

BLYTHBURGH

Focus

SERVING BLYTHBURGH,
BULCAMP AND HINTON

Issue No.16

<http://blythburgh.onesuffolk.net>

September/October 2014



A12 speed controls could be coming

Speed warning signs on the A12 and more prominent village gateway signs could be given the go-ahead according to a traffic survey carried out by Suffolk County Council's Highways Authority at the request of the Parish Council.

In a lengthy response to the traffic management plan adopted by the parish council in May 2013 aimed at improving safety on the A12 through the village, the county council ruled out a pedestrian crossing and pedestrian refuges. The report argues that safe locations would be too far from desired crossing points and the high cost could not be justified.

The most likely development is for Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) for use on the A12 and B1125. To be most effective they would remain in place for a few weeks before being relocated.

If the parish council purchased the signs the estimated cost is £1,200-£3,500 per sign for supply and construction plus approximately £4000 for investigation, design and safety audit regardless of the sign quantity.

In this option it is recommended that up to two units are purchased and rotated between three sites, at a cost of £7,000-£11,500. Sharing signs with, say, Walberswick would reduce the cost.

Subject to a successful trial of temporary Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS), ecological and development consent and consideration given to the future VAS policy, permanent VASs could be installed on the A12 approaches to the village. A further VAS could be installed on the B1125.

More prominent gateway signs for the A12 and possibly the B1125 are also recommended. The

declassification of the B1125 was not supported as the survey concluded that habitual users and the users of satnavs would not be deterred.

The estimated cost of providing gateways and new signs is approximately £2400 per pair for supply and construction plus approximately £3000 for investigation, design and safety check regardless of quantity.

The total cost of two gateways would be approximately £7,800 or around £10,200 if the B1125 was included.

Subject to ecological and development consent, gateways could be installed at the 30 mph speed limit terminals on the A12 approaches to the village. Upgraded village signs and refreshed and additional road markings could be provided to compliment the gateways.

Blythburgh's proposal that the B1387 from the water tower to the A12 should be improved to provide an alternative route for through traffic was recommended if funding was available.

Deterrent measures could then be taken in Dunwich Road – a chicane and calming humps for example – but these would depend upon street lighting being accepted.

The Highways Authority also recognised that providing a footpath at the northern end of Angel Lane would require the introduction of a one-way scheme (rejected by villagers when it was last proposed) or, for a shorter footpath, the purchase of part of a garden. If funding was available there should be a feasibility study.

The parish council will now meet Suffolk County Council to discuss the report and its financial implications.

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Planning for Blythburgh's future

Villagers welcomed the idea of more houses in the village at a special meeting of the parish council on 1 September. The district council is updating the Local Plan and has opened discussions with parishes about what this might mean.

The planners have identified the field bounded by The Street and Angel Lane and Hawthorn Farm Barns as sites for consideration for housing development.

Blythburgh, defined as a key service centre, has a designated need for 10 more houses in the period 2010-2027. Including Blyth View, 29 have already been completed or approved. Blythburgh therefore has no 'residual requirement'. What this means for further planning applications has to be discussed with the planners.

Villagers want to encourage more and younger full-time residents. It was noted that even in the core of the village, approaching one-third of the properties are now second or holiday homes.

The coffee mornings in the church and the new film club are encouraging developments but maintaining a sense of community and local activities is increasingly difficult.

The meeting stressed that any new building had to be of high quality and design. The character of the village had to be respected and problems

with infrastructure and traffic not exacerbated. For planning purposes the village has a boundary outside of which development would not normally be allowed.

Apart from small adjustments to bring all core dwellings within the boundary it was thought the boundary should not be extended. Within the village there were in-fill opportunities, for example, it was suggested, to the west of the A12 where the visual impression was weak.

Maintaining the open aspect of the valley to the east of the B1125 was important, and development to the west of Dunwich Road, with the known problem of surface water flows from the higher ground, should not be allowed.

It was thought that the only practicable direction in which the village could expand was to the east of the A12, including the Chapel Road field.

This could be an opportunity for a high quality 'gateway' development but for now should remain outside the boundary.

The parish council's planning advisory group will meet the planners later this month to discuss Blythburgh's thoughts on the Local Plan update.

The authority's proposals will then be published for consultation, giving villagers another chance to have their say.

Alan Mackley

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS

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01502 478521

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Starting Tuesday October 14 and then the second Tuesday in every month, a quiz with nibbles, £2 a head for teams of four.

The total ticket money will be divided in two, half to the winner and half to Holy Trinity Blythburgh.



Calling all women in Blythburgh

Would you like to meet women with a bit of attitude and get-up-and-go? Well, come and join the Blyth Belles. A few of us in the Blyth Valley villages have been talking about setting up a group for some young-at-heart people - nobody is too old or young - so long as you've got a love of life and have plenty of ideas of things we can do.

It is early days, but we've been thinking along the lines of activities and talks with demonstrations on any subject from arts and crafts to science and nature, sports and leisure to food and cookery.

We might plan trips to the theatre, do a bit of fund-raising for some charities we like or maybe do some outdoor things such as walks or summer picnics. But you might have more ideas and we need them. We are having our first meeting in Blythburgh Village Hall on Thursday 2 October at 7.30 pm, just to share ideas and to see what we would all like to do.

Then we'll plan a calendar of events and activities for the following 12 monthly meetings. Come if you can - and bring a few nibbles and drinks to plan our new venture. For further information and any questions please call or text Sarah Wickham on 07810632987.



Make a date with Peter and Tinkerbell this Christmas

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust believes in fairies and has booked seats for a performance of *Peter Pan*, this year's pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Norwich, on Saturday 3 January at 2.30pm. As usual the coach will pick everyone up at the bus stop on the northbound A12 at 11.30am, and we should be back in Blythburgh around 6.30pm. The start time should allow us to get to Norwich in time to have a bite to eat before the show and even hit the sales!

This trip is open to everyone who is resident in the parish of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton, but places are limited so please book early! Deadline for applications is Friday 30 November. Please apply in writing to Jenny Allen, Wolsey House, Chapel Road, or by e-mail (jennyanddick@aol.com) with your name and address; the number of places requested; and a contact telephone number. Please also state if any children are aged under 3 and would be sharing a seat with an adult. Please assume that you have got places if Jenny does not contact you.

Film night in Blythburgh

Following the successful launch of the Blythburgh Film Club in September the next films will be shown Friday October 3 at 7.30pm, doors opening at 7pm, with a children's matinee on Saturday October 4 at 3.15pm, doors opening at 3pm. Please bring your own refreshments to the adult showing. Pop corn and a soft drink will be supplied at the matinee. The White Hart will provide fish and chips from 6pm to 7pm on Friday for cinema goers at £7 a head. Booking is essential. mentioning that you are a film goer at the hall.

Terms of the licence held by the hall restrict advertising the films to be shown. Parishioners who are members of Blythburgh M@tters or have signed up to the film club's mailing list will be notified automatically. Details will also appear on the Parish Council notice boards. Alternatively, please call David Tytler on 01502 478521. There is no charge for the film but voluntary donations of £3 for adults and £1 for children towards the upkeep of the village hall and its services would be appreciated. Films will be shown monthly during the winter. The film on Friday November 7 will commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War.

BLYTHBURGH REFLECTIONS

Not the Mint with a Hole...

Back in the day maybe, just maybe, Blythburgh did have a Mint... but that would have been before the London Mint moved to The Tower of London in the late 1200's, before it became The Royal Mint and moved to Tower Hill in the early 1800's, before the most recent move to a bigger site in 1968 - decimalisation has a lot to answer for - and most certainly before a Blythburgh resident received his invitation to visit The Royal Mint at Llantrisant, South Wales.

The site is MoD controlled, security is tight, but, pass through three sets of gates, and you enter a different world. Yes, they may tell you their job is bashing metal but that is like saying that our Queen is head of a family. And talking of the Queen, there are photographs (iconic ones, larger than life), a plaque to commemorate a visit, her face on hundreds of thousands of coins and who knew that she and Prince Philip have a personal interest in medals... but I run ahead.

Eight hundred people work on this 30 acre site. It is the only mint in the world that buys raw materials, has its own foundry and manages the process soup to nuts. The mix of skills is broad – precision engineering, design, engraving, polishing. Many roles are so specialised they can only be learnt on the job. There are even “Mint Families” to carry on the traditions. The end product is our commemorative coinage, circulating coinage (UK and other countries) and medals.

Essentially the process for minting commemorative coins and circulating coins is the same but the scale is quite different. Just one commemorative coin is minted and checked every minute: a proof 1p coin is treated the same as a

proof gold sovereign and yes, our villager had the unique opportunity to mint his own coin. With circulating coins, one machine produces 700 £1 coins a minute; quality being checked regularly.

Minting a coin is almost the end of the process and what fascinated our villager was learning what goes into designing a coin and the complex process to turn that design into a die – check it out if you get a chance, it's fascinating.

Medals, including the Royal Victoria Medal, are made on site with the Queen often taking a personal interest. The 4,700 medals for the 2012 Olympic Games were struck in an area that has an even higher level of security. Access wasn't permitted but a full set of Olympic and Paralympic medals is held in the museum. Our villager wasn't permitted to hang one round his neck but confirms they are surprisingly heavy.

The museum, in the middle of the site, isn't open to the public. Our villager was open mouthed when his host produced one of just seven 1933 pennies and speechless to be shown a full set of Edward VIII proof coins – never minted nor released into circulation.

Having just visited the store room (100 metre long, tens of feet high) where crates of our coins wait to go into circulation are held (£49 million worth), our villager (I will leave you to guess the identity) paused for a moment to consider relative values.

**The Royal Mint is planning to open a Visitors' Centre in 2015 / 2016.*



Words: Sonia Boggis
Illustration: Spike Gerrell

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Uncompromising – as good as ever

In its ninth year and with a capacity of 35,000 people, Latitude may not be as experienced or as large-scale as some of its fellow UK major festivals, but that hasn't stopped it carving out its own place on the over-saturated festival timetable.

While a handful of music events have stumbled and fallen in the past few years, Latitude continues to develop a healthy reputation as Britain's most relaxed festival. Lakeside stages, live music, chilled cider; its idyllic England with the added eccentricity of woodland raves, stand-up comedy and multi-coloured sheep. Latitude 2014 appeared to welcome a more varied crowd.

Still, as ever, popular with families this year it attracted a distinct increase in young music fanatics giving the entire weekend an edgier and faster paced feel than in its previous eight years.

With beautiful sunshine over the majority of the weekend festival-goers were spoilt for choice for places to shade from the heat and soak up the culture. Once again the comedy stage was full of life and laughter from open to close, playing host to some of the biggest acts in British comedy including Marcus Brigstocke, Al Murray and Kevin Bridges, with the latter blowing the roof off the over filled gazebo with his fast paced wit and enigmatic performance.

For the music lovers Friday's sunshine salvation could be found under the forest canopy of the I Arena to catch South African group John Wozniak. The six-piece's bouncy and tropical riffs appropriately sound tracked the muggy woodland as revellers bopped in their straw hats.

Kelis took to the Obelisk Arena stage in the early evening as the relentless heat continued to beat down. That didn't stop the masses wiggling around to her gleaming repertoire of hits. The clattering percussion and swanky brass of new cut 'Cobbler' back dropped some impressive whistle notes as Kelis, who has become accustomed to a late-afternoon main stage slot, looked radiant in front of a full backing band.

Reworked renditions of *Trick Me*, *Milkshake* and

Millionaire saw her transmute from R&B vixen to slinky virtuoso, adding a touch of class to her classic numbers without sacrificing any of their character.

Lily Allen had the toughest task of the day, filling in the Obelisk Arena headline slot after Two Door Cinema Club were forced to pull out. "It's so, so last minute, this thing - I'm so sorry," she apologised, but the sentiment was unnecessary. The star quickly won over the crowd with her spiky persona and even spikier lyrics. Dedicating *F**k You* to David Cameron was warmly received, but added breakbeats at the end of 'Smile' had the crowd energised and elated. Lily proved herself a more than worthy headliner, with a biting back-catalogue nipping away for her own proper big slot in the near future.

Damon Albarn took the Obelisk stage on the second day of excitement. He stormed crowds through the decades of his music, bands and sounds. Moving between piano and guitar, Indie and electro, Albarn played for all his fans of Blur and the Gorillaz, all the while pandering to the big hits the crowd craved.

However it wasn't the music headliners that pulled the most sensational throng. The poetry stage has well and truly found its feet – as did the often seated crowd as legendary wordsmith Scroobius Pip took to the stage. His rousing and electrifying performance swept the crowd into a trance of silence under his every word, only broken by cheers, applause and the sound of sobs from those most moved. Scroobius Pip is recognised for his honest and brutal language, addressing emotive subjects and on a wet Sunday night he had the poetry tent fit to burst and every individual completely eating out of his hands.

Latitude may not be the biggest festival in the UK, but that's the key to its success and charm. With the line-up attracting bigger and more diverse names every year and more happy campers than ever before, it continues to exceed its highly regarded standing on the UK festival scene without compromising its ethos.

Emma Robinson



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A big thank you to the queen of speed

After five years of co-ordinating the Blythburgh Speedwatch Group, Binny Lewis decided to stand down from the end of August owing to her other commitments, including full time work. So far nobody else has come forward to take over the role and as a result speed watch has been suspended until a review in the spring. Unless, of course, somebody steps forward to take over.

Binny says that she would be only too happy to show a new co-ordinator the ropes and run it jointly for a couple of weeks until he or she has had a chance to find their feet.

The role consists of weekly e-mails on Friday to confirm availability of the team and on Sunday confirming the rota, with confirmation of who is holding the equipment and who to pass it on to, and posting off the weekly data with registration details of those found exceeding the 30mph limit and keeping a file copy for the team's records.

On a yearly basis the co-ordinator has to arrange an annual calibration when the speed gun is sent by courier in October; manning a Speedwatch table at the Annual Meeting, with data/photos showing what the team has been doing; and organising the rota for the Latitude Traffic Count in July.

All expenses, for photocopying data sheets, postage, envelopes, etc., are reimbursed through the Parish Council. Suffolk Police confirm that Blythburgh will need a co-ordinator in place to be able to continue with Speedwatch.

Binny says: "After being the first Speedwatch Group in Suffolk, it would be a great shame no longer to have a team in the village if we can't find a replacement.

"Our figures show there is still a need to have coverage of speeding through Blythburgh. During August the Speedwatch Volunteers completed a total of 28 hours monitoring and reporting a total of 41 vehicles for exceeding the 30mph limit through the village. The highest speed recorded on the A12 was 52mph, and on Dunwich Road a staggering 47mph (as the vehicle was slowing down)."

The Parish Council passed a motion of thanks to Binny for all she had done to set up the village speed watch- the first in the county - continuing to run it efficiently and selflessly for five years, and in promoting Speed Watch groups throughout the county. Binny's efforts have been key in helping to establish 57 Speedwatch teams in Suffolk.

David Tytler

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust

The Blythburgh Latitude Trust makes grants to meet specific needs to individuals and families living in the parish. It has, for example, provided IT and sports equipment and school uniforms. It will also give grants to groups to support projects to improve the quality of life in the Parish of Blythburgh, Hinton and Bulcamp. For example, the trust has supported the play site, village hall improvements, the Christmas Tea and the annual pantomime visit.

If you have a need, contact the honorary administrator, Jim Boggis, Marsh End, Church Road (01502 478 687) All applications will be treated in complete confidence. Normally grants will not exceed £200. Parents or carers must endorse applications for children under 16.

Apply now

Ray St. Clair Brown 1928 - 2014

Paul Bennett remembers his friend Ray Brown

I first met Ray when we both joined the parish council in the early nineties. Along with Chris, the doctor, Ron the postmaster and others, we were mostly all new to it and vaguely excited at the prospect. A couple of years later along with Dorothy Midson and Nick Catling, we formed the Blythburgh Group, a collection of people living in the village and making a modest living out of painting, photography and potting.

Even then I admired Ray and his very natural talent, as opposed to mine which I have always considered to be a small amount of talent with the ability to work hard to make it better.

There is a picture of Ray's he did of Blythburgh Creek which I have always admired. I've painted that same subject many times but have never quite got to the essence and simplicity of that scene that Ray achieved in his picture.

After the Blythburgh Group disbanded in 2003, Ray and I saw each other occasionally while out shopping or walking. And then several years ago, I asked him down to Fern Cottage for a gin and tonic which I knew to be one of his favourite drinks. I remember we sat in the garden on a sunny summer day and just about managed, with all the laughter and chat, to stick to half a bottle of Gordons.

The die had been cast. And since then every fortnight we have convened for that half bottle in Fern Cottage, Well Cottage and latterly in Victoria Road, Southwold. In the last couple of years Ray was too frail to make it down to ours and I know he missed that - he loved our garden.

Besides JMW Turner and the North American artist Andrew Wyeth being our mutually

favourite painters, the conversation has ranged from Ray and his experiences in the fifties and sixties mixing with the likes of Frances Bacon, Lucien Freud and all those interesting and amazing people that were working, talking and of course drinking in that particular part of west London.

And with all my various and extensive anecdotes, the conversation never lagged and was never boring. Again, how we stuck to just half a bottle, God only knows, but we did.

Amongst our many discussions, we talked a lot about dying and what was to come. Both with some belief but with the word agnostic not too far away, we came to the conclusion that dying wasn't so bad after all. In fact, a few days before he went, I asked Ray, now that he was aware of the end, how he felt.

"Ambivalent", was his reply. "If this is dying then it's really rather a mundane affair." Bravery or acceptance? I suspect a bit of both.

Ray Brown, besides being a gentleman, was a very gentle man. With all the tragedy of losing his two sons at too young an age and of course Joan two years ago, he somehow won through and made the best of life. And of course his daughter Charlotte was a great help to him in achieving that balance. As far as I'm concerned, he gave me a wonderful friendship and I will miss it and him.

At Joan's funeral when he was turning away from her grave, somebody heard him say: "See you later."

Well, later is here, and hopefully, please God, Ray and Joan can finally be together.

A date for your diary...

The next meeting of Blythburgh with Bulcamp and Hinton Parish Council will be in the Village Hall on Tuesday November 18 at 7.30pm with the public forum starting at 7.15. Everybody in the parish is invited. Please come along and have your say. This will be a particularly important meeting as it will set the parish precept for 2015-16.

Peter Leslie Nash 1945-2014

Family, friends, neighbours and former colleagues gathered in Holy Trinity Church on 28 July to say goodbye to Peter Nash who sadly died after leaving Angel Lane but before he was able to move into his new home in Chediston. The service was led by Reverend Simon Pitcher and Father Roger de Lacy-Spencer. People close to Peter contributed to a Sharing of Memories.

Peter was born in Ilford, Essex, and grew up in Ongar, where he enjoyed his primary school years, but not, he had said, his time at Brentwood County High School. Peter's father died young, and so too did his only sibling, a sister. Peter was to remain close to his mother throughout her life.

Peter's ambition was to become a test pilot but his health prevented him from pursuing that dream. But after a spell with British Rail catering and a period in insurance, Peter eventually took to the skies at the age of 26. He was very successful in his new role, becoming a chief steward on transcontinental jumbo jets, responsible for as many as 400 passengers.

Constant travel took its toll and Peter retired early at the age of 50 and settled in Blythburgh. Suffolk was well known to his family – their house was, after all, called Minsmere. Peter was able to continue a long-established involvement with the theatre, always backstage, where his skill in building scenery and making props was highly regarded. His cake-baking talent was also legendary. He loved his garden, its birds (the best-fed in the village), and his pets – including cats that found it well worth adopting him. Peter was an active member of the Horticultural Society, and the church where he cared for the graveyard and the brasses.

In recent years Peter's health deteriorated but he was rejuvenated by a chance encounter with Bo Maggs and, in due course, her helicopter. Unfortunately helicopter landings in Angel Lane were to prove very controversial. Peter retreated from any involvement in village life and eventually decided to move. He died on 26 June. He will be remembered for his humour, his kind, caring character, and his willingness to help.

Alan Mackley

There is still time to learn...

Interested in earth sciences or dressmaking? An opportunity to learn about either is coming to our own village hall. For two hours on Wednesday starting 24 September, you can learn about dousing, ley lines, sacred sites and how to make your home energy use cleaner. Or if you are keen on sewing, from clothes to blinds, you can learn how to do it to professional standards in the village hall for two hours every other Thursday starting on 26 September. To enrol or for more information ring 01728 833171 or 01728 768080, or through www.coastalleisurelearning@gmail.com – do sign up, the courses are fabulous.



SOUTHWOLD AND DUNWICH RNLI FUNDRAISERS' COMMITTEE

Sausage and Mash Quiz to provide first aid training Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation manikins for Southwold Lifeboat on October 10 in the Stella Peskett Millennium Hall, Southwold, at 7.00pm. Tickets, including supper, £8.00 per person. Licensed bar.

To enter teams of four, please ring 01502 478521.

Notes from Daisy Bank LXIII

I promise to be more careful with bonfires in future. Not how, but *when* I light them. Recently, we've had a lot of tree debris to get rid of and consequently, the incidence of bonfire lighting has gone up. Whilst talking to my neighbour about this problem, we discussed the absence of the golden cockerel on top of the church and how, over the years we have come to rely on it and its wind direction facilities.

Evidently Derek and his older brother Donald as teenagers would, before a day of shooting there. 22 rifles on the marshes and general mucking about, see if they could spin the then cockerel around with their marksmanship and prowess; you can still see some of the results of all that on the old cockerel now displayed in the church.

And there is the story. Donald, Derek's partner in crime, joined the navy well under the age of enlistment at the beginning of the war. On the infamous Dieppe Raid where we and the Canadians lost loads of people, he was part of the crew of a landing craft. And, at the height of the fighting and eventual withdrawal, he was told to grab a rifle and help out. So successful was he that on returning to the UK, thankfully unscathed, he was sent up to Scotland to retrain as a Royal Marine Commando. A few years after Dieppe he went back to France on D Day and was injured quite badly. So taking pot shots at the church wind vane ended up with Derek having a hero as a brother. Not many people can say that.

Please close the church door. Every morning I open the church and always say good morning out loud to the several people who are buried there. I have a special affinity with Thomas Brock of Darsham, who died in 1667 leaving behind a wife and two children. Poor man, one day maybe he will say good morning to me. However, in late July, I was unfortunate enough to be able to say good morning to three swallows who had been let in because somebody **didn't close the door.**

Over the next few days by opening all the doors for a time, I tried to get them to go out. In the end, I phoned the RSPB and they suggested waiting until dark and shining torches at the main door and hopefully they would see the light

and go towards it. Some very kind friends and neighbours gathered at ten thirty and with me yelling and shouting at the Chancel End and them with their torches at the porch, we tried but to no avail. Somebody suggested getting up at first light, so at five the next morning I tried again with the door opening system but no good. So, the three swallows having flown thousands of miles from Africa to get here, finish up dying in the roof of Blythburgh church. A tragedy.

The bridge saga is now complete and awaits what the council calls landscaping. They've very kindly re-erected those ghastly wicker fences which eventually will either blow on to the road and cause an accident or will deteriorate over subsequent winters and leave another dreadful mess. I'm so glad that the council are spending the £2142.40 council tax that I contributed this year to their coffers with such due thought and diligent concern.

The trouble is that, were my own Labour Party in charge, I doubt very much if they would have done any different. It's just the nature of the bureaucratic beast. They're not very good at it.

In case I get accused of too much bile and rant, I will end on a lighter note. We went for lunch the other day in the White Hart. In the last 20 years I have been there probably less than half a dozen times. Not regular drinkers, we like to go somewhere different when we do go out. It was a lovely sunny day, loads of customers and the food and the service was excellent.

I am so pleased that the couple who run it now seem to have found the formula for success. Also I feel that it is necessary to commend what has happened with the shop. In a difficult time Alan and Katie have kept it going, which in itself is a success. I am just as guilty as most in that Mr Waitrose delivers on Monday and Mr Rainbow gets more than the odd visit.

When I go into our shop I try to spend more than a couple of pounds but really I could do better. So my promise to all those concerned is to visit the shop and pub more often and be more careful when I light the bonfire. If you like, three summer resolutions. I feel better now.

Paul Bennett