

The source of the Deben

Sir, - Some reviewers of the Life on the Deben film, the premier of which was shown in Woodbridge last week, have suggested there is a dispute as to exactly where the source of the Deben is. I contend it is open to debate but there should, and can be, no dispute since there is not one single identifiable source to claim. Certainly there is no gushing spring to mark an exact source spot in this locality furthest up stream from the Deben estuary. The Deben may, I suggest, best be likened to a tree trunk with its upper reach tributaries, as the boughs and branches, radiating out in various directions from Debenham village - the trees crown. It is this convergence that results in local fluvial flooding. Twigs of this imaginary tree variously stretch out over a large catchment to the very top of the surrounding watersheds. Trig points over 200ft on topographical local maps indicate an extensive drainage area lying in several parishes from whence waters run down from surrounding farm land into the Deben. I suggest all, or any of these points, may be correctly described as a source but none specifically the source. There is no Deben source in Aspall parish as erroneously stated in Whites 1848 Suffolk Directory (it is not high enough) but somewhere in the immediate vicinity of nearby Dairy Farm, Thorndon is generally considered to be the very top of the Deben watershed far from the sea as was shown in the film in dramatic panoramic shots. In fact as would be expected at such a high point some water from Dairy Farm runs in the opposite direction away from Debenham and into the Dove and then the Waveney. Most drainage ditches from Dairy Farm join up to make a stream which carries on down through Red House Farm and then wends its way via Hill House Farm to where it meets up, at New Road Bridge, Aspall, with another Aspall tributary running along the road side from the opposite direction; from Aspall House and the watershed in the parishes of Bedingfield and Rishangles. The united streams then run as one in the valley below Aspall Church and along the side of the B1077 fed by another tributary from Kenton. Now the Deben river, having left Aspall, it passes through The Gulls just north of Debenham where an ancient

anchor was discovered, & recorded by Dove in his well known 19th Century Diary suggesting the river was historically navigable from Woodbridge to this point. Close by Debenham Primary School the river is joined at The Butts by a tributary from the watershed in Wetheringsett and Mickfield. The end of this tributary, running over and along the road known as Water Lane is said to be the longest ford in England. Another main tributary from Mickfield joins the Deben near the old Cherry Tree public house in Debenham before it leaves Debenham crossing the Low Road meadows. I hope this description of the Deben upper reaches may help resolve matters.

JOAN FREEMAN,
Aspall.

Limited disruption? Really?



The Woods Lane closure which will cause chaos in the Woodbridge and Melton area for the next few months.

Picture: GREGG BROWN

Sir, - I heard on the local radio that the Woods Lane road closure at Melton had not caused as much disruption as expected. Really! Could it be that the obliging people of Suffolk who use this main arterial road are making long detours costing them more in fuel and time? Many I have spoken to are getting up much earlier in

order to go about their daily business. There is no way to measure how much damage this closure has or will do to local businesses as people stay away.

I have been told that instead of coming to Woodbridge Co-op they are going to Wickham Market. Others have said they now go to shop in Saxmundham. Will these people come back?

Who knows?

Let us hope that Bloor Homes will repay the people who have had their lives disrupted and turned upside down by ensuring that the houses they are building are truly affordable to local and young people of Suffolk. Let us wait and see!

CHRISTNE SMITH,
Felixstowe.

Help change a life

Sir, - At this time every year, thousands of people in the UK write letters in solidarity with those suffering human rights abuses around the world as part of Amnesty's Write for Rights campaign. As a result, people have been freed after being unfairly imprisoned, threats against human rights activists have been reduced, and lives have been changed for the better. Amnesty Bury St Edmunds group is delighted to host two Write for Rights events again this year and invites everyone in Bury St Edmunds to come along. We will be at West Suffolk College library on Friday,

December 8, and at the Apex cafe on Saturday, December 9. Both events will run from 10am-2pm. Your letter can help make a big difference to people's lives. From Shackelia Jackson, whose brother was gunned down by police in Jamaica, to ten people currently facing a 15-year jail sentence in Turkey because of their human rights work, people around the world urgently need the support of others, including readers of the East Anglian Daily Times. Come and get involved. By writing a letter, you can change a life. www.amnesty.org.uk/write

AVRIL DAWSON,
Chairman, Amnesty International,
Bury St Edmunds.