

VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

JANUARY 2019

ISSUE 188

VILLAGE DIARY

- Tue 1 **HAPPY NEW YEAR**
Wed 2 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
Sun 6 United Parishes service. 10.45, Balsham Church
Mon 7 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
Wed 9 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
Sun 13 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
Mon 14 Black wheeled bin collection
Local History Club. Tracing traditions: Museum of Cambridge oral history project. 7.30pm, Village Hall.
Wed 16 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
Sun 20 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
Mon 21 Blue wheeled bin collection only
The art of composting. Talk by Chris Field of Field Compost. 7.30pm, Village Hall
Wed 23 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
Sun 27 Morning worship. 9.15, St Mary's Church
Mon 28 Black wheeled bin collection
Parish Council meeting. 7.30pm, Village Hall. All are welcome to attend
Wed 30 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
Daisy Chains Pre-School meets Monday & Wednesday 9.30 – 12.30 Tuesday & Thursday 9.30—2.30 (includes lunch club) in the Village Hall

THE VILLAGE HALL

is available to hire at the rates below, it also offers the following equipment: Badminton, Short Tennis and 3 Table Tennis tables.

Village Hall rates (for Village use):

Sport Hire	day or evening £8.00/hour
Meeting Room	day (9.00 – 19.00) £5.00/hour. evening £7.00/hour.
Main Room	day (9.00 – 19.00) £7.00/hour evening £10.00/hour.
Complete Hall	day (9.00 – 19.00) £12.00/hour evening £18.00/hour
Children's party	£30.00 daytime £43.00 evening
Adult's party/disco	£60.00
Wedding reception	£150.00

To book the Village Hall contact Georgina Magin
Email: bookings@westwickham.org
visit www.westwickham.org
or T: 01223 290972

The Village Voice is sponsored by West Wickham Parish Council and delivered free to all households in West Wickham and Streetly End. The views expressed herein are those of the contributors.

PARISH ISSUES

The Parish Council has been contacted recently about a few issues that have given cause for concern to some parishioners, these include dogs barking, light pollution caused by security lights and parking problems. Whilst the Parish Council does not have authority to insist or force changes, we are always keen to assist informally in any way we can. In most cases neighbours are happy to help once they know that their actions are causing concern. If the informal and neighbourly approach doesn't bear fruit, there are more formal routes that can be taken; a few useful links are listed below.

Noise Nuisance: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/environment/pollution/noise-nuisance/>

Light Nuisance: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/environment/pollution/light-pollution/>

Parish Council responsibilities: <https://www.localgov.co.uk/Parish-council-responsibilities/29135>

With regards to parking, please could we ask everyone not to park on or obstruct the pavements. Do not park within 10 metres of any junction and just consider if your parking could cause any potential safety issues for other road users or pedestrians trying to get through.

West Wickham is a lovely village to live in and I would encourage everyone to make sure that they are being as neighbourly as possible to ensure that these issues are few and far between.

Patrick Charlton, Chairman West Wickham Parish Council

(Ed. Several of the topics discussed at the 26 November meeting of the Parish Council have already been covered in articles in the Village Voice. The meeting minutes will be available on westwickham.org shortly)

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB

At our meeting on 14 January (7.30pm in the Village Hall) we are doing something a little different. Members of the Museum of Cambridge's (formerly known as the Folk Museum) *Tracing Traditions* oral history project will be coming to talk to us. They will be telling us about the Museum and how we can help with the project. They are particularly keen to enlist volunteers to collect village people's memories (rather like Graham Hopwood's in this issue). If you think you would be interested in helping please do come along. The meeting is open to everyone.

For further details contact Janet Morris, 21 High Street
Tel: 290863 Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com



GET YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE CHIPPED FREE

ABCTree Surgery is offering free Christmas tree chipping locally to the residents of West Wickham & Streetly End. Please call 07919343321 or email rob@abctree.co.uk and speak to me to book. I will only be able to offer this service up to 12 January.

Rob Giles

FROM THE VICARAGE

My wife said to me, 'You're right – you can't say Happy New Year' but you can say 'Blessed New Year.' It is the early part of December, and we are in the car, and I am asking 'What can I say in the January letter from the churches when everything now is in such a muddle, nationally and internationally, with long angry debates in Parliament and scary headlines in all the papers?'

The reason I am writing this so early is because all our deadlines for the January issues are early because of Christmas pressures on the magazine teams. So much can have happened, for better or for worse by the time you read this

To remind you of the Christmas story. Things were not any better in Jesus' day! Joseph and Mary are now safely in Egypt, beginning to settle down, probably in Alexandria with its large Jewish expatriate community. Augustus has been Emperor in Rome for twenty-three years and King Herod the Great has been ruling Judea for seventeen years. Herod is paranoid and obsessive. He is building great palaces and fortresses from end to end of Judea. Any threat to his position sends him into a murderous rage. He has his wife Mariamne condemned to death for plotting against him, and then later he has their two sons strangled. When the Magi come to Jerusalem, their message of a baby king causes Herod to send his soldiers to Bethlehem and kill all the new-born boys. There is no Happy New Year for the Holy Family! Herod is to be on the throne for another two years, so they have to stay in Egypt until after his death and it is safe to go home to Nazareth.

There is good news today from our seven churches for this New Year. We have officially become the Granta Vale Group of Churches, and Iain McColl has been officially named by Ely Diocese as our Rector. We are continuing to serve the villages of our group, with its seven beautiful churches. We have three priests, four lay ministers, a parish nurse and an administrator on our Ministry Team, with two part-time assistant priests who are ready to help us. We are expecting a new member of our team to be appointed during 2019.

But for now, as promised, on behalf of all the team I wish you all a very Blessed New Year.

Keith Johnson

POST YULETIDE QUIZ

Just in case you haven't had enough of Christmas by now, here is a nice easy quiz. All the answers are words which can be **preceded or followed** by 'Christmas.'

1. We consume punch (5)
2. Now (7)
3. Snigger wildly about alien. (9)
4. Green, perhaps (5)
5. Joker? (4)
6. MBE, VC, etc (11)
7. Moving forward on one leg after slow start (8)
8. My mistake hidden inside (5)
9. Nation (6)
10. Frail head and broken heart (6)
11. Peg right in the middle (4)
12. Not night (3)

Answers by 15 January to Peter Grieve at 29 Burton End or mail@petergrieve.co.uk

THE PETER & RUTH LLOYD TRUST AWARD

We are pleased to report that this year the Trust presented its eleventh annual award to Ben Newey. Ben is from West



Wickham and after successfully obtaining A levels at Hills Rd, Cambridge has gone on to study Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Warwick University. Very well done!

We are now inviting applications for pupils starting university in September 2018.

Normally one scholarship is awarded each year and the amount is approximately £800. Broadly speaking the degree course should be from one of the following:-

Architecture, Engineering, Geography, History, Law, Mathematics, Sciences, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. The applicant should be living in one of the parishes bordering the old RAF Wrattling Common airfield - Great Thurlow, Little Thurlow, West Wickham, Carlton cum Willingham, West Wrattling, Weston Colville and Withersfield. The award is intended to be of assistance in the purchase of books, materials, equipment etc. Final decision and award will be made immediately after 'A' Level/Baccalaureate results and University offer are known.

For further information about the Trust and award please contact:

Jonathan Drury 01223 290968

For an application form please apply via email to: peter.ruthlloydtrust@sky.com

The application form and supporting documents must be received at the latest by 31 March 2019.

NEW YEAR, NEW CHALLENGES, NEW YOU Adult Learning at Linton Village College

Start 2019 in a fresh and positive way by learning a new skill or building on one you may already have. Linton Village College is offering a great range of adult courses (daytime and evening) covering subjects as diverse as Italian and Tai Chi, creative writing and pottery, flower arranging and Indian cookery and Spanish and silver jewellery making. We have a variety of art-based classes covering watercolours, pen & ink drawing and art & drawing (all mediums) at different times of the day. The new term starts week commencing 14 January and courses last 10 weeks. All course details can be found on our new website at www.lintonvillagecollegeadultlearning.co.uk. For more information about any of our courses or to book a place email adult.education@lvc.org or telephone 01223 891223 Ext 303 / 317.

NATURE NOTES

This month I have resolved to write our nature notes without mentioning badgers, red kites or Brexit, all of which have been taking up too much of my attention. Fortunately, nature has come up with some alternatives.

The stars this month must be the two cormorants spotted by Lucy whilst walking up the Roman Road at Horseheath. Sitting in a tree, one had its wings outstretched in the characteristic pose that they adopt - probably for drying, although there are other possible explanations for this behaviour. There is a lake at the back of Horseheath Park Farm, which is stocked with fish, so maybe these birds have decided to stay around and fish too. If anyone else spots a cormorant in the parish, do let us know. Di reports seeing a single bird fly over the village earlier this year.

The most heart-warming sight for me in the last few weeks has been the group of lapwings who occupied the field next to the Balsham Road in late November. Lapwing numbers have declined greatly in recent years so it was great to see so many in West Wickham. They were on that field for several days running. I read recently that lapwings have been one of the species who have benefited from EU funding targeted at efforts to protect and restore some of the habitats that have been lost over the years. Their relative, the golden plover (a regular visitor here), along with the bittern and stone curlew are other beneficiaries. Bittern numbers have been rescued after almost catastrophic decline - a success story which will hopefully continue, although if anyone claims to have seen a bittern in West Wickham, I would need photographic proof to be convinced.

Mind you, as wildlife adapts to climate change birds, animals and plants will tend to move location in order to try and ensure their survival. One bird that is becoming a more and more common sight these days is the little egret - one flew up from the Stour brook at Sturmer the other day and another sighting was reported at the Roman Road near Mark's grave. We have just returned from North Norfolk where birdwatchers were quite excited about the visit of a red rumped swallow for the second year in succession. These birds breed mainly in southern Europe and then spend the winter in Africa, so it seems counter intuitive that one should end up further north in December. They feed on insects, so would be relying on those small winter flies which we see occasionally on warmer days at this time of year. If temperatures drop for too long however, I imagine they would be in trouble.

Di to, has been away at the coast and was surprised to see many wading birds foraging in the grass next to grazing sheep. Redshank, oystercatchers and even turnstones, usually seen on the mud at the tide line, were in the long grass. Perhaps they were taking advantage of the sheep disturbing insects as they grazed. The tide was right up the beach, so there was no mud available to probe for worms.

Just so the birds don't monopolize these notes, I must mention that, while waiting with the dogs in the small park next to Bridge End Gardens in Saffron Walden, a small muntjac emerged from the car park and sprinted frantically, in a circuit round the park past some rather surprised looking bystanders and disappeared into the protection of the wooded channel of the small stream which runs alongside the park.

Peter Grieve. T: 290503, E: mail@petergrieve.co.uk
Di Licence. T: 290434, E: dianarubylicence@gmail.com

WHY ARE GP PRACTICES MERGING?

In April 2016 NHS England published the General Practice Forward View. The introduction states:

"There is arguably no more important job in modern Britain than that of the family doctor. GP's are by far the largest branch of British medicine. A growing and ageing population, with complex multiple health conditions, means that personal and population-orientated primary care is central to any country's health system. As a recent British Medical Journal headline put it - "if general practice fails, the whole NHS fails"."

Unfortunately GPs are under increasing pressure. There is an aging/elderly population with increasingly complex health needs requiring more time and continuity in a system with decreasing resources, social care and community support. GPs are also being asked to provide better access with improved opening times whilst having a recruitment and retention crisis. The unthinkable is happening, surgeries are closing as they are no longer sustainable.

There are therefore 2 options:

1. Continue the status quo. However, in doing this we must acknowledge that there is a significant risk that Primary Care will not continue in its current guise.
2. Innovate and look at system wide change. This is difficult but provides a service that looks after the patient as a whole and is not fragmented and disjointed by the need to use different providers in the community.

The merged Granta Medical Practices are addressing this struggle with a view to becoming a Primary Care Home. This provides stability as a practice, increased internal skills, and an increased ability to adapt to change. This then becomes more attractive to the multi-disciplinary teams as a place to work, removing the recruitment crisis. It will bring together a range of health and social care professionals to work together to provide enhanced personalised and preventative care for their local community. Focusing on local population needs, the aim is to provide care closer to patient's homes, before hospital admission may become necessary.

With an increased size comes different working patterns. This provides increased access but then impacts on perceived continuity. You cannot have one with the other. However, behind the scenes systems are put in place whereby GP's are constantly communicating with each other about patient concerns, progress, improvement or deterioration and patient care plans and notes are routinely reviewed. There is still a single named GP for every patient who has overarching knowledge and understanding of their patients but they may lead a team that provides ongoing care, rather than run the team.

It is a fine line between offering unlimited on the day access and regular routine appointments and at times the balance can go either way, but we are moving forward, learning from what we have achieved in the past to improve and redesign for the better in the future. We are in a time of significant change and all of the staff at Granta are looking to provide outstanding care for their patients. However, we can only do this with the support of our patients. We must adapt to patient's needs, always be open to suggestions, but maintain our desire to move the practice forward to what we believe it can become.

Dr Tim Wright, Chief Operations Officer

We have received the article below from Graham Hopwood, a former village resident who now lives in Yorkshire.

CAROL SINGING IN THE MID 50s AND 60s

When I saw the request for carol singers in issue 187 of the *Village Voice* it reminded me of when I was a young boy playing carols with the West Wickham Salvation Army Band.

Christmas carol playing with the Band was my favourite time of the year. Most weeknights during December would be spent playing carols in the surrounding villages and farms. As there were no street lights in any of the villages a paraffin lamp on a broomstick handle was used. I travelled in the bandmaster's car with lit lamp between my feet. When I got older I used to carry the Corps sergeant major's BBb bass [tuba] between the playing locations, little knowing that in the future I would be playing the same instrument in an RAF band.

Quite often we would be invited into someone's house for a cup of tea and mince pie. At one house we were playing outside in Horseheath the occupants were on the phone to America and they could hear the Band over there. Again in Horseheath, the valves on my cornet froze up, although nobody else's did, so I went to the house of my friend Charlie, the local postman, while my valves thawed out and I had a cup of tea. I then rejoined the Band.

The highlight of Christmas carolling for me was going to Newmarket on the last Saturday before Christmas where we played by the Christmas tree at the top of the High Street. Afterwards we crossed the road and wandered round Woolworths before going into a café and having fish and chips. After tea we would go to the Newmarket General Hospital to play carols round the wards followed by refreshments.

Every Christmas Eve we would go carol playing round West Wickham. This was until one Christmas Eve when everybody's instruments froze up just after we had started. It was decided to go round the village the following day, Christmas Day, and after that it became the tradition to play on Christmas Day morning.

Graham Hopwood

Ed. We would love to have other memories of the village to publish.

Graham is sent an email copy of the *Village Voice* each month. If you know of anyone similar who would also like to receive it this way please let us know.

THANK YOU

Many thanks to everybody who attended the Daisy Chains Pre-school Christmas Fair on 24 November. We are pleased to say that we made a profit of approximately £340 which will go directly into pre-school funds.

Sue Harrow

HUB NIGHTS

These will start again in March. Huge thanks to Nicci & Di for organising them.

BALSHAM COMMUNITY MARKET 2019

Firstly, thank you to those who made to the Christmas Market on 8 December. After struggling in getting the gazebos up in the strong winds on the green, I made the call about an hour or so before the market was due to open to move it all back down to the Church Institute. It was definitely the best call as I don't think anyone would have survived the crazy weather. However, it was absolutely wonderful to see the Church Institute heaving once again with lots of visitors from the village and from further afield. All of the hard work involved in organising this event had certainly paid off.

As the footfall of the market has been somewhat unpredictable in 2018 we are moving the market back down into the Institute, where the café will be up and running once again. With the lack of visitor numbers, the amount of work involved and the impact on my own family, the markets will be run quarterly from 2019. Each market will have a theme, with the next market on 9 March being a Spring, Easter and Mother's Day theme with lots of food along with gifts stalls including flowers, jewellery, Easter decorations, etc.

Below is a list of the 2019 dates. Get them into your diary now so you don't forget to ensure that the market continues well into 2019 and beyond.

Thank you once again to my lovely regular market goers for your continuous support in 2018. I now look forward to seeing you and hopefully some new faces in 2019.

Debbie Paton, www.facebook.com/balshammarket



WHAT'S ON IN WESTON COLVILLE

Cinema Club. On Wednesday 2 January our film will be *Il Postino*, a gentle heartwarming tale for a winter's evening, set on an island in the Gulf of Naples. In the New Year, we'll be teaming up with West Wrating Book Club for *Great Expectations*. Buy or dust off your copy of the book now, you've got two weeks to read it before the Book Club meets at the Chestnut Tree in West Wrating on Wednesday 16 and then we'll be showing the film three weeks later on Wednesday 6 February.

Both films will be in the Reading Room 7.30pm. Donations. Refreshments available. All welcome.

Jacqueline Douglas

E: jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com, T: 291475

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

2019 Spring/Summer Programme

- Monday 21 January.** The art of composting. Talk by Chris Field of Field Compost.
- Monday 18 February.** Groundcover. Talk by Tim Fuller of Plantsman's Preference Nursery, Diss
- Monday 18 March.** Unusual plants. Talk by Colin Ward of Swines Meadow Farm, Nursery, Market Deeping.
- Monday 15 April.** Bulbs galore - spring planting for summer colour. Talk by Matthew Long of Riverside Bulbs, Monks Eleigh.
- Saturday 18 May** **PLANT SALE**
- Sunday 23 June.** Coach trip to West Acre Gardens & Nursery and Mannington Hall.
- July** Monday evening visit to a local garden. Details to be confirmed.
- Saturday 24 August.** **ANNUAL SHOW**
Monday evening talks take place at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

PARISH NURSE PLUS COMMUNITY WORKER



This is a new role for me and as one of two Community Workers in our seven parishes. I shall be working in the villages of Weston Colville, West Wrattling and West Wickham. My counterpart in the Balsham, Hildersham and the Abingtons will be Steve Jordan. Our work will be an extension of that already being done locally by Claire Gillett, the Parish Nurse and will be alongside hers, falling within the overall Parish Nurse Plus Project's goals:

- make where we live a good place to live, so we live here happily and healthily with a good quality of life, a purpose and feeling of wellbeing
- ensure that all local people have a say
- help people with what they want to achieve
- liaise with interested groups to think about new initiatives which might include activities, ways to cope with life events and to care and plan care
- involve people by identifying community knowledge and skills, to find volunteers willing to help.

To help me to do these things, in the coming weeks, I shall be contacting local groups. In the meantime, if you would like to know more, to let me know what you need or would like, or to offer help, please get in touch.

Whether you have a car, a skill or just a wish to give someone your time, volunteering doesn't have to be onerous. You may have hours or just moments, and you can make a difference. As one neighbour told me: 'When I went to help, I found all that was needed was half an hour each time to go through some paperwork'.

Jacqueline Douglas

E: jacquelinecommunityworker@gmail.com, T:291475

ADVICE FROM CITIZENS ADVICE

I've had my Universal Credit payments reduced for missing an appointment. I don't think this is fair as I had a good reason for not being able to attend. Now I am struggling to make ends meet. What should I do?

If you think the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has made a mistake in reducing your payments, you can ask for the decision to be reconsidered. Contact the department as soon as possible setting out why you disagree with the decision. Make sure to include the date of the decision and your personal information, including your National Insurance number. You can ask for this reconsideration in your Universal Credit online account, using a form on the government website, in writing or over the phone. Your local Citizens Advice can help you put together this information. If the DWP does not change its decision you can appeal, although this could involve going to a tribunal and may take some time to be heard. If you're struggling to make ends meet, you can apply for extra help. Ask the DWP for a hardship payment. This is usually a loan and will be deducted from future Universal Credit payments. You can apply for this payment through the Universal Credit helpline, or by asking at your local Jobcentre Plus office. You may also be able to apply for financial help from your local council. Speak to your local Citizens Advice to see what help is available to you.

The nearest CAB is at Haverhill, part of Suffolk West CAB, Haverhill House, Lower Downs Slade, Haverhill, CB9 9HB, phone 0300 330 1151. They operate a drop in service on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays between 10.00 -13.30. The Citizens Advice website www.citizensadvice.org.uk also gives clear, concise information on a wide range of areas.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE IN YOUR HOME.

At Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, we are encouraging people to make four New Year's Resolutions for 2019 to keep your families and homes safe from fire.

- **Make sure you have a correctly fitted working smoke alarm on every floor of your house and test it weekly** – involve the children in this to ensure they are aware of what the smoke alarm does, what the alarm sounds like and what it means if it goes off;
- **Check older relatives and friends have a working smoke alarm and test theirs regularly** – you may support older relatives and friends with transport and shopping but may overlook the crucial role of a smoke alarm. We can provide testing sticks to help older less mobile people to test their alarms without overreaching or hurting themselves;
- We also offer **Safe and Well visits** to those that are eligible which covers a far wider range of areas than just fire safety. Find out if you are eligible for a Safe and Well visit by contacting us on: 0800 917 9994.
- **Escape Plan:** Make a fire escape plan so you and all of those in your home know what to do in case a fire breaks out in the home.

Like us on Facebook for regular updates www.facebook.com/cambsfrs or follow us on Twitter @cambsfrs. For more information or to get in touch with us at firefire@cambsfire.gov.uk or on 0800 9179994.

MEADOW SCHOOL NEWS

Here at The Meadow School, we can't believe that yet another year has passed and we are entering a Spring Term. Whilst the days are so short and the weather cold, it is hard to believe that Spring is only a couple of months away. However, we are just pleased to have survived another Christmas season!



Christmas at school is always a fun time, although very busy and everyone was grateful for the break of the Christmas holiday. The Christmas production of 'Lights, Camel, Action' was a huge success; our Year 2 children always take on the main speaking parts and they amazed us with how well they learnt the huge amount of lines. Every year group learns a dance, as well as a lot of songs and trying to

ensure that everyone is in the right place, at the right time, in the right costume, is always the greatest challenge! Although the staff have a last minute panic that the production will not come together in time, it always does! Parents, grandparents and teachers watching the performance were thrilled with everyone's effort.

The Key Stage 2 Carol Service was also a great success and helped everyone get into the Christmas spirit beautifully.

The church was packed full of families and the Year 6, aided by the rest of Key Stage 2, retold the Christmas Nativity confidently. Of course, our Christmas Carol Service would not be the same without the visit from Declan the Donkey, who behaved so well! Our Christmas season would certainly not be the same without help from our local community. Mrs Sarah Bassett gives her time so willingly to accompany the production and carol service and we are so grateful for her help. We are also so thankful for our anonymous Christmas tree donation. It is contributions such as this, which make our school so pleased to be a centre part of our village communities.



As a new term starts, new topics have begun across the school. We are very excited to be getting stuck into new learning, with different year groups going on trips as a hook to their learning. Year 5/6 have already been to Stibbington dressed as evacuees for their World War Two topic 'Keep Calm and Carry on' and Infants have a trip planned to Duxford for their 'Up, Up and Away' topic. Year 3/4 are stepping 'Into the Freezer' for their topic. If you feel like you have any skills or expertise you can add to these topics, then please do get in contact with the school.

Don't forget you can keep in touch with all the school news through our twitter page, @Meadow_Balsham.

Helen Loe, Assistant Headteacher

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Parish Nurse: Claire Gillett, T:07498994205
Mobile: 0749 899 4205
email:7churches.parishnurse@gmail.com
Monday, Wednesday & Thursday unless otherwise stated on her mobile phone. This is NOT a 24hr monitored service.
Community Warden: Karen Williams, T: 07717871832
Helping Hands: 07399 263222

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE NEWS

December was a great month for seeing members of the College community come together. Over 120 local residents joined us for our annual 'Coffee and Carols' event. Our visitors were served by Year 9 students and treated to singing and musical performances from the orchestra and choir as a preview to our Carol Concert in Balsham. It is always brilliant to see how many students we manage to squeeze into the church to take part in the concert. The diverse range of music and readings is a really festive treat.

LVC students also had the joy of visiting King's College for their schools' Carol Service at the end of term. Those that attended were struck by the beauty of the music as well as the College's architecture and setting.

These events are a celebration of the season and an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of Christmas. They also enable us to build community and cross-generational relationships and come together to appreciate the important, bonding quality of the arts.

Another triumph was our Evolve dance production. This year it ran over two nights enabling even more audience members to enjoy a showcase of wonderful creative talent at LVC. The shows included choreography and performances from all ages of students, from Year 7 penguins and Minions to a mixed hip hop group, an all-boys troupe and a number of accomplished GCSE pieces.

The end of term was also filled with lots of charitable events. Students donned gaudy Christmas jumpers in aid of REACH, a local Haverhill-based organisation that helps families in financial hardship. They also raised funds for a number of charities through an array of different stalls and activities at our charities fayre on the last day of term. Lots of ingenious money-making ideas showed off students' entrepreneurial skills as well as their care and commitment to those less fortunate than themselves.

When the tinsel and glitter is cleared away it is important that all of us remember that an appreciation of the arts and acts of charity and kindness are for life, not just for Christmas.

Helena Marsh, Principal

PRESS DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 16 January

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