

Challenge

The Parish Newsletter of Weston Colville and West Wratting

The views expressed herein are those of the contributors.

Printed by E & E Plumridge Ltd, Linton (Cambridge 891407)

Tea & Cakes

Thank you to everyone who came to Tea & Cakes in September, and thanks as always to my amazing team of bakers and helpers.

The September session was very quiet – most unusual– where have all the children gone? We really missed them.

Our October Tea & Cakes will be on the third Friday (17th) in the Reading Room, 3.30 pm - 5.00 pm. We look forward to getting together again over a cuppa and some delicious homemade cake.

Val and the Team



Folk evening – Camus

Weston Colville's David Somerville will again be appearing at the Reading Room with his folk band Camus this autumn. The date is Saturday 18th October, starting at 8 pm.

The band has recently excelled at the Sidmouth, St Neot's, Ely and Bury Folk Festivals, and has given us a great evening of entertainment the many times they've played for us.

More details about the band on their website: <https://camusmusic.net/>. All welcome, £5 donation per person (cash please), proceeds to Jimmy's Night Shelter. To book: jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com or 291475



West Wratting Café

The next café will be on Saturday 4th October, 10.30 am until noon in the village hall.

Do join us: we serve freshly brewed coffee, tea and delicious homemade cakes. Jackie from 'Wildly Preserved' will be joining us, selling her lovely ferments and preserves. Everyone is very welcome.

Sherry & Jan



Get ready for

West Wratting Harvest Supper

Saturday 11th Oct 2025

from 7pm

West Wratting Village Hall

In aid of the fabric St Andrew's Church
and the Village Hall

Tickets: Doug Clarke

dougatgalewood@hotmail.com
07818 400723

£20 incl drink on arrival

£5 children

Allergens or Intolerances to be checked on the night

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Monthly Lunch at The Chestnut Tree

A group of us meet at The Chestnut Tree on the third Thursday of every month at 12.30, for a set menu two- course meal (£16.00). We are usually finished by 2 pm.

Everybody is welcome. If you'd like to join us, please get in touch. I usually send out reminders a week or so prior to the lunch and provide the pub with numbers by the Sunday evening so they have an idea of how many they need to cater for.

Suan Rowland (290788, suanrowland@gmail.com)

Soup Lunches Resume

Good news! The weekly Reading Room Soup Lunches will return after the summer break, commencing 1st October and meeting every Wednesday (except over Christmas) until the spring.

Please join us if you are able. There is no charge, but a small donation is welcome. Anyone can join us, there is no particular target group. It's just a chance for a convivial chat and a simple light lunch.

With so much changing information about the proposed solar farm and other local issues, we will invite informed people to join us from time to time. ACRE's 'Village Agents' will be present a couple of times per month, and can provide information about grants and support, as well as helping people navigate health care and benefits issues. We'll also ask Simon (the IT expert) to run another Tech Clinic before Christmas which will be a chance to sort out any pesky issues with your IT or phone. We are planning to have a representative from Linton Surgery join us at some point to give advice and guidance about heading off health issues before they become too serious. Finally (see 'More Memories') we're going

to launch the second in a series of booklets and films about villagers' recollections of life in Weston Colville.

Put the dates in your diary. Invite a friend or colleague. Take your lunch break here. Doors open at 12 noon, we sit down to eat at 12.30 promptly and it's usually all over by 1.30 for those with time-constrained lives, although people are welcome to stay and chat until about 3 pm, and many do!

Bob Coates (07785 361345)

Jigsaws

As the Wednesday Soup Lunches have resumed, the jigsaw sessions in the Reading Room will move to Mondays, between 2 and 3.30 pm. Come and join us, from Monday 29th September.

Jackie Brearley

More Memories

Following the success of 'Maureen's Memories of Weston Colville' earlier this year, another booklet is now almost ready. It's called 'Such A Long Time To Know People: Barbara Atherton's Memories' and is based on Barbara's recollections of living her whole life in this area, first in Temple End and Little Thurlow and then – from 1954 until now (an amazing 70+ years!) – at Weston Woods on Common Road. It teaches us a lot about the history of the area and Barbara's long and interesting life. The plan is to launch the booklet at the weekly soup lunch in the Weston Colville Reading Room on Wednesday 22nd October.

Copies of the booklet will be available in return for suggested donations of £3 each in aid of charity. Everyone is welcome. Please do join us.

Soup lunches begin promptly at 12.30 pm and involve a bowl or two of delicious homemade soup (made by whichever volunteer is cooking that week) plus bread, tea or coffee and biscuity 'afters': a real treat. If you don't usually come but would like to on this occasion, please send me a quick message by the end of Monday 20th October so whoever is cooking knows roughly how many to cater for! We very much look forward to seeing you there.

Gabrielle Cliff Hodges (07979 554758, gabrielle.cliffhodges@cantab.net)



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West Wratting Village Hall

Charity Number 273557

This month's lucky winning numbers, drawn on Saturday 6th September at the café, are: first 14, second 5 and third 26.

The lottery is open for new players: just contact Jan at jan.davey5@btinternet.com.

On 11th October we will hold this year's Harvest Supper starting at 7 pm in the village hall. There will be food and a bar with a free drink on arrival, a raffle and a lively auction of vegetables and other items at the end of the evening.



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This year 15th November sees a repeat of the very successful Wine Tasting evening we held last year. A new selection of exciting and unusual wines will be provided by Corney and Barrow, the UK's oldest wine merchant. For booking details please see the advertisement in this *Challenge*.

Our next village hall meeting is on 14th October; we do need active volunteers to help us further develop the hall. We have plans to reduce carbon emissions, update the kitchen facilities and develop a restful garden/child play area. If you are interested in helping or joining the committee please come along and see how we work together to make the hall available to the village, whilst raising funds through a range of events and functions.

Martin Davey, Chair (penywaen1@gmail.com)

WEST WRATTING VILLAGE HALL INVITATION

To a Wine Tasting Evening.

Hosted by Corney and Barrow Of Newmarket.

Saturday 15th November at 7.00 pm

Exciting wines from around the World will be presented with tasting notes and details of the viticulture, location and more.

There will be tastings of 6 to 8 wines.
Additional wines can be purchased for the evening
Or ordered for delivery. The bar will be open at the completion of the wine tasing

Tickets: £15 including a drink on arrival and "Nibbles"

Evening in support of our Village Hall

Tickets: contact Doug Clarke

Email: dougatgalewood@hotmail.com

Phone or Text to 07818400723

Charity number 273557

Weston Colville Reading Room 'Pub' Quiz

The trophy changed hands from one multi-generational family team to another last month – could it come to you at our next quiz in the spring? Congratulations to 'Pasta Duchy' and see you then – watch this space for more, all welcome.

Jacqueline

Parish Matters

As the last of our Harvest Festivals are celebrated and the final tables of bread, fruit, and flowers are cleared away, October feels like something of a pause. It is the month when fields are gathered in, evenings draw closer, and the colours of autumn deepen all around us. There is a gentle slowing to life, a moment to catch our breath, and to notice the subtle beauty in the changing landscape. The golden light on the trees, the rustle of fallen leaves underfoot, and the crisp, cool air, all invite us to reflection and gratitude.

Harvest is always a reminder of how much we depend on one another and on God's provision. Thank you to everyone across our villages who helped make this season so special – from decorating our churches, to providing food for suppers, singing in our choirs, welcoming visitors, and supporting local charities. These acts of generosity and community are as much a part of harvest as sheaves of corn and baskets of apples. In them, we see God's love made tangible, reaching into the lives of those around us.

October is also a month of change. Leaves fall, temperatures drop, and routines settle after the busyness of summer. Change can be challenging, unsettling even, but it can also be a gift. The beauty of autumn reminds us that God is with us through every season – in the flourishing of summer, the fruitfulness of harvest, and the quieter, reflective days of autumn. There is encouragement here to embrace the transitions in our own lives, trusting that God's presence brings meaning and peace, even when the rhythm shifts.

And, just over the horizon, Advent waits. In only a few weeks we will turn our eyes to hope and light, preparing for the coming of Christ. October offers us



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the gift of in-between time – a season to pause, give thanks, and be ready for what lies ahead.

May this autumn season bring you peace, gratitude, and the quiet joy of knowing God's presence in the changing rhythms of life, in every leaf, every gathering, and every moment of stillness.

Blessings always,

Revd Hannah Threlfall

Work in Horseshoe Lane, Weston Colville

CCC will be carrying out work in Horseshoe Lane to improve the pavements. The work will cover the entire length of the cul-de-sac, from the junction with Common Road, and this area will be closed between 8 am and 5 pm from Monday 6th until Friday 17th October, subject to weather.

Residents will always have access to their property, if it's safe to do so; there may be some delays for access, to allow plant or machinery to be moved.

There will be no access to the footway running along the southeast side of Horseshoe Lane for the duration of the works.

Drivers are requested not to park on the road or verge whilst work is in progress.

Jess Ashbridge, WCPC Clerk

Reminder about potholes: please report potholes on the online portal (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults>), as the more reports each one gets, the quicker they should be attended to.

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Operation Christmas Child (Shoebox Appeal)

It's that time of the year again. Thank you for all your support over the last year, when nearly 12 million boxes were sent around the world. From the UK, 240,000 boxes were sent to 10 countries.



This message is to encourage you to get involved again (or as a first timer) and fill a shoebox. Each box may be the only gift a child will receive. Often items are treasured for years after, and even into adulthood. Adding a photo or short message (no address) means so much.

There are various ways to get involved:

- fill a whole shoebox with the suggested items (see link below), or
- donate one or more items, or
- make a donation which can be used to buy items or for transport and training costs, or
- pack an 'online box' – for £25 you can choose the gifts via the website <https://shoebonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk>
- make a cake for the cake sale on 15th November.

Suggested items include stationery, toiletries (not toothpaste or liquids), toys, jewellery, hats, gloves, scarves, paper, balls, socks . . . there is a long list on the website, which also lists items to avoid.

Age groups: 2 - 4 years, 5 - 9 years, 10 - 14 years, boys or girls.

There will be a shoebox filling party on Saturday 15th November, 10 am - 12 noon at Great Shelford Free Church, along with a cake sale, to raise funds to send the boxes. This is a fun event for all the family.

I live in Abington, and am a year-round volunteer for OCC. Please do get in touch if you need help or further information.

***Jane Furlow (jane.furlow@gmail.com,
07745 046921; Free Church 01223 842181)***

St Andrew's Churchyard Clear-up

The churchyard clear-up will take place on Saturday 15th November from 10 am - 12. The usual coffee and doughnuts will be on offer and everyone is welcome, if only for a chat..

Looking forward to seeing you all.

Cobby (290046)

Mr Potter and Monty Chapman

At the Sidmouth Folk Festival this summer, a member of Camus, the folk band, found a CD for sale called 'The Pigeon on the Gate – Melodeon Players from East Anglia'. It includes two tracks recorded in Weston Colville in 1968! One is played by a 'Mr Potter', the other by Monty Chapman.

The CD notes say 'Unfortunately we have no information about Mr Potter except that he lived in Weston Colville and that he played his father's country dance tunes on a single row melodeon'. I've since discovered that he is probably Frank Potter (1901 - 1978) from Weston Colville. There's also a Mr Potter (most likely the same person) whose name appears in Haverhill Echo reports in the 1960s - 70s of the Weston Colville Happy Circle Club as the accordion accompanist for their singing. If anyone has any further information, though, please do get in touch (details below). We're hoping that Andrew Burn, the melodeon player from Camus, will give a rendering of Mr Potter's tune 'Sweet Smiling Face' at the band's gig in the Reading Room on 18th October.

The CD notes say more about Monty Chapman who plays a 'Stepdance'. Born in Weston Colville, Monty 'was known firstly as an entertainer and would sing and accompany himself on his single row melodeon . . . In the 1950s he worked for Baldock's Steam Engine Company of Haverhill and drove a Garrett engine. When Baldock's closed he worked for Burton's Coaches as a coach driver and would have his melodeon behind the seat, which would be brought out to entertain on every possible occasion!'

On 29th January 1987, the Haverhill Echo ran an article about a new folk club in the town. It read: 'A group of Haverhill musicians have banded together to form the Rose and Crown Folk Club . . . The club was the product of last year's Haverhill Arts Festival. Peter Isaacs, the chairman, said: "We play all kinds of music. One of our oldest members, Monty Chapman, plays melodeon and has taught us a lot of the old music tunes"'. As with Mr Potter, if anyone has further information about Monty Chapman, please do get in touch. It would be great to find out more!

***Gabrielle Cliff Hodges (07979 554758,
gabrielle.cliffhodges@cantab.net)***



Kingsway Solar Community Action

The statutory consultation will run from Wednesday 17th September to Wednesday 29th October. At the time of writing, we have not received formal notification, but we understand that Kingsway Solar will be holding events to present the updated design and further information about the proposed solar farm. We strongly encourage you to attend these events, ask questions and raise your concerns.



In addition, KSCA will be hosting our own workshop events to help residents prepare responses to the consultation. Submitting a letter is vital: this stage is your opportunity to comment on the specific design and details of the proposal, not just to state

opposition. The more responses received, the stronger the community's voice will be. See the 'Get Involved' page at kingswayaction.org

Workshop dates and locations:

- Sat 4th October – Balsham Sports Pavilion, 10.30 am – 12.00 noon
- Sun 5th October – West Wrattling Village Hall, 10.30 am – 12.00 noon
- Sun 5th October – West Wickham Village Hall, 2.00 – 4.00 pm
- Sat 11th October – Weston Colville Reading Room, 10.30 am – 12.00 noon
- Sun 12th October – Brinkley Memorial Hall, 10.30 am – 12.00 noon.

Display a sign and say “No Way Kingsway!”

Signs, banners and posters are now appearing across our villages. If you'd like one, please complete the online Sign Request Form. We are not charging for these, but donations via our *GoFundMe* page are greatly appreciated. You can also download and print your own poster, and A3 wheelie bin stickers are now available and being distributed.

As well as our *GoFundMe* page, we have launched a CrowdJustice campaign to fund the legal challenge against Kingsway Solar. With legal costs expected to top £150,000, every donation counts.

Keep recording your wildlife sightings: as part of our Step Into Nature campaign, we encourage everyone to continue logging wildlife sightings on *iRecord*, especially now, as migratory birds begin to arrive. These records are vital in showing the diversity of wildlife that could be affected by the solar farm's glass panels, fencing, lighting, and noise. Every sighting counts.

Useful links:

- Become a KSCA member to stay involved, <https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us/>
- Request a 'No Way Kingsway' sign, <https://forms.gle/mZH5aGseUVm3yRuq9>
- Donate to KSCA campaign via *GoFundMe* to support our work, www.gofundme.com/f/no-to-kingsway-solar-farm
- Donate to legal funds, crowdjustice.com/case/kingswaysolarcommunitylegalaction
- Follow KSCA on Facebook and Instagram [#kingswaysolaraction](https://www.instagram.com/kingswaysolaraction/) for real-time updates.

Kathy Day

Press Release:

Kingsway Solar Statutory Consultation

Stage two (statutory) consultation has opened for a proposed solar farm in Cambridgeshire. The consultation will run for six weeks, from midday on Wednesday 17th September until Wednesday 29th October, and is held under the Planning Act 2008 as the scheme is deemed a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.

Kingsway Solar is a proposed new solar farm and approximate 15 km overhead line connection into the planned National Grid Burwell South substation (due to be located south of the existing Burwell substation, the exact location yet to be confirmed by National Grid).

It will also include associated infrastructure, including co-located battery storage systems and inter-array connections to link together the land parcels where the solar panels are located.

Kingsway Solar would have the potential to generate around 500 megawatts (MW) of electricity to the national grid, enough energy to power up to 175,000 homes.

The first stage of consultation took place between October and December 2024, and the public are now being invited to view and comment on the initial scheme design being presented as part of this stage two consultation.

A number of key developments have been made to the proposals, including reducing the land proposed for the solar development areas from approximately 1,500 ha to 1,246 ha, developing an initial scheme design where infrastructure is proposed away from residential properties as much as possible, and identifying indicative areas where planting could reduce visual impacts.

During the consultation period, an online information presentation will be uploaded to the Kingsway Solar website which will provide an overview of the proposals and how to take part in the consultation. Hard copies of the consultation materials are available to view at local information points, as listed on the Kingsway Solar website. The website also contains electronic copies of the consultation materials for viewing and downloading, along with further information about the consultation and proposals. Please visit www.kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk.

A series of in-person consultation events are taking place for people to find out more information about the proposals:

- Wednesday 1st October, 2 pm - 8 pm, Balsham Pavilion, Church Lane, Balsham
- Thursday 2nd October, 2 pm - 8 pm, The Reading Room, 46 Chapel Road, Weston Colville
- Friday 10th October, 2 pm - 8 pm, West Wrattling Village Hall, 79 High Street, West Wrattling
- Saturday 11th October, 10.30 am - 2.30 pm, Swaffham Prior Village Hall, High Street, Swaffham Prior.

David Vernon, Head of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects at DRD, commented "Kingsway Solar will play a key role in bringing more reliable, clean energy to the UK – but it must be developed in a way that works for the community it is based in.

"Last autumn, we consulted the public to gather their feedback at an early stage, to help us develop detailed proposals that were cognisant of what was important to the local community.

"From this, we have been able to develop an initial scheme design which we are now seeking views on. We therefore want to hear from as many people as we can, to further shape Kingsway Solar in line with community feedback while still delivering all the benefits the project will bring."

The UK has set ambitious climate change targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and to ensure that the energy supply remains affordable, secure and reliable. Kingsway Solar has the potential to accelerate the transition to net zero and make a significant contribution towards achieving the government's targets, while also increasing national energy security at a time of both rising energy bills and the increasing urgency to tackle the climate emergency.

If you have any questions about Kingsway Solar or the proposals, you can contact the community relations team by email at enquiries@kingswaysolar.co.uk, by phone on 0800 012 9881, or write to FREEPOST DOWNING KINGSWAY (no stamp is needed).

West Wratting Parish Council

The council met on Monday 8th September. Warm thanks were extended to the Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteers who recently repainted the recreation ground railings and assisted with other maintenance jobs around the village.

Kingsway Solar Farm: the council agreed to formally join the Kingsway Solar Community Action (KSCA), a body representing local parishes affected by the proposed solar development. A £200 contribution was approved to support KSCA's public engagement work. Councillors also accepted the terms of CrowdJustice, the funding platform being used to support potential legal action. A further meeting will be held after 12th October to review the Stage Two consultation materials with KSF. Residents' worries about possible impacts on house prices were noted.

Sports Pavilion: two private events were approved, including one on Sunday 28th September (midday), along with a fundraising event in October.

Planning: several planning matters were considered. The application for solar panels at Valley Farm Road (Cam Grain Ltd) was approved with conditions (decision dated 5th September 2025). The council made no formal comment on the application at 61 High Street.

Finance: payments were authorised for grants, payroll, sports club grass-cutting, CAPALC fees, and audit costs.

Training & Governance: councillors gave approval in principle for the clerk to undertake CiLCA training (Certificate in Local Council Administration), subject to a training agreement to be drafted. Corrections to the title deeds for the village hall are being

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progressed. Work also continues on clarifying lease arrangements, with the draft tennis club lease accepted in principle.

Vacancy & Elections: a reminder that a councillor vacancy remains open, with publicity to follow shortly. Residents are also encouraged to consider standing in the May 2026 elections.

Village Assets & Safety: the protective caps ordered for play equipment are still awaited. The council remains committed to keeping the recreation ground and children's play area safe and well-maintained.

Roads & Paths: footpaths around the parish are generally in good order, although some ploughed field paths can be difficult. The Parish Paths Officer is seeking extra hands for litter-picking and small maintenance jobs. Please contact the clerk if you're interested in helping out.

The next parish council meeting will take place on Monday 10th November at 7.30 pm in West Wratting Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Cameron Biggs, Clerk

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Weston Colville Parish Council

A meeting was held on Wednesday 10th September. Full minutes and meeting documents can be viewed at <https://www.westoncolville-pc.gov.uk>

Planning – the clerk was asked to contact Planning about Mines Park, to request how long the application could remain open.

Flooding – Cllr Garrod reported on a response from Simeon Carroll, the CCC Flooding Officer, on 8th August about the flooding on Common Road. A trench had been dug, in the land adjacent to the Stour. If this didn't relieve the flooding issue, they would dig out the ditch. It was conceded that this was frustrating for those affected. There were problems with the wall degrading opposite Fox Hall, and engineers had been contacted. The ditches had been cleared of vegetation by the farm contractor. The clerk would check with Cllr Harvey about clearing the ditch behind the council houses, past footpath 16. Mr Carroll had written to the owner of the smallholding about keeping the area clear. 71/72 Common Road gulleys had still not been cleared.

Footpaths – footpath 16, at the bottom of Horseshoe Lane, would remain closed until the end of the year. Additional permissive paths had been added on Cocksforde Farm. Willingham Green footpaths had been reinstated, following extensive fencing of the new stud.

Highways – pavement resurfacing would take place on Horseshoe Lane from Monday 6th to Friday 17th October, between 8 am and 5 pm. It would be reported in **Challenge**. Cars would not be able to be parked on the road.

MVAS – report received, as part of meeting documents.

Kingsway Solar – a report from the PC Alliance Funding Meeting, organised by KSCA, was received (in meeting documents). Fund raising for legal services was vital, and would focus on three areas:

- (1) hydrology – chalk stream fed shallow aquifer which provided water to Cambridge; damage from flooding from rain off the panels;
- (2) pollution – if the batteries caught fire, it could take weeks to put them out, leading to toxins entering the aquifer;
- (3) transport – the roads in the area were not suitable for the proposals.

The statutory consultation would run from 17th September to 29th October, to determine actions. Cllr Batchelor has advised that the consultation had to be advertised two weeks before launching the consultation, but this had not occurred at the time of the meeting. It was determined to hold a meeting on 20th October to discuss completing the consultation. The clerk attended a meeting regarding the PEIR (Preliminary Environmental Information Report), and parish councils were told to scrutinise the non-technical summary, and make use of local knowledge.

Cambridgeshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Cllr Garrod would complete the consultation on behalf of the parish council.

Grant – Improving the High Street – the clerk would see if a grant could be acquired for the new defibrillator (£1,595), village sign restoration (quote required), and bus shelters (£720). Minimum grant funding was £5,000. It was suggested enquiring whether the playground, and restoration of benches, were applicable.

Risk Assessment/Health and Safety – the defibrillator had been replaced, and would be installed by the Reading Room. A reminder will be put in **Challenge** about calling 999, if it was required. Community Heartbeat offered free training; it was suggested that this could coincide with Tea & Cakes, or Wednesday lunches, or vaccination clinic. The clerk would discuss dates with Community Heartbeat.

Annual Return 2024/ 25 – questions from PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors, were answered. For the 25/26 AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Report) there would be additional website compliance for accessibility. Cllr Pagonis would look into it; it would be completed before March, and additional budgeting for the website next year would be considered.

Dates of Parish Council Meetings in 2025 – 20th October, 3rd November.

Jess Ashbridge, Parish Clerk

Defibrillator in Weston Colville

The defibrillator is at the Reading Room, Chapel Road, Weston Colville CB21 5NX. Ring 999 to be given the code to unlock its cabinet.

Jess Ashbridge, Parish Clerk

Balsham Picture House

Normal start time of doors open at 7 pm and film at 7.30 pm in the Balsham Church Institute, Church Lane, Balsham. Dave's bar will be open as usual before the film for refreshments.

Dick Paden

BALSHAM PICTURE HOUSE



Despite the recent controversy surrounding the authenticity of some facts this film based on the book received good reviews so BPH decided to screen this in October.

Starring Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs as a couple who lose their home and later discover the husband has been diagnosed with a terminal illness as they embark on a year long coastal trek from Minehead to Land's End.

Saturday 4th Oct.

West Wratting Book Club

Over the summer we read two books.

'Home Going' is set in what was known as the Gold Coast (a region on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa, now the country of Ghana) and, later, America. It follows two lines of a family descended from one matriarch and takes in the society, interactions between different tribes, the treatment of women, slavery in Africa and the United States, and the need to find one's roots – the home going of the title.

Although a dark and uncomfortable read, it is interesting and revealing. The narrative is not continuous but picks up on different characters through history, from the 18th to 20th century. One or two people felt unable to read it because of its dark themes while another made a start but had not finished it. Those who did, agreed that it was an uncomfortable read but worth the effort. It described how those caught up in slavery were cut off from their history, with pain transferred and carried down the generations. It was suggested that the Ghanaian parts were less detailed and more lightly sketched than the events in America, which is possibly understandable with, perhaps, fewer sources to draw on. Scores were varied with one 5 and two 8s out of 10.

'The Glassmaker' is mainly set on the island of Murano where the glassmakers lived, denied the

GARDEN MAINTENANCE

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Westley Waterless, Newmarket
e-mail: napierfz@aol.com

opportunity to travel to other places for fear of them taking their secrets with them. It follows one family through history, concentrating on a young girl, Orsola, and her endeavours to find her place in this small world, learning to make glass beads despite the scorn of her brother, and her life through the years. The handling of time is unusual in that it passes at a much slower rate than that on 'Terra Firma', the world beyond Murano and Venice, where it covers several hundreds of years, from the 18th to the 21st century. Some found this difficult but others thought it an interesting concept and felt that one had to suspend disbelief and treat it almost as a fairy story. It touches on some of the same themes raised in the previous book: women's position in society and their treatment, and the slave trade, as well as the plague, our modern plague of covid, the Venetian floods and the damage done by over-tourism, not least on the quality of glass being made there. The descriptions of glass making were enjoyed and it was obvious that the author had done a lot of research. Scores were 7 and 9 out of 10.

We will next meet at The Chestnut Tree on Wednesday 15th October at 7.30 pm to review 'Lone Wolf' by Adam Weymouth.

Linda Gorman (290653)



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Balsham WI

Our September meeting featured the 1990s, a decade which saw much conflict in the world – the Gulf War, break up of Yugoslavia and Waco siege amongst others. We also saw the reunification of Germany and dissolution of the Soviet Union, the launch of the Hubble Space Telescope and the cloning of Dolly the sheep. The euro was launched during this decade and the world wide web came into existence, changing many things in our lives. Sadly, Princess Diana was killed in a car crash in 1997 and there was an outpouring of grief. During the 90s the WI was a founding member of the Fair Trade Foundation and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1990.

Our next meeting will take place on 14th October in the pavilion at 7.30 pm and will feature the 2000s.

Debbie Mower



The Meadow Primary School, Balsham

To begin the year, all staff took part in essential training to ensure they are fully prepared to support our pupils. This included safeguarding and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' training, alongside a full day of paediatric first aid. This means our team is equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to keep every child safe and supported throughout the year.

Our new Reception children have made a fantastic start, settling quickly into their new routines with enthusiasm and confidence. A big thank you goes to our Year 6 pupils, who have been excellent buddies – particularly at lunchtimes – helping the youngest members of our school feel comfortable and cared for.

Playtimes have also been a real highlight, as our OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) journey continues

to grow. The addition of a brand new sandpit has been a big hit, with children thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to play, dig, and create during break times. We are also excited to continue expanding the opportunities available on the playground, with a new mud kitchen currently being created for the children to enjoy.

Faye Facer, Assistant Headteacher

Linton Village College

We've had a brilliant start to the new academic year here at LVC. Our new Year 7 cohort of students has settled in really well and is already an integral part of our school community. It's amazing how quickly they adapt to new routines.

With the new school year also come some exciting changes at Linton. One of the key developments is the relaunch of our Linton Learner ethos. Originally introduced around ten years ago and based on six core values, we've taken the opportunity this year to refine and focus the concept. After careful consideration, we've distilled the Linton Learner values down to two: 'Caring' and 'Independent'. We believe these truly capture the essence of what it means to be a learner at LVC.

The newly appointed Junior Leadership Team at Linton Village College is passionate about making a meaningful impact. From enhancing student wellbeing and communication to improving facilities and celebrating creativity, Head Students Ruvi, Declán, and Sree are committed to fostering an inclusive, inspiring school environment where every student feels valued and empowered to thrive.



It was great to open the school to visitors for our Open Evening at the end of September. We are also offering morning tours during the school day for prospective families ahead of the secondary school application deadline at the end of October. Please get in touch via reception@lintonvc.org to arrange to visit.

Laura Heard



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West Wickham & District Gardening Club



Thank you to everyone who came, contributed and helped out at the West Wickham & District Gardening Fair last month. We very much appreciated everybody's support and enjoyed sharing an entertaining morning with you.

The winner of the 2025 Ralph Westwood-Bate Photography trophy was Lucy Cameron, with this photograph in the Frozen category capturing the fleeting frost from last winter.



Building on the remarkable success of the club over the past year we are hoping members will enjoy the new-look AGM on 20th October at 7.30 pm in West Wickham Village Hall.

We are looking forward to sharing ideas about how we can enhance the monthly talks, visits and the experience for members over the next 12 months. This conversation will be continued after the formal meeting as wine and refreshments will be provided to make the evening a primarily social event.

Of course, if you are not a member and would like to join on the day you are very welcome!

For club information or if you'd like to help at one of our events, please contact me.

Sally Collins (wwdgc@westwickham.org)

Linton Library

'Clueless at Christmas' with crime authors Nicola Upson and Mandy Morton introducing their latest Christmas titles, takes place on Wednesday 5th November 2 - 3.30 pm. Tickets are £5, book in the library or contact

cambourne.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Vicky Anandraj & Ann King
 (www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library)

www.westwratting.org.uk

for information on:

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| What's On | Directory | Parish Council |
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Please send us your contributions, events, notices, photos and comments.

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Poppy Appeal 2025

During this year with VE Day 80 and VJ Day 80, many of us have seen vivid images from World War II and the celebrations as hostilities ended in 1945. With only one year without any war since then, the annual two weeks' fundraising by the Royal British Legion leading up to Remembrance Sunday (this year on 9th November) is so important to enable their amazing support of our ex-servicemen and women and their families. Many of us will have relatives or friends who have served in our country's armed services and know of the huge need for support in so many ways.

Poppies will be available in exchange for donations in The Chestnut Tree in West Wrating, the Post Office, The Bell and The Black Bull in Balsham, and at church services and events in the four villages of Balsham, West Wickham, West Wrating and Weston Colville, whenever possible during the last week of October and the first week of November.

Recognising that lots of people no longer use cash, the Royal British Legion have issued a QR code specific to each district by which any donation can be made, with Gift Aid if wished. Gift Aid increases donations by 25% at no charge to the donor. The QR code is displayed on poppy boxes, collecting tins and posters.

Poppies will be mixed – the previous paper poppy on a plastic stalk, and the new fully paper poppy.

Thank you in anticipation of your donations once again.

Margaret Johnson
Honorary Poppy Appeal Organiser



Update from your Local MP

I've made it my mission during the parliamentary recess to get out and about across South Cambridgeshire. I've listened to residents at surgeries, 'meet your MP' events, on the doorsteps, and at fantastic local community fetes. It has been a pleasure to connect with our vibrant communities.

During this period, I brought together GPs from across our communities to discuss the issues they and their patients are facing. GPs raised concerns about the unfair funding formula that sees Cambridgeshire's practices receive less government funding per head than any other part of England. They want to see decision making brought closer to our communities with patients put first. Now I am challenging ministers to listen.

Without urgent reform to social care, the NHS will remain in crisis. I hear regularly that the NHS and social care access are among the top concerns for residents, so I will continue to fight for better provision and to ensure something is done to address the crisis.

I've also used the opportunity to check on the health of our rivers and chalk streams. I joined the Wildlife Trust, local campaigners, and stakeholders for a tour along the Granta – one of South Cambridgeshire's many precious chalk streams. It was a pleasure to hear from parish councillors, Friends of the River Granta, Anglian Water, and County Councillor Laurence Damary-Homan, about how we can work together to achieve clean and sustainable waterways. I know from my many conversations with residents and years of campaigning on this issue that protecting our precious local environment is vital to our way of life here in South Cambridgeshire, so I will continue working hard as your MP to bring people together and drive meaningful action on this urgent issue.

These are just a few of the things I've been working on over the last few months that I wanted to share with you. If you would like to sign up to my weekly newsletter to find out more about what I am doing in parliament, you can do so by going to pippaheytings.org.uk/newsletter.

Pippa Heytings MP



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Are you booked in for your flu jab yet? If you are eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination, it's not too late to book into one of our flu clinics running throughout October. While you are here we can also check if there are any other vaccines you may be eligible for.

Ring now on 0300 234 5555 and choose the Granta site of your choice or wait to receive your SMS link via your mobile phone to book your appointment.

Finally, it's time for me to say goodbye. After 17 years, I am hanging up my NHS hat! It has truly been both a privilege and a pleasure to work in primary care. While we are all aware of the many challenges facing GP practices and the wider NHS, I feel very proud to have played my small part. I will greatly miss my colleagues and, of course, all of you.

Sandra East, Head of Patient Services
cpicb.grantapatientervices@nhs.net

Linton & District Historical Society

Our new season got off to an excellent start with a presentation by Alan Osbourne, who gave a fascinating insight into the life and times of Ada Lovelace. Ada (1815-1852) was an English mathematician, often referred to as 'the first computer programmer', and the only legitimate daughter of Lord Byron and Annabella Millbanke.

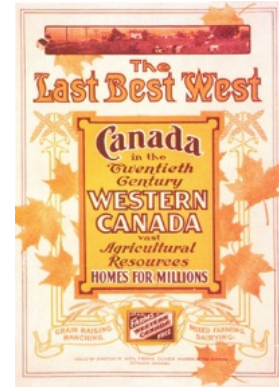
She saw potential in a new Jacquard weaving loom 'punchcard' system which she adapted for use in mathematics, and joined forces with Charles Babbage when he built a mathematical adding machine named 'a difference engine', a copy of which can be seen in the Science Museum, London.

Ada became a baroness when marrying into aristocracy, and had three children, but sadly died

after health complications aged just 37. Inheriting some of her father's lifestyle, she left gambling debts of £2,000. Her wish was to be buried next to her father Byron, which upset Annabella very much, and she did not attend her daughter's funeral.

Ian Creek

LINTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY TUESDAY 21st OCTOBER 2025



We welcome Ann Fletcher with a talk on
Western Canada

LINTON VILLAGE HALL
COLES LANE - 7.30 p.m.

Refreshments and Raffle

Visitors and new members always welcome

The Ellesmere Centre, Stetchworth

This year's **Christmas Market** is on Sunday 16th November. We have some new stalls and our lovely regulars selling everything from jewellery, handmade cards, doggie jumpers, crochet items, chocolates, spirits and much more.

Hot Food * Refreshments * Raffle * Entry £1

Our new website has up-to-date details of our adult and children's classes, along with upcoming events.

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Mobile library: fourth Thursday:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| High Street, West Wrattling | 11.10 - 11.50 am |
| Reading Room, Weston Green | 12.00 - 12.35 am |
| Mill Hill, Weston Colville | 12.40 - 1.05 pm |

| OCT | 9.30 am | 11.00 am | 6.00 pm |
|------------------|---|--|---|
| 5 th | | United Service with Holy Communion – Balsham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop / Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> | |
| 12 th | Holy Communion – West Wickham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Morning Worship – West Wratting, <i>Steven Wheeler</i> | Harvest Songs of Praise – Weston Colville, <i>Steven Wheeler</i> Holy Communion – Balsham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Holy Communion – Great Abington, <i>Revd Jane Butler</i> Café Church – Hildersham, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> | |
| 19 th | Holy Communion – West Wratting, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Morning Worship – West Wickham, <i>Alistair Collen</i> | Holy Communion – Balsham, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Morning Worship – Little Abington, <i>Alistair Collen</i> | Taizé service – Hildersham, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> |
| 26 th | Holy Communion – Weston Colville, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Pet Service – West Wickham, <i>Alastair France</i> Creative Church – Abington Hub, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall / Rosemary Mead</i> | Holy Communion – Balsham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Holy Communion (BCP) (11.15 am) – Hildersham, <i>Revd Michael Wilcockson</i> | Evening Prayer (4.00 pm) – Little Abington, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> |

Regular Midweek Services –

Every Tuesday at Hildersham, 7.00 pm,
Silent Space followed by **Compline**
Every Thursday at Balsham, 9.30 am,
Holy Communion (said service)
Every Friday at Weston Colville, 8.45 am,
Morning Prayer

Details of all our services can also be found on the website: www.grantavale.org.uk

Revd Michael Wilcockson, Rural Dean
associate.priest@stmaryslinton.org.uk
Revd Hannah Threlfall, Community Minister
01223 481090, *RevThrelfall24@outlook.com*
Mr Steven Wheeler, Licensed Lay Minister
01223 290396, *stevenwheeler406@gmail.com*

DIARY

OCTOBER 2025

Wed 1 Soup Lunches restart, Reading Room
Thurs 2 Kingsway Consultation, Weston Colville
Sat 4 West Wratting Café
Balsham Picture House, 'The Salt Path'
Sun 5 KSCA Workshop, West Wratting
Fri 10 Kingsway Consultation, West Wratting
Sat 11 KSCA Workshop, Weston Colville
West Wratting Harvest Supper
Tues 14 Balsham WI
Wed 15 West Wratting Book Club
Thur 16 Lunch Club, The Chestnut Tree
Fri 17 Tea & Cakes, Reading Room
Sat 18 Camus Folk Band, Reading Room
Mon 20 West Wickham & District Gardening Club
Tues 21 Linton & District Historical Society
Sat 25 Lower Wood Working Party

NOVEMBER 2025

Wed 5 'Clueless at Christmas', Linton Library
Sat 15 St Andrew's Churchyard Clear-up
Wine Tasting Evening, West Wratting
Sun 16 Ellesmere Centre Christmas Market
Mon 10 West Wratting Parish Council
Wed 20 Weston Colville Parish Council

Churchwardens:

St Mary's – Ian Ashbridge (01223 291344)
Bob Coates (07785 361345)
St Andrew's – Sebastian Bain (07736 198101)
Church Administrator: Caroline (Cazzy) Walshe,
7churches.seven@gmail.com, 01223 891443
Weston Colville Parish Clerk: Jess Ashbridge,
clerk@westoncolville.org.uk, 07779 277647
West Wratting Parish Clerk: Cameron Biggs,
clerk@westwratting.org.uk

Black bins: Wednesday 1st, 15th & 29th October,
Wednesday 12th & 26th November
Green & blue bins: Wednesday 8th & 22nd October,
Wednesday 5th & 19th November

Editor: Anne Bragg (*editor@challengemag.co.uk*)

Thank you for all your articles, news, etc. If these are sent by email, they are always acknowledged; if you don't get a reply, your items haven't been received, so please resend. Some contributions may have to be edited, to fit the space available, and are published at the discretion of the editor.

Copy date for November issue:
Monday 20th October