



Watton & Wayland Times



OPEN GARDEN

Sunday 14th June

2pm – 5pm

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Watton Edwards Premier and Post Office Begin The Next Chapter



Watton Edwards Premier Food and Post Office has officially opened the doors to its new home, marking the end of more than a century trading at its former High Street premises. The business remained in the Edwards family for the bulk of that time, and has since been taken over by Mr Ketul Desai, who said he is excited to lead the business into the next part of its journey.

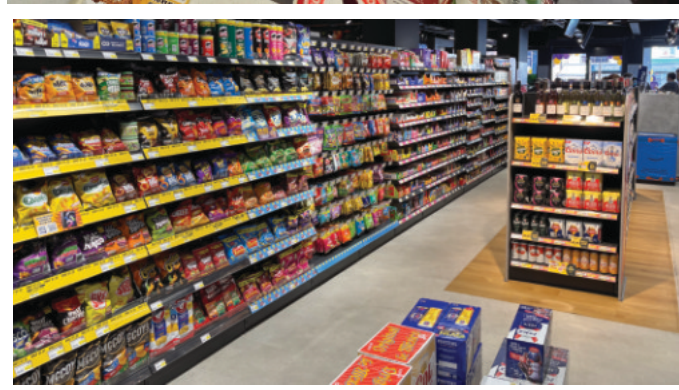
On 30th April, the long established business completed its move into the larger and more convenient building previously occupied by Boots Chemists, giving the team more space to serve the growing needs of the town.

The new store was formally opened by locally based Anna Soko Mudeka, pictured left with Ketul Desai. Anna is a Zimbabwean British musician, actor, business executive and organiser of the Southburgh Festival of World Music. Her presence brought a celebratory atmosphere to the occasion and reflected the strong community spirit surrounding the move.

Managers Kalpesh and Dhairya expressed how delighted they are to continue supporting the people of Watton from their new location. They spoke warmly about the loyalty shown to Edwards over the years, the friendly way they have been welcomed by customers and their excitement for this new chapter.

All previous Post Office services remain fully available at the new premises, along with the complete Edwards product range including cards and stationery, magazines, gifts and toys, ensuring customers can continue to find everything they expect under one roof.

With improved accessibility, a fresh layout and room for expanded services, the move marks a significant moment for one of Watton's longest standing businesses and a positive step forward for the High Street.



Wayland Men's Shed



Wayland Men's Shed
 Wayland Men's Shed has no paid full time or part time staff to run or administer the running of the workshops, social room, groups, outings and events. We can only run and be successful with the assistance of volunteers. So, it was gratifying to have been invited to Broom Hall on Sunday 19th April by the mayor, councillor Gillian Turrant to celebrate the work of volunteers in the community. John Chamberlin, our treasurer and myself attended to represent the committee and membership. It was a lovely afternoon and fantastic to see so many volunteers from a variety of community groups.

The Woodwork shop continues with various projects and is currently constructing

hedgehog boxes amongst personal projects. The computer workshop has received donations of computers and monitors as well as printers. These are being worked on to see if they can be made good for passing on or dismantled for parts or scrap value. "The Shutterists" camera group, pictured above, visited Wayland Wood this month on a gloriously sunny day. After a morning coffee at Tom & G's, Carbrooke, we spent a very pleasant morning in the sunshine taking pictures and wiling away the morning. We ended up at the Waggon & Horses where we were made very welcome by Scott and his team. As always, the food was excellent. The topic for this month's music appreciation group was, "special memories." The winning entry was, "Ferris Wheel" by Indy followed

by "Umbrella Man" by Flanagan & Allen and "The Girl from Ipanema", by Stan Getz & Astrud Gilberto. The shanty group has been busy rehearsing favourite shanties as well as some new ones. The next performance will be in the High Street on Sunday 24th May at the Spring Fair. We are fast approaching our Annual General Meeting, which will be held at the Sports Centre in Dereham Road at 7pm on Wednesday 10th June. As a charity we offer an open invitation to anyone who wants to see how we operate. If you wish to attend please let me know so that we can ensure enough chairs. Malcolm Trayhorn Chairman and Social Secretary

Norfolk's Recycling Centres Unable to Accept Most Electrical Waste

Recycling centres across Norfolk are currently unable to accept most electrical waste items. The disruption follows a serious fire last month at a waste electrical recycling facility used as part of the national recycling system that Norfolk belongs to. The company operating the site has since lost its treatment facility approval and ceased operating, which means Norfolk's electrical waste cannot currently be legally recycled. For residents, this means that most electrical items cannot be accepted at any of Norfolk's recycling centres for the time being. Only large household appliances such as washing machines, tumble dryers, dishwashers and cookers can still be taken to sites. Breckland Council's bulky waste collections will also be affected, and residents are advised to check directly with them for updates. Norfolk County Council has acknowledged the inconvenience and is working with national regulators and industry partners to put a safe and legal solution in place as quickly as possible. The council says it is exploring all available options to restore the service. Residents are being asked not to bring electrical items to recycling centres unless they fall into the small list of accepted large appliances. Where possible, people are encouraged to store electrical items safely at home until services resume. Updates will be shared as soon as the situation changes so residents know when electrical items can be accepted again.

Tackling Rural Poverty By Terry Jermy MP

As someone who has lived in South West Norfolk my entire life, I am acutely aware of the many inequalities that rural communities face. This was part of the reason why I stood to become a Member of Parliament; I wanted to highlight what the challenges were and put forward proposals for how to address them. Last Summer, more than 40 rural and semi-rural Labour MPs and I launched the Labour Rural Research Group (LRRG), to ensure that rural voices are heard at the heart of government and to develop the research, evidence and policy solutions needed to tackle rural poverty, unlock rural potential, and deliver meaningful change across the countryside. Recently, we worked to secure £53 million in Government funding for a heating oil financial support package. Another key focus has been calling on the Government to develop a rural strategy to tackle rural poverty, following a landmark report that LRRG and I published, which warns that rural poverty is deeper and more widespread than official statistics

suggest, with families across the countryside paying a structural 'rural penalty' just to reach a basic standard of living. Drawing on evidence from councils, NHS bodies, charities, rural businesses and dedicated focus groups with residents, our report Rural Poverty in Britain finds a consistent pattern - rural households are expected to travel further, pay more and rely on fewer alternatives, yet national funding and service models continue to assume urban density, economies of scale and proximity to services. Research undertaken in rural areas and conducted exclusively for the report reinforced these findings. Rural poverty is experienced less as isolation from places, and more as isolation from systems. Transport unreliability, overstretched health services and thinning education pathways are seen as mutually reinforcing and negative pressures, creating a persistent sense that rural living demands more from households while offering fewer supports in return. Communities like ours know the cost-of-living crisis hits differently in rural areas. That is because families already pay more for fuel, more for food and more for transport simply because of where they live. This 'rural penalty' isn't about lifestyle - it's

about structural costs. If we're serious about fairness, we must deliver a Rural Strategy that recognises these pressures and ensures rural households are no longer paying more just to get by. What our report makes clear is that we need coordinated, cross-government action to ensure our rural communities can thrive, which is why we are calling for a Rural Strategy to sit at the heart of national policymaking, not on the sidelines. My LRRG colleagues and I have set out 24 recommendations that address the root causes rather than symptoms of hardship; going beyond isolated interventions or 'rural add-ons'. These address poverty across income, employment, education, health, housing, crime, connectivity and access to services. You can access the full report through my website; www.terryjermy.com Rural Britain has huge untapped potential. With the right investment in connectivity,



transport and local enterprise, South West Norfolk communities will have the opportunities to grow. Ignoring rural disadvantage isn't just unfair, it's economically short-sighted. Separately, I would like to remind households that the Government's £53 million heating oil support package can be accessed. Already, two thirds of applications that have been completed have been awarded support. To apply for support, please visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/heatingoil or call 0344 800 8020. As always, should you or someone you know need support, please do email me: terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk

DixieMix Strike The Right Chord With Watton Jazz Lovers



Watton Rotary Club welcomed DixieMix, East Anglia's Premier jazz band to the stage at Watton 's Queens Hall in March. They have been coming to Watton for many years now, and never disappoint. On this occasion over 100 jazz fans came to enjoy the show. Led as always by the irrepresible Simon Nelson on trumpet and vocals, the trad jazz band included

several familiar members as well as a couple of new faces, but there was no lessening of DixieMix's unique brand of humour and music throughout the evening. Playing a mixture of well known tunes and some less so, they included numbers from the likes of Duke Ellington, Kenny Ball and Chris Barber. During the interval the audience (and the band) were fed with our

traditional ham or cheese rolls (the band even have a song about it!) with fresh fruit to follow. The bar was also open for the duration of the concert.

Our thanks go to DixieMix and all who attended the evening, from which we raised around £450 which will be used by the Rotary Club for charitable purposes, both locally and further afield.

Fundraising Events at Griston Church

The A Strings

Back by popular demand the A Strings will perform for us at SS

Peter and Paul Church, Griston on Friday 5th June at 7pm. Join us for an evening of easy listening music and maybe a sing a long finale. Tickets £10 including refreshments from Bridget Park 07919097239

Griston Yard Sales

Something new for the village, on Saturday 27th June Driveway Sales from 10am to 2pm. Maps and refreshments will be available at the church. Come along and grab a bargain.

Hare and Seek - the Answer the Winner & the Next Clue

Many more of you found Harry last month I am pleased to say, but I really want to say before I tell you the answer, **READ THE CLUE(S)** - it or they really help (I think) but still retain an air of devious mystery for fun.

So, what were the clues? Well, in the how to play section, where the first clue is, I said . . .

"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 a shrinking violet, and by the way, you have not found him amongst the Flora and Fauna hare - OK?"

The picture was to tell you you were looking for a

black hare not a white one like last month and if you then read Lotta's column, she said . . .

"Keep hunting for Harry the Hare - he is not hare though he left his watering can behind!"

Lotta's remark was to tell you Harry no longer had a watering can in his possession.

The garden pictures in the paper were a diversion. But you had been told he was a shrinking violet so he was quite small, no watering can, black and NOT amongst the 'Flora and Fauna' in that piece. BUT he was among the "Flora and More" on the back page under the 'OR' of MORE on the back page as below. No swearing!

The winner drawn was: J Rowling well done to you! And Jon has a £10 voucher to spend at Watton Bakery!

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. Now I wonder where Harry is hiding this month . . .

How to Play Hare & Seek

Each month, a tiny hare will be hiding somewhere in the pages of the Watton & Wayland Times. 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 staying unseen. Once you've found him, just let me know where he is.. Pop your answer over to me 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 has been off boxing again and I gather he won more than one match! But he didn't break any rules. It does seem like Harry certainly knows the Form when it comes to looking after his Leverets; even if mum will pass the buck . . .



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Face-to-face meetings with these high street banking providers are available on:

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Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		



My London Marathon Journey by Mark Bunning

26th April 2025, exactly 1 year from the race, I enter the ballot for the umpteenth time, well about 15 years, so the expected rejection email was awaited. June the 20th was judgment day, expecting the “sorry, not this time, but consider a place running for charity” email. This email didn’t arrive but one stating I was successful in the ballot, please finalise the place by paying for your place on the start line. I couldn’t get to that payment page fast enough, there was no way I was missing out on this. Now sort the accommodation and Airbnb came to the rescue. So I now have 44 weeks to running a marathon and my first ever running race. Prior to this, my furthest distance I have run was one half marathon several years ago. My one goal at this event is to crack the 4 hour time. Garmin is my friend at this point. I enter the race details, tell it I am willing to work hard, 5 days running a week with 2 rest days. With that, a training plan was produced. Most of this training was building the base, the engine that would carry me through. Lots of slow easy runs keeping the heart rate in check, with a few speed sessions and tempo runs thrown in for good measure. Christmas and the New Year pass, I then receive an email telling me Airbnb are cancelling my accommodation due to “building works” - thanks! So quickly sort out new accommodation. As time gets closer the tempo and speed runs didn’t change too much. What did change was the easy runs - they got longer and longer to 1-1.5 hours during the week, to 3 hours on a weekend. I was now running on average 30-40 miles a week and over 6 hours. Doing half marathon distances at the weekend for fun. Working out my fuelling for the day was key. I had no intention of pulling up short for lack of hydration or carbs. One of my last long runs went pear-shaped after the water bladder split at the 1 hour mark. I still pushed on to complete 3 hours with no fluids. Things do go wrong but you still need to get the job done. The day before and it was time to collect the number from the expo in Excel. Drive down to Leyton where my accommodation was booked, then have a London bus ride to the Excel. Wow it was packed. This was my first insight into how busy this whole experience was going to be. Number collected and finisher’s tee-shirt collected, all-important photos holding number up with key backdrops and I was done - let’s get out of here. Change of scenery on the way back, and had a ride on the tube with all the West Ham fans en route to their home game. Arrive back to Leyton and spent the afternoon laying on the bed resting, watching the Red Roses dominate Wales. I then have a walk round and go to Stratford to meet Sarah and my Mum. Norwich City’s last game of the season and as they are No. 1 fans they couldn’t miss it, but with the result they probably wish they had missed it. They both went there then got the train into Stratford. Chief cheerleaders and pom-pom wavers collected, I needed food. It is one of my favourite hobbies - eating - so into Spoons and filled up on their offerings before a walk back to the accommodation and an early night. Alarm set for 6am. I was awake before 6, no need for the alarm. Garmin sleep report was not good - being told off by your watch beats a clip round the ear from mother - oh well, I’m excited, I just want to get to the start. Breakfast eaten, several cups of coffee consumed and we are out the door. London tube awaits. Leyton to Stratford to London Bridge then final destination Blackheath.

Sardines in a can springs to mind. A short walk to the blue wave area and it was time to rest before the start. More fluids taken on board and a few more bits of food. One last toilet stop - well, 30 mins in a queue to go to the toilet. Drop my finish line bag at the lorry and it was time to enter my wave holding pen. The race had already started and the leaders were past Cutty Sark and close to Tower Bridge before I even start my race. But 10.25 and wave 9 finally crosses the start. I get near the front of my wave for the start wanting a clear road and settle into a good pace. Boom - didn’t last for long. I had caught the back of the wave in front and now to try and keep this pace going I needed to dodge my way past these. This was not the ideal situation but nothing goes to plan so just deal with it. A lot of wasted energy was used up trying to keep the pace going. First sight of my pom-pom wavers was at Cutty Sark and I knew where they were as I received a message before the start. Superb thinking and planning, Sarah. It was great to see them. The next planned sighting of them was going to be Tower Bridge / Tower Hill area but with the crowds this didn’t happen so they went for the finish, up Birdcage Walk. I continued round to Tower Bridge. Picking up jelly babies from the crowds. Enjoying reading the signs and hearing the music. The roads open up and I seem to have more room to pass people. Over Tower Bridge we go, the noise was something else. We turn right and the roads seem to be crowded again so I struggle to keep the pace going trying to get through the other runners. This happened in several places and seems weird - you just hit a crowd of runners filling the whole road and nowhere to get round them. Half marathon done at 1.55.04 so sub four hours was still on. Past another disco stage playing YMCA and all the runners giving the full arm movements. Into Canary Wharf district and the tall buildings towered above us and the crowds were still alive. Past a bad first aid incident - a woman out of the wheelchair and smashed face, scarlet all over the place. That wasn’t the only one. Further round, a man on the floor, scarlet pool, with St John’s being kept busy. What a fantastic job they do. Fire stations with water showers set up to soak the runners. I didn’t need that - I wanted to keep dry, no chafing, no wet soggy clothes, all that can add to blisters, rubbing and an uncomfortable experience. I keep pushing on, soaking up the experience back down Tower Hill onto the Embankment. The further I get the more runners stopped, walking and looking in poor shape. So glad I had my name on my shirt, as the wheels nearly fell off the bus for me. It suddenly became very hard - from feeling really good one minute to hmmm I’m in trouble. But the cheers and “You’ve got this Mark, only 4 miles to go” somehow lifted me from a dark situation. Into the underpass and away from the crowds and the noise, runners to the sides stopped having a breather, stretching. The pain they were going through fuelled me and sort of gave me strength in knowing I’m in good shape. Big Ben ahead and I swear it was moving further away as I moved closer. Last mile and I’ve got this. On to Birdcage Walk and head for Buckingham Palace. “Mark! Mark! Mark!” screams from the right - pom-pom wavers Sarah and Mum at 500 metres left to go. So great to see them. My sub-4 goal had left my head just for this point. Sarah shouted “Just go!” She knew I would be a nightmare if I missed out on the sub-4. She was as conscious of the time as I had been and knew what it meant. I set off for the line, looked at the watch and knew it was on. At that point it seemed simple as I knew I had done it. 3.57.50 - I crossed the line. Time to collect the medal and my bag. It was done and dusted - 15 years wanting it, for a 4-hour victory lap.

In Your Garden With Lotta Potts

Flaming June? Glorious June? June is busting out all over? Any or all of those could apply at any time this month and depends on the weather. Hopefully this year we’ll get nice gentle breezes with the odd refreshing shower among the warm days without the unseasonable gales that tear everything to bits and enjoy this halfway through the year lightest and brightest month when all in the garden is lovely. Special days: 1st start of Meteorological Summer Derby Day traditionally the day for clipping box. If it’s really hot wait as the clipped leaves will scorch. Also the day for thinking about stopping harvesting asparagus – well maybe in a day or two 3rd Sunday Fathers’ Day. Another import from the US but a good chance to treat Dad. 21st Summer Solstice astronomical summer and the day with the longest daylight hours. Nothing to choose between this day and the day before and the day after. 24th Midsummer’s Day. Shakespeare wrote A Midsummer Night’s Dream around 1594, 12 years after the Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar, which more accurately reflects the time it takes the Earth to circle once around the Sun. The old date for Midsummer’s Day has been kept. No, I didn’t know that. I read it in a gardening book. This is the month when we are supposed to be able to sit in the garden and admire in comfort. It might be like that and if we are really well organised then hooray. The rest of us will probably be catching up but do stop every now and then to look round at the chocolate-box that is a normal June. This really is the month of the blousy flowers, peonies and roses and that wonderful scent. A rose without scent is a nice plant but honestly, not a proper rose. Right, get on with it Lotta. The lawn will need regular mowing and if it wasn’t fed with the usual mix of weed-and-feed in May it might benefit from a liquid feed. If it’s a new lawn it will need watering with a good soak. That depends on the weather (here we go again) but if it’s dry don’t take chances, get out the hose. Check the lawn over before mowing for worm casts. Brush them in as they are wonderful soil. Some people collect them to mix with potting compost. Whatever you decide, don’t leave them as they will leave a horrible streak on the lawn if mowed. Back to roses. If you have suckers pull them off at the root. If cut they will just regenerate. If you aren’t sure that growth at the base is a sucker or just a new shoot have a look at the graft point which is a lumpy bit on the base of the stem where the variety has been grafted on to the rootstock. If the growth is below that it’s a sucker. Loosen the earth round it to be sure and then remove it with a sharp pull. I should have said before – wear sturdy gloves. Rambling and climbing roses will be in full growth and may need tying in to their support. Once ramblers have finished flowering they can be pruned back to their allotted space. Just dead-head climbers for now if they repeat flower. Keep dead-heading all flowering plants this month. Fast-growing hedges such as privet should be clipped regularly to

maintain their shape. When the spring bulbs have died back dig up hyacinths and tulips and dry off for re-planting in November. These bulbs come from hot, dry places like Iran and Turkey so don’t like being in damp ground. If you have to leave them, make sure they are good and deep. Bulbs grown in containers definitely should be lifted and stored in shallow trays or old vegetable nets in the shed, preferably a cool one. Other spring bulbs such as daffs and bluebells can be left. Naturalised ones can safely be mown with the grass now as the foliage should have died back and if the bulbs are in borders remove the dead leaves. If they’re deep enough you (hopefully) won’t disturb them when you plant summer bedding. If planting perennials try and mark where the bulbs are first. Last word on pruning, Montana type clematis need a good haircut if they’re out of control. If they aren’t too bad a bit of a trim won’t go amiss and you won’t lose flower next year. This is the month to put out baskets and containers if you’ve kept them under cover. These and any other newly-planted trees, shrubs, perennials will need frequent watering until established. The really outstanding baskets will possibly need watering twice a day and regular feed as these will be closely planted. Don’t give full-strength feed daily but if you mix half-strength or even slightly less, this can be used frequently. Veg seeds can be sown now, even the tender ones like French and runner beans. If you have any sown inside that are growing away they can be hardened off and planted out so you have a bit of a start on the direct-sown. Lettuce don’t germinate in hot weather so if possible sow in shade or in trays in shade to plant out later when they’ve come on a bit. The more exotic varieties (well to me they are) like squash, sweetcorn and pumpkins can go out as well. These plants are great fun. If they work. Squash plants want to take over the world if they are growing well but if not you will soon find out they are not doing well so replace them and try again next year. Mainly sow little and often with things like carrots and lettuce as while main crop carrots will store, a glut of lettuce is a bit of a problem unless you are a fan of the French recipe for lettuce and peas. I’m not sure. If you have planted potatoes you should get the first new ones any time. If the plants are flowering have a little root round in the soil and you might get the first ones in time for the last of the asparagus. Home-grown spuds and asparagus drowning in butter are food for the gods. **A few don’ts:** water the lawn unless it’s a new one. Grass always recovers after the next shower of rain. Buy lots of plants unless you know exactly where they are going to go. Says the writer who, at the time of writing has received a lovely honeysuckle plant by delivery. I’m sure I knew where it was going when I ordered it. Spray to control pests: do let the predators do it. Go out without sun protection. Do put sunblock on the nose and a broad brimmed hat might come in handy as well. Also stops the sniggering by folk who think you want to look like an Australian cricketer. After the don’ts here’s a couple of do’s: find the best place in the garden for an evening drink (well-deserved) and keep weeding.



Gunner Fred Richard Taylor 1916-2006

Museum 4 Watton Wednesday to Saturday 10am-4pm

Fred Taylor's family visited to share with us the memoir of his experiences during WW2. Written in 1961 when Fred was forty-five and landlord of The Eagle pub in Great Hockham, his memoir recounts his experiences of serving with the British army during WW2, his subsequent capture during the Fall of Singapore and his years spent as a captive and forced labourer working in brutal conditions on the Burma (Myanmar) Railway, as a prisoner of war of the Japanese Imperial army. Fred's memoir does not shy away from the truth or elaborate the horrors to which he was subjected; some of the language Fred uses to describe his captures is of its time.

Any errors in deciphering personnel and place names are mine, sorry, but my conclusions were reached after research. Where there are quotes from Fred's original text, they are highlighted within the text. I WAS THERE

It was on the 3rd September 1939 that Fred Taylor heard over the wireless that a state of war had been declared between Britain and Germany. A young recently married chauffeur gardener from Stow Bedon, the thought of impending hostilities left Fred with uneasy feelings. However, this did not stop him from volunteering his services. At first, Fred was told he was doing important work, so instead joined the Home Guard. It was six months later that Fred was called up and joined a Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment as a Gunner. He was to see his first action during the Coventry Blitz of November 1940, a devastating Luftwaffe raid codenamed "Moonlight Sonata" which destroyed over 43,000 homes and the medieval cathedral. During the raid, over 500 bombers dropped 500 tons of explosives and 30,000 incendiaries, killing 554 people. Unfortunately, the city's anti-aircraft defences were heavily outmatched and relied heavily on the too few HAA guns available to counter over 500 German bombers. Fred's company was broken up

shortly after, and he found himself chosen to join a 'specific mission'. On reporting to the Regimental Quartermaster, Fred was issued with "Contrast shorts, pith hats and all the gear that I had never seen before. We were bound for the Far East. Fred's battery was the 13th S.L (searchlight) under the command of Major A.R.C Stiby. Fred left England on the troop ship the SS Duchess of York, destination... Singapore.

After disembarking, Fred was billeted at Changi Barracks. Changi was to become his home for the next twelve months, a place he was never to forget. Fred was the 13th Searchlights Battery storeman, and it was his job to see that the Battery sites were kept well equipped. "I soon settled down in my store, making my store my home. A small table, a chair and my bed, photos of my wife and daughter stood on the table, and although I was homesick, I knew I could only do the job I was sent here to do, and I believe I did that job in every detail." Fred was to enjoy a good working relationship with his Q.M.S over those twelve months likening their relationship to that of a father and son unfortunately this run of relative stability and calm was to come to an abrupt end when one night three planes from the Japanese Imperial Army swept over Singapore very low and dropped a string of bombs on the harbour; the Fall of the "Impregnable Fortress" that was Singapore had begun.

Expecting a naval assault from the south, the landward defences were largely unfortified, leaving the northern, jungle-covered side vulnerable to Japanese advance. Early Japanese air attacks destroyed Allied airfields, and the sinking of HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse left the coast unprotected.

Fred recalls "Singapore was going through a heavy bombing, water was cut, and the whole system was in a bad state, the dead was causing a state of disease. General Percival asked for help and was told to hold on for another fourteen days and the sky would be blackened with planes; the sky was but with the Dirty big fried egg on the wing tips" Some help did arrive in the form of the 11th Division but they took a "battering landing" and many had to swim ashore and into the hands of the waiting Japanese. "another total flop and a disgrace to us all...it was not men we needed we could have licked them had we had an air

force and a navy but they had gone." Having prioritised the Soviet Union and Mediterranean over the Far East, the British high command had left Singapore with insufficient air support, tanks, and reinforcements, mistakenly believing the naval base was secure from landward attack.

By mid-February, about a million civilians were crammed into a tight area remaining under Allied control, equating to just 1 per cent of the island. Around 7,000 of Singapore's civilians had died in the fighting by this point, not including the hundreds killed in earlier bombing raids. Civilian infrastructure was on its knees, and disease was spreading fast. Churchill had demanded of the Allied troops a fight to the "bitter end," instructing commanders that every inch of ground must be defended and no surrender should be entertained.

On the 15th of February 1942, Lt General Arthur Percival signed the largest surrender in British history. The city was supposed to be a fortress, but his force of 85,000 allied men had been defeated by just 35,000 Japanese troops. In London, Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced that the fall of Singapore was the 'worst disaster and largest capitulation in British history. A very dark day indeed.

On the evening of the 15th February, Fred and his comrades were told to fall in and march to a pineapple factory, where they were given the news by their commanding officers that as far as they were concerned, their war was over. "I am sorry to say some could not take it but took the quick way out. It was a very hard pill to swallow. ..this was it to be taken prisoner by the filthy dirty, scruffy lot of barbarians that



are still living in this world of so called humanity." After several days, they were marched back to Changi. "My home, but what a change, blasted by bombers and the stench of death and decaying bodies that still lay around... we were herded into billets ten times as many as we should be there. We were beaten and kicked around. Some were beaten to death, some were shot for meagre things or trying to escape days passed, weeks, months we were feeling the sharpest thorn hunger, but we had not seen nothing yet."

To be continued.

If you would like to learn more about Fred's life in the army during WW2, please visit us at the museum, where you can study Fred's memoirs in detail for yourself.

District Councillor's Chat With Cllr Claire Bowes

Reform UK virtually swept the board across Norfolk in the local elections on May 7th. As a result I was not returned as County Councillor for Watton Division. I would just like to take this opportunity to say how truly honoured I have been to serve and represent the residents of Watton, Carbrooke, Caston, Griston and Ovington over the last decade and I thank all those who have entrusted me with their vote over the years. Furthermore, following the decision to postpone/cancel last year's elections, (which I stood firmly against) the most important thing is that democracy has been served. I remain Breckland District Councillor for Watton Ward so please don't hesitate to contact me on any matter I can assist with in that role.

Good news from Breckland! The district council is to take direct action to tackle rising housing pressures head-on, investing more than £1 million in a new initiative that

delivers on its Housing Strategy and responds directly to growing demand affecting local communities. The council is proactively intervening by creating dedicated, specialist housing support for 18-25-year-olds, which will help to break the cycle of homelessness facing young adults in the district. At it's Cabinet meeting in May members approved plans to establish a brand-new supported housing service for young people. The decision follows clear evidence of increasing housing need among 18-25-year-olds, many of whom are at risk of repeated episodes of homelessness without targeted intervention. Importantly the new service will not only provide accommodation but also deliver life-skills training, education, and wrap-around support to help young adults build independence and long-term stability. Young people represented around 20% of all those seeking housing support in Breckland over the last three years. This mirrors analysis by YMCA Norfolk, which will receive the £1.2m grant towards developing and delivering the new service. Currently, young people presenting as homeless are

Trooping the Colour at Caston

Saturday 13th June traditional Afternoon Tea to celebrate Trooping the Colour 2pm at Holy Cross Church, CASTON. Please feel free to wear your summer hats for the occasion. Enjoy a summer afternoon in a marquee to mark this historic annual event. £15 to include a glass of Prosecco. Tickets from Lynne 01953 483640 or Bridget 07789922915

placed in general temporary accommodation, which often lacks the specialist support needed to help them develop the skills and resilience required for independent living. This can trap individuals in a cycle of instability, while placing sustained pressure on council services and local communities. By working together Breckland Council and YMCA aims to break that cycle. Claire Bowes District Councillor, Watton Ward claire.bowes@breckland.gov.uk 07789796937

Norfolk Wildlife Trust Breckland Local Group

We had a wonderful turnout in April at Wayland Wood and a lovely day too. Unfortunately the weather has meant that all the Spring flowers have arrived and gone over far too early. At time of writing we have yet to have had our walk on Cranberry Rough with our very own Breckland Birder. Sunday June 28th we are off to Nattergall's HighFen at Methwold, a rewilding site. This is now full but if you're interested there may be cancellations, so contact me at Breckland@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk. This is our last event until the Autumn. So look out for announcements of that. Thank you for your support.

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Saham Toney Bridge Club



The club held its annual dinner and presentation evening in late April at Broom Hall and the picture shows from left to right the winners of the trophies The Cleverly cup Mike Steven's and Pat Fosbrooke, the Derrick Savage trophy Ginny and Keith Bartlett and the winner of the individual Rawnsley cup Gillian DeCruz. The Saham Bridge Club meets every Thursday every Thursday evening at the Carbrooke Hub at 6.30pm. We are a very friendly club with about 28

members who play contract bridge weekly We are members of the EBU which opens many doors for players to enjoy county bridge competitions but the majority of us just enjoy meeting on a Thursday evening and playing bridge. We are always looking for new members who have a little knowledge of bridge to join us on a Thursday evening. Help is given and partners are found if you are alone. Please get in touch with Elaine Aberdeen e.aberdeen@btinternet.com 01953 882005



Inner Wheel Update

In April we had a very informative talk by Stuart Strickland about Mercy Ships. This is a Christian charity started by an American couple who bought a liner in 1978 and kitted it out as a hospital ship and sailed it to Africa. They took their family and many of the crew brought their families so they have every facility for family life on board. It docks at a port for up to 10 months at a time, carrying out operations, some only needing a couple days to recover, others involving care for months. They chose to use a ship as the majority of people live within 100 miles of the coast so can travel, some by very unorthodox means but their determination gets them there. Most of the

staff are volunteers from all over the world, some living on board with their families, others giving up their holidays to bring their skills to the ship. As time has gone on, it has widened its remit from surgery to teaching locals medical skills and helping build and equip medical centres as well. As a result of its success, there are now two ships, the original Africa Mercy and purpose-built Global Mercy, with another being built. Several of us joined other members of our District on our annual outing. This year the District Chairman had chosen a trip on the North Norfolk railway starting at Holt and travelling to Sheringham. Angela picked a lovely sunny day and we all enjoyed the shops, the sea and a tasty lunch before the return trip and home. Jenny Simons (Club Correspondent)

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The Breckland Birder AKA Paul Newport

March saw an early arrival of Chiffchaffs and indeed this trend continued into April. Chiffchaffs are one of the earliest of our summer migrants to return to breed, my first this year was heard on 2nd March on Wretham Heath, by April, many woodlands resounded to the onomatopoeic song of this Warbler. Another early Warbler is the Blackcap, a beautiful songster which began arriving in numbers during the early days of April.

On the 1st of April over marshland near Hingham a Snipe was seen performing its display flight, sadly a rare sight and sound these days. The display by Snipe is known as drumming, this drumming sound, sometimes likened to the bleating of sheep, is produced by the bird as it dives over its territory, the outer tail feathers are held out from the rest of the tail and the rushing air causes the feathers to vibrate, thus causing the drumming sound. Victorian Ornithologists originally thought the Snipes drumming was a vocalisation.

On the 5th April, notable Breckland species were seen on the patch including Stone Curlew, a pair of Curlews, two Stonechats on heathland, and overhead, two male Woodlarks seen very well performing their beautiful song-flight display. Also of note was a Raven seen overflying farmland and calling.

A visit to Hockham on the 7th saw further increases of summer migrants arriving to breed, notably Chiffchaffs (pictured below) in good numbers, but also Blackcaps seen and heard. A bit of exotic colour seen with a pair Mandarins seen, these are tree nesting ducks with a few pairs in the Brecks. Overhead, 3+ Crossbills passed over calling and in a north-east heading. Perhaps the highlight of the morning came in the form of two Mediterranean Gulls passing over, these are stunning gulls with white underparts, a black hood, and a blood red bill, these plumage features, especially the white underparts and black hood, gives us a gull with contrasting features.



Another long distance summer migrant was located on the 9th at Hockham, two Tree Pipits, a species which arrives with us in early April from its sub-Saharan wintering grounds. The Tree Pipit is a scarce breeder in Britain and here on our local Breckland patch they can be found displaying their beautiful song-flight within forest clearings where scattered tall trees within the clearing are used as song-posts. Also present in this clearing was a singing male Stonechat and an overflying Swallow.

A walk along a section of the Peddars Way at Great Cressingham on 10th April saw my first Whitethroats of the year, both were singing males in suitable breeding habitat. One of the most familiar harbingers of spring is the Cuckoo and on the 13th April I located two calling males at Hockham. Very sadly, this bird, like so many other species has declined significantly in recent decades, the most reliable habitats to look and listen for the Cuckoo is around reedbeds and marshes where host species such as Warblers frequent.

A visit to Thompson Common early on 14th April produced another calling Cuckoo in suitable breeding habitat and overhead a male Goshawk was closely shadowed by a Crow, which is a potential prey species. A Pingo on the common held one Green Sandpiper, a passage wader species, and a single Grey Wagtail feeding around the edges of the water-filled Pingo.

A short work break visit to Seamere Marsh near Hingham on the 15th saw my first Lesser Whitethroat of the year, a singing male in typical breeding habitat comprising an old broken hedgerow with tall trees at intervals. The Lesser Whitethroat is in Britain, at the limit of its breeding range in north-western Europe with most birds occurring in the south and east of Britain although range expansion has seen some birds breeding in the lowland areas of Wales and Scotland. The Lesser Whitethroat (below) is rare in Ireland.



On the 19th April I enjoyed a full mornings visit to Wretham Heath, as well as visiting the heath I also had lengthy stops at both Langmere and Ringmere. My arrival at the car park saw a number of common species including House Martins visiting the artificial nest sites on the wardens house whilst in the surrounding bushes Great Tit, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, and Goldcrest, were all singing. My first static watch was from Langmere hide where numerous species were seen including a pair of

Oystercatchers, one Curlew which arrived to feed along the muddy shores before flying off, 6 Gadwall, 3 Shelduck, a pair of Egyptian Geese with 5 goslings, singing Chaffinch and Blackcap, Lapwing, and a pair of Teal. A ♂ Cuckoo was wandering about calling. The beautiful mature Scots Pine plantation held further singing Blackcaps, Coal Tits, and at least two Ravens which were frustratingly out of sight but frequently calling. As I left the woodland for more open heathland habitat I

recorded two singing Tree Pipits in a forest clearing and in the top of a tall Birch tree a ♂ Willow Warbler delivered its sweet song. My next static watch was at Ringmere where further evidence of successful breeding seen beginning with a pair Egyptian Geese with 6 goslings. Also noted here was 3 pairs of Tufted Duck, 5



Shelduck, 4 Little Grebe, and a pair of Mistle Thrushes which visited the muddy shores to collect invertebrate food which was taken to waiting young in nearby woodland.

On the morning of 20th April I decided to visit the new Woodland Trust site at Thompson, what a fantastic habitat which will provide a permanent home for so many species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and a wealth of invertebrates. Even at this early stage in the creation of this large habitat, Skylarks appeared numerous on this visit and a singing and displaying Whitethroat was watched in bramble scrub. Evidence of breeding success seen with a pair of Stonechats with the ♀ food carrying. A couple of Lapwings saw off Crows, a clear indication of eggs or young present. Another exciting day of birding on 22nd April with a visit to Thompson Water where many Reed Warblers (top picture) and Sedge Warblers were singing in the vast reedbed habitat, also present was at least 3 singing Cetti's Warblers and singing Garden Warbler. A pair of Great Crested Grebes were present with one bird on a nest. Overhead, 3 Swifts were flying to and from over the woodland canopy where they fed upon winged invertebrates.

On the 23rd April I walked a section of the Pingo trail at Stow Bedon where I walked through a variety of habitats from conifer woodland, Oak and Birch woodland, heath, woodland swamp, and open fen and marsh. As we approach the end of April the countryside is filling with the song of both our resident species and summer visitors and on this visit to the Pingo trail I located several singing Garden Warblers,

Blackcaps, and a couple of Willow Warblers too. One Cetti's Warbler was singing its loud, explosive song and overhead Crossbills gave themselves away with their distinctive "glip glip" calls. Also overhead and at height, 4 Mediterranean Gulls headed east and calling. And finally, on my return walk two Woodlarks were displaying their

beautiful song-flight. My final observations for April came on the 27th following a call from my friend Sarah Harris (British Birds editor) who told me a Spotted Redshank was at Thompson Water. I arrived at the lake for an evening visit when I located the stunning Spotted Redshank feeding in the shallows, however, after about 10 minutes or so the bird departed high to the east. Spotted Redshanks are very scarce passage migrants in Breckland.

Also seen on this visit was a stunning male Mandarin on the water and a Grey Wagtail was seen feeding from surface weeds.

The Euston Park Bowmen

Are a friendly local archery club, founded in 1987 and based in Euston, Thetford.

We are a small, welcoming club of around 12 members, and we are very much hoping to grow. Archery is a wonderfully inclusive sport, I myself am a wheelchair user, and we genuinely welcome people of all ages and abilities, from complete beginners to more experienced archers. Whether someone has never held a bow in their life or wants to develop an existing skill, there is a place for them with us.

We meet on Wednesday evenings throughout spring and summer, and on Sunday early afternoons during the autumn and winter months. Sessions are relaxed, sociable affairs, there is plenty of banter, a good chat, and always a warm, friendly atmosphere.

The sport is also surprisingly affordable. Our membership fees cover full insurance through Archery GB, so there are no hidden costs, and equipment can be borrowed when starting out.

For more information and contact details check our website at eustonparkbowmen.org

Saham Toney Villagers Celebrate New Accessible Seating Area



A much-needed outdoor seating area has been created at the Wells Cole Community Centre in Saham Toney. It comprises a fully wheelchair accessible paved square, with seating for a minimum of 9 people.

The project was the brainchild of local resident Margaret Robins, following an experience she had whilst walking near the community centre last year. She came across an elderly gentleman who was struggling to reach the safety of the bench which looks out towards Bell Lane. Clearly fragile and hindered by a wheeled walker on uneven terrain, he readily accepted her offer of help. She was able to settle him safely on the bench and a fall was averted.

The incident highlighted the shortage of accessible seating at the Community Centre. The gap in provision did not just affect people with disabilities who needed accessible seating but many others who are fragile, getting fit for surgery or convalescing. This need expands to those who are lonely, need human interaction or people who just want to sit, chat or quietly think and take

in the lovely surroundings. After several months devising a plan, Margaret created a full proposal with budgetary costs and presented it to the Wells-Cole Trust Fund who embraced the idea and worked with her to finalise detail and firm up costs. The Trustees agreed to fund the project and councillors on the parish council approved the installation. Work commenced on 3rd November 2025 to create a paved square, close to the disability parking area. A wide, paved path leads into The Square and on all four corners, an Amelanchier 'Robin Hill' is planted, each one enclosed by ball topped railings. The Square embraces three engraved York benches that in total seat a minimum of 9 people whilst accommodating wheelchairs, walkers etc. The area was completed by the end of November and given the time of the year, it was agreed that opening the space should be delayed until the ground had settled and turfing undertaken. The Square was formally opened at 11am on 13th April 2026 to coincide with the regular Coffee Morning held at

the community centre. In line with all openings, a red ribbon bow was called for. The ribbon was cut by Vivian Gicquel, who has been a wheelchair user for many years and helped with disability access planning for the project. Although a low-key event was planned, organisers were delighted to welcome 40 attendees including representatives from the Trust, District and Parish council, Tea, coffee, homemade cake and biscuits were served. Everybody agreed that it was "Good to Talk".

At the opening of the Square, Margaret said 'This has been a truly community project. So many people need to be thanked for their contributions to its success, including the late Mr. Horace Wells-Cole, whose legacy created the Wells-Cole Trust which funded the project, Saham Toney Parish Council, the village allotments and friends. Special thanks go to Kevin Robins, without whose generous and ever present support the project may never have taken place.'

Report and Picture by Mike Gicquel

Swaffham & District u3a

Our AGM was held on 7th May 2026. Having circulated all the relevant reports to members before the meeting, the AGM was not a prolonged affair although it covered all the necessary legal requirements. As there were no new applicants for the committee, the present serving members were re-elected. Members were urged to consider coming onto the committee to help with the workload.

This was followed by a presentation and talk on the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. They care for

23,000 war memorials and war cemeteries around the world commemorating 1.7 million Commonwealth casualties. The Commemoration team maintains the casualty database required to commemorate each casualty correctly and work with other agencies to identify the last resting place of those originally listed as 'missing'.

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

The work of the Purfleet Trust with the homeless in Kings Lynn is highlighted in

our talk in July. It is not only accommodation that the homeless need, but also access to so many support services and this is covered by the work of the Trust.

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/>

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Watton Town Council Updates, News, and Events



WATTON OPEN GARDEN & YARD SALE
 Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th June
 10am-4pm

Maps will be available online, at Tesco, and at Adcocks (Saturday only.)
£5 entry fee goes to the Mayor's charities!
 Contact Watton Town Council at events@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk or pop into the office for an application form!

SEE YOU THERE!

End of Mayoral Term

I had the pleasure of presenting two cheques to the charities I chose at the start of my term as Watton Town Council Mayor.

PACT animal charity and 1st Watton Rainbows each received a cheque for £500, the money was raised at various events throughout the year. My thanks go to everyone who helped raise the money.

As my time as Mayor comes to an end I would like to say it has been an honour and a privilege to represent the town at many different events.

I have met members of our community who work hard to provide the events, activities and opportunities for a wide range of residents to participate in and enjoy, my thanks also go to them.

Finally, thanks to my husband who has supported me wholeheartedly during my time as Mayor.

On Tuesday the 12th of May I shall hand over to my successor and wish them well for the forthcoming year.

Councillor Gillian Tarrant

Watton Town Mayor 2025/2026



A word from the Mayor

I am delighted and honoured to announce that I have this week been elected as the Mayor of our Town Council. My heartfelt thanks go to the outgoing mayor, Gillian Tarrant for her dedication and leadership. Her commitment to our community has laid a strong foundation for myself and the Deputy Mayor, Tomos Hutchings to build upon.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the trust that has been placed in me to lead our community. Watton is not just a place on a map; it is our home, a community filled with unique, talented people and a place with a proud history. I am looking forward to serving you whilst fostering an environment where all our residents feel supported. To that end, my commitment to you all is to focus on keeping you informed about decisions which affect our community which is within the remit of the Town Council. I will work with local businesses, community groups and residents to create a safe and vibrant town and focus on practical solutions for matters pertaining to Watton.

As Mayor, I have chosen two charities for my term in office, which means that any monies raised during my tenure will be split between Beside Youth C.I.C., and Wayland Men's Shed.

Town Council Updates

Breckland Council has been invited to attend a future Town Council meeting to update on the Safer Street Wardens Scheme. It was agreed that Breckland representatives should attend prior to the Town Council meeting on June 23rd.

The litter bin located on the side of the road by the Thetford Road roundabout has been damaged by a vehicle for the second time. It was beyond repair and thought needs to be given to possibly locating any replacement bin where it will not be so easily hit. Requests have also been received for additional bins, but it is possible that as a consequence of local government re-organisation, charges will be introduced for bin emptying and it was noted that the current agreed Town Council policy is not to install any more bins.

The entrance to the car park to the rear of the Factory Shop has bollards put across it and notices erected that the area is privately owned. The land agents dealing with the property have been approached and they have informed the council that this is due to insurance requirements.

It was resolved to continue to support WASFAG by funding 50% of the cost of the £252 for the hosting and yearly domain renewal for the WASFAG website. In 2025, Saham Toney Parish Council also contributed 50%, and an approach has been made to request the same for 2026. This has now been accepted and Saham Toney Parish Council is willing to contribute.

It was resolved to respond to the correspondence received from Wayland Academy regarding its Garden Project Appeal to say the Council is willing to be involved and if possible Councillors would like to visit the school. Wayland Academy has suggested the date of Wednesday 3rd June for Councillors who may wish to visit the garden project.

It was resolved to purchase two framed plaques at a cost of £300 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Watton Twinning Association. Research will also continue to be undertaken regarding the cost of a wooden hare and barrel as an additional gift for Weeze.

Sarah Humphries was nominated and seconded as Chairman and with no further nominations duly elected.



TOWN CRIER COMPETITION

Town Criers will be coming from across the UK!

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

Watton Town Crier Website
www.towncriermike.co.uk

For More Information
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Staff Retirement

This month marks the end of an era for one of Watton Town Council's longest serving staff members, Jane Lambert. Jane started with the Town Council in 2008 as a cleaner, and progressed to Office Support Clerk in 2018, her continuous hard work and positive attitude has kept the team going and her retirement will be a massive loss to the staff. We want to wish Jane the best in her retirement, we hope she enjoys her newly found free time!

Beside Youth C.I.C. help build brighter futures for vulnerable teenagers so they have safe spaces, trusted adults and long-term support when they need it most. They provide inclusive youth groups that integrate social activities and wellbeing services with a commitment to long term mentorship.

Wayland Men's Shed which is firmly established at the Sports Centre in Dereham Road provides a safe place for men to attend their various workshops and groups with the aim to assist in their wellbeing and reduce isolation.

Strong communities are built together. I encourage you to share your ideas, concerns and feedback with me or my fellow Councillors. I'm looking forward to meeting many of you at local initiatives and our many community events. I want to finish by saying that I wish to engage with you all regularly and openly and will be updating you all with Town news at every opportunity and am very much looking forward to the year ahead.

Sarah Humphries



WATTON FOOD HUB CALENDAR JUNE 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					

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

Tomos Hutchings was nominated, seconded, and duly elected as Vice-Chairman.

The transfer of the current Breckland owned car parks in the town to the Town Council is progressing. Paperwork is with the solicitors.

It was resolved to accept the Biodiversity Mission Statement as presented which will be posted on the Town Council website and social media. It was also resolved to pass £50 of the £200 budgeted for the Biodiversity Group to the Wayland Academy Garden Project, to be paid against invoices submitted. It was also agreed to purchase compost and herb plants to fill the planter at Jubilee Garden.

An update on the repair of the clock in the High Street was requested. The Town Council is waiting for general building maintenance work to be completed on the Clock Tower

building before consideration is given to the repair of the clock itself.

Cllr Gavin Bulmer offered to review Health and Safety concerns relating to access to the clock mechanism and an offer was also made to look at what work may be needed to the clock mechanism.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) noted that the Council IT Policy may need review in preparation for agreement of Assertion 10 of the AGAR.



Lt Ellingham Working Weekend

Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th August 2026

(Saturday 10am till late, Sunday 10am till 4pm)

Supporting East Anglian Air Ambulance

It's back again this year! If you are looking for a great family day out in August, with lots of different activities available to watch and do, why not pop along and enjoy this local event and in doing so also support our local East Anglian Air Ambulance.

This year there will be more military vehicles than ever before - and don't forget the tractor run out at 4pm on Saturday if you fancy a trundle along the country lanes of Little Ellingham.

At £5 (cash only) per person, with young people age 12 and under free of charge, this show offers extremely great value for a family day out. Amongst the various other attractions and free of charge, the East Anglian Air Ambulance team are also offering the opportunity to learn the vital skill of how to perform CPR.

In 2003, Richard and Jane Baker wanted to give back something to say thank you after East Anglian Air Ambulance attended a horse riding incident which involved their eldest daughter, who needed expert care. Being local farmers, and having a wonderful



support team to help, they decided to hold a 'Working Weekend' and so this annual event began. It has run for 20+ years and to date has raised just over £60,000 for the charity. Richard Baker commented, "Living in a rural location, none of us know if or when we might be in need of this expert medical emergency service. It is vital we do as much as we can to raise money to support this charity, which receives no regular funding other than the public's generous donations."

Richard also commented, "I have had a behind the scenes tour of their working operation. It was an excellent experience and insight into how the money raised has contributed to the operation it is today."

You may also have heard that East Anglian Air Ambulance needs a new home for its Cambridgeshire base as Cambridge Airport will be closing in the near future. You can

learn more about this, and the charity's £8.2m appeal, on their website eaaa.org.uk.

A few facts about East Anglian Air Ambulance:

Fuelled by their supporters**, East Anglian Air Ambulance is a charity bringing hospital level critical care to people in severe medical emergencies, every single day of the year.

From road traffic collisions to cardiac arrests to medical emergencies, the charity's specialist doctors, critical care paramedics and pilots bring the advanced skills, equipment and medicine directly — normally only found in a specialist emergency department — to the patient's side in the fastest time possible.

The equipment carried by East Anglian Air Ambulance's helicopters and

critical care cars enables enhanced care at the incident scene — when the patient needs it most — such as blood transfusions, advanced pain relief, sedation and anaesthesia, and surgical interventions.

This, combined with quick onward transfer to the most appropriate hospital, gives every patient treated by East Anglian Air Ambulance the best possible chance of surviving and recovering a life threatening emergency.

East Anglian Air Ambulance is a charity which is independent from the NHS and Ambulance Trusts and receives no regular government funding, relying almost entirely on public support.

The charity treats (on average) five people every day.

The average cost of a mission is currently £4,250.

Should you wish to find out more please visit www.eaaa.org.uk



How to Help Young Birds this Summer

As soon as the weather warms up, our beautiful garden birds begin their annual quest to reproduce and they often choose hedges, trees and even man-made nest-boxes in our green spaces. When these young birds reach 'fledging' age- i.e. they are capable enough to leave the nest, most of the time this goes smoothly. However, even when this stage of their lives goes well, we can find a young bird (or sometimes more than one!) sitting slap bang in the middle of a path or lawn, looking helpless, clueless and very vulnerable. And when this happens, it can be difficult to know how to help them, and whether to intervene at all.

As a general rule, if the young bird has no visible injuries and is well covered with feathers, then it should be left alone and given plenty of space (such as the young Cuckoo in this photo from the reserve!). A few tufts of downy fluff on their body is fine, and appearing not to be able to fly is fine- at this age, they can usually only flutter a little and will not be fearful of humans, dogs or other animals so may not necessarily fly

away from you, even if they can. Their parents are very likely to be close by and will generally only visit their young to feed them if they feel that there are no predators around (sadly, humans, pet dogs and cats are all perceived as predators, whether they mean harm or not).

The priority for the parents of a nest of young birds is to get them to leave as soon as they are able to- as if a predator were to find a nest full of chicks, it could easily predate them all- whereas if those young birds have left the nest and are scattered around, it is more likely that only one or two might be lost, with the rest of the brood surviving. This is why chicks can leave the nest naturally when they can flutter and hop around (and so are mobile) but may not be able to fly yet. The best thing to do is to keep an eye on any young birds from a distance- ideally indoors- and you should find that the fledglings naturally move on within a few hours. Their parents will use food items as 'bait' to encourage the fledglings to move to get it, if the parents feel their young are in a vulnerable place.

But when should we intervene? If they are any visible injuries, it's a good idea to seek professional help from a wildlife rehabilitator. If the young bird is in a busy road or on a public footpath, you could gently and quickly move a fledgling to the

nearest safe place such as under a bush or in a hedge. If the fledgling appears uninjured, it's a very good idea to keep any pet cats indoors, or to put a pet dog on a lead if it needs to visit the garden where the fledgling is, until the young bird has naturally moved on.

For any injured or unwell wildlife, or where it is known that the parent birds have been

harmed or have not returned for a day or two, you could visit the very helpful website www.helpwildlife.co.uk to input your postcode and the species you have, to find the nearest suitable help.

With best wishes,
Heidi Jones (Visitor Experience Officer, RSPB Lakenheath Fen).



Stung by Curiosity at Watton Evening WI

Stinging Nettles - bug bear for the gardener and a plant that can give you a nasty sting or are they? Our speaker, Fay Jones (pictured by Jan Wassell) gave members of Watton Evening WI a fascinating talk with computer pictures on this truly British garden feature. Brought to this country by the Romans the plant has been used for hundreds of years as food, drink and other helpful products. Fay brought a comprehensive collection of items such as knitting wool made by striping the stems in water. The competition for the night was a natural potion, there was an interesting selection. Members are working together to provide items for shoe boxes to be distributed to those affected by domestic abuse throughout the county. Whilst the craft group met in May to make candle holders and the Lunch Club members visited the Willow House for an excellent meal in the evening! Five members joined many other Norfolk members at the Norfolk Federation Annual Meeting which was held at Norwich Theatre. It was a lively meeting when changes to the constitution were discussed and voted on. A speaker from the local charity, Break, who help young people in care and after when they leave at 18 often with little support, gave an excellent presentation as did a member of the

charity, Leeway, who help people particularly women and children affected by domestic abuse. The main speaker was Joanne Harris, the well known author.

At the May meeting members discussed the two National resolutions, 'Accessible public toilet facilities to promote dignity, health and social inclusion' and 'Action for women's homelessness'. Votes cast were included in the National Annual Meeting which will be held by video link at the beginning of June.

Fund raising continues with Watton Evening WI taking part in the Spring Fair and working towards Carnival later in the year.

We look forward to our next meeting on Thursday June 11th at the Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton at 7.30pm when members Sandy Vellam and Hazel Gillingham will help all members make a small flower arrangement in celebration of the 36th birthday of our WI here in Watton.

We would be delighted to welcome guests and new members to our meetings, just come along or if you would like further information please contact Margaret Herbert on 01953 882269.



Veterans Voice in Swaffham

The Veterans Central Swaffham drop-in centre is now well established (and popular) and we have now fixed dates for the rest of 2026.

4th Tuesday of the month. Join us for hot drinks, cakes and conversation. Come along for a FREE hot drink, cake, chat

and a spot of banter, or to ask questions about veterans support.

Venue: The Regency Room, Swaffham Assembly Rooms, 1030 to 1300.

Location: The Assembly Rooms are located in the centre of Swaffham and there is adjacent free parking for 2 hours (but use machine to get a ticket).

You are welcome to bring partners or carers. Please spread the word to any military colleagues in the area.

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Days by Coach 2026

Saturday 6th June **Springfields Outlet Shopping/Quilting Show**
Adult £25 Child £15

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

Wednesday 2nd September **Ryan's Birthday Mystery With Lunch**
Adult £45 Child £25

Sat. 12th September **Gt Yarmouth & Lowestoft** Adult £25 Child £15

Holidays 2026

North Wales 27th July – 1st August

Turkey & Tinsel Bournemouth 27th – 30th November

Shows 2026

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

ABBA Voyage 26th September 3pm Show £125

Knitting & Stitching at Alexandra Palace 10th October Adult £50

Thursford Christmas Spectacular December 2pm Show £65

Cromer Pier Christmas Show 15th Dec. 2.30pm Show Adult £50

NEW 2026 BROCHURE OUT NOW!

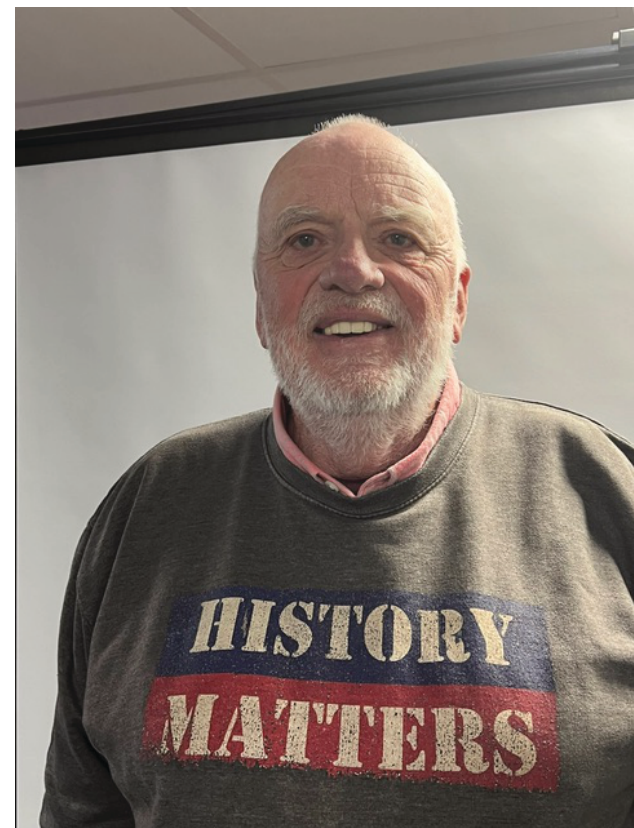
Please Call for Further Information or to Make a Booking

West Norfolk Aviation Society

The speaker this month was Kevin Boardman who came along to tell us more about Katherine Johnson. If the name rings a faint bell in some readers it is because she is the main character in the film 'Hidden Figures'. Katherine was a 'computer' at NASA from the late 1940's. Computer in those days meant something very different to today. She was basically a one of many carrying out mathematical equations (hence computer) in order to work out what was required to put a man into space and more importantly recover said man back to earth in one piece.

So far so good, but Katherine was a black woman in a very white and male orientated society. Due to her skills and force of personality she was quickly recognised as a mathematical genius. However she had to fight tooth and nail to get her work recognised and even to get it published under her own name. Her skill sets were, after a long struggle, eventually recognised and she went on to to a long and successful career in NASA being instrumental in the maths within the Apollo programme and Space Shuttle.

She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Honour in 2015 by President Obama and lived to the ripe old age of 101.



I have barely touched the surface of this story but Katherine Johnson was a truly remarkable person, who battled long odds to come out on top. If you haven't seen the film its well worth a watch, just remember its a Hollywood version! Next month we have our own member Ann telling us about her interesting life, and at 88 she has plenty to tell. All welcome on Tuesday 02 Jun @ 7.15pm. Further details on our website, non members entrance fee £2 per head includes a light buffet. Mark Burch, WNAS Scribe www.westnorfolkaviationsociety.com



Events at RSPB Lakenheath fen

Places for all events need to be booked online- <https://bit.ly/LakenheathFenEvents> or in person at the Visitor Centre ahead of the event.

Moth Mornings

Learn more about the amazing world of moths- join us to admire what we catch in our harmless trap.

26 June, 31 July, 28 August (10am to 11am)

Moth Morning – Clearwing Special

For the first time at RSPB Lakenheath Fen, we will be deploying a full range of pheromone lures to see which of the 15 UK species of beautiful clearwing moths live here.

17 June (9:30-11:30am)

Guided Pond Dipping

Why not borrow a pond-dipping kit to see what beautiful and strange creatures live below the water?

6 June, 4 July, 1 August (11am-1pm)

Join in with Harrier & Bittern Nest Watches (FULLY BOOKED)

9 June (7:30am – 12:30pm)

Summer Wildlife Walks

Join us on a tour of the reserve to look for star species such as Kingfishers, Hobbies, Marsh Harriers and Bitterns as well as lots of warblers, butterflies and dragonflies.

14 June, 28 June, 12 July (9:30am-12:30pm)

Butterflies & Dragonflies of Lakenheath Fen (Guided Walk)

If you'd like to learn a little more about these showy insects, join us as we walk the best parts of the reserve to find them.

27 June (10:30am-1:30pm)

Big Wild Sleepout 2026

Our annual 24 hours of wildlife-themed fun is back, with guided walks, pond-dipping, stargazing, bat detecting and a camp fire.

1-2 August (1pm-1pm)

Last Month's Codeword Result

Last month's prize was another "choose your own prize", and the answer to the puzzle was: "AUSPICIOUS WEATHER MAP"

The winner this month was A Saunders, and the Runner Up was J Hunter. Well done to both of you!

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, Shirley from Adcocks in the High Street was given the pack, which she shuffled as she wished, and then drew one card for the Winner and one more 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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What's On at Watton Westfield

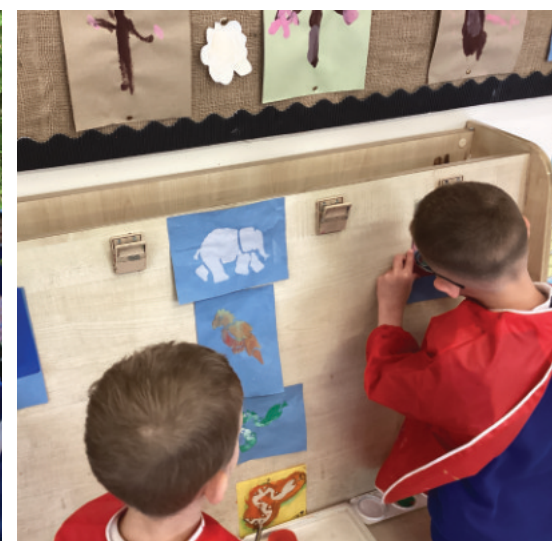
The warmer weather seems to have started to make an appearance and the children at Watton Westfield Infant and Nursery School have been enjoying plenty of opportunity to get outside and explore our wonderful grounds.

As a whole school right from our youngest 2-year-olds up to our bigger 7-year-olds, we have been nature detectives and animal artists to celebrate the 100th birthday of Sir David Attenborough on 8th May 2026.

We are proud of how our school works within the wider Watton community and we would like to say thank you to all of the

local residents and businesses who help us! Over the past few weeks we have been generously gifted Easter eggs for all our pupils by the wonderful Mrs Betty Orford (pictured with just a few of our children receiving their treats), compost and plants for our allotment from Tesco, a wide variety of art and craft materials from two local families, books for our library from a past pupil, and even a new dishwasher from a donor who preferred to stay anonymous. We are also lucky to have a wonderful band of volunteers who come regularly to listen to children read and help in our garden, plus a new PTA committee. We are so thankful for all of your support!

If you would like to be involved with helping our school and being part of the volunteer team or PTA, please feel free to reach out to the school office by telephone (01953 882669) or email (office@wattonwestfield.org). You would be very welcome!



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

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

Tues 2nd 5pm – 6pm Prayer & Praise: Sing your favourite worship songs & pray with & for the community. 1st Tues of month.

Wed 3rd 1.30pm – 4pm (location in Watton) Bereavement Group: Contact Linda Benton on 07803 017340 or linbenton2978@gmail.com for details. 1st Wed of month.

Thurs 4th 7.30pm – 9pm Choir Practice: If you wish to join the choir, please contact us in the church office.

Sat 6th 10am – 12noon Saturday Chat: Join us on the 1st Sat of month for our coffee morning. Come with friends or alone and make new ones!

Sun 7th 4.30pm Choir Practice: In preparation for that evening's Choral Evensong.

Tues 9th 10am – 12noon Messy Church: Kids, bring your adult for a FREE morning of fun, stories, play and craft activities (aimed at primary age, but all ages and families welcome). PLUS! Food and drinks

served too!

Thurs 11th 2pm – 2.30pm Prayer Gathering - Led by Rev Dave Cossey. Come join us as God's people to lift up both our community & the wider world in a time of informal prayer. 2nd & 4th Thurs of month.

Fri 12th 2pm – 4pm Community Cinema: Showing 'Song Sung Blue'. Doors open at 1:15pm for 2pm start. £5 ticket on the door inc. hot drink & cake.

Wed 17th 1pm – 2.30pm Ecumenical Ladies' Prayer Group: At Home Church, Dereham Rd, Watton. Fellowship followed by prayer time. Please bring a packed lunch, hot drinks provided.

Thurs 18th 2pm – 4pm Craft Group: Enjoy refreshments & company whilst crafting. £1 donation. In the church rooms.

Thurs 25th 10am – 3pm Open Church: St Mary's open to all to visit, pray, explore, and discover what we offer the community. Friendly volunteers on hand to help with any enquiries.

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

Fri 26th 6.15pm for 7pm start Tom Cee Spring Showtunes Tour: Tom Cee is here to sing your favourite musical hits, from

Film, the West End, and Broadway. Les Mis, Phantom of the Opera, Disney, My Fair Lady, and many more! Come together as a family and enjoy a night of music you won't forget! Tickets £14 available on Eventbrite or the TikTok shop: @uniquetommeperformer.

Tues 30th 2pm – 4pm Tuesday Club: Join us for a social afternoon of games & laughter here at St Mary's. Confectionary prizes to be won! Donation gratefully received for refreshments. All welcome!

May's Winners of the 200 Club! 1st prize £50: Ann Sidney, No. 200
2nd prizes £25 each: Diane Millard, No. 56, David Wickham, No. 76

Decorumless Donald by Miss Mardle

When Charles and Camilla met Trump
It didn't half give me the hump
Don pushed passed our queen
Just so he could be seen
With her handbag she should've given
him a clump!

CODEWORD

Blast me Bor! There's a £25 shopping voucher to spend at that there new place in the High Street in this month's exciting

HAVE FUN SHOPPING CODEWORD

To celebrate the new home for Watton Edwards Premiere, the first prize this month is a £25 voucher to spend on shopping with them. Note this cannot be used at the Post Office and there will be no cash change if you spend less than the full amount.

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):

6, 9, 25, 22, 13, 9, 16, 20, 26, 12, 18, 26, 5, 24, 20, 22, 22, 24

Send the Codeword you think is the answer, along with your name and contact details in an email to me at 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.

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St Mary's Church, Watton

Church Road, Watton, IP25 6DQ

www.stmaryswatton.org

Weekly Wednesday Services at 10am

Worship in June

Sun 7th	10am	Holy Communion
	6pm	Choral Evensong
Sun 14th	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	2nd Sunday
Sun 21st	10am	Holy Communion
Sun 28th	8m	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	4th Sunday

Polish Catholic Community

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

St. Peter & St Paul's Church,

3 Church Street, Carbrooke, IP25 6SW

www.carbrookechurch.co.uk

Sun 7th	10.30am	Morning Worship
Sun 14th	10.30am	Holy Communion with Rev Christina Mason
Sun 21st	10.30am	Morning Worship
Sun 28th	10.30am	Holy Communion with Rev Christina Mason

Ashill Group Services

Sunday 7 June, (Trinity 1)

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 14 June (Trinity 2),

9.30 am, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion

10.30 am, St George's Saham Toney, Holy Communion

10.30 am, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Morning Praise

Sunday 21 June (Trinity 3),

9.30 am, St Nicholas' Ashill, Lay-led service

9.30 am, St Peter's Merton, Holy Communion

10.30 am, St George's Saham Toney, Lay-led service

10.30 am, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, All-Age Service

Sunday 28 June

(St Peter and St Paul),

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

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

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**

The Wayland Group of Parishes

Sunday 7th June

10.30am United Holy Communion St Peter & St Paul, Griston

Sunday 14th June

10.30am United Holy Communion St Botolph, Stow Bedon

Sunday 21st June

10.30am United Holy Communion St Martin's, Thompson

Sunday 28th June

10.30am United Holy Communion St Margaret's, Breckles

Wayland Group Parish Churches

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

Dance Away Queens Hall, Watton IP25 6DA

Ballroom, Latin & Sequence. Bar & Raffle

June 6th, July 4th, August 1st

Arise my love, my fair one, and come away . . .

How quickly the seasons of the year pass by! Not long ago we were waiting for buds to burst open, blossom to display its colours and lawns to need mowing again. And now we move into summer. Many priests would say that the popular wedding season is during the summer months, typically between May and September, the warmer weather and longer days making it easier for the couples to organise their big day.

I love meeting wedding couples to help them plan their ceremonies. Weddings are a joyous occasion, and it's such a privilege to celebrate the love and commitment between two people in this way. At our first meeting I usually ask about how the couple met, about their love for each other, and what it is about each other that led them to falling in love. In our discussions, they choose music, hymns, poems, and Bible readings.

One of my favourite Bible readings for a wedding is from a book called Song of Songs (also known as Song of Solomon). It's a book in the Ketuvim section of the Hebrew Bible and in the Old Testament, featuring chapters of intense, sometimes erotic love poetry. It portrays a passionate, romantic relationship between a woman and her lover through dialogue and metaphor, often interpreted as celebrating marital love or symbolising God's covenant with His people. It's absolutely beautiful! For my own marriage to Jonathan, which we celebrate on 7th June, we chose a reading from Song of Songs chapter 2, verses 10-13.

Pioneers of Promise Brings Renowned Speakers to Watton

International Speaker Luke Brendling Headlines Multi-Generational Event Watton will be the scene of a remarkable gathering on 13th June as the much-anticipated Pioneers of Promise event comes to town. This occasion is set to deliver an inspiring programme, featuring a panel of experienced and respected speakers ready to share their insights and aspirations with attendees from every generation.

Leading the distinguished line-up is Luke Brendling, a Norfolk based international speaker renowned for his dynamic presentations and worldwide outlook. Brendling's appearance is a significant opportunity for the local community, as residents are given the rare chance to hear from a figure of his calibre right here in Norfolk.

Joining Luke Brendling are Phil Pavitt and Paige Squirrell, both acclaimed in their own right. Their inclusion promises a rich blend of perspectives and inspiration, ensuring the event caters to a broad audience seeking motivation and fresh ideas. Pioneers of Promise is crafted as a multi-

Jonathan's father, Howard, was a lovely, modest man, with a quiet passion for education and for music. He was actually a doctor of music, and for many years chair of the Association of British Choral Directors, conductor of several choirs, and deputy chorusmaster of the Royal Northern Sinfonia. If you happen to listen to Classic FM or Radio 3 you may have heard them singing.

Howard set the Song of Songs verses to music for the church choir to sing at our wedding, which helped to make that day such a memorable one. Several years later, when Howard eventually passed away, we were able to use his legacy to build a narrowboat, which we named 'Song of Songs' in his memory. Written on its stern is the closing line of Howard's composition with the words 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'

The full reading on our wedding day was this: "My beloved speaks and says to me: Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." (Song of Songs 2:10-13)

If you're thinking of having a church wedding in the Wayland Benefice, I'd be delighted to speak with you about planning yours too!

With much 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 318885 or by email at vanessadlayfield@gmail.com

generational celebration, welcoming people from all backgrounds and age groups. Its aim is to build connections, encourage innovative thinking, and spark meaningful dialogue across the generations. With such a diverse roster and an inclusive atmosphere, the event is expected to leave a lasting impression on all involved.

Tickets are free for under 16s and £10 for everyone 16 and above. Reservations can be made via Eventbrite or by contacting info@lovewatton.co.uk. The ticket price includes a ploughman's supper and refreshments served throughout the day, making it not only an inspirational but also a convivial experience.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for 13th June and join Watton as it hosts an event dedicated to hope, inspiration, and a shared sense of purpose in the community. For further details, visit the event website at lovewatton.co.uk.

Watton will host the Pioneers of Promise event on 13th June, featuring a panel with international speaker Luke Brendling, alongside Phil Pavitt and Paige Squirrell. The programme aims to inspire attendees of all ages and backgrounds, promoting connection, innovative thinking, and meaningful dialogue. Tickets are free for under 16s and £10 for others, including a ploughman's supper and refreshments. Book via Eventbrite or contact info@lovewatton.co.uk. For more details, visit www.lovewatton.co.uk

Watton Methodist Church

57 High Street, Watton IP25 6AB

wattonmethodist.chessck.co.uk

Minister: Rev Neil Vels

Sunday Service Times

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

Wednesday Coffee Morning in The Methodist Centre

Weekly from 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, Thrextton

10:30am Sunday 7th June

A warm welcome to all

Are you not used to visiting a church service and wondering for a reason to make a visit?

One reason: 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



St. Peter's Church, Merton

Strawberries & Cream Teas



Saturday 27th June 2026

2 pm – 4.30 pm

with background organ music

All proceeds in aid of church upkeep
 'St Peter's Church, where community is key'

Veterans Central News

RAF West Raynham SHQ NR21 7PL

Veterans Central Hosts Cadet Services Day

The Veterans Central charity is holding a number of events over the summer months at their RAF West Raynham SHQ facility. The events attract people from across Norfolk and are also designed to help Veterans Central find more veterans that might benefit from the support provided by Veterans Central.

All Events are FREE to attend. The Veterans Central café is open on all events.

Sunday June 21st: World War Two History Day.

Visit the Military vehicles, re-enactors and displays and learn about the role they played in the World War Two. Sit in some of the presentations – from the development of airfields in Norfolk, the Royal Norfolk Regiment in the war, 'Over Here' – the American presence in East Anglia, and more. Watch or take part on one of the World War Two wargame scenarios. Browse the various historical displays and photo albums. Get a fantastic book bargain in one of our bookshops.

This event is from 10 to 3.

Sunday July 19th: Annual Open Day.

Our biggest event of the year with a wide range of military and other displays, aircraft cockpits and vehicles, classic cars, craft stalls, children's activity zone, games and activities – including axe throwing and archery. A massive tombola and book sale. BBQ and Hog Roast. Live music. And more. This event is from 10 to 3.

For more information, email events@veteranscentral.co.uk.

If you would like to participate in one or more event, email ops@veteranscentral.co.uk.

On Saturday 9th May Veterans Central hosted over 70 young people from the local Cadet Groups – Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, and Scouts. This was the first such event held at West Raynham SHQ and, in glorious Norfolk sunshine, was a great success. "The whole day was fantastic and gave our cadets an opportunity to work together on the various exercises, to view a range of aircraft and displays, and meet and chat with military veterans. We look forward to the next one!"

During the day the participants, in teams of six, undertook several Exercises that helped develop key skills such as communication, teamwork and leadership. Exercises took place in the grounds around SHQ and included one called Intelligence Gathering where teams had to plan a search of an area looking for 'bits of information' that they had to pass to their Operations nominee who then passed it to HQ for analysis. Once the search period was over the team get together to review and analyse the information in order to answer three question, which then had to be submitted as a report. Other Exercises continued the concept of 'how to work together and to communicate in an effective way', from Test Flight, to Tower Build, Helium Stick, and more.

With the Exercises complete, the team than rotated through the various displays, spending time with the briefers at the Hunter



and Canberra aircraft, the Bloodhound missiles and military vehicles, the table top wargames, and the Radio Group (in contact with 'radio hams' around the world).

The event was such a success that Veterans Central has already agreed a date for the 2027 Cadet Services Day. Any cadet organisation wishing to take part can contact Veterans Central at:

ops@veteranscentral.co.uk.



July - What's On at The Queens Hall, Norwich Road, Watton

The regular activities:

- Ballroom Dance Saturday 4th
- Bingo Monday evenings
- CLM dance fitness Tuesday evenings
- Carpet Bowls Wednesday afternoon
- Line Dancing Wednesday evenings
- Pilates Thursday evening
- Jujitsu Friday evening

- Irish Country Music 7th
- Blood Donors 14th
- Medium 24th
- Holy Mass 25th

For further information check out the Queens Hall website
[web: queenshall-watton.co.uk](http://web:queenshall-watton.co.uk)

Messy Church
 at St Mary's
 Tues 9th June: 4pm-6pm
CRAFTS for primary age but all families welcome
STORIES
FOOD/DRINK
FREE!
 St Mary's Church, Church Rd, Watton, IP25 6DQ
 01953 881252 | wattonchurch@gmail.com | stmaryswatton.org

Pioneers of Promise
 Advancing the local church together
 A day for land-takers atmosphere-shapers community-makers
Speakers:
 Luke Brendling
 Phil Pavitt
 Paige Squirrell
 Saturday 13th June 2026 - 1pm
 Queen's Hall, Watton IP25 6DA
 Under 16s free
 16s and over £10
 Includes refreshments and ploughman's supper
 Tickets from Eventbrite: Pioneers of Promise
 Or email: info@lovewatton.co.uk



Shantymen and Lunch At The Queens Hall

Following their successful visit last year, Wayland Shantymen, part of Watton Men's Shed will be entertaining us again at the Queens Hall in August. After their performance a light lunch will be served. They enjoy singing together and have widen their portfolio since last year. The lunchtime concert is to raise funds for their charity, and the Queens Hall, also a charity organisation and run by volunteers.

You are also invited to attend our AGM, on Tuesday 9th June at 7:00 pm in the Green Room at the rear of the hall.

A Colourful Event - But what a lot of fun!

Being part of a Community sometimes means you have to get your "hands dirty" as Buckingham Lodge Care Home Hospitality Manager Kitty Chisholm & Community Engagement Marcia Hughes soon found out (Left) The home was only too pleased to be able to help with sponsoring a Paint Station at Necton Primary School for their Colour Fun day", said Marcia, "But I'm not sure we realised quite how interactive it was though" "The day was full of fun raising funds for the school", said Kitty "thankfully, the blue washed off - though we did look like a couple of Smurf's".



The Digital Side of the Library

It's not just about books anymore! Of course, you can still borrow books at the library, but we also offer so much more and a big part of what we offer is now digital.

The world changes fast and we know that technology and the online world can be overwhelming, but we are here to help you embrace the digital world.

Need to access a computer and haven't got one at home?

You can use our Public Pc's in the main library or borrow one of our Laptops to loan free of charge, all you need is a library card and that's free to sign up too. Feeling stuck and behind the times with technology? Want to learn how to use your new tablet or phone, feel confident shopping or start looking for a new job

online?

We offer drop-in digital support sessions on alternate Thursdays. Pop along between 1-3pm and our fantastic volunteer Azzy can help with the following support:

- Computer/Phone/Tablet basics
- Getting started with using the internet: search engines, safe browsing, etc.
- How to get started with Video Calling
- Using Email
- Becoming confident with online shopping
- Using the internet to look for work
- Using social media platforms (general guidance)
- Formatting and uploading a CV
- Online Services for GP & prescriptions

Our next sessions are: 4th & 18th June, 2nd, 16th & 30th July.

Can't get to the library and need something to read? You can access hundreds of e-books, audio books, magazines and newspapers by downloading our free to use library apps on to your phone or tablet.

If you have any questions on what we offer at the library, please speak to a member of staff in-person, email us on watton.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk, call 01953 881671 or you can visit our

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/WattonLibraryNorfolk.

Karen Sidell, Library and Information Assistant



 Read and download newspapers and magazines with PressReader

 Access a huge range of eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines, to read, listen to and download with Libby by OverDrive

 Listen to hundreds of eAudio titles to download and listen to from BorrowBox

For more information on how to access the library apps

Please visit: www.norfolk.gov.uk/ebooks



Did you know it is National Year of Reading?

We are celebrating with a packed programme of exciting children's activities, to be held alongside the Thompson and Griston second-hand book sale. A fabulous way to start the summer school holidays!

Date: 18th July 2026. Venue: Thompson Millennium Green. Booking is essential.

To reserve your place, and for further information, go to <https://www.thompsonmillenniumgreen.org.uk/books2026>



Great Hockham Gardening Club

And so, as the seasons turn and before our meetings head for the great outdoors, we welcomed our final speaker until the autumn, and who better than Dr. Ian Bedford (right), a champion of our planet and all who sail in her. His talk was entitled, Them and Us (Bugs).

Ian has been a lifelong entomologist. From when he was knee high to a grasshopper, he has loved the bug world. When he was a child on the South Downs near Brighton he was catching insects, bringing them home, breeding and then releasing them. He was a research entomologist at the John Innes Center in Norwich. More about Ian at <https://gardenclubspeaker.myfreesites.net>.

Ian opened with a dismal picture of the current state of things. Human activity is damaging the natural world. There is deforestation, the one thing that we need to put oxygen back into the system. There is pollution of the environment with toxins: in China they have killed off all their pollinators and so can only set their apples and pears by hand. There is an increasing human population covering the land area with housing and infrastructure. All this and more is affecting the natural balance

Picture below: Green shield bug eggs.



that has sustained the Earth for half a billion years. Britain takes up about 0.04% of the Earth's land masses, but gives out 1.1% of the greenhouse gasses. We're the worst country in the G7 for lost biodiversity and the most nature depleted country in Europe. Our population is still increasing, around 3 million more people are expected to be living in Britain in the next ten years. Where once there might have been a beautiful copse with snowdrops in spring: acquired by a developer and ended up with

just mown grass. Ian said that where he is in Norwich there are the new improvements at Thickthorn. He wonders if it's really necessary to do that much damage.

Also, over the years many of these areas have been heavily contaminated with pesticides - and not just pesticides that are sprayed on crops to control herbivorous creatures. There are also the ones given to animals to protect them from their actual and potential ailments - which those animals then excrete over the land. Soon after he retired from John Innes he was coming out to see a man who owns a string of veterinary practices. He told Ian, "I'm really concerned about the amount of these chemicals that are being given to animals." It would seem that a lot of the vets realise this and want to try and raise awareness of it.

So, the question is, can Britain's biodiversity actually replenish whilst we still have to farm and we still have to build



for an ever-increasing population? Wherever he goes Ian is seeing people who are really keen to see the wildlife return to the areas where they live and are doing things to help. Increasing numbers of wildlife and conservation projects are being set up. When Ian started doing his talks the number of major reserves had grown from 118 to 224. But these are the official national nature reserves which amount to just 0.7% of Britain's farmland. However, there are also numerous little community reserves that villages and towns are setting up. Ian gave an example of Cremer's Meadow on the boundary between Brundall and Blofield. It comprises over four acres of Norfolk countryside. Owned by Brundall Parish Council it is available for the benefit of residents. It's right in the middle of the village and is a place teeming with wildlife. Ian warned that when setting up your own contribution to helping nature you should be careful as to what you buy. Shop bought plants are completely free of bugs, he therefore has to conclude that they have been treated. But then people wouldn't buy them if they had aphids on them. But bring them home and they might be poisoning your garden wildlife. And it's not just the pesticides; it's the fertilisers with the high potassium phosphate and nitrate. Also, the fungicides and the herbicides, all of which actually poison the soil for the creatures that we actually need to live there. Some of the pesticides are actually killing farmers, they're very toxic, poisonous chemicals that were once used to kill people in the Second World War, but they put them on our plants. Many creatures that were once seen to be pests are now recognised to be beneficial. Ian highlighted earwigs: how many of us have actually seen earwigs (below) in the past few years? They are delightful little creatures, one of the very few insects that we have in the environment that actually looks after its young. They protect their eggs and mother looks after them right the way through till they're almost mature before they go off on their own. Ian asked members to look out for earwigs; he would like some for his garden.

We thanked Ian for his most interesting and thought-provoking talk. I'm sure that as far as our members are concerned, he was talking to the converted. For myself, I must build a pond.

Our July outdoor visit is to Vicarage House, Great Hockham, IP24 1PE -1400.

Don't let the bugs bite.

Edward.

The Watton & Wayland **memory cafe** For those with dementia and their carers

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month
10am - 12noon
Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton
(next to The Methodist Church)

With car parking & easy access, come join us for a hot drink, squash, biscuits & a chat

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QUEENS HALL
WATTON

THE QUEENS HALL COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO THE ANNUAL AGM

TUESDAY 9TH JUNE 2026
19:00

YOU'RE INVITED

GIVE YOUR OPINIONS
PROPOSE YOUR IDEAS
JOIN THE COMMITTEE

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

WATTON (LOCH NEATON) BOWLS CLUB

Come and enjoy the game - everyone is welcome!

- A FRIENDLY & WELCOMING CLUB
- PLAY FOR FUN OR COMPETE
- LEARN TO PLAY - FULL SUPPORT GIVEN

SOCIAL EVENTS | FRESH AIR & EXERCISE | MAKE NEW FRIENDS

JOIN US TODAY!

Watton Sports Centre, Dereham Rd, Watton

For further information and contact details please go to our website at: www.wattonbowlsclub.co.uk

ASHILL, HOLME HALE & DISTRICT ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW

With over 200 entries across 12 flower classes. Plus crafts, photography and home baking classes this is a show not to be missed! In addition to the floral entries there will be a quality plant sale and tombola prizes. Refreshments will be served, including delicious home made cakes. So come along and support your local garden club for a lovely afternoon enjoying floral beauty and good company.

All of this plus...
ENTRY is FREE!
SUNDAY JUNE 28th 2026
'Open to the Public from 2.00pm to 4.00pm'

AT HOLME HALE PAVILION, SCHOOL ROAD
HOLME HALE, IP25 7PD

Website: <https://ashillgardeningclub.wordpress.com>
Email: ashillholmealegardenclub@gmail.com
Enquiries: 07584 691202

Growing Pelargoniums

Ashill, Holme Hale & District Garden Club

On a sunny April afternoon members attended a presentation by Luci Skinner (right) on all things Pelargoniums. Luci is a horticulturist who runs her own plant advisory service and specialises in pelargoniums. Luci currently holds an RHS national collection of Pelargoniums, many of which she brought along for members to view and inspect during the tea break.

Luci started her presentation by discussing what is a pelargonium. Pelargoniums are a genus of about 280 species of tender, evergreen perennials, often incorrectly labelled 'geraniums' in garden centres to this day. A frost tender perennial plant (will survive down to -5oC) that can last well over 5 years with a good care regime. They originate from South Africa and are long flowering, drought tolerant plants that belong to the geraniaceae family, closely related to hardy geraniums.

Pelargoniums can be identified by having 2 upper petals and 3 lower petals, often featuring markings, with 7 stamens. The confusion in the naming of pelargoniums and geraniums stems from the great Swedish biologist Carl Linnaeus, who proposed the modern system of naming plants, and as such is known as the father of taxonomy. Despite indications to the contrary Linnaeus insisted that these plants from South Africa were the same as 'Geraniums' and placed both species under the same name. It was not until 30 years in 1789 that pelargoniums were shown to be a different genera to geranium. Geraniums have 5 equal petals, 10 stamens and die back in winter.

Luci then covered the different species of pelargoniums with a diverse range of leaf shapes, including planate and kidney shaped. Some species are tuberous and others have succulent stems or knobbly stems. Some of the benefits of growing pelargoniums in your garden are that they are long-flowering, scented, drought tolerant, long lived, insect repellent and some have medicinal or culinary properties. The downsides include their frost tender nature, care with watering (need to stay dry in winter) as prone to fungal disease. Luci completed her presentation by detailing how to care for these lovely plants on a month by month basis throughout the calendar year. The meeting closed with a Q&A and members eagerly purchasing some of the pelargoniums Luci brought for sale.



Upcoming Garden Club Events

Our May meeting (28th) will have a presentation by bee-keeper and gardener Lynda Hunt on 'Bee-friendly gardening'. Our June meeting (25th) has Andrew Sankey talking about 'Joseph Banks, Kew and the Plant Hunters'. The Club's Annual Flower Show will be held on Sunday June 28th and is open to the general public from 2pm. 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.

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

Thompson Community Hall Update

We continue to try to put a varied programme of events for everyone to enjoy. We will have to let you know next month how our new direction of how much fun A House of Games Meets the Generation Game turned out to be! Chaotic fun we hope.

COFFEE MORNING EVERY TUESDAY 10-12noon. We always have our famous cheese scones available as well as home made cake.

FILM NIGHT this month is June 5th and we will be showing H is for Hawk, starring Claire Foy and Brendan Gleeson. Tickets are £5 with free popcorn. Ice Cream sales. No need to book. Screening starts at 7pm.

On June 20th we are again planning something new by holding a lunch and village walk.

Our Film night for July is on July 3rd and will be

One Battle After Another starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Sean Penn.

Many of you will have heard that we had a flooded hall towards the end of April when a pipe fitting popped off and flooded the entire hall. Fortunately it was clean water! Had some of the team not been going to the hall to open up for coffee morning we would not have found it so quickly. A wonderful band of people literally swept into action to stop the leak and get rid of the water and rescue things from cupboards. We lost very little. The sun shone and much of it dried quickly on the patio. Some of the insurance work is taking a little longer, but we were relieved not to have to cancel any major events. Coffee morning and Stitchers had to close but we were able to hold Ice Cream Thursday for the children after school and a very important 90th birthday tea on the Saturday. The sun shone and the hall was warm despite not having heating, so we doubt anyone would have known there had been a problem that Tuesday if we had not mentioned it.



Clearing all fabric stock

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



Call 07939 126803 (Sundays by Appointment)



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Watton & Wayland Times

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

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

All views expressed in articles in the Watton & Wayland Times are those of the contributors and not necessarily the views of the Editor or Printers. While every care and effort has been taken to ensure accuracy, neither accept responsibility for errors or omissions.

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Norfolk County Bowls Association, is the governing body for all Outdoor Bowls in Norfolk. In Open Competition therefore, when our ladies play, some of their opponents are recognised as 'National and International' players. One lady from Norfolk will be playing in the European Games in Glasgow this year.

So a round of applause and bragging rights to Watton (Loch Neaton) Bowls Club ladies for winning who are pictured above. Well done!
L to R: Edna Mayhew, Shirley Ball, Sandy Vellam, Jackie Devitt (Norfolk County Ladies President) and Annette Walters.

150th Wayland Show - Sunday 2nd August 2026 Brandon Road, Watton IP25 7NG

WE ARE BUSY ORGANISING ANOTHER GREAT WAYLAND SHOW FOR 2026 WHICH WILL BE THE 150TH YEAR OF THE SHOW!

The family-orientated Wayland Show will reflect the heritage of the region and the countryside of the 21st century, and provide visitors old and new with a truly rural show experience. New and exciting interactive events and competitions will offer visitors of all ages the opportunity to enjoy hands-on experiences. The Wayland Show committee have been working with the local community, organisations and groups to combine skills and talents to ensure that the 2026 Show is indeed a regional celebration, proud of its heritage yet looking to the future.

At the heart of the 2026 Show will be all that is best from the region – quality livestock, unique craftsmanship, local musicians, and local foods and produce.

We are keen to promote local participation to truly reflect the diverse cultural heritage of our area. Every year local companies from across the region use the Wayland show as a valuable way to

promote their business and to sell their products. To book a trade stand pitch, shopping village table or a stand on the new market lane please visit waylandshow.com

Sponsorship and membership offers a meaningful way to support this long standing rural show and its future depends on the continued involvement of both sponsors and members. Do look at the sponsorship opportunities and the annual membership at waylandshow.com (Sponsors and Members)

To compete in all competitions please see the application forms online. These include Livestock, Equestrian, Horticulture, Cookery and Crafts, Vintage Vehicles and the Fun Dog Show.

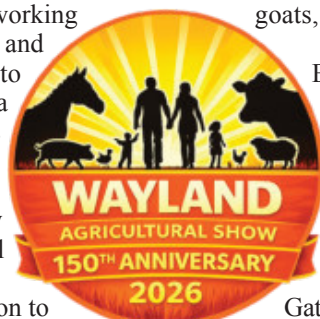
Grand ring entertainment all day including Falconry, Jousting, Heavy Horses, Shetland Derby, Vintage vehicles and tractors. Grand parade of sheep, cattle, goats, horses and pigs with the presentation of the Champion of Champion award.

Early bird adult tickets are available online £10.00 (+booking fee) Under 16 free. This price is only available until midnight on 1st July.

Adult £12.50 (+booking fee) - Under 16 free. This price is available until midnight on 25th July 2026.

Gate price - Adult £15.00 - Under 16 free
Gates open at 10am.

For further information please see the website www.waylandshow.com or the Facebook page. (Harry is not hiding in our logo - he is too busy elsewhere.)



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