

Report from the Boxford Society 2024/25

Since the last Annual Parish meeting the Boxford Society has arranged a Summer Outing in September 2024 when we visited the Longshed in Woodbridge where the Sutton Hoo Ship's Company are building a replica of the Royal Burial Ship found at Sutton Hoo. It was fascinating - they are using tools found at the original site and building the ship using techniques used in the Anglo Saxon period. There are a couple of past members of the Boxford Society who volunteer for the project and it was good to catch up with them. They are scheduled to launch the new ship in Spring 2026 and we hope to have the opportunity to join in the celebrations. We then enjoyed lunch at The Wilford Bridge pub.

At the Autumn Meeting in October 2024 we had a return visit by Mark Bailey, Professor of Late Medieval History at UEA to talk to us about The Black Death in Suffolk - lots of fascinating facts and theories about the origins and results of the Black Death on our part of Suffolk. He will be invited back as his talks are always riveting.

The Society has and will continue to monitor all Planning Applications but there have been no substantial applications requiring our input.

Our Spring Meeting is scheduled for tonight, 26th April 2025, when Edward Martin will be talking about The Lost Gardens of Suffolk. After a long career working as an archaeologist for Suffolk County Council, Edward has held a number of other roles including Chairman of the Suffolk Gardens Trust. Edward will demonstrate how seemingly unimportant mounds of earth and neglected ponds can, with the help of maps, old photographs and other documents, be brought back to life and revealed as fascinating examples of garden history.

On 12th June at our Summer Meeting, Roger Loose will give a talk entitled 'The Boxford Old Picture Show Part 1: Cox Hill, Ellis Street and Broad Street' when he will use pictures from the Boxford Society archives showing what life was like in Boxford in past years. There will be a second meeting next year when Roger will show us more archive photographs of other streets in the Village.

In September, our Summer Outing will involve a guided walking tour of Harwich - a town with a wealth of history - after an arrival via the Shotley to Harwich ferry which affords excellent views of the enormous container ships in Felixstowe. This will be followed by lunch at an historic inn in Harwich.

In October, the Autumn Meeting will host our speaker, Wendy Shepherd, who is coming to tell us all about the Womens' Land Army in WW2 - the training, accommodation, uniform, the varied work related jobs and the Women's Timber Corps. She will enlighten us about the 1939 Register, the War Agricultural Committee, Parish Invasion Committees, Rationing, and the WVS.

Report from the Boxford and Hadleigh Community Car Scheme

The Car Scheme with its 20 volunteer drivers continues to provide lifts for anyone registered with the Boxford and Hadleigh Health Centre to medical appointments. 2 of these drivers are currently out of action due to ill health, 1 is a serving police officer so can only drive if the appointment coincides with her non-working days, 1 driver works 2 days a week, so only available for 3 days, 2 drivers spend considerable time out of the country, and 3 are so busy can only be called on in emergency. So effectively, we only have 11 drivers to cover Boxford, Hadleigh and surrounding villages. We carried out 358 trips in 2024 and have already provided 150 lifts this year, which indicates that there is a growing need for this service which is likely to increase due to the impending closure of the Boxford Surgery and the inadequate bus service.

