



## Community Art Club at Thompson - More Space, More Art, More Community



Community Art Club has been welcoming locals to make art and make friends in the middle hall at Thompson Community Centre since January 2026. Only three months later, the club, which welcomes ages 13 to 113, has proved so popular it is moving next door to the Centre's larger hall, not only giving more space for the wide range of art activities on offer, but also providing room to welcome locals using wheelchairs, or with other mobility issues.

Rachel Duffield, Founder and Tutor of Community Art Clubs CIC, a new social enterprise supporting people in rural areas to make and experience art, said, "Thompson Community Centre is a fantastic modern hub for local folk and I'm thrilled to be able to use the larger hall to give people a reason to get out and about and meet people. Inclusivity and accessibility for people with disabilities has always been important to us and now with more space it's become a practical reality."

Rachel's first art club began in 2024 in Bunwell, South Norfolk and runs on Saturdays. It was set up with the aim of reducing social isolation, increasing community

cohesion and benefitting the wellbeing of people in rural areas through engagement with art and art-making. Since it started, the club has offered a staggering 120 hours of quality art tuition alongside opportunities for art trips, fun and friendship.

The second club was trialled in Watton's Dragonfly Gallery in Autumn 2025 and moved to Thompson as a permanent fixture in January 2026. The success of these clubs encouraged Rachel to turn the venture into a CIC (not-for-profit social enterprise), currently funded by weekly donations. A third club runs in the evenings monthly at Kenninghall's Marketplace Bistro.

- Community Art Clubs CIC runs on alternate Mondays 10-12 at Thompson Community Centre
- No need to book- just drop in
- Suggested donation £5 or Pay What You Can
- All art materials provided- a different theme each time.
- Tea, coffee and biscuits included.
- A warm welcome guaranteed!

For more information on this or the other Community Art Clubs email [rachelduffieldart@gmail.com](mailto:rachelduffieldart@gmail.com), WhatsApp 07943476788 or [www.facebook.com/communityartclubs/](http://www.facebook.com/communityartclubs/)

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Saturday 20th June **Coastal Mystery with Lunch** Adult £45 Child £25

Saturday 4th July **Bircham Windmill & Hunstanton**  
Adult £30 Child £20

Saturday 8th August **Bakewell & Castleton** Adult £45 Child £25

Thursday 13th August **Fakenham & Wells** Adult £20 Child £10

Saturday 22nd August **Wroxham & Boat Trip** Adult £35 Child £25

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Cromer Pier Summer Show 5th August 2.30pm Show Adult £50

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# Hare and Seek - The Answer

It seems one or two readers had trouble tracking down Harry the Hare, so I'll explain in a little more detail than I planned - partly to give you a clue as to how my weird brain works!

The correct answer was on Page 17, bottom right quarter — tucked neatly into the Codeword answer from the previous month. The winner drawn was: J Sides - well done.

So, what were the clues? The important one was on the back page, though you might fairly accuse it of being worthy of the worst riddles from Ted Rogers' 3-2-1!

Beside a picture of Harry, the caption read: "No, this is not him. It's a zoomed in picture of him in hiding that was taken with a very old camera... Don't get all negative - just keep looking!"

The key was in the phrase "zoomed in picture" - meaning magnified, so Harry was actually much smaller. The "very old camera" was both misdirection and clue. It pointed to the vintage photo of Watton High Street taken with a glass-plate camera. And glass plates, as you may recall, are negatives, where white areas becomes black in the finished print and black becomes white.

So, Harry would appear white wherever he was hiding, and that meant he had to be in a black area of the paper. There aren't many of those, and the most obvious was in the Codeword result box from the previous month - which is exactly where Harry was hiding!

I hope you found it fun! Quite a few people entered and if you were one of them, call into Adcocks and you can collect a small Fridge Magnet for your trouble if I haven't seen you already. Julian.

# How to Play Hare & Seek

Each month, a tiny hare will be hiding somewhere in the pages of the Watton & Wayland Times. There will be clues and there will be misdirection! Your job is simple: spot him. He could be tucked into an advert, peeking from a photograph, or lurking in a puzzle grid or somewhere else, but he won't make it easy for you, he is quite good at this.

Once you've found him, just send us: The page number, and where he is hiding out. Pop your answer over by email or message, and you'll be entered into the winners draw. One correct finder will be crowned that month's winner.

Sharpen your eyes... Harry is on the move, and when last seen, I was told he was carrying a watering can. Lotta told me in an email that she had seen him in her garden and managed to take this picture of him. But that was before she sent her column in so whether that's any help I don't know... I do know he is a bit of shrinking violet, and by the way, you have not found him amongst the Flora and Fauna hare - OK?



For 9 years Watton Rotary Club has held a Young Photographer competition at Wayland Academy, which has been supported with great enthusiasm by the school and its students. Our judge, Dr Mike Harvey remarked on the very high

# Jake Is Young Photographer Winner



standard of this year's entries, which had to be on the subject of 'Wildlife'.

After much deliberation Jake De'ath was declared this year's winner, with his superb portrait of a male chaffinch (above right). Joint runners-up were Amelie Steward and Harry Shrimpton, and Tyler Lane's entry was Highly Commended.

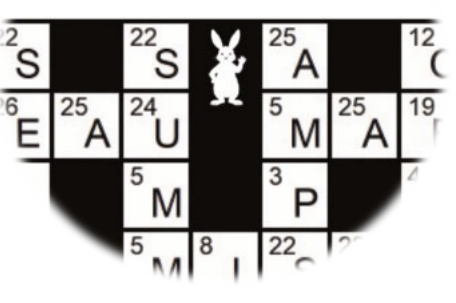
Certificates were presented at the school following feedback from the judge on what impressed him about each entry and how they might have been improved. Mike was struck with the enthusiasm shown by all students and their desire to learn.

Katie Allott, Art and Photography Teacher at Wayland Academy said:

"My aim with GCSE Photography is for students to experience a new way to express themselves, whilst developing the skills and knowledge to achieve another GCSE qualification. Students attend afterschool for 3 hours a week and they complete a huge range of photoshoots and digital editing tutorials. "The Rotary competition is a wonderful asset to Wayland Academy students. They receive an outside brief from a client, this provides them with the experience of working like a professional photographer. The value which comes during the feedback/results afternoon is always a fantastic experience, if a little nerve-racking. Students learn to take compliments and suggestions for improvements to their work. This work is also submitted as part of their GCSE coursework and is worth 40% of their final GCSE grade. Thank you for the ongoing experience you provide for our students, they very much enjoy the experience."



# Word Res



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# What's On at The Library

This month we've put together a collection of events and resources available through the library pertaining to the relevant goings-on throughout April and May:

## Summer Reading Challenge Volunteer Recruitment

We've been lucky enough to experience the first few warm spring days in Watton this month, and in the world of libraries that means we're starting to get prepared for the Summer Reading Challenge! The Summer Reading Challenge is a free annual initiative which aims to get children aged 4-11 reading over the Summer holidays to keep up their literacy level and foster an enjoyment of reading early on. Children can collect stickers for each book they read and can take part in a range of activities throughout the summer.

We're looking for young volunteers aged 13-25 to help get primary school aged children excited for the challenge. If creating displays, supporting staff to run children's activities, recommending books, helping sign children up for the challenge, and doing daily tasks around the library all sound like things you'd be interested in, ask a member of staff for an application pack or email [volunteercontact@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:volunteercontact@norfolk.gov.uk) to request one. You'll also have the opportunity to complete a Flourish Youth Award which you can list on your CV. Please submit applications by Friday 26th June.

Additionally, we offer year-round volunteering opportunities for High school students looking for work experience, just come and ask us!

## Getting ready for school bags - April onwards

Our 'Getting Ready for school' bags are now available to loan for free ahead of National Offer day on the 16th April when many families will be finding out which school their child will be attending. Starting school in September is a big milestone, so these bags feature hand-picked books aimed at helping children build confidence and giving them a sense of reassurance with the transition to school. We'll also have a display of books from our Feelings Collection which help to explain new experiences to children and any feelings surrounding them.

**Local and Community History Month - May**  
May is Local and Community History Month so look out for a local history display in the library made up of books from our Local Studies collection. This collection can be found next to the front desk and is available to the public. We also have some reference guides in staff areas which can't be borrowed but can be used in the library, just ask!

We also thought this might be a good time to spread awareness of some of our useful online resources which can help you research history in

Norfolk! These can either be accessed from library computers with a log in which we can give you, or many are available from any device when you log in with your library card:

FindMyPast is a British-owned online genealogy resource, offering databases containing over four billion records including civil registration, census records, UK parish records and British military records. This can be especially useful in researching your family tree!

BFI Replay is a new free-to-access digital archive from the British Film Institute, exclusively available in UK public lending libraries, containing sixty years of screen stories, digitised and preserved for you. The result of one of the UK's largest mass digitisation programmes, the films have been drawn from the vaults of the BFI National Archive and partner UK Regions and Nations Film Archives.

Additionally, Picture Norfolk ([www.picture.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.picture.norfolk.gov.uk)) can be accessed at home. Picture Norfolk, created and run by Norfolk Library and Information Service, is an online collection of over 26,000 local, historical images showing thousands of aspects of Norfolk life from the past 200 years. Images are shared from Local Studies Libraries, Norfolk Museums Service, Norfolk Record Office, and private collections. You can search a particular person, place etc in these archives.

## Mental Health Awareness Week - 11th - 17th May 2026

We have many resources in the library that can help signpost you to mental health support for a variety of different situations, including posters and leaflets which provide information on how to access free NHS talking therapies. We also have a 'Reading Well' collection of books available which are recommended by health experts, as well as people with lived experience of the conditions and topics covered. These books and leaflets can support you to understand and manage your health and wellbeing using helpful reading. On most Wednesday mornings we also have the lovely Michelle from Family Hubs who offers support and advice to parents of babies, children and young people.

We are hoping to invite organisations which offer support with mental health to have information stands during this week to provide further information to the residents of Watton, which will be posted about on our Facebook page closer to the time if it goes ahead!

## Dementia Action Week - 18th - 24th May

We'll be setting up a display of books and leaflets from our 'Reading Well for Dementia' collection, which contain helpful information and resources for people living with dementia. There are also books for family, friends and carers to provide advice and support, and age-appropriate books for children to help them understand more about dementia.

We also have Reminiscence kits available to loan for free which feature collections of themed items such as photographs, records, books, and toys to connect people with their past and create conversations about their memories. There is a wide selection of Reminiscence Kits available through Norfolk Libraries with a variety of themes: anything from TV and Radio through to a scent kit containing 14 nostalgic scents. There'll be some examples out on show but we're able to reserve any of these themed kits to Watton



Library for you.  
**Reading with Pets as Therapy Dog Toby 23rd-31st May**

We had two lovely mornings in half term hosting Toby the Pets As Therapy dog (above) and his owner Jenny. Toby calmly listened to children read him stories to help them gain confidence with their reading and received many cuddles for his diligent work! We hope to have him back over the next school holidays in May, so look out for dates closer to the time on our Facebook page to book. Thank you Jenny for keeping Toby's busy diary for him! Please let us know if there are any new events you'd like to see at your local library, feedback is always appreciated to help us deliver a well-rounded offer to all members of the community. For any enquiries please speak to a member of staff in branch, email us on [watton.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:watton.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk), call 01953 881671 or you can visit our Facebook Page: [facebook.com/WattonLibraryNorfolk](https://facebook.com/WattonLibraryNorfolk) Jessica Annison, Library and Information Assistant

# Letter from Australia

From Chris O'Connor

As I sit here writing, the rain is absolutely bucketing down - and yet there's a catch. In my last Letter from Australia I told you it had been so blisteringly hot that it frizzled the leaves on a lime tree I'd nursed for five years. So where's the twist? Well, although the rain is a blessed relief after almost six months of near drought, it's still warm. And then comes the next turn in the plot: it's nearly midday, I've got the heater on, and tomorrow it'll be raining again but the temperature will hit 32 degrees. You just can't win. To add to the absurdity, the Weather Bureau is warning us to expect a warm autumn - which we're in now - and an equally warm winter. Meanwhile, up north they're preparing for a cyclone, and throughout the summer there's been flooding. In one case the downpour was so fierce an entire town was wiped out, everything swept down the river - transportable homes, belongings, the lot - while brick houses were simply smashed apart by the force of the water. For now, I think I'll stay indoors and try to forget the wild mood swings of the Australian climate. My only real problem is that my dog, Nugget, won't be getting his daily walk. Why, you ask. Because I'm not getting drenched just so he can trot off and christen a light pole. Enjoy your summer - I'll be over here trying to work out what season it is.

# Councillor Chat

With Cllr Claire Bowes

I never cease to be impressed by the number of local voluntary and charitable organisations and individuals who work selflessly in the Watton and Wayland area and who's valuable contribution to the community can easily go unsung. I have recently been pleased to secure funding amounts for projects for some of those through the Norfolk County Council community fund, including the Sports Centre with £1,000 going to the new 3G 5 a side pitch project and £500 each going to the Daisy Programme, 3rd Watton Brownies and Love Watton.

I want to take this opportunity to applaud and draw attention to the significant successes achieved in recent years by Wayland Academy. As a result of the hard work and dedication of pupils and staff the Academy celebrated record GCSE results in August 2025, with 64% of students achieving 9-5 grades in English and Maths and 80% achieving 9-4.

The Academy is a member of the Inspiration Trust and is ranked among Norfolk's top-performing schools, featuring strong progress, a "knowledge-rich" curriculum, and a high Progress 8 score of - +0.61 which indicates that students make significantly higher-than-average progress compared to other schools. -

I was pleased to meet with Gavin Bulmer and Lauren Lester (above) at Spartek recently to hear about the business's achievements and success in the renewables market and their future plans. I was impressed with the drive and motivation of the young team but also it wasn't just about business success as the company has a strong ethos of supporting and investing in the local community.

I attended Eastern Attachment's planning



Appeal Hearing at Breckland Council offices in March, following residents' concerns about the impact of a potential increase in HGV movements, through both Griston and Caston villages. The Inspector's decision on the application is awaited.

The County Council will again hold a series of Household Hazardous Waste days at recycling centres across the county this spring. The events allow residents to dispose of hazardous household waste free of charge, this includes items such as aerosols, anti-freeze, drain cleaners, fertilisers, paint, and weed killer. - Booking is required and opens 8 days before each event. Booking can be done online or over the phone. These events are for household waste only - and are not for businesses, groups, or organisations. -

Locally, Dereham Recycling Centre will be holding one of the events on Friday 15th and Saturday 16th May. To check which items are and are not accepted, and to book a slot residents can visit: - [www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardous-waste](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/hazardous-waste)

Norfolk has one of the largest numbers of oil

heated homes, with around 70,000 households relying on the fuel for heating and hot water. - - - The Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund will offer help to - low income - families who may otherwise be left without fuel. - - Norfolk's rural communities face unique pressures, and the sharp rise in heating oil costs is landing hardest on the households least able to absorb it. Help is available to those who are on low incomes, typically households with less than £35k coming in each year. - Once eligibility is confirmed, the County Council will offer grants of around £350 per household. - - There is also support available around setting up payment plans with oil suppliers. - - Residents can apply to the Norfolk Heating Oil Crisis Fund through the council's website at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/HeatingOil](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/HeatingOil) - . Those who cannot access support online can call 0344 800 8020.

The Government recently announced its intention to abolish Norfolk's existing two-tier system of Local Government which comprises eight district and one county council and replace them with three new unitary authorities for the county. The areas of Breckland Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, plus a small number of parishes from South Norfolk, will be replaced by a new authority for West Norfolk. The decision will also see two additional unitary authorities established, one for Norwich and one for East Norfolk. These three unitary councils will be responsible for providing all local authority services within their respective areas, including social care, planning, highways, housing, education and waste. The establishment date for the new unitary system is 1st April 2028. The Structural Change Order is expected to pass in Autumn 2026, followed by shadow council elections in May 2027. Current councils will continue to provide services during the transition period

leading up to April 2028.

Norfolk County Council Elections May 7th. The local elections for Norfolk County Council will be held on 7th May and I am pleased to have been successfully nominated to stand for re-election. Please do remember that residents must now show an approved form of photo ID when voting at a polling station. There are two polling stations in Watton ; The Queen's Hall and Watton Methodist Centre which will be open for voting from 7am to 10pm on Thursday 7th May. Your polling card will indicate which polling station you should attend to vote. Whilst these are County Council elections, Breckland Council, as the Electoral Authority, oversees the running of the elections. All information about the process and timetable can be found on the 'Council and Elections' page of Breckland Council's website and the 'Elections' page of Norfolk County Council's website.

Norfolk County Council under a Conservative administration has a strong record on delivering on it's promises and investing in the county's future. From new libraries to strengthened local transport, supporting businesses and high streets, expanding opportunities for young people and taking action to protect Norfolk's heritage and natural environment. It is a Council that stands up for Norfolk and fights to secure the investment it deserves.

Claire Bowes Breckland District Councillor for Watton Ward

[claire.bowes@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:claire.bowes@breckland.gov.uk)  
County Council candidate for Watton Division

(Including Carbrooke, Caston and Griston)  
[clairebowes4watton@gmail.com](mailto:clairebowes4watton@gmail.com)  
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## The Wayland Partnership Development Trust

If you have noticed activity in the car park and around the building, we have been having surveys conducted as part of the progress towards our plans for the Digital and Creative Media Centre. These are essential for a planning application and exciting as we feel we are making more steps towards our goal. If you wish to register support go to our website [www.wayland.org.uk](http://www.wayland.org.uk) and follow the click link. We are collecting a wonderful number of supporters, which shows just how much Watton and Wayland would like to see the town have this new facility. If you wish to donate even a small sum towards helping to make it happen there is also a link to our JustGiving page. Together we can create new future for the area.

We have recently been awarded a small grant by Breckland for a simple Growing Together project we have planned and which will make use of the garden. If you have growing skills you would be willing to pass on, particularly to children, please get in touch. We would welcome unwanted seeds or seedling suitable for growing on in pots or grow bags. Part of the project will also be to create a small heritage archive of memories of how our diets and the food we ate as children has changed compared with today. Contact us if you are interested in joining in.

Our Dragonfly Gallery is open again. We are very dependent on volunteer support to keep it manned so we do apologise if there are days when we are unexpectedly closed for a huge variety of reasons. If you would like to be added to our team then please get in touch. You do not have to commit to every week as we welcome those who can be called upon when a volunteer is ill, has a holiday, or grandparenting duties.

At the moment our hours are Monday to Saturday 10-1. Wednesday remains our focus on Swapshop but we have most of the items on display all of the time at the moment.

If you are an artist or a crafter we are seeking new stock for the season. We take a small commission on any sales. One-off items that you enjoyed making but don't wish to keep, or a series of similar items are all welcome.

We know from the range of groups in the area that there are some very talented people in Wayland. Our customers love to buy those unique handmade gifts. We recently had a Canadian family looking to take home some gifts that reflected Watton so who knows where your items may find a home!

Swapshop is our recycling initiative. We have a range of materials donated to us which are suitable for crafting, from paper craft to fabrics and art materials - and we have lots of buttons!

We pride ourselves that everything is clean, and the two ladies who are in charge of swapshop spend a lot of time sorting and checking the stocks. Everything is a very reasonable price because we want to make crafting as affordable as possible. If you need to occupy the children at weekends or holidays we have plenty of paper and card, stickers etc.

If you have surplus craft materials to donate then bring it along. We would hate to see it end up in landfill. And why travel to more distant outlets when you have one on the doorstep?

If you wish to contact us email: [officewaylandpartnership@gmail.com](mailto:officewaylandpartnership@gmail.com) or for Dragonfly [dragonflygallerywayland@gmail.com](mailto:dragonflygallerywayland@gmail.com). Or phone: 01953 880204 or 07736731115

## Thompson Community Hall

A big thank you to everyone who came along to our very successful Book Fair in March. Also thank you to all those who have donated, and continue to donate, books for us to sell. We can assure you that all proceeds go towards the three charities involved – the churches at Thompson and Griston and Thompson Community Hall – so any books you donate will be sold for charity. Then there were the cakes – what a delicious selection we are given by very skilled volunteer bakers at every event. We know that some people only come for the refreshments – and why not! Our next sale is July 18th and will have the extra bonus of the Millennium Green alongside the hall holding some activities for National Year of Reading. More of that in later editions. Meanwhile keep the book donations coming. You can bring them to the Community Hall on Tuesdays or Wednesdays 10-12 or by arrangement with us. Thank you to the team of volunteers who sort the books into categories and price them ready for the next sales, who man the sales and do the background organising.

### COFFEE MORNINGS

We continue to hold coffee mornings every Tuesday 10-12 and always have our delicious home made cheese scones and home made cake available.

### ICE CREAM THURSDAYS

We will have begun to hold Ice Cream Thursdays again in April. All are welcome to come along. We open each Thursday from 3pm in term time after school finishes. Ice cream, crisps and snacks are available as well as cold or hot drinks which are enjoyed by the children and their accompanying adults. It is wonderful to see the children enjoying the play area and Green while the parents, grandparents and carers sit and supervise as they enjoy a tea or a coffee in such a beautiful spot.

### CLASSIC CARS AND COFFEE

Began the new summer season on Easter weekend and attracted a lot of people wanting to show off their beloved vehicles or who came to view them. We will be open on the first Sunday of every month 10-1 until September. Bacon and sausage baps, cake and ice cream as well as hot and cold drinks available to purchase.

### FILM NIGHT

May 1st Film night is on the first Friday of every month, screening at 7pm. £5 a head with free popcorn.

### HOUSE OF GAMES MEETS THE GENERATION GAME

**May 16th 7 for 7.30.** This is a new venture for us. We have tried to come up with a fun evening with some daft and different challenges for teams. All will be revealed on the night. As always we will have food. We will be serving a two course supper. Unlike our quizzes we don't see this as being taken seriously but it may well bring out the competitive side of some! It is essential to book to aid our catering and our plans for the event.

## West Norfolk Aviation Society

Simon Gladas presented our most recent talk which was a truncated (due to time constraints) history of RAF Bentwaters in Suffolk.

Interestingly there is no such place as Bentwaters, the airfield is named after a couple of cottages/farms on which the airbase is built. This is quite unusual if you stop to think about it, RAF Horsham St Faith (now Norwich Airport) built near Horsham St Faith and RAF Coltishall built near, well you get the idea, but Bentwaters nope no such place. Interesting and little known fact No1 is that Bentwaters was the last airfield to be completed and handed over during WW2. For many years it had very poor infrastructure and was home to 6 RAF Mustang squadrons up to the end of the war. It then became a conversion unit for those pilots moving to the early jets, a pretty risky business so accidents were fairly common.

Eventually the airfield was passed to the United States Air Force (USAF) in 1951 after a period of Care and Maintenance a loosely used term which generally means abandoned. It took the USAF many years to bring the airfield infrastructure up to a decent standard. It was home to F86 Sabres and F84 Nuclear Strike Thunderjets. Following this the F101 Voodoo was resident for a number of years, built initially to escort the massive B36 Peacemaker bomber which were rendered instantly obsolete with introduction of Surface to Air Missiles. This left the F101 without a job and they were rounded up and all sent to RAF Bentwaters where they remained for 7

years the only base in the USAF to operate the type.

Next came the F4 Phantom a truly brutish aircraft and one which the speaker was clearly in awe of. It was the main type operated from mid 60's until the introduction of the A10 in the late 70's. The A10 was withdrawn from Bentwaters in 1993 and allegedly retired as a type from the USAF, however its abilities remain unique and it is STILL in use in 2026, 50 years after it entered service in 1976 (see below), as those of you who saw the excitement last week when I believe 12 arrived at RAF Lakenheath! Not a bad advert for keeping things simple! Can't imagine the current batch of electronic wonders currently in service will still be going strong in 2076!!

This was an entertaining talk and our thanks go to Simon for making the long trek from deepest Suffolk. Next month we have guest speaker Kevin Boardman who will be speaking about Katherine Johnson from NASA, the true story of the lady at the centre of the Hidden Figures Film. Please feel free to join us on Tuesday 05 May 2026 at Mundford Bowls Club, Doors Open 1915 for 1930 start. Further details [www.westnorfolkaviationsociety.com](http://www.westnorfolkaviationsociety.com). Please note from there will be an Entrance charge to non members of £5pp. Price includes a light Buffet Supper.

Below: An A-10 Thunderbolt II, assigned to the 74th Fighter Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, GA, returns to mission after receiving fuel from a KC-135 Stratotanker, 340th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, over the skies of Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, May 8, 2011.

Picture by Master Sgt. William Greer, U.S. Air Force.

A10 Thunderbolts were seen over Wayland recently, heading to land at Lakenheath.



## Courier Fraud - be aware!

Norfolk Police are reminding residents to remain vigilant to courier frauds following 10 reports made during the last week in March across Norfolk. The incidents primarily consist of members of the public being contacted by scammers pretending to be officers from a London police station, saying that a person had been arrested for fraud and had been using the victim's cards. They were then encouraged to dial 999 without hanging up first, to confirm the identity of the 'officer' and then provide card details for the investigation. The reports were made by residents in Norwich,

Long Stratton, Aylsham, Swanton Morley and Downham Market.

During one incident, which took place on Thursday 26 March 2026, a victim from Wymondham was contacted by the scammers and convinced to put credit cards and their mobile phone into an envelope, which was then collected by a courier.

Your bank or the police will NEVER ask for your PIN, bank card or bank account details over the phone. Never share these details with anyone.

If you receive a call from an officer and wish to check their identity, we advise hanging up and calling 101- ideally from a different phone. An officer will never mind waiting for you to check their identity via the control room.

## In Your Garden with Lotta Potts

Here we are, well and truly in spring. Flowers are growing, and even the hares have taken up gardening . . . Apparently.

Just to help us celebrate May has two Bank Holidays:

1st May Day now first Monday but still the time for maypole dancing.

25th this year Late Spring Holiday or in my day Whitsun and a time for processions round the parish, usually behind a brass band.

In between we get the first major flower show, Malvern, in the first week and then joy of joys Chelsea in the third week

Another tradition is 'ne'er cast a clout till may be out'. I haven't used a capital for may because there are two ways of looking at this: it could mean you keep stitched into your liberty bodice (a misnomer if ever there was one) until early June or it could equally mean once the hawthorn (olde worlde term is may) is in bloom cast clouts with abandon. Your choice. Enough frivolity we have work to do and lots of it.

All the experts will tell you not to rush out and buy lots of bedding (not frost hardy) until at least the middle of May in case of late frosts. This is good advice but if you've got fruit trees you can be in a bit of trouble. If you are starting off with fruit it might be worthwhile seeking out the really dwarf ones that can be grown in pots on the patio. These are handy as they can be brought in over winter and put out once frosts are over or they can be covered with fleece at nights when frost is threatened. This leads to the annual question, of course, when do you know you've had the last frost? You don't. The best bet is to just aim for mid-late May and hope. Now for the other annual point I tend to make:

I make no apology for asking gardeners with a bit of a shady area round trees or shrubs not to plant Spanish bluebells. Whilst quite pretty these are scent-free and very sturdy. They are so sturdy they cross-pollinate with the natives so that with both the Spanish and the hybrids proliferating soon we shall have no native scented bluebells. This would be a crime against nature so I am asking you now the season is upon us to look out for Spanish bluebells or hybrids and get rid of them. How to tell? It's quite easy. The native is slender and curves slightly at the top of the flower stem. The bells are deep blue to blueish purple and hang mainly to one side of the stem. The leaves are narrow, dark green and pointed. They also have that glorious scent. The Spanish and hybrid ones are stiffer in the stem, the bells are all round the stems, they have little or no scent and the leaves are noticeably large and wider, almost floppy. If you are able to take a walk in a bluebell wood just marvel at what we have. Please leave the flowers as they'll die before you get them home (if they don't they're Spanish so well done). If you want some for your garden don't dig up wild bulbs, it's illegal. Plenty of sheds and garden centres sell pots so you can ensure they are natives. If you buy mail order make sure the seller states native and bred for sale. If you aren't sure give them a call and ask. Like snowdrops bluebells should be planted 'in the green' so the growers may well have started to lift bulbs ready for sale before the flowers appear. If you buy mail order this way you can tell by the leaves whether they're natives or not. It's also a lot cheaper than buying them in pots. However, whichever you have they will spread. A lot and very rapidly so be sure you want them.

There'll be new flowers popping up every day and there are so many I can only name a few,

otherwise there'll be no room for anything else in the paper. Two of my favourite trees are the Amelanchier in early May (even earlier this year, made a start in April) and common lilac in late May. At the time of writing I can just see the flower buds starting to grow. They are tiny and green, about the size of peas, and I know that late May they will be a glorious blue with superb scent. Both of these prosper in my small garden and recently I saw an Amelanchier that had been really pruned into a cocktail glass shape. The lilacs don't take so kindly to pruning and sucker but all is forgiven. Shortly there will be bulbs. The best known is the tulip in its late varieties but another is camassia. This looks like an oversized bluebell and will grow in borders and naturalised in grass. The late Christopher Lloyd grew them in grass with lots of other native flowers and they looked fantastic. I believe the King also grows them this way at Highgrove in the wildflower meadow. They will spread like mad through very viable seed. This can be a bit of a nuisance if you have a well-disciplined plot but so what? This is a plant that will give you lots of flowers year on year for very little outlay. It's worth checking them out. They come in blue and white but the white looks a bit more like grey and is none the worse for it. I need to be getting on with the jobs that need doing in May. After all the digging and weeding and preparation of the past few months this is where the fun starts. From the middle of the month onward plant bedding, tender exotics, dahlias, tender veg and sweet pea plants that have been hardened off. I realise that we have early plants and flowers now but with the tender stuff it's worth sticking to the recommended rules and waiting. Early in the month take care of the lawn. If you couldn't feed in April now's the time to get on with it otherwise the grass will burn as the temperature rises. You can weed and feed but large weeds will have to be removed by hand. That's for the purists. The grass will need cutting, the blades on high, and the weeds will be cut as well. They're green. Eventually they will give up trying to flower and seed so job done without more effort than cutting the grass.

If you didn't prune the forsythia and flowering currant bushes once flowering had finished now's the time otherwise next year you will have lots of long stems that don't produce flowers. Take my word for it. Pruning is quite easy. Follow the flowered stems down to a shoot that didn't flower and cut just above it. If there is old wood take one or two stems out completely, about a third of the redundant stems. Same again next year and the year after and there you have a brand new bush. Forsythia and flowering currant can be pruned drastically and will make a neat hedge. Other hedging plants such as beech, hornbeam and box should be pruned late May or early June. Privet needs more care, cutting every six weeks or so but will thrive for it. Just make sure when pruning anything that any birds have flown. Sometimes they nest in ridiculous places. Robins are well-known for making their homes in sheds in pots and even the odd watering can. Plants that have formed large clumps such as primroses can be divided now. Just dig up the clumps and pull them apart and spread the divisions round a bit. Nice clumps next year! Dead-head any bulbs that have gone over and leave the foliage to absorb the sun for about six weeks. Plant some bedding in front if the leaves are too untidy. Please don't tie knots in them or fold them over. This will not improve matters for next year. You can direct-sow all sorts of vegetables

## Steve Stephenson and his Music



Back in March of this year, Ann King remembered "at 17 going to the new hall and how happy we were to be there. The girls dressed in clothes with full skirts and net petticoats underneath. We danced to different bands including Steve Stephenson with a drummer who had a five minute session at the

end of the dance which we loved to watch, also a singer called Irene Jolly who sang "When The Saints Go Marching On". Unfortunately she got killed along with her husband in a car crash just after her honeymoon aged only 22. I would like to pay tribute to Irene for her musical talent."

Well, that prompted Sue Bunnett, to bring in a great deal of information about the band. Here father used to play with them. In May 1961, the band achieved were selected to the perform in Anglian Television's talent programme "Showdate". I plan to tell more of that story in a later issue of the paper.

However Sue brought in this picture of the band which may bring back the memories of more of you. Back row left to right: Pete Webb, Steve Stephenson and Tibor Szluha. Front row Don Hunt, Geoffrey Higginbottom, Irene 'Rene' Jolly, Bob Hubbs and M G Bunnett.

## Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

This is a big thank you to all those people who made the Original Second-Hand book fair on Saturday, 14th March, at Thompson Community Hall such a success. What a wonderful day we had. The sun shone, the daffodils bloomed, the birds sang, and the wind blew!! But that keen wind didn't stop you turning up in your hundreds. We were overwhelmed by your generosity and your kind words. We would like to say a big thank you to all our volunteers, old and new; whether they baked, gardened, sorted books, advertised, or manned stalls or the kitchen on the day. Many hands made much lighter work. We would also like to say a very big thank you to all those people who kindly donated books and other items for us to sell. Without your support, we couldn't hold our sales. All money raised is donated to three village charities: Thompson and Griston churches and Thompson Community Hall. We hope you enjoyed your day with us and hope to see you at the next Original Second-Hand Book Fair on 18th July 10 am-3.30 pm at Thompson Community Hall, when we will be celebrating 'The National Year of Reading' with child-centred activities on the Millennium Green. The kitchen will be serving homemade cream teas, ice-creams and all your other favourite cakes and savouries too. More details to follow in the coming months.

now if you have room or even a few pots. Tomatoes do well in pots as do all manner of peas and beans. There are now lots of dwarf varieties that produce very well. The downside is, of course, they need lots of watering. They need watering in the ground but the soil holds the moisture better. Plant hanging baskets with tumbling tomatoes and herbs as well as flowers - mix them all up! Keep hunting for Harry the Hare - he is not hare though he left his watering can behind! Oh, and nearly forgot. Keep weeding!

## Is it me? By Miss Mardle

Is it me or just my age that makes me crave written words on a page. AI is getting a deaf Yorkshire man to agree. What, Artificial intelligence, no ta not for me. We all search for answers, be it Google or bot. But it has to be delivered in ten second slots.

It used to be flat caps now it's all flat screens. If you're not on snap chat you're just a has-been.

When tik-tok was the sound of a clock that chimed

It's now a generation who don't seem have time.

We used to have jumble sales and car boots. Now stuff's sold on Vinted to make extra loot. No-one rings you it's all just WhatsApp and texts

and a pic of an aubergine means you want to get undressed.

Whole body deodorant is money for old rope in the good old days we had a wash with Pears soap.

The internet should be a force for good. But it really is not doing what it should. It's a hiding place for bullies, trolls and fakes. It should be better patrolled for all our sakes. You are left with concentration span of a flea. I'll take things slower, why not join me.

# THE WAYLAND PLAYERS

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Saturday 9th May at 7.45 pm plus a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm. Tickets are £10 and are available from our honorary ticket agents, Adcocks, High Street, Watton. Join us for an evening of local theatre at its best with laughter guaranteed. Jenny Mann

## William Henry Nobbs "Harry" 5th October 1897 - 1st September 2003

Museum 4 Watton  
Wednesday- Saturday 10 am- 4 pm.  
William Henry Nobbs was born in Stow Bedon towards the end of the 19th century. He attended the local village council school and was honoured with a number of certificates for the Regularity of his attendance. On leaving school at the age of 12, Harry started work on a local farm, earning six old pence a day scaring crows. In 1914, Harry was just sixteen when Britain declared war on Germany, and on October 5th 1915, when Harry turned 18, he was conscripted into the army. There was a short delay in Harry's joining as his employer insisted Harry was needed to help on the farm. On joining, Harry was attached to the Cambridgeshire Regiment and sent for a month's training before deployment to France. During his initial training, the army was seeking volunteers to join the newly formed Machine Gun Corps, regiment. The regiment was formed in October 1915 in response to the need for a more effective use of machine guns on all combat fronts. Harry accepted, and another month of training ensued before deployment to the Western Front. During his time in the army, Harry was a participant in some of the most infamous engagements of the First World War. He first saw action at the Somme (July-November 1916) and then the Battle of Arras (April to May 1917), and lastly at Passchendaele, the Third Battle of Ypres (July – November 1917). It was at Passchendaele that almost 70,000 Allied troops were killed and a further 170,000 wounded. As a machine gunner, Harry's job was to occupy mainly defensive positions, and he was spared the ordeal of ever having to go 'over the top'; however, this didn't mean Harry's role was any less dangerous. The MGC was among a select few regiments to acquire the

moniker the 'Suicide Club' because they were frequently targeted by enemy snipers and artillery, and served in high-risk, exposed posts. Wartime casualties were so heavy that of the 170,000 officers and men who served in the MGC, 62,000 were killed. Harry was to suffer a shrapnel injury and then contracted yellow fever, and was sent back to England to recover and recuperate. Harry never returned to frontline service; instead, he became an instructor at the Machine Corps headquarters in Grantham, Lincolnshire. Whilst there, the Armistice was signed and soon afterwards Harry was honourably discharged from the army and returned to working on the land. Amongst the items, kindly donated to the museum by Harry's family and on display are his Machine Gun Corps cap badge, shoulder flash, and custom-made stick pin. We also have on display a touching handwritten letter on YMCA official H.M Forces On Active Service notepaper addressed to Harry's parents from a friend and co conscript who had enlisted at the same time as Harry. Unfortunately, the friends had been split up as Harry, or Charlie as his friend refers to him, several times during the letter has already been deployed to The Western Front. The letter writer asks Harry's parents to exchange addresses with his parents, so that if the friends do not reunite during the war, they can at least keep in touch through their parents' letters. The letter is on display along with photographs of Harry during the war and photos taken after his discharge. In 2001, at the age of 101, Harry was to receive his highest honour when he was awarded the French Legion d'Honneur.

The Légion d'honneur (Legion of Honour) is the highest French order of merit, established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802 to reward military and civil excellence. This includes foreign nationals who serve France or its causes. We are very lucky to have Harry's Legion d'Honneur, and it is on display for you to see and admire. Harry Nobbs life spanned three centuries, in which he witnessed some of modern history's most infamous events. To find out more about Harry's remarkable life and times, his wartime experiences, life after the war, and his extraordinary achievements, please visit the museum, opening times as above. We look forward to welcoming you. Why not enjoy a coffee during your visit? Our small coffee bar, serving artisan coffee, tea and soft drinks, is open when we are, and no item costs more than £1. The museum will be open on Sunday, May 24th, during the Spring Fair event on the High Street. We will be serving free refreshments that day, including delicious home-made cakes, donations welcome. We look forward to welcoming you on the day.



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# Responding Quickly To Heating Oil Challenge

Here in South West Norfolk, more than 22,000 households are reliant on heating oil, making our residents some of the most impacted by the sudden change in heating oil prices anywhere in the country.

From the beginning of the conflict in the Middle East, I have been working closely with Government Ministers and officials in both the Treasury and Department for Energy, to highlight the impact of these price increases, sharing dozens of examples from constituents about the reality for South West Norfolk families.

Not only did heating oil prices significantly increase in the space of two weeks following the start of the conflict, but we also had some heating oil providers cancelling already agreed and paid for orders, leaving many vulnerable residents unable to afford to top up their oil, and in some cases, people were telling me they were having to turn off their heating.

In my meetings and discussions, I called for an urgent and immediate response to the crisis through the introduction of a financial support package. I also highlighted the need for more long-term solutions, looking at ways we can implement stronger regulation to avoid companies unfairly profiting from situations like this, and how there can be greater fairness and protection for consumers with heating oil and LPG prices, in the same way electricity and gas users

are protected.

I have also called on the Chancellor to consider the cost of fuel and whether the fuel duty increase in September can be postponed, and what other measures the Government can take to address cost of living pressures in rural areas. For us in a rural area, owning and running a car is a necessity, not a luxury.

I was pleased the Government immediately instructed the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to investigate allegations of price gouging which triggered some suppliers to quite rightly honour their original prices.

Then, the Prime Minister announced a £53 million heating oil support package. Here in Norfolk, we will be receiving more than £3million - the biggest share of the funding given to any county in the country, in recognition of the sheer number of households reliant on heating oil and LPG locally.

This money has been allocated to the existing Crisis and Resilience Fund

through Norfolk County Council and distributed via their established processes.

The Government has placed no restrictions on who should receive support - any eligibility guidelines have been put in place by Norfolk County Council. Norfolk County Council have confirmed as a guide; they expect to support households with an annual income of £35k or less, but to avoid people in need missing out, they have concluded that decisions will also be taken based on individual circumstances.

The support service is now live, and I would urge people to make contact with the Council to discuss options if you are in need of support. Contact can be made via [www.norfolk.gov.uk/heatingoil](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/heatingoil) or via telephone on 0344 800 8020.

My team and I will be doing everything possible to get people the support they need so please do get in touch if we can be of assistance. My email is: [terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk)



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## Watton (Loch Neaton) Outdoor and Short Mat Bowls Club

With Spring we hope just around the corner, we are looking forward to the new 2026 season. However, our good friend Michael (Mike) Mitchell (pictured) passed away suddenly on 19th February. Mike was battling cancer, and undergoing treatment which was beginning to show benefit, so his death came as a shock to both his family and friends. Mike was our Greenkeeper for a number



of years, and gave a lot of his time to our club and its greens. He always reckoned he never needed to visit a gym, he covered miles cutting our greens, sometimes three times a week! He was passing on his knowledge to other club members, with Steve Schofield now taking on his role. Mike was a 'people person' - he could talk to anyone, always friendly, always competitive but with a humorous edge. Along with our greens he also spent many hours on his allotment.

He was hugely proud of his family, his two daughters and his wife Sue. Apart from Bowls, he had an interest in all sports, especially Rugby and Formula 1 Racing, nothing made him happier than to share his love of F1 with his wife, and, knowing Mike, a glass of chilled lager near to hand. He will be missed by all our members, with his love of life, his knowledge and his fount of stories from his days in the Army.

Weather permitting, we will open the Green 13th April, with a Roll Up on 14th. Our season starts on Wednesday 22nd with an Away friendly to East Harling followed on the 30th by the opening match of the afternoon Age Concern League at home to Long Stratton. As with last season we are playing two teams in this League, Watton 'Hares' and Watton 'Foxes'.

On Saturday 2nd May - New to our Club, an afternoon game using 'Aussie Pairs' rules - a bit different to the usual Bowls

played in the UK, lots of fun, with a bit of concentration thrown in for good measure! From Tuesday 5th May, the club welcomes anyone who would like to learn to play bowls; also, to players recently moved into the area, to our Roll up afternoon starting at 2:00pm. For anyone new, as long as you wear flat shoes, we'll provide everything else. You will find us at Watton Sports and Recreation Centre on the Dereham Road. Members will show you what bowls is all about - it's fun, sociable and competitive, but in a friendly sort of a way.

Other Leagues start with our Breckland Ladies home match to Aldiss Park 'Black' on May 11th, and on 21st May, our debut home match in the Dereham & District League to Mattishall BC.

The first weeks of a new season always look busy! Please don't let that put you off, we always offer a welcome to new and returning players

Our sister club - Loch Neaton Short Mat will continue to play on Tuesday afternoons at 2:00 pm, hopefully, throughout the summer; playing socially to enjoy a friendly fun afternoon. Experienced players and beginners are always welcome. Costs are £10.00 membership for new members, and £3.00 rink fee per game.

Look at our website [www.wattonbowlsclub.co.uk](http://www.wattonbowlsclub.co.uk) for further details of both clubs.

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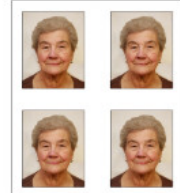
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mark@markbunningphotography.co.uk

# Echoes of Apollo: A Look at the Artemis II Journey

On 11th April, four explorers splashed down in the Pacific Ocean, bringing a historic ten-day mission to a close. They didn't just return to Earth; they brought the Moon back into our reach. Artemis II was the first time in over half a century that humans have ventured into the deep-void of space, and it has changed how we see our place in the stars.

The mission carried a team of four: Commander Reid Wiseman, Pilot Victor Glover, and Mission Specialists Christina Koch and Jeremy Hansen. Their goal wasn't to land on the Moon, but to prove that new technology - the massive Space Launch System rocket and the Orion spacecraft - could keep a human crew safe, healthy, and hydrated hundreds of thousands of miles from home.

For ten days, the Orion capsule, named Integrity by the crew, became their somewhat cramped home. After a thunderous launch from Florida, the crew spent their first day orbiting Earth, testing the manual controls of the ship; a high-speed "test drive" if you will, to ensure the steering and life-support systems were performing correctly, resolving some blocking issues with the toilet (ice apparently not what you might be thinking!) before setting off for the moon. The most breathtaking moment occurred on the sixth day. The crew swung around the "dark side" of the Moon, the side that always faces away from Earth. At this point, they were further from home than any human beings in history, reaching a distance of over 250,000 miles.

As they emerged from the lunar shadows, they captured high-definition footage of an "Earthrise," showing our blue planet appearing over the grey, cratered horizon of the Moon. A powerful reminder that while we are exploring the heavens, we are all protected by the fragile atmosphere of the earth that is our home.

This mission was the ultimate "stress test." The crew lived in a space about the size of a large estate car, testing everything from how they slept in zero gravity to how the ship's heat shield would handle the 2,800 degree Celsius friction of re-entering Earth's



Second from left, Lucas Ye, designer of zero gravity indicator "Rise," and his family pose for a photo at the Banana Creek viewing site as the countdown progressed for the Artemis II mission, Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Rise also held an SD card containing the names of millions who flew with the crew around the Moon - Julian is proud to say that his was one of the names onboard! "Rise" was inspired by the iconic Earthrise moment from the Apollo 8 mission. A zero gravity indicator is a small plush item that typically rides with a crew to visually indicate when they are in space.

atmosphere. Because they succeeded, the path is now clear. Artemis II has proved that the bridge to the Moon is open. We are no longer just dreaming of the stars; we are actively building the road to get there.

### What's Next?

The success of this flight has paved the way for Artemis III, which will test how we dock ships in space, and Artemis IV, the mission that will, we hope, finally return human footsteps to the lunar soil. NASA says we aren't just visiting this time, we are going back to stay, building the first lunar bases that will one day serve as a stepping stone to Mars.

### Keys to the pictures overleaf from bottom left corner and working around the page clockwise . . .

1) The Artemis II crew pose with the zero gravity indicator named Rise that also held an SD card containing the names of millions who will fly with the crew around the Moon. "Rise" was inspired by the iconic Earthrise moment from the Apollo 8 mission. A zero gravity indicator is a small plush item that typically rides with a crew to visually indicate when they are in space. The Artemis II crew were : Commander Reid Wiseman, Pilot Victor Glover, and Mission Specialist Christina Koch from NASA, and Mission Specialist Jeremy Hansen from the CSA (Canadian Space Agency).

2) Artemis II launch. The four astronauts aboard NASA's Orion spacecraft atop the SLS (Space Launch System) rocket launched on Wednesday, April 1 from Launch Complex 39B at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Artemis II lifted off at 6:35 p.m. ET (11:35pm BST). Image credit: NASA/Michael DeMocker

3) Onwards and upwards! Image credit: NASA/Michael DeMocker

4) Earthset - captured through the Orion spacecraft window at 6:41 p.m. EDT, April 6, 2026, during the Artemis II crew's flyby of the Moon. A muted blue Earth with bright white clouds sets behind the cratered lunar surface. The dark portion of Earth is experiencing nighttime. On Earth's day side, swirling clouds are visible over the Australia and Oceania region. In the foreground, Ohm crater has terraced edges and a flat floor interrupted by central peaks. Central peaks form in complex craters when the lunar surface, liquefied on impact, splashes upwards during the crater's formation.

5) Home, Seen from Orion. Taken April 4, NASA astronaut and Artemis II Commander Reid Wiseman peers out of one of the Orion spacecraft's main cabin windows, looking back at Earth, as the crew travels towards the Moon.

6) Artemis II Splashdown NASA's Orion spacecraft, named Integrity by the crew, carrying Artemis II crew splashes down in the Pacific Ocean near San Diego,

California, at 1:07 p.m. PDT, (1:07AM BST Saturday) Friday, April 10, 2026. The Artemis II test flight launched on Wednesday, April 1, from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida to begin its 10-day journey around the Moon for scientific discovery, economic benefits, and to build on NASA's foundations for the first crewed missions to Mars. NASA's Landing and Recovery team and the U.S. military to extract the Artemis II crew from the Orion spacecraft.

7) Crew "Rise-ing" to the occasion - on 7th April the Artemis II crew - (clockwise from left) Mission Specialist Christina Koch, Mission Specialist Jeremy Hansen, Commander Reid Wiseman, and Pilot Victor Glover - pause for a group photo with their zero gravity indicator "Rise," inside the Orion spacecraft on their way home.

8) Artemis II Flight Control Team During Splashdown - Artemis II Flight Control Team pictured at consoles within the White Flight Control Room in the Mission Control Center at NASA's Johnson Space Center for the splashdown and recovery of the Artemis II crew as it landed in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California.

**Centre Image:** Peeking at the Earth as the Artemis II crew came close to passing behind the Moon and experiencing a planned loss of signal, they captured this image of a crescent Earth setting on the Moon's limb. The edge of the visible surface of the Moon is called the "lunar limb." Seen from afar, it almost looks like a circular arc - except when backlit, as in other images captured by the Artemis II crew. In this photo, the dark portion of Earth is experiencing nighttime, while Australia and Oceania are in the daylight. In the foreground, the Ohm crater is visible, with terraced edges and a flat floor interrupted by central peaks. Peaks such as these form in complex craters when the lunar surface is liquefied on impact, and the liquefied surface splashes upward during the crater's formation.

All Images from, and © NASA - with appreciation.

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**£500 Jackpot!!**

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**Town Council updates:**

**A word from the Mayor**

The Watton Annual Town Meeting is booked for April 21<sup>st</sup>, 7pm at Watton Sports Centre.

Sadly, this month sees me come to the end of my year as Watton town Mayor.

Councillor Saunders and the Events and Marketing Officer had initial conversations with Wayland Academy to discuss the idea of holding a Festival of Youth event in 2027. It was resolved to move forward with the plans to hold the Festival in 2027.

I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to everyone who invited me and made me very welcome, to a variety of interesting events and activities throughout the year.

Hopefully, I have managed to mention in past paper articles all those I have attended. This past year I have met so many amazing people at the various events I was invited to attend and learnt so much about the people and groups who make Watton such a diverse yet welcoming and supportive community.

The Pride in Breckland Grant “is being provided to support projects which enhance the district and meet the needs of local communities.” Watton Town Council have accepted the grant of £12,210; it is suggested that the grant should be spent on ‘Place-Based Improvements’, being mindful of the priorities set out in the Watton Town Delivery Plan. It was resolved to add this item to the next Biodiversity Working Group meeting agenda along with asking the Events and Marketing officer to research if the grant money could be used on part of the Heritage park project.

In the last month I chaired the AGM of the Watton Twinning Association which was followed by an excellent afternoon tea. The association will celebrate forty years of twinning with Weeze in Germany next year.

I was also invited to the opening of a new shop in town; the Woolly Yarn which is situated in the old brewery building on the high street. Lucy who owns the shop also aims for it to be a welcoming place to pop in for a chat and company even if people don't knit or do crafts, they will be welcome I think this is yet another example of our wonderful, caring community.

It was resolved to defer the Equipment Hire Policy to the next Finance Committee meeting to discuss the implication of potentially having to register for VAT and the refundable deposit amount.

Although I have come to the end of my time as Mayor, I will still be a

member of Watton town council and continue to work for the benefit of the town and local residents.

Looking forward there will be more projects in the town including the council taking control of the car parks and open spaces from Breckland council ensuring parking remains free of charge.

Finally, I would like to wish my successor to the position of Watton town Mayor and chair of the council well and every success in the forthcoming year.

Councillor Gillian Tarrant  
Watton Town Mayor



Breckland District Council have informed the Town Council of a consultation they are holding regarding the Breckland District Council Local List. The Local List is a validation checklist for applicants use to ensure that they submit all information to make a planning application valid. The Town Council has been asked to respond as representatives of the public. It was resolved to support what is already included in the revised Local List.

Breckland Council have asked for the opportunity to re-visit the Town Councils to update and promote the Safer Street Wardens Scheme. It was resolved that Breckland Council will be invited to attend a future Town Council meeting to give further information about the scheme.

The next Neighbourhood Police meeting will be online on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm. The meeting could not be held at Wayland Hall as planned as the date clashes with the Annual Town Meeting.

It was resolved that the Town Council will look to use the £12,210 Pride in Breckland grant to support enhancement of the Reclaim the Rain Project in the High Street. Consultation will be undertaken with Watton and Saham Flood Action Group and the Biodiversity Working Group. It was suggested if there is enough money considering will be given to how the gateways of the Town might be improved.

It was resolved to undertake an audit of the footpaths in the parish. Cllr Gilbert offered to assist with this.



The 2026-2027 Chairman/Mayor will be elected at the first Council Meeting in May, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May.



**TOWN CRIER COMPETITION**

Town Criers will be coming from across the UK!

30th of May 2026 from 10:30am  
Watton High Street

WATTONTOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK

Watton Town Crier Website  
[www.towncriermike.co.uk](http://www.towncriermike.co.uk)

For More Information  
01953 881007

**Norfolk Festival of Volunteering - June 2026**

Engaging Communities Norfolk has just announced the inaugural Norfolk Festival of Volunteering is to be held in June 2026. Inspired by the UN's International Volunteer Year (IVY) and the ongoing work of the Norfolk & Waveney Vision for Volunteering steering groups, the Festival of Volunteering is a month-long celebration of volunteers and volunteering. It's a chance for Organisations and the public to thank volunteers, share their stories, and inspire new people to get involved.

The Festival will take place across the county, with local groups and VCSEs encouraged to celebrate volunteering through sharing stories, hosting an event or activity, or publicly thanking their volunteers. Empowering Communities Norfolk ask for groups to let them know what they are doing to celebrate so that they can promote it as part of the festival and help volunteering reach as wide an audience as possible - inspiring new people to join in! If you wish to get in touch with Empowering Communities Norfolk regarding the Festival of Volunteering please email them at [volunteercentre@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](mailto:volunteercentre@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk)

Here at Watton Town Council, we work a lot with various groups of volunteers, be it at the Food Hub, local events, or in the day-to-day running of the Council. To thank all of those volunteers in the community, our current Mayor Gillian Tarrant is holding a volunteer celebration on April 19<sup>th</sup> to celebrate all those that volunteer in the local community. Although this misses the Festival of Volunteering in June, Gillian wanted to hold the celebration before her end of Term.

A massive thank you to all those that volunteer their time in Watton for any cause, the town is a better place because of you all!



### Easter Fun days

The Easter holidays saw the return of more fun days down at Watton Community Centre, we had lots of guests join us over the two weeks including; Walk, Wheel, Cycle who ran a number of activities - including the plate painting spin bike, Love Watton, St Mary's Church & Watton Methodist Church, New-U - who ran a fantastic craft activity using old clothes, and of course we had a bouncy castle too! These fun days continue to be a roaring success with the locals and they will continue through the May half term and during the Summer holidays - so keep your eyes peeled for more posters and details of what's going on each week. If any local businesses would like to sponsor these events to help us keep running for free, please do get in touch with the Town Council office.



### WATTON FOOD HUB CALENDAR MAY 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	29	30	31

**TUESDAYS** - Food Hub Open 12:30-14:30      **8 MAY** - Food Hub Open 16:30-18:30  
**THURSDAYS** - Food Hub Open 09:30-12:00      **20 MAY** - Food Hub Open 16:30-18:30

### Watton Weekly Market updates

Watton Town Council staff have been working hard to revive the weekly Wednesday market, the market took a hit during the pandemic and never seemed to recover. But the team are slowly bringing the market stall numbers back up. We now have the following stalls on the weekly market:

- Plantation Farm - Fruit, Veg & Plants
- The Cheese and Pie Man
- Routs Fishmongers
- Heather's Emporium - Jewellery & Accessories
- The Toy Den - Pick & Mix sweets, Toys & Accessories
- Gerry's Curry Sauces
- Scrubaadub Home Fragrances



Come down to middle street and support the local market!

If you're interested in joining our growing market, contact [events@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:events@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk) for more details!

### Watton Hare Trail

Watton Hare Trail is now up and running. Come and find our 10 mischievous Hares that have hidden themselves in local businesses around town! Trail forms can be picked up from Adcocks, Bunnings, Watton Sports Centre, Museum4Watton, and the Town Council Office. The gracious hosts of our Hares also have some trail forms to get you started!

Happy Hare Trail Hunting!

## 3<sup>RD</sup> APRIL - 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY

**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 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY BACK TO THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE TO BE IN WITH A CHANCE OF WINNING A HARE AND PRIZE HAMPER!**

**FUNDED BY NCC LOVE YOUR MARKET TOWN SCHEME!**

## WATTON TOWN COUNCIL SPRING FAIR MARKET

FOOD & DRINK | CRAFTS | MUSIC

24 MAY 2026 | 13:00 ~ 18:00

WATTON HIGHSTREET

WINNER OF THE HARE TRAIL TO BE ANNOUNCED!

## Swaffham & District u3a

This month we were delighted to welcome Jo and Emma and five feathered friends from the Phoenix Birds of Prey Rescue Trust. We learnt about the work of the Rescue Trust and the lives and habits of their amazing birds. Each bird had its own unique personality and an amazing relationship with their handler affording some great photo opportunities.

The Trust is based in Norfolk and has been going for 13 years. Set up by Jo, the Trust rescues injured and abandoned birds of prey and many are hand reared. The Trust relies entirely on volunteers to support its work and are always delighted to talk to anyone interested.

Next month's meeting will be preceded by our AGM at 10am. After

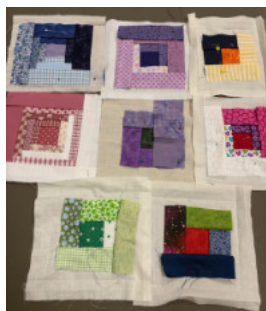
a short AGM to cover all the necessary legal requirements, it will be followed by a presentation and talk on the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Looking forward to June, Barbara Meyer will give us an overview on her conservation work with the Big Cats Conservation programme and how her photography is aimed at raising awareness of the threats to these and also British wildlife.

Anyone is welcome to join the u3a. The only criterion to join is that you are no longer in full-time employment and have the time to take part in the activities on offer. We meet at Holme Hale Village Hall on the first Thursday of each month. Doors open at 9.45am for socialising and the meeting starts promptly at 10.30am finishing by 12 noon. Further details on all the activities covered by Swaffham & District u3a are available on our website: <https://swaffham.u3asite.uk/>

## Wayland Quilters

Wayland Quilters members had great fun and quite a bit of head scratching at our recent meeting when we had a go at doing Manx Log Cabin patchwork. Some of our members had taught themselves how to do it and kindly



helped others to have a go. Some, including myself, didn't try it but I must admit it looked very interesting to do so I plan to have a go.

Don't forget that we meet 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month at Thompson Village Hall so if you would like to join us please do. Some of us knit some of us sew and some of us just drink tea/coffee and chat. Contact Rosemary Scott 07766957949 for details.

## News from the Watton & Wayland Memory Cafe



By the time that you read this, Easter memories will possibly be a mix of a church service and a heap of silver paper and cardboard as you munched your way through chocolate gifts.

At the Memory Cafe in the two weeks before Easter, we were busy making Easter cards and on the third Tuesday, we decorated muffins (thank you

Watton Bakery for your kindness) - both activities ensuring sticky fingers, although the cake one meant the fingers tasted better!

Here are a few of the many photos we took - do you recognise anyone? I can promise that none of our members have long pointed ears or hare-like faces and Harry is not here . . . !!!

# ADCOCKS

## For All Your Electricals!

We're a local, family business based in Watton and we're members of the Euronics Buying Group.

That means we can offer you a great range of electrical products at great prices and backed with our personal service.

Our spacious showroom offers a wide range of top brand electrical products from Bosch, Neff, Siemens, Hotpoint, Beko, Blomberg, Zanussi, Samsung, Panasonic and Sony .

So let us take the hassle out of your electricals shopping, with our experience, advice and renowned after sales service.

We offer prompt, FREE delivery of all major appliances to Watton and the Wayland area.



euronics



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# Wayland Men's Shed

Wayland Men's Shed has continued to thrive and provide a valuable service for the well-being of men in the community. Our numbers continue to grow which is a clear indicator that it is a much-needed resource. We now have 108 members with regular enquiries and visitors coming along with a view to joining. The committee had discussed some time ago that we should put a cap of 100 on membership, but we are reluctant to turn anyone away. With up to 50 members attending sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays we find ourselves fast outgrowing the room we use for social purposes. Likewise, the workshops, who meet on Mondays and Thursdays, have limited space mainly due to Health and Safety issues. We continue to look at options that allow us to remain as part of the Sports Centre. However, we are happy to be situated there and are grateful to the trustees and staff for their support.

The Woodwork shop has been busy with a number of projects including, two Tawny Owl boxes for the Carbrooke nature park, three sets of book stands (9 in total) for the Thompson village hall book sale, dartboard protection stands for the Sports Centre plus repairs to various items of furniture.

The computer workshop has been busy repairing and updating donated computers and printers. They are then passed on to charitable causes or sold at a small cost to

cover any parts. Any that are deemed unsuitable for repair are dismantled for their scrap value. If you have a computer that you no longer want and are happy to donate it to us, please get in touch.

"The Shutterists" camera group visited the lovely picturesque village of Lavenham on 25th March to capture some amazing pictures. This month's winning pictured was titled, "wing and a prayer" (left) snapped by Mark Tindale.

The topic for this months music appreciation group was, "one word title." The winning entry was, "Days" by the Kinks

The shanty group this month performed at Heathersett Village Hall on Sunday 22nd March. This was at a gathering of the Stoma and Reconstructive Surgery Social Support Group (STARS) and is a local support group in Norwich and the surrounding area for people with stomas. This was a very enjoyable event and our group was well looked after.

This month we have held two "Meditation sessions" at our social room after the Monday sessions. This was run by Amanda Copson who is a fully qualified and experienced Meditation teacher. There were 13 members who all agreed that it gave a sense of well being and peacefulness. We are now looking to extend these sessions.

Malcolm Trayhorn  
Chairman and Social Secretary



Pictured below: Mrs Jenny Mounter, the winner of the March Codeword competition. Jenny chose, as her prize, a turned wooden item by Alan Smith. Jenny visited Alan where she selected the beautiful bowl below, and while there picked up a lamp as well! Well done Jenny and thank you Alan for your kindness.



## Last Month's Codeword Result

Last month's winner was drawn XXXX, and the prize was another "choose your own prize". The answer to the puzzle was:

**"A NEAR ENOUGH OATH"**

The winner this month was J Yeardeley, and the Runner Up was G Daisey. Well done to both.

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, Dave from Alexanders Jewellers and Gold Shop 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 it was 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 whatever page it is on!

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# FOOT HEALTH CARE

FOOT CARE TREATMENT IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME

## Treatments Include

- Routine Nail Care
- Ingrown Toe Nails
- Fungal Nail Treatment
- Corns & Callus Removal
- Athlete's Foot treatment
- Verruca Treatment
- Advise on The Diabetic Foot

Foot massage given at the end of all treatments

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Qualified Foot Health Professional

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Mob: 07743 116447

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# Trade Stands & Pitches at The Wayland Agricultural Show

Honouring 150 Years of Tradition - Reimagined for Today

## Don't miss out...

Join us as the Wayland Agricultural Show celebrates its 150th Anniversary — a true highlight of Norfolk's rural calendar. This landmark year promises to be one of our most vibrant yet, and we're inviting traders of every kind to be part of it.

From artisan jam makers and local crafters in our bustling Shopping Village, to established businesses seeking a prominent trade stand, there's a place for everyone. New for 2026, we're delighted to introduce Market Lane - a dedicated space perfect for traders who sit between traditional craft stalls and full-sized trade pitches, much like a farmers' market atmosphere.

It's a brilliant opportunity to showcase your products, meet customers face-to-face, and trade in a setting that celebrates community, agriculture, and local enterprise. With thousands of visitors expected for this milestone year, Wayland is set to be a must-visit summer show.

Secure your pitch today and help make our 150th anniversary truly unforgettable.

**Sunday 2 August, Wayland Showground, Brandon Road, IP25 7NG**

**TRADE STAND PITCHES: from £160 + VAT**  
**SHOPPING VILLAGE TABLES: £40 + VAT**  
**MARKET LANE (3m x 3m): £55 + VAT**

**Application forms and contact information: waylandshow.com**



# CODEWORD

**Blast me Bor! I can't afford to get you no diesel but I'll do me best on suffin' else**

# CODEWORD

Let me know with your main 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 :-)

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):

**16, 1, 19, 10, 8, 9, 8, 3, 1, 19, 4, 13, 16, 22, 2, 13, 11, 17, 16, 10**

Send the Codeword you think is the answer, along with your name and contact details in an email to me at [wattontimes@gmail.com](mailto:wattontimes@gmail.com)

Or, if you don't do email, in an envelope marked 'Competition' to Julian, Care of Adcocks, 32 High Street, Watton. 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.

3		5		5		20		18		22		15		13
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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

**Worship in May**

Sun 3rd	10am	Holy Communion
Sun 10th	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	2nd Sunday
Sun 17th	10am	Holy Communion
Sun 24th	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	4th Sunday
	11.30am	APCM at church following the 10am service.
Sun 31st	10am	Café Church

**Polish Catholic Community**

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

Sun 31st 1pm – Mass with a picnic following. (Cancelled 30th)

**St. Peter & St Paul's Church,**

3 Church Street, Carbrooke, IP25 6SW

www.carbrookechurch.co.uk

Sun 3rd	10.30am	Morning Worship with Julie Denton
Sun 10th	10.30am	Holy Communion with Rev Christina Mason
Sun 17th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Robert Denton
Sun 24th	10.30am	Morning Worship with Rev Christina Mason
Sun 31st	10.30am	Holy Communion with Rev Jane Atkins

**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  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> 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

**Tuesday 12th May at 2pm**

We shall be making coloured fabric covered notebooks/shopping lists, followed by refreshments.

All welcome, regardless of age or ability

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 3<sup>rd</sup> May 10.30am

Everyone welcome

**Swaffham and Watton Roman Catholic Community**

Mass held at the Watton Methodist Church at 5.00pm on Saturdays.

Watton Methodist Church  
57 High Street, Watton IP25 6AB

**Ashill Group Services**

Sunday 3 May, Easter 5, 9.30 am, St Nicholas' Ashill, Lay-led service  
10.30 am, St George's Saham Toney, Lay-led service  
10.30 am, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Holy Communion

Sunday 10 May, Easter 6, 9.30 am, St Nicholas' Ashill, Lay-led service  
10.30 am, St George's Saham Toney, Holy Communion  
10.30 am, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Morning Praise

Thursday 14 May, 7.00 pm, Ascension Day, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion

Sunday 17 May, Easter 7, 9.30 am, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion  
9.30 am, St Peter's Merton, Holy Communion and Baptism  
10.30 am, St George's Saham Toney, Lay-led service  
10.30 am, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, All-Age Service

Sunday 24 May, Day of Pentecost, 9.30 am, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion  
10.30 am, St George's Saham Toney, Lay-led service  
10.30 am, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Book of Common Prayer: Morning Prayer

Sunday 31 May, 9.30am Trinity Sunday, St Peter's Merton, Festal Holy Communion: Archdeacon of Lynn presiding and preaching (this is the only service in the Ashill Group today)

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



**All Nations Church**

**All Nations Church, Watton**

We meet every Sunday at 10:30am at the Youth and Community Centre on Harvey Street.

We would love to have you with us.

**May at ANC**

- 3rd May - Worship Service
- 10th May - Community Café
- 17th May - Worship Service
- 24th May - Community Café
- 31st May - Worship Service

If you would like to get in touch or find out more then please email: [hello@ancwatton.co.uk](mailto:hello@ancwatton.co.uk)  
Or call Harry on 07999 564055  
If you are interested in an introduction to the Christian faith and a chance to ask any questions you have then please get in contact to join our next Alpha course.

**Q: If someone is not used to attending a church what is a reason for them to make a visit?**

**A: Jesus said . . . "I am the way, the truth, and the life."**

**You are welcome to visit Purpose Church**

The Watton Sports Centre, Dereham Road, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6EZ.

Service every Sunday 10.30am

More information contact Nick 07940049933 or [nicknundy@gmail.com](mailto:nicknundy@gmail.com)

**The Wayland Group of Parishes**

**Sunday 3rd May**

10.30am United Holy Communion  
St Botolph's, Stow Bedon

**Sunday 10th May**

10.30am United Holy Communion  
St Martin's, Thompson

**Sunday 17th May**

10.30am United Holy Communion  
St Margaret's, Breckles

**Sunday 24th May**

10.30am United Holy Communion  
Holy Cross, Caston

**Sunday 31st May**

10.30am United Holy Communion  
Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham

**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

**Praying many blessings for our farmers, our community and its sustenance . . .**

I have found living and working in a rural benefice, particularly one centred around farming, is defined by a deep connection to the land, a strong sense of community, and the rhythmic, seasonal nature of agricultural life. Farmers I come in to contact with often describe a rewarding, albeit demanding, way of life that offers a unique sense of peace and purpose.

Did you know that this year, May 10th is Rogation Sunday, which always takes place on the fifth Sunday after Easter. But what exactly does it mark?

Rogation is an ancient church festival which seeks blessing for a community and its sustenance. The word rogation comes from the Latin verb rogare, meaning "to ask", reflecting the beseeching of God for protection from calamities. As the Book of Common Prayer puts it: "Rogation Days are the three days preceding Ascension Day, especially devoted to asking for God's blessing on agriculture and industry."

Since mediaeval times there has been a tradition of "beating the bounds" of the parish, praying for God's blessing upon the crops and thus the well-being of that particular settlement. It is still observed by some parishes today – with a procession, prayers and a sharing of hope in God's goodness to nourish every endeavour which enables people to flourish.

So, the Sixth Sunday of Easter (the fifth Sunday after Easter Sunday) is traditionally known as "Rogation Sunday" in the Church of England's calendar of festivals. This is because the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the following week are known as the "Rogation Days," days for fasting and prayer. The Thursday of that week is the feast of the Ascension, a major Christian festival commemorating the bodily ascension of Jesus into heaven 40 days after his resurrection on Easter, marking the end of Jesus's earthly ministry.

Rogation invites people to ask for blessing – for a particular place, for all its inhabitants, for every endeavour to promote the common good. It is totally inclusive – joining everyone in seeking sustenance and a commitment to play their part in its provision.

**What's On at St Mary's Church, Watton - May**

Church Road, Watton, IP25 6DQ

www.stmaryswatton.org  
wattonchurch@gmail.com  
01953 881252

**Saturday 2 May, 10am - 12 noon**  
**Saturday Chat** takes place on the first Saturday of each month. Join us for a friendly coffee morning - come with friends or come alone and make new ones.

**Tuesday 5 May, 5pm - 6pm** Prayer & Praise is held on the first Tuesday of each month. Sing your favourite worship songs and pray with and for the community.

**Wednesday 6 May, 1.30pm - 4pm** (location in Watton) The Bereavement Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month. For details, contact Linda Benton on 07803 017340 or [linbenton2978@gmail.com](mailto:linbenton2978@gmail.com).

**Thursday 14 May, 2pm - 2.30pm** **Prayer Gathering**, led by Rev Dave Cossey, takes place on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Join us to lift up our community and the wider world in informal prayer.

**Saturday 16 May, 10am - 12 noon** **Messy Church** offers a free morning of fun, stories, play and craft activities for children (aimed at primary age, but all ages welcome). Food and drinks are also provided.

**Wednesday 20 May, 1pm - 2.30pm** **The Ecumenical Ladies' Prayer Group** meets at Home Church, Dereham Road, Watton. Enjoy fellowship followed by a time of prayer. Please bring a packed lunch; hot drinks are provided.

**Tuesday 26 May, 2pm - 4pm** **Tuesday Club** meets at St Mary's for a social afternoon of games and laughter. Confectionery prizes are available, and donations for refreshments are gratefully received. All are welcome.

**Thursday 28 May, 10am - 3pm** **Open Church** invites everyone to visit, pray, explore and discover what St Mary's offers the community. Friendly volunteers will be available to help with enquiries.

**Thursday 28 May, 2pm - 4pm** **Craft Group** meets in the church rooms. Enjoy refreshments and company while crafting. A £1 donation is appreciated.

**Thursday 28 May, 2pm - 2.30pm** **Prayer Gathering**, led by Rev Dave Cossey, takes place again as part of the regular second and fourth Thursday pattern.

**Friday 29 May, 2pm - 4pm** **Community Cinema** returns with a film to be confirmed - please check the website for details. Doors open at 1.15pm for a 2pm start. Tickets are £5 on the door and include a hot drink and cake.

**April's Winners of the 200 Club**  
1st prize (£50): Rev Dave & Weiwei Cossey, No. 10  
2nd prizes (£25 each): Barbara Powdrill, No. 196; Alan Blake, No. 54

May God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the source of all goodness and growth, pour his blessing upon our farmers, our communities, and all things created, that we may use his gifts to his glory and the welfare of all peoples.

With love and many blessings, Vanessa x  
Reverend Vanessa is the rector for the Wayland benefice of Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Thompson, and Stow Bedon. You can contact her on 07984 31885 or by email at [vanessadlayfield@gmail.com](mailto:vanessadlayfield@gmail.com)



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# Great Hockham Gardening Club

I no longer need to turn on the outside light when the boss of the house is dragged from her bed and let out for her morning constitutional. It follows from this that there will soon be a procession of flowers to enjoy and keep watered. One of these will be irises. It seems that there are specialists in everything and irises are no exception. Enter Chris and Kate Davey of Seagate Nurseries (and a selection of said plants at popular prices).

There are impulses and then there are impulses. One day in April 2018 Chris and Kate happened driving along the Long Sutton By-Pass when they spotted the Seagate Irises nursery. They decided to pop in for a plant. As it wouldn't take long Kate decided to stay in the car. After a rather long wait, Chris returned with his plant and an agreement to purchase the entire establishment. At the time Chris was a tree surgeon and the couple had two children, one four years old and the other six months.

The nursery had been on the market for about two years and had become somewhat run-down. It had very little stock so they started off by buying in wholesale and then selling on with a mark-up.

Before they could start propagating their own plants, the soil needed reviving - an on-going process. At that time their range was only 400 varieties, but the business was becoming established. And then came the pandemic. But about two years later things began to pick-up. They had made a commitment to be as nature friendly as possible, being totally peat free and encouraging wildlife. Previously the owner had no interest in anything but irises, but Chris and Kate gradually introduced other varieties and the business became 'Seagate Nurseries'.

As with most things I am surprised when I find out about things in detail: flora that are defined as irises consist of 300 species. The American Iris Society (the international registration authority) recognises about 90,000 named irises. Then there are about another 200,000 more irises in the nursery system not registered. The varieties that Seagate Nurseries cultivate and sell are only those that are registered. To ensure no

unwanted hybridisation the stock for cultivation must be trimmed early as then they cannot seed. A plant from seed is never true to the parent so you end up with goodness knows what. (I think we've come across this before with snowdrops and apples.)

Chris then gave members a few tips as to the method of cultivation: The rhizome must only be half buried, always plant in sunshine, with drier summers feed earlier rather than later were some of the main points. One other tip that he mentioned was on planting: if the ground has been thoroughly rotovated, planting should be a little deeper than normal as this is to allow the loose soil to slump and expose the rhizome.

Any decent gardening programme will always emphasise the importance of marking plants: The flat leaves of irises allow names to be written directly onto the leaves. This avoids the problem should pot and label go their separate ways. I'm not sure about advertising restrictions in these pieces so I won't mention Staedler Lumocolor as being Chris's inscription device of choice. Feeding: if you want to feed, earlier might be better than later. This is because with drier summers Chris has found that when it comes to lifting some of the fertiliser can still be on the surface. Chris ended his most enjoyable and informative talk by showing pictures of some of the many varieties the couple cultivate.

To my own woes: I don't mind digging, it's sufficiently mindless for the body to get on with it while the brain contemplates higher things. But not in the garden of a new build! We have two veg beds: I deep dug Bed One two years ago and so Bed Two was unfinished business, it nags away at you. Ordinary spade won't go in, heavy spade, fork, pickaxe won't go in. Idea! Mains hammer drill into shallow fork holes, insert fork, lever fork, loosens 'soil'. However, drill stalls, fear of fork handle breaking. But with a combination of all the above it's now done, 'No dig' method from now on.

And so, to our outside meetings. Wednesday 13th of May at 1400 will see us at West Barsham Hall enjoying tea and cake and maybe a glance at the garden. Stay safe, Edward.



# The Whitethroat Sylvia communis

By the Breckland Birder  
Occasionally, as part of my contribution to the Wayland and Watton Times I would like to have a 'species focus' when I write about specific species which are encountered in our local area. This month I am writing about one of my favourite Warbler species, the Whitethroat, and I feel that the timing is right to focus on the Whitethroat as it is in April when this summer migrant arrives with us to breed. Whitethroats winter in a region of Africa known as the Sahel, a wide 6000km band of semi-arid, scrubby environment along the southern boundary of the Sahara Desert, the Sahel reaches from the Atlantic Ocean to the west to the Red Sea to the east. The Sahel is effectively a transitional zone between the hot, dry Sahara Desert to the north and the more humid savannahs to the south. The Whitethroat occupies a very special place in my heart and the first arrival back on my patch in April is greeted with a smile and a "Welcome back" under my breath. My reason for the Whitethroat being such a special bird to me is because in the late 1960's the species suffered a catastrophic decline in their numbers. Between the 1968 and 1969 breeding seasons (whilst on their wintering grounds on the Sahel), this area of Africa was affected by a very severe drought, it was following this disastrous period in the spring of 1969 that up to 90% of Whitethroats failed to return to Britain to breed as they had very sadly perished in the drought. Whitethroats numbers have steadily increased since the drought and can now be regarded as a common bird, however, numbers have not recovered to pre-1969 levels. This is why Whitethroats hold a very special place in my heart.



The Whitethroat Sylvia communis is a summer visitor which arrives with us to breed from about the end of the second week of April where it fills our hedgerows, commons, and areas of scrub from where they sing their loud scratchy song from a high perch, for example,

from the top spray of a bramble patch, this is indeed a very conspicuous songster which often gives a song-flight over its territory which is used to attract a mate and warn other male birds that his territory is taken.

The Whitethroat is a delightful little bird which always appears on the go, it is a slim Warbler and there is clear demarcation between the male and female birds appearance.

Male Whitethroats are contrasting in plumage colour, the head colour is grey, this contrasts with the brown back and bright white throat, it has a rusty patch on the wing which separates it from other Warblers, the underparts are pinkish-buff and the tail is brownish with white outer feathers. The female Whitethroat has a brown head and matching brown upper parts. Adult Whitethroats have a pale brown/orange eye, however, young Whitethroats (pictured below) have an all black eye, this eye colour changes to the colour of the adult bird after the first autumn moult.

The breeding habitat of Whitethroats includes overgrown hedgerows, commons, and patches of scrub. The male bird builds several 'cock nests' then the female selects the one she wants and completes the build. Whitethroats are single brooded but will have a second weather permitting. Both male and female Whitethroats are involved in feeding the chicks in the nest, they will continue feeding the young for 15 to 20 days following their leaving the nest when they then become independent.

The diet of Whitethroats in the summer months includes caterpillars, beetles, and flies, however, in late summer and early autumn the diet includes soft fruits such as Elderberries, Dogberries, and Blackberries, these fruits are consumed to raise sugar levels in order to build energy for their long and strenuous migration back to Africa. Migration to Africa occurs in August and September. I often find several Whitethroats in August and September, in a single patch of Bramble where they feed in preparation for migration.

Finally, I am always fascinated by local names for birds, the Whitethroat is known in Norfolk as 'Nettlecreeper', an ideal name for a bird which is adept at skulking amongst thick and low ground cover, including nettles.



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For further information and contact details, please go to our website at: [www.wattonbowlsclub.co.uk](http://www.wattonbowlsclub.co.uk)

**Ashill Memory Café**  
'Make time for a cuppa event'

May 6<sup>th</sup> 11am - 2pm @ Ashill Community Centre  
8 Hale Road, Ashill, Thetford IP25 7AX

This is an annual event which helps to bring people together to enjoy tea and cake, raise awareness of dementia and help fund future research projects.

**PLEASE COME AND JOIN US**

The Watton & Wayland **memory cafe**

For those with dementia and their carers

Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month  
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**It's time to PRELOVED CLOTHES**

Caston WI invite you to our 'PRELOVED' CLOTHES SALE at CASTON VILLAGE HALL SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup> MAY 10.00AM - 12.00PM REFRESHMENTS SERVED (bacon baps, scones & a selection of cakes tea/coffee available)

**SALE!**

# Chemical Warfare (and cooperation) In The Garden

Ashill, Holme Hale & District Garden Club It seemed appropriate in these current turbulent times of regional wars around the globe that the garden club had a presentation related to warfare. However, this presentation of war was of a much more natural source with logical tactics and clear strategies.

Dr Gwenda Kid (pictured), a qualified chemist turned medicinal plant expert, gave a fascinating presentation on how the plants and flowers in our garden communicate with other plants. Gwenda is a published author and co-deviser of the "Medicines from Plants" trail at Cambridge University Botanical Gardens.

While plants cannot talk, they certainly do communicate with the world around them. Plants use chemical signals to either attract pollinators or repel insects who might view them as a tasty snack. Gwenda started her presentation with some definitions in relation to the topic. The term 'Allelopathy' is the term used for the biological phenomenon where plants release chemicals (allelochemicals) that inhibit or influence the growth of, survival, or reproduction of surrounding plants and microorganisms. This natural "chemical warfare" allows plants to reduce competition for resources like sunlight and water. These compounds are released via root exudates, leaf leaching, or decomposition of plant residues. Thus these allelochemicals act as natural herbicides, inhibiting germination or slowing growth of neighbouring plants. Thus, there is great interest in their agricultural use as a sustainable natural herbicide alternative to synthetic agricultural chemicals. Cover crops such as rye, sorghum and brassicas are used to manage weed growth through these chemical interactions.

Junglone is a chemical exuded by the black walnut tree, which suppresses nearby plants

like tomatoes and also many insects from its surroundings. Another example of these chemical interactions, that as gardeners we are very familiar with, is "companion planting" which is an organic way of maintaining a natural balance in the garden, aiding pollination and keeping pest numbers down. Good examples of this are borage and strawberries, others are garlic and carrots or sage and broccoli.

Upcoming Garden Club Events  
Our April meeting (23rd) will be given by horticulturist and nurserywoman Luci Skinner talking about 'Growing Pelargoniums'. The garden club's first outing of the year will be to see the new Tulips at Houghton event in the walled garden at Houghton Hall on Thursday April 30th. Our May meeting (28th) will be on 'Bee-friendly gardening' by Lynda Hunt.

All meetings are held at Holme Hale Pavilion and start at 2.30pm. New members from anywhere in the district are always welcome, so come along and improve your gardening knowledge, while enjoying a welcoming environment with like minded colleagues. If you enjoy the afternoon then you can join the club for just £6 per club year.

Website:  
ashillgardeningclub.wordpress.com/  
Email:  
ashillholmevalegardenclub@gmail.com



# Watton Evening WI

Well, April has nearly gone and the daffodils have been lovely, and lots of them too. It's been another busy month. But before April started we had our group meeting with Saham Toney WI at the end of March, which was well attended. Our speaker was Wally Webb (pictured) who was a fountain of knowledge regarding the Norfolk Broads, so it was a very interesting evening. We also enjoyed a lovely spread and a good chat afterwards.

We have had a coffee morning at the Methodist Centre at the beginning of April, which was well attended as always. Our meeting on 12th April was 'The Wonderful World of Stinging Nettles' which was very informative and very interesting too! So our



thanks go to Fay Jones, our speaker for the evening.

There was much fun had doing the Decoupage Art in March and our thanks go to Sandra Wood for a great evening and lots of lovely items.

Our meeting in May is slightly different as we will be discussing the resolutions and voting on them. There is also a quiz afterwards too. If you would like to attend a meeting you are very welcome. The meeting starts at 7.30pm, but if you would like more information please contact Margaret Herbert on 01953 882269.



# Caston WI Preloved Sale

Caston WI are holding a Preloved Clothes Sale on Saturday 30th May in Caston Village Hall, The Street, Caston NR17 1DD. Doors open at 10.00am when you will be greeted with a selection of good quality (no jumble!) ladies and gents clothes, shoes and

handbags. In true WI tradition we will also be serving tea/coffee with a choice of bacon baps, scones and a selection of home-made cakes. We look forward to welcoming you to our event and hope you may find some real bargains.

Doors close at 12.00 midday. For further information please contact: Elsa Bellingham 01953 881745

# 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](mailto: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.

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# GARAGE SALES CASTON NR17 1DD



Saturday 9th May 9.00 am to 12.00 noon

Refreshments and parking at the village hall

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# Inner Wheel

We were very lucky to have Hazel Gillingham as our speaker at our March meeting, entertaining us with the life story of Mary Seacole. She was born in Kingston, Jamaica and suffered racial prejudice all her life but against the odds she did a great deal with her life. She is not as well known as Florence Nightingale but she did a great deal for the soldiers in the Crimean war as a nurse although Florence Nightingale never recognised her hard work. It is only in recent times that her incredible life has become well known and she has been honoured with a statue at St Thomas's hospital in London and she has been added to the National Curriculum so her story is studied in schools.

In April, Brenda Tubb entertained a sellout audience at the Queens Hall, demonstrating her wonderful flower arranging skills. She is so popular that we had no tickets left to sell 2 or 3 weeks before the event. Our apologies to those who were disappointed. She made some beautiful displays, all the while chatting about the flowers and "him indoors" and she had the audience in fits of laughter. The Inner Wheel ladies produced a splendid tea which was enjoyed by all and then the flowers were all raffled off and some



delighted ladies left with their works of art. Our thanks go to Brenda for giving us her time and expertise enabling us to make a large amount for Hear for Norfolk. This is our President Heather's charity for her year, as she herself is partially deaf after an illness and her sister was born deaf. Many, many thanks again to Brenda for a wonderful afternoon. Jenny Simons (Club Correspondent)

# Watton Twinning Association



Our AGM and Cream Tea was very well attended and most enjoyable. As the current Town Mayor is the Twinning Associations Honorary President Gillian Turrent took the chair of the meeting as the committee had to stand down, discussions were had and the committee was re-elected. The main topic was the upcoming visit to Weeze in May to celebrate their 800th year Anniversary. The Town Council and the Twinning Association are having a joint gift especially carved for this occasion, this will be a hand

carved Hare over a Barrel which depicts our town sign, we are really looking forward to seeing this when it is ready. Next year we shall be celebrating in Watton the 40th Anniversary of Watton Twinning Association and Weeze Partnerschaft Weeze. so lots of plans to be made for that event. If you would like to know more about us or perhaps join the association please contact me, Margaret Devine magsdevine44@gmail.com or call me on 07450793916 Margaret Devine(Chair)



## Owl Boxes Placed on Carbrooke Green

These Owl boxes have been fitted on Carbrooke Green as an environmental project. Built from scratch by members of the Mens Shed and installed by Watton Rotary members.

## Norfolk Wildlife Trust Breckland Group

We hope you all had a good Easter, we were lucky with the weather. At time of writing we are still looking forward to our guided tour of Wayland Wood. Hope there's good weather for that also.

On Sunday May 17th we have The Breckland Birder aka Paul Newport, helping us identify by sight and sound, the birds of Cranberry Rough. As a lot of you will know, Paul is a very knowledgeable photographer of our bird life. So join us if you can at 10.00 am. Cost is £3 non members, £2 members, paid cash on the day please. Booking is required at breckland@nirfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk.

# Claire Bowes

## Vote for Claire on 7th May

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# Caston and Watton Ju-Jitsu & Self Defence Club

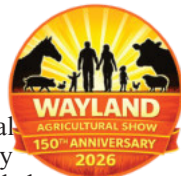


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## Wayland Agricultural Show: Sponsorship & Membership. Don't miss out!!

**Honouring 150 Years of Tradition - Reimagined for Today**



In 2026, the Wayland Agricultural Show celebrates its 150th anniversary - a remarkable milestone made possible by generations of community support. For a century and a half, the show has championed agriculture, rural heritage, and local pride, and its future depends on the continued involvement of sponsors and members. Sponsorship offers a meaningful way to support a long standing community event, while gaining visibility and connection across the region. As we approach this landmark year, we warmly welcome both new and returning sponsors and members to help ensure the Wayland Agricultural Show remains a valued tradition for years to come. Sunday 2 August, Wayland Showground, Brandon Road, IP25 7NG

**GOLD SPONSOR — £660 (inc. VAT)**  
Premium visibility, prime placement, and recognition as a leading supporter of our 150th anniversary year.  
**SILVER SPONSOR — £400 (inc. VAT)**  
Strong brand presence across show materials and valued support for this landmark event.  
**BRONZE SPONSOR — £135 (inc. VAT)**  
An accessible way to champion the show and be part of its heritage.  
**LIVESTOCK RING SPONSOR — £150**  
Support one of the show's most iconic attractions with ring-side branding.  
**BANNER SPONSOR — £50**  
Display your banner on the showground and be seen by thousands of visitors.  
**MEMBERSHIP**  
Adults: £27.50; Young Farmers Membership: £17.50; Children & Young People: Free  
Membership includes show entry and helps safeguard the future of this long standing community tradition. Application forms, full benefits, and sponsorship details available at: [waylandshow.com](http://waylandshow.com)  
**Don't miss out!!!**

Sponsorship & Membership Opportunities  
Celebrate 150 Years of the Wayland Agricultural Show



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