

TOWN and AROUND

ISSUE 243 JANUARY 2026

PRICELESS!

A photograph of two men on a beach. The man on the left, wearing a dark jacket and waders, is leaning over a wooden wheelbarrow and holding up a mesh bag filled with shellfish. The man on the right, wearing a grey sweater and waders, is standing and looking at the bag. The background shows a beach and the sea under a cloudy sky. An orange bucket is visible on the right.

Local News • Events • Great Outdoors • Features
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First word



Happy New Year. May 2026 bring you good health and happiness.

The turn of the year is traditionally the time to look back on past achievements (and mistakes!) and look forward to the coming year so we at T&A are starting as we mean to go on. This issue has a wide variety of articles, local and business news, information, and dates for your diaries - you'll find the latter on page 60, and yes there's plenty going on in January.

During 2025, the Hunstanton Lifeboat Station had another busy year launching 40 times to people who found themselves in difficulty off our shores; their report is on page 36.

On page 8 there's a report about the biggest multi-charity firewalk Norfolk has ever seen. Hosted by the Rotary Club of King's Lynn Priory Satellite eighteen local charities were represented. Chapeau to all the courageous firewalkers who raised a total of £32,000.

Local business news items include a joining of forces of accountancy practices (p11), a 'Practice of the Year' award (p14) and 'Britain's Inspiring Leader of the Year' (p26) - all news from this not-so-sleepy corner of Norfolk.

The panto season is drawing to a close, if you haven't already been to see Aladdin at the Princess, please note that the last performance is on Sunday 4th January. It's a super show with a lot of tricks and surprises.

My thanks to the T&A team and all our contributors of articles, news and events plus our advertisers, the income from whom pays for the publication of this magazine. If you would like to advertise your business in these pages, please get in touch with me by telephone or email - we have no expensive sales force! The copy date for the February issue is 12th January.

Christmas is an expensive time of year, so how would you like to go to a museum free of charge and see something that all the family can enjoy? Lynn Museum has an exhibition of vintage Star Wars toys and original cinema posters, from 1977-1985. The exhibition is not only a celebration of classic toys and collectables but also of the iconic design and artwork of the Star Wars films. Seasonal admission free until 31 March 2026.

Wishing you all peace and joy in the year to come,

Elaine

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

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Cover photo at Brancaster Oysters by Ian Burt

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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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It's the season for panto-h yes it is!!!

Dani Crawshaw



This is the last dress rehearsal before the excitement begins, and as cast members do vocal warm ups, I get to chat to Sam Littlewood, who plays Aladdin.

"It brings out that excitement, that build up to Christmas, that magic - even for the grown ups it brings it back a little bit - I think that's the great thing about panto there's something for everyone."

"This show is probably the biggest we've had - it's the most technical, we've got so many surprises, it's going to be such a great show for everyone."

The lights go down, the music begins and soon this year's dame makes her entrance, "Cooee, it's me...Widow Twankey, helloworld!" And we're off.

Josh Rettie, who played the Prince last year, says, "Being a dame, any dame, you can kind of just have fun with it all, you can play around, mess around and just make sure everyone's having a good time really."

And I do, for just over 2 hours I'm happily entertained.

The antagonist, Jafarazad (Jess Broadbent), gets us booing and hissing, Princess Jasmine (Freya Barton) has us singing along to a few

numbers - dancing along with Rollason Stage School.



And of course there's plenty of shouting 'it's behind you!' I even manage to catch a bag of sweets.

Those surprises? Given it's Aladdin, there are some flying carpets involved, but I won't ruin all the tricks.

The Princess Theatre says it's the only one with a rig that can perform some of the stunts though - just to wet your appetite.

For what my opinion's worth - I'd say the cast is ready for a live audience!



Sam adds, "That first show, that first run down to the front and you go hi everyone, and everyone screams it back to you, and you hear everyone chuckling to the all the bits and pieces you've been working so hard on - it really does make every little bit of it worth it."

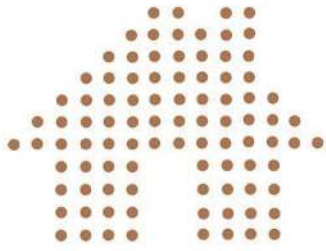
"We're the best panto in the entire UK at the minute - in the world - I'm not biased," he laughs, "But it is such a great show this year, and honestly it is the best job in the world."

Lewis Southall, who's the Emperor (Princess Jasmine's father), sums it all up better than me - "Panto is Christmas, it is Christmas in a nutshell."

Aladdin at The Princess Theatre in Hunstanton runs until the 4th of January.

All images Ian Burt.





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Wells Christmas Tide Festival

By Dani Crawshaw



Image Brad Damms

As we walk towards Staithe Street we can hear Christmas music from BellFolk - a handbell ringers group who're playing *Away in a Manger*. You can't help but stop and listen. As a crowd gathers I overhear Laura, who's here with her family, say, "It's a beautiful sound."

"This is my husband Anthony and our 5 year old daughter Robyn, we're here with a big group of friends from Stamford, it's now become a tradition and we love it."



And what's not to love. There's music throughout the day, crafts for sale, plenty of lovely places to get something to eat and a hot drink. Which if I'm honest, with the rainy weather, those pitstops are needed!

As we continue up Staithe Street, we're met by a robot who's wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and giving the odd high five. There's also bagpipes playing, bagpiper Dave Harper says he's done the festival for several years, "It's always good fun, a good crowd and there's lots going on."

I meet 5 year old Talia, who's had her face painted, "It's a reindeer," she tells me, "I'm ready to meet Santa now." And 3 year old

Sophia who's standing waiting for a balloon with her brother George says, "I've got my Christmas dress on for Santa."



He's due to arrive around 6, taking time out of his busy schedule to make an appearance.

As we head to look at some crafts at The Maltings, I chat to Sally Anne Smith, "I'm a

volunteer - but my dad is one of the organisers, I live in Hampshire but come to support him. For me it's the start of Christmas, I love it, it's where Christmas begins for me, I've got all emotional now!"

And I have to agree, before I arrived I wasn't really feeling festive. But that's all changed.



Despite the rain and cold, crowds gather later for the Christmas lights switch on, the lantern parade and then the main event - Santa's arrival. And, like every year, he does it in style, by boat at the quayside escorted by a flotilla of illuminated vessels.

You can feel the excitement, which is simply wonderful - especially at this time of year. There are children on adults shoulders, keen to get a glimpse of the main man.

It ends with a fantastic fireworks display over the marshes.

The Christmas Tide Committee, who put together the event, says, "What a day. Wet, cold, windswept and yet unforgettable, because of the people who showed up."

"A very special thank you to Father Christmas and his angels for taking time out of the busiest season to be here with us and bring smiles to so many faces."

It was mine and my daughter's first tide festival - and it definitely won't be our last.



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Stepping into the heat for those in need

Organisers are calling it the biggest multi-charity firewalk Norfolk has ever seen. The crackling fire, cheering crowds and unstoppable energy made it a night to remember when over 150 people faced the flames in King's Lynn on 19th November.

The event celebrated bravery, community connection and the incredible work of local charities across the region.

banners, College of West Anglia, for capturing the night with professional photography and KL1 Radio, for championing and promoting the event across West Norfolk.

Editor's note: Town and Around would like to thank College of West Anglia students Abigail Wallwork and Urte Kuvikaite for the images published with this article.



Credit: Abigail Wallwork

Firewalkers – representing 30 charity and business teams plus 9 individual walkers – took to the burning embers for Firewalk to Fundraise! 2025, hosted by the Rotary Club of King's Lynn Priory Satellite.

A remarkable 18 local charities were represented, bringing together hundreds of supporters for a night of courage, community spirit and phenomenal fundraising.



Credit: Urte Kuvikaite



Credit: Urte Kuvikaite

When organisers took to the stage, they were able to announce a staggering running total of £22,205 – with donations still coming in. This has now risen to over £32,000!

The Rotary Club wishes to extend gratitude to the businesses whose generosity made the event possible: Mapus-Smith & Lemmon LLP Chartered Accountants, Fleming Brothers Suzuki, Nick Pelosi Ltd, Hoffhaus Design, Treabark, Propads, No Time Like Now, and Foodie Friends with Linda Taylor.

Special thanks also go to: Firewalk UK, for delivering a world-class firewalk experience, Alive Lynnsport, for hosting the event and providing exceptional support, Signworx, for producing our event



Credit: Abigail Wallwork



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Pre-Nuptial Agreements: planning for the “what if” while hoping for “forever”

By Daniel Sims, Solicitor, Hayes + Storr



When planning a wedding, conversations about flowers, venues and guest lists are far more appealing than discussing finances. Yet for many modern couples, a Pre-Nuptial Agreement (or prenup) has become a sensible, even practical, part of the journey to marriage, one that offers peace of mind and clarity for the future.

A prenup is a written agreement made between two people before marriage. It sets out what should happen to assets, income, property and sometimes debts if the relationship later breaks down.

Traditionally seen as something for the wealthy or the “rich and famous”, prenups are now increasingly common among couples from all walks of life, particularly where one or both partners have children from previous

relationships, own property, a business, or expect to inherit family wealth. An agreed framework in the event of a future divorce can save the time and money associated with solicitor negotiations or contested court proceedings further down the line.

In England and Wales, prenuptial agreements are not automatically legally binding, but since a landmark Supreme Court case (*Radmacher v Granatino*, 2010), the courts will generally give them considerable weight. For an agreement to be upheld, it must be entered into freely, with both parties fully understanding its implications and ideally receiving independent legal advice.

There should also be full financial disclosure, so they are both aware of the assets and possible claims, and the document should be signed at least 28 days before the wedding to avoid any suggestion of pressure or haste.

Fairness remains at the heart of the matter. A court will not uphold a prenup that leaves one partner, or their children, in financial hardship. Even if all the technicalities are met, the settlement must still meet both parties' reasonable needs. An agreement that leaves one spouse struggling to rent a home while the other retains several properties would likely be struck out as unfair.

Prenups can also be flexible and creative, evolving with the marriage itself - some even

link settlements to the length of the marriage, recognising shared years and contributions. Couples should include review clauses to revisit the agreement after major life events, for example: the birth or adoption a child, a career change, or inheritance.

Ultimately, a well-drafted prenuptial agreement isn't about planning for failure; it's about protecting each other, encouraging honesty, transparency and fairness.

Post-Nuptial Agreements

If time runs away before the big day, all is not lost. A Post-Nuptial Agreement (or postnup) serves the same purpose as a prenup but is signed after the wedding. It allows couples to clarify financial arrangements once married - perhaps when life has settled down, or if circumstances change. Like a prenup, it can offer reassurance, structure and fairness, helping couples move forward together with clarity.

For more information on making a prenuptial or postnuptial agreement, please contact our family department on 01328 863231 or email daniel.sims@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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BUSINESS AS USUAL" AT HUNSTANTON OFFICE: PRACTICE NEWS FROM KATHRYN GIGG CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Kate & Nic are delighted to announce that they have joined forces with Mapus-Smith & Lemmon LLP, a prestigious and long-established leading King's Lynn firm of Chartered Accountants.



The newly combined firms will continue to operate from the office in Hunstanton, so, in practical terms it will definitely be "Business as usual" for clients.



From left: Sharon Edwards, Kate Gigg, Nic Tarry and Paul Farrow

As part of this transition, Nic has become a Partner with Mapus-Smith & Lemmon LLP, continuing to work closely with clients as



before, whilst Kate will now work as a Consultant, eventually heading towards a well-earned retirement after very many years of dedicated service to her clients.

Paul Farrow, Senior partner at Mapus-Smith & Lemmon LLP has commented: "We are delighted to welcome Nic, Kate and the team from Kathryn Gigg into our practice. Their long-standing reputation for integrity and client care complements our own values perfectly and allows us to build on our shared commitment to supporting local businesses and individuals with trusted, high-quality accountancy and advisory services."

Nic added: "Kate and I are very pleased to be joining forces with Mapus-Smith & Lemmon LLP and we both look forward to continuing to serve our clients with the same personal approach, backed by the wider resources and expertise of a larger firm. Our clients can be assured that they will continue to receive the same high standard of professional service at our Hunstanton office, as always."

Hitting the right notes! Teenager in final of national music competition

Ukrainian pianist Iryna Oliynyk, who lives in Wells-next-the-Sea, wins regional round of Rotary's Young Musician competition.



"My biggest inspiration is my mum," the teenager says, "Seeing how hard she works inspires me every day."

The 16 year old's overcome more obstacles than most in pursuit of her dreams, four years ago her family was forced to flee war-torn Ukraine.

"I moved to the UK when I was 12 years old. My mum, my brother, my sister, and I came to the UK following the Russian invasion. We were very grateful to our sponsors, Lord and Lady Leicester of

Holkham, for supporting us when we arrived."

Now a Year 11 student at Alderman Peel High School in Wells, Iryna's won the regional final of the Rotary's Young Musician competition, having previously been runner-up for three years in a row.

She's thanking her music teachers, both here and in Ukraine, for their support and guidance, but mainly wants to thank her mother, Nataliia Oliynyk.

"My mum decided that I should learn an instrument, because she wanted me to develop discipline and strong skills, as well as the opportunities that come through music and performing."

Besides the piano, Iryna plays the violin, and sings in the choir at Alderman Peel, "I don't know exactly where my musical career will lead, but I want to take every opportunity. I am exploring joining the Royal Academy of Music's Junior Programme in London on Saturdays. It is expensive, so I hope to fundraise or find sponsorship."

"I also want to perform more solo concerts on a larger scale in the future."

Alderman Peel's Lead Teacher of Peripatetic Music, Benjamin Howell, says, "Her achievement is exceptional. It reflects years of dedication and consistent excellence. I am always impressed by her musicality, professionalism, and strong work ethic across all areas of school life."

School Principal Matt Hardman adds, "We are all incredibly proud of Iryna's achievements since joining Alderman Peel High School, and it is wonderful to see her talents as a young musician recognised by this award."

The national final of the competition, organised by The Rotary Club of Great Britain and Ireland, is due to take place in February.

Good luck Iryna!

MAKING TAX DIGITAL – AM I INCLUDED?

By Mapus-Smith & Lemmon LLP incorporating Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton

It now seems an age ago that the concept Making Tax Digital was first floated. After an initial "roadmap" in 2015, the system has been debated, refined and changed but it will be going live from April 2026. From that date those with income from self-employment and rent, in excess of £50,000 annually (the limit reduces in future years), will be required to maintain digital records and submit quarterly summaries, followed by an annual declaration.

Back in November HMRC issued a useful guide, defining who will be caught by the new rules- in summary:

Your qualifying income is the gross income that you receive (i.e. before deducting any expenses) in a tax year from your self-employment/s and property. For example, someone with £25,000 from rental income and £27,000 from self-employment income would have qualifying income of £52,000; and a key point to remain aware of is that those with multiple sources of self-employed income will need to submit a quarterly return for each income source.

It does NOT include:

- employment (PAYE)
- dividends (including those from your own company)
- a State Pension
- private pensions
- Income from a partnership does not count towards your qualifying income.

The system is, unfortunately, far from perfect. Despite HMRC assurances that free software will be available there is very little choice, and some free packages will only deal with the simplest cases. HMRC have already started contacting taxpayers who they think will be affected (based on 2024/25 data), but this process may not be complete before the April implementation, and the onus is therefore on the taxpayer to register. Although the process is designed to be simple, it is clear from the information released that even the registration criteria are not straightforward. Those who are not confident that they will be able to deal with MTD from April should definitely contact their accountant for advice as soon as possible.

If you require any advice regarding MTD, please contact either Kate or Nic on 01485 534800 or kgigg@mapus.co.uk

N.B. Article written November 2025

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Caution: The information listed above is for general guidance only. You should neither act, nor refrain from action, on the basis of any such information. You should take appropriate professional advice on your particular circumstances because the application of laws and regulations will vary depending on

Kathryn Gigg

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Daisy Zeal celebrates her 103rd birthday



Daisy, who lives at Regency Manor in Hunstanton, having moved from Clacton in July this year, celebrated her birthday with music and dancing on 7th November.

She was joined by residents, staff and local MP James Wild for her tea party with entertainment including a group serenade and dancing, she revealed that there's "no secret" to her age, attributing her longevity to remaining active and embracing life to its fullest.

James Wild said: "It was a pleasure to join the residents in celebrating Daisy's 103rd birthday at Regency Manor."

"The warmth and good spirit among residents and the staff's care and dedication were evident in the supportive relationships they have built with each resident."

"Daisy's approach in staying active and enjoying life is something we should all aspire to and Regency Manor clearly supports that brilliantly."

Explore your dream wedding at the Caley Hall Showcase



Newly engaged couples and those refining their final plans are invited to an exclusive Wedding Showcase at the stunning Caley Hall on Saturday 18th January. This is the perfect opportunity to experience the venue, view our luxurious bedrooms and meet our friendly wedding team who'll be on hand to discuss your plans.



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Whether you're just starting your wedding journey or finalizing the last details, this showcase offers invaluable insights.

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Furry Fashion and Festive Fun



Just before Christmas, I had the great honour (and enormous responsibility) of judging the Doggy Christmas Jumper Competition, held as part of the Hunstanton Winter Wonderland and Christmas Lights Switch On.

The event kicked off with a lively gathering on the green. Dogs of every shape, size and level of festive enthusiasm arrived in their Christmas best. Humans fiddled with collars and straightened jingling bobbles, while the dogs tried their hardest to stand tall and look dignified... even if some of them were bursting with excitement.

Before judging began, we set off on a gentle yuletide stroll along the promenade to the Ski Café and back. It was one of those crisp winter walks that makes you especially grateful for a good knitted jumper. The sight of a whole parade of dogs trotting along the seafront brought smiles and waves from everyone we passed. You couldn't have asked for a more joyful little procession.

Back on the green, it was time for the serious business of judging. I



gave every dog a proper once-over — fairness is very important in these matters — and goodness me, the standard was high. In the end, first place went to Ethel and Hugo whose handmade festive outfits, full of cheerful sparkle, earned them the top spot. There were cheers, applause and plenty of wagging all round!

Once the competition wrapped up — jumpers admired, photos taken and tails still swishing happily — the crowd gathered for the big moment: the Christmas Lights Switch-On. As the dogs settled down with their humans, the countdown began... and then Hunstanton burst into shimmering colour, officially welcoming the Christmas season.

It was a wonderful afternoon full of community spirit, woolly fashion and winter sparkle. I was proud to serve as judge and even prouder to represent the canine voice of Hunstanton.

And now, something else to bark about — the results of the UK Dog Friendly Awards are in, and Norfolk has done brilliantly once again! Our county scooped up several wins and reached the finals in many more. These awards celebrate the places that truly make dogs feel welcome — not just tolerated — and it warms my little heart (and my paws) to see Norfolk shining so brightly.

If you'd like to see who trotted home with the honours this year, do pop over to our website for the full list of winners and finalists.

Until next time: stay warm, stay stylish and keep those tails wagging.

Miss Zsa Zsa Canine Editor,
www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk

Coastal Vets crowned Practice of the Year



A West Norfolk veterinary practice has won the coveted 'Practice of the Year' title in the 2025 Petplan Veterinary Awards.

The award ceremony took place at the end of November during the London Vet Show at ExCeL, London and was hosted by comedian Josh Widdicombe.

Now in its 26th year, the awards were set up to recognise the nation's most outstanding veterinary professionals.

Based in Snettisham with a branch surgery in Burnham Market the team were dressed to impress the photo shows Chris, Clare, Serena and Maddie with the award. "Care, compassion, and going above and beyond for pets (and their owners)", were just some of the words used - and we couldn't be more proud".

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Norfolk's Weekend Walkers



Looking to get fitter in the new year?
Want to get outdoors and enjoy Norfolk's beautiful countryside?
Hoping to make new friends?

Norfolk's Weekend Walkers is a welcoming and friendly group who'd love to meet you! We offer a mix of walks mainly around West Norfolk and the lovely North Norfolk coast. Walks are fortnightly on a Sunday morning and the average length is 6-7 miles. Any age is welcome - although most members are 50+ we are all young at heart! Well behaved dogs welcome on most walks!

Our first outing of 2026 is a Ringstead circular walk on Sunday 11th January at 10.00am. This fabulous walk is 7 miles long and as well as the lovely countryside around the village there are fine sea views in the distance.

Our group is part of Meetup, so if you're interested in joining us for a trial walk, please either download the Meetup app and look for Norfolk's Weekend Walkers or go online:

<https://www.meetup.com/norfolks-weekend-walkers>

We hope to see you in the New Year!



SEDGEFORD ARTISAN CRAFT FAYRE

Jacqueline Sindle

As the saying goes, "that's a wrap". What a very successful final artisan craft fayre of 2025 we held in Sedgeford on 23 November. This final event raffle was in aid of East Anglia Children's Hospice, The Nook in Norwich. We raised a very respectful £188.47. The money was banked within a couple of days, and we received very grateful thanks from Cassie at The Nook. A certificate is on its way, and I also received a very lovely letter from Kensington Palace on behalf of HRH Princess Catherine who is Patron of EACH. I wish to thank all those who made this raffle possible. All of the stallholders provided a raffle prize as did Beachwave Creations in Hunstanton, Thaxters Garden Centre, Tesco in Heacham, Tesco in Hunstanton, The Rose and Crown in Snettisham and The White Horse in Holme. The refreshments raised an impressive £270 which will be split between Sedgeford Village Hall and St Mary's Church Sedgeford. The Principals from Elevate Performing Arts were also there to provide perspective new students with the information regarding the school. The stall holders also had a very successful day so all in all a very profitable event. Thank you to everyone who played their part and also to Elaine and Richard Bird for their continued support.

We have three more artisan fayres booked at Sedgeford Village Hall for 2026 and the dates are 26 April, 9 August and 22 November. If anyone is interested in taking part, please email sedgefordcraftfayre@gmail.com. Likewise if any business wishes to provide a prize for any of 2026 raffle, please get in touch.

Greyfriars pupils help with bulb planting in The Walks

Gary Walker

On a chilly morning a group of pupils from Greyfriars Academy gathered with volunteers from King's Lynn parkrun to plant daffodil bulbs at the rear entrance of the school.

The frosty conditions and hardened surface did not deter the pupils from getting stuck in to preparing the areas marked out for planting by the Parks Staff, with the group working hard to plant the 500 bulbs provided by the parkrun volunteers who, using the park every Saturday have a keen interest in helping to ensure it always looks its best.

The bulbs when in bloom in the spring provide a colourful back drop to the usual grassed areas, as well as adding to the biodiversity, ideal for supporting insects and butterflies.

The children also enjoyed the opportunity to gain some understanding of the best way to plant bulbs together with the benefit that flowers provide to insects and wild life in general.

They were also made aware of the squirrel's love of bulbs; they having been keeping a careful eye on proceedings. Hopefully given the number that were planted, enough will remain after winter to provide a really nice colourful avenue on the path to the academy's back gate.

Janet Moyle, the Academy Deputy Head said "we are so grateful to King's Lynn parkrun in arranging the planting and providing the bulbs. The children were really excited to be able to help with the planting and all will be looking forward to the warmer spring time days when the flowers will all be in bloom."



The picture shows pupils and staff from Greyfriars Academy Sheringham Class together with parkrun volunteers and Borough parks staff.

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Downham Market and District Horticultural Society

Affiliated to: Royal Horticultural Society



Very Happy New Year from Downham Market and District Horticultural Society.

We started off December with an interesting and informative talk on container gardening by Michael Holland, author of award-winning children's books about plants and the natural world. Michael is passionate about helping people of all ages connect with nature. He gave us many inspiring ideas for container gardening that may not have been considered—using household items such as colanders as unusual hanging baskets and containers; planting on different levels using raised beds; how to plant a sensory garden and many more aspects besides. I suggested that his next book should be on container gardening, as he covered so much information it was difficult to retain it all!

If you are thinking of joining our friendly Society and are wondering whether it would be for you, can you answer 'yes' to any of the following questions?

- Do you love your garden but don't know where to start?
- Perhaps you've just moved?
- Maybe you'd like a bit of gardening inspiration and advice?
- Do you want to meet friendly, like-minded people?
- Are you looking for a new hobby – one which gives you fresh air and exercise and the opportunity to enjoy the fruits (and vegetable) of your labours?

If so – we could well be just what you are looking for! We meet on the second Monday of each month in Downham Market Town Hall. We have monthly talks, covering wide-ranging subjects on a horticultural theme. Meetings start at 7.15pm, and finish around 8.30pm with a sociable (and complimentary) tea, coffee and biscuits.

As well as our monthly talks, we organise regular garden visits and workshops, run plant stalls at local events during the summer months and organise our popular and well-established Summer Show – this year's is on Saturday 4 July in Downham Market Town Hall.

All this for just £10 a year, which includes a 10% discount from Downham Garden Centre – what a bargain!

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



Colander of fuchsias beautifully planted up by one of our members

Old Hunstanton Flower Festival 2026 - Friday 24th - Sunday 26th July

This year we are inviting local crafts people to take a stand in the Village Hall Garden at the Flower Festival to exhibit and sell your wares. You can choose to be there for just one day, or exhibit on all three - the choice is yours. If you are interested in pursuing this - or know someone who might be - please contact Simon Carter on 07941 521860 or simoncarter920@btinternet.com.

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Wendy Warner's plant of the month

Dinner Plate Dahlias

It may seem strange to be thinking about dahlia flowers in January, but this is the time to be selecting new varieties to flower in your garden this summer and autumn. As with most things gardening related you are always planning ahead for the best show and by buying your dahlia tubers now you will be able to plant them in the Spring and choose the exact colours and varieties you want. Although they can be purchased as potted plants at the time they are flowering, this is only a small selection of varieties compared with the many available now in dry tuber form.

There are many groups of dahlias available and their flowers vary dramatically both in size and shape. There are singles, decoratives, fimbriatas – with fringed petals or coloured tips, cactus flowers which have pointed petals giving a spiky effect, pompoms and balls where the flowers are nearly round, collerette and anemone flowered which are often bi-coloured and giant flowered. The majority have vibrant flowers, in a huge variety of colours except blues. Flower size can be anything from 4 to 6cm for pompom and ball varieties up to 20 to 30cm for the giant flowered ones.

It is these large ones we will focus on which are often known as Dinner Plate Dahlias, due to their size. As well as large flower heads, they also tend to grow on tall stems, with most plants ranging between 80 to 110cm high. Their stature makes them a fantastic focal point in borders and they make stunning cut flowers.

There are some new varieties available this year including 'Diamond Debutante' with 20cm diameter fuchsia pink flowers, 'Vancouver' with 20cm diameter dark pink flowers with white tips, 'Decora' with 18cm diameter Salmon Peach flowers, 'Magenta Festival' with 20cm diameter stunning magenta pink flowers and 'Dazzling Sun' with 15cm diameter yellow flowers with a red centre. Others to look out for are 'Lindsay Michelle', a fimbriata type with 20cm diameter bright yellow flowers with pink tips, 'Café au Lait' with 22cm diameter coffee cream flowers and 'Penhill Watermelon' with it's enormous 27cm diameter



Dahlia Café au Lait

salmon rose flowers with curvy petals.

As with all dahlias, they will need to be planted outdoors in spring after the last frosts, but can be started off in pots indoors or in a frost-free greenhouse and then be planted outside. They are best positioned in full sun and should be planted in rich, well-drained soil. Due to their height and the size of their flowerheads, some sturdy support is likely to be required and they shouldn't be planted in an exposed position where they might endure further wind damage. Feed regularly during the growing season with a specific dahlia feed or other fertiliser high in potash. Although our winters seem to be getting milder, it is still advisable to cut back and lift dahlias after the first frosts and carefully dig up the tubers before letting them dry out and storing them in trays of dry compost, vermiculite or wrapping them in dry newspaper in a dry shed or garage which is frost-free. If this is not possible and you want to leave your plants in the ground, after cutting back the stems, mulch at the base of the plant to protect the tubers and this will give them a greater chance of surviving the winter.

If you want some spectacular, eye-catching flowers in your garden later in the year, invest in some Dinner Plate Dahlias when they come into the garden centre in January,



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Hunstanton vegans plant based Christmas

Amanda Knight

Hunstanton Vegans gathered once again for our much-anticipated annual Christmas meal—hosted, as it is every year, at the wonderful Old Town Beach Cafe. The team there never fails to make our festive gathering feel special and this year's celebration was no exception. With its cosy atmosphere, festive decorations and a room full of friendly faces, it was the perfect setting for our plant-powered festivities.

This year we enjoyed a delicious set Christmas meal, and the café treated us to a beautifully prepared spread of traditional favourites—made entirely plant-based. We tucked into fluffy roast potatoes, perfectly seasoned stuffing, rich gravy, vibrant winter veggies and all the trimmings you'd expect from a classic Christmas dinner. And of course, no festive feast would be complete without a proper pudding, so the grand finale was a warm, comforting Christmas pudding that had everyone beaming.

What made the event even more special was seeing just how much our local vegan community has grown. Hunstanton is home to



more vegans than many people realise, and it's wonderful to welcome not only long-standing members but also those who are new to the lifestyle—or simply curious about giving plant-based living a try.

And that's the real heart of an animal-free Christmas: enjoying all the flavours and traditions of the season while keeping compassion at the centre. A plant-based

festive table proves time and again that you don't need animal products to enjoy a hearty, joyful and indulgent celebration.

If you're vegan, nearly vegan, or just interested in learning more you can find us on Facebook at Hunstanton Vegans—drop by, say hello and keep an eye out for our next meet-up.

Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association Awards

Clive Edwards

At a General Meeting of the Broads' principal boating organisation, the Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA), there was presentation of a highest-impact award for Sail-Training; their Chair presented the Association's Mike Evans Award to the Excelsior Trust which is also an Affiliate of NSBA; the following glowing citation accompanied the award:

Excelsior has taken to sea over 11,000 often disadvantaged young people since re-commissioning by HRH The Princess Royal at Lowestoft in 1988.

Taking last season (2024) as an example, Excelsior visited fourteen countries in seventeen weeks and participated in Sail Training International's Tall Ships Race in the Baltic, as well as visiting the Faroe Islands. Excelsior was the only British Registered vessel to compete in the 2024 race. At their Corunna conference in October, STI awarded Excelsior the Sultan Qaboosh Trophy for her performance during the race. This is the STI top award and the first time it has been awarded to a British vessel. The Excelsior-Trust is also a member of the UK Association of Sail Training Organisations. With a similarly intense programme for 2025 it was planned to compete again in the STI Tall Ships Race in the North Sea (making much easier the logistics of weekly crew changes), as well as voyages to the Netherlands and briefly back to the Baltic.

Sail Training at sea changes lives: it works differently from other forms of engagement, and it usually takes at least three days to 'reach' deep into a young person.

Regularly, the first time a new Excelsior crew member has done anything as part of a team, is when they pull up Excelsior's mainsail; if they don't hoist that sail, the boat doesn't move.

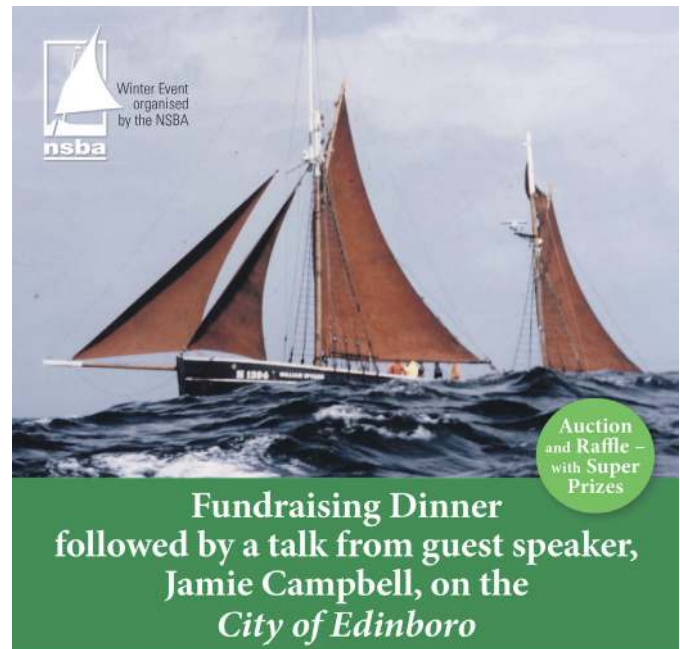
They sail out through the harbour mouth, relax and begin to enjoy the experience; within a couple of miles, they lose mobile signal, which will not be available again until they make next landfall. A little later, it dawns that they cannot get off; they are stuck - entirely out of their comfort zones, with unfamiliar crewmates in confined quarters below deck and in a sailing environment they don't understand.

They all lend a hand with cooking, washing up and sail changes; they are taught some basic navigation and all have a go at helming Excelsior. Before long, they decide that night watches can be fun and they are picking up new skills at every turn and it's something they

have done for themselves.

A different, more confident young person steps off Excelsior at the end of their trip.

One can delight that so many of the young crews volunteer and return to help with Excelsior's winter maintenance at the Lowestoft shipyard.



Horning Village Hall (NR12 8LH) – 4th February, 2026

A two-course meal followed by a lively talk from our guest speaker, Jamie Campbell, on the *City of Edinboro*, the last remaining Hull sailing smack, and her many adventures from when her keel was laid in 1884 to the present day.

6.30pm: glass of wine on arrival

7.00pm: two-course meal, followed by talk from guest speaker
£25 – includes a donation to *The Excelsior Trust* (reg. charity no 285899)

This event is open to all. Booking: julia.bower1@btinternet.com

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The Hunstanton Sailing and Watersports Club

Pru Fox



The Hunstanton Sailing and Watersports Club is run by volunteers who are passionate about being on or in the water. A new group of volunteers are now on the committee and are planning for 2026. Why not think about joining this year. The annual fees are:

- Adult membership £180
- Family membership £200 (2 adults and 2 children)

These two memberships include car parking at the club, access all year to the club, use of club watersports equipment, use of showers, hiring the club for party events, access to the bar when open, reduction in bar prices and paid social events, the opportunity to volunteer at the club

- Social membership £20 - Includes reduction in paid events and bar prices at the club, use of the club when open, the opportunity to volunteer
- Social membership with parking £90

Includes reduction in paid events and bar prices at the club, use of the club when open, the opportunity to volunteer and parking outside the club

- The fees are reduced for RNLI crew. The annual fees run from 1st May to 30th April.

Some planned social events are also advertised for any members of the public to attend including quiz evenings, bingo, dancing, food tasting, charity fund raising, sit and relax when the bar is open.

Look out for a programme of these events in the March copy of Town and Around

If you have any questions please contact info@hunstantonsailingclub.co.uk

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Nature notes with Carrie Carey

On a chilly, but dry weekend in October, we held our second Big Weekend event at Titchwell Marsh reserve. Packed with free talks, demonstrations, workshops and guided walks, this event was an opportunity to blend nature and conservation with art. Several crafters pitched their stalls in the picnic area creating a hub of activity and interest. One of my favourite additions was a soundscape sculpture set up by Sophie Marrit and Jane Scobie in a quiet area of woodland. Crafted from natural materials including Willow and Great Fen-Sedge, the sculpture's organic design provided visitors with an immersive experience as they listened to the sounds of pond life. And if you've never heard this before – and I had not – the crackling and snapping of shrimp claws, the rasping sounds of crabs, and the low thud of fish swimming near the pond's bottom were quite extraordinary.



Far removed from the freshwater pools of Titchwell, researchers are using AI to listen to the soundscape of coral reefs. Healthy reefs should have a rich and diverse acoustic environment full of the snaps, pops and grunts of marine life. These complex patterns of 'reef song' provide an assessment of coral health and can indicate whether they are in a state of stress or recovery. Listening to a hydrophone recording from 1km underwater, scientists were surprised to hear the unmistakable sound of rain falling on the surface. This unexpected discovery revealed the strong acoustic link between the ocean's surface and life beneath it, offering new insights into how human-generated noise affects marine ecosystems and shaping solutions to combat this.

Alongside this research, citizen science projects have been gathering thousands of hours of audio from reefs, mangrove forests and seabeds collating these into a living sound library of marine life. Sanctuary Soundscapes invites volunteers to listen to recordings of marine animals and human activities to help assess ecosystems and noise impact. Initiatives like these gather data on a large scale which is often not possible with traditional research methods. While citizen science typically involves monitoring or surveying in the field, emerging technologies such as mobile apps, online platforms and even gaming, make the ability to take part in scientific discovery, data collection and analysis easier than ever.

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch is one of the oldest citizen science projects around. Launched in 1979, participants have spent 12.6 million hours counting more than 200 million birds since then. Last year, over nine million birds were counted in the UK's gardens and greenspaces, that scale of data would have been impossible to achieve without the half a million people who took part. With an increased commitment to make these projects more accessible and inclusive, the Big Garden Birdwatch is something that needs little equipment or training. And you don't have to be an expert birder to take part; enthusiasm, curiosity and an hour of your time are the only requirements.

Over the last four decades, this project has highlighted the winners

and losers in the garden bird world helping us better understand the challenges that they face. Each January we ask people across the UK to spend one hour counting the birds they see in their garden, local park or from their balcony. Participant results are gathered and



analysed giving us valuable insight into how garden birds are faring from year to year. The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch was one of the first surveys to identify a decline in Song Thrushes. Sightings of these beautiful and melodic birds have plummeted by 83% in the last forty years. It also identified the population crash of Greenfinches in the mid 2000's meaning these birds are now a species of concern. The reasons behind the declines in these and other family favourites, such as House Sparrows, are complex requiring further investigation. Counting the birds where you live is not just a fun and fascinating thing to do, it shapes our understanding of the pressure garden birds are under. And by taking action, we inspire hope. That's why every Birdwatch matters.



House sparrow

But if you are feeling a little daunted and could do with a pointer in the right direction, then why not hop onto one of our Birding for Beginners guided walks taking place this January. Taking a relaxed stroll around Titchwell Marsh reserve, you'll meet some familiar birds and some new ones, pick up tips to welcome them into your green space and discover how entry level bird-watching kit can bring you closer to the action.

Want to know more? Jump onto our website at www.rspb.org.uk/titchwell and click on the events tab.

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch 2026 will run from Friday 23 January to Sunday 25 January. To find out how you can take part, please go to www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch

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It's winter sale time!

With varying degrees of discount across the labels Allez Chic's winter sale begins on 6th January at 10am and it's the perfect opportunity to find something special for the late winter season.

Sale shopping is so much more than what you buy, it's a treasure hunt to discover something that's perfect for your shape and colouring that will make you feel great – and at a discounted price.

The Lily and Me dress in the advert has a very flattering cut and the fabric is incredibly soft. An elegant dress that goes from day to evening with just a change of footwear.

You are bound to enjoy shopping at the end of season sale, the personal, caring service that Cheryl Daubney and her team provide ensures a lovely shopping experience. They will help you choose and sometimes suggest something for you to try that you might have otherwise overlooked, rather like a personal shopper. Their fashion know-how and ability to put an outfit together is second to none.

What are you waiting for ladies?

Allez Chic

The Old School, Castle Rising PE31 6AG

Shop in-store Tuesday-Saturday 10am-4pm

Hunstanton Eyecare news

As we welcome in 2026 I hope you have plenty to look forward to. I'm sure we will continue to see new developments this year as we are now part of the Dipple & Conway team.

The month of January is traditionally sale time, and we are no exception. Many of our frames have 25, 50 or even 70% reduction on the ticket price, so if you have been thinking about a new pair of specs, now might be the time to come and have a look. It is also an opportunity to perhaps consider an alternative to your "regular" specs, may be for reading or office work or for a particular hobby or sport. Having a lens designed for a specific task makes a lot of sense. I know as I'm an optician I would have loads of specs, but the office ones live on the printer, the music ones on the organ, and in the music bag in case I forget them, and my readers are by the bed. Then there is the thought of having frames of different styles and colours to suit all occasions. I'll leave those thoughts with you! Dipple & Conway want to make your visit as enjoyable as possible so don't forget we have the fridge full of lovely fizzy things and can even stretch to the tea and coffee in the colder weather.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Annette



Where heritage and hospitality meet

Set on the North Norfolk coast, just moments from Brancaster beach, Titchwell Manor is an escape where heritage and hospitality meet. Once a Victorian farmhouse, it has been thoughtfully transformed into a hotel and restaurant that blends luxury with homely touches.

The bar and lounge provide cosy corners to take in views of open skies and glimpses of coastal wildlife, while the walled garden becomes a favourite spot for coffee or cream tea in summer. In the colder months, roaring fires create a snug refuge from the winds along the coast. It's a place to pause and savour the simple pleasures of Norfolk life.

Food lies at the heart of the experience at Titchwell Manor. Proud holders of three AA Rosettes since 2013, the kitchen team is renowned for crafting dishes inspired by the finest local and seasonal produce. Breakfasts are award winning and full of flavour, from pastries and fruit to cooked classics, while leisurely lunches and bar snacks are served daily without the need to book. Evenings bring relaxed suppers in the Conservatory and Terrace Bistro, where menus evolve with the seasons. Whether you're in the mood for a light bite after a coastal walk or a celebratory dinner with friends, the collection of dishes is designed to suit every occasion.

For those wishing to extend their stay,

Titchwell Manor offers 28 individually styled bedrooms, each with its own character. From hot tub suites and shepherd's huts to boltholes inspired by the coast, every space provides a comfortable base for exploring the area.

Thoughtful touches, such as a boot room stocked with wellies for guests eager to head straight out onto the coastal paths, Titchwell is a retreat designed to make every stay effortless.



TITCHWELL
MANOR

Wedding Showcase at Titchwell Manor
Saturday 31st January | 1pm until 4pm

Titchwell Manor, one of Norfolk's most sought-after wedding venues, offers couples exclusive use of the hotel for 50+ guests, blending cosy bedrooms, inviting spaces and a coastal backdrop.

Join our free wedding showcase on Saturday 31st January to meet the team, sample cocktails and canapés, and explore the award-winning manor just moments from the beach. Featured suppliers include The Welly Boot Bakery, Garden Shed Florist, Tim Stephenson Photography, Norfolk Nanny and more. See the Manor dressed for a wedding; tour the bedrooms and enjoy an afternoon of laid-back luxury. Scan the QR code to book your free tickets below.



eventbrite.co.uk/e/wedding-showcase-open-day-tickets-1975993831743



Air Cadet Presentations

42F (King's Lynn) Squadron Gather in the Town Hall for Annual Presentation Evening

Gary Walker

Air Cadets from 42F (King's Lynn) Squadron gathered in the Town Hall for their annual Presentation Evening.



Guests at the Town Hall

With guests including the Deputy Lord Lieutenant Nick Pratt, Borough Mayor Cllr Andy Bullen and Station Commander RAF Marham Gp Capt Leonie Boyd, all the Cadets were keen to ensure their uniforms were of the



Squadron Line Up for Guests

smartest order and their drill was of the highest standard.

The Awards included, Best Cadet, Best NCO, Best Recruit and success in Aviation Studies to name just a few with this year's Flight Award going to A Flight who had gained the highest number of points awarded following various flight competitions during the year.

A new intake of Cadets were sworn in by the Sqn Padre, Rev Kyla Sorenson and a small number of promotions were also announced.



Gp Capt Boyd presents Flt Lt Petch with a framed F335 print

It fell to Cadet Sergeant Grace Munson to thank each of the Staff members for all their effort during the year, with each member being handed a small gift from the Cadets.

The evening was rounded off with a presentation by Gp Capt Boyd, Stn Cdr RAF Marham, to the Sqn OC, Flt Lt Pauline Petch, who had announced that following 15 years of service to the Cadets that she was planning on retiring at the end of the year.

The evening finished with a reception for all the guests and Cadets and parents present.

CALLING ALL YOUNG WRITERS!

The Rotary Young Writer competition 2026 is up and running! Can you write a story or a poem that will capture the mind of the judges?

This year's theme is "Happiness in Nature" and can be fiction or non-fiction, prose or poetry. Entries are encouraged from all children, whether a school attender or a home-school attender.

These competitions are a great way for young people to be challenged in a fun and friendly environment. Rotary is committed to offering them opportunities to unlock their potential, develop their skills and broaden their horizons.

The competition is divided into three categories: Junior ages 7 to 10, Intermediate ages 11 to 13, and Senior ages 14 to 17. Judges are looking for imagination relating to the subject, the ability to engage interest, the ability to be consistent in the power of argument and relevance to the theme.

Each entrant will receive a certificate and prizes are awarded for 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place in each category

The Rotary Young Writer competition takes place each year, with the closing date of Friday 13th February 2026. For more information, an application form or to show your interest please contact hunstantonrotary.youth@gmail.com Individual entries are welcomed.

Downham Market Rotary news

It's been a hectic time for Downham Market Rotary in the lead-up to Christmas. We were honoured to be invited by Downham Market Academy to provide interviewers for a mock job application day. We joined with others from Nestle, Morgan Sindell, Cranwick, Palm Paper, Life Fitness, Tesco and the College of West Anglia.

The standard of the year 10 pupils was impressive and all those we interviewed were totally focussed on their future with the majority knowing exactly what they wanted for their future careers and what they had to achieve to fulfil their aims.

We have also sent of around 200 Rotary Shoeboxes to those in need in Eastern Europe. The boxes are filled with toys, household goods and other useful items for families probably not used to receiving gifts courtesy of private donations, Denver Church and School and others.

Picture shows Children in Eastern Europe receiving their gifts under the Rotary Shoebox Scheme.



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FENLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

The society serves the three counties of the fenlands, and everyone is welcome to attend any of our meetings and/or research sessions, no matter where your family originated.

You are welcome to attend any of the following sessions:

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

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

3rd Wednesday of January. Red Lion Pub North Brink Wisbech 6.30 - 8pm These are held every other month.

Our experienced researchers do not charge for their help with your research. They can help no matter where your family originated.

Our January 2026 meeting will be on Thursday 22nd in the Wisbech

Library at 7 - 9pm The talk will be "A Murder in Denver" by Susanah Farmer. Thursday 26th February our speaker will be Jonathan Farmer.

Visitors always welcome to join us with a donation of at least £2 to help to pay for the hire of the room.

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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Ostrich Pub Supports Bridge for Heroes: £565 Raised for Armed Forces Community



The Bridge for Heroes would like to thank Colin and Michelle Wilson and Jean Vallecillo Reeve of the Ostrich pub in Castle Acre for their generous support.

During a summer garden party at the pub Helen Usher raised £200 which was matched by the owners with another £200. Also, they have one of our collection pots which so far this year has raised just under £165.

Every penny in our collection pots is used to support the Armed Forces Community in West Norfolk and enables us to keep the Bridge Centre running 6 days a week. We provide meals each day including a veterans breakfast once a month on a Saturday. If you would like to have one of our collection pots please contact denise.walmsley@thebridgeforheroes.org



Award winning dreams

Dani Crawshaw



Amanda and her son Harry greet me at the company's showroom in Dersingham. The family run business started in 2003 - an idea that came from good old nostalgia.

"My grandparents' bed," Amanda tells me, "I can remember it was tall, grandad had us a step so we climbed into it. But you never lay on it you lay in it, that is the feeling that I've always wanted to create."

"When you go to bed you feel safe, you're comfy, you're supported - to me, when I lie on these mattresses, in these beds, it's a blast from the past."



When her sons were younger, she couldn't find beds that 'possessed the same soul', so along with her husband Steven, they decided to create their own - the Wrought Iron and Brass Bed Company began.

And for the past two decades, through hard work and determination, she's guided the company into a nationally recognised brand, with quality British craftsmanship at the heart.

"I never actually thought further than the month ahead when we first started, and I never imagined it would grow like it did. But it still is how it was - we try to source everything locally, we are part of Made in Britain, that is so important to us."

"We can't get our wood from this country,

because our wood grows too quick, so they're Scandinavian slats, but they come into King's Lynn. So everything is as local as it can be."

For the last few years they've made their own mattresses too, something she's 'quietly dreamed about for years' - filled with British wool, sourced directly from sheep farmers.



If you haven't realised, these aren't just beds for Amanda, "To make something that it going to be such an important part of people's lives - that in itself is a privilege."

And each one, once it's put together in the workshop, is lovingly given a name by the team.

"Well this bed - it wasn't long after I'd lost my beautiful black Labrador Willow, and Sarah who does all our powder coating at the

workshop, just said it's such a beautiful bed, it's so delicate - there's only one name - it's Willow."

It's the focus on sustainability and local craftsmanship that won Amanda Made in Britain's Inspiring Leader of the Year Award (2025).



"I have to say I was very emotional, because to be recognised for that, when you just think - well you just are who you are, you just do your job."

"When you actually stop and you recount where you started, where you are and what you've achieved, you think oh my goodness, I've done that," she smiles.

Her and Steven are thinking of retiring soon, and sons Jack (who oversees production) and Harry (head of brand development and marketing) say they'll have 'huge shoes to fill'.

"I'm hugely inspired by mum and privileged to have her as a mentor," says Harry, "Mum winning the award was amazing, but for me, what I'm impressed by is the legacy that mum's created."

"We're not here for world domination, we're not here for mass production - we're here for quality. We're happy being our small family company, that's what we want to be, we don't want to lose our identity."

I've only met Amanda for a short period of time, but what worthy winner of the Inspiring Leader Award. And having passed all that love and passion for the company onto her sons - it'll be in safe hands.



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Grants available for people who are unwell or recovering

There is a charity based in Hunstanton that gives grants to help people who are or have been physically or mentally unwell. The Hunstanton Convalescent Trust can assist with the expenses of convalescence, recuperative holidays and facilities that will help with recuperation. This assistance can also be used to help their carers.

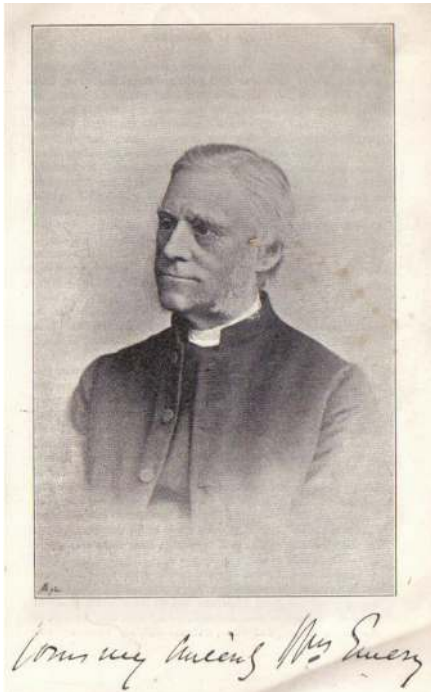
Applications and enquiries about assistance can be made by contacting the Trust Secretary on 01485 579117 or email: convalescent_trust@icloud.com

Read on to learn more about the history and work of the Trust.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HUNSTANTON CONVALESCENT TRUST

Have you ever wondered why Hunstanton has so many very large and very grand houses?

The idea for a New Convalescent Home originated at a conference of clergy and laity held in Ely Cathedral in 1869 and was driven forward by the Venerable William Emery, Archdeacon of Ely the 'founder and father' of the Home and whose portrait was hanging in the entrance hall until the sale of the home in 1982.



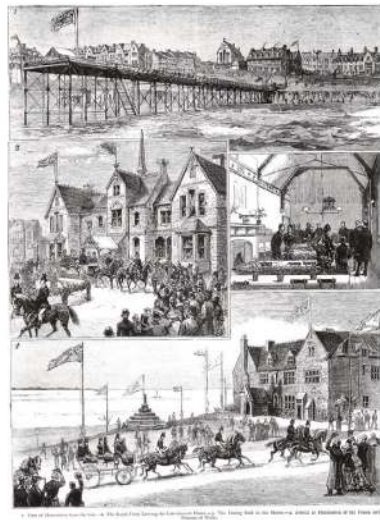
The first General Meeting of subscribers and friends was held in the Guildhall in King's Lynn on 18 March 1872. Reference was made at this meeting to the grave illness which had recently threatened the life of the Prince of Wales, but it was the special attention of the requirements of convalescents of the poorer classes which led to the rapid raising of funds for the Home.

The first 'Home' was opened in June 1872

in two rented houses on a site opposite the present post office in the High Street at a rental of £40 per annum.

These two houses provided accommodation for six women or girls and six men or boys.

Efforts to raise further funds for the provision of a permanent building were unremitting and met with such success that in August 1877 the foundation stone of the 'new' Home was laid by the Countess of Leicester on a new site at the northern end of Valentine Road. Building works progressed quickly and on 14 April 1879 the new Home was opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales (later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra).



Extract from The Graphic

Princess Alexandra took a deep personal interest in the Home which she visited on many occasions and until her death contributed liberally to its support.

The new home was originally designed to accommodate forty patients but over the following twenty-five years the building was extended to accommodate up to one hundred patients. From its foundation in 1872 up to its closure in 1979 more than seventy thousand patients were accommodated at the home. During that time the President of the Home was the Earl of Leicester. The bishops of Norwich, Ely and Peterborough were its Vice Presidents. In 1905 a special appeal 'Was made for funds to erect a new building exclusively for children. The foundation stone

for this new building, was laid on 26 April 1906 and opened for patients on 8 June 1907. The Prince and Princess of Wales graciously permitted it to be called 'The Prince Edward Home for Children'. The building now houses offices of the Borough Council and the Temporary Town Library.

By the end of the 1970s the practice of sending patients to a convalescence home following a serious illness or operation had ceased. Consequently, it was "decided to sell the Home and the proceeds of sale were invested and controlled by the Charity Commissioners. The building itself, like many other of the larger town houses in Hunstanton, was then converted into flats. A scheme for the Charity to be known as 'The Hunstanton Convalescent Trust' was formally approved by the Charity Commission on 15 April 1983 (registered Charity Number 218979).

The new Charity was a combination of three former charities. A Board was formed from local people to act as Trustees to deal with the income arising from the capital invested with the Charity Commission. By the terms of the Trust this income is to be applied in helping those who are or have been physically or mentally unwell by providing or assisting towards the expenses of convalescence, recuperative holidays and other items, services or facilities which are calculated to alleviate the suffering or assist the recovery of such persons; preference being given to residents of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The Trustees can also apply such income by way of grants, donations or subscriptions to institutions or organisations which provide or which undertake to provide such items, services and facilities for such of its residents. Similar assistance can also be used to help their carers.

If you feel someone you know would benefit from making an application for assistance, please send an email of enquiry for further information to the Trust Secretary : convalescent_trust@icloud.com

The Hunstanton Convalescent Trust is a registered charity number 218979



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Bronze Age Barrows

Russell Lyon

It cycle quite a lot if the weather permits – I don't like the rain in my face. I fairly recently converted to using an e bike from my ordinary roadster which I always thought was cheating a bit as the object of cycling is for me primarily exercise. But I soon discovered however that one of the extra benefits of not having to expend so much energy on peddling (which you still have to do to keep moving) was you had time to look around and became more aware of the wild life and countryside through which you pass. Minor lanes and highways opened up to my wheels and I noticed one afternoon on my way to Great Massingham through Harpley Common a series of earth mounds which had escaped the plough. Were they natural or man-made? In particular there were three mounds near the road side (a consulting OS map called them tumuli) and I soon realised what they were – Bronze Age Barrows.



The light was fading fast in the late afternoon and the largest mound was casting a long slightly eery shadow as I climbed to the top and realised, I was standing on a person or person's grave. The Barrows are grave markers and

one or more people or their ashes was buried beneath my insensitive feet. The rabbits seem to be more respectful than me as there is very little burrow activity to be seen.



Local tradition has it that if a rabbit has the temerity to dig into a Barrow it will never re-emerge. Local tradition again says that treasure is buried beneath the mound but I understand when this one was excavated many years ago, by F.R. Lucas only charcoal was found at three feet deep, then burnt bones and wood. Shards of pottery from jars or beakers were also discovered which enabled dating of the structure to the Bronze Age which makes most of the barrows in the vicinity to be at least 4,000 years old and some may be even older as some may belong in the Neolithic (late Stone Age).

I noticed that the Barrows I looked at all had shallow ditches right around their bases from which the soil must have been dug to form the mound. It is known that there are upwards of 2,000 barrows in Norfolk some more visible than others with many ploughed over or obliterated by wind, rain and time but there may be many more to be found. Aerial photography has been

revolutionary in making archaeological discoveries and has become much more affordable with the advent of drones. I have my suspicions about two mounds in Dersingham which may be natural but who knows what may be concealed beneath the piles of soil?

Bronze Age people were people like us who worried about staying warm in the winter months, getting enough to eat and concerned for their children. Would they have a future? Would they survive? Did they get on with their neighbours?



It was a time when people may have moved around quite a bit, herding their animals and growing crops. Some settlements or transit camps have been identified such as the hill fort at Wareham near to Stiffkey whose outlines are remarkably well preserved. This is a fortified enclosure where people lived protected by high earth walls with a wooden palisade on top. Archaeological digs have shown that houses were built in the flat area within the rampart walls but little can be seen to human eye. They have disappeared into time and the soil but the outlines still can be seen by ground penetrating radar. This site was properly developed in the Iron Age of the Iceni but gives a



good insight into the lives of the Bronze Age people who proceeded them.

The people whose remains are buried at Harpley Common must have lived in the near vicinity of their Barrows. They will have grown crops and tended their livestock. Logically their dwellings must have been close to springs or watercourses but so far, no traces have been found. I'm sure intensive research of the area would shed some light on where they lived but perhaps it is more fitting to let them be. It is enough to know they existed and their burial mounds are a more permanent memorials to their lives than any of our current gravestones or memorials in churchyards. It is entirely possible that living relatives of these Bronze Age people are still living in Harpley, Massingham and beyond. Our bodies may die but our genes and atoms are passed on and are immortal.



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It's a Wonderful life

John Maiden

It came as pleasant surprise to find that Pope Leo shares my taste in Christmas movies. We both like "It's a Wonderful Life" the 1946 film featuring James Stewart. Not a lot of people know this, but although I have always been known as John, my parents must have had great expectations for me, because they had me baptised Adrian John, after the only English Pope, Adrian IV. However, while they were quite happy to saddle my big brother with the name Paul Anthony - giving him the initials PAM - they did not want me to become associated with JAM. Hence, the reason for my dislike of Adrian, because it is the name used by doctors, dentists and anyone in authority who does not know the real me.

I thought this phase would have been over by now, but when a charming young hospital doctor introduced himself to me as Oliver and asked if it was okay to call me Adrian, I heard myself saying that I preferred John, or simply AJ.

If this seems too trivial to be worth a mention in Town & Around, put it down to the panto season and the fact that I have already been to see Aladdin at the Princess Theatre in Hunstanton. Oh yes I have!



Brian Hallard

Now I expect to be reading a review of this spectacular panto in Town & Around very soon, so I will confine myself to thanking Brian Hallard and his team for providing live entertainment and films in my home town at a beautiful building which will always be the Capitol cinema to me.

If anyone is interested in finding out how Brian managed to breathe life into the Princess, when it looked as if the building was destined to make way for yet another block of flats for the aged, an opportunity will present itself on February 18. This is the date when the Hunstanton Society has invited Brian to give a talk entitled "The Life of Brian".

All Hunstanton Society talks take place at the Heritage Centre on the corner of Northgate and Greevegate, but I am wondering if the Princess is free on this date. If so Brian might prefer to take the opportunity to stage his talk in familiar surroundings.

This possibility reminds me of the '53 Floods anniversary on January 31 2013 when the venue was the Princess thanks to Brian, because the Town Hall was unavailable. Ben Colson, the founder of the Norfolk Green bus service was another benefactor, because this was the day a Norfolk Green double decker bus was launched outside the Princess in honour of Floods hero, Reis Leming.



From left: Debra, Kathy and Michael with the bus outside the Princess Theatre

His widow Kathy and two of his three grown-up children, Debra and Michael, were present to take part in a BBC TV documentary entitled "Friends Reunited" along with Neil Quincey and two of his children, Jane and Bill.



By coincidence, Ben Colson will be the next speaker at the Heritage Centre on January 21. His subject will not be Norfolk Green, of which I was its number one fan. Instead, it will be the equally Fascinating Story of the Succession to King Edward VII.

I will conclude with a very brief account of the latest talks at the Heritage Centre. In November Dr Eric Somerville gave a very interesting account of 'Opium Eating in the Fens' and I found myself to be in sympathy with the opium eaters, because I could not put up with living in a place where the fields are mostly boring and flat and the roads are all bumpy and twisted.

There were no free samples on offer at this talk, but it was a different story on December 10, when professional chocolatiers, Garry and Nichola Hunter from Holt gave us the complete story of chocolate from the humble cocoa bean to the most delicious chocolate you can buy.



Chocolatiers Gary & Nichola Hunter with Hunstanton Society committee member Stephen Kent

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Hunstanton Lifeboat Station news

We've had another busy year, launching around 40 times to people who found themselves in difficulty or danger off our shores.

Our call-outs have ranged from rescuing four people and numerous dogs, cats and other creatures from a sinking cabin cruiser, to helping people cut off by the tide.

Whoever said there's never a dull moment must have been in the RNLI at some point, maybe even down at our boathouse on Sea Lane.

For as well as launching to emergencies, we've had a demanding programme of exercises at sea to ensure our crew are ready for anything when their pagers go.

These have included training for a major incident with other agencies on the River Ouse in King's Lynn and drills with our Coastguard and National Coastwatch Institute colleagues, along with practising mud rescues and rough weather launches and recovery.



Search and rescue women sharpen skills at Hunstanton RNLI

We were also proud to host a special event for search and rescue (SAR) women back in October, which was attended by female volunteers from as far afield as Cullercoats, near Newcastle; Cleethorpes in Lincolnshire and Clacton in Essex, as well as our flank station Wells.

We've been bowled over by the support we've received from the community this year - most recently when our display was voted the best at the Hunstanton Christmas Tree

Festival, which drew hundreds to the town hall.



Thanks to everyone who organised or hosted events for us like the golf day at Hunstanton Golf Club, events at Searles, RNLI fests at the Golden Lion in town and the Queen Vic at Snettisham, the Brancaster Staithe Sea Shanty Festival, the Rock Choir, Nelson's Shantymen, No Nonsense, Hunstanton Concert Band and other acts too many to mention, along with everyone else who played, sang, tended bar, cooked or helped fill the collecting boxes.



Care home puts the kettle on for Hunstanton RNLI

And then there are our tireless fundraisers who have inspired us by going the extra mile for the charity that saves lives at sea, like Johnathon Jarvis and his family who raised £4,000 with another mammoth trek, the tide runners and triathletes, the VW owners, the

Turners and Oughtons who swam the equivalent of the distance to France and back and little Pip the terrier, who walked a mile a day in May.

Supporters organised Tai Chi sessions, coffee mornings, suppers and bridge drives, which all helped to keep us driving on - not to mention the many, many Betty's 5p pots which have been filled and returned to the station.

And last but not least, the Hunstanton Round Table who donated a game-changing night vision scope to the station

It all helps to keep us ship-shape and ready to launch whenever we're needed.

We'll have our pagers on over Christmas and New Year even when we're tucking into our Turkey.



For RNLI crews like ours all around the coast of the UK and Ireland are ready to leave their celebrations with friends and family to battle the elements and save lives at sea.

RNLI lifeboats launch on average more than 100 times during the Christmas period every year, with 119 'shouts' in 2024.

These rescues, and others all year round, are only made possible by the donations which help to fund the essential kit and training needed to keep us prepared and equipped to save lives.

To make a donation to the RNLI's Christmas Appeal, and enable the charity to continue its lifesaving work into next year and beyond, go online to RNLI.org/WinterAppeal.

Stay Safe, Respect The Sea
Hunstanton RNLI

NATIONAL COASTWATCH INSTITUTION (NCI) BRANCASTER

With winter upon us, the conditions on Brancaster beach and coast can be extremely wild, but – come what may – the Brancaster Coastwatch station remains staffed during daylight hours: we will open over the Christmas holiday period except for Christmas Day itself.

During the last month there has been only one recordable incident, when a channel marker buoy washed ashore. The channel markers into Brancaster Staithe harbour are crucial to the working fishing boats and leisure users, as the channel is narrow and dangerous, and missing markers need to be replaced quickly. HM Coastguard and the National Trust were informed so that prompt action could be taken.

As reported in our last issue, we are pleased that the management group has been strengthened with the appointment of Ralph and Fraser as Deputies; this will assist the efficiency of the team over the next period. We are also fortunate in that our volunteers bring a wide range of expertise to the service, including carpentry skills, accountancy, construction, health and safety, and welfare.

We have had one successful assessment this month, Mandy P, a testament to her hard work and application: we wish her well as a certificated Watchkeeper.

The Brancaster Winter Fair was a great success, at which the NCI Brancaster stall offered a wide range of superb craft items and other goodies donated by volunteers or their partners. Our thanks go to them and also to Jo, Mary and Katie of the Brancaster Village Hall Committee for all their help and support in what has become a major fund and awareness raising event. The photo shows our stall and Watchkeepers.

May we take this opportunity to wish all our volunteers and their partners, as well as the whole community, a very happy New Year.

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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Special events this month:

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

Saturday 17th January - Music Night with Vocalist Glen Cooper

Regular Events

Mondays : Strength and Balance Class 4.30pm.

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.

Scrabble 10am, Whist Drive 7pm.

Fridays : NIA at 12.30. Prize Raffle 1pm. Cash Bingo at 7.30pm.

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NEWS FROM BRANCASTER VILLAGE HALL (BVH)

Geoff Wingrove

With Christmas approaching rapidly at the time of writing, the pace of activities at BVH is increasing. On November 29th BVH was the venue for a highly successful annual Winter Fair, which has grown in size and popularity. This year there were many stalls featuring all kinds of local produce and the outcome of community activities; there were also stalls from the local schools, churches, the RNLI and Brancaster Coastwatch station. Credit and thanks must go to the organisers and volunteers for their hard work in creating this success.

It is with sadness that we note that Maureen, who has run the BVH Coffee Mornings for a number of years, is standing down. The Coffee Mornings have been filled with conversation, laughter, quizzes and raffles – and of course, coffee, tea and cake. We are very grateful to Maureen for her community-enriching service over fifteen years: we hope to recruit a worthy successor to follow her.

Our regular activities will continue to take place over the winter, with the following special events:

New Year's Eve Party: 31st December

7pm until late

Mega Quiz 17th January 7pm to 10pm

BVH Guest Talk: 24th January 7pm to

8.15pm "My Life in Politics" by Steve

Norris, former Under Secretary of State

Bar 71 continues to thrive, with Skittles and Quiz Nights organised, as well as casual darts and snooker. The December guest beers are Christmas Jumper and Rocking Rudolph – very seasonal! Opening hours can be found on our website: do come along, and you will be assured of a warm welcome.

Brancaster Village Stores/Post Office has enjoyed a very successful year: the Post Office in particular has proved to be a crucial village service. The shop supplies those commodities that the village requires, and the staff have been fantastic.

Further information about these and other activities, along with last posting dates for Christmas, can be found on our website at www.brancastervillagehall.communitybooking.s.co.uk or on Facebook and Instagram. For enquiries, please contact us at bvhsetup@gmail.com

FROM THE BRANCASTER PARISH ARCHIVE: HMS INDOMITABLE 1907

All Saints Church at Burnham Thorpe, once the parish of Nelson's father, the Reverend Edmund Nelson, contains a plaque and a flag that belonged to HMS Indomitable. Many visitors have wondered about these memorials, and what is their story. These historical artefacts are a reminder of a particular period of our history when one man's vision contributed to some of the worst disasters in British naval history.

The story of HMS Indomitable starts at the end of the 19th century when a brilliant sailor and administrator, Sir John Fisher (known as Jackie) moved to the Admiralty as Sea Lord and began to develop his ideas on the future of the Royal navy. In 1904 Admiral Fisher became First Sea Lord, responsible for the most

powerful navy by far in the world at that time. Admiral Fisher was a man of strong views about most people and things in naval terms, and in particular about the types of ships the navy required for the future, if Britain was to maintain its preeminent position.

Following his strong prompting and leadership, an entirely new class of major warship was designed and built in record time. This was HMS Dreadnought, a capital ship, or battleship. This was the most powerful and fastest battleship in the world, which made all other capital ships belonging to other navies obsolete, due to its all big gun armament and turbine engines.

However, this story is about another class of ship that Admiral Fisher introduced to the Navy shortly after the launch of HMS Dreadnought. Fisher was obsessed with speed and power for future capital ships and so HMS Indomitable was constructed with these qualities. The ship was about the same size as HMS Dreadnought and carried a similar all big gun armament. However, it was much faster, but in order to achieve this speed it had significantly reduced armour protection. This class of ship became known as battlecruisers, and Fisher's vision was that they would undertake a scouting role for the fleet and be fast and powerful enough to sink any weaker opponent, and also fast enough to escape any more powerful ship.

HMS Indomitable was a member of the first class of three battlecruisers. Laid down in 1906, it was launched in 1907 and commissioned in 1908; this was an incredibly short space of time. The ship was built by Fairfield Shipbuilding at Govan on the River Clyde. Battlecruisers were never meant to take on battleships, as their armour protection was not of the same thickness or extent. Unfortunately, in the clash of fleets, there was a temptation – because of their all big gun armaments – to use battlecruisers inappropriately. They were also much more lightly armoured than their German equivalents, and so vulnerable to plunging shellfire.

HMS Indomitable had a very varied career during World War One. The ship took part in the infamous and abortive pursuits of the German ships Goeben and Breslau in the Mediterranean, the outcome of which brought Turkey into the war on Germany's side. It was then present at the bombardment of the Dardanelles before the disastrous landings at Gallipoli which ended in catastrophic failure, with over 140,000 British, French and Commonwealth casualties.

Indomitable returned to home waters and was present in the first clash between major German and British ships at the battle of Dogger Bank in 1915. It was here that the first signs of the vulnerability of British battlecruisers came to light, with serious damage to HMS Lion, although the action ended in a minor victory for the British.

However, the nemesis of the British battlecruiser came at the major clash between the whole German and British fleets at Jutland in 1916. Here plunging fire from the heavily-armoured German battlecruisers and battleships sank three British battlecruisers –

HMSs Indefatigable, Queen Mary and Invincible – with the loss of over 3000 sailors, the last being a sister ship of the Indomitable, which was also present at the action. Other battlecruisers were seriously damaged.

Following Jutland, the rest of the war was uneventful for Indomitable; she was placed in reserve in 1919 and scrapped in 1921. It had become recognised that the design was seriously flawed, although with major revisions, the last British battlecruiser HMS Hood was built just after the end of the war. HMS Hood was sunk in an ill-judged action against the German battleship Bismarck, with a loss of 1400 lives and only 3 survivors. An expedition in recent years has discovered the wreck of the Hood and shown that her weak deck armour had been penetrated by a shell from the Bismarck. Britain built 16 battlecruisers between 1906 and 1919, of which 5 were sunk with the loss of nearly 5000 lives, 3 were converted to aircraft carriers and 7 were scrapped in the 1920s and early 1930s. The sole survivor at the end of World War Two was HMS Renown, which was scrapped shortly afterwards.

The ship's plaque and the flag flown by HMS Indomitable at the battle of Jutland, now displayed in All Saints Church at Burnham Thorpe and pictured here, are stark reminders of an idea, innovative in theory, that proved deeply flawed in practice.





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MP's Question Time at West Norfolk School

North West Norfolk MP James Wild visited Ingoldisthorpe Church of England Primary School to meet pupils and staff and see classroom learning in action.

He was welcomed by Headteacher Julia Norman and Willow, the school's wellbeing cockapoo, before touring classrooms, observing lessons, and speaking with pupils and teachers about their learning.

James also met members of the Student Council and the Ethos Group for a lively Q&A session, where pupils posed thoughtful questions about democracy, school life, and their community. The visit built on the school's recent engagement with the Parliamentary education team during UK Parliament Week, which had helped pupils explore how democracy works and the role of MPs.

During the visit James' discussion with Mrs Norman focused on the school's strong academic performance, with results above the national average, and saw the impact of the reading programme and well-stocked library which had been designed to inspire a love of books in pupils.

After his visit, James said: "It was a pleasure to visit Ingoldisthorpe Primary. I was impressed by the friendly, family atmosphere here and by how well the school supports its pupils, both academically and personally.

The engagement, confidence, and values shown by the children are a credit to their teachers, parents, and staff."

Mrs Norman, Headteacher, commented: "It was great to show James around Ingoldisthorpe Church of England Primary School with our school dog Willow. Our pupils asked James lots of interesting questions about his job and what it is like to work in the House of



Commons.

"Our pupils have recently had a visit from Kelly Stroud the senior engagement outreach officer who delivered an assembly to our Year 5 and 6 pupils, so James' visit was a nice follow up and opportunity for our pupils to learn more about how parliament works."

Ingoldisthorpe prioritises giving pupils opportunities of regular visits with an upcoming trip to Ely Cathedral.

£5m for new Special Educational Needs School in Downham Market

Terry Jermy MP. terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk

Having lobbied the Secretary of State for Education and other Government Ministers on the urgent need for a new special educational needs school in Downham Market since the election, I was thrilled with the announcement last month that the Government will be investing £5 million in funding to make this proposal a reality.

Located at Ryston End in Downham Market, the funding seeks to address long-identified gaps in provision for children with additional educational needs in the West of the county and would cater for up to 100 pupils.

Norfolk County Council will receive the £5 million in funding from the Government for the Ryston End proposal, and a further £8 million in funding for a project located in the East around Great Yarmouth.

The Council will be given the choice to create new permanent facilities or use the money to fund additional places in mainstream settings. I have confirmed that I would prefer for the site at Ryston End to be utilised, given the distinct lack of special educational needs services in the West of the County and the long travel distances for families.

As one of only two MPs to employ a SEND Specialist Caseworker, I am acutely aware of how much the SEND system is in crisis.

This funding shows the Government's commitment to solving the SEND crisis and ensuring children and young people with SEND get the education and support they need. The new special educational needs school will help repair the broken system and be a modern and supportive setting for children and young people with SEND and their families.

The Ryston End site was once the Sixth Form linked to Downham Market High School but has sat empty and boarded up for a number of years.

This announcement follows the four SEND Roundtables I held in the Autumn for both families and schools, in addition to two SEND surveys. The results of the surveys will form a forthcoming report which will focus on the impact of rurality on SEND and outline further

recommendations to the Government to help fix the SEND crisis.

This funding forms part of a landmark £3 billion government investment to make sure more children can go to a brilliant school closer to home and enable children with additional needs to achieve and thrive.

Should you or someone you know need SEND support, please get in touch: terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk



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New Nurture Cafe in South Lynn in the New Year

As we approach Christmas and the New Year Season, everyone, especially families with young children, will find themselves under pressure in this cost-of-living crisis. South and West Lynn, a ward I represent on the Borough and County Council, is a community in low income, with proportionally more children, and larger families, than many other wards. The child poverty rate in South and West Lynn is 33%. The number of babies born with a low birth weight is above the local and national average. These young people will be the workforce of tomorrow. Investing in young people, to help them achieve their full potential, is so important.

The UK isn't replacing its working age population - the proportion of people in work to every pensioner, is shrinking, that is workers paying in National Insurance, which funds the state pension. We struggle to find the skills the workforce needs, in the NHS, Social Care, IT and construction. Yes, it takes a community to raise a child. But it also takes a child to support the future community. Bringing the best start in life for every child is about practical measures.

When I spoke up for West Norfolk at the County Council in 2022, I insisted Nourishing Norfolk set up a local Food Hub. It was the beginning of a journey.

Purfleet Pantry's Food Hub at the Southgates now contributes affordable food to the community and runs a series of terrific cooking sessions for families in the half-term. The Baptist Church runs Food in the School Holidays every Thursday. As a South Lynn Councillor, I support all these activities with my County Community Grant.

The Satellite Food Bank in South Lynn has just started.

Food and affordability are important. But young parents also face isolation.

What is happening? The County Council's Early Years and Family Service, in partnership with the Baptist Church on Wisbech Road, are launching a Nurture Cafe in South Lynn this January, at the Church.

When is it? Every Tuesday morning, 9- 11 am. What is it? A trusted place, a venue to relax, meet other parents, ask for advice from professionals. With a Cafe.

What is on offer? Health Visitors, County Council's Early Years Support Service, baby weighing, breast feeding support, advice about neuro diversity, Autism, ADHD, mental health, healthy eating will be on hand. There will be a support group for Dads.

Is it free? Yes. I am funding the Nurture Cafe from my County Councillor Community Grant. If you are a mum, dad or a carer with young children in South and West Lynn, please come along. This is for you.

Democracy in Norfolk

There will be County Council Elections this coming May. (Government postponed the May 2025 Elections). But Government has just postponed the Elections for the new Elected Mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk, that were due to happen this May. Mayoral Elections will now take place in 2028. Or has Gov got cold feet? Realised the potential harm to Norfolk, of taking away our local powers, like control over transport, and control over the Fire Rescue Service? Understood the public does not want this? But costly pre-preparations for Local Government Reorganisation are proceeding apace at both Councils. In March, the Secretary of State will



tell Norfolk if we are going to have one, two or three Unitary Councils in Norfolk, instead of Borough and County Councils. What a catastrophe waiting to happen. Government should leave Norfolk to govern itself.

West Winch Bypass

The County Council's Planning Committee granted Planning Permission for the Bypass in November. But the £109 million project has just increased to £121 million. National Gas Transmission, a private firm owned by overseas interests, have increased the cost of diverting the gas mains by an extra £12 million, without apparent or transparent justification. I have written to the Department for Transport, about holding National Gas Transmission to account for its extortionate increase. Meanwhile, I am holding the County Highways Project Management Team to account about Sustainable Transport Measures for the A10, once it is traffic calmed.

The Pullover Roundabout Flyover

The cost of a single carriageway flyover from the A47 from the Saddlebow Interchange, over the Pullover Roundabout, has gone up from £31 million to £40 million. The scheme would prevent congestion and pollution and support business, with a faster flow on the corridor of movement. But the scheme scores too low under Government criteria. These criteria are clearly wrong and need to reflect the benefits to commerce and industry.

A happy and peaceful New Year to you all.

County Councillor Alexandra Kemp
County Division: Clenchwarton and King's Lynn South, Norfolk County Council, including South Lynn, West Lynn, Clenchwarton, West Winch, Setchey

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Trans exclusion

Jo Rust

Sometimes decisions are made by organisations in response to guidance which just don't make sense to me, especially organisations that I've been a member of. I refer in this instance to the decisions made by Girl Guiding, the WI and even the Labour Party to exclude trans women from attending their meetings, groups and conference.

I write this from a personal perspective, having trans friends and wanting to be inclusive and promote diversity as well as being – a long time ago I know, a former girl guide. This was a group I loved being a part of as it was so welcoming and inclusive and really pushed forward the fact that women and girls could be and do anything. The situation is that Girl Guiding has announced that trans girls and young women won't be able to join as new members anymore.

On top of that, the Women's Institute also announced that as from 2026, it'll no longer offer full membership to trans women, despite having welcomed them for 30 years. So, while their current trans members are "permitted" to remain members, it sends out a very clear message to them, that by denying new members of the trans community, they're viewed differently. There is no law which states that groups MUST exclude trans women from single sex areas. There are other choices which these groups could have opted for.

I've read articles which express sadness and disappointment from both Girl Guides and the WI that they feel they've been forced into taking this stance for fear of facing costly legal damages, I still personally find it upsetting which two organisations which I've admired have chosen to exclude women and girls from spaces that they'd be safe in. The proportion of people in our community who have made a difficult and mentally draining transition from the sex that they were born into, to the gender that they actually identify as,

is tiny, less than 1%. Sadly, it's factually correct and backed up with evidence, that women are at more risk from cis men than they are trans women. Those stats and that data have remained true for decades, and there have been trans people around for a long time.

It's always difficult trying to put a reasoned perspective forward about a topic which people feel so strongly about. I understand that cis women want to protect the spaces that they fought hard to obtain. But they fought hard to get them from men who were born men and identify as men. They didn't have to fight for them from people who were born men but did not identify with that sex. Being inclusive makes our lives better.

I've previously written articles that have referenced the term "toxic masculinity", we need to reference positive masculinity and positive feminism. Opening up spaces that women have fought for, to trans women, isn't going to take away rights, it's going to welcome women who embrace all that it is to be a woman. I understand that people are worried by a lot of things these days, many of which are magnified by popular press but are not backed up by data from official bodies such as the Ministry of Justice, or the Office of National Statistics. I'd ask that we all take a pause for a moment and look at the actual evidence which supports taking action that excludes people who are already incredibly vulnerable and likely to be discriminated against, face violence and harm, and less likely to be supported to reach their full potential. The evidence doesn't show that excluding them from women's space makes those spaces safer for all. It makes it more dangerous for some by excluding them.



Public consultation on Hunstanton bus shelters and community centre

Hunstanton Town Council held a well-attended public consultation in early December at the Town Hall, inviting residents to share their views on proposals for new bus shelters, additional benches around the town, and the ongoing Community Centre project.

Members of the community were able to review the proposals, speak directly with councillors, and provide feedback that will help shape the next steps for these local initiatives.

Earlier in the day, the Town Council, together with attendees of the Monday Helping Hands Café, welcomed a group of student councillors from Smithdon High School. Students from Years 7, 9, and 10 visited the Town Hall to observe the consultation in action and learn more about how local government engages with the public.

During their visit, the students spoke with councillors, staff, and members of the public, offering enthusiastic suggestions for activities and opportunities for young people both in the town and at their school. They were also given a guided tour of the Town Hall and Council Chambers, gaining insight into the workings of local democracy.

The council would like to thank all residents and young visitors who took part in the consultation and contributed their views and ideas.



Hunstanton Society

Presentation by
Ben Colson

The Fascinating Story of the Succession to King Edward VII

Normally the line of succession used to be straight forward, the oldest son of the Monarch becomes King. Following Queen Victoria came her eldest, King Edward VII. On that basis, following him it would have been King Albert Victor, but instead his younger brother became King George V. What happened to Albert Victor – what was the real cause of his death at Sandringham aged just 28 – and why has he been largely written

Wednesday, 21st January 2026 @ 7.30pm
in the Heritage Centre (doors open 7.00pm)
Admission £1.00 Members, £5.00 Non-Members
Refreshments included



Hunstanton Society

TALKS

We have had two talks since our last Newsletter. The first was given by Dr Eric Somerville on Opium Eating in the Fens. Given on 19th November this entertaining talk told us all about the huge consumption of Opium in the Fens region of this country. Although making people somewhat spaced out under the influence of this incredibly strong drug, it seems that actually people lived longer lives as a result. So it cannot have been all bad!

Then on 10th December we had our AGM which took place followed by some nibbles and a glass of wine or soft drinks or Tea or Coffee. This was followed by a talk on 'The Anatomy of Chocolate' by Chocolatiers Gary and Nichola Hunter. Pictured on page 34 in John Maiden's article are the Hunters with the Chairman for the AGM Stephen Kent holding some of the sample chocolates everyone enjoyed consuming. Yum, Yum!

In January we have returning once again, Ben Colson, well known for his bus company Norfolk Green that he sold some years ago now. He has also given talks on transport operations in this part of the world and two years ago, a talk about King Edward VII and his links with the Sandringham Estate. This time he is talking again about Edward VII but on this occasion on the succession of King George V who was not his eldest son. This should prove to be interesting. (See page 43)

EVENTS TEAM NEWS

Thank you to everyone who supported the Christmas Tree Lights Switch-on Event. We had over 160 visitors who enjoyed the various games and activities we had to offer. Particularly popular was the Lucky Dip and the Christmas Quiz and we raised over £170 on the day.

The lucky winner of 'Name the Bear' was our very own Stephen Kent who got to take 'Ginger' home.

The sweetie jar was won by a lovely young lady from Ely who asked for it to be donated to the homeless, (and it was gratefully received by



the clients of the Night Shelter in Kings Lynn}, and the hamper was won by another young lady from Kings Lynn visiting Hunstanton for the day. Thank you to everyone who took part, either by helping in the Heritage Centre on the day, by donating prizes or coming along to support the event. And congratulations to our lucky winners!

OBJECTS OF INTEREST – The Wash Pleasure Steamboat Company

Among the archives, in a plastic cash bag, is a collection of tickets from the Wash Pleasure Steamboat company.

In 1881, a full decade after Hunstanton, Skegness opened its pier. Soon after, steamboat excursions were being run and local businessman formed The Wash Pleasure Steamboat Co.

Probably the most popular trip was the excursion from Skegness to Hunstanton, where day trippers could alight at the pier, recover from the trip at one of the local tearooms, then visit the Sandringham Estate.

The steamboat would stop at the Lynwell lightship on the way back. The steamboat service stopped in 1910, mainly as the result of



shifting sands in the wash.

The historic pictures of the piers show how much things have



changed. The end section of the Skegness Pier was destroyed by a storm in 1978. The same storm destroyed the Hunstanton Pier.



Skegness Pier



Hunstanton Pier

In 2013, Searles ran a trial using "Wizzy", The Wash Monster II, one of their amphibious pleasure craft across the Wash from Hunstanton Beach to Skegness Beach (16 miles) in under two hours. This is about the same time it takes by car (70 miles).

A regular service was never introduced.



Philip Thomas, Hunstanton Society

A bright New Year at Westacre Theatre

As we step into a fresh new year, you're in for a real treat at Westacre Theatre. A new season of stories, creativity... and theatrical magic. Our exciting Spring 2026 programme is literally brimming with creative experiences from scriptwriting and drama to our Summer Bursary auditions, National Theatre Connections, and support for our wonderful home-educating families. If you missed the unforgettable performance of Alligators last year, it returns in March for a limited run guaranteed to stun, move, and spark conversation. Not to be missed!

Our Theatre brochure is now out in the world, so keep your eyes peeled for hard copies in supermarkets, libraries and cafés across the region. Or, if you can't wait, you can explore the full digital brochure online today. www.westacretheatre.com/spring2026

This season promises something truly special for every kind of theatregoer. If you're drawn to the warmth of the past, the thrill of live storytelling, or the unravelling of hidden truths... here's just a flavour of what's in store:

An Evening of Very Old Radio rekindles the charm of bygone entertainment, celebrating the wit, wonder and imagination of radio's BBC golden age.

NLive: Hamlet takes us deep into questions of truth, performance and deception - the ultimate exploration of secrets from the National Theatre. Alligators offers a gripping dive into morality, reputation and the dangerous territory of what we choose to hide - returning to our stage for just four performances

Anyone for Tennis? lifts the curtain on backstage chaos of Wimbledon with a sharply funny behind-the-scenes glimpse. For lovers of classic literature, The Complete Works of Jane Austen (Abridged) delivers playful nostalgia, mischievous retellings and irresistible humour.

Nurturing the next generation

Alongside our new season, we are proud to champion a thriving programme for young people. If you have a budding actor, singer, artist or scriptwriter in the family, Westacre is the perfect place for them to explore their talents.

A home for young creatives



At the heart of Westacre Theatre's mission is our commitment to empowering children and teenagers through inclusive creative opportunities. Each year, hundreds of young people find their voice through our workshops.

From Drama Club and Musical Theatre to Scriptwriting and Artful Dodgers (our vibrant art club), these sessions offer spaces where young people can grow in confidence, learn collaboration and explore big ideas through creativity.

For those seeking more formal training, we also offer 1:1 LAMDA tuition by MissAdventures Theatre Company. With a 100% pass rate - and many students achieving Distinctions - this personalised coaching builds not just acting skills, but communication tools that last a lifetime.

The show must (and will) go on! Support the Westacre Theatre Tent Appeal



For five magical summers, audiences have gathered under our iconic lakeside tent to experience theatre under the Norfolk skies. It's where stories came alive, friendships were forged, and the spirit of Westacre Theatre shone brightest. Sadly, after years of loyal service, our tent has reached the end of its life. The fabric has been damaged beyond repair and the structure can no longer stand. Without it, our outdoor performances, workshops and summer events - the beating heart of our seasonal programme - are at risk.

That's why we've launched the Westacre Theatre Tent Appeal, a campaign to raise £50,000 to fund a new tent and restore our beloved outdoor home. If you're able to pitch in, your support will help bring theatre back under the Norfolk skies where so many memories have already been made - and where many more deserve to be.

Theatre Director Sadie Grist says: "Our summer performance space is so precious and unique that it is absolutely vital we replace and protect it. It's a space for our young talent in particular to flourish, for audiences to fall in love with theatre and we are determined to see it back again next summer."

If you'd like to support our tent appeal please visit: www.westacretheatre.com/tentappeal

Box Office | 01760 755 007
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HELP US BRING BACK THEATRE UNDER THE NORFOLK SKIES

www.westacretheatre.com/tentappeal

Tent Appeal
Can you pitch in?

WESTACRE THEATRE

Pitch in for the Canvas £5 (per sqm)
Cover the stage in wonder! Our canvas is the heart of the theatre, sheltering stories, laughter, and memories for all to enjoy.

Buy a Tent Peg £25
Anchor the magic! Tent pegs keep our canvas secure and our performances safe. A small gift, but a big impact.

Contribute to a Tent Pole £100
Support the performance! Every pole keeps our theatre standing tall. Your name (or dedication) could go on a plaque or programme. A lasting tribute to your support...

Fundraise for Us
If you have an idea that will help to raise essential funds for our Tent Appeal, then do please get in touch!

SCAN ME

To learn more and donate please scan the QR code to visit our website tent appeal.

Can you help us raise £50K by summer 2026?

For five magical summers, audiences have gathered under our enchanting lakeside tent to enjoy unforgettable outdoor theatre in the heart of West Norfolk.

We need your help to raise vital funds to replace our tent. Every donation, large or small, will help us bring back the magic of summer theatre under the skies.

Please help if you can! Thank you

Registered Charity No: 1057258

Get Ready to Shine with Girlguiding North West Norfolk!

Our Division of Girlguiding is absolutely buzzing with exciting opportunities for girls and young women! We're actively looking for new members and amazing adult volunteers to join our welcoming family—we'd love to have you!

Girlguiding is a vibrant space for girls of all ages to discover new passions, develop brilliant skills, and make memories that last a lifetime.

Rainbows (Ages 4-7): It's all about fun! Get ready for awesome crafts, silly games, and exploration.

Brownies (Ages 7-10): The adventure truly begins here! Think camping trips, cooking disasters (the fun kind!), and earning badges on everything from dancing to stargazing.

Guides (Ages 10-14): Ready to take the lead? Guides choose their own challenges, plan fantastic activities, and develop the confidence to speak up and change the world around them.

Rangers (Ages 14-18): This is the ultimate challenge! Want to travel abroad? Gain valuable qualifications? Take on major leadership roles? Rangers is your path to epic adventures and exploring future careers!

Calling All Community Heroes! Got a few hours a month to spare?

Volunteering with Girlguiding is genuinely rewarding and super flexible! It's a brilliant way to give back, meet new people, and even learn a skill or two yourself!

And don't worry—you definitely don't need to have been a Guide before, and you absolutely don't need to be an expert in camping or knot-tying (we teach all that!). We just need enthusiastic adults to help us out:

Ready to Start Your Adventure?

Joining is super easy! Whether you're a girl eager to join a unit or an adult ready to volunteer, just head over to the official Girlguiding website to register your interest, or search for a unit near you in North West Norfolk!

Snettisham Brownies and Guides Celebrate with Festive Fun and Top Awards!

The Snettisham Brownies and Guides wrapped up the term with

a sparkling, joyful Christmas party, celebrating their hard work and achievements over the past year. Girls arrived in a blaze of Christmas jumpers and festive headbands, ready for an evening of fun and celebration.



A highlight of the evening was the presentation of several top accolades, marking the dedication and commitment of many members.

Many Brownies and Guides received their prestigious Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards.

To achieve these top awards, the girls successfully completed a range of Theme awards focused on skills, advocacy, and community action within the Girlguiding programme.

Celebrating 100 Years! Gallow District Shines at Fakenham!



Gallow district kept our annual Christmas tradition glowing brightly this year! We were so proud to showcase a beautifully

decorated tree at the Fakenham Christmas Tree Festival.

In keeping with the festive spirit, our units across all sections poured their heart into creating special handmade decorations. This year was all about celebrating the incredible 100 years of WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts)! So, the tree was decked out with decorations inspired by both our brand-new and much-loved old interest badges. It was a wonderful way to honour a century of Guiding history and the amazing impact it has had.

It was a doubly special celebration because the Fakenham Christmas Tree Festival itself was marking its own huge milestone: its 25th anniversary!

Thanks to everyone's hard work and amazing generosity, the Gallow district entry successfully raised an impressive £151.65! What a brilliant result!

Docking Brownies: 50 Years of Fun, Friendship, and Flair!



The girls of Docking Brownies have something huge to cheer about! This past October, we officially marked a massive milestone—our 50th Anniversary!



To commemorate half a century of fantastic fun and adventure, the girls had a brilliant evening dressing up! They rocked fabulous 1970s-style Brownie uniforms—it was a night full of vintage flair and laughter, reminding everyone of the rich

history and traditions of our special unit.

Carols and Community: Snettisham Girlguiding at St Mary's Church

The Christmas season just wouldn't be complete without the beautiful spirit of community, and a highlight of the festive calendar is always the Annual Carol Service at the magnificent St Mary's Church, Snettisham.



Every year, the girls from Snettisham Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides proudly participate in this cherished tradition. Dressed smartly in their uniforms, the girls stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other community groups, sharing the warmth and wonder of Christmas together.

Held within the beautiful, centuries-old church, the service often features the girls contributing to the readings really showcasing the confidence and sense of service that Girlguiding helps instil. For the youngest Rainbows, it's a truly memorable night of singing their favourite carols like "Silent Night" in a lovely atmosphere. For the older Guides, it's a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the meaning of community and tradition.

It's a heart-warming reminder of the strong bond between Snettisham's Girlguiding units and the wider village—a truly festive and meaningful evening for everyone who attends!

Register your interest in becoming a Girlguiding young member or adult volunteer today at

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/>
We welcome new Girl guides and adult volunteers alike.



Find a group near you at girlguiding-anglia.org.uk

Rainbows	Brownies	Guides	Rangers
For ages 4 to 7	For ages 7 to 10	For ages 10 to 14	For ages 14 to 18
At Rainbows, girls play, learn and have tons of fun	At Brownies, girls have nonstop fun, learning and adventure	At Guides, girls laugh, learn and expand their horizons	At Rangers, girls have fun, hangout, learn more and give back



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Students cooking up a storm

There were no soggy bottoms in sight when contestants from a Hunstanton school showcased their culinary talents in this year's Rotary Young Chef Competition.

The local heats of the annual event took place at Smithdon High School on Thursday 27 November, when ten of the school's Year 10 Hospitality and Catering students rose to the challenge of creating a healthy dish for two on a budget of just £6.00.

"The students get one hour and 40 minutes to create their dish and serve, ready for judging," explained Becky Dibble, who teaches Food and Nutrition at Smithdon, and was a member of the judging panel, along with School Governor Debbie Parry, and Deputy Headteacher Sarah Robinson.

"It is judged on skill level, food safety, personal hygiene, presentation, and taste."



Runner up Grace Bakal, winner Jessica Barry, and teacher Becky Dibble

Remaining cool under pressure, Jessica Berry took first place,

impressing the judges with her lemon-crust, pan-fried chicken breast served with home-made pasta in a creamy sauce; while Grace Bakal was runner up with her chicken souvlaki dish of Greek seasoned chicken on flatbread with salad.

Jessica's win has secured her a place in the District Final at West Suffolk College in Bury St Edmunds in February, where she will pit her skills against other students from across the county, in the hope of making it to the National Final – and earning a trip to Tuscany, complete with cookery course.

She will be supported by King's Lynn Rotary Club, who will pay for the ingredients needed for her next competitive creation.

The Rotary Young Chef Competition has become a regular fixture on the calendar at Smithdon, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust.



"The competition is extremely important, as it boosts the competitors' confidence, gives them a chance to show off the skills they have gained, and become more independent," added Mrs Dibble. "They can add this to their CV, which can set them aside from other students."

Images by Ian Burt

East Anglian Air Ambulance Kings Lynn Fundraising Group (KLFG)

By Trevor Dane, East Anglian Air Ambulance Volunteer

This year has been very busy and successful for KLFG. Thank you from Terri and myself to our group volunteers, Nigel, Jane, Netty, Gill and Sheila for their valued support throughout the year.

As 2025 draws to a close, we would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has kindly supported KLFG and East Anglian Air Ambulance with donations and purchases during the year. There were 219 taskings by air and road, with 140 patients treated.

We recently attended a cheque presentation at the Morris Minors Owners Group West Norfolk presentation evening. The group have

been supporting EAAA for several years with their outdoor fundraising events and monthly meetings, and we are really pleased to continue to support them. In 2025 they raised a fantastic £2,500 to save lives. Their kindness and generosity are very much appreciated.

Wendy and Phillip Horn from Morris Minors Owners Group also held a celebration for their Golden Wedding Anniversary, raising a brilliant £1,250. Thank you to Wendy and Phillip for this thoughtful gesture-and congratulations on a wonderful 50 years!

If you are interested in supporting East Anglian Air Ambulance in 2026, we would

love to hear from you! KLFG can be contacted by emailing myself or my colleague Terri: trevordane104@gmail.com tfaye.100@gmail.com



Sporting corner with Tim Keogh

Senior Football Round Up

All senior local teams face very different challenges as the season evolves, with promotion and relegation battles looking to go down to the wire.

It was all change at King's Lynn Town FC earlier on in the season. A good start to new manager Culverhouse's reign then came unstuck with an FA Trophy exit and a key league defeat to Chester FC. All is not lost as mid table Lynn will know a couple of wins will put them in touching distance of the play off places, although the opposite could quickly drag them into a relegation battle. A busy Christmas schedule and tense 2026 ensues for what, as Culverhouse fully acknowledges, is a relatively young squad. Financial turmoil off the pitch seems to have abated which should allow the club to focus on matters on the pitch if they can overcome some injury concerns to key players such as Adam Marriott, Gold Omotayo and Reece Hall-Johnson.

Prediction - Mid Table with a relegation scare

Heacham FC are presently bottom of the Thurlow Nunn Premier Division. New manager, Mark Hunter, faces a crucial new year where nothing short of points will galvanise their season. Despite losing 3-2, a very creditable and improved performance against high flyers Ely City on the 13th December will have given the home faithful some hope. Similar to Lynn, this is a young squad but players such as George Patience, Harvey Pightling and Jack Prentice do seem to be adapting quickly, whilst Hunters's introduction of Kian Yamada to the squad

looks a very intuitive move indeed.



*HFC's George Patience in action
Credit : Phill Gwilliam*

Prediction - It is a four horse race, but Heacham to avoid relegation by a whisker

In Division One of the Anglian Combination, Dersingham Rovers are grinding out results to keep pace with the top two. They agonisingly missed out on promotion to the Premier Division last season on the very last game and are desperate to make amends this year. Manager, Harry Collison, has already highlighted how competitive Division One is. Whilst they have played more games than the top two of Holt United and Thetford Rovers, Ders's fortunes still remain very much in their own hands and will always have a realistic chance with the potency of Joe Collison, Sam Peck and Scotty Sutherland-Gray up front.

Prediction - Promotion

After relegation to Division Four last season and changes in the squad, Ingoldisthorpe FC are fairing well in this campaign and are very much in the mix for an immediate return to Division Three. Presently sitting 5th, Chairman, Eddie Herbert, will be fully aware that a couple of wins early in the new year will stamp a real claim on their promotion intentions to their rivals.

Prediction - Promotion

For Dersingham Women it has been a fantastic start to the season in Division Three of the Norfolk Women & Girls' Football League as they presently sit 3rd in what is their debut season. Whilst credit must go to manager Georgie Archer, coach Antonia Masson, the lethal front line of the Emma duo (Leech and Corbyn) and the charismatic captaincy of Anne-Marie Harris, there is a desire, passion, commitment and talent across this whole squad.

Prediction - Promotion



*Dersingham Women FC captain, Anne-Marie Harris in action (in yellow)
Credit : Ian Burt*

Indoor Bowls Season underway

The Hunstanton Men and Ladies Indoor Bowls teams have started their seasons in their respective Norfolk County Indoor Bowls Leagues.

The men began the season well, with two wins elevating them up to 2nd early on, but two recent losses, including a tight defeat to Lowestoft Railway 'B' and a loss at Dereham 'B', mean they have slipped to 6th in Division Four of the Norfolk Men's County Indoor Bowls League. Captain, David Ilsley, knows he has the squad, particularly with Cliff Parade BC tournament Champion Graham Keeley in their ranks, to quickly climb back up the table with only 6 points dividing 2nd through to 6th place.



*Back row from left: Mo Stokes, Sarah Pugh, Debra Wright, Jean Read, Janet Sawyer, Gill MacKenzie, Helen Young.
Front row from left: Faith Harman, Janet Kendal, Christine Abbott, Margaret Dark, Hazel Bloor.*

Conversely, the Ladies, team had an erratic start to the season with two wins and two defeats. However, a significant win against 2nd placed Fakenham side, Gallow 'B' (92-24), in November seemed to

galvanise the side. They won all four rinks to secure maximum points, with the trio of Debra Knight, Mo Stokes and Gill MacKenzie coming from seven points down to win an exciting game on the very last play. They followed this up with a similarly impressive display and another maximum points haul win against leaders Norfolk Bowls Club 'B' (81-43) meaning they are now up to 3rd in Division Two of the Norfolk Womens' County Indoor Bowls League.

Captain, Margaret Dark, said, "A very pleasing win against Gallow 'B' which we took confidence from into our game against Norfolk. We are hoping to take this good form into the New Year". The Ladies final game of the year is against lowly County Arts 'B' on Saturday, 20th December. Having already beaten the top two in the Division, a promising 2026 is very much on the cards.

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QUESTION: With the FIFA World Cup taking place next year in the US, Canada and Mexico, which two countries made their debut in the 2018 World Cup in Russia?

ANSWERS TO:

editor@townandaround.net

or by post to: The Editor, Town & Around,
18 Tapping Close, Snettisham PE31 7FF

Please note we do not accept entries by any social media channels or text. CLOSING DATE 15.01.2026.

Last month's question was: In which country do football team FC Santa Claus compete? The correct answer was Finland and the first name out of the hat this month was Janet Woodford.

AFTERNOON TEA

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Sporting corner with Tim Keogh

Ron Williamson

Thornham Cricket Club legend, Ron Williamson, is stepping down from his role as Club Secretary.



Here we reflect on the extraordinary contribution he has made to the club over more than 40 years. From the early days of six-a-side pub cricket to the thriving senior and junior teams of today, Ron has been a constant presence—player, secretary, mentor, and friend.

Ron's kindness and generosity are legendary. Whether it's welcoming visiting teams with a smile and a hot cuppa, manning the BBQ at summer events, serving his famous sausage rolls, or ensuring young players have everything they need at training, he has done it all with warmth, laughter, and a story to share. His dedication extends far beyond the pitch, making every club gathering, match, and event feel like a true community celebration.

Stephen Bett, Chairman of the Club, says, "Without Ron, the cricket club would not be in the position it is in today. His very hard work and enthusiasm have been behind so much of what we've achieved. Being Chairman has been made easy by all his hard work, and I cannot thank him enough for all his efforts over many years." His words capture the depth of gratitude felt across the club and the vital role

Ron has played in its success.

Although he is stepping back from his formal secretary duties, we are incredibly grateful that Ron will continue to look after the square—a job he has carried out with unmatched pride and care—and we very much hope he will also keep his rightful place at the BBQ when summer rolls around. His presence in these roles is part of the fabric of club life, and we're delighted that this connection continues.

As Ian Parkin, Vice Chairman of the Norfolk Cricket League, said, "Whoever takes over from him will have some very big boots to fill," and indeed, Ron's influence will be felt long after he steps back from day-to-day duties. Vickie Rose now takes on the secretary role, and we celebrate Ron's tireless efforts that have laid a foundation for her to continue building a thriving, inclusive club.

Ron has welcomed generations of players and families into Thornham Cricket Club and has shaped the club with heart, humour, and dedication. As Andy Arnold reminds us, "Every club needs a Ron." Long may his spirit, support, and love of the game continue to inspire all who step onto the square.

Thank you, Ron, for everything. The pitch, the Pavilion, and the people you've touched are a testament to your remarkable service.

Ron said, "I can honestly say it has been a pleasure and an honour to serve Thornham Cricket Club, at first as a player and then as secretary, going right back to the start on the old playing field which was only pub 6 aside. Some 40 plus years have seen more changes than I could ever imagine, and I'm not gone altogether as I'll still be looking after the square, and I'd like to wish Vickie Rose as much fun and enjoyment as I've had as she takes over as secretary".

I have been writing for Town & Around for over five years. Ron was one of the first people I met, and I found him to be the kindest and helpful person I have met on all matters cricket related. He even managed to cajole me into turning out for the over 40's team. Well done Ron and I wish you all the best and am sure we can share a beer or two in front of the new Clubhouse next Summer.



Thornham CC over 40s team



Ron and Mike Potts



Searles recognise loyal service

Local man, Steve Matthews, who was born in Ringstead and lives in Old Hunstanton, was recognised for 25 years service at Searles recently. The groundsman come greenkeeper joined in 2000 as the golf course was being designed. Golf professional, Ray Stocker, thanked Steve for his loyal service, saying, "Steve has been an integral part of the golf club since it was built and continues to impart his vast amount of knowledge and experience onto younger members of the team". Steve officially retired

on the 28th November, but will remain on the team in a part-time capacity. Steve said, "I have enjoyed every single moment but it now means I can spend more time with my wonderful partner Lorna and our two dogs, whilst catching up on some housekeeping and long overdue DIY".

Steve, who has a handicap of 14, has one final objective, to get his name on the Honours Board at Searles Golf Club. He has a great chance this season, as he has reached the Semi Finals of the Winter Pairs. Steve added, "I have a great partner, who has carried me so far to be honest, but feel this is a real opportunity".



Countdown to Christmas as Spire Lights switched on at Big Light Concert

Nearly 300 people filled St Mary's on Saturday 13th December for The Big Light Concert when the magnificent Spire Lights were switched on after a countdown led by the Rector, Dan Tansey, marked the beginning of the Christmas season in Snettisham's beautiful St Mary's church.



Your Choir led by their Musical Director, Mike Tandy, delighted the audience with a wide variety of songs in the first half including favourites including Carol of the Bells and O Holy Night along with the Elvis hit Blue Christmas, You raise me up, Last Christmas and Mama Mia.

During the interval with Andy in charge of the bar, mulled wine (with and without alcohol) and mince pies were the order of the day.

Snettisham's own singer-songwriter Erin Eliza's soft toned vocals with a sweet sounding acoustic guitar filled the church in the second half with a folk twist to popular songs including White Christmas and Walking in a Winter Wonderland and Have yourself a merry little Christmas along with a very beautiful song many in church hadn't heard before called My Christmas List.

KL1 Radio recorded the concert for broadcasting on Christmas Eve. Sponsors of the Spire Lights include Kim Cairns Classic Cars, The Rose & Crown, Supreme Carpets, Snettisham Parish Council, Borough Council (via a Community Grant), S&M Builds, Wild Ken Hill and Atelier Associates Architecture + design. There were also individual and anonymous sponsors.

The creator of the magnificent display that will be lit every night over the Christmas season is Matt Hallard who voluntarily designs, installs and oversees the display every year.



Images Ian Burt and T&A



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Sedgeford, Norfolk

Local Rugby teams face contrasting fortunes

Tim Keogh



The men's West Norfolk rugby team have started their campaign well in Division One of the Eastern Counties League after promotion back to this level last season.

They have serious aspirations for back to back promotions under the guidance of head coach, Jamie Williamson. They were joint top and unbeaten at the end of October, however, a tight loss at Saffron Walden (32-28) dented their title bid before they beat Colchester II's (30-5) to re-ignite their challenge.

On Saturday, 13th December, they travelled to Bury St. Edmunds II's, their main rivals for the title. Unfortunately, they returned on the back of a 52-21 loss and slipped to 4th.

They welcome bottom side North Walsham II's on Saturday, 20th December aiming to end the year on a high.



West Norfolk Warriors Ladies were promoted to Division One of the Eastern Counties last year. However, they have found things tough going, winless and bottom going into their game against fellow strugglers Harpenden on Saturday, 14th December.

A much-improved, gutsy performance, saw them take a share of the spoils in an entertaining 17-17 draw. They will be hoping to use this as a launch pad out of the relegation zone.

Next up they face Hitchin Ladies at their Gatehouse Lane base on Sunday, 11th January.

Editor's note: Lack of space in this issue means that the regular 'In the Spotlight' feature and a story of 'Sweet Success' will appear in the our next edition.

Leisure Club

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Glebe House School and Nursery update

As the term draws to a close, Glebe House has been buzzing with community spirit, festive cheer and acts of kindness. This month has been full of memorable experiences that highlight the talent, generosity and enthusiasm that make our school community so special. We hope you enjoy catching up on our news!

Purfleet Trust - Reverse Advent Calendar



Ms Stowe and Mrs Playford, supported by our Community and Outreach Prefects, led the school's Reverse Advent collection for the Purfleet Trust, helping local people at risk of homelessness. Families and staff contributed almost 100 bags and boxes, around 2,500 items, including food, toiletries and warm clothing. Every donation will support hot meals, care packages, the community supermarket or the Trust's annual Christmas meal. A huge thank you to everyone who gave so generously and made a real difference this festive season.

November - Great Duck Rescue



Our whole-school November community day on Thursday 27th November brought back one of our favourite traditions, now proudly rebranded as The Great November Duck Rescue. With home clothes, stick-on (or carefully drawn!) moustaches and plenty of British-weather humour, the Inter House competition was bigger and bolder than ever. Laughter filled the grounds as pupils "rescued" ducks for charity, helping us raise over £280 for November. A heartfelt thank-you to everyone for supporting both the fun and the important cause behind it.

FoGHS Bonfire Night

Our Friends of Glebe House School hosted a lovely Bonfire Night on Wednesday 5th November. Families enjoyed a huge bonfire, a busy hot dog stall, and a very popular pick-and-mix station. The evening finished with an excellent music-accompanied firework display, skilfully designed and managed by past parent Mr Neidle. A wonderful community event to mark the start of the new half term, just as the evenings started to draw in.

Anti Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week at Glebe House was a wonderfully uplifting celebration of kindness, well-being and community. We began with Odd Socks Day on Monday, celebrating everyone's uniqueness, and enjoyed inspiring assemblies led by our Well-being Ambassadors and Kindness Club on using our voices as a Power for Good. On Tuesday, the Pre-Prep explored The Kindness Tree, learning how small acts can grow and spread. Thursday's World Kindness Day activities encouraged children to "fill each other's buckets," with prefects adding a fun odd-sock matching game. The week ended with Wear It One for Diabetes, raising over £100 for families living with Type 1 diabetes, and reminding us that kindness and care are at the heart of life at Glebe House.

Christmas Show



What a magical evening we enjoyed at the 2025 Glebe House Christmas Show, held at Hunstanton Town Hall! This much-loved annual tradition truly launched the festive season for our families and wider community. From the graceful Pre-Prep ballet and enchanting Nativity songs, to the classy performances of Years 3-8, the Eagles Performing Arts and Strictly Dance, and Mrs

Hawkins' 40-strong choir, every moment shone. The three House performances and the joyful finale of The 12 Days of Christmas highlighted the children's talent and enthusiasm. A heartfelt thank you to all staff and teachers for making the evening so memorable and special.



Year 2 Science Trip to Langham Glass



Our Division II children had a fantastic trip to Langham Glass as part of their science topic on materials. From discovering how glass is made to watching expert makers create festive animals and baubles, the children were captivated, especially when a glass



bubble exploded! They proudly created their own glass tea-light holders too. This much-loved annual outing with Mrs Maud is just one way Glebe House extends learning beyond the classroom, embracing local opportunities and hands-on experiences that truly bring learning to life.

Year 1 Library Visit to Hunstanton Library



Year 1 enjoyed a fabulous trip to Hunstanton Library. The rain held off for a delightful walk through the park, and the children were excited to take part in Christmas-themed activities and help decorate the children's area. They explored the festive book selection and ended the visit with two very funny Christmas stories. A big thank you, as always, to the wonderful library staff and to our children for their excellent behaviour.

Come and see us!

Does your child start Reception or Senior School in September? 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.

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The Arts Society King's Lynn

The Arts Society King's Lynn continues the 2025-26 season on Thursday 8 January 2026 when they welcome Laurie Wickwire to give a talk on The British Crown Jewels: Every Stone Tells a Story. With over 35 years in the diamond industry, diamond expert Laurie Wickwire represents the industry across all sectors: mining, sorting, grading and brokering some of the world's key rough stones. She is also the On-Air Diamond Expert for the international television shopping channel QVC where her opinion is regularly sought by over a million viewers each week. Whether presenting diamond shows on national channels the BBC, ITV and QVC, hosting diamond master classes, filming jubilee specials, or creating the historical jewellery range for both Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle gift shops, Laurie's love of the diamond industry is apparent.



A graduate of GIA London, IGI Antwerp, and DeBeers Institute of Diamonds, Laurie is both a certified diamond grader and certified pearl grader. Additionally, she holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in International Business & Finance, and a Bachelor of Arts in French.

The British Crown Jewels are an unchanging jewelled anchor, whilst all around us changes. Delve into the history & beauty of the Crowns, Sceptre, Orb and other royal jewels used during the coronation ceremony. Diamond industry expert Laurie Wickwire will take you to the front row of the coronation with details of the diamonds, rubies, sapphires and pearls used in the newly crafted royal regalia used by Kings & Queens since 1661. Secrets & mystery abound within these priceless jewels, seen by millions, worn by one.

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.



The new year starts with a bang for King's Lynn Community Cinema Club; two films and a club meal are scheduled for January. Films, as usual, will be shown in Screen 2 at the Majestic at 7.30pm.

The first offering is on Thursday 8th The Phoenician Scheme. A Wes Anderson film with an extensive cast of actors including, Tom Hanks, Benedict Cumberbatch, Benicio Del Toro and Scarlett Johansson. A black comedy about an industrialist and arms dealer who survives an assassination attempt, appoints his daughter, a novice nun as his heir and develops a new enterprise. This results in them becoming targets of scheming tycoons and foreign terrorists.

On Thursday 22nd the second offering is a subtitled French film The Marching Band. An acclaimed orchestra conductor is diagnosed with leukaemia and whilst a bone marrow donor is trying to be found a DNA test reveals that he is adopted. He finds he has a brother, a cook in a school canteen who plays trombone of a local marching band. The conductor steps in when the band loses its conductor, and the brothers learn more about each other's lives.

There is to a social event of a club meal on Sunday 25th, details to be emailed to members.

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.

Wash Art Group news

The Wash Art Group held a very enjoyable and successful exhibition at Thornham Village Hall in August. The was in support of Tapping House and the picture shows group member Julie Witt presenting a cheque for £376.80 at the Hospice.



NEW BEGINNINGS!

On 29 November 2025, a community event was held at the Co-Op supermarket in Dersingham to introduce Rotary International to local shoppers. This initiative aimed to dispel misconceptions, raise awareness of Rotary's mission and activities, and highlight the organisation's longstanding commitment to community service.

Our goal was to present a refreshed narrative about Rotary—one that emphasises humanitarian aid, community development, and meaningful engagement in Dersingham and the surrounding villages. The event also marked the announcement of the upcoming Sandringham & District Rotary Club, scheduled to begin operations in January 2026.

This new club aims to adopt an inclusive, family-friendly approach. Membership will be open to all ages, welcoming families with children, single parents, working adults, retirees, and individuals aged 18 to 80. Our message is simple: everyone can contribute to positive change, regardless of age or background.

Joining the club offers the opportunity to become part of a global network of more than 1.2 million members across over 200 countries. Rotary's collective efforts improve lives through humanitarian aid, support underserved communities, and strengthen local initiatives. Members will be involved in projects that make a genuine difference—both locally and internationally.

If you are interested in taking part, we encourage you to contact John Greyson (07739 370513) or Jean-Marie Vernon (07369 207266) for more information. Your involvement can help us advance our shared goals of community service and global humanitarian support.

We will be holding a presentation meeting on 9th January 2026 – 7pm at The Dersingham Village Centre, where you can learn more about the Sandringham Rotary Club, meet the founding members, and discover how you can get involved.

Burns Night Celebration

Downham Market Rotary is holding its annual Burns Night supper at Ryston Park Golf Club on Monday 26th January 2026. The celebrations will be written and performed by members of both Rotary and Golf Clubs. There is, of course, the traditional address to the haggis and the programme will feature Scottish dancing and other entertainment.

Accommodation is limited and anybody wishing to attend is advised to contact Howard Phillips at the earliest opportunity; Howard Phillips

Email: downhammarketrotary@hotmail.co.uk
Mobile: 07770 756614 Home: 01945 430880



Downham's Scot in exile, George Morton, is piped in with the haggis in 2025



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Deepdale Podcast – Top Albums of the Year 2025



Chris Haycock and Jason Borthwick from Deepdale Camping & Rooms have published their annual selection of albums that have made them smile over the past 12 months. The list features twenty-one incredible albums, from both local Norfolk and East of England artists, and more internationally known groups.

The December episode of the Deepdale Podcast, has become a tradition, allowing Chris to pick and chat about some of his favourite music from the year gone by. With occasional additions from Jason, although most of the time Chris is introducing Jason and the listeners to an eclectic, but brilliant selection of music, by artists who are often flying below the radar.

The majority of the albums selected for the 2025 list are artists that everyone should know about, but don't have the backing of huge labels. Artists featured include Brown Horse, Pavey Ark, Kysons Point, Kathryn Williams, Sunday Driver, Skinny Lister, Iona Lane, Eliza Delf & The Wilderness, Sam Kelly, Murmurations, IQ, Floral Image, Neev, Christina Alden & Alex Patterson, and Polly Paulusma. Many of whom live in the local area, have played at Deepdale, or played locally recently.

And there are five artists who are more internationally established - Father John Misty, Doves, Turin Brakes, Hannah White and CMAT. Some joined Chris' favourite's list when they played at Moseley Folk Festival in Birmingham (to which he makes an annual pilgrimage).

Sixteen artists gave Deepdale Podcast permission to play samples of their music, so the episode is both packed with passionate amusing

chat about great music, but also full of fabulous tracks. An hour of enjoyment in the dank of December weather, a great way to warm yourselves.

Anyone who'd like to listen to the Deepdale Podcast, can search for it in any good podcast app or directory.

However a word of warning to all listeners from Chris ... "Listening may not be great for your bank balance, as you will want to own many, if not all, these albums, and you may want to give to friends and family too!"

The Deepdale Podcast is a magazine programme about North Norfolk. Jason is usually the host, and he chats with local people about their businesses and organisations. Subjects are as wide ranging as the attractions are of this beautiful part of the world ... the local wildlife, events, music, art, geography, history, and pretty much anything other than politics. The idea is a podcast that celebrates what is incredibly special about North Norfolk and the people that live and work here.

"I love putting together the Deepdale Podcast each month. I get to talk to really interesting people, have an excuse to explore this beautiful part of the world, and to share my love of this place with people around the world." said Jason Borthwick.



Jason Borthwick

The December episode also includes details of the forthcoming Deepdale Live Music programme, which includes gigs by some fabulous artists. The growing programme for 2026 can be found online at www.deepdalemusic.co.uk



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David Young provides unique musical entertainment on clarinet, tenor saxophone and wind synthesiser. The instruments are accompanied by pre-recorded musicians and covers all tastes from jazz standards, film/show music, Latin (cha cha, samba, bossa nova), ballroom and upbeat pop music from several decades.

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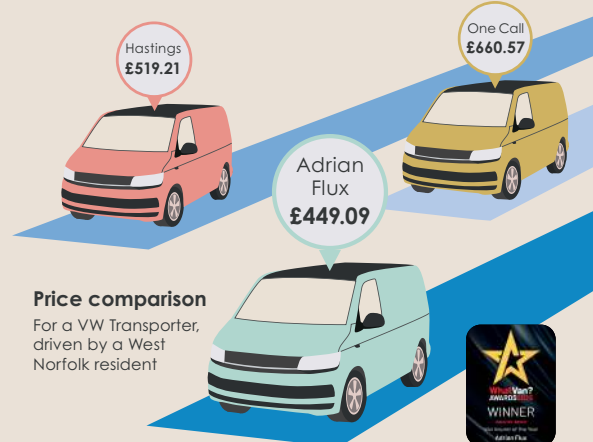
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January events - see also <https://townandaround.net/whats-on/january>**Thursday 1st**

Inaugural New Years Day parkrun. Sandringham parkrun Sandringham Royal Park 8:40 for a 9:00 am start. First Timers Briefing 8:45am. Start and finish on the vista near children's play area. Parking for parkrun is free until 11:00am.

To volunteer or for further information contact:
sandringham@parkrun.com
07913 439222

Thurs 1st – Sun 4th

Aladdin at the Princess Theatre – you last chance to see this magical show. Box Office 01485 532252

Saturday 3rd

Sandringham parkrun. Sandringham Royal Park. 8:40 for a 9:00 am start First Timers Briefing 8:45am. Start and finish on the vista near children's play area. Parking for parkrun is free until 11:00 am. To volunteer or for further info contact:
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Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. Meet outside the Sailing Club
hunstantonpromenade@parkrun.com. Info: 07804 927764

Hunstanton Conservative Club Special Saturday night Bingo. Eyes down 8pm 01485 532462

Sunday 4th

Indoor Car Boot Sale at Wereham Village Hall from 8am £5 per table Enquiries: Philip on 01366 501330 or 07759 033492

Wolferton Cash Bingo. Doors 6.30pm, Eyes down 7.30pm
Wolferton Social Club PE31 6HA Enquiries 01485 541919

Thursday 8th

The Arts Society King's Lynn. Laurie Wickwire to give a talk on The British Crown Jewels at West Winch Village Hall where there is ample free parking available. 2.30pm. 01760 724823

Friday 9th

Dersingham Singers Singalong 2-4pm at Dersingham Village Centre PE31 6LN. All welcome. Enquiries 07885 721158

Sandringham Rotary Club presentation meeting at The Dersingham Village Centre at 7pm. Call John Greyson (07739 370513) or Jean-Marie Vernon (07369 207266) for more information.

Saturday 10th

Sandringham parkrun – see Saturday 3rd for details.

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. see Saturday 3rd

Sunday 11th

National Theatre Live: The Fifth Step 4pm at Thornham Village Hall PE36 6LZ Tickets <https://thornhamvillagehall.co.uk/event/the-fifth-step/> Enquiries 07502 265305

Monday 12th

Hunstanton u3a at Hunstanton Community Centre 2pm. Wally Webb sharing stories about his time in the RAF, his entry into radio, and more. Enquiries 01485 544754

Tuesday 13th

King's Lynn Society of Arts and Sciences. From scoops to scandals. Talk: The Antidote to the News: Reflections on 25 years in Journalism by Patrick Kidd. Small Barn, Knights Hill Hotel PE30 3HP. 7.30pm (doors 6.45) Visitors £7 cash. 07491 637505

Thursday 15th

The Wolf Folk Club at Flitcham Village Social Club PE31 6BU. 7.30-11pm

Friday 16th

Thornham winter Warmer Talk and Dinner. Join Allie Wharf from Norfolk Seaweed to explore how the sea's oldest plants are helping to shape a more sustainable future right here in Norfolk. Enquiries 07502 265305

Anmer Social Club Film Night PE31 6RN. Doors 7pm Enquiries 07899873351 £5
Great Massingham Village Hall PE32 2HU Massingham Historical Society's Archive Evening. Enquiries 01485 520455

Saturday 17th

Sandringham parkrun – see Saturday 3rd for details.

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. see Saturday 3rd for details.

Hunstanton Conservative Club Music Night with Glen Cooper 01485 532462

Sunday 18th

Wedding Showcase at Caley Hall Hotel 11am-2pm Free entry. Call 01485 533486

Tuesday 20th

Old Hunstanton Village Hall PE36 6HS Knit and natter 10am-12 noon. Just bring your knitting and croqueting and join in. £3 includes cake and coffee.

Wolferton Prize Bingo. Doors 6.30pm, Eyes down 7.30pm
Wolferton Social Club PE31 6HA. Enquiries 01485 541919

Curry and Quiz night at The Golden Lion Hunstanton 01485 532688

Wednesday 21st

Hunstanton Society Talk by Ben Colson 7.30pm at the Heritage Centre PE36 6BB

Thursday 22nd

New Hunstanton Women's Institute. 2.15pm at the Methodist Church Hall, Austin St, Hunstanton PE36 6AL. West Norfolk Community First Responders will be giving a demonstration as to how to give CPR and how to use a defibrillator. Visitors welcome. £5 including refreshments. 07789 687893

Friday 23rd

Dersingham Quiz night at Dersingham Social Club PE31 6JX 7.30pm. enquiries 01485 543380

Saturday 24th

Sandringham parkrun – see Saturday 3rd for details.

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. see Saturday 3rd for details.

Coffee morning to raise funds for Dersingham Flower Festival. Dersingham Methodist Church PE31 6HP 10-11.30am

Burns Night supper at Anmer Social Club PE31 6RN. Doors 7pm, supper 7.30pm. to book: email farmboy24@sky.com or telephone, text or WhatsApp on 07899 872351 by Monday 19th January.

Monday 26th

Old Hunstanton Village Hall PE36 6HS Bingo Doors open at 6.15pm. Eyes down at 7pm.

Tuesday 27th

Dersingham Village Cinema presents Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale (PG) at Dersingham Village Centre PE31 6LN £6 under 16s £3. 7pm Enquiries 01485 543195



Scan here for up to date event information

**Wednesday 28th**

Hunstanton Society Coffee morning 10.30-Noon at the Heritage Centre PE36 6BB

Snettisham Gardening Club AGM with cake & fizz! 7.30pm
Snettisham Memorial Hall PE31 7LX. Info: Gail on 01485 541279 or Addie 01485 544754

Thursday 29th

Miss Saigon 25th Anniversary 1-4pm at Hunstanton Town Hall PE36 6BQ Tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/creative-arts-east/miss-saigon/e-ovkpij> Info: 01953 713390

The Wolf Folk Club at Flitcham Village Social Club PE31 6BU. 7.30-11pm

Friday 30th

RAF Aerial Reconnaissance and Photography in World War II. 14:00, Lynn Museum Mark Taylor will be discussing the importance of World War II RAF reconnaissance. Adults £2, <https://www.lynnmuseum.norfolk.gov.uk/>

Quiz Night at Anmer Social Club PE31 6RN The club opens at 7pm, Quiz starts at 7:30pm. £3pp.

Pub Quiz 8pm The Lodge Old Hunstanton 01485 532896

Saturday 31st

5K Your Wy – Move Charity. Sandringham Royal Park 8:40 for a 9:00 am start. For anyone affected by cancer. Info: sandringhamgroup@5kyourway.org 07913 439222

Hunstanton Promenade parkrun 9am. see Saturday 3rd for details.

Wedding Showcase at Titchwell Manor 1-4pm. Tickets at: eventbrite.co.uk/e/wedding-showcase-open-day-tickets-1975993831743

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In the Limelight

Happy New Year from us All at the Princess Theatre. From Pantomime wishes to New Year's resolutions we hope they are treating you well.

Panto Season is almost at an end, boooooo.... If you haven't had a chance to catch "Aladdin", tickets are available for the final few shows of the season up to the 4th January. For the very first time ever, the stage has come alive with real magical flying, a dazzling feat that's never been seen here before. It's bold, breathtaking, and guaranteed to leave you utterly amazed! Don't miss your chance to be part of this unforgettable moment.

Now it's time for the theatre and its team to take a well-earned rest. We will be closed from the 5th of January and will return on the 19th. Please remember that online orders will be available 24/7.

We're thrilled to say that 2026 is all set to be an incredible year at The Princess Theatre, with a line-up ready to entertain audiences of every kind. Our brand-new brochure is out now, packed with shows running from January through to July, giving you the perfect chance to plan and pick your favourites. You'll find all the details in our theatre foyer and bar, as well as online, where you can browse the full year in one go. And don't forget to keep checking back, we're adding new shows regularly, and there's plenty more excitement still to come even into 2027!

The first show of the year is Talon - The Best Of Eagles Busy Being Fabulous on Thursday 22nd January, featuring the Eagles timeless back catalogue including Hotel California, Take It Easy, One Of These Nights, Take It To The Limit, Desperado, Lyin' Eyes, Life In The Fast Lane and many more.

New to the Princess is the queen of pop Totally Gaga on Friday 23rd January. This is the perfect night to glam up and step into a world of pop spectacle, glamour, and unstoppable energy. Starring the sensational Georgia Crandon, her stellar LIVE band, and dazzling dancers! Featuring ALL of Gaga's greatest hits, Bad Romance, Just Dance, Shallow, Poker Face, Born This Way and many more. Unleash your "Monster", get on the right track, and book your seats now.

Time for a spot of Adult Panto? Snow White & The Magnificent



Seven on Saturday 24th January? Can the fearless company of just 3 actors hold it all together and pull off their biggest challenge yet, their very own adult version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs using a minimum of set props, costume and actors!? This show is not suitable for under 16's.

The UK Rock Show returns Friday 30th January. Get ready to be transported back to the 80s heyday of classic rock, combining the feel of a rock festival with the atmosphere of a top end rock arena tour. Expect fireworks, flames, amazing lighting and exacting attention to detail as this amazing 5 piece band recreate hits from rock gods such as Journey, Aerosmith, Def Leppard, Bon Jovi, Kiss, AC/DC, Van Halen and many more!

Saturday 31st January, Jim Davidson - Last Man Standing. In the ever-evolving book of British comedy, Jim Davidson OBE remains a best-seller, an unapologetic voice still standing tall while others bow to the tide. Through decades of laughter, controversy, and cultural change, he's held the line. And now, he's back with a brand-new tour 'Last Man Standing ... Just!' and firing on all cylinders and refusing to be silenced.

Join us at The Princess Theatre for a trio of screen highlights to brighten up the early months of 2026.

John Cleese: Packs It In on Tuesday 27th January. Spanning six weeks on the road, the film captures Cleese unfiltered and on the move - riffing on life, fame, and the absurdity of getting old in front of thousands of fans. As he reflects on a stage career that began in 1963, the question lingers: is this the end of the road? With unique and intimate access and showing unexpected tenderness, this is a documentary about legacy, laughter, and the dignity of bowing out... however reluctantly.

Westlife: 25th Anniversary Concert, Tuesday 3rd February
Celebrate 25 years of unforgettable hits with a spectacular concert experience on the big screen.

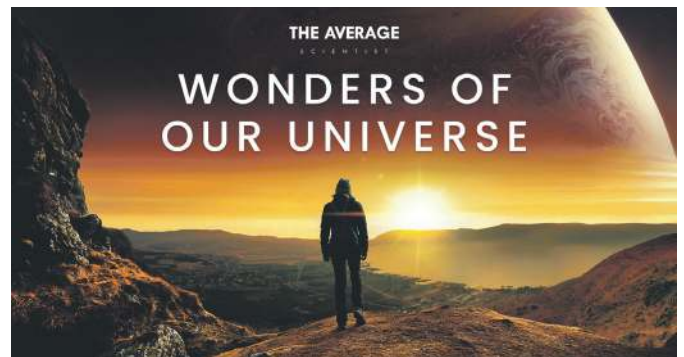
Film Night, Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale, Tuesday 17th February. Join us for the final chapter of the Downton Abbey story.



Anna



Wonders of Our Universe, a brand-new show comes to The Princess Theatre on Saturday 21st March. Join astrophysicist Ian Hall FRAS for a breathtaking journey from the explosive birth of the cosmos to humanity's first steps into space. Discover black holes, the life cycle of stars, and the beauty of distant galaxies, all brought to life with cinematic visuals, immersive sound and a powerful soundtrack. Ian's live narration blends science, humour and storytelling, making the mysteries of the universe accessible to everyone, from seasoned stargazers to complete newcomers.



Please share our theatre joy with us on our socials. We love seeing you check in and let us know you have enjoyed a show. Don't forget, we would love some happy reviews too.

A New Year's resolution for me is to compliment more. You never know when that might just make someone's day!

Thanks for Reading & Here's to 2026.

Anna

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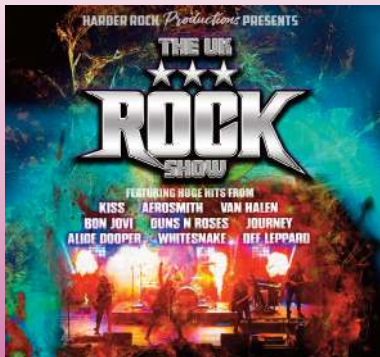
**The Princess Theatre Aladdin Panto
continues on New Years Day, 2nd, 3rd &
4th January.**

Hop aboard the magic carpet and join us at the Princess Theatre for our spectacular Pantomime Aladdin. Packed with dazzling dance routines, brilliant special effects, toe-tapping musical numbers, plenty of audience participation, and laughter for the whole family, it's the festive treat you won't want to miss!



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
SAT 31ST - JIM DAVIDSON - LAST MAN STANDING

January
2026



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