

VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

DECEMBER 2025

ISSUE 271

WHEELED BIN COLLECTIONS

Wednesday	3 December	Blue & green
Wednesday	10 December	Black
Wednesday	17 December	Blue & Green
Wednesday	24 December	Black
Wednesday	31 December	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

7 December	11.00. Joint service of Holy Communion at Balsham Church
14 December	9.30. Holy Communion at St Mary's Church
21 December	9.30. Holy Communion at St Mary's Church
24 December	6pm. Christmas Eve carol Service at St Mary's Church
24 December	11.30pm. Midnight mass at Balsham Church
25 December	9.30. Christmas Day Communion at St Mary's Church
28 December	11.00. Joint service of Holy Communion at Balsham Church

For more details visit www.grantavale.org.uk

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 12 DECEMBER

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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.

LATEST NEWS ON DEVANA, OUR LOCAL HABITAT BANK AND ENVIRONMENTAL RECOVERY HAVEN

It's been over two years now since our 100 acres of land at Yen Hall Farm began its transformation into the Devana Centre for Environmental Recovery, a thriving habitat bank for biodiversity right here in Cambridgeshire. As we complete our first full growing season, we're delighted to share how this once intensively farmed land is evolving into a haven for wildlife and nature recovery.

Creating New Habitats

- Over the past winter, our team completed a major phase of planting, building on the eight wildlife ponds established earlier in the project. These ponds are already attracting frogs, dragonflies and other invertebrates, a clear sign that nature is returning.
- We've created 17 acres of native broadleaf woodland, planting 11,900 native trees and shrubs across 24 species including oak, beech, hornbeam, wild cherry and yew. This rich mix helps build resilience against pests, disease and the challenges of climate change.
- Alongside this, 29 acres of mixed scrub now contain 20,100 native shrubs such as dog rose, gorse, hazel and hawthorn, that will provide food and shelter for birds, pollinators and small mammals.
- We've also planted 1.3 kilometres of new hedgerow, made up of 6,500 native shrubs from 19 species including blackthorn, guelder rose and crab apple. These living corridors will link habitats across the site, helping wildlife move safely through the landscape.

Orchard and Community. Our new 2.5-acre traditional orchard features 216 trees with 55 heritage and local fruit varieties including apple, cherry, damson, medlar, pear, quince and plum. *If anyone* interested in creating a community orchard group to help manage the trees and, more importantly, harvest future crops please contact: www.evergreen-fund.co.uk/contact-evergreen

Caring for Growth. The young trees and shrubs are currently protected by temporary tubes to prevent browsing by hares, rabbits and voles. These will be removed once the plants are well established, around five years from now. Despite an unusually dry spring and summer, plant losses have been minimal thanks to the use of woodchip and green-waste compost mulches, which help conserve moisture and improve soil health. In preparation for future wildflower meadows, we're managing grass areas by cutting and collecting to reduce soil nutrients, with meadow creation planned in the next two to three years.

Get Involved. Visitors will notice four camera posts along the footpaths. We'd love you to take part by following the instructions and sharing your photos, helping us build a record of how Devana changes with the seasons. Your support, whether through photos, volunteering or simply spreading the word, helps this landscape thrive.

Looking Ahead. The Devana Centre for Environmental Recovery is quickly becoming a living example of how land can be restored for nature, climate and community benefit. If you'd like to get involved or join the orchard group, please contact us at www.evergreen-fund.co.uk/contact-evergreen

Samantha Fry

★ **HUB NIGHT!** ★
WEST WICKHAM VILLAGE HALL

NEXT DATE: **20.12.2025** 7PM-11PM



Come along to our festive monthly

COFFEE MORNING

in West Wickham Village Hall

THURSDAY 11TH DECEMBER

10.30 — 12.00

TEAS, COFFEE & A VARIETY OF FESTIVE TREATS

MORE INFORMATION FROM

SUE THURSTON 01223 897811

Donations for refreshments

to **CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS**

Call me if you need a lift



ALSO AT THE COFFEE MORNING

CARRY ON COOKING

Join us for engaging slow cooker demonstrations!

Discover the **delicious possibilities** of slow cooking! Our Village Agents are hosting informative and interactive sessions where you can learn how to prepare nutritious meals with ease. Connect with fellow cooking enthusiasts, share recipes, and enjoy the benefits of this convenient cooking method.

We have Slow Cookers to give away too! Ask us for more info.

STITCH, BITCH & CRAFTY THINGS COMMUNITY HUB

Village Hall Friday 5 December
6:30-8:30 pm



Andrew Dockerill watercolour artist/ teacher
Session suitable for absolute beginners
Materials available for £6.00
Usual free tea and coffee.

CAN YOU HELP?

For many years it has been a great privilege to decorate the pulpit in the Church for Christmas. I intend to do so again this month. The decorations are pre-prepared and need to be safely installed. This involves balancing on a set of steps. As I am not as agile as I used to be I need a bit of help this time.

I wonder if there is anyone who could spare about an hour or so one morning in the run up to Christmas to come and give me a hand?

If you think you could help I would be really grateful. Please contact me on T: 290243, mobile 07563 204364 or by email to: viviennehenderson17@gmail.com

Thank you, Vivienne

FROM THE VICARAGE

Over Advent and Christmas I often revisit well-loved writings. As a child I used to perform, with my brother and sister, the poem by Clement-Clarke Moore: *Twas the Night Before Christmas* for my parents on Christmas Eve. As an adult I have enjoyed re-reading *Approaching Christmas* by Jane Williams, a companion to the Christmas season rich in joy and wisdom, as well as a collection of poems and commentaries by Janet Morley entitled '*haphazard by starlight: a poem a day from Advent to Epiphany*'.

The intriguing title '*haphazard by starlight*' actually comes from a poem, entitled *BC-AD*, by Ursula Fanthorpe, who was a poet and a Quaker and use to write a new Christmas poem each year to include with her Christmas cards to friends. They were usually short and sought a fresh, unsentimental take on the familiar story. This approach could also provide a jolt of defamiliarization for the reader, reminding us of the extraordinary nature of the gospel truth. As part of the Christmas carol service at Hildersham church some years ago, members of our children's church council gave a reading of *BC-AD*. It's a poem in the form of a Shakespearean sonnet, but with the lines divided into threes rather than fours, each one beginning with the phrase 'This was the moment ...'. Indeed, the poem begins with the dramatic announcement: 'This was the moment when Before/ Turned into After'.

The poem then continues in a slightly meandering style and contains references to familiar characters from the birth narrative – the shepherds described as 'a few farm workers' and the magi as 'three/ Members of an obscure Persian sect'. The meandering style is interrupted, however, by the jolt of last two lines, which presents the moment those familiar characters, perhaps to their own astonishment, 'Walked haphazard by starlight straight/ Into the kingdom of heaven'.

Amidst all that is comfortingly familiar about Christmas, I hope we can be alert to the astonishing good news of the gospels, even if it does sometimes seem we are walking towards this truth as if 'haphazard by starlight'. For the account of Jesus' birth speaks of a moment when everything changed. A child, born in humble circumstances, is the Christ child who is greeted, as Luke's gospel says, as "Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord". Good news conveyed by these simple words, which invite a lifetime's reflection: Jesus is "Emmanuel, which means, 'God is with us'". Good news worth responding to, celebrating and sharing, and which can shape the way we live in all the times and seasons of our lives.

Rev'd Iain McColl

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING SCHEME

ARTHUR RANK HOSPICE CHARITY

This scheme is a great fundraiser and helps them to continue to provide care to patients and their loved ones. Last year some 4,000 Christmas trees were collected by more than 160 volunteers across Cambridgeshire, raising over £100,000. You can sign up your tree today to be recycled. The deadline is 4 January. Visit:

(<https://www.arhc.org.uk/fundraising/fundraise-your-way/community-initiatives/christmas-tree-recycling/>)

PETER AND RUTH LLOYD TRUST AWARD 2026

We are now inviting applications for pupils starting university in September 2026. Normally one scholarship is awarded each year to the amount of £1000. The degree course should be from one of the following:- Architecture, Engineering, Geography, History, Law, Mathematics, Sciences, Education, Medicine, Nursing and Veterinary Medicine, but all will be considered.

The applicant should be living in one of the parishes bordering the old RAF Wrattling Common airfield, which includes West Wickham. The Award is intended to be of assistance in the purchase of books, materials, equipment etc. The final decision and award will be made immediately after 'A' Level results & university offers are confirmed.

For further information about the Trust and the Award please contact: Jonathan Drury T: 01223 290087. For an application form please apply via email to: peter.ruthlloydtrust@sky.com. The application form & supporting documents must be received by 5 April 2026, at the latest.

Jonathan Drury

JOIN THE ADVENTURE BECOME A SCOUTING VOLUNTEER!

Do you believe in helping young people grow, explore and reach their full potential? Are you ready for new challenges, friendships and fun? We're looking for enthusiastic adult volunteers to join our Scouting team in Balsham

Whether you can give an hour a week or a few days a month, you'll make a real difference supporting young people to:

- Build confidence and resilience
- Learn new skills and independence
- Enjoy outdoor adventures and teamwork

No previous experience? No problem! We provide full training, support and a welcoming community.

What you'll gain:

- A sense of achievement and purpose
- Leadership and teamwork experience
- Lasting memories (and plenty of campfire stories)

Interested? Please contact our Chair, David Weir, via email: chair@balshamscouts.org.uk or Juliet Bevan at: juliet.bevan@balshamscouts.org.uk

THANK YOU

from Saffron Walden Rotary

Another great response from our South Cambs villages to our Ukraine appeal at Abington School on 8 Nov. Our van was totally filled + more and over £2,000 in donations too. Thank you to everyone for your very kind and generous support.

Tony Collett

NATURE NOTES

Up until the time of writing, the weather has been unseasonably mild and as a result we have seen **bats** flying in late October / early November including, appropriately at Halloween. Bats will only fly when the minimum temperature exceeds 5 – 10 degrees Celsius, depending on the species, size and health of the individual. Bats' small size and high surface area-to-volume ratio make them prone to losing heat quickly which means that when temperatures plummet they must either expend significant energy maintaining body temperature or enter a state of torpor. Fat reserves when they are in this state are an important factor in their survival and so the availability of small insects which were still around this year because of the mild temperatures will be an advantage to them.

I am sure many people have been raking up leaves in their gardens but please don't be too vigorous. I was doing this the other day when a moth emerged. It was a **satellite moth**, apparently common but new to me. It blended in well with the leaves, being a rich reddish brown colour – hence the need to be careful. It flies between September and April, which feels slightly counter-intuitive, bearing in mind what I have just written about bats. In fact there are a number of species of moth that fly in the winter months so they are clearly able to survive in the cold weather. Another insect that has found a strategy for survival is the ladybird. There are several piles of them hibernating in the church at present.

The most exciting message I had this month was that a flock of **cranes** had been seen flying over Streetly End. We know that cranes have established themselves at both Lakenheath Fen and Wicken Fen. They do migrate between breeding and wintering grounds, and gather in flocks when they have arrived, so this group may have been on their way. Another wading bird that has become common in Britain is the



Little Egret, which I have seen often in Haverhill and Hildersham. However keep a look out for its big cousin the **Great White Egret**, which is rumoured may have strayed into our patch. It is heron-sized, with a yellow, rather than black, bill. Over the last few years, the Great White has been seen in more and more places, including

Cambridgeshire.

It is the time of year when tawny owls are beginning to call nightly, with the twits being the females and the twoos being the males replying. They have been particularly noticeable recently. Another songster I have been hearing is the song thrush who is producing his repetitive song at dawn and dusk. Although the breeding season is a winter away, the song proclaims territory. The wintering thrushes (redwings and fieldfares) have their own sounds, whistling and chuckling respectively. Lucy Cameron caught a group of fieldfares on camera, taking advantage of a few puddles on the ground, perhaps seeking refreshment after a long flight. We are still hearing the occasional evocative piping call of the golden plover as they fly over.

Drawing of little egret 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

WEST WICKHAM IN THE PAST: A MISCELLANY

In October 1840, the Reverend John Ramsden Wollaston with his wife and family left West Wickham for a new life in the newly established colony of Western Australia. Both John and his wife, Mary, were in their fifties and he had ministered to the people of West Wickham for twenty years. Five of their children went with them – 3 sons aged from 19 to 13 and 2 daughters aged 10 and 6. Their oldest son had gone before them and their other son was to join them later. John had originally intended to go as chaplain to the Australind Company (a speculative development company) but this didn't work out and he booked their passage independently on the barque, Henry, which was primarily a trading ship, just a 100ft long, with limited passenger accommodation and facilities. They set sail on 2 December and at Christmas, John was able to send this letter to his friend and former churchwarden, Samuel Webb, of Streetly Hall:

Atlantic ocean On board the Henry Christmas Day 1840

My dear Mr Webb

As we possibly meet with a ship soon bound for England I think this is a Good Day for the fulfilment of my promise of sending a few lines to my Friend at W Wickham....

You will rejoice to hear that after going thro' a good deal we are all thank God safe and well. The part of the world we are in now is in the Tropic of Cancer 21.39 North Latitude and 28.08 West Longitude, opposite the Coast of Africa, but we see nothing but Sea around us as far as the eye can reach....

Our Christmas is very different from yours – We have for some days past thrown aside our blankets & all our warm Clothing & are living principally on Deck under an awning spread over it, where I held Divine Service and administered the Sacrament this morning – a great contrast to our Wickham church - altho' I cd get no evergreens to decorate our floating chapel, I put up a board on the Mast with the glad tidings "Unto you is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" - & surrounded it with a painted apology for a laurel wreath....

To shew we are not starving in the Atlantic our Bill of fare today contained mock Turtle soup, Haunch of Mutton, Roast Goose & a noble Plum pudding of 20lbs or more. This with a glass of good wine drank to all our absent friends (amongst whom those at Wickham were not forgotten) is very well indeed for such isolated beings as we are now from the world.

Instead of the expected three months, the journey took them nearer six as they were blown off course nearly to the coast of S America. It then took four weeks to re-cross the Atlantic for a short stop in Cape Town before they finally reached Fremantle on 21 April 1841. This was still not their final destination and they had to take another boat down the coast to Picton, now part of the large port of Bunbury where they started their hard, pioneering life. John was subsequently instrumental in establishing the Anglican church in Western Australia where he is recognised today as a 'Local Saint and Hero'.

To find out more about your village in the past why not join West Wickham & District Local History Club, come along to a meeting or contact: Janet Morris, 21 High Street
T: 290863 Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB

Monday 8 December

Christmas social + What's this object?

Seasonal refreshments plus a light-hearted attempt to identify objects from the past (domestic, gardening, occupational) brought along by members.

7.30pm in the Village Hall

All welcome

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 12 January

7.30pm in the Village Hall

A return visit by Mathew Morris to talk on

RICHARD III: *Bloody will be Thine End*
Reconstructing the life & death of England's last medieval king

All welcome (small charge for non-members)

Further details from Janet Morris, 21 High Street

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



WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB CELEBRATING OUR WINTER WONDERLAND

With the leaves tumbling and early morning mists returning, we know we are heading into winter with all its botanical stars lighting up our garden. From the sweet scents of sarcococca to the first stunning hellebores, there's plenty to enjoy.

So, it is fitting that we are celebrating the seasons at our **Christmas social evening on Monday 15 December at 7.30pm** in *West Wickham Village Hall*. Wine, soft drinks and refreshments will be provided by the Club to help the members get into the Christmas spirit. This year we are beginning with an informal group chat about our gardening experiences over the past year before circulating and enjoying each other's company.

We hope that your winter walks will also inspire you to enter this year's photo competition. It's open to everyone in West Wickham and the surrounding area.

The categories for 2025–26 are

Along the Path

Lovely Leaves

Sky's the Limit

Photos to be taken after 1 October 2025 and by the end of August 2026. Meanwhile keep the competition in mind when you're out and about through the year ahead. We had some great entries last year. You can look at these on the Club's page at <https://westwickham.org/clubs/west-wickham-district-gardening-club>

Email your entries and queries for the photo competition to Alice and Andy Mitchell photo@westwickham.org.

For Club information or if you'd like to help at one of our events, please contact Sally Collins at

wwdgc@westwickham.org

★ **HUB NIGHT!** ★
WEST WICKHAM VILLAGE HALL

NEXT DATE: **20.12.2025** 7PM-11PM



KINGSWAY SOLAR COMMUNITY ACTION

It's been a busy month.

- We've published a report on land use and solar energy, drawing on new modelling by Tony Day showing that large-scale solar offers limited grid benefits. We've promoted the **#AskEd** campaign with **Stop Oversized Solar**, challenging the government's renewable-energy strategy.
- We issued an **Open Letter to Ed Miliband** in response to the government's claim that 76% of the public "wouldn't mind" living next to a solar farm. We also contacted **George Freeman MP** following the APPGSTA report *Feeding Britain Sustainably to 2050*, which warns that current land-use policies risk undermining UK food security.
- We are continuing to **encourage our MP to engage more fully with the inadequacies of the consultation process**, which has left many residents feeling poorly informed.
- During the consultation phase we strengthened our links with communities along the **grid-connection corridor**, and we are now working with **BEAT (Burwell Energy Awareness Team)** to help maintain pressure on these issues.

Keep an eye on our news page for the latest updates, announcements and links to useful resources: kingswayaction.org/news

We are working closely with the Parish Council Alliance who are seeking **legal representation**, which will be critical in the next stage. Our **Crowd Justice** fundraiser supports this effort. This ensures that donations only go towards a fully-funded case, with automatic refunds if targets aren't met. Every pledge, large or small, helps.

Finally, a note on **sign thefts**. During the consultation it was wonderful to see so many signs, banners and stickers displayed. Unfortunately, after some early incidents, we've now had further reports of signs being taken. These are expensive to produce and funded entirely through your donations. If signs are removed from private land, please report it to the police and request an incident number. This helps us build a clearer picture of what's happening.

Useful links

- Join KSCA: kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us
- Request a sticker: hello@kingswayaction.org
- Support our campaign: gofund.me/no-to-kingsway-solar-farm
- Contribute to legal funds: crowdjustice.com/case/kingswaysolarcommunitylegalaction
- Follow us on Facebook & Instagram: [#kingswaysolaraction](https://www.facebook.com/kingswaysolaraction)

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas, and thank you for your support throughout 2025.

Kathy Day

AN UPDATE FROM YOUR MP

One of the proudest moments in my time as an MP has been delivering our petition to save Arthur Rank Hospice's beds to Number 10 Downing Street in November. I was joined by fellow Cambridgeshire MPs and the most amazing group of people who have felt the Hospice's care first-hand or whose family members have. The petition we delivered was more than 15,500 strong!

We continue to fight to restore the funding to ensure all 23 beds at the hospice remain open because everyone deserves access to excellent care right up until the very end of their lives. Thank you so much to all the passionate constituents and colleagues across the county that made this happen.

If you would like to keep up to date with my work, you can register for my e-newsletter, available at www.pippaheytings.org.uk/newsletter.

I hope you have a restful and joyous Christmas break and a very happy New Year.

Pippa Heytings MP

BALSHAM WI

The November meeting featured a play performed by 11 members of the group and told the story of the last 100 years of Balsham and the WI nationally from its start in 1915. The cast were each dressed to represent a decade from the last century and was accompanied by many photographs from the archives.

Our next meeting will take place on 9 December in Balsham Pavilion at 7.30pm and will take the form of our annual Christmas celebration, together with a review of the past year's meetings to finalize our celebration of the Centenary year. Please get in touch if you are interested in joining us, email balshamwi@gmail.com

Debbie Mower

BALSHAM SINGERS

Our 30th Anniversary Christmas Concert takes place on Saturday 13 December at 4pm in Holy Trinity Church Balsham. Tickets are £12 adult under 16's £1

Tickets are available from Balsham and Gt Abington Post Offices and online at Ticket Source: ticketsource.co.uk/balshamsingers or through choir members and are selling fast. Last Christmas we had a full house so we'd advise buying a ticket in advance to be sure of a seat.

We will be holding a raffle so please bring some cash along with you. All proceeds of the raffle will be sent to Royal Papworth Charity which also celebrates 30 years in 2025. We are always grateful for the loyal support of our audience and hope that everyone who comes along will enjoy our concert.

Jo Stinton

DECEMBER AT LINTON LIBRARY

On each Saturday we'll have a drop in **Christmas Craft** activity, as well as a **Christmas Trail** all December.

The Library will close for the **Holidays** from 5pm on Tuesday 23 December, and reopen at 10am on Friday 2 January.

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

GRANTA Medical Practices

Please find below details of when our surgeries will be open over the Christmas and New Year break.

Please remember to order your repeat prescriptions in plenty of time so that you do not run out of your medication over the holidays. The table below shows you when you will be able to collect your prescriptions, depending on that date you place your order.

DATE	Opening Hours	Repeat Prescription Schedule
Saturday 20.12.25	Opened for pre-booked appointments only (Sawston)	Place order today, pick up 24.12.25
Monday 22.12.25	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 29.12.25
Tuesday 23.12.25	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 30.12.25
Wednesday 24.12.25	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 31.12.25
(Christmas Day)	Closed	Place order today, pick up 02.01.26
(Boxing Day)	Closed	Place order today, pick up 02.01.26
Saturday 27.12.25	Open for pre-booked appointments only (Royston)	Place order today, pick up 02.01.26
Monday 29.12.25	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 02.01.26
Tuesday 30.12.25	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 05.01.26
Wednesday 31.12.25	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 06.01.26
(New Years Day)	Closed	Place order today, pick up 07.01.26
Friday 02.01.26	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 07.01.26
Saturday 03.01.26	Open for pre-booked appointments only (Sawston)	Place order today, pick up 08.01.26

Don't forget, there are Prescription Collection Points at Sawston, Linton and Shelford. Sign up today via cpicb.grantadisensing@nhs.net to pick up your medication at your convenience 24/7, including Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years' Day.

Whilst we are closed, if you need urgent medical assistance please use NHS 111 service. If you have an emergency that poses an immediate threat to life, please ring 999.

Be prepared for common health problems by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home. Your local pharmacist can offer you advice and guidance on the best treatment for you. Pharmacists can now also prescribe some medications under the "Pharmacy First" service. Please go to <https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/> for further information and eligibility criteria.

We wish you all a healthy and peaceful holiday season.

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE NEWS

Battlefields and Bletchley Park

School trips are an essential part of life at LVC, enriching our curriculum and offering experiences beyond the classroom. One of the most significant events in our calendar is the two-yearly Battlefields trip to Northern France and Belgium.



Led by the History Department, the trip takes 95 students from KS3 and KS4 on a journey through key sites of World War I. Starting in Ypres, students visit Essex Farm Cemetery and an Advanced Dressing Station, learning how medical care was delivered close to the front lines. At Mansel Copse and the Somme, they explore the realities of trench warfare and the immense human cost of conflict. The

Thiepval Memorial to the Missing and the moving Last Post ceremony deepen their understanding of remembrance and loss. Throughout the weekend, students develop historical knowledge of why men fought, empathy for those who endured unimaginable hardship, and insight into the impact of war on individuals and societies.

Last month we also had over 100 students visiting Bletchley Park, the historic home of World War II codebreakers. Here, they watched a live demonstration of the Enigma Machine and took part in hands-on decoding activities, discovering how logic, mathematics, and teamwork were used to crack secret messages. The experience not only illuminated the vital role of codebreaking in the Allied victory but also highlighted its lasting influence on modern computing and cybersecurity.

Both trips offer students a unique opportunity to connect with history in a tangible way. These experiences remind us that the past is not just something we read about and that it shapes the world we live in today.

Helena Marsh, Principal