VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

FEBRUARY 2025 ISSUE 261

WHEELED BIN COLLECTIONS

Wednesday 5 February Black
Wednesday 12 February Blue & green
Wednesday 19 February Black
Wednesday 26 February Blue only

It is no longer necessary to book to attend any of Cambridgeshire's Household Recycling Centres.

For details of locations & opening hours visit: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/household-recycling-centres

CHURCH SERVICES

2 February 11.00. Joint service of Holy

Communion at Balsham Church 6.00pm. Candlemas service at

Weston Colville Church

9 February 9.30. Holy Communion at

St Mary's Church 16 February 9.30. Morning worship at

St Mary's Church

23 February 9.30. Morning worship at

St Mary's Church

11.00. Creative Church at

Abington Hub.

For more details visit www.grantavale.org.uk

* HUB NIGHT! * WEST WICKHAM VILLAGE HALL



Will be back in March

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

West Wickham website: for news, what's on, directory of information & useful contacts.

https://westwickham.org

AgeUK Community Warden: Vacancy Granta Medical Practice / Linton Health Centre:

T: 0300 234 5555 option 3, followed by option 1 for appointments, option 2 for the Pharmacy.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE Sunday 16 February

Editors: Andrew Morris & Anna Fairhead 21 High Street, West Wickham Cambridge CB21 4RY T: 01223 290863

Email: editor_wwvillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk

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.

COFFEE MORNING 13th February from 10.30 o.m.

West Wickham Village Hall

Selection of teas & coffee Variety of homemade cakes LIFTS AVAILABLE Call Sue Thurston (897811)



FUTURE DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

13TH MARCH, 10TH APRIL & 8TH MAY

A FAN OF DIGGING FOR BRITAIN?

Then why not come along to the next meeting of West Wickham & District Local History Club and hear about some local archaeology.

Monday 10 February
Linton in context: a Granta Valley landscape
Rachel Clarke
7.30pm Village Hall
All welcome. Non-members £2

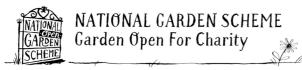
For further details contact the Secretary, Janet Morris Tel: 290863 Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com

WEST WICKHAM CHAIR YOGA

Next 6 week block starts on 26 February 9.30am in the Village Hall

Chair yoga is open to everyone of all abilities and fitness levels (men are very welcome!) These classes will include gentle stretching and mobility exercises. Seated yoga postures help build strength and flexibility. Everyone can follow along at their own pace and will benefit from mindfulness and relaxation at the end. £7.50 per session or a discounted rate of £5 when you book a 6 week block from 26 February.

Call Laura Nicholson on 07891017887 or email restriseyoga@gmail.com for further details



Clover Cottage

50 Streetly End, West Wickham, CB21 4RP

Snowdrop Opening Sunday 16 February Sunday 23 February Sunday 2 March 2 - 4pm

Adults £3 Children free

Light refreshments







More information at ngs.org.uk

FROM THE VICARAGE

The seasons within our liturgy emphasize waiting for God's revelation. We began with Advent, a season of waiting, and now we are at the finishing line with Candlemas, the feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, the moment when the waiting is over, and Christ has come!

I have a deep interest in the education and support of children. I believe they are our future, and we have a responsibility to guide and encourage them to explore the love and wonder of God.

Bringing a child into God's house may not be to everyone's taste; it can be daunting. But it is a vital part of our faith and community. It is an action that resounds in heaven, significant both for the child and for those waiting to receive them. In Luke 2:22-40, we see Mary and Joseph bringing Jesus into God's house for the first time. Like any parents, they are hoping for welcome, blessing, and comfort. Waiting to receive them are Simeon and Anna, whose joy in this tiny baby is palpable.

I think there's an echo of Candlemas whenever a child is brought to church, especially for the first time. It's always a holy and fragile moment. I believe the best way to welcome children isn't necessarily with something flashy, but simply by being there, ready to receive them in a space made for them. I've witnessed children's lives enriched by church relationships, where some of their favourite people are not other children, but adults who take time to chat, show interest in their latest fascinations, and share biscuits.

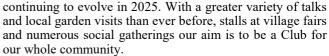
Think of what can be received from these moments: the congregation receiving the fulfilment of their hopes and prayers, and the child and family receiving a joyful welcome. May we, as parents, have the faith of Mary and Joseph to bring our children into God's house; and may we, as the church, welcome them with Simeon and Anna's joy when that small, thumb-sucking, fidgety, rosy-toed baby is brought into the temple!

Revd Hannah Threlfall

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

More than just a Gardening Club...

The Club has been going through a sea change in the last 12 months and is



Over the past 12 months we have been delighted to welcome members and many new visitors of all ages to our events including the spring plant sale and summer fair, both of which we will build on this year. The photography competition is running again (see below) and the excellent homemade cakes baked by the members will, as always, be a central feature of these gatherings!

Whilst many members are keen gardeners, there are an increasing number who just want to find out a little more about nature, ecology and plants. Sharing knowledge after the monthly meetings is, of course, invaluable with tips from the more proficient members helping out those of us with much less knowledge.

With the trend for indoor gardening continuing to grow, Monday 17 February sees us welcoming Dr Manos Kanellos who will be talking on the subject of how to set up and maintain a terrarium, 7.30pm at the Village Hall. Dr Kanellos is a plant physiologist who has been growing orchids for many years and is a qualified judge for the RHS Orchid Committee.

So why not come along and find out how to make your own indoor glasshouse garden. Non-members are always welcome for a £2 entry fee. Annual membership is £8 per person. For more details please contact Sue Boase on 07716 401646, email wwdgc@westwickham.org

This year's photography titles are: Frozen, Light and Dark, Terrific Trees. All categories are open to children with a special prize awarded for the best under 16's entry. Entries to be received by the end of August.

Sally Collins, Vice-chair WW&DGC

BALSHAM SINGERS

The Singers would like to say a big Thank You to everyone who helped make our Christmas concert such a great event. Our loyal advertisers, our front of house crew, these include the PCC (especially Nigel, we are grateful for the use of Church & Church Institute), the PC for the use of the Sports Pavilion for our rehearsals and most of all to our fantastic audience. The Church was full but hopefully everyone was comfortably seated. A sum of £500 from our raffle and a choir donation was sent to Ocular Melanoma.

The next day we sang carols around Balsham's Christmas Tree and on 20 December we were invited to sing for the Royal Papworth Hospital Charity. We were pleased to make a donation to their fund raising day. An unprecedented 3 gigs in a week

Thank you all for your support. In 2025 the Balsham Singers will be 30 and we will have some celebrating to do, more next month, for now we wish all of you a Very Happy New Year.

Jo Stinton

WEST WICKHAM IN THE PAST A MISCELLANY

The Great Bustard and the Albatross

Back in 2020 I wrote a piece for the Village Voice about the killing of a great bustard by a 'murderous neighbour' as recounted by Jonas Marshall Webb of Streetly Hall in his memoir (Streetly: A Tale of Cambridgeshire by a "Native") printed in 1928. The great bustard (otis tarda) is a large ground dwelling bird which was once common on the grassland and open fields of south Cambridgeshire (hence its inclusion in the coats of arms of both South Cambs District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council). It was a native bird which was supplemented by migrating birds from continental Europe during the winter months -'droves' of them in Horseheath in the early 19thc according to one report. The disappearance of the great bustard later in the century was probably due to habitat loss as large fields and waste ground were enclosed into smaller, hedged and cultivated units, although sporting undoubtedly also played a part.



More information has now come to light about the West Wickham great bustard. According to reports in *The Zoologist* and *The Field* journals a female bird was shot by William Jonas, tenant of Manor Farm, on 6 January 1880. A T Travis from Saffron Walden made the reports and added that the bird was 'now in my hands for preservation'. This would appear to be Joseph Travis (the 'T' must be a misprint) who, according to

the 1881 census, lived at Gold Street in Saffron Walden and gave his occupation as 'Naturalist', a possible euphemism for taxidermist! It would be lovely to know what happened to the stuffed bird.

The great bustard was not the only rare visitor to meet its fate in the village at this period. Both The Ibis and The Field carried accounts of an albatross which had been caught on Streetly Hall land on 9 July 1897 'by a labourer named Samuel Barker, who killed it and took it to Mr S Owen Webb, of Streetly Hall', who thought it was a species of gull. Interestingly, Owen Webb sent the dead bird to 'Mr Travis, taxidermist, of Bury St Edmunds, for preservation' this would have been Latimer Travis, son of the Joseph who had dealt with the great bustard. The bird was subsequently identified as a black-browed albatross (originally diomedea melanophrys but now thalassarche melanophris), a bird from the southern oceans and found in places like South Georgia and the Falklands. The Streetly Hall bird was thought at the time to be the first record of an albatross in the British Isles and according to the British Trust for Ornothology, the black-browed albatross is still a rare summer visitor to Scottish gannet colonies such as those at Bass Rock and on the Shetlands.

Thanks must got to eagle-eyed (pun very much intended) Sue Thurston who spotted the information about the albatross at an exhibition in Linton and passed it on. This led me to the website www.historicalrarebirds.info and the information about the West Wickham great bustard. The Great Bustard Project has been instrumental in reintroducing the bird to Wiltshire, seemingly quite successfully, and further details on this can be found on the website www.greatbustard.org.

Janet Morris.

Tel: 290863 Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com

NEWS FROM YOUR MP

I'm delighted to be writing here in *Village Voice* for the first time as your new MP.

Let me first thank the people of South Cambridgeshire for giving me the honour of representing you in Westminster. It's my job to stand up for each and every one of you (whether you voted for me or not) and to fight your corner in Parliament, and that is a task that I won't take lightly.

One of my first priorities as your MP has been calling for certainty about the funding for the new Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital which has been included in the Government's review. I took the opportunity during the Budget debate to urge the Chancellor to stop further delay on this ground-breaking, life-saving hospital which already has spades in the ground. I was also delighted to join the "Changing the Story of Cancer" fundraising event at the Cancer Research UK centre with fascinating presentations by leading cancer experts.

There was unwelcome news in the Budget for many entrepreneurs and small businesses in our constituency which has one of the highest number of small and medium sized businesses and start-ups. Raising employer's National Insurance is a tax on jobs that will deal a hammer blow to small and family businesses and struggling care providers.

On top of that, the Governments proposed 'family farm tax' has alarmed farming communities. Farmers from South Cambridgeshire have raised their concerns about the impact of the tax' with me. The tax will be a cause of concern for the 299 farms in South Cambridgeshire.

I have received lots of correspondence about the proposed Kingsway Solar development. Whilst supportive of the need for renewable energy, I understand the concerns that this national infrastructure project is causing locally and in particular, the serious concerns around the new land parcel 'C' in the developer proposal and its overwhelming impact on surrounding villages. Many constituents have been in touch and I have met with Parish, District and County Councillors. You can read more about my position on Kingsway Solar development at:

www.pippaheylings.org.uk/news/article/kingsway-solardevelopment

South Cambridgeshire is a large, spread-out constituency made up of many villages like West Wickham. I want to be accessible and available so I have been scheduling surgeries in different villages to listen and take up constituents' concerns.

If you would like to get in touch with a concern or arrange a surgery appointment, please email me at

pippa.heylings.mp@parliament.uk

I also have a regular email newsletter that keeps constituents informed of my activities and if you would like to subscribe to it visit www.pippaheylings.org.uk/newsletter

I look forward to contributing to the *Village Voice* again in the future and hope to visit again soon.

Pippa Heylings, MP



NATURE NOTES

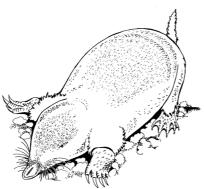
People have continued to comment on how unusual it is to see a jay in their garden with such frequency. We mentioned this phenomenon in the December Nature Notes. My theory is that the paucity of the acorn crop in their normal woodland habitat has forced them to seek alternative sources of food. I visited a friend in Balsham the other day and there was a jay on the fatball. Perhaps jays will make an appearance on lists of birds seen during the Big Garden Birdwatch, which is/was between 24 and 26 January.

Di started monitoring her bird feeders in preparation for the BGB and saw not only birds, but squirrels and rats too. She did see a jay, though, determined to get at the peanuts. Out and about, she disturbed a snipe which zig-zagged away from the field next to the Old Vicarage. She also spotted a flock of about 15 skylarks, which rose as one about two feet off the ground before settling again. The collective noun for skylarks is an exultation, which is probably only applicable in the spring and summer, when they are up in the air singing. Bramblings have once again been seen in Carol and Trevor's garden at the top of the village.

I hear there has been a barn owl regularly quartering fields in the day time in Shudy Camps. Has anyone had a similar treat here in West Wickham?

In the freezing weather, the surface may be frozen hard but the moles manage to penetrate it and push the earth up. A common

misconception is that moles hibernate in the winter but in fact they continue to be very active, dig and eat voraciously. They



Victoria Stilwell Soprano
Stella Bracegirdle Mezzo Soprano
Dom Wallis - Tenor
George Salmon - Bass

FLEMENTS:

Mozart, JS Bach, Vaughan Williams, Poulenc,
Britten, Byrd, Carmichael/Charles, Debussy
and others

Saturday 22nd March, 7:30pm
Holy Trinity Church, High Street
Hildersham, Cambridge CB21 6BZ

Advance Tickets: www.sonarechoir.com

are omnivores that prefer to eat grubs and worms and in frosty weather they dig deeper down where the worms are. They have a tolerance of carbon dioxide and a more efficient use of oxygen than us humans because they re-use exhaled air deep down in the earth. But this doesn't seem to stop them coming to the surface and leaving a line of molehills along their burrows. Their technique for catching worms is to wait for the worm to fall into the void of their tunnel. The mole's bite is toxic and paralyses the worm so it can be left in the 'larder' for later. We rarely see a mole, but we certainly know they are around.

Our spell of bitterly cold weather in early January seems to have come to an end for now. It did bring with it some stunning sunrises, blue skies and clear nights, which may have enabled some of us to see the meteor showers and appreciate the 'Wolf' Moon on 13 January. I heard no howling that night, so we don't have to worry too much about wolves but there are plenty of foxes about. They mate around this time of year so some people may have heard the cries of exquisite agony which gives the game away. There are also plenty of deer as our dog, Lenny, knows full well. He found himself in the middle of a herd of fallow deer and one of them jumped over the top of him, which was rather worrying at the time.

Meanwhile, spring is not too far away. Violets and wild primroses are already out in the village and aconites are out in some gardens. The hazel and alder trees have many tightly furled catkins, and on Charterhouse Bridge, they are already bright yellow and dangling.

Please send your nature sightings to:

Peter Grieve. T: 01223 897811, E: mail@petergrieve.co.uk Di Licence. T: 290434, E: dianarubylicence@gmail.com

Drawing by Maureen Williams. Our apologies for misnaming her Maureen Walker for the last few months. We don't know how that happened!



Bingo and Bakes



Friday 28th February 7pm

Eyes down 7:30pm Linton Infant School hall

£7 including 4 games and cakes at half time

To book a spot please email 1stlintonrangerunit@gmail.com

Profit towards international trips in 2025 and 2026

GRANTA MEDICAL PRACTICES UPDATE

As I write this, the NHS is again in the throes of extreme winter pressures due to high levels of infectious diseases such as flu, Covid, RSV and norovirus. You can help stop the spread by following the three C's:-

CLEAN: Wash your hands often, using soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand rub

COVER: Cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze. Use a tissue or your upper sleeve, not your hands.

CONTAIN: If you get sick, stay home until you're well again. Try not to spread your germs to others.

Don't forget you can treat many minor illnesses at home with a well-stocked medicine cabinet. Colds and coughs, sore throats, and upset stomachs can all be treated by having a supply of health care essentials such as pain relief (paracetamol / ibuprofen), cough and sore throat remedies, a first aid kit, upset stomach treatment, rehydration treatment and heartburn / indigestion treatment.

And finally, it isn't too late to get a flu jab. They are available until the end of March. Just give us a ring (Linton Health Centre: 0300 234 5555 option 3 followed by option 1) to book your appointment!

Wishing you all a safe and healthy February.

Sandra East, Head of Patient Services

COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Kingsway Solar Farm. The proposal for a very large new solar farm on parcels of land between Balsham, West Wratting and West Colville, has completed the 'informal consultation' stage. Thank you to everyone who has engaged with this process.

Shortly before the Christmas break, Kingsway Solar released their 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (EIA) document, which outlines what the applicants' environmental consultants see as the environmental challenges and concerns. You can see this, plus all the other documents currently in the public domain, on their website - https://kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk/

The next stage of the process, once Kingsway Solar have digested all of the initial feedback, will be a 'formal consultation'. This will be asking for much of the same responses to the proposals. Again, we encourage everyone to engage with this process, as the scheme will impact everyone in this area, directly or indirectly.

It's worth reiterating that, given the size and scale of this scheme, the ultimate decision to approve, or not, will be made by a central government planning inspector, rather than any of the local planning authorities. This will be a major development covering a very large part of our countryside if it does go ahead, so please do engage if you have any views on this proposal.

Average Speed Camera & Accident Data. We have recently been sent the traffic data for the stretch of the A1307 between Linton and Cardinals Green – this shows the accident data as well as the number of tickets issued for people exceeding the speed limit. We're happy to provide these to people wo are interested.

Contact Details

District Council: Geoff Harvey:

geoff.harvey@gmail.com

County Council: Henry Batchelor:

henrybatchelor89@gmail.com

SCURRYBUS TO THE CHESTNUT TREE PH

We are pleased to confirm that we are now in a position to start operating the ScurryBus. We have successfully been granted the permit which allows it to transport members around the local community.

As a way of introducing the ScurryBus, we will be holding an open day at the Chestnut Tree on Saturday 22 February where people can come and view the ScurryBus for themselves and also enjoy the facilities at the Chestnut Tree.

On the day we are planning on having it depart from West Wickham and Western Colville/West Wratting at various times commencing around noon and finishing in the late evening. Probable timings are:

11.30am arriving for Brunch amongst other things 14.00pm in time for Wales v Ireland Six Nations

Rugby match

16.30pm ahead of England v Scotland Six Nations

Rugby match

19.00pm to sample the very first Village Supper Night

Return trips will be at 14.30pm, 17.00pm, 19.30pm and 22.00pm

We will be granting a one day trial membership to anybody who wishes to use the ScurryBus on this day. In order for this open day to work successfully, pre booking of travel will be essential.

We ask that individuals and families notify us in advance so that they can be granted temporary membership, confirm timings and pick up points etc.

Please contact me by email to scurryltd@gmail.com or by text on 07795 848716, alternatively pop into the Chestnut Tree and leave your details behind the bar.

We look forward to seeing you on the day.

Paul Mower

BALSHAM WI

We will celebrate our 100th birthday this year, and to celebrate each meeting in 2025 will focus on a different decade. Our first meeting this year saw us travel back in time to 1925. All members wore a hat to the meeting (as was customary in those days). A member was able to get the committee minutes for the 1920s from the County Archives and with the help of local newspaper stories, the census and a local historian among others, was able to put together an interesting presentation. We heard about the start of the WI, what Balsham was like at the time and details of early members and their programme. We also had a visit from Miss Lily from the music hall in town with a recitation as well as a few games appropriate to the period.

Our next meeting on 13 February (7.30pm at Balsham Pavilion) will have a 1930s theme. Prospective members always welcome. Save the date: we are planning an afternoon tea for members past and present on Saturday 16 August at the Church Institute. More details nearer the time.

Debbie Mower

DON'T FORGET THE COFFEE MORNING Thursday 13 February 10.30 in the Village Hall

MEADOW SCHOOL NEWS

A Fresh Start for the New Year. As we welcome the start of a new year and term, January is a time to refocus and look ahead. At the Meadow, we're eager to build on the hard work and progress made last year and continue supporting our children as they grow and learn. With fresh opportunities and challenges ahead, we're ready for another successful and rewarding chapter in 2025.

Transforming Our School Grounds. This term, we are especially delighted to welcome the new grounds team from East Cambridgeshire District Council. Their passion and dedication to improving our outdoor spaces are clear, and we're excited to see the positive changes they will bring. From creating spaces for learning and play to ensuring our surroundings are safe and well-maintained, we're looking forward to the transformation of our school grounds into a purposeful and inspiring environment for all.

Making a Splash This Summer. Looking ahead, we're also excited to restart swimming lessons in the summer term. Swimming is a vital life skill, and we are committed to ensuring every child has the opportunity to develop water confidence and safety awareness. However, providing this essential experience comes with significant costs for the upkeep of facilities and the delivery of high-quality teaching.

Can You Help Keep Swimming Afloat? To make swimming sustainable for the future, we are reaching out to our local community. If you know of any businesses or organisations that might be willing to support this initiative, whether through sponsorship or donations, we would be incredibly grateful. Please contact Ellen Campbell on 01223 894400 or via email: office@meadowprimary.org if you know of anyone who may be interested in helping. Together, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive, both in and out of the classroom.

We'd also like to take a moment to thank the wonderful members of our local community who already support us in so many ways—whether by coming in to hear readers, assisting with school activities, or offering time and skills. Your generosity and involvement make a real difference, and we truly appreciate everything you do for our children.

Faye Facer, Assistant Headteacher

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE NEWS

We were very honoured to welcome author and poet Michael Rosen in January. Michael is a British children's author, poet, presenter and academic and is now a professor of children's literature in the Department of Educational Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London. He has also served as Children's Laureate.

This was our second visit from Michael. This time he conducted a series of workshops for a range of different year groups. Michael gave a poetry workshop to the whole of Year 7 where he told stories of his family's experiences during the Second World War and the students worked together to create some very moving poetry on themes of family, home, flight, empathy for others and compassion. After lots of book signing and interactions with students and staff, he worked with LVC dance company to plan a collaboration for a concert in June and he finished the day writing protest song lyrics with GCSE musicians. At the end of the day, very unexpectedly, we had a visit from ITV who filmed an interview with Michael Rosen performing his poems in our library with the homework club looking on silently. This was broadcast on ITV Evening News on the same day.

As well as our visit from Michael, the cast of 'We Will Rock You' (our latest school production) were lucky enough to be given an all-day workshop from Richard 'Woody' Woodford, alumnus of LVC and West End singer/



actor/dancer at the start of term. As well as directing and giving feedback to the cast, he spoke about his career and in particular, the path he has taken since leaving LVC. Thanks to the Friends of LVC for funding this opportunity. 'We Will Rock You' runs at LVC from 6-8 Feb - tickets are now on sale.

Helena Marsh, Principal

LINTON LIBRARY NEWS

A friendly welcome awaits you at the Library: come and say hello to our new Library Assistant, Vicky; browse our shelves in the warm; use our computers for free or contribute to the jigsaw puzzle.

Author Talk: we have Jo Browning Wroe coming to give a talk at 2pm on Wednesday 12 February .The event is £5 so please book your place by contacting the library or email: cambourne.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Valentine Craft: drop in session on Friday 14 February, 2-4pm. This event is aimed at children. **50 Things Story and Craft event**: Tuesday 18 February, 10.30-12.30pm. This event is aimed at children under 5 (with their parent/carer). The event is free but please book your place by contacting the library.

NEW Games Afternoon: weekly, Thursday 2-4pm. Come and meet new people, learn to play Five Crowns (for

example), board/card games provided or bring your favourite to share.

IT Club: every Wednesday 5-7pm, knowledgeable volunteers are here to offer help, including how to use the Addenbrookes MyChart patient management software.

Knit and Natter: every Tuesday, 2pm – 4pm. Bring along any craft project you are working on. All welcome.

Daylight Readers: our Book Groups meet on Friday 21 February, one at 10.30am and the other at 2.30pm. New members always welcome.

Vicky Anandraj and Ann King, Community Library Assistants, Linton Library

Opening hours: Tuesday 10am-5pm; Wednesday 4-7pm; Thursday 2-5pm; Friday 10am-5pm; Saturday 10am-1pm. Customer Services: 0345 045 5225,

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library.