NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

MAY 2025 ISSUE 264

WHEELED BIN COLLECTIONS

Wednesday 7 May Blue & green 14 May Wednesday Black Wednesday 21 May Blue & green Wednesday 28 May Black

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/wasteand-recycling/household-recycling-centres

CHURCH SERVICES

4 May 11.00. Joint service of Holy

Communion at Balsham Church

11 May 9.30. Holy Communion at

St Mary's Church

18 May 9.30. Morning worship at

St Mary's Church

9.30. Morning worship at 25 May

St Mary's Church

29 May 7.30pm. Ascension Day service

At Balsham Church

For more details visit www.grantavale.org.uk





NEXT 24.5.2025 7PM-11PM

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

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

AgeUK Community Warden:

Sheree Geoghegan. T: 07436 102865 Email: wardens@ageukcap.org.uk

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 Friday 16 May

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.



ROAD CLOSURES

The road from the Mill Road/Dean Road crossroad to Balsham, will be closed on the following dates:

5 to possibly 9 May. For drainage repairs. 23 May, for telecommunication work.

A diversion via West Wratting will be signposted.

THE VILLAGE VOICE NEEDS YOU!

Last month we appealed for someone to take on the delivery of the Village Voice from the Village Hall to Maypole Croft. We are very pleased to welcome Alison Puttock to this role. THANK YOU.

Andrew & Anna

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 19 May at 7pm in the Village Hall Prior to the Parish Council meeting at 7.45pm.

Please support and attend this important meeting



THE BIG GARDEN PARTY SATURDAY 5 JULY

On behalf of the West Wickham Parish Council I'm pleased to be hosting our Big Garden Party on Saturday 5 July, from 12pm to 5pm at the Village Hall.

This year there will be two Punch & Judy shows to add to the bouncy castle, dog show, tombola, raffle and more. The West Wickham BBQ team will be back and there will be vegetarian options available as well as burgers and hot dogs. Magic Ices will be hoping for better weather than last June's event and the Hub Night Bar team will serving beers, wines and Pimm's

We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to lend a hand with everything from setting up stalls and running games, to serving refreshments and tidying up at the end of the day. Whether you can spare an hour or the whole afternoon, every little bit makes a big difference.

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, support a good cause and be part of something special. No experience necessary – just a willingness to get involved!

If you would like to help, please email me at ronniet@westwickham.org or call/text/WhatsApp me on 07710 000153.

Ronnie Temple



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The draft minutes of the meeting held on Monday 24 March can be viewed on the notice boards.

Planning

24/03435/Ful. 33 Burton End. The application for change of use from agricultural land to garden use, supported by the Parish Council, had been refused by the District Council.

Kingsway Solar Park. Council complained that they had been unaware of the latest meeting of the Action Group. Concern was expressed on the scale of the project and possible difficulties in joining up such wide areas to the National Grid, one concern being the cable route which will affect other parishes outside the immediate area. The suggestion that the parishes involved join together to deal with the various issues was a sensible one. Chairman stressed that West Wickham Parish Council is not opposed to it but it has to be done correctly.

Finance: Precept of £13,650 for 2025: This has been agreed by South Cambs District Council.

Traffic & Parking issues: Potholes & Flooding: Work on the large pot hole in Balsham is scheduled for 5 May, when the road will be closed (ED. See separate notice). Numerous potholes in the village are flagged up for filling in the near future

Maintenance:

- a. Footpaths: Cllr Temple reported that he had replaced a post on footpath 21. The sign in Webbs Road has been made and is ready to be fixed with thanks to Chris Covey for paying for this. There are other finger signs in the Parish which may need repairing. Cllr Temple will check to see if any are in need of replacement or repair.
- b. Wildflower area: Posts are going to be put in front of the wildflower area in order to prevent the flowers flowing over onto the pavement and also, hopefully, stopping dogs fouling the area.

Village Hall & Recreation Ground:

- a. RoSPA safety inspection: Two pieces of equipment need to be checked. The cable on the zip wire needs checking and the Rotorway needs greasing.
- b. Goal posts and 5-a-side proposal: The Parish Clerk has received a response from the Balsham recreation field groundsman who said, in principle, we could borrow the paint marker in the summer time. The area chosen for the pitch has been rolled and scarified, courtesy of Sara and Tony Humphry. Cllr Temple asked Rob Giles if this area could be cut lower than the rest of the rec. and he agreed to do this. He also requested a double gate to replace the existing gate so his new equipment can get through. He would be pleased to put money towards a gate which would need to be locked.
- c. Sign on road for Village Hall and Recreation Ground: This is in hand.

Home Close house letting: The Chairman was glad to announce that Keith Jolly has been allocated the house in Home Close.

Big Garden Party: Cllr Temple said that various jobs had already been allocated but was still looking for volunteers.

Any Other Business: Cllr Temple had noticed when walking past the Village Hall how overgrown the front area was, with wires going through some trees. A suggestion was made that most of the trees could be cut down and it possibly turned into a wildflower area.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 19 May at 7.45pm.

All are welcome to attend the meetings.

Jenny Richards, Parish Clerk.

T: 01223 665260; Email: parish.clerk@westwickham.org

WEST WICKHAM IN THE PAST: A MISCELLANY

When anything can be delivered straight to your door or you can hop in the car and get to the shops, it is easy to forget that there was a time when, with the only form of transport being by foot or horse and cart, villages like ours had to be virtually self-sufficient in goods and services. For example, in the 1851 census for West Wickham, when the population reached a peak of 570, there were as many as four shopkeepers (as well as two butchers and a baker). Unfortunately, these have left no records or descriptions, so we don't know if these were all general stores or specialists of some sort. However, we can get some idea of the things they might have sold when a business comes up for sale, as happened in January 1826 when the entire stock in trade of shopkeeper, Joseph Lawrence, was advertised in the *Cambridge Chronicle*.

Joseph's shop was at, what is now, 25 High Street. From the details of the shop fittings, which were included in the sale, we know that it had three counters with drawers and storage bins plus several separate 'nests' of drawers both large and small. The three counters equate with the three 'departments' that the shop would seem to have had drapery, grocery and hardware. From the amount of stock mentioned and its prominence in the advert, it would appear that the drapery section may have been the most important.

Nearly all clothes, especially those of women and children, along with bedding and household linen, would have been hand made at home – the sewing machine was an invention of the later 19th century. This explains the wide variety of material that Joseph was offering. There was a large quantity of hemp shirting and sheeting. This along with the calicoes (unbleached cottons used for underwear and nightwear) would have been the coarsest and therefore cheapest material on offer. Flannels and other woollen 'stuffs' would have been used to make skirts, men's waistcoats, jackets and even trousers. Joseph also sold some other materials like muslins and cambrics, which were

finer weaves, and there were Irish linens and cotton prints for summer use. Handkerchiefs, probably the large red or blue spotted ones worn by working men with their collarless shirts, and shawls - the standard outerwear for all women and girls - were also stocked. There were also the vague 'other articles in the drapery line' which would have included needles, pins and buttons (no zips or elastic) along with ribbons and other trimmings.

On the grocery side, there was a large quantity of cheese, a firkin of butter (a firkin was a barrel containing 9 gallons, roughly 41 litres – with no refrigeration there was probably only this amount because winter temperatures would have helped preserve the butter), flour, sugar, tea, tobacco and snuff. All these would have been sold loose by weight – the scales and beams for weighing these were included in the sale. The hardware section included earthenware, brooms, various nails, tin kettles and saucepans. The cheese, butter and flour were undoubtedly local but where did the other goods come from? That, we don't know. Some items may have been made in nearby villages; for some Joseph may have had to travel to somewhere like Cambridge. Some could have been delivered or he may have been supplied by larger tradesmen, for example, from Linton, who acted as wholesalers for the smaller villages. The number of shops declined with the population and by the end of the century there were only one or two left.

For queries on all aspects of village history contact: Janet Morris,

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

West Wickham & District Local History Club is on its summer break and will be back with its talks programme in October.

West Wickham Village Hall COFFEE MORNING

From 10.30 on Thursday

8TH MAY



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

R.A.F. WRATTING COMMON May Memorial Service, Sunday 25 May

A short open-air service will be held at 12 noon at the R.A.F. Wratting Common Memorial, to commemorate the anniversary of the commissioning of the airfield. The last Sunday in May was chosen for this annual service as it was on this day in 1943 that the airfield was commissioned. The Memorial is dedicated to those who served at the airfield, especially the 260 who gave their lives in the cause of freedom. We look forward to seeing some relatives of the veterans who served with XC Squadron, 1651 Heavy Conversion Unit and 195 Squadron. Cadets from 1451 (Haverhill) Squadron of the Air Training Corps will be on parade. The Memorial is situated at Weston Woods Farm, Weston Colville, CB21 5NR and all are very welcome to attend the service. For further information please email: rafwrattingcommon@gmail.com

We are always pleased to hear from anyone interested in getting involved with the Airfield Memorial. With just two services per year to arrange, as well as year-round general maintenance, this is not an onerous project to assist with but is very rewarding. It is hoped that, with the continued support of people in the locality, this important memorial to our community's war effort will survive for many generations.

Dan Heath



WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Here comes the sun!

After a very well attended talk by *Jonathan Spain* about horticultural societies in Cambridgeshire we are pleased to see that ours is going from strength to strength thanks to our enthusiastic and motivated members.

Now the sun has finally decided to brighten our spring gardens, all thoughts are turning to the Gardening Club's summer outings and meetings.

We are looking forward to welcoming members and non-members to our most popular event of the year: the Plant Sale on 17 May at 10.30 to 12.00 at West Wickham Village Hall. Anyone generous enough to bring seedlings and plants for sale (or cakes for the tea stall), please bring your (labelled) pots between 9.15 and 10.00 or deliver plants to Janet Morris at 21 High Street before the day. If anyone would like plant labels or pots, again, Janet can help you! Please contact her on T: 290863, Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com

As always, there will be tea and cakes available for visitors to enjoy and this year we are accepting card payments as well as cash for plants, merchandise and at the tea stall.

This year's summer garden visits are to *Buster's Cottage*, *Duxford* on 16 June at 18:30 (£10) and to *Farm Lodge*, *Hildersham* on 21 July at 18:30 (£7.50): both fees include refreshments. We are collecting members' names for these events now. Please contact Indi Liepa 01223 291320; ifliepa@gmail.com, PLUS we will be attending a number of summer fetes in the area so look out for us there! From 17 May membership (to renew in September) is only £5 so if you're itching to join us now might be the time!

For more information about the Club please contact: Sue Boase T: 07716 401646, Email:wwdgc@westwickham.org

BALSHAM SINGERS

The 1st concert in the Singers 30th Anniversary year takes place on 17 May at 7.30pm in Holy Trinity Church Balsham. The programme is varied with revisits to concerts gone by with music ancient and modern.

Tickets are £12, under 16's £1, available at Balsham and Gt Abington Post Offices and online at

https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/balshamsingers

Like to join us? We are holding 5 singing for fun sessions in Balsham Sports Pavilion at $7.30 \, \text{pm}$ starting on 22 May. Just turn up and try us out , no booking, no commitment. Cost £5 a session or all 5 for £20.

Jo Stinton

CAN YOU HELP?

Balsham Scout Group are looking for new committee members, in particular for the role of Treasurer. This involves overseeing the general financial management; planning and keeping track of budgets within the group; collect, deposit and keep track of funds and provide financial reports to fellow committee members.

Without a Treasurer, the group will be in danger of closing, so if you feel you can help us please contact our Chair, David Weir (chair@balshamscouts.org.uk) for more information.

FROM THE VICARAGE

When the promise of Spring seems only to unfurl ever more abundantly, who can deny that May is the most glorious of months! We are so lucky living in the countryside - well more or less - and stepping out each morning this month into the exuberance of nature.

However, writing this column a month in advance - and trying to make it relevant - is always a bit of a risk. For we notice too, the creeping uncertainty about our weather patterns. Will May 'deliver' this year ... and perpetually? And also, there's more uncertainty in a world of such fast -moving political events, and ongoing, heartbreaking, bloody conflict. So where will it end?

Last month in church, at the annual climax of our story of God's self-sacrificing love, we celebrated the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus: this seeding of joy and hope in the future, whatever the worst we throw at God, and at the created world, and at each other. And early in June, on Pentecost Sunday, we will celebrate with thanks that the Spirit of Jesus has broken out into the whole world as a living, reconciling presence.

Yet, notwithstanding our joyful Christian celebrations, most of us at times must wonder if the hard evidence for all our extravagant hopes and claims really looks that good! Perhaps it's too easy, especially if this May does come up trumps with the weather, to have our optimism buoyed-up, to make our plans for the future, and count our blessings in this pleasant corner of England. And to stop watching the news.

I guess, though, that we would then also be turning our backs on all that can stand as a *resistance* to an increasingly self-serving and violent world. Merely trying to defend our good life here in Granta Vale will always threaten to draw us into, and in small ways help perpetuate, the conflicts of the world. Instead, our hope for the future is made real and living as we meet the challenge of being a people of honesty, justice and compassion, whatever the cost to ourselves ... our lives kept safe within the life of the One who calls us into our full humanity.

Alistair Collen

A BAROQUE CONCERT in HILDERSHAM CHURCH Thursday 19 June at 7.30pm

In support of the Friends of Holy Trinity, Hildersham

JS Bach and his Sons
Ashley Solomon – Baroque Flute
& Steven Devine – Harpsichord

Ashley is a Fellow of both the Royal Academy and the Royal College of Music, London. He has a successful international career as a soloist and is director of the baroque ensemble Florilegium.

Steven also enjoys an international career as a soloist as well as conducting and directing many baroque groups including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Tickets: £20 from: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1322767305619? aff=oddtdtcreator Contact Athene Hunt: huntcam2015@gmail.com

NATURE NOTES

The RSPB has stated that, following the Big Garden Birdwatch in January, 'starlings are disappearing from our gardens. I count myself fortunate therefore to be hosting at least one family under the eaves of our house and listening to them reproducing the sounds they have picked up from other birds and various other human-related noises from their environment including their well-known ability to mimic mobile phone ring tones.



and other Starlings birds that like to probe lawns for invertebrates have had a tough time during the long dry spell. All the fields and gardens are rock hard something you do not expect at this time of year. I sensed that, after a recent sprinkling of rain the birdsong seemed to contain a sense of relief. especially from the blackbirds and thrushes but I think we need plenty more rain before the worms start

coming nearer to the surface. Those who don't rely on worms such as **blue tits** are doing much better and currently preparing to nest in the many custom-made titboxes around the village. Another, the **reed bunting**, has been spotted a couple of times – flying along a ditch on the Roman Road but also sadly having collided fatally with a greenhouse. Two different beautiful male birds in different parts of the village.

Di has spent the first week of April in the Lowther Hills in southern Scotland, where the dawn chorus has been even noisier, with the squabbling drake mallards, the croaks of herons and the honking of greylag geese as they flew in to the small loch, just one hundred yards from her door. There were also the calls of the curlew and shrill piping of oystercatchers, which are waders we often see near coasts but both breed in moorland, particularly in the north.

The white blossomed hedges were missing in Scotland, but back home the calm conditions have produced a long period while the blossom has remained in place both in the hedges and in the fruit trees, hopefully providing nectar for the bees and other insects that have been brought out by the sunny conditions. The wildflowers have also been blooming, noticeably the **wood anemones** (many have remarked on the patch in the verge near Skippers Hall) and also **stitchwort** (aka shirt buttons), **cowslips**, **oxlips** and **bluebells** which are now beginning to show in Leys Wood and Lower Wood in Weston Colville. I am particularly fond of the **coltsfoot**, which is quite prolific around the outside of Hare Wood, but which has now mainly gone to seed. Its seedheads are rather beautiful, being whiter than the dandelion and disc-shaped rather than like a golf ball.

Frogs and toads have been very active in many West Wickham ponds (although not, regrettably, in our pond.) Their activity included crossing the High Street under the watchful eyes of frog lollipop people with torches, mating in the pond and producing spawn containing eggs which transform first into tadpoles and ultimately into small adults. Life is very hazardous at every stage as ponds are full of predators, especially **newts** who also produce spawn. If the froglets do manage to emerge unscathed from the pond, they then have the challenge of surviving the winter before returning to the same pond and starting the process all over again.

Drawing by Maureen Williams

Please send your nature sightings to: Peter Grieve. T: 01223 897811, E: mail@petergrieve.co.uk Di Licence. T: 290434, E: dianarubylicence@gmail.com

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE NEWS

The arts are fundamental to our curriculum offer at Linton Village College. We are fortunate to have a thriving Dance department led by Helen Frost. During the spring term, LVC students benefited from a range of dance enrichment opportunities.

We welcomed Oddey, a professional dancer from Flawless, a British street dance troupe, to lead our boys' day of dance. Twenty-five Year 8 boys participated. Oddey choreographed highly energetic Hip Hop pieces and gave an inspirational careers talk. The boys recently performed one of their dances in the Year 8 Celebration assembly.

We also hosted a twilight event for local education leaders to celebrate International Women's Day. LVC students choreographed an insightful and thought-provoking dance based on this year's IWD theme: Accelerate Action.

Our Annual Dance show took place in March with the theme 'Through the decades'. It was a vibrant exploration of how dance has been shaped by the changing tides of music, fashion, and societal changes. Over a hundred students from all year groups performed in the show. Our technical team of students worked alongside Blueshed Technical Company to programme and operate the lighting and sound.

GCSE and BTEC Dance pupils from across Anglian Learning came together recently to participate in a highly innovative workshop with the renowned dance company 'James Cousins Company'. The pupils worked collaboratively on a variety of choreography and performance techniques.



LVC has recently been named as an Arts Award Champion Centre by Trinity College in recognition of our commitment to delivering the nationally recognised Arts Award qualifications.

Helena Marsh, Principal

KINGSWAY SOLAR COMMUNITY ACTION NEWS

Community in action. On 7 April, KSCA held its very first AGM in Balsham. The meeting saw a good turnout from the local community, with a real sense of shared purpose and determination to protect our villages. During the meeting, our committee was officially appointed, with just one role – fundraising – still open. If you have experience or enthusiasm in this area, we'd love to hear from you!

During the AGM, we shared a presentation highlighting everything KSCA has achieved so far, our plans for the coming months, and – most importantly – how you can help. Our message was clear: we can only stand up to the proposed Kingsway development if we stand together.

If you haven't yet signed up to become a KSCA member, now is the perfect time. To become a member, please complete our quick membership application form online—just click the "Get Involved" button on our website homepage (see below).

We're also looking for enthusiastic people to join our subgroups: Research; Local Communications; Fundraising; Lobbying. If any of these areas interest you, please get in touch.

Step into Nature: May's Call to Action – Wildflowers! A huge thank you to everyone who has taken part in our Step into Nature campaign so far. In March, we asked you to keep an eye out for hares, and in April, we tuned in to skylarks. We'd love for you to continue recording hares and skylarks, but this month, we're turning our attention to wildflowers. As you walk through our local field margins and hedgerows, keep an eye out for interesting flowers to help build a bigger picture of the biodiversity we're working to protect.

You can log your sightings on iRecord, which helps us collect important data from within a 2km radius of the proposed solar farm site. Not sure what you've found? Try using the PlantNet app to help identify the wildflowers you see. Just take a screenshot of the result and upload it alongside your record on iRecord.

Save the Date! On Sunday 8 June at 10:00 am, KSCA plans to take part in the National Community Walk. We'll walk the local footpaths threatened by the Kingsway Solar development to raise awareness of the potential impact on our landscapes, communities, wildlife, heritage and public rights of way. More details to follow.

Stay connected with KSCA. If you've signed up as a KSCA member – thank you! As part of our community, you'll receive key updates about our work and campaign progress through our WhatsApp announcements chat. It's the quickest way to stay in the loop. You can also keep up with the latest news and developments by visiting our website: kingswayaction.org And don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Instagram for real-time updates, event info, and ways to get involved.

Ellen Collier

JULIAN GROUP

This Group continues to meet monthly at Nine Chimney House, Balsham at 7.15 for approximately an hour. We have a reading from Mother Julian's booklet 'Enfolded in Love' and then have half an hour of quiet time finishing with a rereading of the extract and the Grace. If anyone would like to join us they would be very welcome. Please contact Joanna Sanders, T:01223 893063, Email: sanderschimneys@uwclub.net

MEADOW SCHOOL NEWS

As the spring term drew to a close the school enjoyed a packed and joyful month filled with creativity, community spirit, and a touch of theatrical mystery!

One of the highlights of the term was without a doubt the spectacular production of *Mystery at Magpie Manor* performed by our talented Year 3 and 4 pupils. Audiences were treated to a lively, whodunnit-style performance filled with fantastic acting, toe-tapping songs, and plenty of suspense. The children truly rose to the occasion, delivering confident performances that left everyone in the audience thoroughly entertained.

A huge thank you goes to the dedicated team of teachers and support staff who went above and beyond to make the production such a success. From sourcing props and creating dazzling costumes, to supporting rehearsals and stage management, your hard work made it all possible, and the results were truly impressive.

On the final day of term, we gathered as a school community for a beautiful Easter service at Balsham Church. Year 6 pupils took on speaking parts with confidence and clarity, helping to lead the service in a reflective and respectful way. All classes came together to sing a selection of Easter songs, filling the church with warmth and joy. It was a lovely way to mark the end of term and celebrate the meaning of Easter together.

Meanwhile, our KS1 children had the opportunity to enjoy an outdoor adventure day as part of a joint trip with Wimbish Primary School. This collaborative experience was packed full of forest school-inspired learning, including orienteering challenges, den building, and nature-themed art. The children loved exploring the outdoors, learning new skills, and working alongside their peers from another school. It was a day of fresh air, creativity, and discovery! Back at school, the PTA hosted another hugely popular fundraising event - Chocolate Bingo! Families filled the hall, and the excitement was palpable as chocolate prizes were won in abundance. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces and enthusiastic bingo players, both young and old! A big thank you to everyone who helped organise and run the event, with a special shoutout to our headteacher, Nichola Pickford, who proved to be a superb and spirited bingo caller!

Faye Facer, Assistant Headteacher

BALSHAM WI

Our April meeting looking at the 1950s, at changes in the village since then and some of the WI members whom older members could remember. We all benefit from their campaigning for a footpath along West Wickham Road which did not exist at the time. We had a raffle with prizes that would have featured during a 1950s meeting, as well as competitions that took place at that time, although not the one to count the number of prickles on a hedgehog!

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 13 May, 7.30pm at the Pavilion in Balsham. The theme for this meeting will be the 1960s. We are a friendly bunch, and new members are always welcome. Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Pavilion, Balsham. Please get in touch if you are interested in joining us – balshamwi@gmail.com or send a message on Facebook, @Balsham WI

SAVE THE DATE. Saturday 16 August. We are holding an afternoon tea for past and present members at the Church Institute in celebration of our centenary

Debbie Mower