the frame is more often under water and open to rot. With the support of grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and East Suffolk Council work on the repair started on December.

The other involves the 5-tonne water wheel. In its 13 years of constant

use the paddles of the wheel have eroded and weakened the wooden teeth on the gearing requiring £6k of repair. Wooden teeth are used to prevent sparks which could ignite a fire. **And then**, (more routinely!) this year the Mill will need redecorating externally and this will cost more than £50k!

Woodbridge Riverside Trust is building on the huge success of “The King's River” tapestry on show in The Longshed's Gallery with the initiation of two new Community Art Projects celebrating the River Deben's heritage and ecology—the first is to create a beautiful 18' tapestry on linen illustrating the river and its surround and the other involves local schools and a local youth organisation creating art depicting aspects of the river's heritage and ecology on wooden panels.

Woodbridge Quay Company is working through retrospective planning consents for the new but already popular Ferry Quay Café. Tidying up the beach is in progress with owners of tenders being informed, and tenders with no known ownership scheduled for removal.

Woodbridge and Waldringfield Boatyards have submitted an application to the Marine Management Organisation for a licence to dredge next to the boatyard and pontoons to facilitate operations, with the beneficial use of the resulting dredgings for saltmarsh restoration at Loder's Cut Island off Kyson Point.



Somerset, first launched in Poole in 1957, has recently been accepted onto the Historic Ships Register. She's currently undergoing refurbishment at Waldringfield Boatyard.

Waldringfield Boatyard

the boatyard does not take bookings for personal water craft (see *Co-Chair's Report*).

Felixstowe Ferry Boat Yard do allow launching of personal water craft, with launch fees payable at the café. Outside, the council car-park is being extended and the Ferry Boat Inn pub sadly closed and up for sale but hopefully to reopen

The winter has seen busy workshops with decks being laid, masts being made, new engines being installed, dinghies and Cambridge punts being built and several yachts under restoration. A new crane at Waldringfield Boatyard is currently being assembled and tested which will increase the yard's capability to lift heavier yachts ashore. Four young members of the team have commenced training under the internationally recognised Boatyard & Marina Operative apprenticeship scheme.

Martlesham Creek Boatyard has seen an uptick in walkers since Covid. Interestingly,

soon. And off-shore, Trinity House will shortly be carrying out their annual survey on the all-year-round Woodbridge Haven buoys, following which their placement will be slightly adjusted by Harwich Harbour authorities. The Ore buoys (not all year round) will then also be placed.

Water Quality continues as a matter of public interest. To this end, I took this news-gathering opportunity to ask boatyards about the topical subject of toilet provision! (Facilities normally available only to paying customers of the businesses involved.)

Melton Boatyard	toilets/shower facilities; sluice work-in-progress
Melton Boat Club	toilet facilities planned for this year
Robertson's Boatyard	toilet facilities/sluice; "Percy" wheeled pump-out machine all repaired and working. Percy used by other Deben-resident boats with holding tanks
Tidemill Yacht Harbour	toilet facilities (no pump-out but customers use Robertsons' Percy Pump-out)
Ferry Quay	toilets/shower facilities; sluice for chemical toilets
Woodbridge Boatyard	public toilets at gate
Martlesham Creek Boatyard	toilet facilities/showers with septic tank
Waldringfield Boatyard	toilets in Maybush pub when open
Ramsholt	toilets in Ramsholt Arms pub when open
Felixstowe Ferry Boat Yard	public toilets at gate, now with septic tank no longer going direct into river

The River Deben Association

**Autumn Meeting: 30th April 2025,
7pm, Woodbridge Community Hall**

**Talk: 'Conservation and Climate
Change: National Trust on the
Suffolk and Essex Coast'**
by Matt Wilson

National Trust



We're delighted to welcome Matt Wilson, Countryside manager for the National Trust Suffolk and Essex Coast as our speaker this year. Matt will outline his role with the National Trust, and will talk briefly about the National Trust at 130 and its new strategy. The majority of his talk will be devoted to his direct areas of responsibility including the management of the Sutton Hoo woodlands, heather at Dunwich, the colony of grey seals on Orfordness and the preservation of the Northey Island saltmarsh on the River Blackwater.

Our cover artist, photographer Jeremy Young will also be at the AGM to show some of his current work.



River Deben Association

Committee

The Rt Hon the Lord Deben	Patron
Colin Nicholson	Co-chair
(vacant)	Co-chair
Liz Hattan	Vice-chair
	Nature/Conservation
Caroline Peeke	Secretary
Moray MacPhail	Treasurer
	Membership Secretary
Matt Lis	River Businesses
Sue Orme	Planning
	Footpaths/Access
Anne Marie Sellon	Social Media
Ben Grundy	Estuary Matters
(vacant)	Youth Rep

Co-opted, for election at RDA 2025 AGM:

Robert Brinkley	Felixstowe Ferry Rep
Tony Carter	Upper Deben Rep

Contributors

Julia Jones	Publications Editor
Alan Comber	Website Manager
Tristan McConnell	Publicity
Jane Haviland	Nature/Conservation
(vacant)	Events Manager

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Social Media/Photos/Communications	media@riverdeben.org
All other matters	chair@riverdeben.org



Liz Hattan



FFSC



Debenham Green Team



Sue Orme



Sue Orme



Sally Westwood

The River Deben means many things to many people. From its source to the sea it offers pleasure, challenge, inspiration, livelihood and a home. As well as a home, the river is a habitat. It's a complex eco-system which must adapt to changing environmental conditions and new patterns of use. It needs our care as well as our celebration.



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