

TOWN and AROUND

ISSUE 242 DECEMBER 2025
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Celebrating 20 years 2005-2025

First word



A warm welcome to our December issue that has a distinctly festive feel about it.

There's an extensive list of events that you will find on pages 74-76 and I'm pretty sure there's something for everyone there.

There's also a wide variety of articles that I hope will inform and entertain. On pages 52-53 you can read about Brancaster Oysters, learn about Thomas Thoresby on page 44, all about pantomimes on page 78, and find the Lifeboat Station news on page

39. Don't forget their special carol service on 17th at St Mary's Old Hunstanton at 6.30pm. There will be a retiring collection for the RNLI.

Our magazine is a community effort, and your input is truly appreciated. Thank you to everyone who has contributed stories, photos, and ideas throughout this, our twentieth year. Thanks also to our advertisers; the income from whom pays for the production of this magazine. Please support them if you can.

Recently we have increased our circulation to include Wells-next-the-Sea and Fakenham with, so far, a positive response from readers. For our existing advertisers this means your message is reaching a wider audience and if you are a business in Fakenham that would like to get your message out across West Norfolk we are here for you!

If you prefer to stay indoors on Christmas Day please spare a thought for the hardy souls who will be braving the cold waters of the Wash in Hunstanton at the Round Table Christmas Swim. The fun starts at 10am.



From all of us here at Town and Around we wish you and your families a peaceful, joyous Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

Until next month,

Elaine

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Town and Around is published by Elaine Bird and printed by Mortons of Horncastle

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Our pick-up points include supermarkets in Hunstanton, Heacham, Dersingham, King's Lynn, Downham Market, Fakenham and Wells-next-the-Sea.

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Page	356.64	297.00
DPS	684.00	570.00

All prices are per issue, exclusive of VAT. Phone for more details.

The copy date is 12th of the month preceding publication.

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Work's started on the mega incinerator - but is there still hope for Wisbech?

Dani Crawshaw

It's something campaigners hoped would never happen, but some now fear is inevitable - a mega incinerator in Wisbech. Work's begun on the site where more than half a million tonnes of non-recyclable waste will burn each year, with potentially hundreds of lorries coming into the area daily.



Recent drone shot, image Richard Murray

Despite opposition from residents, councils, councillors and local Conservative MP Steve Barclay, development consent for the facility was granted in February last year, by then Energy and Net Zero Secretary Claire Coutinho. An environmental permit given in May.

MVV Environment, the German company behind the plans, say the 300 million pound plant on the Algores Way industrial estate is expected to take 3 years to build.



What the incinerator's expected to look like, image MVV Environment

To give you an idea of its size, the turrets, at over 90 metres, will dwarf the spires of nearby landmark Ely Cathedral (66 metres). It's not only the blot on the landscape that worries people, it's the health implications, the smell and the potential impact it could have on Wisbech - changing the Georgian market town forever.

Helen Pentelow, a local business owner and resident, has campaigned against the build since it was proposed 6 years ago, and has made her views clear - it will be 'a disaster'.

"My business is adjacent to the site and since October there have been lorries constantly coming and going - there's mud all over the road. And this is just the beginning, the machinery they'll have to bring along this road, as you can imagine, will be enormous.

"I just think Wisbech will be known for having this monstrosity, an absolute eyesore. We're a small Georgian market town, it's not out in the sticks, it's 100 metres away from my business, it's hundreds of metres away from a school, if I'd got children there I'd be having kittens."

She adds her concerns about the potential health implications and smell and local roads being unable to cope with lorries. MVV Environment says they'll avoid coming through the town, but Helen thinks at times it will be 'inevitable'. And tells me she knows of house sales that have fallen through.



Campaigners with MP Steve Barclay, Westminster, 2021

I ask resident Terry Wood, who bought a house nearby 3 years ago, if she'd known more about the incinerator at the time, would she have reconsidered. Without hesitation it's a 'yes'.

"I would have given it a wider berth - we are half a mile away as the crow flies. You look at these things and you expect them to be in the middle of nowhere - the middle of a field somewhere, but I feel it's been plonked here. I'm in a state of disbelief.

"I know we have to dispose of rubbish - but right next to a school and people's homes - how is that justified? That's what angers me, it's just been you've having it here - so tough. It's disgusting beyond belief."

There continues to be efforts to oppose it.

Local MP Steve Barclay, who describes it as a 'stupid idea', is seeking the support of local councillors to sign a pledge to refuse to send waste to the site. County Councillor Alexandra Kemp has recently written to the government voicing her concerns about air pollution, and remains hopeful, saying, "It is never too late to stop a wrong decision."

And of course Wisbech Without Incineration (WisWin) continues its campaign. Founder Ginny Bucknor describing the incinerator as 'illogical', and remains hopeful that, "Investors will realise it is a bizarre place to build a major infrastructure project, and will pull out."

MVV Environment says the facility will be 'state-of-the-art', and it will be a 'good neighbour' to the local community, with promises to monitor harmful toxins and control the smell 'through a number of operational measures, including good housekeeping'.



A spokesperson adding, "Through its experience at its facilities in Germany and the UK, MVV is confident that the various concerns raised from time to time, will prove unfounded in the fullness of time."

It also says they'll be local employment opportunities, and money donated to local community groups.

Understandably all this does little, if nothing, to ease the concerns of residents, with the whole identity of their town under threat.

With years of the build to come, perhaps, as all the campaigners I've spoken to say, someone will see sense?



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The magic of Luminate

Dani Crawshaw



The feeling I have walking around Luminate is one of pure joy. From dancing elves to mirror balls giving the illusion of snow flurries - the Royal Parkland is alive with lights, music and animals narrating.

My two year old is immediately mesmerised, as the bear welcomes us to the wood. And for a mile or so we are immersed in an enchanting journey. We travel through tunnels, play instruments and even get to toast some marshmallows.



It's at the fire pit we meet Stuart and his 6 year old son Robert, who says, "I love it. The reindeer are great and my favourite thing is playing the drums." 6 year old Elliot's also there with his 4 year old brother, Thomas. "It's really exciting," Elliot says, "And makes me feel like Christmas."

We can see a laser display, which lights up the sky, and set off to have a closer look. Snettisham's Scout Group's watching too, the 8 year olds are transfixed. Afterwards Edward tells me, "It's very cool, we think it looks like UFOs."

And off they run to the stepping stones that change colour - going back and forth in delight. These immersive installations aren't just for children, that's the wonder of Luminate - you can unleash your inner child - let the magic in.

So I run along the stepping stones too -

joined by a group of adults behind me. The member of staff nearby jokes, "When no-one's here I have to admit I have a few goes!"



Then it's on to make a wish. I meet the Scout group again, Casper says she's wishing for "Love in the world", Edward, "To be able to come to Luminate everyday," and Harvey, "For my lovely mummy to get better." I gave my wish to Harvey's mum too.

I chat to Val, who's working on the trail for a second year, ready to help when needed, "Everyone's so happy and amazed at what they see - it just makes it so special." I ask what it's like in the rain and cold, "It's fine, you've just got to have layers and waterproofs!"



Next is the fairies, which delight my daughter. How can it not? It's there, as luck would have it, we are walking alongside one of the directors of the event, Janine Maycock, "It's really nice watching the kids' reactions, it makes it all worthwhile," she says.



"It's a solid 9 months of planning, but to be honest even whilst we're here now you walk around and you think oh what would work here, what would be better, where is there a gap that we need to think about for next year - so it almost starts during it!"



The hard work of the whole team's paid off. On the face of every person I pass is a smile or a look of wonder.

Before we know it we've come to the end - almost 2 hours have passed, and I'm left thinking - again please.

Luminate at Sandringham's on until December 24th

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We will remember them

Dani Crawshaw



We march down to the Remembrance Memorial to remember all the people who sacrificed themselves for our freedom," 10 year old Amy Grace tells me, who's joining her fellow Girl Guides in the march in Hunstanton.



Lucy and Amy Grace

"It's Remembrance Day - remembering all the people that fought in the war," adds her friend Lucy.



Ruby and sister Azalia

The Brownies and younger Rainbows are in the parade too - 9 year old Ruby tells me she's got a poppy on her brownie uniform to, "Remember the soldiers who died." Her and her 6 year old sister will be holding flags, which they're very excited about.

The groups join a parade through the town to the memorial - which includes veterans, representatives from the local forces and members of the RNLI.



At the war memorial in the Esplanade Gardens a service is held, the names of the fallen are read out, The Last Post is played and a minutes silence is held. The sun shining throughout.

More than 20 wreaths are laid, one by local school Smithdon High. 16 year old Miles Harris says, "We are here today to lay a wreath to pay remembrance to those who have fallen and served our country, I feel like it's really important to pay remembrance to those who

have lost their lives so we can live our day to day life how we live it."



Daisy and Miles laying a wreath

Fellow pupil Daisy May adds, "I felt really proud to go up there and be part of it, it was a special thing to do, I think it's really important to remember soldiers that sacrificed their lives."

Similar services have been held across West Norfolk, in Snettisham horses have been part of the parade. Hundreds of people filled the village square, the Salvation Army Band played and a poem was read commemorating the animals that have served.



It seems only right to end with a section from 'For the Fallen', by English poet Laurence Binyon.

"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them."



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When a child refuses contact: understanding parental alienation

By Daniel Sims, Family Solicitor, Hayes + Storr

For many separated families, Christmas can highlight the challenges of shared parenting. While some children move easily between households, others may resist spending time with one parent, sometimes refusing contact altogether. This can leave one parent feeling rejected or believing that the other has deliberately influenced the child's views.

What is parental alienation?

The courts increasingly encounter situations where one parent claims that the other has "turned" the child against them. Rather than treating this as a psychological condition, judges have clarified that parental alienation is best understood as a pattern of behaviour that results in a child unjustifiably rejecting a parent.

Recent guidance has outlined three elements that must be shown before the court will conclude that alienation has occurred:

1. The child shows resistance or refusal to spend time with one parent;
2. This cannot reasonably be explained by that parent's own conduct; and
3. The other parent has acted, directly or indirectly, in a way that has contributed to the child's rejection.

When refusal has another explanation

It is important to remember that not every case of resistance amounts to alienation.

Children, particularly older ones, can form their own opinions about where they feel most comfortable. In other cases, reluctance may reflect a legitimate wish to avoid a parent whose behaviour has been harmful or neglectful.

Similarly, there are situations where one parent restricts contact for protective reasons, for example, to safeguard the child's wellbeing or safety. In those circumstances, what may appear to be alienation could, in fact, be a proportionate and justified response.

How the court approaches these disputes

When parents cannot agree about the reasons for a child's refusal, the court may direct a Fact-Finding Hearing. This allows each side to present evidence, which might include statements, reports from schools or health professionals, or information from the police or social services.

The court's task is to determine, what has actually happened:

- Has there been domestic abuse or other conduct justifying limited contact?
- Or has one parent engaged in behaviour amounting to alienation?

The answers to these questions shape the next steps in the case.

Possible outcomes

If the court finds that one parent's conduct has led the child to become alienated from the



other, it may order steps such as family therapy, psychological assessment, or supervised contact to help rebuild the relationship. The parent responsible will generally be expected to recognise the impact of their behaviour and work towards restoring the child's relationship with the other parent. Where allegations of abuse are proven, the court will instead focus on ensuring that any future contact is safe, and in some cases, it may decide that contact should not take place at all.

Support for parents

At Hayes + Storr, our family law team has extensive experience helping parents navigate complex contact disputes.

For confidential advice, contact our Family Department on 01328 863231 or email law@hayes-storr.com.

This article is for general information only and does not constitute legal advice. The law may have changed since publication.

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Our drop-in centre is more than just a place to receive support — it's a welcoming, friendly community where you can connect with others who understand your experiences. Attending the centre helps combat loneliness and isolation, which are common challenges many veterans and their families face. By coming along, you can meet new people, share stories, and enjoy a supportive environment where you feel valued and understood.

Once you arrive, there's a wide range of activities and services available to help you feel engaged, supported, and connected. From social activities, games, and group discussions to practical support and wellbeing programs, every visit helps create a sense of belonging and purpose. As one beneficiary shared:

"Coming to the drop-in has made such a difference. It's not just the support I get — it's knowing I'm not alone and that there are people who understand me."

Even small things, like a cup of tea and a friendly chat, can make a huge difference in brightening someone's day. Another member said:

"I didn't realise how much I missed social contact until I came here. The volunteers and other members make it feel like a second home."

Our volunteer drivers make it easier for everyone to access these benefits, ensuring transportation is never a barrier to support. Whether it's your first visit or you're returning to see familiar faces, we're here to make getting to the centre simple, safe, and stress-free.

If you need transport to our drop-in centre, please get in touch with us today. Let us help you take that important step toward connection, support, and reducing isolation. At The Bridge for Heroes, nobody should face challenges alone — we're here to help every step of the way.

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS & PARTIES FOR YOUR STAFF – ARE THEY TAXABLE?

By Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton

It seems unlikely that many businesses will be throwing a party to celebrate the largesse that has been spread around by the 2026 Budget. Indeed, in the era of working from home, political correctness and general doom and gloom, the office party may not be the afternoon bacchanalia which many of us fondly remember (although in some cases, if you can remember it you probably weren't there). However, where an employer does scrape together enough petty cash and goodwill to create some staff entertainment or reward, whether as Christmas parties or Christmas gifts for staff, there are employment tax, business tax and VAT consequences – of course!

A Party?

Surprisingly in some cases you might not have to report anything to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) or pay tax and National Insurance. To be exempt, the party or similar social function must:

- be open to all of your employees
- be annual, such as a Christmas party or summer barbecue
- cost £150 or less per person (if it exceeds that, the whole cost is taxable, not just the excess)

This also applies to online or virtual parties. If your business has more than one location, an annual event that's open to all of your staff based at one location still counts as exempt. You can also put on separate parties for different departments, as long as all of your employees can attend one of them. If there are multiple parties over the year costing less than £150 per head, in aggregate they can all be included. The £150 limit applies to the number of guests, rather than the employees, so spouses and partners can be included.

Christmas Gifts?

Some employers, perhaps with a recollection of rowdy events in the past, make gifts, such as non-cash retail vouchers or hampers, to employees as an alternative (or addition) to Christmas parties.

Such gifts might be covered by the annual events exemption if given at the event (as long as the total of all costs for the event do not exceed the £150 per head) or may alternatively fall within the definition of a "trivial benefit in kind".

The trivial benefit exemption is less generous than the party exemption and will only apply to a gift which is not cash or a cash voucher and is less than £50. It will not be exempt from tax if the employee has a contractual right to the gift or it is given in recognition of particular services carried out as part of their duties.

If the employer manages to jump through all the tax hoops there are no tax or NIC liabilities for either employer or employee. Where one or all of the conditions are not met, the gift will be taxable and subject to NIC. Additionally, where an employee buys their own gift, and is reimbursed, this relief will not apply.

The information above was summarised prior to the 2025 Budget. It is, of course entirely possible that Rachel Reeves will stride up to the floor of the House of Commons wearing a party hat, and in the

spirit of Christmas, announce a whole series of celebratory concessions. The smart money is backing the appearance of a sack of less palatable surprises.

For advice regarding the tax implications of employee parties & gifts please contact either of the partners Kate Gigg FCA or Nicola Tarry FCA at Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton on 01485 534800 or kate@kathryngigg.co.uk.

N.B. Article written in November 2025

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The Bridge for Heroes

A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Collection Pot Holders



We want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone who currently has one of our collection pots in their shop, workplace, club, or community space. Your support is truly invaluable, and the impact of every single coin and note donated cannot be overstated.

What might feel like small, everyday donations quickly add up to make a significant difference. The funds raised go directly towards supporting our Armed Forces community — helping veterans, serving personnel, and their families through times of need.

We know that behind every collection pot is someone who has given their time and space to support our cause. Whether it's a local shop counter, an office reception desk or a community centre, your willingness to host a collection pot is helping us reach people across towns and villages in ways we couldn't achieve alone. Your commitment helps keep the memory of our Armed Forces community alive in the everyday lives of those around you.

If you're not currently involved but would like to help, hosting a collection pot is a simple yet powerful way to show your support. By placing one in your business or community space, you're not only helping raise funds but also sparking conversations, raising awareness, and encouraging others to play a part. Together, these small acts of kindness build a network of support that makes a big difference.

If you'd like to request a collection pot or learn more about how you can get involved, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our team. We'd be delighted to provide you with everything you need and guide you through the simple process of setting one up.

Your generosity helps ensure that those who have served — and continue to serve — our country are never forgotten and always supported.

Together, we are stronger, and together, we can continue to stand by our Armed Forces community.

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Friday 19th - Santa's Bingo

Thursday 25th - Mulled Wine at the Club 10.00am -1.00pm

Wednesday 31st - New Year's Eve Music Night with Female Vocalist Sabina

Saturday 3rd January - Special Saturday Night Bingo - Eyes down 8.00pm

Regular Events

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Tuesdays 12.45pm - 1.30pm - New Seated Yoga with Jackie Lee

Tuesdays: Cash Bingo starts at 7.30pm

Wednesdays : 10am-12pm (Fortnightly) U3A Chess Group.

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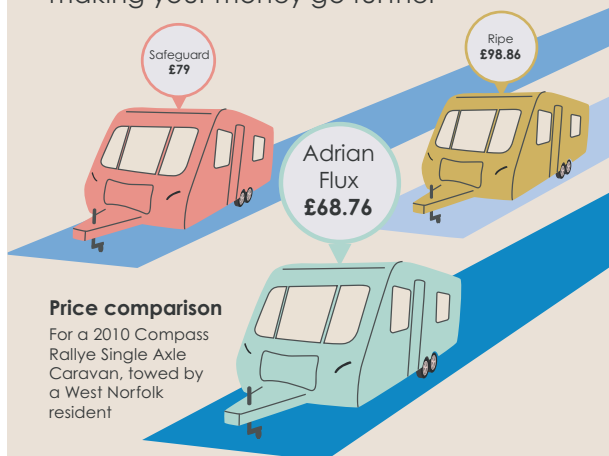
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Hunstanton Eyecare

I'm writing this in early November, and a couple of weeks ago the clocks went back to GMT, oh I did enjoy my extra hour with a nice cuppa! The only downside is that the days are shorter and we will probably be travelling, and driving, much more in the dark. Just recently we have also had several enquiries relating to the news that older drivers, over 70, will be hit with stricter eyesight rules. On this point I have to say that nothing has really changed, we are all bound by the DVLA law stating that our eyesight should be up to a certain standard, and that's just common sense!



So with all this in mind, I thought it would be a good idea to remind you of the benefits of anti-reflection coatings. Today, we would generally anti-reflection coat all our spectacle lenses. The coating is a high-tech multi-layered coating, applied in the factory by the robots in a sterile environment and untouched by human hands until it is finished and ready for inspection and packing.

Spectacle lens surfaces are of course polished and shiny and therefore reflect about 8% of the light that falls on them, the coating reduces these undesirable reflections to about 0.5%. We have a sample in practice and it looks as if there is a hole in the lens, the difference is quite noticeable. The coating therefore improves the transparency of the lens, not only giving better vision but also greatly improving the cosmetic appearance, especially in higher powered lenses. Coatings are particularly relevant when it comes to night driving. Not only are we battling with low light conditions, but headlights and streetlights will reflect from lens surfaces making things even more difficult, the coating helps to combat this. I will say that nothing can ease the dazzle of bright LED headlights or someone who forgot to dip their headlights, but as drivers we should do the best we can. Coatings, like everything in the optical world have improved in quality over the years, we usually supply "Crizal Sapphire" which comes with a two-year warranty, so if lenses get scratched by general wear and tear, they will be replaced free of charge.

So, whatever your visual needs, we are here to help, aiming to give you the best advice and providing the most up to date products backed up by our lens supplier Essilor.

In my next missive we will be welcoming another New Year, doesn't time fly! So, from all of us at Hunstanton Eyecare, and also the crew of Dipple & Conway, we wish you all a very happy Christmas and hope the new year brings you good health and happiness.

Annette

Problems with night driving?

Elaine Bird

A new study commissioned by the Department for Transport (DFT) reveals that brighter vehicle headlights are more likely to cause glare for drivers.

The independent report was compiled by Transport Research Laboratory (TRL). 1,850 UK drivers matched to the age and gender split of the licence-holding population were surveyed. These drivers answered questions about their own experiences of glare when driving.

TRL's report confirmed that the glare from modern headlights was a real problem for drivers of all ages with 96% of people surveyed saying that most or some headlights were too bright and 97% said they were regularly or sometimes distracted by oncoming vehicles with whiter headlamps and those on larger vehicles being especially problematic for causing glare.

More than half of drivers reported either having stopped or reduced driving at night (or would if they could) due to headlamp glare. From the frequently asked questions section of TFL's report we learn that ageing eyes are more sensitive to glare, so older drivers are certainly more affected, but the survey showed concerns across all age groups. This isn't just an issue for pensioners, it's something most drivers notice. The best advice is to avoid looking directly at oncoming headlamps, keep windscreens clean to reduce scatter, and make sure their own headlamps are properly aligned.

The full report can be found at:

<https://www.trl.co.uk/uploads/trl/documents/PPR2069-Glare-from-road-vehicle-lighting.pdf>



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Rambo reunited with owner

Dani Crawshaw

When I speak to Simon, you can hear the relief in his voice, "I literally have hardly slept since he went missing, and I've been out searching for him ever since. I've walked 19.6 miles trying to find him."



The moment the pair were reunited

The Eurasian Eagle owl went missing early November, "I was flying him along the beach, like I always do, and a jet came over really low, and it spooked him and he just went super high and then went off in the wrong direction and got lost."

I first met Simon and Rambo in October, when he explained he'd rescued the Eagle owl a few years back, "The previous owners who had him just locked him up in an enclosure for far too long, and they had a breeder ring on him that was far too small and it grew into his foot, so he's only got use of one leg."

And that's why Simon's been so worried, "Because he can't survive in the wild, I knew he'd only have a few days left - every time I came home and thought shall I get some rest, I thought no - that's an hour that I could be looking for him."

But thankfully 4 days after going missing Rambo was found in Heacham, and to Simon's relief he was okay, "Not a mark on him, he was starving hungry though."

"It's as the most emotional thing ever being reunited with him."

When I got him everything just lifted off my shoulders and I felt like I wanted to collapse. I came close to him a few times, but something always scared him off, I was 6 feet away from him at one point but then a dog barked and it scared him off.

"When we found Rambo, he was a ten minute walk from my house - but it took me over an hour to get home because everybody kept stopping me and saying oh you've found him, I'm so pleased. I also passed about 7 people who were out looking for him."

"Personally I want to thank everyone, from Heacham and all the surrounding areas - the support and love I've had is unbelievable and is completely overwhelming as well. I particularly want to thank Nigel Marsh, who runs 'my mini break', without his help I wouldn't have got Rambo back."



Moon and Rambo

It's not just people that have been missing Rambo, Simon says barn owl Moon 'has been off his food as well'. The pair are often seen out and about with Simon, who for the last few years has been helping injured owls.

Before Simon goes (to have a well deserved rest) he ends by telling me, "It's unbelievable - I can't explain what it feels like to have him back."

Welcome home Rambo!

Agatha Appleton and the Peril of the Pyramids

Dave Carter

The climax of Sedgeford's dramatic year will be a silly play from Gloucester-based Rain or Shine Theatre Company; you may remember their past Christmas performances at Sedgeford, 'Dracula' and 'Murder Most Wide'.

The company, all of whom are professionals, love performing at Sedgeford and we know they'll enjoy an appreciative audience when they deliver their usual brand of comedy in 'Agatha Appleton and the Peril of the Pyramids'.

It's the early 1930s and librarian Agatha Appleton finds herself embroiled in a hilarious Egyptian adventure that will test her courage, her wits, and her heart. Can our hero outsmart her enemies and uncover the mysteries of the ancient world?

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slice of archaeological adventure heavily laced with Rain or Shine's trademark silliness.

Join Sedgeford Village Hall and all, for an evening of side-splitting spills and thrills in a theatrical tour-de-force... from the company who performed our last two outdoor plays! Tea, coffee and mince pies (£1.00), will be served during the interval and our fabled raffle will provide added dynamism to the evening's entertainment. Pay for your seats online... (£15.00 adults), by using our Barclays account and adding a payment reference: 'Agatha and your name'.

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Wendy Warner's plant of the month - Phalaenopsis Orchids

Although their appearance is exotic, Orchids grown as houseplants are easier to care for than you may think. There are a number of types available, but Phalaenopsis are the most popular and definitely the ones to choose if you are giving orchids a try for the first time.

Phalaenopsis are commonly known as the Moth Orchid as the flowers resemble beautiful moths as they open. The upright flower spikes rise above large glossy green leaves and they come in a vast range of colours, from white through pink, purple, burgundy, yellow, orange and green, either plain or with speckles or spots of contrasting colours. Most produce large flowers from branching stems with lower blooms opening first leaving more buds to follow at the top. Choose one with multiple stems and plenty of flower buds. Wild or species varieties are more expensive but have a greater quantity of smaller flowers on shorter stems.

These orchids may look delicate, but the popularity of Phalaenopsis is due to the fact they are well-suited to the home environment. The key to success is mimicking their natural habitat. Place them in a spot with bright, indirect light, an east- or west-facing windowsill often works best. Avoid direct sunlight, which can scorch the leaves.

Plants should be kept moist but not waterlogged as roots can rot. A good way to do this is to stand them in a bowl of water for half an hour then remove them and allow to drain before returning them to their pot cover. They should be grown in a loose, bark-type potting mix which will absorb the moisture. Phalaenopsis are usually supplied in transparent pots which act as a handy aid to check if the plant needs water. If the roots below the surface are green, they are moist, whereas if they look white or grey, they require watering. They also like moist air, so misting the leaves and any aerial roots with water or an orchid spray can increase the humidity. Feed regularly whilst flowering with a liquid orchid fertiliser or a slow-release drip feeder inserted into the pot.

Flowering can occur at any time throughout the year and flowers will last for up to three months. Once the last flowers on the spike

fade, and the top of the stem turns brown, cut it back to just above the second node on the stem below. A secondary spike will often then be produced. This will sometimes try to grow horizontally, so use clips to train it upwards on a plant stick. Any yellowing leaves should be cut off. The plant may have a short rest period whilst one flower stem dies and another appears and the plant can be moved to a slightly cooler position for a few weeks.

Treat yourself or a friend, remember, a Phalaenopsis isn't just for Christmas, it will give you months of flower!



News from The Barking Bugle

A Dog's Tail-Wagging Christmas!



Woof woof, humans and fellow pups! It's me, Miss Zsa Zsa, your canine correspondent and Canine Editor at The Barking Bugle here to tell you why Christmas smells, tastes and feels absolutely paw-some this year! I've been sniffing around, wagging my tail and pawing through all the festive fun, and trust me—you don't want to miss a single treat.

The festive sniff-ventures kick off on 30th November in Hunstanton with a Christmas Dog Walk & Jumper Competition by the Bandstand on The Green. I'll be on paw as the judge, making sure the best-dressed pooches get their well-deserved belly rubs and tail wags! All proceeds go to Quackhouse Rescue, so you can look good and do good.

In December there's more tail-thumping fun! On 7th December pups can visit Father Christmas at Bark In The Dark at ROARR! at Lenwade—a grotto just for dogs (I approve!). Then on 14th December, the Santa's Grotto for Dogs at The Forum in Norwich welcomes all festive furballs in aid of the RSPCA.

For extra jingles in your paws, Santa Paws at Holt Country Park on 19th and 20th December offers pre-booked festive frolics. And if you're like me and love a good howl-along, join the Canine Carolling at Holkham Hall on 22nd December—singing optional, tail wagging mandatory!

Finally, just before Christmas, the Barking Bugle team & friends will be outside Tesco in Hunstanton on 23rd December, collecting for PACT Animal Sanctuary. Come and say hello and help other furry friends in need.

So, fellow pups (and humans who love us), get your paws ready, your collars shining and your noses twitching! Christmas is full of walks, treats and festive cheer, and I, Miss Zsa Zsa, your trusted canine correspondent, promise it's going to be absolutely paw-some.

Tail wags and festive sniffs,

Miss Zsa Zsa

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Carolyn Hayes

Our October speaker was Grenville Harding. A few years ago Gren noticed large bumblebees zigzagging just above the grass on his back lawn. This was the start of an obsession to learn more about these fascinating and endangered creatures, via research in books, on the Internet and out in the field, and via the Bumblebee Conservation Trust: <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/>. Gren informed us that plants such as dandelions, thistles, red clover, blackberries and teasels are invaluable for providing pollen and nectar and, by setting aside a small patch of garden in which to grow such plants, you can encourage bumblebees into your garden.

Gren has recently brought out a beautiful book, *Bumblin'*, which covers his journey to learn more about the bumblebee, and contains many close-up photographs which he has taken himself. This is stocked by several local bookshops, including Words and Wonder in Downham Market High Street.

Later that week, a large group of us travelled into Cambridge for a tour of Christ's College gardens, led by the Head Gardener. After enjoying refreshments in the Portrait Room, we started our walk. The sun had come out by then so we saw everything at its best. There are three individual gardens, each one running into the next, plus The Fellows' Garden which contains a huge Mulberry tree, propped up by large wooden posts since being uprooted in a storm in 1795. It still produces mulberries, which are made into jam by the kitchen staff and given to the Fellows and students. At the end of the Fellows' Garden is the mid-18th century bathing pool. It is traditional each year for the undergraduates to jump into the pool to celebrate the end of their exams!



The massive trees were showing off their dazzling autumn colours

Before we knew it, one and a half hours had passed, and we were back at the Portrait Room for more very welcome refreshments, and a sit down and chat. All in all, a very successful event. Thank you to everyone who came along. We hope to arrange a visit to another Cambridge College garden next year.

If you wish to join our friendly Society, or just find out more, Judith, our membership secretary, would be delighted to hear from you. Contact Judith on 01366 501466 or email jt.mazur@tiscali.co.uk

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SNETTISHAM GARDENING CLUB

We finished our year with a Hog Roast on 26th November. We do not hold an event in December as it is usually a very busy month for members. Thank you all for your support during 2025.

We will start our new programme with our AGM on Wednesday January 28th 2026 at the Memorial Hall, Old Church Road at 7.30 pm when we will be taking subscriptions and our programme will be available along with new membership cards and the entry schedule for our annual Open Show in July. Cake and fizz will be on offer to celebrate what we hope will be another successful year for our club. After very careful consideration, we are sadly having to increase our subscriptions for 2026 but not having done so since 2009. As we are all too aware, costs have increased dramatically recently, including our operating costs.

We take the opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and New Year and look forward to seeing you in 2026.

Call Gail on 07899933840 or Addie on 01485 544754 for further information about Club activities.

Mudpies and Butterflies

with Louise Barby

December may feel like the garden has finally come to rest - but this is a month of quiet opportunity. Low light, bare branches and stillness reveal the structure of the garden more clearly than at any other point in the year. It's the month where good design stands out, and where the smallest acts of care have the biggest impact on plants and wildlife.

Below is a guide to what to do now, how to support the winter garden ecosystem.

Protect Tender Plants

- Wrap tree ferns, bananas, and borderline exotics with fleece or straw.
- Lift pots off the ground using "pot feet" to stop roots freezing.
- Move citrus and pelargoniums into frost-free shelter, but keep them just slightly on the dry side.

Prune Apples and Pears (But Not Stone Fruit)

- This is the perfect dormant-season pruning window for pome fruit.
- Focus on airflow and shape, and avoid pruning during hard frost.
- Leave cherries, plums and apricots until summer to avoid silver leaf disease.

Check Stored Produce

- Inspect stored onions, potatoes and squash for rot. One spoiled veg can infect the lot.
- Recycle any mouldy produce into the compost heap — heat will neutralise it.

Plan Next Year's Layout

The garden is at its most honest in December. Stand outside with a notebook and ask:

- Where are the empty, flat, lifeless areas?
- Where does the eye go when flowers are gone?
- Which areas need winter height, not summer colour?

Design is easier when the distractions of abundance have faded.

Wildlife Tasks for December

- Create a "messy corner" - a pile of prunings, leaves, and logs is winter shelter for hedgehogs, beetles and wrens.
 - Float a tennis ball in ponds — stops them freezing over completely, allowing oxygen exchange for frogs and newts.
 - Clean bird feeders and bird baths weekly — cold weather increases disease risk.
 - Plant native shrubs for winter food: holly (Ilex), spindle (Euonymus europaeus), hawthorn, Viburnum opulus.
 - Leave ivy in place — in December it is flowering and feeding late pollinators, and its berries feed thrushes into spring.
- The garden is not asleep — it is revealed. Look closely. You can plant trees and shrubs all winter as long as the ground isn't frozen.

Do not cut back everything — leave textures and seed heads for beauty + wildlife.

All that remains to do is wish you a super happy Christmas filled with bright blue skies and frosty days in our lovely Norfolk countryside.

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RAF Air Cadets complete Charity Fund raising walk for Mayors Charity

Gary Walker

A group of RAF Air Cadets and staff from 42F (King's Lynn) Squadron RAF Air Cadets set out on a bright Sunday morning to walk from Downham Market to King's Lynn along the banks of the River Great Ouse.

They were set off from King's Lynn Railway Station on the rail replacement bus by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Steve Bearshaw and were met at Downham by the Borough Mayor Cllr Andy Bullen and his dog Vin who accompanied them for the start of the walk.



The mayor's father, Geoff Bullen, was in fact the first cadet to sign up when the Cadets were first formed in 1938, with King's Lynn being given the F in its title as a Founder Squadron. It was originally known as the Air Defence Cadet Corps, later becoming the Air Training Corps. Geoff eventually joined the RAF, training in the USA and Canada as a bomber pilot flying Sterling aircraft and being employed to tow Horsa gliders for both D Day and Arnhem.

Carrying the Charity standard, the group made their way along the river bank in almost perfect conditions and had a very welcome stop at the Crown and Anchor pub in St Germans who kindly provided the Cadets with squash and bacon rolls.

The final stretch took the group over the Tail Sluice and from there on to Palm Paper to the South Quay raising just under £600 for the charity.



Anyone wishing to support the Charity can do so by going to the Sqn crowd funding page
<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/42fsponsoredwalk>

Recycle Your Christmas Tree and Support Young People in Care

If you're planning to have a real Christmas tree this year, you may be wondering what to do with it once the festivities are over. Luckily, local charity Break has a solution that makes disposing of your tree simple — while also changing the lives of young people living in care across East Anglia.

Break has partnered with Just Helping to offer a Christmas tree recycling service for households in West and North Norfolk. Residents in postcode areas NR10-12, NR21-24 & 28, PE30-38 and IP24-26 can have their tree collected between 7-9 January 2026 in exchange for a small donation. All proceeds will go directly towards helping Break support children and young people living in care making sure they have always have someone by their side.

The deadline to book your tree collection is Sunday, 4 January 2026.

Hayley Malone, Break Fundraising Manager said: "If you're having a real tree this year, this is a fantastic way to take the hassle out of disposing of it. We'll take your tree away in January, and all donations raised ensure we can continue our vital work supporting children and young people living in care to build their confidence, create strong relationships and experience new opportunities."

Break is also looking for volunteers to help collect trees in January. Those interested in lending a hand are encouraged to get involved and make a difference in their community.

This year, why not let your Christmas tree's final act be a generous one? Book your collection today and start the new year knowing you've made a positive impact on the lives of young people in care.

For more information and to book your collection: <https://www.break-charity.org/charity/get-involved/events/christmas-tree-recycling/>

When: Collections from 7-9 January 2026, booking deadline 4 January

Where: Visit www.break-charity.org to schedule your collection or volunteer to collect



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Christmas Trees fit for a King



If you want a Christmas tree that will withstand a few weeks indoors and be a sparkling centrepiece throughout the festive season, you need to follow a few rules, so recently T&A visited Paul at Sandringham Sawmill to find out how to care for our tree from an expert.

"Firstly, you need to buy a good quality tree," he said. "Here at the Sawmill we sell the Nordmann Fir, it's a slow growing tree and if you look after it properly it won't drop its needles."

"The first thing to do is cut off about half an inch or so from the bottom of the trunk which will rid your tree of any hardened sap and make sure it can absorb lots of water to stay fresh and green and then stand it in water to give it a good drink."

"When it's time take it indoors, you can cut more off the trunk so that it will fit in a stand that takes water and don't stand it by the fire or near a radiator, try to find the coolest part of the room."

"Water is key to keeping your tree alive and depending on the temperature a tree can drink two or three pints of water a day so choose a spot you can get to easily to top up and check the water level every day."

So there you have it!

Christmas Trees are available from Sandringham Sawmill.

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A busy 2 months for Priory Rotary Club

Phil Davies

It has been an extremely busy October and November for Kings Lynn Priory Rotary Club!



Priory Rotary hosted their annual Harvest Lunch for older local citizens at Dersingham Village Centre on Saturday October 18th. 70 guests were treated to beef stew and dumplings, followed by apple and blackberry pie and tea or coffee, provided by Ann Pacini and served by other Priory members.



Entertainment was then provided by Rotarians Rowena Senido who sang popular songs and President Derek Stringer with a solo performance on the saxophone.

Earlier in the week, members of Priory Rotary were busy handing out Dictionaries 4 Life to year 4 students at St Martha's and

Sandringham and West Newton primary schools, the first of 11 schools to be presented with these beautifully illustrated and informative books. This was followed by presentations to the other schools over the next 6 weeks.

And on Wednesday 15th, Priory had joined forces with residents from Amberley Hall carry out a much needed litter pick at Peppers Green. A huge amount of rubbish was collected by the team.



The photos are before the start and at the end of the litter pick.



A team of Priory volunteers laid the preparations for planting wildflowers in Wootton Park on October 21st.

On Monday and Wednesday of week commencing October 20th we held our monthly Senior Citizens film club at the Corn Exchange cinema, where we entertained 195 people with tea and coffee before enjoying Downton Abbey, the Grand Finale.

This was followed on November 15th and 17th with The Choral, starring Ralph Fiennes and Roger Allam. We also have volunteers at the Friendship Café for dementia sufferers and their partners/carers every Wednesday afternoon.

Several members gathered at Castle Rising on a damp afternoon on October 26th to Walk 2 Miles and raise money for the worldwide Eradicate Polio campaign.

November 5th saw the bi-annual Quiz Night, with 15 teams of 6 battling it out and raising money for the Kings Lynn Food Banks. Followed by the annual Technology Tournament on November 7th, with teams from Kings Lynn Academy, Marshland, Smithdon and Springwood.

To cap it all, Priory's Satellite Club held a spectacular Firewalk to Fundraise at Lynnsport on November 14th, with 20 teams and several individuals taking part. At the time of writing, final figures are not known, but predictions are that more than 100 brave souls will walk the coals, and over £10,000 will be raised for local good causes.

With such a wide range of community-minded activities, Priory Rotary are always on the look out for more volunteers.

If you might be interested, please contact us via our website, www.prioryrotary.org.uk to arrange a preliminary chat with one of our members.

Rotary Donation to the Pelicans Hockey Club

Michael Walker

At a recent hockey session for the under 12s the President of the Rotary Club of King's Lynn, Jame Lee, met with a coach and some players and presented a cheque for £250.



From left: Rosie Allison, Elizabeth, James Lee and Marelise Verdoes

The Rotary Club applauds the huge contribution that the Pelicans make to the community. It was founded in 1920 and has teams for adult and youngsters, with training sessions at their Lynn Sport base most evenings. Members have gone on to play for their universities and even for national teams, including Danny Kerry, currently UK Sport Coaching Lead, within the Olympic and Paralympic teams.

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Rotary Donation to the East Anglian Air Ambulance

Michael Walker

Recently members of the Rotary Club of King's Lynn, together with partners and friends, spent an evening with Martin and Karen Williamson, who have a wonderful collection of James Bond memorabilia, including Aston Martin and Lotus cars, as well as original film props and equipment.



From left: Martin Williamson and Rotarian Ian Mason

Martin's passion came through strongly in his presentation to the group. £320 raised on the evening has been donated to the East Anglian Air Ambulance.

New President of The King's Lynn Probud Club

New president, Bob Ward, invites people who would like to join Probud to get in touch.



From left: Past Probud President Sydney Brailey, President Bob Ward, Secretary Ivan Jordan

The Probud Club of King's Lynn was founded in 1978 as a social club for retired or semi-retired men. Members are from all sorts of backgrounds and occupations and meet at 10am every Wednesday at the Knight's Hill Hotel, South Wootton for a friendly chat. Every 3rd Wednesday in the month the club meets for lunch there, often with a speaker. An Annual General Meeting is held when a new President and a small Committee are elected.

Various outings, visits and events happen throughout the year when our wives or partners and friends join us. The most recent a tour of the Royal Sandringham Stud followed by a meal.

The joining fee is £15 and annual subscription is £10. Contact President Bob Ward (01553 617374) or Secretary Ivan Jordan on (01553 670228), for more information.

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Rotary Young Musician Competition

Michael Walker

For many years the Rotary Club of King's Lynn has organised a very successful debating competition for secondary-aged pupils in the area. For the fourth year another Rotary competition – Young Musician – has been held in King's Lynn. On 5 November four competitors took part in the local round. Pupils from Alderman Peel School in Wells, Downham Market Academy and Springwood High School took part. They played pieces by Rachmaninoff, Ireland, Rameau, McHugh, Mozart, Joplin and Chopin.

The winner was pianist, Iryna Oliynyk, whose two pieces by Chopin and Rachmaninoff greatly impressed the judges and the audience. She goes on to the District round to be held in Norwich in February.

The Rotary Club is very grateful to Derek Oldfield, Avril Wright and Daniel Jenkins for acting as judges and to Springwood High School for hosting the event.



Photograph: Amelie Hayward, Ethan Soong, Joseph Burt and Iryna Oliynyk.

Rotary Purple 4 Polio

What is Purple 4 Polio?

Hilary Farrell

In 1985 Rotary made a pledge for a polio free world. At that time, 40 years ago, there were 125 polio endemic countries and hundreds of new cases every single day. Rotarians around the world have worked hard to provide education and vaccines for Polio. The initiative is a testament to the ongoing commitment of Rotary and its members to protect children from the devastating effects of polio. In the past few years, only two countries have reported cases of polio caused by the wild poliovirus but no child anywhere is safe until every child has been fully vaccinated. When a child receives their life-saving polio drops on mass polio immunisation days, their little finger is painted with a purple dye so it is clear they have received their polio vaccine, hence "Purple 4 Polio".

Is there a cure for Polio and who does it affect?

There is no cure for Polio, but polio is preventable with a vaccine. Polio mainly affects children under age 5. The virus is highly infectious and is spread person to person, typically through contaminated water.

It can attack the nervous system, and in some instances, lead to paralysis.

What do Hunstanton and District Rotary do to support Purple 4 Polio?

On World Polio Day 24th October, Rotarians "Walk-a-Mile" for Polio, raising funds from donations. Perhaps you saw them braving the wind and sea spray along Hunstanton Promenade?

Hunstanton and District have a Poetry Evening, providing a two-course meal and inviting participants to share a poem. This year over £400 was raised for the Purple 4 Polio campaign.

This Christmas at Hunstanton Town Hall's Christmas Tree Festival there will be a Purple 4 Polio Christmas Tree to raise awareness of Polio. Come to the Town Hall on December 5th, 6th and 7th!

Over the last seven years Hunstanton and District Rotary have planted purple crocuses to remind the world of the Rotary pledge to rid the world of Polio. Next February a swath of purple around Hunstanton will remind us of the fight against Polio. Look out for the purple in the Spring!

Will Polio be eradicated?

To finish the job over 2 billion doses of oral polio vaccine still have to be administered, to more than 400 million children in over 50

countries, each and every year. We have to have zero cases of polio and zero positive environmental samples before the world can finally be certified polio free.

Until we end polio forever, every child is at risk. www.endpolionow.org

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SWIMARATHON
SATURDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2026
11:00AM - 5:00PM
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All proceeds to local charities and other good causes

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All proceeds to local charities and other good causes

Teams of up to 6 will be challenged to swim in relays for 55 minutes. **Open to all ages and abilities.**

To register your team visit priorityrotary.org.uk or contact Ken Banks on:
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Christmas Day
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East Anglian Air Ambulance King's Lynn Fundraising Group (KLFG)

By Trevor Dane, East Anglian Air Ambulance Volunteer



Because of you, Dan's family had time to say goodbye.

Dan Leathers was just 20 years old when he was involved in a tragic car accident just before Christmas.

The East Anglian Air Ambulance crew from Norwich were tasked by helicopter and were at Dan's side within minutes, giving him with the urgent care he needed at the roadside. Sadly, Dan's injuries were too severe for him to survive. But because of the care he received, his family had two days to be with him in hospital. Time for friends to visit, to laugh, cry, and say goodbye. Dan's family never had that 'If only East Anglian Air Ambulance had been there' thought – because support from people like you meant that we were able to our crew could be there for Dan in the moments when he needed us most.

This Christmas, you can help us be ready to respond to the next person in need, and the next. Your donation doesn't just fund flights. It funds critical care. It gives families the chance of more Christmases together. And when that's not possible, it gives comfort. Donate this Christmas: eaaa.org.uk

King's Lynn Fundraising Group have attended several Hunstanton Town Hall Indoor Markets this year, which are weekly events. From June to October, we are pleased to confirm we have raised £825.39. Thank you to everyone who has supported East Anglian Air Ambulance and KLFG in raising this fantastic amount and to the Hunstanton Town Council and staff who manage the markets throughout the year.

On 22 October I represented the charity at a volunteering event at King's Lynn Town Hall. On 2 November Terri and I attended a Christmas Fair at Heacham Hall, raising £60.94. Thank you to everyone who supported us with purchases and donations. When volunteering and attending events, you never know who you might meet, or who may be on the table opposite... On this occasion it was Eurasian Eagle Owl, Rambo and Barn Owl, Moon! These magnificent birds are owned by Simon, who kindly brought them to the event for people to see them up close.

Here's what you helped us achieve in October: 227 taskings by air and road, 157 patients treated, 2,389 people taught CPR.

Where you can find KLFG in December
6 December: Middleton Village Hall Christmas Fair, School Road, King's Lynn, PE32 1SA

KLFG can be contacted by emailing myself or my colleague Terri: trevordane104@gmail.com
tfaye.100@gmail.com

East Anglian Air Ambulance enquiries: 0345 669 999

Wild in Westminster and West Norfolk

At the time of writing this column, the Budget is looming large. Speculation is rife that the Chancellor is going to break Labour's promises on income tax, reduce tax breaks for pensions, cutting savings allowances, hike council tax, and even commit to higher welfare spending to fill the hole in her tax and spending plans caused by her poor choices a year ago. However, I will have to return to what is actually announced in a future column.

One thing is clear though – the uncertainty created in the run up to the Budget has been very damaging for jobs and growth. Companies have put off or stopped investment plans. People are not spending for fear of what is to come. Unemployment has risen again to 5 per cent – the highest rate for five years – as the impact of the national insurance rise continues to hit job prospects.

Against this backdrop it is easy to become downbeat about the state of things. But despite the challenges, companies small and large are battling on. We need to do more to make things easier for them to compete including removing regulatory costs that have the same impact as tax in terms of jobs and growth. That's why I've been urging the government to get on and finalize the deal with the EU they boasted about and lift red tape on our fishing and other

exports.

I'm also a member of the Coastal Communities cross party group of MPs. One of our areas of focus is on young people. At our most recent meeting we reviewed the Coastal Youth Life Chances project looking at what it is like to grow up in a coastal community today for young people.

The study identifies trends and challenges that will be familiar to most in terms of education, mental health, jobs, and what is on offer for young people in terms of activities and opportunities. The latter topic is an issue the Hunstanton Advisory Group has talked about and plans for better facilities at the Rec will go some way to help address this. The busy programme of activities and events locally is also welcome. Among the recommendations of the research is to include young people in local planning and decision making, re-open youth clubs and places to meet.

While King's Lynn has secured a Town Deal and now Pride in Place funding, this is only available for larger towns. That means Hunstanton, Heacham, and other places have not benefitted directly from such resources and it is for our local councils and other public sector bodies to make sure they prioritise coastal areas whether transport, healthcare, or other services.

The ongoing consultation on an updated masterplan for Hunstanton is also an opportunity to develop a coherent set of plans that can improve the town for residents, as well as visitors. Find out more and how to have your say at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/hunstantonmasterplan

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Borough Council news

Cllr Terry Parish, Heacham Ward which includes Sedgeford and Fring

Merry Christmas to you all. The month ended with news that an offer has been made for resident parking at Heacham Beach car parks. There will be one hour's free parking. This meets the concession negotiated by a resident and well done to her. There is a caveat; a no return window of three hours. It will also take another 3-4 months to take effect as the Borough Council continues to insist that software has to be changed (the concession was 'made' last July).

The facts that parking charges are too high overall and that the winter season of free parking remains cancelled still seem to have been forgotten. A meeting to discuss these matters has still to be convened though the cabinet member originally asked to attend has resigned his position. I will continue to pursue the matter.

Sedgeford's Parish Council perseverance, over several years, of issues relating to the Heacham River is paying off. Anglian Water has confirmed that improvements to the river within the Sedgeford boundary will be made from 2025-2030 funding, with investigatory work commencing

soon. A report on that will be coming in around 6 months. The intention is to improve river flow and mitigate against it drying out in the summer. The big issue of why there is less water flowing from the aquifer is still an open question.

Back to Heacham. At the time of writing, a new traffic diversion or roadworks seems to pop up several times each week. I don't get any advance notice of these and neither I nor the Parish Council are asked about diversion routes or notices. We have to put up with them too, but please tell me /us if particular difficulties arise.

Several planning applications are dragging on. Delays are due to inadequate, sometimes incorrect; information provided on the application forms or lack of appropriate consultations for criteria associated with the application. Planning officers pick up on some of these errors and I pick up on any local matters they miss. I recommend that any planning applicants ensure that their agent complete the application form completely and correctly and, if your application is not simple, seek pre application

advice from the Borough. It will have to be paid for but will speed up the process. If your application has the potential to annoy people, then meet with the Parish Council to discuss your intentions. You may find that the contentious issues, after discussion, can be mitigated.

The Borough Council's housing development, Florence Fields in Lynn, has a mixed tenure of market sales, rent, and affordable homes. It is now recommended that the proportions in the mix will change and more rented accommodation and affordable housing will be provided. This is good news as it should encourage more locals to take up residence in these excellent, efficient, houses and ensure that they are used rather than lying dormant racking up costs to the council.

There has been more interest shown in Styleman Court flats so it remains to be seen whether this expensive development breaks even for the Council. It will an outrage if a high proportion end up as holiday flats.

At an interesting meeting of Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board (IDB), environmental



matters were raised and the importance of IDBs in controlling invasive species like Floating Pennywort underlined. There was also concern raised at the pressure to licence the release of beavers and the need to ensure proper, local, consultation.

Future funding of IDB's, following local government reorganisation, was a worry with unconfirmed reports that the government might make radical changes. On a personal note, though a large proportion of Council Tax goes to pay the IDB bill, that they do very good, essential, work I do not doubt. Councils adversely affected by the costs want it to be met by central, government, funds.

At a joint panel set up to debate recommendations for a change in the way Council scrutiny is managed it was unanimously decided to leave things as they are; the current three scrutiny

panels that handle different aspects of the Council's work. Reasons for doing so included forthcoming local government reorganisation - why meddle with a system that functions now when it will be all change come the unitary council.

The meeting of my scrutiny panel, Regeneration and Development, had two substantial items on its agenda, the King's Lynn Masterplan, and a presentation by Anglian Water.

The Masterplan is a coming together of old and new initiatives which have been in and out of the pipeline for some years. Consultants have so far cost between £200,000 and £300,000 which is small beer compared to some projects. However, what is intended to be done is good and the strategy to ensure all plans pass the planning stage is commendable. As funding allows, for example from any share of the

devolution pot, work should actually be done rather than talked about for another few years. Meanwhile, public consultation continues.

A small point, my recommendation that the term 'wayfinding infrastructure' should be replaced by 'signposts' was agreed.

The Anglian Water presentation was informative as it was revealed that there was now closer cooperation between them and planning officers. The latter had been miffed when AW announced, earlier this year, that they would be objecting to all proposed new developments in areas where sewage infrastructure was or would be at capacity (for example, Heacham Waste Water Treatment Works).

This stance conflicts with government driven necessity to build ever more houses. Cooperation between officers and

AW will seek to mitigate the impact where possible and ensure the development of the next Local Plan is linked to AW's asset management. Officers could ignore AW's current problems as the water company is a non-statutory consultee, that is, their recommendations can be ignored. In law, water companies must connect developments to sewage pipes and water supply pipes whether their infrastructure can cope or not. Officers are most unlikely to go down that daft line and I will monitor the situation in my patch.

Whilst there can be too much sewage, the opposite is true for drinking water. This is a dry region and last summer made it drier, reducing levels in aquifers and rivers from which water is extracted. Anglian Water has to prioritise domestic supply and has no obligation to provide water to businesses and farms. This area

doubles its population in the summer when rain water is minimal and crops are growing. New water supplies are needed now and new development should, logically, await new pipe lines and reservoirs. And all new development should have rain water storage and 'grey water' use for flushing toilets etc.

A pipeline and reservoir are in hand but if and when they are completed, they will likely benefit the area towards Cambridge more than us. They will also have to provide for an ever-increasing population and rely on rainfall elsewhere which cannot be guaranteed. Water rationing in England? If you still have one, keep your cold water storage tank whatever heating system you adopt.

Having said all that, it's a long time since I built a snowman. Perhaps this winter? Happy New Year.

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Food in the School Holidays in the Autumn Half-Term



Above: Food in the School Holidays comes to Clenchwarton. Volunteers with Rev Jackie Goddard

Below: Rev Jackie Goddard with Alexandra Kemp

Clenchwarton Methodist Chapel launched its first ever Free Food in the School Holidays Event (FISH) on Wednesday morning 29th October, for families with young people. Building on the success of the South Lynn free family Breakfast Brunches in the Baptist Church, the Clenchwarton Breakfast event was funded by Clenchwarton County Councillor Alexandra Kemp's County Community Grant.



Meanwhile in South Lynn, Young People of All Abilities had a Whale of a Time, at South Lynn's Free Food in the School Holidays (FISH) for Families and Young People on Thursday 30th October in the Baptist Church, run by Rev June Love and her team of

volunteers. Funded from Cllr Alexandra Kemp's Borough Council Community Grant.



Food in the School Holidays in the Half-Term in South Lynn.

The Wisbech Incinerator - Will it be Built?

Are Governments intelligent? I will come back to this question in a moment. First, let's Consider Population Health Management. Everyone is talking about it. It's simply about helping people stay as healthy for as long as possible, preventing the emergence of health problems in the first place, and early interventions to stop them getting worse. Saving the public purse from spiralling health and social care costs. Tackling health inequalities. A recent report showed a 11.4-year life expectancy gap between the most deprived and the most affluent areas in West Norfolk. Causes of poor health include the quality of housing, nutrition, access to open space and clean air. You will notice that heavy industry has often traditionally been in the poorest areas that have the most compromised life expectancies. Where health effects are

masked and explained away by already poorer outcomes.

So, Population Management logically means today, Governments do not permit or give planning permission to site heavy and potentially most polluting industry in the most deprived neighbourhoods. Right?.. Unfortunately no.

I return to my original question. Are Governments intelligent? The answer is - the previous Government granted Planning Permission for the Wisbech Incinerator, in a particularly deprived ward of Medworth, close to the West Norfolk border. So, no.

West Norfolk is officially one of the host authorities. I have brought Motions to both Councils against the Wisbech Incinerator and spoke at the Planning Inquiry.

Is it too late for the current Government to stop it? The answer is this: it is never too late to stop a wrong decision.

As a Councillor representing one of the most deprived wards in England, South Lynn, where we all defeated the Saddlebow Incinerator a decade ago, I am all too aware that air pollution and wind velocity are no respecter of ward boundaries or of neat graphs predicting the carry of particles. Incinerators are often not good at trapping ultrafine particles.

The Wash has its own maritime ecosystem, producing powerful winds and temperature inversion which traps, holds and concentrates pollution. Illogically, air quality studies always base their meteorological data on Marham, which is inland and has very different operating factors.

I have written again to the Minister for Nature, who is responsible for incinerator permits and for the circular economy, and to the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. I have also written to the Secretary of State for Health, pointing out the new 10- Year NHS Plan is about prevention and that emergency admissions to hospital in South Lynn are significantly worse than the national average for COPD and other conditions which can be triggered by air pollution.

It would be sound good sense for the Government to halt this now, and counsel the would-be builder MVV Energie, to be the future and set up a recycling centre instead.

Government should act fairly and not do anything that could increase poor health outcomes, should it?

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Start the festive season with Jólábókaflóð

Elaine Bird

Iceland, the land of volcanoes, stunning landscapes, glaciers, an amazing Opera House, and a Cathedral built of concrete, all in all a wonderful place to visit. And if you've read the Icelandic Sagas you'll know something of the rich history and culture of the Norse people who settled there between the 9th and 11th centuries. The Icelandic Parliament, Althing, is one of the oldest parliaments in the world, first meeting in 930.



*Basilika Krists konungs
Reykjavik*



*Harpa Opera House in
Reykjavik which opened
in 2011*

When we visited in 2012, we were lucky enough to experience Meat Soup Day on Skólavörðustígur (the first day of winter) in Reykjavik, where passersby can enjoy a taste of free

kjötsúpa served in the street by local restaurateurs.



Another wonderful tradition is Jólábókaflóð, pronounced "YO-LA-BOK-A-FLOT," this event can be translated to Yule Book Flood" in English which flood' is celebrated on Christmas Eve and revolves around giving and receiving new books, often accompanied by hot cocoa, Icelandic chocolates, or even a special beer. The night is spent in the company of loved ones, reading and sharing stories.



It all began during WWII when paper was not rationed in Iceland, making books one of the few available and affordable Christmas gifts. 1944 saw the first publication of Bókatiðindi (the "Book Bulletin"), a Christmas book catalogue which



by the book

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was sent to every home, and to this day the official start to the holiday season begins with the delivery of the "Bokatidini" showcasing the (hundreds of) books released that year to every Icelandic home.

The Icelandic love of reading and "Jolabokafloð" has continued to grow each year; Iceland publishes more books per capita than any other country and sells the majority of these books between September and

November as families prepare for their annual Christmas Eve book exchange.

If you love books and would like to start the festive season the Icelandic way, much closer to home, Hunstanton's 'by the book' and 'Write around the corner' are hosting their Norfolk version of Jólábókaflóð on Friday 12th December from 7pm.

For more information call Adrian on 01485 522349.



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The women of 1776

John Maiden

While climate change, caused by man-made global warming, is creating havoc in foreign lands, it is also the most likely cause of the delightful weather we woke up to on Remembrance Sunday. Of course, Donald Trump has yet to be convinced that climate change is really happening.

Had members of the USAF 67th Special



Neil Quincey, Ken and Karen Wilson, with John Maiden and the Twinning sign

Operations Squadron, with which our town is twinned, been allowed to take part in our Remembrance parade, I might have asked some of them what they make of Trump's obvious blunders, of which climate change denial is just one.

In days gone by I used to enjoy listening on the wireless to Alistair Cook's Letter from America. Now, thanks to the friends I made following my home town's twinning with the USAF 67th SOS, I receive regular updates on facebook.

Kathy Leming wanted to know if she would still be welcome if she ever paid us another visit from Trump's version of America. I was



Reis Leming Way - Debra Ross, Kathy & Michael Leming in 2013

pleased to assure her that the star-spangled banner still flutters next to the War Memorial and flood memorial on Reis Leming way.

Still on the subject of flags, former USAF Colonel Brooke Davis Kelly was kind enough



Stars and Stripes

to raise my hopes for the future of the USA, by sending me photographs of the banner she recently displayed to remind Mr Trump that there have been "No Kings In America since 1776".



In view of his attitude to women and his obvious friendship with a certain Mr Epstein, it is a good thing to remind Mr Trump of the part played by women in 1776. If the White House has a book in its library by Sally Smith Booth, entitled "The Women of '76" Trump should read it, while waiting for his ballroom to be built. A copy of the book was sent to me in 1976 by my Aunt Annie, better known in America as Mary Gabriel, Mother Superior of the 'Holy Child Jesus' teaching order.

(I either took the attached photos or obtained permission to publish them from Brooke Davis Kelly, David Jones and Maria Rix)

Jive Survivors Kings Lynn

We run every Sunday except bank holidays. 7:30 pm until 10 and we have a page on Facebook which is Jive Survivors Kings Lynn

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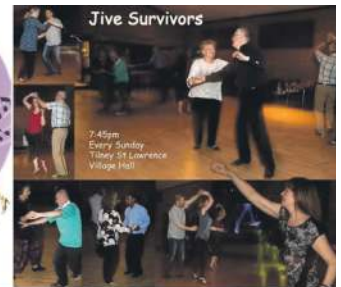
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Inaugural sailing trip brings award for Alderman Peel student Erin

A lifelong fear of heights and lack of sailing experience hasn't stood in the way of a Wells student who has won prestigious recognition after her inaugural trip on a historic boat.



Erin not only conquered her height problem by climbing the rigging during the voyage, but her can-do attitude and enthusiasm for everything she was asked to do have seen her win the highly sought-after recognition.

She was recognised for 'going above and beyond' on a sea voyage by the East Anglian Maritime Awards on 11th November, and she is also nominated for an award from charity The Norfolk Boat.

Erin was nominated for both by sailing lead Debbie Carter De Bois at Alderman Peel High School, Wells, who said she had been very impressed with the Year 10 student's attitude and hoped she would continue with her sailing in the years to come.

She was among a group of ten students from the school, a member of the Wensum Trust, who were able to set sail to The Netherlands on a week-long voyage on a vessel owned by a charitable trust.

"She consistently checked in with her fellow crew, also took on extra duties plus cooking and cleaning schedules. Erin would offer to help others even when it was not her watch or her duty. She immersed herself in learning knots, navigation, how to do the ship's log and was enthusiastic. We were very lucky with the weather, but even had we not had calm seas she would have definitely been the student who would have helped and kept everyone calm.

"Erin displays a can-do attitude and took on the challenge of sailing Excelsior. This vessel is over 100 years old and is not an easy vessel to sail or steer. Erin took on every task, dug deep and never once moaned. She even conquered her fear of heights by climbing the rigging, no mean feat as it is very unnerving climbing up a rope ladder," said Debbie.

The Excelsior was 14-year-old Erin's first taste of sailing and she's now looking to join a sailing club - and to convince younger sister Orla to give it a try as well.

"I've always loved pushing myself to try something different, and I wanted to come back from the trip feeling proud of what I'd achieved and ready to share what I'd learned with others. What I didn't realise was that I would find my happy place on the water. Even when we weren't on shift, I often stayed on deck to help out or just to watch the sunrises and sunsets," she said.

Her great-grandfather served in the Royal Marines, but there is no family connection to sailing otherwise and Erin said joining the Excelsior had helped her confidence grow while discovering a real love of sailing.

Having ridden horses since an early age, Erin's height limit was in the saddle - and she



had no intention of going higher. But she was encouraged to climb the rigging of the Excelsior, despite the prospect "filling me with dread"

"Erin returned from her Excelsior adventure with a newfound confidence, ambition and a passion for sailing we never knew she had. The experience has had such a positive effect, both in school and at home. What's most special is that she's found her happy place on the water," said mum Steph, who is a teaching assistant at Alderman Peel High School.

The Excelsior Trust has one of the UK's oldest working vessels with a fishing smack from Lowestoft which has been offering hands-on sailing experiences since 1983.

The award from Norfolk Boat is for any young sailor who goes above and beyond during a sail training voyage.

Brancaster Staithe Shanty Festival raises thousands for lifesaving charities

Organisers of the three-day Sea Shanty Festival say this year was 'off the scale'.



The Wellington Wailers

Sam Ireson, who sings in Nelson's Shantymen and is part of the team that put on the event says, "Our main aim was to bring the community together and raise money for charity."

Which it did - five thousand pounds in total.



*Nelson's Shantymen,
Image RNLI/Chris Bishop*

Half has been given to Hunstanton RNLI, and the rest to the National Coastwatch Institution, who work closely with the Hunstanton crew.

Hunstanton RNLI's lifeboat operations manager Mike Gould says the work of the station and more than 200 like it would not be possible 'without the kindness of those who support the charity that saves lives at sea'

Sam hopes the success of the festival continues, raising even more for the life saving charities. Adding, "Hopefully it'll keep on growing - roll on next year!"



*Sue Ireson from Nelson's Shantymen
presents a cheque to Mike Gould,
Image RNLI/Chris Bishop.*

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides & Cubs light up Luminare!

Ruby Goold

The Sandringham Estate just got a whole lot brighter, and it wasn't just down to the spectacular light show either!

A huge crowd of excited faces from Snettisham Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides, along with Sandringham Guides and Snettisham Cubs, descended on Luminare for an unforgettable evening adventure of sparkle and fun.



Over 40 warmly-dressed adventurers kicked off the festive season with a dazzling mile-long illuminated journey through the Royal Parkland.

The trail featured wow moments at every turn. Twinkling lights, shimmering tunnels, and dancing lasers transformed the woodland into a real-life fairytale, leaving the groups mesmerised.



The young adventurers squealed with delight as they spotted twirling fairies and animated woodland statues during their illuminated walk.

Midway through the enchanting walk, the aroma of a classic winter treat drew them in: the fire pits! Fortified by a warming hot chocolate and the sticky goodness of giant toasted marshmallows plus pizza! they headed deeper into the sparkling woods.



To cap off the magical night, some of the girls took their Girlguiding Promise along the beautiful light trail, making the start of their journey even more special and unique!



The fun didn't stop once the light trail was over, either! Waiting in the courtyard was a charming vintage fairground, complete with a beautiful Helter Skelter, Ferris Wheel, Swings & tea-cup rides.



Everyone rushed to jump on the rides, getting a fantastic birds-eye view of the beautiful Sandringham grounds all lit up for Christmas.

A massive Thank you to Chipperfield Events for providing such a wonderful Funfair.



A huge thank you goes to the Luminare and Sandringham teams, and especially to the dedicated volunteers, for making this bright and happy start to the festive season possible!

Ready to join the fun? Register your interest in becoming a Girlguiding member or adult volunteer today at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/>. We welcome new Girlguides and adult volunteers alike!

Have questions or want to find a local group? Email: northwestdivision@girlguidingnorfolk.org.uk to connect and learn more about getting involved.

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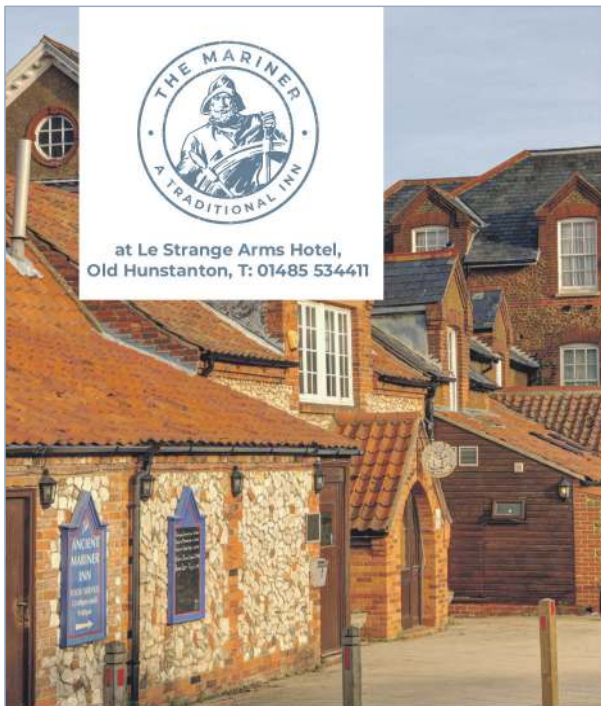
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Christmas gifts to spread festive cheer

Ah, the noble art of gift-giving. It sounds so simple in theory: find a suitable present, wrap it nicely, and watch the recipient's face light up with unadulterated joy. But in reality, this seemingly simple act often feels less like a heartwarming gesture and more like an Olympic sport involving intense research, psychological analysis, and a sprint to the shops minutes before closing time. So, what to do? The answer is simple – take a trip to Castle Rising!

Allez Chic's Cheryl Daubney says: "This year we have a great selection of accessories that are perfect stocking fillers or bought together make up a great outfit. On the rails too are corduroy jackets and warm trousers that are just right now the weather is cooling off."



Right on trend this winter are earmuffs – this classic has made a comeback, but they've gone from practical to fashionable and now they fold up easily too. In store at Allez Chic in three colours. Team up with this super soft cosy scarf to keep you warm when those chilly winds blow.

Presented beautifully this charming Lily and Me bamboo socks and keyring gift box pictured in the advert makes a perfect present for those with a shoe size of 4-7.5. And did I mention gloves? There's a wonderful selection in store.

So, if you're facing the gifting challenge this Christmas remember you're not alone in your struggle. We're all just trying to navigate the minefield of personal taste and budget, but there's help at hand at Allez Chic!



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Hunstanton Lifeboat Station news

Crew training continues by day and night over the winter whatever the weather throws our way.

A recent launch on exercise saw our relief lifeboat Irene Cornford tackle some of the most challenging sea conditions we've seen in a while.

Yet her four-strong volunteer crew of Dave, Ian, Louise and Roger took the surf in their stride as a biting north-westerly whipped up the waves.

Tractor driver Justin had water swirling around the tops of his wheels and spray lashing his cab as he reversed the rig into the teeth of the surging tide.

While the crew were carrying out the testing navigation and anchoring drills they had been set out on the wet and bumpy stuff, the shore crew set about rigging the carriage for a net recovery.

When rough conditions make it impossible to reverse the boat onto her trailer, a net is strung across it to catch the vessel as she comes in bow-first.

The manoeuvre takes considerable skill and communication on the part of both the helm, the crew and the tractor driver, while the shore team continually practise setting up the net to ensure it sends the sea packing.

Every detail has to be right first time, down to every last cable tie and wooden dowel peg.

For you only get one chance when two tonnes of boat with four people on board hits the ropework.

Shore crew swarmed the carriage after 'Irene' returned to station. She had to be jacked up and turned through 180 degrees, before being lowered inch-by-inch back onto her trailer.

She then needed to be washed down, checked over and refuelled to ensure she was shipshape for her next service, whatever the tasking.

Talking of services, St Mary's Church at Old



*The four-strong volunteer crew of Dave, Ian, Louise and Roger took the surf in their stride
Photo RNLI/Chris Bishop*

Hunstanton will be hosting a special Christmas carol service on Wednesday, December 17 (6.30pm).

Admission is free and there will be a retiring collection for the RNLI.

More than 200 attended last year's event, with this year's service expected to attract similar numbers.

Hunstanton Concert Band will be performing once again, under the baton of musical director Paula Cuthbertson.

The service has been organised by our station and the church to thank all of the emergency services who keep us safe all-year-round.

Many will be at work or on call over Christmas just like our crew, whose members will be ready to answer their pagers 24/7 throughout the festive period, including on

December 25.

If someone needs us, we'll be there to answer the call just like we are throughout the year.

Our volunteers are all part of the charity that saves lives at sea, whose lifesaving work would not be possible without the kindness of those who support us.

They come from all walks of life in and around Hunstanton, who sign up because they want to make a difference in our coastal community.

And there are many roles in which you could just that, ranging from becoming part of our sea-going or shore crew; to volunteering as part of our visits, shop or outreach teams or our fundraising guild.

If you'd like to make a New Year's resolution to join us, e-mail hunstanton@rnli.org.uk. Stay Safe, Respect the Sea

Hunstanton RNLI crew take part in moving Remembrance day

RNLI volunteers marched through the streets to Hunstanton's towering War Memorial overlooking The Wash, which carries the names of 71 who made the ultimate sacrifice.

They joined town councillors, veterans and members of the emergency services for the parade to the memorial in the resort's Cliff Top Gardens, along with people from local organisations and businesses who came to pay their respects.

Lifeboat and hovercraft crew member Roger Smith carried the lifeboat station's standard, while senior hovercraft commander Lee Torrice laid a wreath on behalf of Hunstanton RNLI.

Roger's great, great maternal uncle John Scott was a 19-year-old private in the Norfolk Regiment, who grew up in Hunstanton and died on the Western Front in October, 1917.

'I felt proud and honoured to represent my crew and my forbear,' said Roger after the service.

Recently-retired launch authority Jeff Lenton's distant cousin Gerald Lenton is remembered on the War Memorial at Hunstanton. He was Second Lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment, who also fell on the Western Front.

Fishing boats operating a few hundred yards off the town's beach paused their work while their crews paid their respects.



*Hunstanton RNLI crew member Roger Smith holds the station's standard aloft at the town's Remembrance service
Photo RNLI/Chris Bishop*



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Dark skies of West Norfolk

Terry Parish

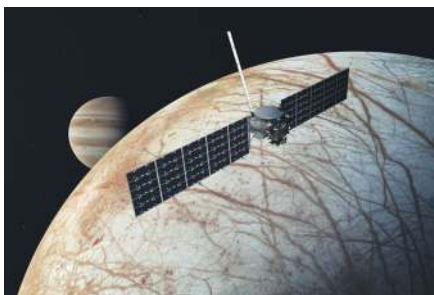
Merry Christmas to you all. The season has come around again; it always will as the Earth orbits the Sun. On the 21st, at 3.03pm, the Sun is as far south in our sky as it will get this year. It is the Winter Solstice, the shortest day and longest night and the time of magic and mystery for millennia as people encouraged the Sun's warmth to come back and life to renew in the land. Both the Greeks and Romans added feasting and fun. Sounds like Christmas.



Why we are in the dark. Credit:BBC

I didn't see much of the night sky last month. When clear enough, Jupiter was shining brightly in the NE and this month, it will do so earlier in the evening. The gas giant rises around 6pm and is a bright magnitude minus 2.6. Start looking from around 7pm. It's the brightest thing up there except the Moon and the odd piece of Elon Musk junk, sorry internet communications satellites.

If you have powerful binoculars, a birding 'scope, or a telescope, point them at Jupiter and find the four Galilean moons. Ganymede, Callisto, Io and Europa. The Europa Clipper is on its way to that icy moon to seek the possibility of life, but not as we know it. The Clipper was launched in 2024 and will arrive in 2030.



Artist's impression, the Clipper over the cracked ice surface of Europa with Jupiter in the background. NASA

I only saw last month's supermoon through thin cloud, and that was on the 6th Nov, the night after the 'event'. On the 4th Dec there is another supermoon, the third and last this year. It's a tad less super than its November apparition being 239km further away at 357,219km. So, a very miniscule tad. The time of minimum distance is around 11pm but catch it as it rises because an optical illusion will make it seem bigger the closer it is to the horizon.

Sticking with the Moon. On the 6th, Jupiter is below it and the stars Castor and Pollux to

the left. On the 7th, Jupiter is just to the right of the Moon and Pollux and Castor are above it.

On the 9th, the star Regulus is left of the Moon.

On the 13th, before the Moon rises, the Geminids Meteor shower should light up the sky. Bits falling off the chariot of Phaethon are responsible or, at least from an asteroid, lump of rock, named after the son of Helios, the sun god. A typical teenager, Phaethon ignored advice and flew too close to and too far from the Earth both burning and freezing it. This, apparently, caused deserts and the frozen lands. This annoyed the stars and Zeus zapped Phaethon with a lightning bolt.



Phaethon unwittingly making deserts and frozen lands but at least he left behind the Geminids. Internet

Anyway, wrap up, get your eyes accustomed to the dark, and take a look as late as you can. It would be seasonal to have a hot mince pie and mulled wine after your astronomical effort.

On the 17th get up before dawn, 6.45am, and look SE. A crescent Moon will be to the right and equidistant to the left Mercury will be a shining spark close to the horizon so a difficult location for most of us. Do not use optical instruments as the Sun will pop up. More on Mercury below.

Boxing Day. Hope for a clear sky and take yourself outside, see the crescent Moon, go left of it and find the ringed planet Saturn, a wonder in a birding or small telescope. The ringed planet has 274 moons and a small telescope on a clear night might see the spark of reflected light from one of them, Titan. This moon is bigger than the planet Mercury and was discovered in 1655 by Huygens using a telescope with a lens just over 2 inches wide. A few years later Cassini discovered four more, Tethys, Dione, Rhea and Iapetus. Cassini also discovered the division in the ring system which is named after him and NASA's major exploration of Saturn was the Cassini mission of 2004.

William Herschel, discoverer of the planet Uranus, found the moons named Mimas and Enceladus. The latter is a prime contender in the search for extra-terrestrial life so, one day, Herschel may have a microbe named after him. The names of the moons were suggested in 1847 by John Herschel, son of William, so, maybe, two different microbes will be needed. (Ephemera, John did many things scientific and he invented the blueprint).

I have mentioned Mercury twice already and there is a good opportunity for you to view the planet in the first half of December. It rises low in the SE at 6am and is shining with a magnitude of minus 0.6. It will appear as a bright spark. On the 7th it is at its most distant western elongation from the Sun. In other words, it's quite far to the left of the Sun's rising disc so will stand out more against the darker sky.



Bepi Colombo's 6th Mercury Flyby. ESA

Three spacecraft have been sent to Mercury: Mariner 10 in 1973 which made three flybys over two years; Messenger in 2008 which made three flybys and then orbited until 2015; and Bepi Colombo launched in 2018 which has flew by Mercury 6 times and will arrive in orbit in one year. It is a European Space agency mission in co-operation with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency. It consists of two probes which will orbit Mercury separately.

The stars Castor and Pollux were mentioned earlier. They are the heads of the twins in the constellation of Gemini; Castor is higher in the sky and lies at a distance of 51 light years whilst Pollux is 34 ly distant. One way of locating them is via Orion; draw a line from Rigel, bottom right of the hunter, through Betelgeuse, top left. Carry on until you find two bright stars close together and voila!



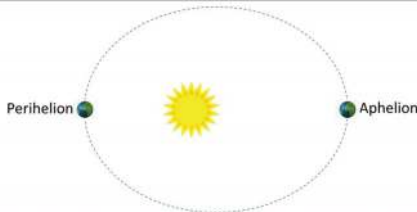
Finding the twins and a few other stars. Internet

Castor is yellowish and Pollux orangish, technical terms which need good eyes even with a telescope. What will be revealed is that Castor is not a single star. A telescope will easily reveal two, possibly three, though the third is faint. Sophisticated analysis shows that each of the three is two, so Castor is a multiple system of 6 stars. They are a mixture of several bigger and brighter than the Sun and several smaller and much dimmer.

Pollux is a single star, 9 times bigger and twice as massive as the Sun. It has a very large gas giant planet orbiting it. Pollux is 7.6 billion years old, 3 billion years older than our Sun so it has had time to expand and cool into a red giant. Perhaps a civilisation existed around it once.

The New Year, 2026!

The Moon starts with another super one on the 3rd with Jupiter shining just below it too. And that date is also when Earth is at perihelion, its closest point to the Sun, 147 million kilometres away.



A little exaggerated. Internet

New readers may need reminding that no astronomical body orbits anything in a circle, all follow ellipses and the Earth is no different. Fortunately, its ellipse is nearly circular, otherwise our climate would alter

dramatically. The Earth's aphelion, furthest, distance from the Sun is 152 million kilometres which occurs on 21st June. Yes, that's right, in the northern hemisphere we are closest to the Sun in the winter and furthest in the summer.

Jupiter is the planet of the month as its orbit and Earth's brings the planet as close as it will get on the 9th. It will be just 633 million km away and shining at a magnitude of a bright minus 2.7 (negative magnitudes are bright, positive ones dim). On the 10th, Jupiter will be exactly opposite to the Sun in the sky so all its surface will be reflecting light back towards us, the same way a Full Moon does.

This is a good time to turn binoculars and telescopes towards the gas giant to spot the four Galilean moons. They orbit Jupiter at different speeds which can be noticed over several hours. Sometimes, from our perspective, one or more moons will be behind Jupiter. However, on the 15th at 6pm and on the 29th at 9pm, the four moons will be strung out in order. From Jupiter, Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto. Our Moon is once again just over Jupiter on the 30/31st.

In the SW you can find much dimmer Saturn. Its magnitude is +1 and the ringed planet will set at 10pm. On the 22nd, Saturn



On the right of Jupiter, Io, Europa and Ganymede. Near the left edge, Callisto.

These dots are what you might see through good binoculars on the dates given in the text.

Callisto will be to the right of Ganymede.

is just to the left and above the Crescent Moon, whilst, on the 23rd it is just below it.

There is another meteor shower on the night of the 3rd/4th, the Quadrantids. However, light from the bright supermoon will drown out all but the brightest meteors.

Happy New Year
Back in February, Terry Parish

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Thomas Thoresby – A man of means and influence

Russell Lyon

There are many people from Kings Lynn's past that deserve to be remembered better and probably none more so than Thomas Thoresby. It's true he has left a building which bears his name but few of us will remember why it's called Thoresby College in Queens Street (which has been called Trinity College). It is Thomas's legacy to the town but he gave so much more which goes unsung.

He was born in Bishops (Kings) Lynn around 1450 to one of the richest families. His father was a merchant engaged in trading to the Baltic countries and had been mayor of the town and an MP. The family owned lots of land outside Lynn from Gayton to Dersingham, Roydon, Congham and Fincham and all parts in between. Like many wealthy families much of their initial wealth came from sheep. Thomas was known as "flock master." He had very many sheep. In his will he left his wife 100 ewes and his son, 1,000 wethers (young castrated sheep) and 1,000 ewes. It meant that they must have traded a lot of wool to Europe which was in great demand.

In addition the family held the royal farm of Castle Rising from Richard III and included certain tolbooth rights which made the Thoresby's very rich indeed.

Like most medieval wealthy men Thomas was very religious and really frightened by the prospect of heaven or likely hell after death. According to the Catholic Church most hardened sinners went straight to Hell and the saints to Heaven but the vast majority of souls went to purgatory for various lengths of time. This was a state where tortured souls were made to suffer and purify their many sins before the gates of Heaven were open to them. Your time spent in purgatory where you repented your sins could be offset and shortened by doing good deeds on earth. This could mean going on a pilgrimage or military crusade or by giving money to the Church. But if you couldn't do any of that then being penitent, confessing your sins regularly and doing acts of charity would help reduce your time in torment.



Medieval door into Thoresby College

Thomas was mayor of Lynn at least twice and he was very keen to clean up the town. It involved rubbish collections and pavement repair to which the good citizens had to pay. Fines were issued of 1p or 2p per yard of pavement if there was no compliance and residents were also urged to use designated "muckhills."

His biggest contribution to the town came when he paid for the rebuilding of the south aisle of St Margaret's and his greatest legacy was the founding of the building now known as Thoresby College (or Trinity College) in Queens Street. The original purpose of the building

was to accommodate chantry priests. These priests had to pray daily for the members of the Guild of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, for Thomas and his family and one of them had an additional job to educate six poor people in grammar and song.

In addition to all this he left in his will which he I'm sure he believed would help him and his family to if not avoid purgatory at least speed their passage through it quickly to heaven.

This included:

Robes and vestments to 120 parish churches near Lynn costing 20 shillings each

Donation were made to the Carmelite Order of Lynn the nuns of Shouldam Priory, the Cistercians at Marham Abbey, the Benedictine at Blackborough End and the Augustine Priory at Crabhouse.

£60 (a huge sum) was paid to buy a pardon from the Pope and for the granting of the remission of all sins for three years to all people who came to St Margaret's and made their confessions.

The "commons" in Lynn were to have 100 marks to remember his soul for ever.

St Margaret's were to be given white velvet robes costing £40 and £10 was also be donated for a new font and to finish off the work in the south aisle.

Land was to be made available to support Thoresby college and the 13 priests installed there.

His household servants were to be paid for and rewarded up to a year after his death and his personal priest supported should he wish to go the college.

It's a long and expensive list which shows Thomas's wealth and also his great fear for his soul in the afterlife. The building that he paid for was finally completed the year he died in 1510 and it still stands to this day in Queens Street and is easily identified by its magnificent medieval door which opens onto a central grassed courtyard surrounded by buildings that are still in use as offices and apartments.



Judas tree Thoresby College

An ancient Judas tree stands in the middle and is much propped up to keep it standing. It is so called as it is said that Judas Iscariot hanged himself from this species of tree after his betrayal of Christ. It is tempting to think that this tree was planted there when Thoresby College was first built but I doubt that as my botanical friends tell me that Judas trees have a limited life span of 50-100 years but the present tree may be a graft from the original.

Thomas's wish for priest to pray for him and his family died for ever when Henry VIII in 1545 abolished and suppressed all chantries and guild chapels and the buildings were sold by the crown to private citizens. It marked the end of the Middle Ages. The medieval practice of chantries to save souls and offset people's sins in a strange way has a modern equivalent with the same concept of offsetting where people and companies pay for carbon dioxide capture to offset the purgatory of global warming that we might be creating in the environment.

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Keep up with the latest news online

The Town and Around website is updated regularly with local news between each edition. The site is very easy to navigate and the latest news is on the home page- <https://townandaround.net/>
To see older stories, just click on the News tab and you can scroll through articles going back to 2018.

Also on the site are previous issues (back to 2012) in flicki book format at <https://townandaround.net/previous-issues>

New this year are video interviews and reports.

Elaine Bird

FENLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Bridget Hunter

Our researchers start by looking at the surnames. But do you know where your surname came from? Before 1066 when William the Conqueror took over England families did not use surnames. William decided, to be able to trace and get taxes from people they should have family surnames.

How did they decide on a surname? They often said they were Robert son = ROBERTSON, or William's son WILLIAMS and so on. Or their trade name CARPENTER, FARMER, BAKER, ARCHER etc The reason there were so many SMITH families is there were so many trades GOLDSMITH, SILVERSMITH BLACKSMITH all very important trades. Farmers, cooks and carters could not manage without a blacksmith to make their tools. Surnames often got changed over the years due to a misunderstanding of the spelling of the name when an enumerator wrote down what he thought he heard the person say. Do you have an unusual surname?

Our monthly meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month except December and August. Our January meeting will be on Thursday 22nd in the Wisbech Library at 7 - 9pm The talk will be "A Murder in Denver" by Susanah Farmer, Visitors always welcome to join us with a donation of at least 2 pound to help to pay for the hire of the hall.

Research sessions: Our researchers do not charge for their help with your research.

1st Tuesday of the month - Research Session 10 - 12 noon Wisbech Library, with maybe a donation towards the hire of the hall.

2nd Monday of the month -in Baytree Garden Centre Hilgay near Downham Market 11- 2.30 we will be in the restaurant.

3rd Wednesday of November . Red Lion Pub North Brink Wisbech 6.30 - 8pm These are held every other month. Everyone welcome to any of our sessions, no matter where your family originated

Our speakers are available to attend groups and clubs to give talks in the local area. Our talks are very amusing as well as informative. They include 'We're going down the pub' - A talk on 'Local' History, - History of Elgoods', - 'Wisbech Heritage - The Littleport Riots' - 'The Fun of Family History' - 'My Naughty Great Aunt Eliza' - The Ups & Downs of Being a Magistrate' - 'The Sad Tale of The Blacksmiths Family'

For further information on any of the above please phone Bridget Hunter 01945 587723. bridget25hunter@btinternet.com

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Hunstanton Society

Our Events Team organised the building of Poppy displays for outside the Heritage Centre over the course of the two Coffee mornings leading up to Remembrance Sunday. These were made out of plastic bottles, spray paint, and some chicken wire. We were really pleased with the result and brought some favourable comments from people walking past.



Then on Remembrance Sunday we laid a wreath on behalf of the Society at the War Memorial. There were literally hundreds attending the service (estimated 800) which was a really good turnout and must have broken all records. Mind you, the weather was wonderful. If you take a walk in the Heritage Gardens, please do see if you can find the wreath!

We must also thank Linda Nudds for creating the Americans in Hunstanton display which went up in advance of Remembrance Day. It took a lot of hard work by Linda and a few others to pull it all together. Well done and Thank you.

The Family Fossil Man has been very busy over the summer and early Autumn talking to fossil enthusiasts who have popped into the Heritage Centre. We must also thank Barry a huge amount for stepping in on a number of occasions to enable the Centre to be open when we are short of volunteers to help 'man' the Centre on its opening days. Thank you, Barry – you are a star!

We are preparing for the Christmas Tree Festival in the Town Hall which runs from Friday 05 December to Sunday 7 December. As part of this we are making a "Wishing/Memory Tree" for display in the Town Hall.

OBJECTS OF INTEREST – CREST WARE

Among the large collection of Porcelain Souvenirs on display at the Heritage Centre are a number of items known as Crest ware, or Crested china. Technically, these are actually not crests. A Crest is the section borne on top of the helm of a heraldic device. They are shields showing a coat of arms. But as that is what they are generally known as, we'll stick to it.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries porcelain souvenirs with heraldic crest decorations became popular holiday souvenirs. The business of William Henry Goss in Stoke-on-Trent was a leading producer, and it is claimed at least 90% of homes had at least one piece of Goss crested China.

Crested China (Goss) - Pot based on Flemish tobacco jar



There are pieces from other makers mainly from the Stoke-on-Trent area, including Carlton, Shelley and Arcadian, but also from London (Dainty Ware).

Although most of the collection uses the crest for Hunstanton St Edmunds there are pieces that post-date its rebranding as New Hunstanton in 1896 (see the tent below). It became just Hunstanton in the 1980s. The shield features two lions, fairly common but used in the LeStrange family coat of arms. The crowns with arrows shot

through represent St Edmund.

The designers came up with many weird (some very weird) and wonderful examples, some of which are shown here.

The Jug is from "Swan China" whereas the swan is not, it is marked "Botolph", a Stoke-on-Trent pottery for which there are few records. Porcelain boots were very popular souvenirs, but most examples are not crested.



There are other examples very appropriate for a seaside resort, shown below is a camping tent and a bathing engine.



The tent design is of a form you see in early photographs of the Hunstanton holiday camps. On the rear side is an inscription commemorating the Great War armistice in 1918.

Other designs in the collection include the one for Hunstanton Village (Old Hunstanton) which also features the two lions. Pictured here is from the centre of a china plate.

A newer example simply labelled Hunstanton is in the shape of a bell (complete with clappers inside) and features a coat of arms currently used by the town council.



This is also the one used on the Hunstanton town sign, containing the motto *Alios delectare iuvat*, which is Latin for something like 'It is our pleasure to please others'.

Heraldic experts are very welcome to come forward with comments. Philip Thomas, Hunstanton Society

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News from Brancaster Village Hall (BVH)

Geoff Wingrove

As autumn changes to winter, the pace of activity at BVH slackens and gives our hard-working volunteers some breathing space. It is pleasing to report the Baby and Toddlers Group's highly successful Halloween event during half term, which attracted many children in imaginative costumes, parents and carers. It is also pleasing to say that the painting of sanderlings by local artist AJ, entitled "Low Tide" was very well-received at the Society of Wildlife Artists' 62nd annual exhibition at the Mall Gallery in London. Do visit Brancaster Open Studio, which is an Aladdin's cave of wildlife paintings and photos.

This has been a highly successful year for BVH, Bar 71 and Brancaster Stores and Post Office, which play such a central part in the village community.

Regular groups

Yoga, Baby and Toddler Group, Pilates, Scottish Dancing and the mobile library continue: details can be found on our website.

Dates for the diary

Christmas Bingo: 13th December 7.00pm
New Year's Eve Party: 7.00pm until late
Mega Quiz: 17th January 7.00p to 10.00pm
BVH Guest Talk: 24th January 7.00pm to 8.15pm "My Life in Politics" by Steve Norris
Former Under Secretary of State

Bar 71

The Skittles and Quiz Nights continue, and darts and snooker are available. A range of real ales are to be featured over the winter, so come along and enjoy a warm welcome and really good company.

Further information about these and other activities can be found on our website at www.brancastervillagehall.communitybookings.co.uk or on Facebook and Instagram. For enquiries, please contact us at bvhsetup@gmail.com

FROM THE BRANCASTER PARISH ARCHIVE: NORTH NORFOLK COASTAL AREA: PREHISTORIC ERA

In writing about the prehistoric period of the north Norfolk coast, in particular the area around Brancaster, a number of surprises were encountered. Over the 20th century the area has revealed spectacular archaeological discoveries that clearly demonstrate the importance of the north Norfolk coastal region in the evolution of fauna and humankind. In many respects, and surprisingly, the area could be regarded as the cradle for humankind in northwest Europe.

In prehistory, Britain was a peninsular of the European mainland, and the land between the continent and Britain was heavily forested. Britain began to separate from the continent around 8000BC, with the receding of the last Ice Age, and eventually parted in 6100BC. The separation was finally caused by a tsunami that hit the eastern part of Britain and western continental Europe, following the melting of ice in the Scandinavian region; this tsunami formed what are now the North Sea

and the English Channel. During the time that Britain was joined to the continent, hunter-gatherer humans were able to move into the country, following the herds of animals that they hunted for food in order to survive.

If we go back to the earliest times and look at the available evidence for the habitation of humans and fauna in the Brancaster area, it is quite a revelation in terms of what has been found. In 1990, at West Runcton, the bone of a mammoth known as a "steppe mammoth" were found; this animal was twice the size of an elephant. At Happisburgh, a few years later, bison bones were discovered that had marks from a flint tool on them; the bones were dated to 500,000 years ago and demonstrate the existence of human habitation in this area. Furthermore, in 2000, a perfect example of a complete prehistoric hand-axe was also found at Happisburgh. Earlier, in 1931 at Cromer, a polished antler harpoon was discovered, dating back to 12,000 years ago.

It is clear from the nature of the coastal environment that the Ice Ages had a significant effect, as they had on the animals and humans in the region before and after the severe climatic conditions. A visitor to the area 500,000 years ago would have seen a very different country and a wide range of animals, including lions, wolves, hyenas, lynx, jaguars, enormous bears and giant otters; there would also have been rhinos, mammoths, bison and monkeys. This level of animal life would have attracted the hunter-gatherers over a wide span of years from their African origins, across Europe and into Britain in search of food. Clearly, this level of predation would have had an effect on animal life, but nothing compared with that of the Ice Ages and the subsequent tsunami; the human population, too, would have been affected.

In terms of the earliest humans in the Brancaster area, evidence has been found of flint and bone tools to suggest this presence covered most of the prehistoric periods. A crucial find was made at Boxgrove in 1993 when a single human tibia and two teeth were discovered, dated between 524,000 and 478,000 years ago. Flint hand-axes in a variety of shapes and sizes used for hunting

have also been discovered, along with scrapers, flutes and points; bones, too, used as harpoons for hunting animals and fish, have been found. The human discoveries are the earliest found in northwest Europe and a significant find to demonstrate the importance of this area in prehistory.

The coast from Sheringham to Holme consists largely of low-lying, gently sloping sandy beaches, backed by substantial areas of chine, saltmarsh, and mudflats; the waters off the beaches are relatively shallow. Titchwell contains evidence of human activity dating back to some 9000 years ago, with the discovery of good-quality flint tools. Remnants of the ancient forest that covered the area can also be identified off the beach. Flint tools have been found, too, on the beaches of Thornham, Brancaster and Holme, indicating a fairly settled population, which around 4300BC began to move from hunter-gathering to farming; this would have included keeping sheep, cattle, pigs and goats.

Perhaps the most significant find in this region occurred in 1998, when a wooden monument was discovered at Holme after being exposed by erosion in the saltmarsh that backs the beach area. It was quickly named "Seahenge", as it was a large structure consisting of an oval arrangement of oak posts surrounding an upside-down central oak stump (see photo). There are 56 posts in all, split down the middle with the flat surfaces facing outwards. There is a single entrance to the monument, aligned with the midwinter sunset; it is dated to 2049BC. Although called a henge, its purpose is unknown – it could have been a mortuary site or a shrine. A second similar timber edifice, discovered very close by, was unfortunately not excavated, and was subsequently lost to the elements. The Seahenge structure was removed from Holme, in order to save it from a similar fate, and reassembled in the museum at King's Lynn.

For an area which, in history, has often been "on the road to nowhere" and for centuries something of a backwater in national influence, these discoveries show its critical place in the history of Britain and, to an extent, of northwest Europe.





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National Coastwatch Institution (NCI) Brancaster

With autumn coming rapidly to an end, the onset of winter has meant that the Brancaster station has changed to winter hours - 10.00 to 16.00. The station has had a very successful year, particularly in terms of recruitment, and currently has 42 volunteers, of whom 34 are certified Watchkeepers. Since last month there have been two new members, Nick and Kevin, and three successful certifications, Jo, Adrian and Jason. We congratulate the new Watchkeepers on their hard work over the last few months and wish the trainees well.

The station AGM, held on 30th October, was extremely well-attended. A report was received on the station's activities over the last year which showed that the volunteer team had contributed 4200 hours of watchkeeping – a magnificent effort. Volunteers dealt with 17 serious incidents in a timely and professional manner, ranging from lost children to people stranded on sandbanks and the Scolt Head Island Reserve.



*New deputy station managers
Ralph and Frazer with John A*



*John G receives award for
outstanding service*

The objectives for the forthcoming year include strengthening the team and delegating a further range of duties. To this end, two new

Deputy Station Managers, Ralph and Frazer, were appointed. (See the photo of Station manager, John A, awarding them with the rank). The annual Station Manager's award for outstanding service was made to John G (see photo): many congratulations to him.

The station is sad to be losing the services of Henk, who is moving to be nearer his family. Henk has been a stalwart of the team over the last three years as the Coastal and Water Safety Officer: we wish him well in the future and thank him for his commitment and service.



A highlight of the AGM was the presentation to NCI Brancaster of a cheque for £2500 by Sam and John from the Brancaster Staithe Shanty Festival. We thank the organisers for their great generosity and look forward to working with them next year. The photo shows Sam and John presenting the cheque to Richard B, Deputy Station Manager and Watchkeeper.

If you would like more information on NCI Brancaster, or to find out more about becoming a volunteer, please contact Richard Burrows, Deputy Station Manager, on 07535 612777. You can also find us on Facebook, if you search NCI Brancaster.

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Dictionaries for Life

November 10th was an exciting day for the year 3 children at St George's Primary School in Dersingham.

The countrywide Dictionaries For Life scheme is a literacy initiative where local Rotary clubs provide personalised illustrated dictionaries to primary school children, to help them develop their vocabulary and improve their literacy skills.

Hunstanton and District Rotarian Christine Earnshaw said: "All children from Yr 3 to Yr 6 have received these dictionaries over the last few years and we will continue to supply them to Yr 3s."

"All the other Primary School in this area have also received these Dictionaries For Life."



Christine is pictured far right with Rotarians Jay and Cassie Carr, and Year 3 children with their dictionaries.

Tesco Hardwick Supports The Bridge for Heroes with Generous Donation

Laura Evans



The Bridge for Heroes were delighted to welcome Lisa, Community Champion for King's Lynn Hardwick Tesco, who visited The Bridge for Heroes Drop In centre to present a fantastic donation of £491.52 — funds raised through Tesco's ongoing book sales initiative.

The money was raised thanks to the generosity of Tesco colleagues and customers, and will go a long way in supporting the vital work The Bridge for Heroes does for the Armed Forces community in West Norfolk.

This donation will help combat loneliness and isolation among veterans, serving personnel, and their families, ensuring they have a welcoming place to connect, share experiences, and find support.

Everyone at The Bridge for Heroes would like to extend a huge thank you to Lisa, the Tesco Hardwick team, and all the customers who contributed.

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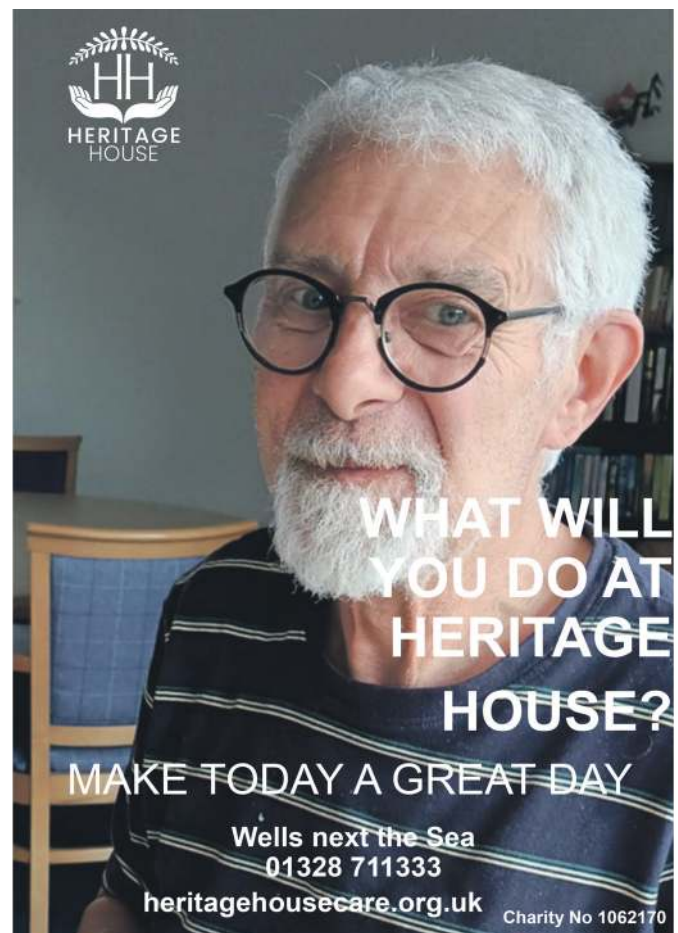
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The Pearl at Brancaster Staithe

Tim Keogh

Oysters have a long history with archaeologists finding proof of oysters ingested as far back as the Neolithic period, cooked over fires. The Roman's used them as a delicacy. Today, however, native oyster populations have declined worldwide and there is now a reliance on farmed species.

Over at Brancaster Staithe, there has been a fishing operation since the 1960's when a 20-year-old Cyril Southerland had the vision to harvest seafood from the waters in and around Scolt Head and process at his house, which was purchased by his grandfather for £500 in 1922.



Ben, Hannah, Ruth and Cyril

The family run business has now been operating for over 60 years as Cyril celebrates his 80th birthday. As well as oysters, the company also harvest mussels, crab and lobster. I made the short trip along the coast to view the business close up. As well as to celebrate Cyril's 80th birthday celebrations, I had my own personal agenda, to dispel my dislike of this aquatic beast! Whilst not a fussy eater, I was put off oysters many years ago. On a first date, we decided to order oysters as a starter, not for their apparent aphrodisiac benefits you understand. I was informed the best way to consume an oyster was to tip the contents on the shell into your mouth and swallow. Incorrect as it happens with my preferred choice of chewing also permitted. However, the darned thing would simply not go down and, as I struggled to ingest, the blasted oyster came flying out and hit my date slap bang in the middle of the forehead, putting an end to any prospect of a long and fruitful marriage.



With the native oysters having died out just after World War I, Cyril spotted an experiment taking place in Thornham Harbour in 1972 conducted under the auspices of the Ministry. The seed oysters did so well that he asked Eastern Sea Fisheries if he could try some at Brancaster. He was given 2,000 Gigas (rock oysters). These seed

oysters were tiny, about the size of your little fingernail. Cyril put them on a trestle and they thrived, taking advantage of the natural nutrients that run through the salt marshes in seawater that's amongst the best of the British coastline.

They are now famed for this oyster, supplying restaurants, pubs and fish shop establishments across Norfolk. The oysters are handpicked, graded and delivered in person to their customers.

They obtain the oyster seeds from waters of a similar high quality as those off Brancaster Staithe, sourcing them from Guernsey and Morecombe Bay. The seeds, deposited in the local waters in small mesh bags, can take up to two years to form into harvestable oysters and very labour intensive in that time. Oysters can grow to as much as 10 inches in size.

One of their most loyal customers is just 100 yards away. White Horse chef, Fran Hartshorne, makes full use of her neighbour's products, ordering seafood regularly to accommodate her menus as well as the recent Oyster Festival.



Once the oysters are ready for reaping from the waters, they are brought into the processing plant, situated on Cyril's property. The oysters are then immersed in running water tanks for 42 hours, where the water is treated with ultra-violet rays that ensure the oysters are cleansed of all bacteria ready to be delivered to their customers.

Whilst connoisseurs of oysters, who can detect regional variations in taste, do suggest eating them raw from the shell, oysters are equally delicious cooked. There is also a view that oysters should be swallowed whole and not chewed, this myth comes from the time when oysters were used as a medicine to treat blood conditions among other things. It is also well known that oysters are an aphrodisiac as they lead to a release of sex hormones. You might also be lucky enough to find a pearl in your oyster. Pearls form from a piece of grit that sneaks into the shell and is manoeuvred around by the oyster against the nacre of the inside shell - the iridescent material is made of aragonite crystals and the protein conchiolin which is the substance that forms the glossy pearls. In Japan, oyster farms deliberately insert grit to produce pearls, whilst the French harvest and consume more oysters than any other country in the world.

More recently, Cyril and wife Ruth's son, Ben, has taken over the helm at Brancaster Oysters. He is now joined by sister Hannah who looks after the administration and delivery side of the business. Covid shutdowns changed the dynamics of the business until Ben had the idea of selling direct to the public. Additionally, people who had been used to enjoying oysters were asking where they could source them. Having identified a gap in the market, Hannah set up a local delivery service. Hannah said, "we thoroughly enjoyed setting up this facility

and meeting fans of our shellfish masked face to masked face". They continue to provide this service.

Although Ben and Hannah now oversee operations, Cyril is still very much involved although now in a back seat capacity. Cyril refuses to fully retire and says, "I will die in my waders!"

Top Tips

Eat your oysters the French way, cooked (boiled so the shells open) or raw (you will need an oyster knife) with lemon juice, minced shallot, red wine and well buttered rye bread.

Simply eat raw from the shell with a dash of lemon and mignonette sauce (vinegar, shallots and cracked pepper).

Cyril's recommendation is that you simmer the oysters in water until the shell opens, then grate some cheese on the shell half with the oyster on and grill them (I tried this and can now confess I am a convert. Who knows, I may even approach that first date and tell her I am now a reformed man!).



Harvesting mussels



All Images by Ian Burt



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Christmas Competition

To celebrate Cyril's 80th birthday, Brancaster Oysters have kindly donated a Christmas hamper of seafood goodies, oysters and wine.

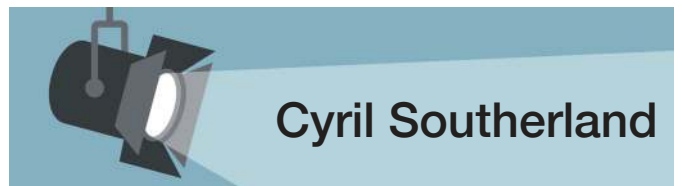
For your chance of winning this great prize, ready for collection before Christmas, please answer the following question:

What was Cyril's first paid job ?

Please email your answers with a contact telephone number to tim@townandaround.net no later than Friday, 19th December. The winner will be selected randomly from all the correct entries. Good luck.



In the Spotlight



Name: Cyril Southerland

Age: 80 (just)

Star Sign: Scorpio

Occupation: Fisherman

Family: Wife, 2 daughters, a son and seven grandchildren

A Cats or dogs person: Both, we presently have an 18 year old cat called Millie

Sports Team Support: Norwich City and Heacham FC, both of whom I still attend matches regularly

Biggest Break: After trying out a couple of trades, joining the Fishing Industry

Worst injury: Not so much injury, but falling out of one of my boats not so long ago did show my age

Funniest memory: Once having to take the mother-in-law on holiday with us because I didn't want to kiss her goodbye!

Hero: Horatio Nelson

Hobbies/interests: Knitting fishing nets and watching football

Best memory: Getting married to my wonderful wife, Ruth

Favourite international meal/cuisine: Thai

Favourite drink: Bitter Shandy

Favourite holiday destination: Northumberland

Favourite film/play: The Dam Busters

Favourite actor/actress: Jenny Agutter

Favourite author: Non one specific but I do like to read publications by local authors

Three items for a desert island: Penknife, twine and a needle, so I can knit a fishing net

Favourite band/singer: Tina Turner

Pet hate: Snobbery

What is your worst habit? Falling asleep as soon as I sit down. I usually get awoken by one of my grandchildren jumping on me though

Biggest achievement in life: My family

Best advice ever given: Work when you work, play when you play

What would you change in the world: End wars and create worldwide peace.

Sporting corner with Tim Keogh

Local Ryder Cup beats the weather

The Ryder Cup, named after founder Samuel Ryder, is synonymous with golf. First competed for in 1927 at the Worcester Country Club in Massachusetts, it is now played every two years pitting the best golfers from Europe and the United States against each other, with the latter having won the most, whilst Europe are the present holders after a tense win back in September. The next one in 2027 is being held at Adare Manor in County Limerick, Ireland. Many of the courses that have hosted the tournament, such as Gleneagles, are over 100 years old and steeped in history.



The Ryder Cup between Heacham Manor Golf Club and Searles GC does not quite possess the same level of history, with both courses being relatively new, opened in 2009 and 2000 respectively. However, that does not detract from the intense rivalry when the teams meet up each year to contest their very own Ryder Cup.

Players are pictured above

Over 30 players braved the blustery conditions to vie for the 15th Ryder Cup between the clubs on Saturday, 25th October. Whilst Searles have tied for the cup, they have never won the bragging rights outright.

Heacham Manor came out of the blocks and were three up at the 9 hole turn. A spirited come back from Searles looked to be on the cards, before Heacham Manor took control of the tail end groups to prevail 12-5/7.5.

A delighted Manor captain, Tim Hoare, thanked his opponents for yet another valiant effort. Searles captain, Dave Cox, said, "we look forward to welcoming Heacham to our manor next year, I am confident a Searles win is just a matter of time".



Heacham Manor GC captain, Tim Hoare (left), receiving the trophy from Searles GC captain, Dave Cox



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Match Report:

Dersingham Women 3 - North Walsham Ladies 2

On Sunday, 9th November, 3rd placed Dersingham Women welcomed 2nd placed North Walsham Ladies to their Pastures base in an eagerly anticipated Division Three match in the Norfolk Women & Girls' Football League.

Dersingham were keen to avenge a cup defeat by the visitors earlier on in the season. The home side controlled the early stages, although Walsham posed a serious threat on the counter-attack. The break through came on 12 minutes when an angled shot from the lively Emma Corbyn squirmed under the away keeper to put the hosts 1 up.

With the energetic Chloe Melton - good genes from grandfather Dick the Sage no doubt - controlling affairs down the right, posing a persistent threat, the ball ended up freeing the fleet footed Emma Leech, allowing her to break free on 25 minutes to put Dersingham 2 up. It did take a couple of great saves from Skye Lee in goal to maintain the lead.



Chloe Melton

However, on 35 minutes, Walsham broke, and it took a magnificent last ditch tackle from Carolyn Flowerdrew to deny the forward. The referee on the other hand saw it differently and awarded a penalty, which was dispatched.

In the second half, player of the match and top goalscorer, Leech, added to her tally to make it 3-1. Despite a number of opportunities at both ends, it was another refereeing decision that changed the dynamics, as Walsham were awarded a second penalty. Fortunately, the crossbar came to the home side's rescue. With ten minutes left, the referee then awarded a third penalty to the visitors for a handball offence. This time Walsham scored to make it 3-2. Dersingham were hanging on in the end but a gutsy team ethic meant they saw the game out



Dersingham Women's team

Back Row: Georgie Archer (Manager), Loretta Burrell, Emily Rix, Skye Lee, Georgia Stephenson, Crystal Hart, Molly Sands, Carolyn Flowerdrew
Front row: Tiffany Ross, Emma Leech, Lillie Edenborough, Chloe Melton, Holly Melton, Emma Corbyn, Chloe Bunn, Ann-Marie Harris (Capt.)

cueing wild celebrations amongst the home players and spectators alike.



Lillie Edenborough action shot

This was an all round good performance by Dersingham across the whole pitch, who moved up to 2nd in the table as a consequence. This is their debut season and manager, Georgie Archer, and coach, Antonia Masson, have brought together a capable bunch who try to play attacking and attractive football. An ecstatic Archer said afterwards, "every single player put in a good shift today, but we deserved it in the end. I'm delighted for everyone involved in the club".

A wonderful advert for women's football,



Player of the match Emma Leech being presented by T&A's Tim Keogh with the Player of the Match award

worthy of a visit throughout the season if you get a chance, playing their home games on Sunday afternoons. The squad train every Thursday evening at Lynnsport, anyone interested in joining please email Georgie at georgiearcher3@gmail.com.



Tesco Hamper Competition

Tesco has been in Hunstanton since 2002 and is located on the old gasworks site. Their popular Christmas brochure with lots of great offers, recipe ideas and Yuletide suggestions is now available in-store.

Manager, Gareth Rapkins, has kindly put forward a £50 Tesco Christmas Hamper prize up for grabs if you can answer the following question correctly: Which town was well known local Hunstanton Tesco employee Damo Cabot born?

The winner will be chosen at random from all the correct entries. Email your answer with a contact telephone number to Tim@townandaround no later than Friday, 19th December.

Armchair Sports Trivia

Win a delicious afternoon tea for two (worth £19.95 pp, total £39.90) courtesy of Berni Beans.

QUESTION: In which country do football team FC Santa Claus compete?

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Last month's question was: The Ashes start on November 21st in Perth. In 1970/71, the abandonment of the third test at Melbourne after three days of rain was the inspiration for which significant cricketing creation? The correct answer was The first ever One Day International and the first name out of the hat this month was Dai Nicol.

Food Glorious Food

A humorous monthly rear-view mirror take on the local bowls scene by Kev Johnson

At the end of October, The Oasis entertained The County President's side in a friendly match. This got my tiny mind whirring back through the years to matches gone by in the County League when I 'were but a lad.' The reason for this was that Captain Dave organised a fish supper for the players, which, I am told, went down well with the great-and-good of the county – well, what is a trip to the seaside without chips?

The reason that I wistfully remembered days past was in part prompted by the 'dented door' tale related last month. Let me explain... there was a time when any travelling team was fed at the end of a match by their hosts, whilst all players wore their finest club ties and blazers bedecked with badges won, both sewn on and pinned. The more successful the player, the more 'bling' shone, with later victories adding a bar below the original until something resembling a ladder tugged at pressured lapels and threatened to cause more senior

Indoor Bowls

The Hunstanton Men's Indoor Bowls team have started well in the County League this season, sitting 2nd in Division Four despite a losing home draw against Lowestoft Railway recently. The Ladies start their season this month with aspirations of promotion in the County League equivalent.



Standing: Derek Moss, Andrew Younger, Cliff Humphreys, Robert Riches, David Greaves (Club President), Phil Grainger, Mike Hallifax, Kelvin Crane, David Ilsley (Captain)
Kneeling: Stuart Davidson, Adam Wells, Mark Charnley, Ian Cain, Paul Hallifax
Missing players: Peter Scott, Graham Keeley, Kevin Johnson, Frazer Clement & Martin Crook



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bowlers to topple over...and to intimidate opponents, of course.

Speeches were made thanking opponents, and woe and betide any captain forgetting to salute an officer of their opponent's or the County. Players from the game would sit with their opponents – sometimes awkwardly if words had been exchanged. Over a pint or two, a main AND dessert would be devoured, before the visitors made their way home. This ceremony would add an hour to the afternoon, making the return from distant parts a race home to see Match of The Day.

In recent times this ceremony has stopped and the number of ends and time reduced, although today's opponents (at the time of writing) face a trip of 75 miles back to that well-known Norfolk town of... Lowestoft. Message to self, buy the President a map for Christmas.

In conclusion, and to link it to Mr Dented Door, it was not uncommon for that gentleman and his namesake (a very famous bowler) to tell the caterers that they played on one rink, and then their true rink to have a second meal, should anyone have a late finish. Oh, and it was also a regular thing that a trip to the far side of the county would also need a pit-stop in Norwich to have fish and chips too!

Mark Royal visit



Hunstanton Indoor Bowls Chairman, Colin Bunn (right), with Mark Royal

Professional bowls player, Mark Royal, was in Hunstanton recently as he brought his Jack & Bowl Roadshow to Hunstanton Indoor Bowls Club at the Alive Oasis.

Mark has won the Welsh Open twice and once reached the dizzy heights of No. 2 in the world Indoor bowls rankings.

The roadshow travels around the country and as well as offering coaching advice, provides top brands of bowling equipment, accessories and clothing for sale and proved to be a popular event.

Indoor Bowls Chairman, Colin Bunn, said, "it was a privilege to have Mark visit and to offer advice to local players".

For more information, you can visit his website at www.jackandbowl.co.uk

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New manager for Heacham FC



Mark Hunter photo: Phill Gwilliam

Mark Hunter, has been named the new manager of Heacham FC. Hunter possesses a UEFA B License and is an FA Youth Award holder. His experience of mentoring, developing and educating players at Peterborough United Foundation U18's, acclimatising them for the demands of senior football, should bode well. This will resonate well at Heacham, where there is a strong focus on youth development.

The King's Lynn based 46-year-old also has 11 years of professional scouting experience in the English Football League system, which ensures he is well positioned to spot talent both within and outside of the club that will fit with his game plans and strategies.

Hunter said, "I am looking forward to the challenge. I know there is talent here and realise Heacham are not being rolled over by teams,

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playing well but losing by the odd goal. I want to make us more compact, harder to beat and more competitive. We've got 19 games to go and 57 points to fight for. I will have a close look at the squad at training on Tuesday and look forward to the home game against Harleston Town next week".

Whilst there will be a long term plan for Hunter, his immediate priority is to get the Magpies out of the drop zone and safe from relegation, to secure their place in the Premier Division next season. He visited the club yesterday to meet club officials.

Chairman, Sam Pishorn said, "really pleased Mark is joining us, his experience fits very well with what is required here at Heacham both in the short term and long term. His background is a perfect fit with the ethos we have here at the club".

Let's hope Hunter starts his realm as well as new King's Lynn Town FC manager, Ian Calverhouse. Despite facing completely different scenarios in their new roles, both face an immediate prerequisite, to move their charges up the league table.



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Armchair Sports Trivia

I was the lucky winner in the October edition. I would like to say a big thank you to Berni Beans for the prize. It was a first class experience. The food was delicious and all homemade. The atmosphere and staff made it very friendly. We shall certainly return again for more!

Margaret Sayer

Spooktacular costumes for Sandringham parkrun!



A cool morning greeted the 276 participants for Sandringham parkrun 204 - 25/10/2025, and a wicked good time was had by all! Tourists visited from Ely, Cambridge, Derby, Stroud, Newmarket, Maiden Head, Norwich, Wales and Poland.

A great turnout for this fang-tastic Halloween event, now let's creep it real..... Simon Mocatta in a time of 18:59 was first across the line, our first lady was Helen Barry, a first timer to Sandringham in a time of 22:00. With 59 First Timers to Sandringham including 2 First Timers to parkrun Jackie Freeman and Katy Dixon and 22 participants enjoyed a new PB. Milestones this week were: Kirsty Reed - 100, Laura Lucas - 50 parkruns. Highest age grade was Teresa Tranter, from Sudbury Joggers with a new PB and a tremendous 88.32% followed by Vaughan Roberts with 76.26%. Well done to all finishers.



creatures were haunting the woods and may have given them a fright... or that maybe every week lol. If you would like to join our community of welcoming and friendly persons it would be very much appreciated, please contact us at Sandringham@parkrun.com.

5K Your Way - Move Charity joined in the fun; eat, drink and be scary with themed treats to greet the group after walking the two-lap course. Many thanks to everyone.

Keep up to date with the Sandringham news page: <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/sandringham/news/>

View photo for this event on the Photo link on Sandringham parkrun website: <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/sandringham/photos/>

King's Lynn parkrun's Spooktacular Halloween Special

A Hauntingly Good Time!

Gary Walker



A crisp and surprisingly mild morning set the perfect stage for the 381 runners who gathered for King's Lynn parkrun's spine-chilling Halloween Special! The sun was out, the costumes were on, and the energy was high as participants took on the 5k course in some truly bewitching fancy dress. We even had a monstrous turnout of 33 volunteers, who worked behind the scenes to make sure everything ran as smoothly as a ghostly breeze.

A special shoutout to the incredible Maea Fonua, who's been a constant presence at the Arch marshalling over the past few months. Unfortunately, this was her last run with us, as she's heading back to Sydney, Australia. We'll miss her enthusiasm and dedication, and we wish her all the best in her new adventures down under!



Despite the Halloween getups, the running was as fast and furious as ever. Congratulations to George Munson, who zoomed to a fantastic finish with a time of 17:56, just one second shy of his PB. Hot on his heels was his running buddy, Cody Pearman, who crossed the line in 18:06 to take second place. These two have been parkrun legends for years, and their rivalry only seems to get more exciting with each run!

The first female finisher was Elenor Walsh, who completed the course in 21:39. Great job, Elenor!

This week's Age Graded Hero was Pauline Sparrow, who nailed a phenomenal 90.33% grading! Well done, Pauline—you're in a league of your own!

There were also some fantastic milestones celebrated:

- Thomas Reader and Charlotte Karreman-Lowie both hit their 10th parkrun as juniors.
- Richard Reed, Will Chandler, and Ellie Burt all completed their 25th runs—what an achievement!
- A big round of applause to Pam Moore, who hit her impressive 100th parkrun, and Mark Jones, who completed his 150th.

If you're new to parkrun, don't be shy—whether you're a seasoned athlete or a first-timer, everyone's welcome! Just head to www.parkrun.com/register, sign up, and join us at 8:45 am at The Walks Café for the first-timers briefing. We'll walk (or jog) you through everything you need to know. See you next week, and don't forget your spooky costume!

King's Lynn parkrun is a free, timed 5k that's open to everyone, regardless of age or ability. If you're new, just head to www.parkrun.com/register to sign up, and make sure to arrive by 8:45 am at The Walks Café to join the first-timers briefing. We'll guide you through everything you need to know!



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Young Artists showcase at Chequer House Gallery

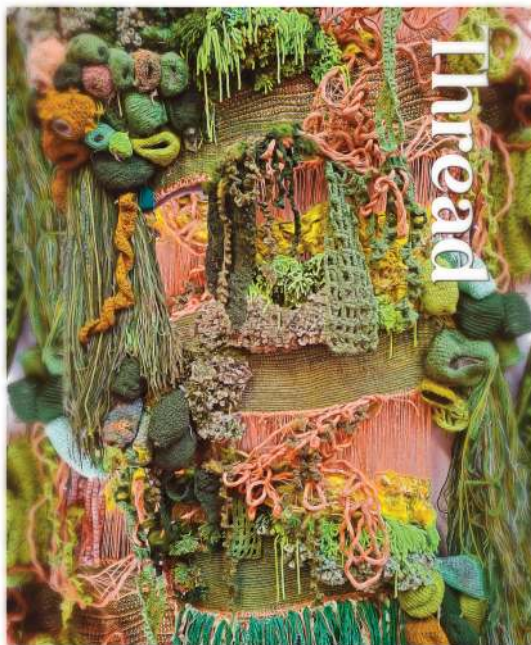
Young artists from our WNAT high schools are showcasing their talents this month at a free exhibition which is taking place at Chequers House Gallery in King's Lynn.

Open to the public on Wednesday – Sunday, from 11am to 5pm From December 13th until 28th December 2025, the Thread Exhibition features the artwork of secondary school students from across the West Norfolk Academies Trust, including Springwood High School in King's Lynn, Smithdon High School in Hunstanton, Marshland High School in West Walton, and St Clement's High School in Terrington St Clement.

Over 60 Year 11 and Year 13 students are exhibiting their creative work, which encompasses a wide range of media from paintings and drawing, to sculpture, digital art and photography.

"There is no specific theme, but students respond from a range of starting points for their exam and coursework projects and build this into their own style and practice," said Lee Eveson, who is Head of Art and Photography at Springwood, and organised and curated the exhibition with the help of WNAT Head of Art Phil Bennell.

"Even as a 50-year-old artist and teacher, every painting that you start is an adventure. Sometimes it's a trial of wits between you and the artwork, and, as a creative, you are always evolving. For this reason, I thought Thread was an apt name for the exhibition."



West Norfolk Academies Trust joint High School and Sixth Form Art & Photography Exhibition 2025 Art Exhibition

Supported by Chequer House Gallery
Art work by S. Hawkes, Springwood High School.

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It is Mr Eveson's Eleventh year of running the event, which often welcomes 500 visitors through its doors over the course of the exhibition.

"We have been lucky enough to work with Chequer House Gallery, King's Lynn in doing this," he continued. "They have been amazing, and offered us their new gallery, which I can't thank them enough for."

"This exhibition shows students what their work looks like in a professional setting. It raises aspirations, confidence and contribution to the creative arts."

"The creative arts is the second biggest economic provider in the UK," he added. "Creative industries are such an important part of our education system and society. We are very lucky to receive the support we do from our Senior Leadership Teams and the community as a whole."

"I feel very lucky to be an art teacher here, not only because of this, but because we have outstanding students at our schools."

The WNAT 'Thread' Art Exhibition is open 11am to 5pm, Wednesday to Sunday, 13th – 28th December at Chequers House Gallery.

A magical Christmas awaits at Westacre Theatre

Liz Brewer

This December, Westacre Theatre invites audiences to step into a world of candlelight, carols, and Christmas spirit with their production of 'A Christmas Carol' - Dickens at his most magical.

Directed by Westacre Theatre's Artistic Director Sadie Grist and Becky Owen-Fisher of Lamphouse Theatre Company, this enchanting adaptation promises magic, wonder, and a few surprises along the way. Expect ghostly apparitions, laughter, and maybe even a festive tear or two, as Scrooge's journey reminds us of the joy of kindness, community, and redemption.

Neil Bartlett's, A Christmas Carol brings a fresh sparkle to this much-loved classic, reimagined for the whole family to enjoy together. With stunning visuals, live music, and heartfelt performances, it's the perfect tradition to share this festive season.

"Becky and I had the most fun creating our version of Sleeping Beauty last year, and it's really important to us that we are able to bring the same fun, warmth and magic to this brilliant story, so we've sprinkled a little magic over it! Expect laughter, surprises and the odd goosebump! We love that families are making Westacre part of their Christmas tradition and tickets are flying!" says Sadie Grist, Theatre Director.

The show also provides a wonderful platform for Westacre's talented young performers, who play a vital part in bringing the story to life. It's part of the Theatre's ongoing mission to give young people meaningful opportunities to shine, especially in rural communities. Tickets are selling fast, so book early to avoid disappointment!

A Christmas Carol runs 19th - 24th December at Westacre Theatre.

We're a small but mighty Theatre providing an intimate and immersive Theatre experience so tickets are limited and selling fast - visit www.westacretheatre.com or call the Box Office to book.

National Theatre Connections

Westacre Theatre continues its commitment to nurturing young talent with an upcoming new year packed full of opportunities for young creatives.



We're proud to announce that we have once again been selected as a host venue for the National Theatre's Connections Programme 2026. This prestigious nationwide project gives young people the chance to work on exciting new writing and experience the full creative process - from first rehearsal to performing on a professional stage. This year's play, Fishville by Afsaneh Gray, will be performed at Westacre Theatre in February before heading to The Garage Theatre, Norwich, for the regional Connections Festival in April 2026.

Auditions: Sunday 18th January 2026, 10am-12pm. Home Performance: Saturday 21st February 2026, 7:30pm Participants: Ages 13 -19, available during February Half Term (14th-21st February)

Summer Bursary Award 2026

Westacre Theatre's much-loved Summer Bursary Award in the Performing Arts returns in 2026! This unique opportunity offers undergraduate and recent graduate actors, singers, dancers, musicians and technicians the chance to spend the summer fully immersed in professional theatre life.

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Westacre Theatre Production

Step into a world of candlelight, carols and Christmas spirit in this fresh reimagining of Dickens's A Christmas Carol. Neil Bartlett's adaptation brings new sparkle to the timeless tale of Ebenezer Scrooge as he journeys through past, present and future to rediscover kindness, community and joy.
A heart-warming festive treat for all the family.

TICKETS SELLING fast

Performance Dates
7pm - 19, 20, 22, 23 Dec
3pm - 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 Dec
£16 Adults | £10 under 21s
Family Ticket Available

About Westacre Theatre
Westacre Theatre is a small but mighty rural arts hub in Norfolk - a rare purpose-built venue bringing brilliant, West End worthy performances alongside vibrant community and youth drama. Westacre is a true cultural lifeline for the region, seats sell fast, so book early to secure your place!

What's On
westacretheatre.com

Find Us
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Get In Touch
admin@westacretheatre.com

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Applications will open early next year, so keep an eye on our website and socials for more details. Watch this space for your chance to be part of something truly special at Westacre Theatre.

Youth theatre all year round

Beyond the big productions, Westacre Theatre runs a vibrant programme of weekly youth groups for young people of all ages and interests, including: Weekend Drama Club and Home Ed Drama Club led by Camilla from Miss Adventures Theatre Company, Glee Club for musical fans, Off Script for wordsmiths, Artful Dodgers for budding artists, LAMDA coaching for aspiring performers.

These sessions nurture creativity, confidence, and community - helping young people discover their voice both on and off the stage.



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Tyler Butterworth



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Arts Society North West Norfolk

LET'S HAVE A LAUGH

Lesley Nadel

There still exists an 'elitism' in art, the belief that only the wealthy, the educated, the privileged understand art; the superior attitude that art is supposed to be a serious matter so that only the experts know what's going on. These myths need busting because art has always been part of our existence, regardless of race, culture, politics or religion, and humour in art can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. Humour can get your attention, but its definition can vary greatly person to person. An everyday object, boring and mundane, can become new and enjoyable, the weird behaviour of an individual can make us laugh out loud. The transgressions of social codes and preconceived ideas are often the basis of humour in art, particularly contemporary art.

The twentieth-century art movements, such as Dadaism, were some of the early turning points for the foundation of humour in contemporary art that emerged after WW1. "Dada" is a simple joke itself, as it has no meaning, but is believed to be a reaction to the absurdity and gravity of the war. Dadaism is all about being artistically free and spontaneously creative and exploring the roles of chance and randomness. One of the very early examples of Dada anti-art was Marcel Duchamp and his readymade artwork 'Fountain' (a porcelain urinal signed "R. Mutt" 1917) challenging what is art, criticising the art establishment and confounding preconceived notions about the relationship between the object, the artist's idea and the viewer's perception. The title 'Fountain' is a pun on the object's function and appearance. 'R. Mutt' is a further humorous provocation. Firstly, the art establishment said it is immoral and vulgar, and plagiarism of a commercial piece of plumbing. Duchamp defended his readymade sculpture as "everyday objects raised to the dignity of work of art by the artist's act of choice". It was certainly a major landmark in twentieth-century modern and contemporary art and in the 1950s and 1960s sixteen replicas were commissioned from Duchamp and made to his approval.

Not all humour in contemporary art is playful like the Dadaists. More artists have resorted to much darker black humour and irony to highlight social and political protests. Consumerism, waste, inequality, the military, authoritarianism and environmental issues are common themes in contemporary works of art. Some artists have become internationally famous by deliberately producing work that is both provocative and dark but also funny. Maurizio Cattelan is an Italian visual artist known for his uncannily realistic sculptures and installations and famous for his 'banana on the wall'. It is his commentary on how art has become a luxury commodity, only accessible to the wealthy. His 'banana on the wall' challenges this notion by making art accessible to all. The famous Banksy is an artist who uses dark subversive humour as a weapon for political protest (Napalm, Banksy 1994). In others he plays with the codes of the establishment in a more light-hearted way (Devolved Parliament 1999).

Martin Parr, the documentary photographer, is the master of intimate, satirical and anthropological portraits of modern life in Britain and around the world in the 1980s and 1990s. His bold, flashy style captures so brilliantly the English social classes, their times at play and how they lived and laughed. Parr admits to the use of irony in his work to make serious subjects more accessible and to illustrate vulnerability and ambiguities. His often affectionate gaze on modern life, portraying the everyday in a critical and humorous light, and his commitment to preserving a growing collection of significant work, much of which is a humorous reflection on British and Irish culture, is an important part of contemporary art.

Humour can work as a defence mechanism in serious situations and in art it enables us to take a break from the usual reality of our daily life. Humour in art can give us distance from our fears, allowing reality and pleasure to coexist. Next time you laugh while looking at a picture or even in an art gallery, it's because you get it, or perhaps you don't. Either way, enjoy art.

The next lecture of The Arts Society North West Norfolk celebrates that quintessentially British humorous tradition – the Pantomime. Tyler Butterworth takes a revealing look at professional panto as someone born into it. This takes place at Sedgeford Village Hall at 2pm on Monday 8th December. You will find details about us and membership on our website www.theartssocietynwnorfolk.org.uk.

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The Arts Society King's Lynn

The Arts Society King's Lynn continues the 2025-26 season on Thursday 11 December 2025 when they welcome Steve King who has spent 35 years working in the radio industry as a Broadcaster, Programmer and Events Director. He has managed some of the biggest radio brands in the UK and has interviewed and worked with many well-known popular music artists. He has also directed over 50 multi-artist events at venues including the Royal Albert Hall, London Palladium and Manchester Arena.

His work in the broadcasting industry has been recognised on numerous occasions. Steve is an engaging public speaker and has produced a series of highly entertaining lectures based on his extensive knowledge of popular music, and his experiences in the radio business. He has lectured at various media conferences, industry events and for several cruise lines.

In 1965 British music dominated the charts on both sides of the Atlantic and the Beatles

were blazing a trail across the world. However, in America, the civil rights and anti-war movements were gaining momentum influencing a new breed of writers and musicians; electric folk was born, and album sales started to increase exponentially. This is the story of the second half of the sixties featuring the music of the Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan.

The lecture will take place in West Winch Village Hall where there is ample free parking available and starts at 2.30pm. TASKL meets once a month on the second Thursday from September to May and anyone is welcome to become a member.

The annual subscription is just £55 or you can go along to individual talks as a guest for £10. Anyone interested in finding out more about TASKL can visit their website at www.theartsocietykingslynn.org.uk or to join the Society contact the membership secretary on 01760 724823 or via email at info@theartsocietykingslynn.org.uk.

Wandering Minstrels to perform G&S Concert in 2026 at St Mary's Heacham

There will be a treat for G&S fans on Saturday 21 February 2026 when 'The Wandering minstrels' pay their third visit to St. Mary's Parish Church, Heacham, West Norfolk for 'THE WORLD OF GILBERT AND SULLIVAN' at 7.30pm. They will sing, act and dance their way through many of the Savoy Operas including 'The Gondoliers', 'Ruddigore', 'The Mikado', 'Iolanthe', 'Princess Ida', 'Patience', 'The Pirates of Penzance' and 'HMS Pinafore'.

Artists appearing in this concert are Helen Winter, Rosie Braddy, Charles Mills, Tim Hurst-Brown and Bruce Graham, with Peter Hewitt at the piano.



Concert tickets are £15, which are available on 01485 572539 or via heacham.church@gmail.com.

The concert, which begins at 7.30pm, is in aid of St. Mary's Church. It is a light-hearted evening of excerpts from the Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas, presented in period costume and performed in traditional style.

This event is bound to be extremely popular, so members of the public are advised to purchase their tickets early to avoid disappointment. Don't miss what promises to be a fun-filled evening!
www.wanderingminstrels.org.uk

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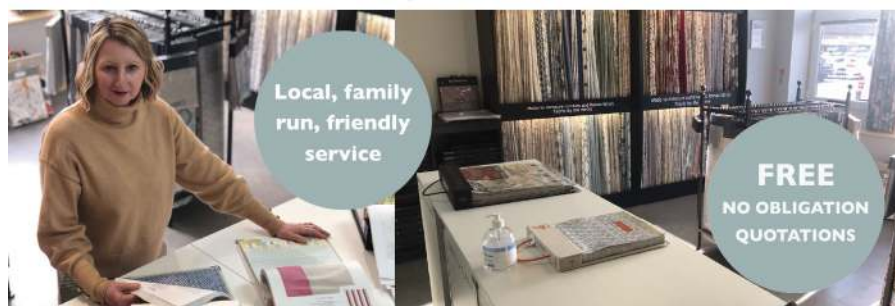
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Festive Highlights at Thornham Village Hall

Wendelien Bellinger

December is always a lively month at Thornham Village Hall, and this year is no exception. Whether you're a theatre or cinema lover, or simply looking for a cheerful local event to dip into between festive preparations, there's a full programme to enjoy.

The season opens on Sunday 30 November at 4pm with a National Theatre Live screening of Mrs Warren's Profession. The Hall's large screen and excellent sound system make it a comfortable and intimate place to experience productions that would normally require a long journey.

A few weeks later, the ever-popular Winter Warmer talks and dinners continue. On Friday 12 December, Professor Kerry Brown will be speaking on Britain's evolving relationship with China. Although all seats have now been reserved, anyone still hoping to attend can join the waiting list by emailing events@tvhpf.co.uk. The series resumes in the new year on 16 January, when Allie Wharf will explore how working with nature could help restore the health of the North Sea.

Film fans can look forward to a relaxed evening on Thursday 18 December, when the Hall hosts its December Thursday Film Night. A Christmas film will be shown free of charge. Licensing rules prevent the title being advertised here, but the Hall's notice board and e-newsletter share the details.

The month also brings something for shoppers: the BagLadies of Thornham Winter Gift Fair returns to the Hall on Saturday 6 December, with handmade goods, seasonal treats, and plenty of opportunities to support local craftspeople.

Information and ticket links for all events can be found at www.thornhamvillagehall.co.uk along with sign-up details for the monthly e-newsletter.

Warm wishes for a joyful December and a wonderful start to 2026.

Winter concert at St Nicholas' Chapel King's Lynn

King's Lynn Community Choir will be capturing the spirit of the Christmas message in their winter concert on December 6th.

The programme will be bringing together songs which have been specially arranged by their musical director, Charlotte Sinassi-Hill, as well as seasonal favourites.

They will be joined by musicians from King's Lynn Town Band as well as their accompanist David Hill.

The audience will be able to join in with favourite Christmas carols as well.

The concert is at 7pm in St Nicholas's Chapel King's Lynn. Tickets are £10 each and they are selling fast! To book, go to concert.klcommunitychoir@gmail.com



The King's Lynn Community Cinema Club is screening The Ballad of Wallis Island in Screen 2 at The Majestic on Thursday 11th December at 7.30pm. There is a members' social event in the bar prior to the showing, details will be emailed out as usual.

The film is a British comedy written by and starring Tim Keys and Tom Basden, and also features Carey Mulligan. It was released in January 2025 at the Sundance film festival. It is the story of an eccentric lottery winner who lives on a remote island and who tries to get his favourite band back together by having a private show at his home.



KLCCC is open to anyone over 18 and costs £20 a season. There are 2 seasons a year each with 8 scheduled films that are free for members. Membership can be arranged by emailing

communitycinemaclub@googlemail.com.

Alternatively, you can just come along to any film as a day member for £6 cash on the door. Full details of all the club's films and events can be found on the club website www.klccc.uk and Facebook page.



December already and where has the year gone?

We have seen and heard so many amazing performances in this last year and we end the year on some local events.

Donation Event

Look Towards Christmas

Friday 5th December 2025 | Start 4pm

Partnership with Burnham Market Primary School
Journey to Bethlehem in Words and Music.
Mulled Wine, Hot Chocolate & Christmas Cookies

We'll be raising money at the Look Towards Christmas event, with all proceeds going to Norfolk & Waveney Mind, a local mental health charity we are in partnership with.

📍 All Saints Church Sutton cum Ulph, Burnham Market, PE31 8UR
☎ 07989 177079 🌐 www.musicintheburnham.com

On December 5th at 4pm at Burnham Sutton church we hold our annual Look towards Christmas concert with Burnham Market Village School. This musical travel towards Bethlehem is in many ways the highlight of the school year as the pupils know there are goodie bags at the end and they have usually sung their hearts out. It has been quite a year at BMPS with three visits from international performers, two concerts and a full costumed production in July. What a packed year!

On Wednesday December 10th at 6pm at St Clements Church in Burnham Overy Town, Norwich School Chamber Choir are singing "Christmas." Mulled wine and mince pies of course to enjoy before carols and Christmas songs for choir and audience too. Tickets are just £10 each and all profits go to our mental health charity Mind.

6pm

Christmas With Norwich School Chamber Choir

Wednesday 10th December 2025
St Clements Church, Burnham Overy Town, PE31 8HU

Donations For Our Mind Project
07989 177079 www.musicintheburnham.com

To finish the year we have our yearly musical operatic joy with Alison Langer and Lawrence Thackeray at Burnham Overy Hall on Friday December 12th at 7pm. This is one of our favourite occasions with supper, lots of wine, great singing from performers and audience alike, and the best of convivial times with lots to celebrate from 2025.....but wait until you hear what is on offer for 2026.

Many thanks for supporting us and here's to more musical times ahead.

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Hold onto your hats, Norfolk...



The Wild West is saddling up for 2026
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School wins award for supporting young carers

Hunstanton Primary's been given the accolade to recognise the support it gives to children who are responsible for the care of a family member.

Headteacher Mrs Johanna Sullivan, says, "Our young carers show remarkable resilience and compassion every day, and it's our privilege to support them. At Hunstanton Primary, we're committed to ensuring every child feels understood, valued, and given the chance to succeed - no matter what challenges they face outside the classroom."

The award is part of a programme run by two charities - The Children's Society and Carers Trust - which provide schools across England with step-by-step guidance for teachers, leaders and non-teaching staff, to help young carers. The school's been commended for running clubs and drop-in sessions which provide vital support.

Vicky Morgan from Carers Trust, says "Figures show there are two young carers in every classroom but balancing learning with looking after family members can be tough without help. By identifying young carers and putting support in place, schools and teachers can make a huge difference to their wellbeing and education. That's why the brilliant work done by staff at Hunstanton Primary is so vital



and why this award is so richly deserved."

And Lisa Witherden from The Children's Society adds, "We're absolutely thrilled that Hunstanton Primary has achieved the Young Carers in Schools award, demonstrating their

commitment to identifying these hidden children and young people and ensuring they get the vital support they need to thrive in education and in life beyond school."

Docking Church of England Primary Academy and Nursery

Mrs Rebekah Woodrow, Headteacher

It has been a busy and purposeful half term at Docking Church of England Primary Academy and Nursery, with children embracing new learning and showing great enthusiasm in all they do. The school community recently took part in a two-minute silence for Remembrance Day, and staff were deeply proud of the respect and thoughtfulness shown by every child as they paused to honour those who served. We would also like to thank the community for the beautiful poppy display in the village, which truly captured the spirit of remembrance and inspired our KS1 children to create their own poppy display during their Forest School sessions.

This half term's focus value is Courage — learning to stand up for what is right, to show kindness even when it takes bravery, and to find strength in compassion. The children have explored this theme in many ways, particularly during Anti-Bullying Week. The week began with Odd Socks Day, when pupils and staff wore mismatched socks to celebrate individuality and remind everyone that it's good to be different. Throughout the week, classes took part in activities and discussions about friendship, inclusion, and how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

The Eco Council has also been hard at work on its first project of the year, encouraging everyone to save energy and care for our planet. Their bright posters and thoughtful messages have inspired us all to make simple, positive changes. Meanwhile, the School Council has been focusing on promoting healthy eating. They have been creating colourful posters and have written a letter to parents and carers to share ideas and remind everyone about the importance of a balanced diet and healthy lunch choices.

A big thank you goes to all families and friends who support the school in so many ways, especially through the work of our dedicated PTFA. The PTFA's efforts continue to enrich school life by funding resources, trips, and special experiences for the children.

It has been a term full of learning, kindness, and community spirit — and we are so proud of how our pupils continue to grow in courage and care for others.



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Glebe House School & Nursery Update

It's been a lively and heartening few weeks at Glebe House School, with pupils throwing themselves into autumn traditions old and new. From spirited celebrations and musical triumphs to outdoor adventures and community projects, there's been no shortage of colour or enthusiasm around the school. Here's a look at some of the moments that have brightened the first half of term of this new school year.

Community Update

Marathon Monday raises over £2,000 for Tapping House Hospice!



Our RotaKids committee led their much-loved Marathon Monday just before half term, choosing this year to support The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House. All our pupils from Reception to Year 8 threw themselves into 26-themed challenges, from step-ups and star jumps to laps of the astro, cartwheels and a lively 26-minute danceathon, with one class even completing a sponsored silence. The mix of effort and good humour raised an impressive £2,057.10 for this very important local charity. Marathon Monday was created in memory of our late Headmaster John Crofts, and the school community is certain he would have been proud of the children's teamwork, determination and generous spirit.

Month Highlights

Harvest Celebrations

We marked this year's Harvest Festival with the whole school gathering in the newly refurbished school hall, which was decorated brightly with autumn colours and seasonal displays. Our pupils sang with plenty of spirit, creating a cheerful start to the week. Our

Community and Outreach Prefects collected the generous donations from pupils and will be delivering them to the Hunstanton Food Bank in due course. After the service, our kitchen team and pupils also decorated the dining room tables, adding a collaborative and seasonal touch to the day.



Autumn Term Social

What a fun way to kick off the Friday Night Social calendar! Our Pre-Prep children had a brilliant Friday evening at Blackbeard's Adventure Golf in Hunstanton, tackling the Pirate Course and Aztec Trail. They learned new golfing skills, cheered each other on and even enjoyed a picnic tea back at school!



The Prep School children competed in the Glebe House Crazy Golf Challenge 2025, which consisted of two afternoons of excitement, friendly competition and memorable swings. Staff were outplayed, spirits were high and one talented pupil even won the bonus hole for the second year running!

Across all events there was some skill, lots of teamwork, and plenty of laughter! Autumn

Term Informal Concert



How exciting it was to host our first musical concert of the year in our beautifully refurbished school hall. From Mrs Carnell's delightful Pre Prep Choir to debut solo performances, it was wonderful to see such confidence and enthusiasm on show. We also enjoyed a poised rendition of Romance on the piano and a beautifully serene Lullaby on the harp. Music plays an important role in school life at Glebe House and this set the stage for this year's Inter House Music which took place later in the month.

Autumn Adventures at The Wilderness



This Autumn Term is flying by at The Wilderness! Our pupils have embraced their Forest School sessions, exploring, discovering and learning new skills in the great outdoors. It's been wonderful to see pupils and staff learning side by side, from crafting and games to testing out the swings! As the weather cools, the children are looking forward to cosy fires (Mrs Haslam's favourite!) and some coastal sessions down at the beach. We can't wait to see what the next half term brings!

Inter House Music



We were delighted to welcome Mrs Skipper back to judge this year's Inter House Music event, a truly joyful show of house identity and unity. Our pupils from Years 3-8 really did shine on stage, showcasing the wonderful talent and confidence we are so proud to nurture at Glebe House. L'Estrange opened with "The Bare Necessities" and were crowned House winners, while Saints impressed with "Beat It" and Barbers delivered a moving performance of "I Have a Voice".

Individual awards went to Eiddwen for her harp performance, Bonnie for her expressive piano piece, and Max, Robyn and Anouk from Years 7 and 8. Congratulations to all involved!

Sporting Update

Inter House Cross Country



An afternoon full of determination was a fantastic way to round off the week before half term! Our annual Inter House Cross Country event saw children from across the Prep School, and some brilliantly brave runners from Year 2, give it their all out on the course. Their determination, team spirit and

big smiles made us and their cheering families incredibly proud. A huge well done to every child who took part!

Out & About

Year 5 Geography Trip to River Glaven



Our Year 5 pupils had the opportunity to take their geography learning out of the classroom and into the field! As part of their on-going geography project, the class went to explore the River Glaven to deepen their understanding of rivers and how they change along their course.

Armed with metre sticks, stopwatches and a lot of curiosity, the children carried out real measurements, made careful observations and discovered first-hand how rivers flow, erode and evolve over time. It was a wonderful hands-on, immersive day and well done to Year 5 on wholly embracing the experience!

Come and see us!

Does your child start Reception or Senior School in September 2026? Is your child looking for a new school? Would your child benefit from a new start?

Did you know we offer a comprehensive co-curricular programme until 6pm? And that we provide daily transport from many convenient locations across North West Norfolk?

Find out more about life at Glebe House School. Contact Mrs Fraulo on 01485 532809 or email tjf@glebehouseschool.co.uk to book a visit.

John Harris cordially invites you to another PIANO PARTY

on his birthday, Tuesday 16th December 2025
between 10am and 3pm in the daytime and 1-9pm in the evening
at the Methodist Chapel Hall, Heacham (opposite Boots)

Musical games and competitions (with prizes!)

Musical Christmas presents (something for everyone!)
carols, singalongs and guest artistes.

Refreshments available, also cold lunch (with hot chips) and desserts.

No charge for anything, but John will invite his guests to make
a donation of their choice, to be shared between
Diabetes UK and King's Lynn Night Shelter.

N.B. Please ring 01485 579136 before 10th December to book lunch.

Future twice as bright for Lynn students

The workforce of tomorrow had twice the advice on offer, when their school's annual careers fair doubled in size.

The Futures Event 2025 at Springwood High School in King's Lynn expanded to comprise an Employment Zone in the Peter Hopkins Hall and an Education Zone in the Sixth Form Hub, with over fifty exhibitors from the worlds of work and education represented.

"The event took place for the first time in this format last year and was a great success," said Nicky Thompson, Careers Lead and joint Head of Year 13 at the school, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust. "We doubled the space this year.

"The majority of exhibitors returned, and we had some new businesses joining us, including SaxonAir, Marsh Insurance Brokers, Ford and Slater, Dodman Ltd, Mars Ltd, and Cranswick Country Foods.

"We were delighted to welcome back a wide range of employers from the local area, including the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, QEH, Lovell, BAE Systems, Mapus-Smith and Lemmon, and Hayes and Storr."

"A wider range of employment sectors were represented this year, and many of the exhibitors brought interactive activities to give students a taste of different career options," she continued. "For example, SaxonAir brought a flight simulator, and Lovell brought a range of have-a-go construction activities.



Cuss, along with Head of Year 12 Luke Rawling, Head of Year 11 Rebecca Davies-Mays, and Head of Year 10 Pete Cuss.

"It was specifically aimed at 14- to 18-year-old students, who are making important decisions about their post-16 and post-18 choices," she explained.

"Heads of Year for different age groups put together an itinerary of tailored careers activities before students attended the careers fair. These involved employers and education providers – including further education colleges and universities – delivering

workshops to help students make informed decisions about their next steps."

Year 10 students heard from the College of West Anglia, Springwood Sixth Form, and the Apprenticeship Service about post-GCSE choices; while Year 11 were guided through the 'Help You Choose' application process; Year 12 learnt about the benefits of securing work experience; and Year 13 practised their interview techniques with Dodman Managing Director Tim Skerritt, and heard from Springwood alumnus Ruby Goodchild, who is currently completing an apprenticeship with Maxey Grounds.

"Springwood High School is committed to providing high quality Careers Education, Information, Advice, and Guidance (CEIAG) for all students, encouraging them to aim higher, and explore engaging and rewarding careers," added Miss Thompson.

"The school's Careers Plan ensures that every student has opportunities to learn from employers about work, employment, and the skills that are valued in the workplace. The Futures Event brings together students and multiple employers to do just that."

All images: Ian Burt



"Uniformed services were also well presented, with Norfolk Police, the Army, and the RAF in attendance."



More than 1,000 students from Years 10 to 13 spent the day off-timetable at the event, which was organised by Miss Thompson with the assistance of Co-Head of Year 13 Jessica



Lynn school in tune with music award



It was time to face the music, in the most positive of ways, when staff and students at a Lynn school discovered that they had won a prestigious award.

Springwood High School was nominated for the Music Mark Recognition for Ambition and Quality Award by the Norfolk and Suffolk Music Hub, in appreciation of the breadth of the school's involvement in music.

"It is a recognition of commitment to Music Education, and also, for us, a recognition at a regional level of the work that we undertake not just in school, but in the wider community," said Robin Norman, who is Springwood's Head of Music.

"With the award, it shows commitment to three key 'pledges': advocate for the importance of music education in the curriculum and creative life of our school; provide an equitable, diverse, and inclusive music education for every young person; and welcome opportunities to broaden our musical horizons by working with providers in our community and beyond."

"It was a nice surprise to receive the email to say that we had been nominated, and awarded, the recognition," he continued.

"This is a recognition given to us for all the work we do with the Norfolk and Suffolk Music Hub as one of their Lead Schools, and also in general in our local community."

Mr Norman was keen to acknowledge the efforts of everyone involved in achieving the accolade at the school, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust.

"This is a result of all the work that goes on week in, week out, at Springwood, and is testament to the hard work of all our Music staff, support of the school Senior Leadership Team, and, indeed, all our fantastic students," he added.

"Springwood continues to pride itself on our commitment to a musical education of the highest quality, where our students are given every opportunity, both in the classroom and with extra-curricular activities, to excel.

"This is a legacy that goes back nearly 50 years, to around 1979, and we continue that legacy today, making sure that there is something for everyone to get involved in."

Images by Ian Burt



The day a Gladiator came to school

Strongman Steel inspires children at Burnham Market Primary

A top athlete who won the title of fittest man in England inspired children at a Norfolk primary school - who probably know him better as Steel from the popular Gladiators TV show.

Zack George visited Burnham Market Primary School with his Zactive workshop which he developed to promote healthy eating, exercise, confidence, hydration and a positive mindset among young people.



A whole school assembly heard Zack talking about his journey from a normal boy to gaining the title of the fittest man in the country in 2020 after he won the UK CrossFit Open competition.

"Steel was wonderful with the children, he spoke passionately about health, exercise and a positive mindset which was inspirational to hear. The visit was funded through the PE and School Sport Premium grant and forms part of our 'Be Inspired project,'" said Sally Morrell, PE Lead.

"The project has, over the last two years, brought Olympians, World Champions and Guinness World Record holders into school to inspire the next generation. We are immensely proud of our PE and school sport offer and are always trying to inspire all our pupils to be active, healthy and have a dream," she added.

Zack's journey also includes his experience of being a Gladiator on



the BBC One series which launched in 2023, with the second season ending in April this year.

But away from the cameras, he runs Zactive workshops designed for young people aged three to 16 to inspire them into staying fit and healthy. He visited Burnham Market Primary, a member of the Wensum Trust, as part of the school's PE and Sport Premium funded project, Be Inspired.

"He spoke passionately about having a goal and learning from setbacks rather than allowing them to have a negative impact. He spent time in every classroom, answering questions, chatting with children and signing autographs," said Senior Teacher Ashley Williams.

The children were also able to have their photos taken with Steel as a memento of the day a Gladiator came to school.

Success times seven for Lynn maths stars

Maths whizzes were put through their paces, and found very much equal to the challenge, when they entered a new maths competition aimed solely at girls.

The sixth-form students from Springwood High School in King's Lynn were among the first to take part in the inaugural UK Maths Trust (UKMT) Mathematical Competition for Girls (MCG) - where they also ranked amongst the highest scorers.

"It is a new opportunity designed to inspire and challenge young female mathematicians from across the UK," said Ben Coote, Key Stage 5 Maths Lead at Springwood, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust.

"The paper consisted of five, difficult, problem-solving questions. The top 25 per cent of students received a Certificate of Distinction, and the next 40 per cent a Certificate of Merit. Students who scored below the Merit threshold, received a Certificate of Participation.

"We had five students competing - two achieved Merit, and three got Distinction."

The Springwood highfliers, who are all in Years 12 and 13, included Cadence Fordham, Rachel Chalmers, and Holly MacGowan with Distinctions; and Sara Mohammed and Sydney Hipwell with Merits.

As the leading British charity for the promotion of mathematical education in young people, UKMT runs a series of maths competitions and challenges throughout the year, including the Mathematical Olympiad for Girls (MOG), which attracted almost 5,000 entries in 2024.

Matching their classmates' performances in the MCG, Springwood students also reached the upper regions of the MOG leaderboard, with Emily Adcock in Year 12 and Nastia Kliuchnyk in Year 13 both achieving Merits.



Another award for Norfolk school's young film makers

Young film makers at a Norfolk school had another excuse to celebrate their success when they received another two awards for their work.

Pupils at Burnham Market Primary School had already won plaudits for their film S.I. Superficial Intelligence, and now have awards from Wales to add to their growing collection.

The group, aged ten and 11 when the film was created, had been led by senior teacher Ashley Williams. They were unable to travel to Wales to receive their award for Best Film and another for Best School or College Project from the Children's International Film Festival Wales last month.

"It was fantastic news - we weren't able to travel for the awards, but it was great to have won two categories," said Senior Teacher Ash Williams, who is behind the film project at the school, a member of the Wensum Trust.

The film also won Best Film at the Into Film Awards earlier this year and some of those involved had the chance to travel to the famous Odeon Luxe in London's Leicester Square where actor James Norton presented the award in June.

The film tells the story of two children fed-up with the amount of homework they receive and decide to build their own artificial intelligence robot named S.I. to complete the work. But the more the robot learns, the more out of control it appears - and the potential risks of AI are laid bare.

The film started life as a classroom joke about an interactive whiteboard that was acting 'like terrible AI.'

Mr Williams said film is a key part of the school's teacher and learning and pupils both create and analyse them across the curriculum.

"We have had an amazing time with this film," he said.

"It was a passion project that has brought out the best from everyone involved. Everyone involved brought their best, showcasing their amazing skills on the big screen."

Determined that being in rural North Norfolk wouldn't be a barrier to film-making, Mr Williams said that being able to bring the



art to his pupils was one of the most rewarding experiences of his career so far.

The premier of the short film was presented at Fakenham's Central Cinema at an event

hosted by Active Fakenham in March.

*Credit Barking Dog Media/
Ian Burt Photography*

Mayor of Hunstanton Announces Charity Events

Hunstanton Mayor, Cllr. Cynthia Easeman, has announced that Guide Dogs for the Blind will be the official charity for her mayoral year.

"As part of my Mayoral duties, it is customary to support a specific charity throughout the year. As someone who relies entirely on my guide dog for mobility and companionship, my obvious choice is Guide Dogs," said the Mayor. "Any funds raised will support the training, equipment, and welfare of these wonderful dogs who provide independence and life-changing assistance."

To help raise funds, the Hunstanton Town Council's Small Events Task & Finish Group has organised a series of community events taking place early next year, and residents are encouraged to mark their

calendars:

- Saturday 17 January – Pre-Loved Sale Community Centre, Hunstanton
Tables £15 each
- Saturday 14 February – Valentine's Silent Auction
Bid on sealed envelopes containing surprises—from a sweet treat to a chiropody session.
Includes complimentary cheese and wine.
Donations of prizes are warmly welcomed.
- Saturday 14 March – Craft De-Stock
Hire a table to sell or clear out your excess craft materials.
Community Centre, Hunstanton
All proceeds will support Guide Dogs for the Blind, helping transform the lives of visually impaired people across the region.
For further information or to book a table, please contact:
cllr.marziano@hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk

News from Hunstanton Croquet Club

Zena Penty

It was great to see so many members attend the annual end of season croquet club lunch and trophy presentation at Heacham Manor at the end of October. Chairperson Roddy Willett presented trophies to all the tournament winners – there were many hard fought finals throughout the year, so huge congratulations to the winners.



The end of October also saw a good attendance at the AGM hosted by our Club President Simon Carter. Huge thanks were



given to all officers for their hard work throughout the season and the committee welcomed Rev. Dan Tansey (Treasurer) Mary Core and Dorothy English to the committee.

There was a fantastic response of help this year for the end of season club closedown where members shared general tasks like cleaning, tidying, weeding etc. It was a bright sunny morning and everyone's positivity



made it a fun session.

I'm sure many members have been missing playing croquet and the camaraderie already – the club always arranges a couple of coffee mornings throughout the winter to keep people in touch. See the Hunstanton Croquet Club Facebook Page for details of events.

Whether you are looking for a competitive or social sport, the new season will start at the beginning of April 2026 where we organise beginners training courses – why not consider giving the game a try – see www.hunstantoncroquetclub.co.uk for more information.

HUNSTANTON LAWN TENNIS TOURNAMENT SERVES UP £2,000 DONATION TO NORFOLK BLOOD BIKES

Ashley Martin

Hunstanton Lawn Tennis Tournament has donated £2,000 to Norfolk Blood Bikes.

The event, Britain's largest tennis tournament, which this year attracted almost 1,200 competitors aged from under-10s to over 80s, supports a local charity each year.

The presentation was made at the event's annual general meeting by Tournament chairman Andrew Creighton to Sandy Gourlay, chairman of the 2025 chosen charity Norfolk Blood Bikes.

Additionally, the charity, which relies on a team of volunteers to transport urgently required blood, platelets, plasma, samples, vaccines and medical instruments to hospitals in Norfolk and several medical centres throughout the region, raised a further almost £600 on its stand at August's Tournament week. The organisation also delivers blood to the East Anglian Air Ambulance allowing it to extend its life-saving capability.

Norfolk Blood Bikes ran a raffle to win a Porsche Driving Experience during the Tournament and the winner was Addy Dickson, of Stoke Albany, Northamptonshire.

The half-day Experience takes place at the Silverstone Porsche Driving Experience Centre where, accompanied by an expert Porsche Driving Consultant, Addy will be able to put Porsche models of his choice through a range of challenging and exciting driving environments.

Mr Gourlay said: "The support of local organisations, such as the Hunstanton Lawn Tennis Tournament, and the community in the area is absolutely critical for the continued success of the charity. We would like to thank the Tournament organisers and all players and spectators for their support this year. The money will contribute towards the cost of buying an additional motorcycle for the Norfolk Blood Bikes' fleet."

Mr Creighton said: "Norfolk Blood Bikes perform a vital job across the county and the Tournament was delighted to support the charity this year and make a donation. Each year the event aims to support a local charitable organisation or good cause and make a substantial donation out of profits."

At an average cost of £65 per task, Norfolk Blood Bikes estimate it saves the NHS a substantial amount of money which, instead, can be



Hunstanton Lawn Tennis Tournament chairman Andrew Creighton (third from left) with (left to right): Shane Finch, treasurer of Norfolk Blood Bikes, Sandy Gourlay, chairman of Norfolk Blood Bikes, and Chris Holt, Tournament community liaison officer.

used to fund frontline patient care. Since launch in 2011, the organisation calculates that it has saved the NHS more than £1.3 million. During that time volunteers have completed more than 20,000 tasks and its fleet of liveried motorcycles and cars have covered around 1.135 million miles.

Most deliveries for blood and blood products start with a call to the Regional Blood Bank at Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge. Deliveries are then rushed to pathology teams at either the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Kings Lynn, the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Norwich, or the James Paget Hospital, Great Yarmouth.

It costs Norfolk Blood Bikes around £60,000 a year to keep its fleet of 16 motorcycles and five cars operating and at no cost to the NHS and with no Government funding, the organisation is wholly reliant on donations to keep mobile.

Last year, Norfolk Blood Bikes, which presently has more than 100 volunteers, covered almost 150,000 miles delivering close to 1,600 boxes of blood products and almost 1,300 litres of donated breast milk.

The Tournament, which has been held for more than 100 years, is played on 38 grass courts on Hunstanton Recreation Ground. The 2026 event takes place from August 16-22.

December events - see also <https://townandaround.net/whats-on/december>

Monday 1st

Anmer Social Club Coffee morning 10am-noon. Coffee; tea; cakes & biscuits available to purchase. For information please email:

lee.suckling78@outlook.com or telephone, text or WhatsApp 07899 872351 and at 7pm Bingo Night - Club opens at 7.00pm. "Eyes Down" at 7.30 p.m. £6.50 for a book of 10 cards; £1.50 for a "Flyer Card" & £2 for a "Cash Accumulator" card. Fully licensed bar and Raffle. For information email: anmer.club@outlook.com or telephone; text or WhatsApp 07899872351

Old Hunstanton Village Hall Film Night - The Bishop's wife 1947 Get in the mood for Christmas with this romantic comedy starring Cary Grant, Loretta Young and David Niven. A bishop is obsessed with raising money for a new cathedral and in answer to his prayers a suave clergyman appears. He proceeds to guide the local community with his special powers. He also becomes attracted to the bishop's wife.... The hall will be decorated for Christmas. The bar will be open and mulled wine will be available. £5 on the door.



Tuesday 2nd

Hunstanton & District Festival of Arts Annual General Meeting for the year 2025 will be held at 6pm at The Conservative Club, Hunstanton High Street when the future of the Charity will be discussed and new teams elected for 2026. Please come along if you would like to be part of it.

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360
Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long with The Hunstanton Concert Band. 7.30pm. Light refreshments will be served. Come and join us for the start of our Christmas Celebrations

Wednesday 3rd

Old Hunstanton Village Hall Dementia Café for people with dementia & cognitive decline and their carers. It's free to attend. For further information contact the Heritage House on 01328 711333

Friday 5th

Anmer Social Club Simply Acoustic Night - An evening of classic and original tunes from talented local performers. Club opens 7:00 p.m. For further information email: events@appleyard.info Note performers are pre-booked for this event

Fri 5th - Sun 7th

Christmas Tree Festival at Hunstanton Town Hall 10am-4pm with live choirs each day. Craft stalls and Santa's Grotto. Info 07745 322124



Saturday 6th

Sandringham parkrun
Sandringham Royal Park at 8:40 for a 9am start. First Timers Briefing 8:45am. Start and finish on the vista near children's play area. Car parking for parkrun is free until 11am. To volunteer or for further information contact: sandringham@parkrun.com 07913 439222

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun
9am. Meet outside the Sailing Club
hunstantonpromenade@parkrun.com. Info: 07804 927764

Advent Fair at Our Lady and St Edmund RC Church
Hunstanton PE36 6DR
Crafts stall, bottle tombola stall, book and puzzle stall, raffle and refreshments.

Dersingham Choir Christmas Concert, St Cecilia's Catholic Church, Mountbatten Rd, Dersingham, PE31 6YE. Traditional carols and more modern festive songs. 2.00 pm (doors open 1.30 pm). £5 on the door; light refreshments available. Contact Kate 07513 986858 for details.

Snettisham Christmas Fair, The Market Square 5-8pm Father Christmas, YOUR Choir, KL1 Radio, gifts, hot food and drinks, mulled wine and rides.



Hunstanton Voices and Coastal Vocals are presenting a Christmas Carol Concert at St Edmunds Church, Hunstanton at 5.30pm. Tickets £6 at the door, under fives free (cash only). Seasonal refreshments included.

Wereham Village Hall PE33 9AP Festive Quiz Night. BYO snacks, drinks & glassware. Info & tickets 01366 502214 or 01366 500766



Castaway Crew Female Shanty Singers Christmas Party - Shanties with a twist of Christmas. Bar plus free mince pies! 7-9pm at Hunstanton Sailing Club, North Promenade PE36 6GB 07510 262061.



Ingoldisthorpe Sports and Social Club Christmas Bingo. Doors open 7.30pm It's a cracker! Contact Diane Forder 07901924223 for any enquiries

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 After Party Duo. Great vocals all eras 8.30pm

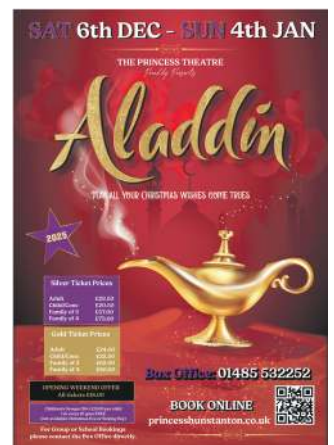
Sat 6th - Sun 7th

Festive Merchants Market
Tuesday Market Place 10am-4pm Explore unique handmade crafts, baked sweet treats & savoury goodies, artisan cheese and drink, along with much more to explore.



Sat 6th - 4th Jan

Aladdin at The Princess Theatre
Hunstanton Box Office 01485 532252. May all your wishes come true.



Sunday 7th

Wereham Village Hall PE33 9AP Indoor Car Boot Sale from 8am. Enquiries 01366 501330 or 07759 033492

Learn Modern Jive. Beginners welcome (no partner required). Tilney St Lawrence Village Hall PE34 4RF. 7.30-10pm. Just turn up or call Jay on 01553 617393

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 Find the joker draw. £1 a ticket. Drawn at 2.30pm. Followed by live music & dancing in the lounge with Jammin Joe 3pm Karaoke with Mike Covey 8pm

Monday 8th

Anmer Social Club Coffee morning 10am-noon. Coffee; tea; cakes & biscuits available to purchase. For information please email: lee.suckling78@outlook.com or telephone, text or WhatsApp 07899 872351

Wednesday 10th

Old Hunstanton Village Hall Dementia Café for people with dementia & cognitive decline and their carers. It's free to attend. For further information contact the Heritage House on 01328 711333

Wereham Village Hall PE33 9AP Christmas Prize Bingo. Doors 6.15, Eyes Down 7.30. Raffle & refreshments. Enquiries 01366 502214 or 01366 500115 or 01366 500798



A LITTLE BIT FESTIVE QUIZ NIGHT

at Wereham Village Hall
Saturday 6th December
- starts at 7pm -

Tickets £6 when bought in advance, £7 on the night - includes Sausage Rolls, Mince Pies and Nibbles, but please bring your own snacks, drinks & glassware.

For more information or to buy your tickets, please either -
pop into the Village Hall office,
call the office on 01366 502214,
email villagehallwereham@gmail.com
or call John Eastgate on 01366 500766

All Proceeds to Wereham Village Hall CIO - Charity Registration No 1168472

Thursday 11th

A musical afternoon with Margaritaville 50s & 60s music. Hunstanton town Hall 1-4pm
Entry: £4 cash 07787 966000



A Musical Afternoon with Margaritaville 50's & 60's Music
In aid of East Anglian Air Ambulance

Thursday 11th December

Hunstanton Town Hall 1-4pm

Sponsored By

£4 Entry Cash Only
Tea & Coffee £1

Dinky David 07787 966000

East Anglian Air Ambulance
EAAA Registered Charity No 1208376

Dersingham Choir Christmas Concert, St Cecilia's Catholic Church, Mountbatten Rd, Dersingham, PE31 6YE. Traditional carols and more modern festive songs. 7.00 pm (doors open 6.30 pm). £5 on the door; light refreshments available. Contact Kate 07513 986858 for details.

The Fakenham Society talk by Gary Powell – Death in Disguise. The former London detective and history buff invites you to be the jury at a true Victorian murder trial. Guilty or not guilty, you decide! Lancaster Room, The Galloway NR21 7NY
Info: 01328 887514

Friday 12th

Snettisham Farmers' Market 9am-1pm. The Market Place. 01485 543721

Christmas Lights event at Thurlow Nunn Standen, Fakenham NR21 8SN. Festive cheer and farm machines dresses in Christmas lights. Children can be photographed on the tractors. Meet Father Christmas. Music by local band Bliss 4-6pm

Anmer Social Club FILM NIGHT - THE PENGUIN LESSONS – 12A - Starring Steve Coogan and Jonathan Pryce in the true story in which disillusioned teacher Tom Michell (Steve Coogan) gets a job teaching English and Rugby in a school for rich kids in Buenos Aires. Club opens 7:00 p.m. Film Starts 7:30 p.m. Admission £5 payable at the door. For further information email: enquiries@anmerclub.co.uk or telephone 01485 579465

Jólabókaflóð at by the book and Write around the corner Hunstanton. Tickets £3 Tickets from 01485 522349. See article on page 32

United Services Club Hunstanton 01485 533360 Christmas Prize Bingo. Eyes down 3pm.

Fri 12th-Sun 14th

Holkham Christmas Market, Lady Elizabeth Wing, Holkham Hall. Over 60 stalls. 10am-4pm Free entry. Please note no dogs in the Lady Elizabeth wing.

Saturday 13th

Sandringham parkrun – see Sat 6th

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. Meet outside the Sailing Club
hunstantonpromenade@parkrun.com. Info: 07804 927764

St Mary's Church Snettisham Big light switch on and concert with Erin Eliza and YOUR Choir plus a singalong for all the family and amazing lights at Snettisham Church. Refreshments. Free entry, donations welcome. Doors 5pm and concert starts at 6pm.



The Big Light Concert
at St Mary's Church, Snettisham
13th December at 6pm

A long celebration of Christmas favourites for all the family
CULMINATING IN THE SWITCHING ON OF SPIRE LIGHTS!

FREE ENTRY Refreshments Available

Fakenham Choral Society Christmas Concert at the Parish Church featuring Britten's St Nicholas, Vivaldi's Magnificat and other seasonal favourites. 07704 887831

King's Lynn Town Band - Christmas Concert at Gaywood Community Centre, King's Lynn PE30 4EE £7.50 (accompanied under 18s free) Doors 7pm Concert 7.30pm. Enquiries 01553 762156



King's Lynn Town Band Christmas Concert

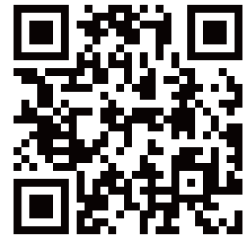
Tickets: **£7.50** (Accompanied under 18s free)
Contact David on 01553 762156, purchase online, or on the door (cash and card accepted)

A fun festive evening filled with music and singing!
Licenced Bar Raffle

Saturday 13th December 2025, 7:30pm
(Doors open 7:00pm)

Gaywood Community Centre, PE30 4EE
www.kingslynnntownband.co.uk

Agatha Appleton and the Peril of the Pyramids at Sedgeford Village Hall 7.30pm Bookings 03306 60054. See page 16



Scan here for up to date event information



United Services Club Hunstanton 01485 533360 Cecil Faraya Motown & Soul Man 8.30pm

Sunday 14th

Norfolk's Weekend Walkers: Lovely 5 mile walk commencing at 10 am. from North Runciton village Meeting place, followed by festive mince pies and hot drinks. New Walkers very welcome. See full details on Meetup.com on Norfolk's Weekend Walkers section or contact Shirley on 07885034859.

Hannah's roses Annual Christmas Fair 10am-4pm at Hunstanton Town Hall. Info 01485 535095



"Hannahs Roses"
in aid of "Children with Cancer"

Phonon: Monica Barker, 30 Park Road, Hunstanton, PE26 1BT (01485 535095)

Annual Christmas Fair

Sunday 14th December 2025 at Hunstanton Town Hall 10:00am - 4:00pm

With large raffle called at 3p.m. Lots of fantastic prizes. Come join us for the day, lots of tables, lots of fun. Registered with West Norfolk Borough Council

Hunstanton Voices and Coastal Vocals are presenting a Christmas Carol Concert at St Mary and all Saints Church in Sculthorpe NR21 9NJ at 6.00pm. Tickets £6 at the door, under fives free (cash only). Seasonal refreshments included.

More overleaf...

Sunday 14th

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 Find the joker draw. Great cash prizes to be won. £1 a ticket. Drawn at 2.30pm. Followed by live music & dancing in the lounge with Graham James. Former member of the Union Gap 3pm. Christmas Prize Draw. Fantastic Festive prizes to be won. Karaoke with Mike Covey 8pm

Learn Modern Jive. See Sunday 7th

Tuesday 16th

Knit and Natter at Old Hunstanton Village Hall 10am-noon. Come and join our friendly group. No need to book, just bring your knitting or crocheting. £3 includes cake and coffee. All levels welcome! 10am-noon 07536 022176

Hunstanton Wellbeing Walk 10.30am Meet outside the Princess Theatre for a stroll along the cliff-top stopping at the Old Beach Café before returning.

Quiz and Curry Night at The Golden Lion Hunstanton 8pm start 01485 532688

**Wednesday 17th**

Old Hunstanton Village Hall Dementia Café for people with dementia & cognitive decline and their carers. It's free to attend. For further information contact the Heritage House on 01328 711333

Friday 19th

Anmer Social Club QUIZ NIGHT – Club opens 7.00 p.m. Quiz starts 7.30 p.m. Entry £3 per person. Fully Licensed Bar Raffle. For information email: anmer.club@outlook.com or telephone; text or WhatsApp 07899872351

Ingoldisthorpe Sports and Social Club Christmas Open Mic event starts 7.30pm onwards. Come & join us as a performer or as part of the audience, Poetry Singing Playing an instrument, whatever

your talent!
Contact Diane Forder
07901924223 for any enquiries

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360
Christmas Quiz Night. 8pm.
First prize £50. Teams up to 4 persons. £3pp

Fri 19th - Sat 20th

St Mary's Church Holme-next-the-Sea PE36 6LJ 10-3pm Beautifully decorated church with nativity scenes, floral displays and a photographic exhibition of the Holy Land from 1944. Free entry, donations for the church tower repair fund welcomed. Refreshments.



Friday 19th December and
Saturday 20th December
10am-3pm

Come and see our beautifully decorated church with various NATIVITY SCENES, floral displays and a photographic exhibition of the HOLY LAND from 1944.

FREE ENTRY
but donations for church tower repair fund would be gratefully received.

Tea, Coffee and biscuits available

A WARM WELCOME AWAITS



(Holme's Carol Service 6pm Sunday December 21st.)

Fri 19th - Wed 24th

A Christmas Carol – Dickens at his most magical. A Christmas tale to melt every heart. £16 adults £10 under 21s. Family ticket available. www.westacretheatre.com 01760 755 007. See p61.

Saturday 20th

King's Lynn parkrun Christmas Party parkrun in The Walks at 9 am with the Borough Mayor Cllr Andy Bullen present to start off the run.

Sandringham parkrun – see Sat 6th

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. Meet outside the Sailing Club
hunstantonpromenade@parkrun.com. Info: 07804 927764

Free Children's Christmas Party for 4-11 years at Hunstanton Town Hall 11am-1pm – parental supervision required. Booking essential. please email cllr.marsiano@hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk with your child's (or children's) names, ages, and contact details. 01485 532402

King's Lynn Festival Chorus
Christmas Carol Concert with brass ensemble from the Royal Academy of Music at St Nicholas' Chapel 5pm. Tickets £15. U16s free 01553 764864
kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk



Live Music at Deepdale
Camping & Rooms PE31 8DD.
Man the Lifeboats 7.30-10.30pm in the Brick Barn. Note: this is a non-seated event. Bar open. T: 01485 210256

Dersingham Social Club PE31 6JX 'The Steriotypes' Playing covers of the very best from the 90's and 00's Indie, Britpop and the Manchester scene. £3 01485 543380

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 The Tonics Duo. Great sound & Festive Fun. All eras 8.30pm

Sunday 21st

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 Find the joker draw. Great cash prizes to be won. £1 a ticket. Drawn at 2.30pm. Followed by live music & dancing in the lounge with Glen Cooper 3pm All eras. Karaoke with Mick Covey 8pm

Learn Modern Jive. See Sunday 7th.

Wednesday 24th

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 Christmas Eve Travis. Great Performance 8pm

Thursday 25th

King's Lynn Christmas Day Special parkrun in The Walks starting at 9 am. Pop up café available for after run refreshments.

Christmas Swim Hunstanton Promenade 10am organised by Hunstanton & District Round Table

Saturday 27th

5K Your Wy – Move Charity. Sandringham Royal Park 8:40 for a 9am start. For anyone affected by cancer, friends and healthcare professionals to come and walk, talk, run or simply have coffee and cake and be part of the lovely parkrun community. For further information email: sandringhamgroup@5kyourway.org 07913 439222

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. Meet outside the Sailing Club
hunstantonpromenade@parkrun.com. Info: 07804 927764

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 Steve Moyse All Decades 8.30pm

Sunday 28th

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 Find the joker draw. Great cash prizes to be won. £1 a ticket. Drawn at 2.30pm. Followed by live music & dancing in the lounge with Mischief. All eras 3pm Karaoke with Mike Covey 8pm

Monday 29th

Snettisham Flea Market at the Memorial Hall PE31 7LX 9am-3pm. 50p admission

Wednesday 31st

United Services Club
Hunstanton 01485 533360 See in the New Year with The Near Misses. Lively fun duo in the lounge. Mark Royal Disco in the front bar. You can bring your own party food. Doors open 7pm. Tickets for New Year's Eve Members £10, Non Members £22. 12 To 17 Years £5 U 12s Free

NYE Live Music 2nd sunset at Hunstanton Town Hall to celebrate New Year. A great night out in aid of cancer charities. Includes hot buffet and bar. Over 16s only. Tickets from Café Legge 01485 532878

Happy New Year!

Nature notes with Carrie Carey

Winter is upon us, and it is a season of change.

Landscapes once brimming with autumnal russets, burnt orange and copper are smothered by dark, rain filled skies. Ground begins to harden under piles of wet, soggy leaves that earlier crunched underfoot while the soil, heavy with rain, chokes under the gentlest of showers. Temperate autumn evenings give way to pale winter afternoons as colour drains early from the horizon. The heady sounds of warmer days are replaced by the whining clutches of a land half frozen, half thawed. In winter's gloom the creaking wood of a tree bending under the wind is amplified, the light chirp of a blackbird sounds less resilient.

Bundled in layers we brave the outside with shoulders hunched over trying to make our bodies as small as possible, invisible to winter's rage. Even through gloves, fingertips burn from the cold, sharp winds lash at faces prompting tears from eyes squinting against the icy assault. It's no wonder someone penned "Oh, the weather outside is frightful!"

But is it really? Winter isn't just a season of survival—it's a vital chapter in nature's calendar. You might have swapped your picnic blanket for snuggling under a blanket on the sofa, but don't let the chill keep you from stepping outside and spotting winter's visitors.

Each year, migrating birds make their way to the UK's east coast seeking to escape the icy grip of northern homelands. From small finches to large wildfowl, they add colour and chorus to still winter days. Crisp early mornings echo with the joyful tinkling sound of thousands of Pink-footed geese etching the pale sky with trailing skeins as they leave overnight roosts in search of food. Listen more closely and you might catch the distant honking of Whooper Swans gliding in from Iceland or the throaty croak of dark bellied Brent Geese arriving from the east. For a true winter orchestra of sound, visit RSPB Snettisham when intertidal mudflats transform into a bustling banqueting hall for thousands of wading birds. Curlews, Oystercatchers and Dunlin are familiar faces all year round but when Arctic temperatures drop, winter sees wader numbers



Curlew

explode as flocks of migrant birds arrive to escape those harsher climes. The soundscape of tens of thousands of waders gathered on The Wash is a layered symphony of chaos and harmony.

Take a walk around fields, country lanes or even a car park—anywhere with a profusion of berries and you can enjoy a winter chorus on a much smaller scale. Flocks of wintering finches fill bushes with joyful chatter as they gorge on colourful berries. You don't even have to go that far to experience the cheerful songs of Blue Tits and Great Tits as these are regular visitors to garden feeders at this time of year. Keep eyes peeled also for the classic winter trio—Siskins, Redpolls, and Fieldfares—darting among the evergreens, feasting on berries or fallen apples. Their energy is contagious. And just when you think the scene couldn't get more festive, in swoop Bramblings dressed in warm autumnal tones and filling the air with soft, whimsical calls.



Brambling

Waking up to a shackle-grey sky, a day that feels devoid of warmth isn't always the motivation needed to get us outside. The dry bite of sharp, freezing air on cheeks and ears nipped by early morning chill may not inspire, but taking a walk in winter can open up a quieter, more contemplative world, rich in nature. Without the distraction of greenery, you notice the intricate delicacy of bare seedheads, moss glowing green against tree bark or silvered lichen adorning fence rails. In the stillness it's easier to

hear deer stepping silently through trees, small animals scurrying through the undergrowth or a flock of thrushes bursting from a hedgerow. Sunrises and sunsets seem more vivid, the sound of waves lapping the shore are clearer, night skies are filled with wonder and awe. The cold can sharpen our focus and invite reflection and rather than being a season that must be endured, winter can help us reconnect with the rhythms of the natural world.

To quote John Steinbeck "What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness."

So why not wrap up and head to Titchwell Marsh reserve this season. The crisp sea air sets the scene for a refreshing stroll through woodlands and reedbeds and past bird-filled lagoons. After your walk, cosy up with a steaming hot drink and a delicious toasted sandwich in our welcoming café. Browse a selection of Christmas gifts—perfect for nature lovers and festive treasure-hunters alike. And don't miss the chance to

book one of our guided birdwatching walks or wildlife experiences.

Contact RSPB Titchwell Marsh for more information. Email Titchwell@rspb.org.uk

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In the Limelight

Tis the season to be Jolly, fa la la la la la la la! No Grinches here at the Princess, maybe a Troll in this year's Panto? We have it on good authority the festive cheer and love, is all around in this year's seasonal show and we will keep you, simply having a wonderful Christmas time! At the theatre we deck the halls, don our Christmas jumpers and declare it's the most wonderful time of the year!

You will see we have created an "Aladdin" themed walkway in the foyer and even given you a chance to make your three wishes – come in a see for yourself!

Panto Day this year is celebrated on 12th December, with this year's theme: The Year of Transformation. People and organizations celebrate by dressing up, performing, and sharing their panto experiences on social media, using hashtags like #PantoDay. This reminds me of my days in panto as a young performer, to latter years in professional panto's and how precious those times were! The Panto Season is huge to theatres across the county and is a well upheld tradition for these venues and communities. British pantomime is a traditional Christmas-season theatrical entertainment. The traditions within the performance are unique, from audience participation, to the slapstick, singalong, dames, goodies and baddies, and always a panto animal. Much pantomime comedy is based on the battle between pun and innuendo, but delivering the right jokes for the audience is crucial together with the pantomime magic that comes from the wonderful characters.

So come and see for yourself and make your wishes come true this Christmas. Hop aboard the magic carpet and join us at the Princess Theatre for our spectacular Christmas Pantomime – Aladdin. We're thrilled to welcome back Sam Littlewood, this time in the lead role of Aladdin! We welcome back Josh Rettie as Widow Twankey and Jessica Broadbent as Jafarazad. New to the Princess is Freya Barton as Princess Jasmine, Amy Robinson as Spirit of the Ring and Lewis Southall as The Emperor. Our talented cast all work professionally across the UK in touring shows, theatres, academies and attractions.

We always delight with brilliant special effects, along with plenty of toe-tapping, musical numbers and dazzling dance routines performed by the talented students from the Rollason Stage School.

It's a magical adventure full of fun, sparkle, and festive cheer, perfect for families, friends, and anyone who loves a good panto! Book now at the Box Office, or call 01485 532252 or pop online to our website.

Last Month we caught up with Widow Twankey as she revealed her 3 wishes...and of course we do have the magical lamp here all festive season, so we have a few more wishes to share with you.

I caught the Panto Troll grumbling his wishes – he wished to be loved, maybe be less stinky and be able to laugh a bit more. Hunny Bear, the Princess Theatre mascot, has wished for more family shows at the Princess Theatre in 2026 and oh yes, we have! From Sooty, Bippo's Circus, Ministry of Science, The Dinosaur that Pooped and Tom Gates' Epic Show!



Aladdin has wished for ticket sales to soar for this year's panto! Jasmine has wished for a White Christmas! Our panto baddie, Jafarazad, has wished for plenty of audience participation. Whereas, the Spirit of the Ring has wished for lots of boo's and hisses when Jafarazad appears!

Have a birthday or celebratory "Shout Out" or maybe your own 3 wishes? Let us know when booking, or pre-show, and we will pass this onto Aladdin to mention at the end of the panto performance. As always, our panto cast will pop out into the theatre foyer to wave you

a cheery bye after the show!

We are pleased to announce that the Princess Theatre will once again be collecting for The East Anglia's Children's Hospice. There will be a bucket collection on the exit door at the end of the performance, and we appreciate any donations to this worthy cause.



You know when it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas – when you need to start thinking about gifting. Let us help you out there with The Gift of Theatre. Vouchers are an excellent gift. You can purchase these online, pop in, or call the box office. With so many shows to choose from in 2026, this is the gift that keeps on giving. If you are purchasing tickets as a gift and wish for them to be posted to arrive before Christmas, the last day is 15th December.



The Princess Theatre has almost wrapped up this year with a total of 104 shows from January to November. This December we have 40 panto performances! We thank you for your continued support. By attending the shows, concerts, plays, Seaside Summer Special and comedy shows you are keeping LIVE performance alive. Long may it continue and of course Huge Thanks as always to all our theatre staff, crew and volunteers.

Out and about for a stroll or heading to the Christmas Swim? Pop into the Sunset Wine Bar for festive tippie or winter warmer. The bar will be open from 10am – 1pm.

Please note; the theatre will be closed from the 5th -18th January 2026. The Year begins with Talon – The Best of Eagles and all show listings for January are listed on the back page.

Finally, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from us all at The Princess Theatre. Good Health, Sparkles and Kindness to all, are my 3 wishes.

Thanks for reading!

Anna

P.s how many Christmas songs did you spot in this newsletter, can you spot them?



SAT 6th DEC - SUN 4th JAN

THE PRINCESS THEATRE

Proudly Presents

Aladdin

MAY ALL YOUR CHRISTMAS WISHES COME TRUE



Silver Ticket Prices

Adult	£22.50
Child/Conc	£20.50
Family of 3	£57.00
Family of 4	£73.00

Gold Ticket Prices

Adult	£24.00
Child/Conc	£22.50
Family of 3	£62.00
Family of 4	£80.00

OPENING WEEKEND OFFER
All tickets £18.00

Children's Groups (10+) £13.00 per child
1 in every 10 goes FREE
(not available Christmas Eve or Boxing Day)

For Group or School Bookings
please contact the Box Office directly.

Box Office: 01485 532252

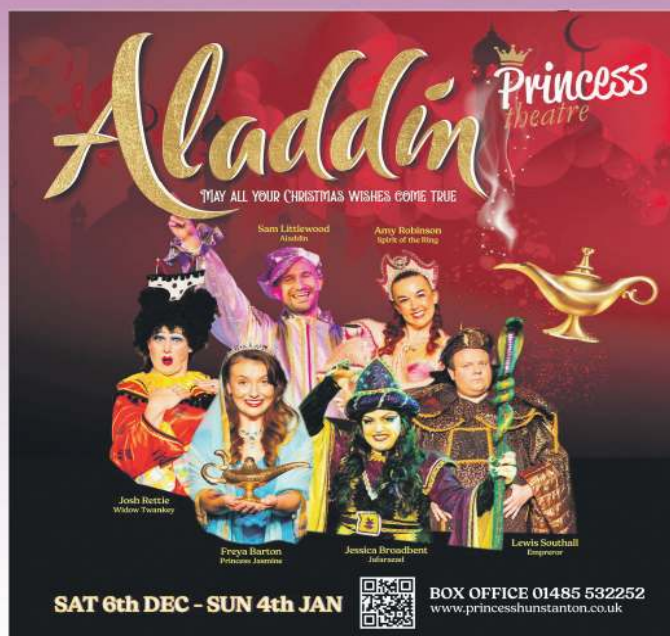
BOOK ONLINE
princesshunstanton.co.uk



Princess theatre December

What's on

www.princesshunstanton.co.uk
01485 532 252



January 2026

THU 22ND - TALON - THE BEST OF THE EAGLES
FRI 23RD - TOTALLY GAGA - THE TRIBUTE
SAT 24TH - SNOW WHITE & THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN - ADULT PANTO
TUE 27TH - CINEMA LIVE - JOHN CLEESE PACKS IT IN
FRI 30TH - THE UK ROCK SHOW
SAT 31ST - JIM DAVIDSON—LAST MAN STANDING



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Open Christmas Day