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Wayland Men's Shed

A Happy New Year to All readers and supporters of Wayland Men's Shed. Our Shed went from strength to strength in 2025 and I am sure that we will continue this year in our mission to provide a place for men to meet up and enjoy each other's company. Combatting loneliness and supporting each other during tough times is something that we have become very good at. Long may it continue. We now have over 100 members with a regular attendance of over 50 members in the social room and workshops.

On Monday 15th December we held a mince pie and mulled wine morning. The event was held at the Sports Centre, in the back room of the bar area and the bar itself between

10am and 1pm. Thanks to all those who contributed mince pies, sausage rolls and cheese scones and thanks to the hard work of some members and their wives the morning was a great success and a great start to the festive season.

The music appreciation group held its first meeting on 7th January with the theme of transport. A very enjoyable morning with 18 members in attendance.

The Shanty group has held its first get together on 5th January in preparation for an appearance for the Women's Institute at Thompson on Saturday 24th January.

The Shanty group (Wayland Shanty Men) now meet up 3 times a month to enjoy singing and rehearsing for

public performances. The next "Gig" is for the Thompson WI on Saturday 24th January.

The Shutterists group have plans for monthly outings and also a monthly competition.

The workshops continue to keep busy those members with an interest in woodworking projects or computer/printer repairs as reported in the last edition.

That is all for this edition but I hope to report further in the next one.

If you want any further information on Wayland Men's Shed please visit our Website www.waylandmensshed.co.uk or contact :

Malcolm Trayhorn, Chairman & Social Secretary Tel: 07729993163 Charity No.1213606

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Norfolk Wildlife Trust Breckland Local Group

We had a bit of a disappointing turnout in December, maybe because Aaron Brett-Miller was an unknown name. Those there seemed to enjoy it though and it meant more Christmas treats each!

At time of writing we are not sure which member of NWT will be doing the talk after our AGM. We are hoping the subject will be on the use of grazing animals. But we do know for sure it will be on Wednesday 11th at 7.30pm. Held as always at the Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton. IP25 6AB. Cost £2 members, £3 non members.

North Pole Roll® Raises Thousands for Local & Regional Charities

A festive community event held in Saham Toney before Christmas has successfully raised thousands of pounds for local and regional causes, thanks to the generosity of residents, businesses and volunteers.

The North Pole Roll®, held at Wells Cole Community Centre, brought families and the wider Wayland community together for a day of festive entertainment, stalls and seasonal activities, all in support of charitable fundraising.

The event raised an impressive £2,502 for Wells Cole Community

Centre, helping to support the village hall and its year-round programme of community groups and events. The funds are being used towards the purchase of new lightweight chairs, improving comfort and accessibility for hall users.

In addition, £630 was donated to East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH), supporting children with life-threatening conditions and their families across the region.

Organisers praised the strong sense of community shown on the day, with local sponsors, stallholders and volunteers all playing a key role in the event's success.

Speaking after the event, organiser Sharon Mackie said the result showed "exactly what can be achieved when a community comes together with generosity, kindness and a shared purpose."



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Christmas Lunches Delivered To The Elderly And Infirm In Watton



For a number of years Jacob Weatherill, proprietor of Florentina Catering, and his marvellous hard working team have prepared free Christmas lunches for housebound individuals and couples in Watton, who would struggle to cook for themselves. This has been done entirely at Jacob's own expense, working with local organisations such as St Mary's Church, the British Legion, the NHS and Margot Hornsby who helped to identify those in most need of support. The meals, comprising traditional roast turkey with all the trimmings were packaged into bags, and delivered by a team of volunteers, including members and friends of Watton Rotary Club just before Christmas. The meals only needed to be warmed up when needed. Thanks are also due to Watton Bakers, who donated mince pies to accompany each prepared meal.

Over 50 meals in total were delivered, and recipients were delighted to receive them. At one home Rotary members even managed to fix a malfunctioning oven, without which there would have been no hot food over Christmas.

Rotary Club President Andrew Barwood said 'Jacob's generosity in providing these meals, not to mention all the hard work that goes into their preparation is wonderful, and it is so good to see local organisations working together to make this initiative possible. Our members have been pleased to support Jacob by helping to deliver the meals'. (Pictured from left) Helen Thomas, Jacob Weatherill, Mike Gicquel, Jayne Eastwood and Jack Hannaway, getting ready to deliver the lunches. Picture by Paul Weatherill.

Saham WI Celebrate

Saham WI were unable to celebrate their 50th birthday in 2020 because of Covid and lockdown. So it was decided to push the boat out for their 55th birthday party with musical entertainment by The Cats and outside catering by Sally from Hingham. Member Sandra Wood made a lovely cake to mark the occasion and a good time was had by all.



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Back to the Basics of Making the Most of Your Library

Over the course of the year we're going to tell you everything libraries have to offer (or at least attempt to, there's quite a lot to get through!) which may not be common knowledge, but as a Community Hub we'd really like members of the community to know about and make use of. Let's start with the basics.

First things first, you can sign up for a free library card with a member of staff, and once you've got one of those a whole world of free media is opened up to you! We know money can be tight at this time of year, and it's no secret that one of the biggest advantages of the library is being able to read books and access lots of other useful resources for free. Therefore it's possibly the best time to get a library card or visit if you haven't been in a while! You can use your library card in any library in Norfolk too; we're versatile like that.

A range of different books to choose from - there's something for everyone! Our non-fiction selection covers just about anything you can think of, from crafting and cookbooks to theory test help and language learning courses. Our fiction collection includes crime, fantasy and contemporary, and we have selections of graphic novels and audiobooks for children, teens and adults. We also have a dedicated local studies section, so whether you're looking to learn a new hobby, engage in some escapism or brush up on your history, we've got it all.

Free access to WiFi and computers. We have 5 desktop computers available or, using our Wi-Fi, you can work from your own devices. Printing and photocopying facilities. You can print from the library computers or from your

A Young Writer: Stories of Watton

Who is Watton, and how did we get here? Dynamic community champions represent, employ and celebrate our rural way of life - one such family are the Hutchings.

A Watton family with North Welsh and Essex influences, we moved here in 2012 to be closer with my grandad who moved to Watton prior. Our family has grown into something new since being here, a recognisable name, with a responsibility to others in our community. Three generations from 80 to 21, so what's the story?

The original Wattonian Hutchings, Chris, is the Chairman of Museum for Watton, which is found in Wayland Hall on the High St. Watton has existed for over 1000 years, and all that knowledge has been collected locally, with the help of some other community champions. With a deep personal knowledge base of history and business, Chris has taught hundreds of residents (including school pupils) about Watton.

My brother and I grew up in local schools, with some highs and lows. There was a deep perception of being an outsider as one of the few pupils who weren't born nearby. Interestingly, I found connections with migrants from Poland and Lithuania as we both came from another country, being Welsh, although I was only a stone throw away before. Wayland Academy has improved significantly since my time not that long ago,

own device using email.

Free community space. With third spaces rapidly declining over the years, the library is one of the few remaining places you don't have to spend money to spend time in. We welcome you whether you want to get some work done, meet a friend for a chat, or simply read a book in a safe, warm, and inclusive space for all. The library can also be a great place for meeting new people at one of our friendly groups.

Information about events in the community. We have a community folder on display in which flyers on local goings-on in Watton and surrounding areas can be stored. We also have a noticeboard detailing regular and one-off activities taking place in the library and other services we offer.

A substantial children's library. We are very fortunate to have a wonderfully large space for our children's area, offering a wide selection of story books, information books, audiobooks and picture books for younger readers. National Literacy Trust research has shown that encouraging a love of reading from an early age can benefit children in learning and wellbeing as they grow, so introducing them to the library can have a great impact on their development. Our information books can be used as helpful resources for home schooling, an addition to classroom learning or simply to help foster early interests. You'll also find Lego, colouring-in and activity pages to complete and bright, welcoming displays.

Look out for more information on what we offer as a Community Hub in next month's edition, we hope there'll be something of interest to everyone.

As always, for any enquiries please speak to a member of staff in-person, email us on watton.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk, call 01953 881671 or you can visit our Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/WattonLibraryNorfolk
Jessica Annison, Library and Information Assistant

being one of the top schools in the county now. I had a very rough time there with discrimination, violence and intimidation. I would not be writing today without the support I had from select few staff and migrant peers. Following high school, my brother and I pursued creative fields in Norwich before office work caught us both. Our first jobs were GP receptionist and Education Admin.

My mother makes and sells candles, once in Swaffham, Banham and now Watton. They are all handmade, and this attention was once also given to the PTA at Watton Junior School. She organised school discos and a huge summer fayre. Known to many as 'candle lady', The Norfolk Gift Company has given a platform to well over 60 local businesses.

My father is a tech genius, supporting my life throughout. His full-time job is err... software engineer? It's too advanced IT for me! He can repair computers inside and out, vintage and new, with pure arcane knowledge of coding. His knowledge and skill with IT brought us all far - and as for Watton - is a business owner and Trustee of the Museum.

As for myself, a Town Councillor, Loch Neaton Trustee, Watton and Saham Flood Action Member, a resident and past pupil. The Hutchings were brought together in this Town, and like many families before us, look to community in our small market town. Whose story should I cover next? Did you know The Museum & Gift Company were related by family? See you next month and thanks for reading.

Written by Tomos Hutchings

Councillor Chat With Councillor Claire Bowes

Car parks: After making a strong vocal stand to oppose Breckland Council's car park charging proposals in Watton last year, I am very pleased to say that Breckland Council has now begun the process of transferring a number of its car parks into the ownership of local town councils. At its meeting in January, Cabinet gave the green light to officially start the transfer, following an update on the latest engagement with the district's Town Councils, who were invited to take on the management of car parking provision in the towns. Attleborough, Dereham, Thetford and Watton Town Councils had confirmed their interest in taking on a number of local car parks although Swaffham Town Council had chosen not to at this time. Work will now be to complete the legal process of transferring the assets from one authority to another, which will help to keep decision making about car parking provision as close to communities as possible. It is important and imperative that the transfers are completed ahead of the Labour Government's Local Government Reorganisation programme, under which they propose to replace the two tier system of County and District Councils with larger unitary authorities. This would mean that any car parks which have not already been transferred into town council ownership will instead become owned and controlled by the emerging unitary authority for the area. However, transferring ownership to the towns should protect these car parks from a potential new unitary charging regime.

Future Breckland Programme:

Breckland's Rural England Prosperity Grant Fund Panel have recently allocated the following funding in Watton, which I have been very pleased to support Digital and Creative Media Centre - Watton £6,830; Streetlight on Church Walk - Watton £395; High Street Matters: George Freeman MP has recently been lobbying Government against the Chancellor's changes to business rates on pubs and hospitality businesses. Rachel Reeve's stealth tax on pubs means that the average town or village pub faces an additional £6,000-£7,000 per year in business rates. The negative impact will reach wider than just the hospitality sector, affecting other independent businesses on our high streets. I have likewise been lobbying for County Council Cabinet Members to fund a scheme, similar to the High Street Matters programme, to help support these businesses. I will know if this has been successful at the Council's budget meeting on February 17th.

A little after the event I know, and how time flies! but I must just mention here how pleased I was to go along to Watton's Christmas Fair and see it so well attended with a lovely seasonal atmosphere clearly enjoyed by all. Hats off to the high street businesses for all the effort put into the wonderful shop displays. It was also great to see families participating with the 'festive selfie board' (successfully secured from the County Council) and sharing their photos on social media, all hopefully helping to create footfall. Finally, it always strikes me how much the town layout lends itself to Christmas lighting and thanks to the Town Council for an impressive display which reached from one end of the high street to the other.

Devolution: Government recently announced that the election of a new Mayor for Norfolk & Suffolk is likely to be delayed until 2028. Despite this, Devolution will still be

implemented across Norfolk & Suffolk over the coming years, likely via a Combined County Authority (CCA). An Investment Fund will form part of local Devolution, and Breckland Council aims to develop a new prospectus of key schemes which it believes should receive a share of that funding to realise benefits both to the district and the county as a whole. With devolved control over transport and planning, Breckland's members want to see accelerated investment in local roads, sustainable transport options and new infrastructure that supports housing and employment growth tailored to local needs. Any new structures must enhance democratic accountability, ensuring that the voices of Breckland residents can influence decisions made at combined authority level.

On the subject of elections. There has been much speculation, following the postponement of the Mayoral elections, that May's County Council elections could be 'postponed' to accommodate the Government's Local Government Reorganisation programme. To be clear, (as I write) they are going ahead, and I very much believe and actively advocate that they should - no matter what. A view that I have made very clear at every opportunity. However, ultimately, the decision is not in the hands of County Councillors. It will be a decision made in Whitehall by the Labour Government.

Road Gritting:

This winter, Norfolk County Council's gritters have been active on A and B roads, key bus routes, and village access roads, using new tech for efficiency. The first runs of the recent winter season started as temperatures dropped, utilising the 58-strong fleet with automated salting to cover 2,200 miles of routes, supported by stocked salt barns and public grit bins. Updates are posted on their social media using #NorfolkWinter, with a dedicated website for info, and recent campaigns even involved naming the gritters. Residents can also check this year's gritting routes and report any issues using the online map on the council's website. Gritting routes are reviewed annually.

Fire Service update:

Two new state-of-the-art specialist fire fighting vehicles are being delivered into Norfolk later this month, leading the way in technology and ability across the fire and rescue sector in the UK. The water and foam carriers can hold and pump 13,500L of water, 1,500L of foam concentrate, making them among the largest and most capable vehicles with specialist equipment to enhance firefighting operations. Norfolk firefighters are also now using state-of-the-art technology to help keep the county safer, with the rollout of 160 new Axon body-worn camera devices in stations across Norfolk. Each of the service's fire appliances and operational officers have been kitted out with a camera for use at incidents. They have also been issued to protection and prevention officers for business safety inspections and home visits, as well as fire investigation officers and the service's training school. Trading Standards officers have also been equipped, The devices have live streaming capabilities, location data and two-way communication. All of this enables firefighters and officers to be able to stream footage to control room staff taking emergency 999 calls while an incident is ongoing, and ensures quicker, more informed decision-making during complex fire incidents.

Claire Bowes

County Councillor - Watton Division - Claire. bowes@norfolk.gov.uk

Breckland Councillor - Watton Ward - claire. bowes@breckland.gov.uk
07789796937

The Merton Sword



Museum 4 Watton Wednesday - Saturday 10am-4pm

During 2025, we received a letter from our patron, The Lord Walsingham, with some rather exciting news! He wrote to tell us that during renovation work on the Merton Estate, what he strongly suspected to be an ancient sword, possibly of Danish provenance, had been unearthed. The sword was duly delivered, and verification was sought from the relevant museum authorities as to the sword's authenticity. But how did the Sword find its way to its deposition site at Merton?

Incursions along the North Sea coast by Norse invaders had begun in the late 8th century, with a brutal attack at Lindisfarne. These sporadic brutal attacks along the coast were to continue until 865 when a coalition of Norse warriors, Vikings if you will, termed the Great Heathen Army invaded England, spending their first winter at Thetford, harrying the local population before launching a further campaign across England. The purpose of this campaign was to mark a significant tactile shift from grab-and-go raids to a full-scale conquest of England and the establishment of Danelaw. The Norse invaders succeeded to a great extent, and a large area of England fell too Danish rule, including Norfolk. It wasn't a completely violent episode, as recent archaeological evidence suggests that many of the Scandinavian invaders assimilated with the local population, trading, marrying, and building communities. The Scandinavian presence in Norfolk contributed to the long term Norse influence as evidenced in place names and some church architecture.

The Merton Sword

Swords were highly valued in Norse culture, a sign of high status they were costly to make. A warriors sword was not merely a tool but a companion. Owning a sword was a matter of great honour, and persons of status often owned ornately decorated swords with silver accents and inlays. Swords were highly valued objects and could be handed down from generation to generation.

It was not unusual for a warrior to name his

sword, and many were given names, such as Leg-biter, Gold-hilt or Widow-maker.

During the Viking age, the most prized swords were produced in the Rhineland, a centre for advanced sword-making technology. These swords were highly prized, and often given as gifts to people of high status or to broker peace agreements. Many were taken as war trophies from a vanquished foe, or stolen from the graves of former warriors.

The Merton sword is missing its tang and hilt. The hilt is the handle, which comprises the guard grip and pommel, and was designed for hand protection and balance. These were often elaborately decorated and were made of bone, antler or precious metals such as gold and silver. The tang is the metal extension of the blade that runs through the hilt, onto which the grip, guard and pommel are mounted. The tang's design influences the sword's balance and handling.

The blade, the most substantial remaining portion of the Merton sword shows evidence of having been made using 'Pattern Welding', a method by which several pieces of iron were twisted and beaten together when red hot.

Pattern welding is a metalworking process that dates back to the early Iron Age. It involves layering different types of iron and steel, heating them together and heating them to almost the melting point before hammering them together. This technique creates visually striking patterns on the blade whilst also combining the desirable properties of iron and steel, resulting in a stronger and more flexible sword. The blade itself often had "blood grooves" running along its middle. These saved valuable metal and made the sword lighter. Various cultures used this manufacturing method, including the Anglo-Saxons it was mostly obsolete by the 9th century. a symbol of prestige and power

How the Merton sword came to be where it was is, of course a mystery, which may never be solved, but we can employ conjecture. The significance of swords in Norse culture cannot be underplayed. They were important culturally and held great symbolic significance; you didn't just throw

them away, there will have been a reason for it's deposition at Merton. Could it be 'grave goods' (it is broken, the handle is missing)? Is there a burial there?

Is this evidence of the practice of "killing" swords, which involved bending the blade so that it was unusable? This practice may have served both a ritualistic and practical purpose, as Vikings were often buried with their weapons, and the "killing" of swords may have deterred grave robbers from

disturbing the burial in order to get one of these costly weapons. Archaeological finds of bent and brittle pieces of metal sword remains attest to the regular burial of Vikings with weapons, as well as the habitual "killing" of swords. It may have been a votive offering. A thank you to the Gods for a successful military campaign or a good harvest, we will possibly never know.

The Lord Walsingham has kindly donated the sword to M4W, and we have begun the task of preserving it using Paraloid dissolved in Toluene to prevent further decay. The sword will be on permanent display at Museum 4 Watton in a specially commissioned cabinet. If you would like to see the sword and other artefacts discovered in Wayland related to the Norse occupation of Norfolk, please call in. We have a selection of artisan coffees and teas, Brovil, or Hot Chocolate on sale along with cold drinks and a selection of biscuits, all for under £1. We hope to see you all very soon.

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Sunday 15th: Antique Fair
Friday 28th: Medium

Regular Weekly Events:

Bingo: Monday evening
CLM Fitness: Tuesday evening
Carpet Bowls: Wednesday afternoon
Line Dancing: Wednesday evening
Pilates: Thursday evening 5th and 12th of February Only
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It is now possible to book events on the website
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Sunday 26th April Holt Sunday Market & Sheringham Adult £20 Child £10
Saturday 9th May Railway Mystery & Cream Tea Adult £45 Child £30
Saturday 23rd May Southwold & Dunwich Adult £45 Child £25

Holidays 2026

North Wales 27th July – 1st August
Turkey & Tinsel Bournemouth 27th – 30th November

Shows 2026

Cromer Pier Summer Show 5th August 2.30pm Show Adult £50
ABBA Voyage 26th September 3pm Show £125
Thursford Christmas Spectacular December 2pm Show £TBC
Cromer Pier Christmas Show 15th Dec. 2.30pm Show Adult £50

NEW 2026 BROCHURE OUT NOW!
Please Call for Further Information or to Make a Booking

Easter Bunny Hunt - A Date For Your Dairy, Put It In There Now!

St Peter and St Paul's Church, Griston. Calling all families! St Peter and St Paul's Church, Griston, are organising a FREE Easter Bunny Hunt.

It will take place in Griston on Saturday 28th March 2026

There will be more details nearer the time, but look out for those Bunnies appearing in gardens and windows of homes in Griston, see how many you can find.

You will need to come to the Church to obtain your instructions, go round the village

and find those Bunnies, don't forget to look up high and down low.

When you think you have found them all, bring you results back to the Church and I'm sure there will be a prize for each entrant. (Do you think it might be Chocolate?)

At the same time there will be a Spud Lunch, why not have a Jacket Potato and a drink for £6 there will be a variety of fillings both hot and cold.

The event will begin at 11am, there could be some interesting stalls and a raffle too, you

might like some plants for the garden and you could win a prize in the raffle.

Look out for more information at the beginning of March.

If you would like to help or give a donation for a Raffle prize or sponsor the Bunny Hunt, or would be happy to man a stall call Jean on 01953 884082

In Your Garden

With Lotta Potts

At the time of writing the weather has been, shall we say, interesting. Snow, gales, named storm, more snow, rain. More snow than I've seen in years. February is never without risk of snow as it's still winter despite the fact that some flowers have appeared already. I have been lucky to have a small patch of large-flowered snowdrops which are really early and were in bloom before Christmas. Next to this little patch is a hellebore (right), dark purple. These two stalwarts are by the back gate and cheer me every time I go out or return. So on to February.

Notable dates:

46 days before Easter Sunday – Lent. Traditionally the time of privation in the Christian calendar and may start as early as 4th on Ash Wednesday. 14th – St Valentine's Day. Time to give the beloved red roses. Offer seasonal flowers instead: daffodils, tulips, freesias or a pot of fragrant daphne. Much nicer, less expensive and more environmentally friendly than imported roses. I have to say that at any time in late winter or spring my favourites are daffs.

Looking at the borders when snow-free there should be signs of spring. The early bulbs should be at least through and clematis may well be shooting. These will need to be pruned if they are the ones that start to flower in June and keep going through the summer. These need to be pruned to two feet from the ground. The reason is that they grow vigorously but flower on the ends of the shoots looking lovely for passing aircraft but just a mess of stems for you. These are so vigorous that mine started to shoot in January. I vividly remember an elderly relative's clematis. Sadly she was unable to garden for some years and the clematis that had covered a garden

wall and over the gate had shot up the cable to the telegraph pole and started off along the wires. It was a wonderful sight if you didn't mind the crick in the neck but I guess the powers that be had something to say about it! Other varieties of this lovely climber should be treated with a bit of caution when it comes to the secateurs. If you don't know what it is, wait for it to flower. You can't do a great deal of damage if you prune after flowering and quite a lot don't need pruning at all – the small-flowering ones that have bell-shaped or flared or wide-open saucers less than



4cm (1-1/2") across just need the shoots that are in the wrong places and can't be just tucked in removed. The ones that flower after July, viticella and texensis varieties, should be hard pruned now, right back to the ground. Others that should be hard pruned are the montanas but not every year, let them go a bit for a year or two then prune hard back. You may lose one year's flowers but they'll be better for it. The others are the Armandii varieties that have white or pink scented flowers in late winter, early spring. Don't get at these now or you will definitely lose the flowers but after they have flowered cut back. These are almost indestructible and it's worth having some of the shoots as they are evergreen and make a good backing for other plants.

Generally there's not a lot that can be done unless the weather is mild and dry – dry is important as trampling on waterlogged soil will compact it and make it difficult to work later. Best wait. However, if possible cut back autumn-fruiting raspberries if you haven't already done so or plant new canes. These are so much easier than summer-fruiting varieties as all they need is to be chopped right back to 6" or so (15cm) and given a mulch. That's it. They should last for years in good soil so are a really good investment and the fruit tastes lovely, particularly the end-of-season last gatherings. If you are really keen you can warm up the soil by covering it with clear plastic then you can have slug-covered plastic. I joke of course. I have no idea if you have or not as I can't be bothered to try to have veg two weeks before normal.

All my enthusiasm is indoors: chit potatoes and keep watching for sturdy shoots to plant out next month/April. Sow veg seeds in propagator pots or Rootainers. These are not heated but have long cells that open up like a book and sit in a plastic frame under a clear cover. They are brilliant for peas, beans and sweet peas that all have long root growth and are not keen on being disturbed. Order snowdrops and aconites 'in the green'. Gardening magazines will be full of adverts for them and they will grow much better than dry bulbs in autumn.

Do have a wander round the garden, keeping off the grass, to see if bulbs are through and cut back perennials if they are also showing growth. Believe it or not I have some perennial poppies standing up before the end of January and those lime-green flowered hellebores are all over the place so winter will end. So while you venture out occasionally don't forget to bend down and do a bit of weeding.

What's On at Watton Library

February might just be one of the busiest months for activities at the library this year! All of these events are completely free and in date order:

First up we'll be having our 'Toasty Toes' event on Monday the 9th of February 10.30-12.30pm. Our aim with this event is to support you with guidance on subjects such as keeping warm, managing your bills, accessing benefits and housing support, bereavement support, and wellbeing.

We'll be hosting representatives from Tech Skills for Life, HealthWatch Norfolk, Age UK, and more in the library to provide information on staying warm and well this Winter, as well as digital help and spreading awareness of groups in the local community. This event is open to anyone 50 years and over and you'll also be given a new pair of supportive slippers to help protect against slips and trips around your home. There'll be hot drinks on hand and we essentially get to give away about 60 pairs of slippers for free, so we're quite excited to host this one! Pop along for a friendly chat with us.

On Wednesday the 11th of February during our usual Bounce and Rhyme time (10.30-11am) we will also have a



short storytime for Children's Mental Health Week. The theme this year is 'This is My Place' so we will be sharing stories on community, identity and inclusion.

Safe Internet Day is on Tuesday the 10th of February, so our friends from Tech Skills for Life are coming in to share a Cyber Shields Storytime and Craft with us on Wednesday the 11th of February at 3.45pm. Learn about staying safe online with stories and create your own Cyber Shield to remember what you've learnt and help protect yourself. Suitable for children aged 4+. While children are crafting, our Tech Skills for Life coach for the Watton area can offer online safety advice and share resources with parents, and refer you to further support

if needed. Spaces are limited so booking is required. Contact us by phone or email to book a place.

DigiFest is an annual programme of events that help children to develop digital skills and encourage interest in technology and coding. This year we are running two events as part of DigiFest:

Code Club Taster will take place on Wednesday the 18th of February 3.30-4.30pm, during half term. This is a fun opportunity to learn how to make your own games and animations online using coding techniques. This is suitable for children aged 6+, and under 8s must be accompanied by an adult.

Adventures with Botley is being held on Thursday the 26th of February 3.30-4.30 after school. We're getting hands on with a real robot and using basic coding to save the planet from rogue asteroids or help Botley find his way out of a crazy maze! This is recommended for ages 6-9.

Again, booking is essential to provide everyone with the best experience, so do get in contact if you'd like to come along. As is the way when planning activities, sometimes we haven't gotten everything ready in time to include it in the paper, so keep an eye out for any impromptu events on our facebook page, or on posters around the library. Jessica Anison, Library and Information Assistant

The Norfolk Gift Company

Your go-to destination for unique, handmade food and gifts by talented crafters, makers & artists from across Norfolk.

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Open Tuesday – Saturday (9am – 5pm)
Closed Sun & Mon

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Incredible Staff and Incredible Community



With bundles of dedication Tracey Goldsmith (above) part of the Kitchen Team at Buckingham Lodge with the help of generous local Watton businesses created a Raffle raising a whopping £230. Thanks to her along with other contributions the team have raised £980 towards a Digital Sensory Table for the residents.

With a target of £3500 they still have a bit to go . . . But with incredible contributions like this, a table may be in sight. If you would like to contribute donations can be made in house. Raffle prizes for future raffles also gratefully appreciated.

For further Information Contact Regional Community Engagement Coordinator marcia.hughes@kingsleyhealthcare.co.uk Thanks to Atlantic Fish Bar; Tom and G's; M and B Handmade Crafts; Local Residents Cheryl Billing, Terri Breen and Eszter Brown

Watton Evening WI

February 2026 already doesn't time seem to go by quicker these days?

Watton Evening WI members joined all members across England and Wales at their January meetings to discussed a wide range of topics from Green Health, Better Public Toilet Facilities, Women's Homelessness , Checking for Vulva Cancer to Every Child needs a Friend. So difficult to choose just one. Our members discussed all the subjects well and all topics received votes however Women's Homelessness which called for WI to support other homelessness organisations and urge all levels of government to take action to reduce the number of women at risk and improve temporary accommodation together with Nearer to Nature – Green Health urging members to improve access to local green spaces and urge the health services to promote the benefits of green health both received the most votes, these votes will determine which resolution will be put to the National Annual Meeting in June.

Following last year's resolution on CPR and Defibrillators we, together with the St John's Ambulance are holding sessions at the Methodist Centre in the High Street on Saturday February 7th . They are open to all members of the public but need to be booked because of number restrictions . If you are interested please contact Ruth Stapleton on 01953 883190 to see whether there are any places left. The sessions are free but a donation on the day to the St John's Ambulance would be appreciated. Tea and Coffee will also be available. Our various clubs, lunch, book, crafts and games are starting again so lots to help the winter months go by.

Our next meeting is on Thursday February 12th at 7.30pm in the Methodist Centre, when Julian Horn, Editor of the Watton and Wayland Times will tell us the history of this very special local publication. Visitors and New Members are very welcome just come along or for further details contact Margaret Herbert on 01953 882269.

Cookies Diner Bids Farewell

After years of serving up hearty meals, warm smiles, and unforgettable memories, Cookies Diner will be closing its doors at the end of January.

Run by Inger and the beloved Cookies Girls — Svetlana, Magdalena and Julia — the diner has been a cherished part of the community, known not just for its food but for

its friendship and welcome.

“We’re deeply sad to be closing,” said Inger, “but we want to thank every single customer who’s walked through our door. Your support, laughter, and loyalty have meant the world to us.”

From early breakfasts to late coffees, Cookies Diner has been more than a café — it’s been a gathering place, a comfort, and a little slice of home.

The team sends their love and thanks to all who’ve shared the journey.



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Search and Rescue through the ages

27 Feb 2026

And everything In between

From

To

Speaker: Squadron Leader Keith Thomas – RAF Search & Rescue pilot (rtd)

St Mary's Church, Watton. IP25 6DQ. 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm.

Tickets from Adcocks Store, High St, Watton & on the door £10

Supporting RNLI, East Anglia Air Ambulance & Rotary charities 1046649

Banking Hub

Convenience and Community Support All Week Long At Your One Stop Banking Hub

Cash Deposits: Any day of the week.
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Bill Payments: Pay your household utility bills. (Please note: All bills require a barcode for processing.)
Gas & Electricity Top-Ups: Use your key or card to top up your energy supply.

	AM	PM
Monday		HALIFAX
Tuesday		NATWEST
Wednesday		HSBC UK
Thursday		LLOYDS BANK
Friday		BARCLAYS

Watton Town Council Updates, News, and Events

HMP Wayland - Community Matters

Town Council staff have attended a further 'Community Matters' project meeting at HMP Wayland.

The prison is continuing to engage as much as it is able with the local community, and the meetings explore additional ways that the prison community might be able to help the 'outside' community and vice-versa.

The Town Council is currently planning a Spring Fayre to be held on May 24th 2026, which will be preceded by a Hares Trail. Various hares will be positioned around the High Street, and HMP Wayland will be producing with some of the artwork for the event.

The benefits of engaging in art and reading is positively promoted within the prison, with one of the Prisoners having just set up a peer-led art class for those interested in pursuing creative arts as part of their education, and it would be good to see some of the nurtured talent from within HMP Wayland shared with others.

The Prison have started to prepare for the Windlesham Gardens competition which is a national inner prison competition where prisoners take the lead in creating a newly developed garden, with an annual theme that will be judged by the RHS in the summer. Next year's theme is Art, Literature, and Reading. In addition to this, the prison is seeking ideas of designs that meet the theme criteria from local schools and the wider community that will then be considered for the final design. HMP Wayland has been placed in the top 3 in the last two years so they would be looking to take the competition to the next level.

The community matters project is focused on building one community, the Prison is looking for ways where they can support the community, in turn, if you are a chef, a Gardner, a musician, part of a choir, or if you are interested in providing your ideas for the garden or willing to donate your artwork which would be displayed in the area itself, please pass your details onto the Town Council and HMP Wayland will get in touch.

Watton Hare Trail

Watton Town Council will be running a Hare sculpture trail around Watton Town Centre from Good Friday (April 3rd) until Friday 22nd May. Each Hare will have a name tag with a secret letter, put all the secret letters together on the Trail Form to make the winning code word. All completed trail forms with the correct winning code word will be entered into a prize draw, the winners of which will be announced at the Spring Fair on Sunday 24th May!

All Hares will be located inside local businesses, Trail Forms will be available from multiple retailers around town! Keep an eye out on social media close to the time!

Town Council Updates

To date, the Council has received three applications for the two casual vacancies on the Town Council. Breckland Council has been informed of the resignation of a third Councillor and the process has begun to also fill this vacancy. It is suggested, and agreed, that if no election is called for this third vacancy the Town Council will look to fill the three vacancies at the same time.

An aim of the Norfolk Community Heritage Milestone Project is to have the full set of 20 Norwich-Watton milestones repainted this year. Volunteers are prepared to paint the stones and it was agreed the Council, as requested, will provide the paint for the two milestones in the parish at the cost of £30.

Breckland Council will now proceed with the transfer of Breckland owned car parks to the relevant Town Councils. An issue has arisen regarding

whether the car parks can be treated as non-business for VAT recovery and further information is being sought.

It was agreed that the invitation from Weeze for Councillors to attend the 800th anniversary of the town would be an agenda item again for the next Town Council meeting when consideration will be given for a gift to be taken to Weeze. Councillor Keith Gilbert will represent the Town Council on the visit. The Chairman of the Twinning Association will be invited to attend the meeting on January 27th.

Councillor Martin reported that a new light head has finally been installed at the east end of Church Walk.

An update from the Reclaim the Rain meeting formally thanks for the Town Council's efforts to consider concerns relating to the proposed development site adjacent to Wayland Woods and an acknowledgement of integrity relating to Councillor Hutchings role as a Trustee of the Loch Neaton Charity.

WATTON TOWN COUNCIL HARE TRAIL

3RD APRIL - 22ND MAY

COME AND FIND ME!

CAN YOU FIND ALL OF THE HARES HIDDEN AROUND WATTON TOWN CENTRE? FIND ALL OF THE HARES AND SUBMIT A COMPLETED TRAIL FORM BY FRIDAY 22ND MAY AND BE IN WITH A CHANCE OF WINNING A PRIZE AT THE SPRING FAIR SUNDAY 24TH MAY!

TRAIL FORM PICK UP LOCATIONS TBC - KEEP AN EYE OUT ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA!

FEBRUARY FUN DAY

FEBRUARY 17TH 10AM-1PM

WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON HARVEY STREET

FREE CRAFTS, ACTIVITIES AND REFRESHMENTS

KINDLY SPONSORED BY MR WHIPPY WATTON

WATTON EVENTS 2026

TUES 17TH FEB	COMMUNITY FUN DAY @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
TUES 31ST MARCH & 7TH APRIL	COMMUNITY FUN DAY @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
SUN 24TH MAY	SPRING FAIR
TUES 26TH MAY	COMMUNITY FUN DAY @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
SAT 30TH MAY	TOWN CRIERS COMPETITION
SAT 27TH & SUN 28TH JUNE	WATTON OPEN GARDENS & YARD SALES WEEKEND
TUES 28TH JULY & TUES 4TH AUG	SUMMER FUN DAYS @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
TUES 11TH AUG & TUES 18TH AUG	SUMMER FUN DAYS @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
TUES 25TH AUG	SUMMER FUN DAYS @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
SAT 29TH & SUN 30TH AUG	WATTON BIKE WEEKEND
SAT 31ST OCT	WATTON FOOD FESTIVAL & FIREWORKS
SUN 8TH NOV	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
SUN 29TH NOV	WATTON FESTIVE MARKET MARKET

THERE ARE SOME FANTASTIC EVENTS BEING PLANNED IN WATTON THIS YEAR - SAVE THE DATES!

WATTON TOWN COUNCIL
www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk 01953 881007

A word from the Mayor

As we welcome 2026, I thought I would take a look back at 2025 to what has been a very busy year for me both as a councillor and on a personal level.

2025 saw my husband and I welcome three Great-grandchildren to the family, who knew Great-grandchildren were like buses and all come along together, well almost together! Whilst we have celebrated family birthdays and milestones, we were also fortunate to enjoy a lovely holiday to mark a very special wedding anniversary.

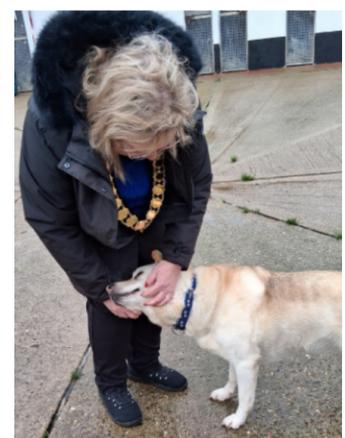
In May I was elected as Mayor for 2025/26. As a councillor I have strived to do my best for the local community and promote the town. The council in 2025 have commemorated a number of important events including the 80th Anniversaries of V.E. Day in May and V.J. Day in August in addition to the remembrance services in November, all of which were very well attended. As were the high street bike event, the food and fireworks festival and the festive market. My thanks go to all those who were involved in organising these events, it is amazing the hard work that goes into them; a lot of which is behind the scenes. The family fun days every Tuesday (except Christmas) during the school holidays have been an overwhelming success with free activities for children (accompanied by an adult) also giving a chance for the adults get together for a chat. The council have been working hard on several projects, with the issue of the Town council taking over control of the Breckland council owned car parks being a high priority that will hopefully come to fruition soon.

I have been fortunate to have been invited to attend many events, activities and celebrations during 2025. My final visit of the year was to the PACT Animal sanctuary where I met with staff and volunteers and some of the many animals they have in their care. PACT is one of the charities I have chosen to support as Mayor and I have to say the care and dedication to the animals they look after is exceptional, well done to them all. I hope the money raised from fundraising whilst Mayor will benefit the animals while they are cared for and waiting for new, loving homes.



Lastly, I would like to wish everyone a very happy and healthy New Year.

Councillor Gillian Tarrant
Watton Town Mayor



WATTON FOOD HUB CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

TUESDAYS - Food Hub Open 12:30-14:30
THURSDAYS - Food Hub Open 09:30-12:00
4 FEBRUARY - Food Hub Open 16:30-18:30
18 FEBRUARY - Food Hub Open 16:30-18:30

The Westminster View



By Terry Jermy MP. Member of Parliament for South West Norfolk

As a rural MP, farming and the environment is at the heart of the constituency, and throughout the election, I made clear it would be one of my top priorities.

It is for this reason I spent the last year campaigning against changes to Agricultural Property Relief. Having met with dozens of South West Norfolk farmers, both in the constituency and in Parliament, and working closely with both the National Farmers' Union (NFU) and the Country Land and Business Association, I promised I would voice their concerns about this policy, and I did so.

I wrote directly to the Prime Minister on a number of occasions, lobbied the Treasury and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), met with Secretaries of State and other Ministers, and spoke in the House of Commons raising these concerns. I took the voices of South West Norfolk farmers with me in every conversation and in every correspondence, urging the Government to find another way and mitigate the worst impacts of this policy. Just a few weeks ago, the Government showed it had listened, announcing that the threshold would rise from £1 million to £2.5 million per person, meaning up to £5 million for married couples or civil partners.

The change represents a significant boost for family farms and rural businesses, helping to ensure that agricultural land and property can be passed on to the next generation without forcing sales to meet

inheritance tax liabilities. The announcement has been welcomed by the NFU.

Another aspect of farming that has been a core focus of mine has been ensuring the Government quickly re-establishes the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). SFI is a government scheme that helps fund the implementation of sustainable farming practices and provides much-needed financial assistance for farmers. Though the scheme had aspects that needed addressing, it was a key fund for farmers and growers to access, and I was disappointed with its sudden closure. I urged DEFRA to commit to bringing the scheme back and presented findings from a survey I conducted with local farmers to the Secretary of State and other Ministers showing ways that the scheme could be improved.

I was very pleased with the announcement in January that the scheme will return, and I look forward to hopefully seeing some of the suggestions proposed by South West Norfolk farmers in its new iteration.

Whilst I recognise these announcements won't solve every issue, they are both significant steps forward and will do much to support small family farms, many of which are right here in the constituency, and they both show that this Government listens.

I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Labour Rural Research Group and as a member of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee to raise concerns and champion farming.

The Wayland Partnership

TALK BY ANDY REID ON THE HISTORY OF WATTON

If you receive your copy of the Wayland Times before the end of the month there is still time to get a ticket for the talk by Andy Reid, "A History of a Market Town Through Time: Watton Norfolk", which is based on his recent book. Tickets are £7 and available from Wayland House. Email officewaylandpartnership@gmail.com or phone 01953880204. The talk is taking place at the Methodist Centre in the High Street. The money raised will go towards supporting us as a charity. Andy will have copies of his book available for sale.

FILM SHOW BY JULIAN HORN ON RAF WATTON
In March, Julian Horn, always a popular speaker, will be showing film of, and talking about a wartime operation from RAF Watton. This will be at the Methodist Centre on March 5th from 6.30 for 7pm. His knowledge of the history of the base is extensive and his talks always interesting. This film tells the detailed story of one man shot down whilst operating from RAF Watton and his escape and evasion from recapture despite his extensive injuries.

It really is an extraordinary story of capture, escape and return home in 1940 and 1941. Many people are possibly barely aware that we had an airfield, now that it has largely disappeared under housing. If you are fairly new to the area, learn about the fascinating role the base has played. Tickets are £7 a head available from Wayland House.

DRAGONFLY GALLERY
We spent the first half of January stocktaking and clearing the Christmas stock. We are now seeking new stock from local artists and crafters. We welcome one off items or a range of things hand crafted in Wayland and Norfolk. We take a 20% commission on any sales you make. Our customers are always looking for unique handmade items as gifts or for hand made cards.

ART EXHIBITION AND COMPETITION
We are planning an art exhibition and competition for the spring. This is a call to all artists and crafters to get your artistic juices going again for 2026. Any medium is

A Talk on the History of Watton
by **Andy Reid**
author of 'A History of a Market Town Through Time: Watton Norfolk'
The Methodist Centre High St, Watton
Thursday January 29th
6:30 for 7pm
To book a ticket
Phone: 01953 880204
email: officewaylandpartnership@gmail.com

welcome – painting, textiles, ceramics, photography etc. The theme is Wonderful Wayland with your interpretation of what makes it special to you – home, family, people, a favourite place, the wildlife. We anticipate submissions of a maximum of 3 pieces per submission. Entries to be submitted by the 26th March.

WORKSHOPS

We begin our round of workshops with one of our popular mindful crafting sessions by Wendy Collins on January 23rd 10.20 – 12.30. We will be creating a useful tissue pack holder for your handbag or as a gift. £12 per head. FEBRUARY 13th Make a little felt pouch to hide your keys inside. Decorate with a heart or a design of choice to make a sweet but useful Valentine's gift. Another of our relaxed sessions with Wendy of CollinsCrafts. £12 10.30-12.30. All materials for these workshops supplied. For upcoming workshops look out for our flyers and facebook ads or pop into Dragonfly for details.

If you would like to learn a skill please get in touch and we will try to help. We have a new volunteer willing to teach crochet which is on trend at the moment for example.

Contact details for Wayland House are: email: officewaylandpartnership@gmail.com or dragonflygallerywayland@gmail.com Phone: 01953 880204

Christmas Lunch Success



Once again our Christmas Day lunch went very well, eventually. We had a bit of a technical problem at the beginning but managed to feed 31 people including delivering 14 meals to the housebound. Our thanks go out to Watton Sports Centre, Louise Elder, Love Watton, Tesco, The Original Factory Shop, Watton Christmas Hamper Appeal, Pamper Ur Pal, Janice Gordon and the numerous Go Fund Me Donors for all the donations.

The volunteers on Christmas Eve and Christmas day were invaluable and a special thank you goes out to my very good friend Sharon Lambert for her expertise and calmness in the kitchen. Sandra Dingle.

Last Month's Codeword Result

Last month's winner was drawn by Shirley from Adcocks, and the prize was the answer to the question that was the answer to the puzzle!

"WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE"

The winner this month was S Exley and the Runner Up was S Bloomfield

To explain how the winners were drawn; all correct entries were recorded in a table as they arrived, each line of which has a single card from a standard pack assigned to it. e.g. 6 of Diamonds or 7 of Clubs etc. For the draw, Paul was given the pack, which he shuffled as he wished, and then drew one card for the Winner and one for the Runner Up.

The Editor supervised and correlated the cards drawn with the table of entries, and if there was no winner assigned to that card, it was discarded and another card drawn.

In that way I ensure winners are drawn at random and fair play is guaranteed. As always, I hope you found the puzzle both fun and not too challenging.

For the next Codeword grid and more details of this month's competition please see page 12.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
O	Y	K	A	W	B	U	E	C	S	R	M	J
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
H	N	P	F	X	Z	I	D	Q	L	V	T	G

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
M	Y	S	E	L	F	B	R	A	N	C	H	E	S
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
R	E	P	U	B	L	I	C	C	R	A	M	P	S
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
H	D	T	V	O	R	I	G	I	N	A	L	L	Y
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
B	L	A	C	K	M	A	G	I	C	A	R	I	A
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
J	O	I	L	L	N	E	A	R	T	H	E	N	D
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
S	Y	N	D	R	O	M	E	E	R	S	A	T	Z

Great Hockham Gardening Club

And so, as the year turns, the Great Hockham (and District) Gardening Club held its 'bring a plate' annual party. As usual the members excelled themselves providing a wonderful variety of savoury and sweet delicacies. Who says home cooking is dead? A change to the proceedings may have resulted in a comparatively large number of members attending, namely, that the usual (Edward) quiz was replaced by a few rounds of bingo. Much easier on the brain. Not only food and entertainment, but the tables were laid out beautifully with seasonal centrepieces of holly provided by Jane.

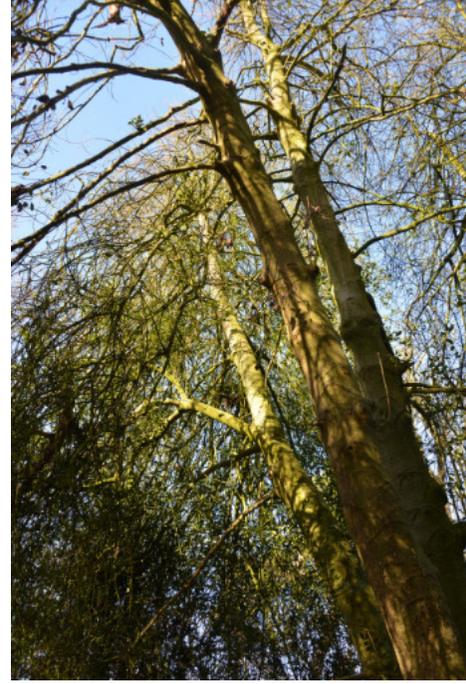
Holly. An old friend seems to be passing on: a holly tree by the river now has brown leaves and seems to be coming to the end of its life. Holly trees are slow growing so big ones are old. This one is particularly big and perhaps unusually, very tall. What makes this one special to me is that it has been part of our dog walks for more than thirty years. It's difficult to see the tree in its entirety as it is surrounded by many others, but the trunk is a wonderful thing to behold. I have seldom passed it without pausing to take another look. The years have left a variety of sculptural patterns and scars, but close inspection now shows the presence of small fungal growths. Over the years the tree has been special to others: on the 11th of

October 1987, CD loved ML enough to record their feelings on the trunk – twice. I wonder if their children ever visit the tree. 1987... perhaps their grandchildren. Evidently someone was a fan of The Beatles, but other declarations of love are less distinct. Close to the base of the tree, in fact actually touching it, are two dead stumps, one seemingly older than the other. Might they be previous incarnations of the same tree? I have no idea. Close to the ground the tree has tiny green healthy shoots that were not there a few years ago. Will this be the birth of its next generation? Holly trees are slow growing, so I will never know. Not just trees, sparrows are in trouble. The other day we were watching Gardener's World when Adam Frost told us that the little brown birds are having a particularly hard time. In the last 45 years, we have lost 60% of our house sparrows. To help with this he had constructed a bird box, but one unlike I have ever seen before. Spadgers are very gregarious and like to nest close to one another. Adam showed us a bird box 'terrace' incorporating four semi-detached nest boxes. How is it that at my age I keep coming across everyday things which I have never seen before? Not to worry, I have got to make one. But due to my latter-life credo, I must not buy any wood. I must only use the off-cuts from previous projects that have accumulated in our garage. This can be somewhat complicated as I may spend ages looking for a piece of a size that I simply do

not have. Another hurdle: if I have a nice-looking piece of quality hardwood I hate to cut it into smaller pieces, I like to maintain the overall effect of the original board and its unique grain structure. Think about it - if someone lent you a nice tapestry, you wouldn't cut bits off it just to make it fit your available space. So, burdened with that conviction it has come to pass that my single

sparrow terrace has ended up with eight residences.

Cold weather: the frost has burst a pipe on our rainwater system and drained the lot. The speaker at our meeting at Great Hockham Village Hall on 11 February at 1400 will be an old friend. Jim Paine will be telling us about the secret life of plants. Perhaps I'll see you there. Edward.



Above and below - 5 years separates these two pictures of the same part of the dying tree. New life is springing forth though.



Veterans Central Drop In at Swaffham

The Veterans Voice project aims to help veterans and family members find how to access veteran organisations and support groups, such as breakfast clubs and social hubs, identify opportunities for social interaction with other veterans, and provide information about support resources.

Veterans Central, as part of the Veterans Voice project, will be running a monthly drop-in hub in Swaffham. Come along for a FREE hot drink, cake, and a spot of chat and banter, or to ask question about veterans support.

Venue: The Regency Room, Swaffham Assembly Rooms, Swaffham
 Tuesday 27th January 2026
 Tuesday 24th February 2026
 Tuesday 24th March 2026
 Tuesday 28th April 2026
 Tuesday 26th May 2026
 Time: 10.30 – 13.00 hrs
 Location: The Assembly Rooms are located in the centre of Swaffham and there is adjacent 2 hours free parking (but use machine to get a ticket). You are welcome to bring partners or carers.
 More information? Contact: ops@veteranscentral.co.uk Mobile: 0771 3860040
 Veterans Central Charity No. 1208763
 West Raynham SHQ, 5 Blenheim Way, West Raynham Business Park, Fakenham, NR21 7PL

Clearing all fabric stock at massive discounts.

I have an excess of fabric accumulated over my years in upholstery, curtains, blinds and haberdashery and I need to clear some space. So I'm selling it at massive discounts at ridiculously low prices 75/80% off. There are also some sundries like braids and upholstery gimp.



07939 126803 or 01953 881804

National Women's Register

Bringing Women Together.

NWR (National Women's Register) is a registered charity operating in Great Britain connecting women through discussions and activities.

Founded in 1960 following The Guardian Women's Pages editor Betty Jerman writing an article entitled 'Squeezed Like Sardines in Suburbia'. The letter strikes a chord with Maureen Nicol a Cheshire housewife who writes to the paper: suggesting housebound wives with liberal interests and a wish to remain individuals could form a national register. Enabling women to contact like-minded friends.'

Today members of the NWR enjoy meetings, conversation, friendship and fun through participating in online, local, regional and national events, local Informal group meetings, walks, book groups to national conferences.

Looking for a group of lively minded women? Consider joining the National Women's Register. The Dereham and Swaffham group meets fortnightly for topical discussions, coffee and cake.

Future Events
Tuesday 27th January 10.30. 'Something you inherited and what it means to you'

Wednesday 11th February. 2.00PM. Robot's /A.I. positives and negatives.

Other events members might like to join in with?
19th February and 10th June, quiz evenings 7.00 for 7.30PM
20th February 11.00AM Snowdrop walk at Walsingham.
If you fancy trying us out, contact: office@nwr.org.uk
Web nwr.org.uk

CODEWORD

It was very interesting to see the variety of wishes that readers had in relation to what prize they would like.

So, I have decided to do that again. Let me know with your entry what you would like as a prize and I will try to fulfil your wish as creatively as possible within the budget I have set myself :-)

Here's a clue! The answer is a personal tribute to a YouTuber I very much enjoyed, and who died just before Christmas. There will be an additional small prize if you can tell me who that was! If you have no idea what a YouTuber is, don't worry it doesn't affect the competition in any way.

So have a go . . . Shall You?

Each number in the Codeword grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In the lower 'control' grid I have given you two letters to start with, copy each of those letters to all the matching numbered squares on the big puzzle grid.

Now, using your knowledge of the English language, work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you discover the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and the control grid. Consecutive squares are not necessarily just one word.

Finally, when you have all the numbers in the control grid, decode the following codeword(s):

2, 6, 18, 9, 2, 9, 14, 9, 4, 21, 14, 25, 16, 24, 13, 1, 20, 12, 14, 25, 24

Send the Codeword you think is the answer along with your name and contact details in an envelope marked 'Competition' to Julian, Care of Adcocks, 32 High Street, Watton or by email to wattontimes@gmail.com

All correct entries received BEFORE midnight on the 12th of the month of the paper, will be put into a draw, and the first entry drawn will win the prize whatever it is. There will also be a Mug & Coaster set for the Runner Up Last month's winner's name and the solution to last month's Codeword are on Page 6. Entry is open to everyone, but in relation to all aspects of the competition's conduct and results, the Editor's decision shall be final.

A little girl's memories of wartime in Surrey and Norfolk

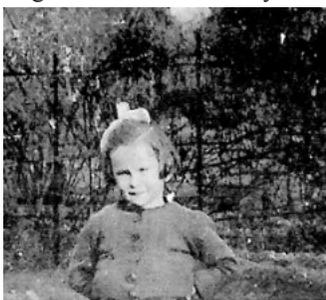
By Ann King

I was born in March 1939 and was six months old when the war began so do

not remember my parents putting me under the table when the air raids started.

At that time we lived in Purford, Surrey and to get away from the danger my mother and I came to stay with my grandparents in a small village in Norfolk. My father stayed behind as he was a plumber, an essential worker so he didn't have to go away to war although he was in the Homeguard.

My first recollection as a young girl was going on the train and seeing barrage balloons in the sky on the way down



from London. A soldier on one journey gave me a red wooden clog from Holland which I treasured for many years. When we came to Norfolk we lived well as my grandfather was a gamekeeper. We ate pheasant, rabbit and pigeon and plenty of vegetables and fruit from the garden plus anything farmer friends cared to give us.

One of the Italian prisoners of war that was at the local farm made wicker baskets. After the war he decided to stay on the farm and brought his wife over and they became like family to the

farmer and his wife especially his children who they treated like their own grandchildren. I also recall an American serviceman visiting my grandparents house, he used to give me chewing gum and sweets. He later married my auntie and I was a bridesmaid

dressed in blue satin, the wedding reception being held in a marquee in the garden.

I suppose I was like an evacuee backwards and forwards between Norfolk and Surrey. I certainly didn't

suffer from food shortage as my uncle had a smallholding in Surrey so fruit was in good supply and I loved the powdered eggs which I loved scrambled.

When I started school we sometimes had our dinners in the air raid shelter, it seemed great fun at the time. One day on my way home from school a man was crouched in a concrete drain in a ditch and told me to hurry home as the siren had gone off.

My Sunday school teacher used to give us a lift in her car which had a seat open at the back where the boot would normally be. I felt very special as nobody else had a car.

I had a very traditional Christmas with a tree decorated with silver cones, baubles, waxed candles and woollen dolls made by my mother. I also had a wooden cot, desk and blackboard made by my father. I also had a Mickey Mouse gas mask.

After the war I came to live in Norfolk on the day the queen married. Later I met my American uncle at a reunion who told me my grandfather kept a store of dried goods in his shed to provide for the people in the surrounding areas of Watton if the rations ran out.

ANN KING

12	1	5	12	1	7	2		4	6	13	13	25	18	26
	16		10		1		23		11		10		14	
10	13	25	24	2	10	13	6		5	6	12	7	18	7
	14		14		21		17		10		12		1	
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	12				16		24		18		9			
22	14	16	5	9	16	25	13	7		3	25	10	12	18
	14		6				16				24		14	
10	23	20	16	8		7	1	23	13	16	10	11	9	1
			6		24		7		12				2	
13	1	7	20	1	10	4	7		14	12	4	11	1	8
	19		6		6		6		11		10		7	
15	14	6	11	6	11		11	10	26	10	12	1	18	2
	4		14		18		22		1		23		1	
15	1	12	7	1	8	7		10	7	18	10	6	12	1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

St Mary's Church, Watton

Church Road, Watton, IP25 6DQ
www.stmaryswatton.org

Weekly Wednesday Services at 10am

Sun 1 st	10am	Holy Communion
Sun 8 th	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	2 nd Sunday
Sun 15 th	10am	Holy Communion
Wed 18 th	10am	Ash Wednesday Service
Sun 22 nd	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	4 th Sunday

Polish Catholic Community

St Mary's Church, Watton, IP25 6DQ
Every Thursday and Saturday at 6pm – 8pm

Watton Methodist Church

57 High Street, Watton IP25 6AB
wattonmethodist.chessck.co.uk
Minister: Rev Neil Vels

Sunday Service Times

10.30am in Church;
6.30pm in the Large Vestry
2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays

Wednesday Coffee Morning in The Methodist Centre
Weekly from 4th 9:30am to 11:30am
Alongside the Country Market

Tuesdays@2 in The Methodist Centre
Next meeting 10th February at 2pm when we'll be making a gift for Valentines Day followed as usual by refreshments.

The Methodist Centre has 2 halls available to hire either on a regular basis or one-offs. Hire includes WiFi, hearing loops, facilities for the disabled, kitchen for light catering. For details of very moderate rates and availability phone **01953 881451**

All Saints Church, Threxton

Sunday 1st February 10.30a.m.
Everyone welcome

The Wayland Group of Parishes

Sunday 1st February
10.30am United Holy Communion
St Peter & St Paul, Griston

Sunday 8th February
10.30am United Holy Communion
St Botolph's, Stow Bedon

Sunday 15th February
10.30am United Holy Communion
St Martin's, Thompson

Sunday 22nd February
10.30am United Holy Communion
St Margaret's, Breckles

Wayland Group Parish Churches
St Margaret's, Breckles; Holy Cross, Caston, Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham; St Peter & St Paul, Griston; St Botolph's, Stow Bedon; St Martin's, Thompson

Ashill Group Services

Sunday 1 February:

9.30 Morning Prayer, Merton
9.30 Lay-led service, Ashill
10.30 Lay-led service, Saham Toney
10.30 Holy Communion, Ovington

Sunday 8 February

9.30 Lay-led service, Ashill
10.30 Holy Communion, Saham Toney (Archdeacon of Lynn presiding)
10.30 Lay-led service, Ovington

Sunday 15 February

9.30 Holy Communion, Ashill.
This will be followed by a Prayer Service for discernment for the Ashill Group of parishes.
(This is the only service in the Ashill Group.)

Wednesday 18 February

18:00 Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday (with ashing), Ovington

Sunday 22 February

9.30 Holy Communion, Ashill
10.30 Holy Communion, Saham Toney
10.30 Lay-led service, Ovington

There are normally lay-led services on Sundays when there is not Holy Communion: 9.30am at Ashill; 10.30am at Saham Toney; 10.30am at Ovington

Let the music play

If music be the food of love strike up a thousand bands. Put a musical instrument in every persons hand.

Give each statesman a violin, teach them a harmonius beat, to play a slow and honest tune make them listen and weep.

Each one becomes a member of an orchestral work of art. There's no solos in this ensemble every person plays their part.

If music soothes the savage beast why not then human kind, by listening to a soulful tune maybe hope and peace we'll find.

By Miss Mardle



What's On! at St Mary's Church, Watton

Church Road, Watton, IP25 6DQ www.stmaryswatton.org
wattonchurch@gmail.com 01953 881252

Mon 2nd, 9th, 23rd 9.30am – 11am Storybags: FREE Children & baby playgroup, meeting every Monday, term time, for plenty of free play, a chance to meet others, & some fun to finish off all together.

Tues 3rd 5pm – 6pm Prayer & Praise: Sing your favourite worship songs & pray with & for the community. 1st Tues of month.

Wed 4th 1.30pm – 4pm (location in Watton) Bereavement Group: Contact Linda Benton on 07803 017340 or linbenton2978@gmail.com for details. 1st Wed of month.

Fri 6th 2pm – 4pm Community Cinema: Showing 'Four Mothers'. Doors open at 1:15pm for 2pm start. £5 ticket on the door inc. hot drink & cake.

Sat 7th 10am – 12 Noon Saturday Chat: Join us on the 1st Sat of month for our coffee

morning. Come with friends or alone and make new ones!

Tues 10th 2pm – 4pm Tuesday Club: Join us for a social afternoon of games & laughter here at St Mary's. Confectionary prizes to be won! Donation gratefully received for refreshments. All welcome!

Thurs 12th 2pm – 2.30pm Prayer Gathering - Led by Rev Dave Cossey. Come join us as God's people to lift up both our community & the wider world in a time of informal prayer. 2nd & 4th Thurs of month.

Fri 13th 2pm – 4pm Craft Group: Enjoy refreshments & company whilst crafting. £1 donation.

Thurs 26th 10am – 3pm Open Church: St Mary's open to all to visit, pray, explore, and discover what we offer the community. Friendly volunteers on hand to help with any enquiries.

2pm – 2.30pm Prayer Gathering: Led by Rev Dave Cossey. Come join us as God's people to lift up both our community & the wider world in a time of informal prayer. 2nd & 4th Thurs of month.

January's Winners of the 200 Club!
1st prize £50: Eleanor Nethaway, No. 24
2nd prizes £25 each: Jane Dye (for Anya Culling), No. 164, Helen Clay, No. 17

Love and Lent . . . By Reverend Vanessa

On St. Valentines day a few years ago, I was delighted to answer a knock on the door to a delivery of the most beautiful bouquet of flowers. Wow! I thought, Jonathan, had remembered! I found a vase and filled it with water. But before I unwrapped them, I opened the small envelope and read the card. It said "To my lovely wife Paula, Happy Valentines Day". Now, my name is obviously not Paula and I soon realised that the flowers had arrived at the wrong address. Paula was my neighbour!

I'm pleased to report that Jonathan had not forgotten St Valentines day at all. He sent me a romantic dinner invitation which I gladly accepted!

Romantic love is a wonderful thing and can be the foundation for lasting, mutual care and relationships. Yet love is very important for other reasons too – love of family, friends, neighbours, all humankind, as individuals, as groups, love for creation, for all life on our planet, for ourselves. Without love, which gives us a focus, a passion, a reason to act positively for others, we would miss so much that is good in our lives. Real love is not cheap, easy, or disposable, it's not always shiny or fluffy or tasty; it can be difficult, unrewarding, costly and unrelenting, but as the song goes, what use is a world without love?

For us, there is a way in which Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, provides the only possible lens through which Valentine's Day makes sense. Human longing for love that overwhelms, dazzles, and delights even beyond the grave appears sadly futile on its own.

Ash Wednesday reminds us: there IS a love that is stronger than death, and there IS a Lover who has conquered death on our behalf. Whether we are on the receiving end of roses on Valentine's Day or not makes no difference to the passion that sent Jesus to the Cross on our behalf. We are loved. We are loved for this lifetime, and we are loved for the lifetime

to come.

Chocolates, flowers, and cards convey sentiments which, at their best, reflect the true love that begat the universe. At their worst, they distract from the fact that only God can keep a promise to love beyond the grave. Ash Wednesday points us to that promise by reintroducing us to the Promise Keeper, in all his glorious affection and power.

The Bible has much to say about love – teaching us to love one another, to love God and to love ourselves. It tells us to love because God loved us first and God's love is unconditional – that love doesn't care who we are, what we look like, what we have done, whether we are rich or poor. God loves us exactly as we are, and God's love is never-ending; we can never do anything to earn it, nor do anything that will stop it.

For those of us who follow a faith, we are asked to share that love, to pass it on and follow God's example. That's not always easy, and we often fail because we are human, not divine.

If you find it hard to love, or feel you fail at times, the passage below offers some guidance, and a reminder of just how much we are loved by the one who will never stop loving us.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

May you know just how much you are loved by God and may you share that love with everyone you meet. Not just today but always.

Vanessa x
Reverend Vanessa is the rector for the Wayland parishes of Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Thompson, and Stow Bedon. She is available for baptisms, weddings, funerals and pastoral visiting.

You can contact her on 07984 318885 or by email at vanessadlayfield@gmail.com

MBE Awarded To Former Watton Man Kevin Osbon

The founder partner of a construction consultancy who grew up in Norfolk has been honoured as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in the King's 2026 New Year's Honours List.

Kevin Osbon, 61, who grew up in Watton, attended Wayland High School, and studied building studies at Norwich City College in the 1980s, was awarded an MBE for services to the economy and regeneration in the East Midlands, where he founded his business and now lives. His mother Jean Osbon still lives in Watton.

Kevin, who left school at fifteen and a half and worked at a local builders' merchant, co-founded multi-disciplinary building services consultancy Focus Consultants in Nottingham from his dining room table in 1994.

Today, the group has offices in Nottingham, London and Leicester, employs 80 people and annually turns over £300m of work with around £8m of fees.

Kevin, now joint chairperson of Focus Consultants, and living at Fiskerton near Nottingham, said: "I am surprised, humbled and honoured to have received an MBE. The construction industry is massively under-represented in the honours system and I want to use this honour as a platform to help bring the sector to the forefront.

"Very often those who work in project management, quantity surveying, and general surveying don't appear in the spotlight, but their roles are hugely important in developments and I see this honour as a recognition of that.

"I plan to use this honour as a platform to represent and raise the profile of the construction industry, to encourage the next generation of construction professionals, and to lobby and to help shape policy. I also plan to continue writing and public speaking, and to carry on with the charity fundraising that I am passionate about supporting.

"The construction industry has been good to me and I want to continue to give something back, working as an independent, cross-party expert based in the East Midlands.

"I have been both touched and amazed by the wide number of people who wrote letters in support of my nomination, and I thank them for their kind words and efforts."

Kevin moved to Nottingham to study, attending university at the age of 23.

He is an Alumni and Industry Fellow of Nottingham Trent University, having worked for many years as a part-time lecturer and provided a significant amount of pro-bono support to the School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment (ADBE), and is also a committed supporter of charity.

He has helped to raise more than £1m in charitable contributions - more than £550,000 in donations and around £700,000 in kind. In 2025, he walked over 900 km (565 miles) of the Camino Way Frances in 35

days of trekking to raise more than £6,000 for Alzheimer's Society – and that's despite having had six knee operations. He and his wife Vicky are currently training for the Nottinghamshire-based Annual Strictly Ballroom and Latin Dance competition raising money for children's charity Neuroblastoma UK supporting children with cancer.

Kevin was named in the Top 100 Influential People 2025 Awards as truly influential in the environmental sustainability sphere of the construction sector, particularly for his work in championing social value, sustainability and community placemaking.

Focus Consultants, which has its headquarters in Nottingham and offices in Leicester and London, specialises in providing project management, building surveying and quantity surveying, advises on sustainability, carries out business planning and economic development research, and helps clients secure public sector grants for regeneration projects. Other companies in the group

include MES Building Solutions, which has its head office in Newark and offices in London and Birmingham.

Kevin added: "I'd like to pay tribute to our brilliant teams at Focus Consultants and MES Building Solutions, who share my values and ambitions when it comes to the built environment, placemaking, regeneration and sustainability."



The Inner Wheel

Now the festivities are over, which we hope you all enjoyed, life will get back to normal in our Inner Wheel year. We were very pleased to see the end of the snow as we had been invited to share our worldwide Inner Wheel day with the Thetford club where we heard a very interesting talk by the gamekeeper and conservation officer at the Great Hockham Estate, Nigel Cobham. He told us about the barn owls and grey partridges who are in need of protection from many types of predator and he and his team are using various methods to encourage their breeding and survival. This was followed by a delicious afternoon tea and a natter with our friends at Thetford.

A date for your diaries:- 10th April, we will welcome Brenda Tubb to the Queens Hall for another of her entertaining flower demonstrations. Not only does she create beautiful flower displays, but she is also extremely funny! More details next time. Jenny Simons.

Pictured are Nigel Cobham with Stella Leonard and President Heather Hewson



Thompson Community Hall

We have begun the year by planning our next round of entertainment for you to enjoy. If you receive your copy of the Times early we have the Mens Shed Shantymen on January 24th. We are serving a light two course supper before the performance. There might still just be time to obtain a ticket. They are £20 a head

FILM NIGHT – 6TH February The Roses, Screening at 7pm. £5 a head with free popcorn and ice cream sales
BINGO NIGHT – February 20th . Another of our popular fun Bingo evenings. You won't get rich but you will win prizes – some very silly – and you will have a fun evening suitable for all the family. £5 per person for 5 games 7.30 start.

BOOK SALE
 Our 2026 Book Sales begin on March 14th 10-4. There will be a chocolate tombola and a plant sale as well as our usual delicious refreshments. Further details next month. Meanwhile, we

continue to take donations of books for future sales. They can be delivered to Thompson Community Hall on Tuesdays or Wednesdays between 10 and 12noon or by arrangement. If you are unable to deliver them please speak to us and we will arrange an alternative. Our hall contact details for all of the above are: email; info@thompsoncommunityhall.co.uk Phone: 01953 488508 For book sales email: booksale@thompsoncommunityhall.co.uk

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Watton & Wayland Times

Deadline is 4pm on the 12th of the month preceding publication and that is the last date and time that copy will be considered for inclusion. Arrival of your copy before deadline does not guarantee inclusion.

You can contact Julian by telephone on 01953 571990 or 07864720480 or by email to: wattontimes@gmail.com

All views expressed in articles in the Watton & Wayland Times are those of the contributors and not necessarily the views of the Editor or Printers.

While every care and effort has been taken to ensure accuracy, neither accept responsibility for errors or omissions.

This issue of the Watton & Wayland Times was compiled and edited by: Julian Horn at

32 High Street, Watton IP25 6AE and is published by

Watton & Wayland Times Ltd.

Company Number 16140119

Registered Office:

38 High Street, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6AE

And printed by:

Sharman & Company Ltd,

Newark Road, Peterborough PE1 5TD

Phone: 01733 424 949

RSPB Lakenheath Fen

In midwinter it seems a good idea to shine a spotlight on three birds that visit us just for the colder months. Two of them are thrush species- closely related to our more familiar Blackbirds and Song thrushes that we see in our parks and gardens- and these are the Redwing and Fieldfare. The third - the Waxwing (pictured by Pat Rolph) - is scarcer, much less reliable (most winters there aren't many around) and they have a curious affinity for urban places, rather than our countryside.

You might encounter Redwing and Fieldfare first in October, and it's usually Redwing that get here first- they migrate here from Scandinavia and eastern Europe to escape harsh weather. Being smaller than Fieldfare, they are not quite so robust and seem to need to escape rough weather sooner than their more substantial cousins, who might find it easier to stick it out for longer due to their larger size. A week or two later sees the first Fieldfare arrive, and the best way to detect them is to listen out as they fly overhead. Redwings have a high-pitched 'seep' call which they repeat, and when they first arrive you are quite likely to hear them overnight as they migrate around the clock and Redwings never seem to stop calling. They get their name for the rusty-red patch under their wings- if birds had armpits this is where you could describe it as being- but when they are perched with their wings folded you can often still see a bit of this red patch.

Fieldfare are darker and more serious looking birds- their heavy black eyestripe on a stone-grey head and harsh chattering call

makes them seem a bit stern. If you disturb them, they sound like they are telling you off! Like Redwings they are sociable, and it is common to see them guzzling berries in groups on hedgerow bushes, especially Hawthorn. They will also come to gardens to feed on windfall apples and pears where they are often joined by other thrushes such as Blackbirds. Both species are big fans of earthworms, so you may see them in fields and meadows that have not been treated too heavily with pesticides.

Although Redwing and Fieldfare are quite common to see in winter, Waxwings (See image by Pat Rolph) are not- though we do get 'influx' years where particularly cold conditions on the continent cause mass immigrations into the UK, and then nature lovers are in for a real treat! Unlike the thrushes discussed earlier than are most often found in rural settings, Waxwings love berries of any kind and are quite confident around people. As a result, many groups of them are found in good years in places like supermarket car parks, industrial estates and urban gardens- so long as there are plenty of berries for them to gorge themselves on. They are a stunning bird- with a ground colour of warm peachy-brown with a black facial mask, white eyebrows and striking red, yellow and black wingtips. In fact, the red patch is what gives them their name- as it looks like old-fashioned red wax used to seal letters. If the berry

supply is good, a group can spend weeks in one spot before having to move on to find more fruit to gorge on!

In the remaining weeks of winter, do keep an eye out for these winter visitors while they are still here. Redwing and Fieldfare are a common sight at RSPB Lakenheath Fen, especially on the wooded Brandon Fen trail (they are often rummaging through the leaf litter under the trees). But if you pop into your nearest town or supermarket car park, do keep an eye out for the jazzy Waxwings too, which really do look far too exotic for our British climate!

What's On

Places for all events need to be booked online- please visit <https://bit.ly/LakenheathFenEvents> to read more and book tickets.



Moth Mornings 27 February, 27 March, 24 April, 29 May (10am to 11am) Learn more about the amazing world of moths- join us to admire what we catch in our harmless trap. RSPB members £5 (£2.50 for Under 18's); non-RSPB members £6 (£3 for Under 18's). Bittern Walks Saturday 25 April, Sunday 17 May (9:30am-12:30pm)

In 1995 the reserve was created to provide a home for beautiful but threatened Bitterns. Their booming calls are thankfully now a common sound in Spring- and on these walks we will be looking for them during peak season. RSPB members £12 (£6 for Under 18's); non-RSPB members £15 (£7.50 for Under 18's).

Dawn Chorus Guided Walk Sunday 3 May (5-8am) A bright and early start should be rewarded with a wide variety of birdsong from our resident and summer visitors- we should hear a range of common species as well as scarcer birds joining in such as Bittern and Cuckoo, typical of the habitat here. Come along to learn a little or just appreciate this natural wonder. Coffee included afterwards! RSPB members £15 (£7.50 for Under 18's); non-RSPB members £18 (£9 for Under 18's). Hobby Walks Saturday 9 May, Sunday 24 May (1-4pm) From May onwards, we are graced with the presence of these elegant raptors for the summer, and when they first arrive there can be dozens here at once. Come along to one of the UK's best reserves for spotting them, with a knowledgeable guide on hand.

RSPB members £12 (£6 for Under 18's); non-RSPB members £15 (£7.50 for Under 18's).

With best wishes for a safe and peaceful winter, Heidi Jones (Visitor Experience Officer, RSPB Lakenheath Fen).



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Let's Get Moving!

Are you looking for a friendly, inclusive, encouraging way to get into an exercise class locally? Lucy Evans at Level Up Fitness may well have the answer for you. For the past year she has been running two bootcamps per week. One outside of Wells Cole Community Centre on Saturday morning at 8.00-9.00am and the other on Tuesday evenings in Mundford Village Hall at 7.00-8.00pm. These have gained in popularity over the time they have been running with lots of participants getting a great deal out of the positive feelings of accomplishment it leaves them with at the end of the session. Some of the feedback received is: "I have never looked forward to an exercise class as much"; "Super friendly bootcamp where everyone is welcome"; "Really inclusive and friendly group"; "Mix of weights, resistance and cardio in each session"; "Challenging but always encouraging"

Lucy is an experienced PE teacher and qualified personal trainer using her 20 years experience to inspire everyone who has the desire to follow their health and fitness goals through. She is quite new to the area having been living and working abroad for the last 14 years and is now ready to get Watton and Wayland moving!

Not sure what Bootcamp means? It is another way of describing circuit training which mixes up a range of exercises and allows a group of like-minded people to enjoy pushing each other through the training. This includes body weight exercises to promote functional fitness (the movements that you use day to day). Resistance with lighter weights to promote being able to do those daily activities more easily. Also, heavier (but manageable for any level of experience) weighted movements to promote the healthy building of strength and muscle to promote longevity and quality of life. Whether you are new to this style of training or have done some before, you will achieve! Even if you come



along on your own you will leave with new friends. Lucy will be trialling some new sessions in Thompson and Ashill in February. She will be at Thompson Community Hall on Thursday 5th February from 7.15pm until 8.15pm (confirmed). Ashill Community Centre on Wednesday 4th February from 7.00-8.00pm (To be Confirmed at time of writing).

She would love to expand her offerings even further, be that in a new location or more sessions at different times of the day at the locations already mentioned. Lucy does not just do these group sessions; she is available for one-to-one or smaller personalised fitness sessions at people's homes or in a suitable outdoor location. Please do get in contact with any requests, questions or suggestions using the details below.

Contact Details: Phone: 07762 894728

Email: no9_2000@hotmail.com

Instagram: levup_fitness



A Fascinating Talk for Care home Residents

Local Watton resident Roy Fleming enthralled residents at Buckingham Lodge with a history of his upbringing especially around his memories of when he was evacuated during the Second World War.

His amazing story which he has captured into a book for his family A Touch of Class resonated with residents at the home of their own memories.

Roy who was born in the Year of the Three Kings in 1936, talked about simpler times when "Hopscotch and

Catapults" were a popular games and how poverty shaped his chances of attending a top Grammar School in London.

But after joining the Navy he ended up travelling the World, before later in life playing as a Reserve for Arsenal.

A lovely morning of Recollection and History.

Pictured: Roy Fleming and Marcia Hughes

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