

March 2026

Box River News

Boxford • Edwardstone • Groton • Little Waldingfield • Newton Green

Delivered free to every home in Boxford, Edwardstone, Groton, Little Waldingfield, Newton Green, Bower House Tye, Milden & White Street Green and available to residents in Acton, Assington, Brent Eleigh, Great Waldingfield, Hadleigh, Kersey, Lavenham, Leavenheath, Nayland, Polstead, Shelley, Semer, Stöke-by-Nayland, Sudbury and parents of children at Boxford School.

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every day



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What's on
March

**FRED'S COFFEE
LOUNGE**
COFFEE & CAKE SPECIALS
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OPEN EVERY DAY
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EVERY LUNCHTIME
12noon - 2:30pm
EVERY EVENING
5pm - 8pm

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AVAILABLE**
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OR VARIOUS CLUB HIRE

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APARTMENT**
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& 5 - 8pm
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FRIDAY**

**NORWEGIAN
BAKERS**
10am - 3pm
**EVERY
FRIDAY**

CURRY NIGHT
Bookings only
5pm - 9pm
**WED
11**

**AFTERNOON
SAVOURY TEAS**
12noon - 5pm
**SUN
15**

CRAFT FAIR
10am - 2pm
**SUN
22**

CASH BINGO
7pm
Eyes down 7.30pm.
**THUR
26**

**CARS & CAMERAS
CAR EVENT**
10am - 12noon
**SUN
29**

Contact the White Hart Inn direct on: 01787 211764
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Boxford Parish Council Update

Although it might not be readily apparent, Boxford Parish Council has been actively involved with the maintenance and upkeep of the public areas in the village. Those areas in the village that have been the responsibility of our county and district councils have been poorly maintained, if at all. Where possible, the parish council has decided to take on the responsibility for the maintenance of the grass areas and verges in the village and other areas where we are permitted to do so.

A résumé of the work carried out over the last year includes: the removal of the ivy growing on the churchyard wall and graves. The repair of the churchyard wall, and recently the replacement of churchyard gate posts. The trees along the school/churchyard boundary have all been tidied up and the yew tree reshaped. The large area of brambles and undergrowth has been removed. In the cemetery, a number of trees and their stumps have been removed, which has improved the light levels, resulting in an abundance of snowdrops and primroses. A number of watering can racks have been made and erected, along with the provision of a number of new watering cans.

The grass areas and verges in the village have for a number of years been very badly maintained by district and county councils. This has led to the employment of a local contractor who is now responsible for all grass areas, with the exception of the playing

fields which are cut under a different contract. In addition, verges and hedges will be maintained on a regular basis. There has been a problem with trees encroaching the power lines in the village. Although it has taken UK Power Networks the best part of two years to carry out the work, at last the trees on School Hill, Stone Street, and Cox Hill have been tackled. At the request of the residents in Ash Street, an additional lamp standard was erected at the junction of Ash Street and Butchers Lane.

Last year the parish council purchased the Croft on behalf of the village. Charlie Smith and his team have made a great job restoring it to its former glory and this year will see it improve further. In the future it will be maintained by the village contractor. Our thanks go to the Beavers who planted numerous bulbs on the verges on Sand Hill which are just beginning to emerge. Over the last few months, the parish council have explored alternative sites where a central car park could be built, which would benefit the village. Unfortunately, there are few options available. The original plan to build a car park adjacent to the primary school has a number of problems associated with its development. It would involve a protracted process before any land could be made available for use as a car park. Practically, there would be a pinch point adjacent to the cottages and school, and negotiating the junction with Church Street/School Hill would be difficult during the busy periods of the day.

A possible alternative site that is under consideration which would alleviate these difficulties is the land behind the village hall and adjacent to the cemetery. This area is large enough to accommodate around 40 to 50 cars. (If needed, cars could still be parked along School Hill as well.) Discussions with the diocese are ongoing.

I would like to make a plea on behalf of the residents of Stone Street hamlet. The road is not suitable for the volume of traffic that use it on a regular basis and as a consequence it is now full of potholes. The numerous potholes and the lack of a footpath makes it very dangerous for pedestrians to use, so please drive sensibly and keep your speed to a sensible level.

This leads unfortunately to an area which has implications for all road users. The roads in our village and surrounding area are in an atrocious condition. The number of potholes seems to increase on a daily basis, so please report them via the Suffolk County Council highways reporting website at <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk>. This reporting tool can be used to report numerous other problems, for example: blocked drains, road signs missing or obscured, footpaths, street lights, trees, hedges.

Finally, can I ask that if you have any concerns or suggestions that affect our village please contact our parish clerk, Ms Zoe Rumsey, clerk@boxford-pc.gov.uk.

David Warren
Chairman Boxford Parish Council

Box River News

Trudi Wild

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This month's cover image

This month's cover artwork is *Ford II (West Acre)* by Kate Giles. The painting features in *Kate Giles - Remember Tomorrow*, a major exhibition at Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, running from 25 April to 11 October 2026.

The exhibition marks the 250th anniversary of John Constable and explores Giles's engagement with the landscapes of Suffolk and Norfolk.



The copy deadline for the April issue is Sunday 15th March at midday.

Readers' Letters

Remembering Reg Tricker 1929-2025

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to family, friends and neighbours for joining us at St Mary's Church to remember and celebrate our wonderful Dad's long life.

Grateful thanks to lay minister Maggie Cogan for her kindness and support during a difficult time and for conducting such a beautiful service.

We couldn't believe that amongst the endless days of miserable weather, the sky was blue and the sun continued to shine as Dad left his beloved Boxford for the last time.

Thank you for your cards, kind words and the many shared memories on the Much Loved website; all of great comfort to read.

Your generous donations to East Anglia's Children's Hospices totalled an incredible £1040. Thank you all so much!

With our love

Pauline Taylor and Barry Tricker



Charitable Trust

Are you aware that the Hadleigh Health Centre has an association with a local charitable trust? This was established 30 years ago 'for the protection and preservation of health and the relief of sickness'. Any patient or staff member of the medical practice can apply for consideration of a grant. The trust is not intended to supplant normal assistance available through the welfare system or council support but for genuine needs that cannot be met by other more appropriate means.

Additionally, donations to the trust have been generously given and are most gratefully received.

The trustees take a reasonably broad interpretation of the purpose defined above. Applications should be made in writing to the practice manager by letter to the address below. Please ensure the purpose of the grant is made clear and why it cannot be met by other means, together with the amount of money requested. The trust is presently adequately funded and trustees are most sympathetic to genuine need and, whilst we must ensure funds are expended appropriately, we are very keen to meet requests and so relieve medically related difficulties.'

*Hadleigh Boxford Medical Practice Charitable Trust
c/o Hadleigh Health Centre
Market Place
Hadleigh
IP7 5DN*

Jane Godfray (Dr Jane Hill)

Jane Godfray, also known as Dr Jane Hill, died on Friday 6th February at St Elizabeth Hospice, Ipswich. She had lived in Boxford since 2001 with her husband Guy and son Edward, and worked as a GP at the Hadleigh Boxford Group Practice for many years.

Jane was closely involved in GP training and later served as Associate Dean for GP trainees across Suffolk and North East Essex. She is survived by her family and will be remembered by colleagues and friends throughout the area.

Her funeral will be held at St Mary's Church, Boxford, on **Monday, 9 March at 1pm**. Family flowers only. Donations, if wished, may be made in her memory to St Elizabeth Hospice.



Mercy Gant

It is with great sadness, we announce the passing of Mercy Gant. Mercy passed away peacefully on Friday 6th February in Magdalen House Care Home, Hadleigh, aged 94.

Mercy's funeral service will be held at St Mary's Church Boxford on **Tuesday, 10 March at 10.30am**.

<https://mercygant.muchloved.com>



Paul Elmer 1930 - 2026

It is with great sadness that we write of the passing of Paul Elmer, a long-time Boxford resident, more recently of Hadleigh in Suffolk.

Born on June 16th 1930, Paul passed peacefully on Sunday, 8th February at the age of 95.

A long-time resident of Boxford, many will remember Paul as the joint proprietor of Riddelsdell Bros garage, widely recognised as one of the world's oldest working garages, and still operational to this day.

A lifetime supporter of Ipswich Town, he enjoyed watching their successes in the late 1970s. Paul also became an avid golfer later in life and spent many happy years at the nearby Stoke by Nayland Golf Club.

A funeral will be held at Seven Hills Crematorium in Ipswich on **Thursday, 12 March 2026 at 11:15am**.



Reclaim the Rain



As Reclaim the Rain enters its final year, we're excited to continue working on our remaining deliverables in Boxford, namely, the planting of more willow trees and storage features to capture high flood flows. These will mark our final pieces of work within the Boxford's surface water catchment area. Alongside delivery, we're turning our attention to the legacy of Reclaim the Rain and overall aims to support future projects which prioritise mitigation for the impacts of both flooding and drought. This includes developing case study documents, strengthening partnership working, producing evaluation reports, and more.

With that shift in focus, there will be fewer short-term updates to share, so you may not see us in the Box River News as frequently as before. In the meantime, please do get in touch if you have any questions about the progress still to come, what we've achieved so far or more on legacy and reporting. Thank you all for your continued support on Reclaim the Rain.

Best Wishes,
Ruby and Sian
reclaimtherain@suffolk.gov.uk

Thank you, Rose

For more than 25 years Rose Elliot has quietly made sure that local news reached the letterboxes of Daking Avenue, Boxford. Before the Box River News even existed in its current form, Rose was already delivering what began as a simple church A4 leaflet - and she continued without interruption as that leaflet grew into the magazine you are reading today.

Month after month in all seasons, Rose, ably assisted by her husband David, has delivered the magazine without fail. Her help has been an essential part of getting the BRN out into the community.

Rose has now decided to retire from distributing the magazine and we would like to offer our deepest thanks for her extraordinary service and dedication, and to wish her all the very best in the future.

Newton Village Hall Matters

Maintenance: As part of our ongoing maintenance programme, several heaters and the fan in the kitchen have been replaced. It is hoped that this will solve the condensation problem in the corridor.

Bookings: The number for bookings is **07955 199 000**. Please visit www.yourhall.co.uk/hall/newton-green where you will find a detailed description of the hall, along with photos and a diary of bookings.

Next Coffee mornings

Saturday 28th March - Parish Council

Saturday 18th April - St Nicholas Hospice

Saturday 16th May - Fireside Club

All coffee mornings are in the village hall and start at 10am. Donations for raffles and cake stalls and good quality bric-a-brac would be much appreciated. Raffles are usually called at about 11:15. Please do come and support these charities and village organisations.

... THE ...
WHITE HORSE INN
... EDWARDSTONE ...

*Wide selection of drinks from independent UK producers
Craft beers, real ales, ciders, wines & spirits.
Home of Little Earth Project*

March

Acoustic Night - From 7pm
Wednesday, Feb 25th
Wednesday, March 11th
Wednesday, March 25th

International Womens Day Tap Takeover
March 4-8th
A selection of beers brewed by women or women owned breweries!

Cottages & Campsite Bookings
Bookings open through Summer 2026 via our website!

Sourdough Pizzas & Boards & Bites Menu
Boards: Wed-Sat 12-8, Sun 12-4
Pizzas: Sit in/Takeaway - Thurs 5-8pm, Fri & Sat 12-8, Sun 12-4
Thursday Nights Pizza & a Pint for £15 (5-8pm)

Street Food
Follow us on Facebook/Instagram for weekly updates!

Wagyu Burgers - Fridays in March
Taqueria La Gringa - Sat March 7th
Pimp My Fish - Sat March 14th
My Thai Chef - Sat March 21st
Tasty Turk - Sat March 28th




 @edwardstonewh www.edwardstonewhitehorse.co.uk

Newton Fireside Club

On the 20th January, we spent the afternoon playing various board games and we also had a quiz.

There was much chatter and, as usual, competition was fierce.

The next session was another opportunity for a good chat. We lit the fire and enjoyed a few drinks with nibbles, as well as the usual tea and cake. The raffle was well supported and raised £42.



MARCH PROGRAMME

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Tuesday 3rd March | Talk on Marks Hall |
| Tuesday 17th March | Easter Egg Painting |
| Tuesday 31st March | Talk on Medical Detection Dogs |

All meetings are held in the village hall and start at 2pm unless otherwise stated and anyone is welcome.

Subs for members are £25 this term and must be paid in advance. This includes refreshments, activities and subsidised events.

Non-members are welcome to come along to any session. The fee will be between £5 and £10 depending on the activity. We are excited to say that we now have a card reader, so payments can be made by card.

New members are always welcome. Usually, the first session is free.

Please contact Moira on **01787 374652** or Sue on **07881 383 998** if you would like more details.

Boxford's Volunteer Lifeblood

Community life in Boxford depends on those who step forward



One of Boxford's greatest strengths is that it has never stood still, growing and changing and developing its vibrancy despite maintaining the ancient fabric at its core which estate agents can call 'desirable'. The real desirability, beyond the attraction of the heritage buildings and dwellings, lies in its spirited population, who value above all the moving parts of the community: its school, commercial outlets, church, shops, two pubs, clubs and societies, green spaces, the river, and opportunities for sport and recreation.

Every now and then many of our residents join in a street, village hall, church or pub celebration of a major national milestone. Quite exceptionally, Boxford also annually enjoys a fireworks display and lantern parade that must be the envy of most similar-sized villages. On such occasions the sense of a spirited, cohesive, and engaged population of all age groups is amplified by display, music, smiling faces and genuine mutual enjoyment. Boxford at its absolute best, touching a high bar.

Our Challenge

Many could be forgiven for thinking that it is our natural, inherited right to enjoy such riches, and that all the land and public buildings are somehow maintained by municipal and public authorities and financed through council and/or national taxes. Nothing could be further from the truth. A small, spirited and engaged group of volunteers run the Boxford Community Council (BCC) - not a public body but a charity. Formed in 1968 by far-sighted individuals to whom we should be eternally grateful, it initiated the purchase of land that is now the playing fields. This wonderful asset is run by a management committee of further volunteers, and it joins with the BCC to raise funds to sustain the pavilion, the football and cricket pitches, the tennis courts, playgrounds and allotments. It charges fees for team sports, tennis and allotments, and by so doing keeps the space for all to use.

In a far from exhaustive list, the village hall, the Spinney, the bowls club, the Boxford Society, Friends of Boxford School (FoBS), the drama group, the gardening society, the sports clubs: Boxford Rovers, Boxford Bike Club, and the dormant cricket club all rely on volunteers. None attract public money. The community council promotes self-funding events for major celebrations, runs the Boxford Bounty, and raises funds to support local causes.

Here is the issue: the lifeblood of the Box River villages is at risk of reducing to the point where they become dormitory areas, no longer enjoying the many and various recreational and communal activities that make Boxford and its surrounding villages and hamlets a busy and joyous environment. A diminishing and ageing nucleus of the same willing faces has kept all our activities going but new blood is necessary, now and in the future.

So please think very seriously whether you can help. Maybe you have a practical bent that can be turned to good use to the community benefit. Maybe your office skills could let you easily assist in the writing of short agendas and meeting minutes. Perhaps simple accounts and the preparation of balance sheets are something you can do in your sleep! Could it be you just want to join in helping and find your niche? Whatever your skills or experience - Boxford needs you.

Please give it some thought and register an interest by responding to: editor@boxrivernews.com

The residents of Boxford and the surrounding villages own and enjoy so much. It is all yours. Without your help within a few short years all of our wonderful facilities will cease to function, so NOW is the time to step up to the mark and help our village continue to flourish in the future. Your contribution will be valuable and fun!

On behalf of the community groups

Organisations that are currently seeking volunteers

BOXFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Boxford Community Council is a charity that supports village life through events and grants to local organisations. It organises major community celebrations including the fireworks display, street parties and the lantern parade.

Roles currently needed:
Secretary & committee members.

Meetings: Quarterly.

BOXFORD PLAYING FIELDS

Run by a management committee, this organisation is responsible for maintaining the playing fields, pavilion, children's playground, tennis courts and allotments.

The facilities support football and cricket matches, tennis, the children's playground, and provide a pavilion for meetings and parties.

Roles currently needed:
Chair, treasurer & committee members.

Meetings: Quarterly.

BOXFORD VILLAGE HALL

The village hall provides indoor recreational space for the village and hosts a wide range of activities, including drama, yoga, parties and events run by other user groups.

Roles currently needed:
Treasurer and committee members.

Meetings: Monthly.

THE SPINNEY (part of the Scouting Group)

The Spinney provides a hall and outdoor adventure space used for lantern making and by local Scouts, Cubs, Guides and related groups.

Roles currently needed:
Treasurer and committee members.

Meetings: Monthly.

To register an interest in any of the roles listed above, please contact editor@boxrivernews.com

Volunteering: more than just helping out

People volunteer for many reasons, and often gain more than they expect.

- Getting to know people they might not otherwise meet
- Feeling part of the village rather than just living in it
- Using skills they already have, and gaining new ones
- Being involved in events and facilities that bring people together
- Gaining practical experience and confidence that can be useful beyond the village
- Contributing in small, manageable ways that fit around work and family

Many roles involve only a few hours a month, and responsibilities are usually shared across a committee or small team. Some people choose to get involved with a friend, which can make the first step easier.

Volunteering does not mean signing up for life - it means helping when you can.

The Butcher's Wife

One foot in the grave(y)

Getting older definitely creeps up on you. You don't suddenly wake up one morning and think "ah yes, I'm old now" - it sneaks in. In my head I'm still in my mid-twenties, moisturised, energetic, capable of wearing heels without breaking my back, and yet here I am now, stretching before I hang the washing out like it's some kind of Olympic sport.

There are little things that the Butcher and I have started doing that have made us realise we are definitely getting older.

Every time, and I mean every single time, the Butcher gets up off the couch, he makes an 'oof' noise. This is normally followed by a few minutes of him referring to one of the following - his sore neck, cramp in his leg, his foot hurting, the list goes on. I'm not much better. I tend to make the 'oof' noise when I sit down, like I've just completed a minor expedition.

Noise infuriates me. Whether it's a shop with the music playing too loud or the extractor fan when I'm cooking. I find myself actually saying out loud "I can't hear myself think". Does anyone else turn the radio down in the car to see where they are going better?

The oldest mini Leeder went to a rave

recently and said there were a lot of "old people" there. When I questioned what she meant (I was picturing a load of 80-year-olds), she said, and I quote, "people about your age". Devastating.

The youngest mini Leeder went to a party that *STARTED* at 9pm! Can you imagine?! I couldn't think of anything worse. The Butcher and I are pleased when plans get cancelled. No, not pleased, ecstatic! We change into our comfy clothes, put Netflix on, and feel victorious going to bed at 9:30pm. My 20-year-old self would have been horrified at what I've become.

"Every single time the Butcher gets up off the couch, he makes an 'oof' noise."

We also get overly excited about practical purchases, and I'm not talking about anything super exciting like a new washing machine. We recently bought a new frying pan and have

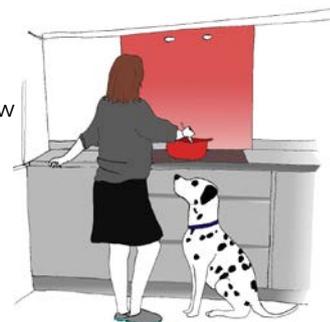
commented every time we use it how nice it is.

The Butcher made quite possibly the most exciting purchase this year so

far, a new Yorkshire pudding tin. We are really at the peak of our lives.

I find myself referring to young people as looking like a twelve year old, e.g. the new GP at our doctor's surgery, or a new colleague at work, when in fact they are grown ups with mortgages and kids. I find it hard to fathom that someone born in the 2000s is an adult. Does anyone else think the '90s was only 10 years ago?

Finally, the Butcher and I both have reading glasses now. Admittedly, I don't wear mine as much as I should (I had to wear glasses as a small child and I hated them), so I've made the font on my phone gigantic to try to stop me squinting at everything. It'll be hearing aids next, although with my aversion to noise and the Butcher babbling on, I might hold off for a bit.



Pork Stroganoff

Comfort food without the fuff. Rich & creamy, it's the sort of no-nonsense dinner that delivers plenty of flavour with minimal effort.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 300g sunflower oil
- 500g mushrooms, sliced
- 400g pork tenderloin cut into 1cm pieces
- 2 onions, sliced
- 1tbsp smoked paprika
- 2tsp Dijon mustard
- 200ml pork stock
- 300ml pot of soured cream
- Chopped parsley

Method

1. Heat 4 tsp of the oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the mushrooms and fry for a few minutes until the liquid evaporates. Remove from the pan and set aside.
2. Add 2 tsp of oil to the same pan and fry the pork for 5-8 minutes until browned. Set aside.
3. Add the remaining oil to the pan and fry the onions until they start to caramelise, around 10-12 minutes. Add the mushrooms and pork back to the pan.
4. Add the Dijon mustard, season well with salt and pepper, and add the stock. Give everything a good mix and let it simmer for a few minutes.
5. Stir through the soured cream and cook for 2 more minutes to ensure it's piping hot. Scatter over the parsley and serve with rice, potatoes, or tagliatelle.



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Monday – Thursday: 7.30am – 6.00pm
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For school aged children, we deliver to Boxford school from
Breakfast club and collect directly from the school.

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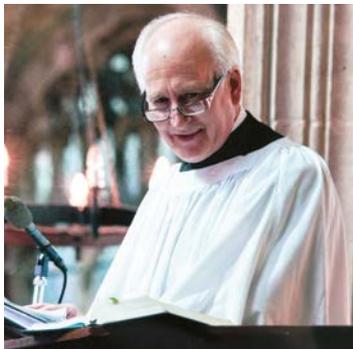
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Reflections from the Ministry Team

Dear Friends,

March is the third month of the year and regarded as the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere, bringing warmer weather and with it, many blooming flowers such as daffodils. It is also known as a time of transformation and rebirth - St David's day falls on the 1st of March and St Patrick's Day on the 17th.



Last month, Revd Diana reflected on and wished us all that "the light of Christ might live in all our lives every day of this month". That was a great wish for us all. I hope it was a reality and a personal experience for everyone in the Box River Benefice!

Against the background of political unrest and uncertainty in the western world it is good to have the reminder that Christian faith in God's love for us continues. Easter comes in early April and reminds us all of the transformation our lives can experience following Christ's death and resurrection. We are blessed to have the freedom and ability to do this.

Whilst it is a disappointment that we do not (yet) have a replacement for Father Rob in the benefice we are very grateful (and blessed) to have the support and help of both Revd's Simon and Diana. We are very grateful to them.

It is always encouraging to village communities when church attendances continue and remain strong in times like these. We do need to continue to pray as communities, for our world leaders at this time.

Let us continue to pray for our national leaders that they might embrace humility, integrity and servant leadership, seeking the common good over personal ambition, making decisions rooted in truth and justice.

We can do this together, in our parishes and at home in our private prayers. I think it is needed and could well be effective if we all engage together for our common good.

Every blessing,
David Ball MBE, LLM

JOIN US FOR A TAIZÉ SERVICE

Sunday 8th March, 4pm
at St Mary's Church, Boxford



A time for reflection, prayer, and community

March

Dates for your diary

Tuesday 3rd 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

Friday 6th 10:30am

Coffee Morning, St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield

Tuesday 10th 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

Tuesday 17th 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House

Wednesday 18th 10am

Coffee Morning, All Saints', Newton Green

Saturday 21st 10am

Coffee Morning, St Mary's, Boxford

Saturday 21st 10am

*Church Spring Clean & Churchyard Maintenance
All Saints', Newton Green*

Tuesday 24th 10am

Drop in for Coffee, Mary's House



CHURCH SPRING CLEAN & CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

**ALL SAINTS' CHURCH
NEWTON GREEN**

**SATURDAY, 21ST MARCH
10.00 AM - 12.30 PM**

Volunteers are needed to prepare the church for Easter.

Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Please come along and join our volunteers.

Everyone welcome - refreshments provided.

Secateurs, saws etc would be most useful for those helping in the churchyard.





Prep like a Pro



It's time to spring-clean your skin. And that means, prep!

Prepping your skin is a bit like priming a canvas: By clearing away debris and deeply hydrating the surface, you create a smooth, uniform base that allows products to glide on effortlessly, rather than clinging to dry patches or settling into pores.

As well as giving skin that sought-after 'glow', a solid prep routine strengthens the skin's barrier, ensuring makeup stays put and looks vibrant all day.



This month, **our entire AllSkin Med prep range is 20% off.** From cleansing foams and gels to scrubs, pads and retexturizing serums, this is the month to stock up.

Prep routine retail offer

20% off any AllSkin Med prep products*

Call 01787 211 000 for more info



* Offer valid on any AllSkin Med prep products until 31/03/2026.

Suffolk Medical & Beauty Clinic, 6 Broad Street, Boxford.

Tel: 01787 211 000 www.suffolkmedicalclinic.co.uk



Service Schedule for March 2026

Sunday 1st March <i>Lent 2</i>	09:30	<i>Morning Prayer</i>	St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield
	11:00	<i>Sunday Eucharist</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 4th March	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 8th March <i>Lent 3</i>	09:30	<i>Sunday Eucharist</i>	St Bartholomew's, Groton
	11:00	<i>Sunday Eucharist with Choir</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
	16:00	<i>Taizé Service</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 11th March	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 15th March <i>Lent 4</i> <i>Mothering Sunday</i>	09:30	<i>Mothering Sunday Eucharist</i>	St Mary the Virgin, Edwardstone
	11:00	<i>Mothering Sunday Eucharist with Choir</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 18th March	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 22nd March <i>Lent 5</i>	11:00	<i>Sunday Eucharist</i>	All Saints', Newton Green
	11:00	<i>Family Eucharist</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Wednesday 25th March <i>The Annunciation</i>	10:00	<i>Communion & Coffee</i>	Mary's House, Boxford
Sunday 29th March <i>Palm Sunday</i>	09:30	<i>Palm Sunday Procession and Eucharist</i>	St Mary the Virgin, Edwardstone
	17:00	<i>Palm Sunday Liturgy</i>	St Mary's, Boxford
Monday 30th March <i>Monday of Holy Week</i>	19:00	<i>Holy Week Communion</i>	St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield
	19:45	<i>Compline</i>	St Lawrence's, Lt Waldingfield
Tuesday 31st March <i>Tuesday of Holy Week</i>	19:00	<i>Holy Week Communion</i>	All Saints', Newton Green
	19:45	<i>Compline</i>	All Saints', Newton Green

All our churches across the Benefice are **OPEN EVERY DAY** for Private Prayer.

If you need support, please contact the Benefice Office in the first instance, all enquiries will be treated in confidence and passed on to the appropriate person.



COFFEE MORNINGS

DROP IN FOR COFFEE AT MARY'S HOUSE, SWAN STREET, BOXFORD
BETWEEN 10AM TO 12PM EVERY TUESDAY

FRIDAY 6TH MARCH 10:30AM
COFFEE MORNING AT ST LAWRENCE'S, LT WALDINGFIELD

WEDNESDAY 18TH MARCH
10AM COFFEE MORNING AT ALL SAINTS', NEWTON

SATURDAY 21ST MARCH
10AM COFFEE MORNING AT ST MARY'S, BOXFORD



The Search for a New Rector

The Box River Benefice continues its journey toward appointing a new rector, and we want to keep everyone fully informed as the process unfolds. As many of you will know, the first round of advertising has now closed. Despite our hopes and prayers, we did not receive any applications. This is naturally disappointing news for our churches and communities, all of whom are eager to welcome the right person to lead us forward.

Although this is not the outcome we had hoped for, it is not unusual during the recruitment of a new rector. Many parishes across the country are experiencing similar delays, and the Diocese continues to support us as we navigate the next steps.

We will be re-advertising the post in March. In the meantime the appointment panel has been asked to propose new dates for interviews so that everything is ready once the advert goes live again. We are now gathering availability from those involved in the process. Your prayers, patience, and encouragement are deeply appreciated as we continue this work together. Please continue to hold the benefice, our PCCs, volunteers, the appointment panel, and our future rector - whoever they may be - in your prayers, we trust that God is guiding us toward the right person in His time.

Taizé Service

Join us at **5pm, Sunday, 8th March** at St Mary's, Boxford. A Taizé service is a quiet, meditative Christian prayer service featuring simple, repetitive songs (chants), scripture readings, silence, and candlelight, originating from the ecumenical monastic community in Taizé, France, aiming for reconciliation and peace through a contemplative encounter with God. These informal services welcome people of all faiths and backgrounds, focusing on reflection, music, and silence rather than elaborate sermons or rituals, lasting under an hour. Please join us as we reflect on our Lenten journey towards the cross.

Open Gardens Return

As I write this, in the gloom of February, it can feel almost impossible to picture the warmth of summer - green lawns, roses in full bloom, and the gentle hum of a lazy afternoon. But brighter days are ahead, and with them come three wonderful open gardens events across the benefice. These much loved days are a highlight of our summer calendar, offering a chance to wander through beautiful private gardens, enjoy homemade refreshments, and share in the simple pleasure of being together.

Sunday, 7th June – Boxford

Sunday, 14th June – Newton

Sunday, 21st June – Lt Waldingfield

Each event supports the life and work of our churches, and we are deeply grateful to every gardener who generously opens their gate, as well as to the volunteers that makes these days run so smoothly.

So, as we wait for winter to loosen its grip, let's look forward to the colour, warmth, and companionship of summer. Mark the dates in your diary, invite a friend, and prepare to enjoy the beauty that flourishes right on our doorstep.



EASTER LILY DONATIONS

**EVERY EASTER, WE DECORATE
ST MARY'S CHURCH, BOXFORD WITH LILIES**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION FOR
AN EASTER LILY IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE,
PLEASE CONTACT THE BENEFICE OFFICE BY
WEDNESDAY, 18TH MARCH**

(boxriverbenefice@gmail.com)

**THE NAMES OF YOUR LOVED ONES ARE THEN
PLACED ON THE ALTAR ON EASTER SUNDAY**



**MOTHERING SUNDAY
EUCHARIST**

**JOIN US ON 15TH MARCH 2026
AT**

**ST MARY THE VIRGIN,
EDWARDSTONE AT 9.30 AM**

**ST MARY'S, BOXFORD
AT 11.00 AM**

**MAY ALL MOTHERS BE BLESSED ON THIS SPECIAL DAY
WHETHER THIS DAY BRINGS JOY OR TENDERNESS,
YOU ARE WELCOME HERE**

Contact Information

Benefice Office:

Mary's House, 5 Swan Street, Boxford, CO10 5NZ

01787 828046

email: boxriverbenefice@gmail.com

LENT LUNCH

AT
THE PARISH ROOM
LT WALDINGFIELD

WEDNESDAY, 18TH MARCH
2026

12.00 PM - 2.00 PM

SUGGESTED DONATION £10.00
RAISING FUNDS TOWARDS THE UPKEEP OF
ST LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

*THIS IS NOT A TICKETED EVENT, HOWEVER IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR
CATERING PURPOSES. IF YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO REGISTER
YOUR INTENTION TO ATTEND WITH NANCY ROSER 01787 882897 OR EMAIL
nancyroser2004@yahoo.co.uk*



The Box River Benefice
Boxford, Edwardstone, Groton,
Little Waldingfield and Newton

Family Fun at Bridges Farm Saturday 4 April 2026

11am - 3pm Bridges Farm, Kersey Tye IP7 6HB

£5 per person (under 2's free) £20 per family

All proceeds to charity

*Cash only
please*

See our animals in the barns and
fields while enjoying the beautiful countryside.
On our working livestock farm you will see:

Cow with their calves
Big Bulls
Sheep with their lambs
Hens and chicks
Ducks



Help feed the animals!
Farmyard games
Tractors & machinery
Barbeque and cream teas



Chris & Sarah Partridge and family Tel: 07765 916162
Email: thecovey@kerseylivestock.co.uk www.kerseylivestock.co.uk



Newton Open Gardens Sunday 14th June 2026

GARDENS NEEDED

A few of last year's open gardens are not available this year.
We urgently need 4 or 5 additional volunteers to
open their gardens for the day.
They do not need to be show gardens.
They can be any size or style from veggie plots
to courtyards and can be modern or traditional.
Please get in touch if you would like further information.
We can also put you in touch with other volunteers
who will be only too happy to support you.

If you feel able to help, please contact
Sue & Paul on 07881 383 998
or sue_presland@hotmail.com

Little Waldingfield Pop-Up Pubs

Our next 'Pop-Up Pub' nights will be on **Friday 27th March**
and **Friday 24th April**.

These relaxed and friendly events run from 6:30 -
10:30pm in the beautiful setting of the pavilion at the Little
Waldingfield playing fields, and everyone is welcome to
join us for an evening of great company and a range of
reasonably-priced drinks (both alcoholic and non) watching
the sun set over the countryside.

Gardeners!
Spring WILL come...
**Please open your garden
Sunday 7th June 2026**

Boxford Open Gardens 7th June 2026
Contact **Audrey Zuck**
audrey@a2zriskservices.com
or
07852 102 455

BOXFORD
GARDENING SOCIETY

GROWING & KEEPING ORCHIDS

Bill Gardiner
Chairman of Suffolk Orchid Society



Tuesday 3rd March 7.30pm
at Boxford Village Hall

 **Fleece Jazz** at
Stoke-by-Nayland Hotel presents

**Alex Webb's Pocket Ellington with
Alan Barnes & Tony Kofi**
Wednesday 11th March 2026 8pm - Tickets: £25

 It manages what ought to be impossible – creating a classic Ellingtonian sound with just four horns and a rhythm section.
Alex Webb – Piano/Arranger
Tony Kofi – Tenor sax
Alan Barnes – Alto & Sax / Clarinet
Simon Finch – Trumpet
David Lalljee – Trombone
Dave Green – Bass
Matt Home – Drums

The Will Butterworth Trio
Wednesday 25th March 2026 8pm - Tickets: £20

 A dynamic & interactive trio with a focus on musical empathy and communication, showcasing Butterworth's virtuosity & ability to capture a sense of atmosphere.
Will Butterworth – Piano
Marcus Vergette – Bass
Preston Prince – Drums

Stoke by Nayland Hotel, Keepers Lane, Leavenheath CO6 4PZ
Ample parking; fully accessible. Directions: www.fleecejazz.org.uk
Tickets: 01787 210796 or via **WeGotTickets** (booking fee applies);
or on the door (cash or cheque only; sorry no debit/credit cards)
*Friends of Fleece Jazz discount

SPECIAL OFFER: A double room with breakfast and two tickets from £129 (subject to availability) Phone: 01206 262836

To celebrate 100 years of Boxford Village Hall, Boxford Drama Group presents:



The Ghostlight Club

A new comedy/drama by Mike Keith

In 1926 an abandoned theatre stirs into life as the long silent troupe of The Ghostlight Club, gather for the play they were never able to perform due to a mysterious fire...

**Thursday April 23rd, Friday 24th and
Saturday April 25th at 7.30.**

Tickets £10.00 (available from 16th March)
at Boxford Post Office or boxforddramagroup.com



GROTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
PRESENTS



QUIZ AND CURRY EVENING

At
Groton Village Hall

On Friday 17th April 2026 7:30 for 7:45 start

£16.00 per head (entry plus choice of curry & dessert)

Teams of up to 6

B.Y.O. Bar

Raffle - Cash only on Evening please

Phone Joanna: 210619 or Jayne: 211360 to book your place

Pulling Prints

An Exhibition of Emerging Printmakers at Mill Tye Gallery.

Mill Tye Gallery is pleased to present *Pulling Prints*, a vibrant exhibition showcasing original printmaking by emerging artists aged 18-25.

The exhibition is the culmination of a free creative development programme led by Gainsborough's House, with support from Mill Tye Gallery, and highlights the talent, ambition and creative energy of Suffolk's next generation of makers.

Featuring bold, experimental work, *Pulling Prints* brings together artists who have explored both traditional and contemporary printmaking techniques through a series of artist-led workshops. The exhibition reflects a spirit of curiosity and collaboration, with participants pushing the boundaries of print to explore identity, process, material and image-making.



Selected artists include *Eartha Jean, Eleanor Mills, Flo Cameron, Lucy Perry, Maddy McCloskey, Mae Warner, Rowan Collinson and Solo Nichol*. These makers are based locally as well as in Norwich and London, and brings a wide range of creative backgrounds to the exhibition, including fashion, photography, installation and fine art printmaking.

Together, their work offers fresh perspectives and strong individual voices, celebrating print as a dynamic and evolving medium while providing a platform for emerging talent at a pivotal stage in their creative careers.

Exhibition Preview: Saturday 14 March, 10:30am - 6pm

Visitors are warmly invited to join the artists for drinks and nibbles to celebrate the opening of *Pulling Prints*.

**Exhibition Dates: Saturday 14 March - Bank Holiday
Easter Monday 6 April 2026**

Opening Hours: Thursday to Sunday and Bank Holidays
10:30am - 4pm

Free admission. Free parking available in the car park before the level crossing.

Mill Tye Gallery & Arts Centre
3 Cornard Mills, Mill Tye
Great Cornard, Sudbury CO10 0GW
www.milltyegallery.co.uk

THE FLEECE HOTEL

Charity Quiz

Wed 11th	Mar	8PM
Wed 15th	Apr	8PM
Wed 13th	May	8PM
Wed 17th	Jun	8PM
Wed 15th	Jul	8PM
Wed 12th	Aug	8PM
Wed 16th	Sep	8PM
Wed 14th	Oct	8PM
Wed 11th	Nov	8PM
Wed 9th	Dec	8PM

Free to enter, please donate on the night to the charity of the month!

Up to 6 per team | 01787 211 818 to reserve a table

NEW EXHIBITIONS

25 April – 11 October 2026

Gainsborough,
Turner & Constable:
Inventing Landscape

Land, Sky, Light:
New Landscapes
by David Dawson

Kate Giles:
Remember Tomorrow

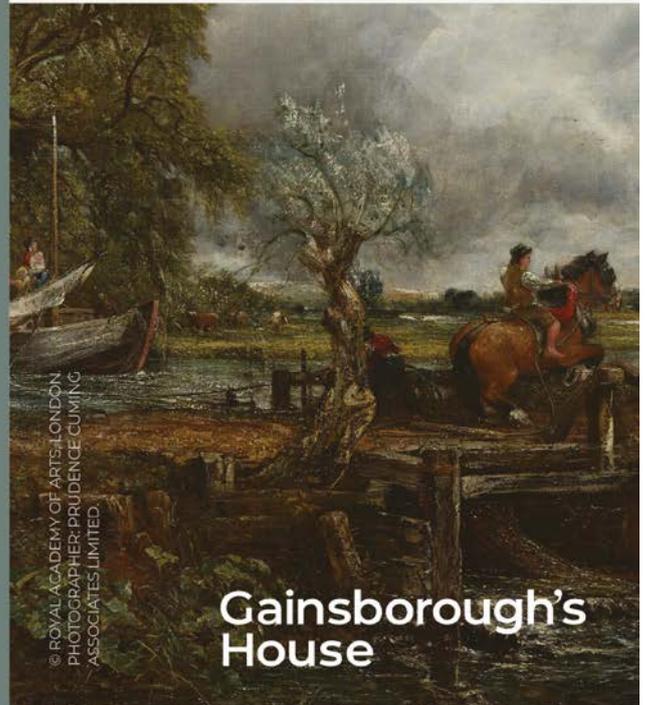
*John Constable
Celebrating 250 years*

Open daily

10am to 4.30pm

📍 Sudbury, Suffolk

www.gainsborough.org



© ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, LONDON
PHOTOGRAPHER: PRUDENCE CUMING
ASSOCIATES LIMITED

**Gainsborough's
House**

LUNCH
INCLUDED

|| GUIDED WALK ||

SAT 13 JUNE
2026

LONDON AT WAR

This is the story of London at War, yet as we walk across the square mile of the City of London we will uncover two millennia of conflict, growth and change across the Capital.

Led by London and Military Historian Clive Harris, we begin at the Roman Wall to discover how the Thames led to the rise of Londinium and how it became the world city based on maritime trade - it was at its height when war broke out in 1939.

The walk passes Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, Old Billingsgate Market, the Bank, the Guildhall, and will end at St Pauls Cathedral, each with its own unique scars and stories connected to the Second World War. Whilst the walk uncovers many of the physical reminders of London during the war, this is also the story of its people and how, from the London Blitz they endured, suffered, adapted, overcame and eventually triumphed to show that London wouldn't be beaten!

Departing: Boxford & Hadleigh

Price: £94.00

Includes: Return Coach Travel, Guided Walk & Lunch at The Phoenix (Whitechapel)

Email: tracey@boxrivertravelboutique.co.uk

Call: 07747 608509



MILL
TYE

MILL TYE GALLERY
AND ARTS CENTRE

Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre

Gainsborough's House Pulling Prints Exhibition March/April 2026/

A vibrant exhibition of original printmaking by artists aged 18–25, developed through a free creative programme led by Gainsborough's House and supported by Mill Tye Gallery.

Gallery Opening on **Saturday 14 March**, 10.30am to 6.00pm

To find out more and to register your interest go to:

www.milltyegallery.co.uk/exhibitions

Mill Tye Gallery and Arts Centre

3 Cornard Mills, Mill Tye, Great Comard, Sudbury, CO10 0GW

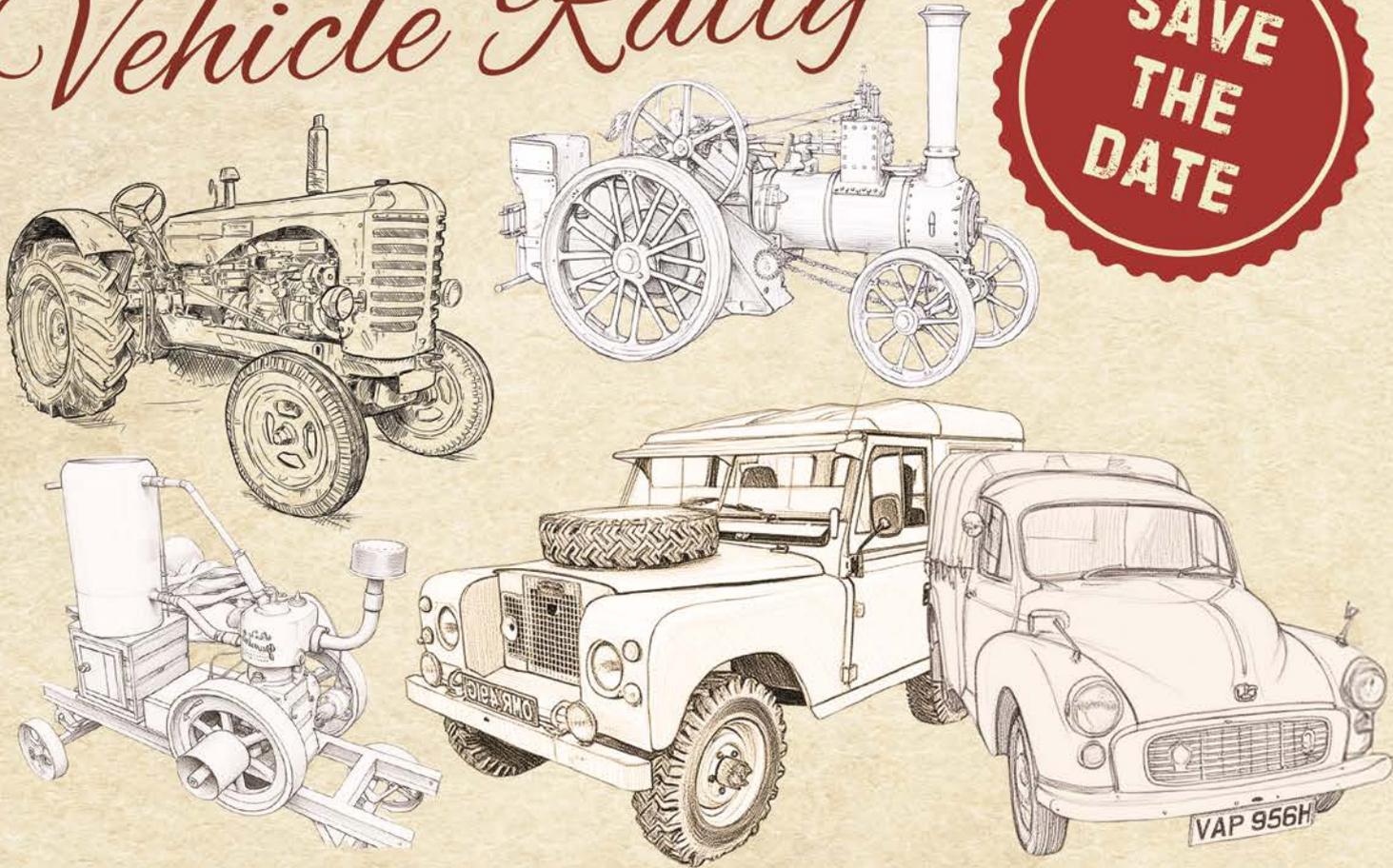
Open: Thursday to Sunday 10.30am to 4pm. Free Admission.



BOXFORD

Vintage & Classic Vehicle Rally

SAVE
THE
DATE



Get ready for an unforgettable showcase of timeless elegance, powerful engines, and vintage style at the 1st Boxford Vintage & Classic Vehicle Rally

4TH & 5TH JULY 2026

BOXFORD, SUFFOLK CO10 5JH
WWW.BOXFORDRALLY.CO.UK

Raising funds for Sulsar :
Suffolk Lowland Search & Rescue

Sponsored by Breakout



Meet the Organiser: James Harvey of the Boxford Vintage & Classic Vehicle Rally

My name is James Harvey and I am organising the Boxford Vintage & Classic Vehicle Rally which will take place on **Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th July 2026** at Hadleigh Road, Boxford. The two-day event is being held in aid of Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue - a charity I have volunteered with for the past 10 years.



James Harvey receives the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service medal from Lady Clare FitzRoy, Countess of Euston. The award recognises more than five years of voluntary service.

Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue supports the emergency services across the county in locating vulnerable missing persons. Having seen the team's dedication and professionalism first hand, it is important to me that the rally helps raise both funds and awareness for its vital work.

I have several years of experience organising vehicle-related events. Between 2022 and 2024, I was Show Organiser for the Suffolk Land Rover Owners Club, during which time more than £25,000 was raised for charitable causes. Events included the Suffolk Show, the Festival of Wheels, and numerous other shows across the county.

Before this, I was involved with the Long Melford Vintage Rally in both commercial and stewarding roles, gaining experience in show operations, exhibitor coordination, and public safety management.

The Boxford Vintage & Classic Vehicle Rally brings together this experience with a cause that is close to my heart. The aim is to deliver a well-organised and welcoming weekend that celebrates vintage and classic vehicles while making a meaningful contribution to Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue.

With Thanks to Our Sponsors and Supporters

A huge thank you goes to our sponsors and supporters whose generosity and backing are helping to make this event possible: Kersey Freight, G Leeks Skip Hire, Ernest Doe, PJH Property Maintenance, Breakout For Business, Byhams Dairy, DAC Education, EA-CAT, Project Seven.

Advertising Opportunities

If you wish to advertise in our event programme or on our website, please email: info@boxfordrally.co.uk

I look forward to welcoming exhibitors, visitors, sponsors, and supporters to Boxford in July 2026, and I would like to thank everyone involved for their support.

Event Information

Rally Dates: Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th July 2026

Location: Hadleigh Road, Boxford

Event website: www.boxfordrally.co.uk

Charity Partner: Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue
www.sulsar.org.uk

Gardeners Question Time with Boxford horticulturalist

Hadleigh Old School is a multi-faceted events venue at 5 Bridge Street IP7 6BY – with adjacent free car parking next to the Iron Bridge (B1070) crossing the River Brett into Hadleigh. On **Thursday 5th March** we will be hosting a special Gardeners Question Time Fundraiser for Benton End and the panel will include Boxford's James Horner, the renowned garden maker and horticulturalist.



James Horner, photo: Jessica MacCormick

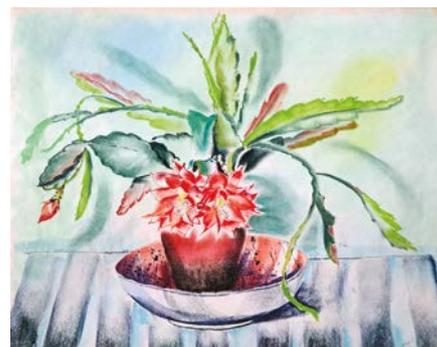
Our host is radio personality and gardening writer Barbara Segall, broadcaster on *Suffolk Sound* and author of *Gardens of East Anglia*. Barbara will be questioning:

- **James Horner**, Head Gardener Benton End House and Gardens
- **Åsa Gregers-Warg**, Head Gardener at Beth Chatto's Plant & Gardens
- **Frank Minns**, Chair, Hidden Gardens of Hadleigh

Doors open 6:30pm for the start of Gardeners Question Time at 7pm. Purchase tickets from www.ticketsource.co.uk (search for Hadleigh Old School). Your generosity will support the revival of Benton End as a new centre of art and horticulture.

Questions for the panel should be submitted in advance of the event, please email hadleigholdschool@gmail.com

Join us after the panel for a complimentary glass of wine and a chance to hear about our upcoming exhibition, *Come Into The Garden Maud*, celebrating the art of Joan 'Maudie' Warburton (1920-1996) a notable British artist and one of the longest serving alumni of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing. Her painting of a flowering succulent is pictured here.



JOIN US FOR A

Tea Dance

Enjoy a delightful afternoon of dancing and conversation with music from 'The Three Chordettes', accompanied by a traditional afternoon tea

04 JULY 2026

3 - 5PM

BOXFORD VILLAGE HALL

Tickets £7.50
on sale from 7th April

For more information contact
info@boxfordvillagehall.co.uk



CLASSIC BRITISH COMEDY NIGHT AT MILDEN PAVILION



**Saturday 21st
March
Bar Open 7pm
Showtime 7.30pm**

Actors from Red House Murder Mysteries perform radio play episodes from the nations favourite comedy shows.



Tickets £20
email: info@mildenvpavilion.co.uk
or via
www.mildencomedieventbrite.co.uk

Evening to include
Licensed Bar
Raffle
Charcuterie sharing platters
during the interval.

in aid of
Milden Pavilion
Church Road
Milden
IP7 7AF

www.mildenvpavilion.co.uk

Registered Charity No 304919



GROTON HISTORY SOCIETY

MAR
27



**SECRET
INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE MI6**



'The Secret World: Successes and Limitations'

Dr Michael J Reynolds

29 yrs SIS / MI6, former Head of Berlin Station, co founder of Hakluyt & Co Intelligence Bureau.

@ Groton Village Hall: 19:30 - 21:30

£5 entry, includes Glass of Wine
(Students free)

French's Care Haven March Walk

Walk with Lucy, our therapy dog!
SUNDAY, 29th MARCH at 11.00AM
Everyone welcome – No need to bring a dog!

From French's Care Haven
Mannings Farm Barn, Groton, CO10 5EU

£5 per adults – includes hot drink and cakes 



 2–2.5 miles

 approx 1 hour

 Free parking

 All profits go to the
care of our rescue
animals

Book in advance: frenchs.100club@gmail.com

 Sharon: 07999 051401

Boxford Study Centre Literature Group

A 6 week course on Mondays 2:30 - 4:30pm
Meeting in Groton Village Hall, CO10 5EL
Starting on Monday February 23rd 2026

Great Pretenders

Tutor: Mrs Alison Davidson

This Term we shall be studying four classic texts
which feature deceptions.

February 23rd	The Merchant's Tale	Chaucer c1390
March 2nd	Othello	Shakespeare c1603
March 9th	<i>Reading Week</i>	
March 16th	Volpone	Ben Jonson 1606
March 23rd	Volpone	Ben Jonson 1606
March 30th	Hard Times	Charles Dickens 1854

Course Fee: £50 for the complete course,
payable on the first or second meeting.
£10 for each single class.

Newcomers to these classes are very welcome.

Please contact Mr David Jones for further information
and if you are interested in attending.
Telephone 01787 211104.

Brent Eleigh Spring Quiz Night

The Brent Eleigh Spring Quiz is on **Saturday 28th March**, 7pm for 7:30pm start.

There will be donations bar, a raffle, and of course the famous Brent Eleigh meal of chilli and baked potato (vegetarian option available), served in the interval.

Quiz master Kevin will have the usual mix of questions. Please get your teams together and join in a good fun evening. Even if you don't have your own table please just let me know and I am sure there will be a table you can join.

Tickets are £12 per person with between six to eight people per table.

Please ring Karen on 07946 209103 to let us know in advance for catering reasons, but we would really love to see you!

Polstead Gardening Club

Our next two meetings in 2026 are:

Tuesday 17th March at 7:30pm: A talk about *Cutting Gardens and Flower Arranging* by Helen Hillier, Helen Herbaceous

Tuesday 21st April at 7:30pm: A talk about *'Garden Design'* by Francesca Green, *Green Eye Garden Design*

All meetings are held at Polstead Village Hall on The Green in Polstead (CO6 5AL). Free to members.

Non-members are welcome £5 (cash or cheque please). Entrance includes a drink and nibbles. Membership Subscriptions are due in February - Single Membership £20 Joint Membership £35 and we very much welcome new Members. Queries: gardeningclubpolstead@yahoo.com.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Edwardstone Christmas Fair 2026

With *Spring busting out all over*, our thoughts have started to turn to the rest of the year - in particular, the Christmas Fair at Edwardstone Church.

It's on **November 5th & 6th** and we already have several stalls signed up.

Although it's a tried and tested format, we're always open to new ideas and suggestions as well as any offers of help beforehand or at the event.

If you know of any small local businesses you think might like to take part, tell them to get in touch!

Contact Diana: dianahawke@btinternet.com or 07790 272393

Easter Fun at Hollow Trees

Tales on the Trail this Easter at Hollow Trees Farm! Available from **Saturday 28th March to Sunday 12th April** (please note we will be closed on Easter Sunday, 5th April).

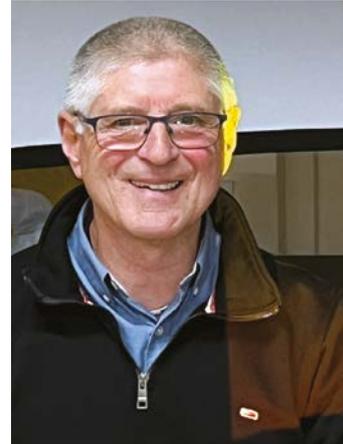
We are bringing some of your beloved and favourite fairy tales to life as we celebrate Easter on our farm trail. From Humpty Dumpty to Goldilocks and the Three Bears, there is a tale for everyone.

Spend the holidays with us and enjoy some classic farm fun and meet our animals. Our activity field will be open so make sure you stop by and take your turn on the Barrel Train and Cresta Run Sledges.

We hope to see you then!

Boxford WI Update

This month members enjoyed a very interesting and detailed account of Andrew Barlow's time with the East of England Ambulance Service and the origins of the



service. He shared some of the stories from his 43 years of service with this emergency service. Some touching, some funny and how the service has evolved over the years. He also brought along his uniform and badges which he had earned during his career.

Members have also been busy making poppies for the charity *'Standing with Giants'*. In 2024 the WI supported this charity by creating knitted and

crocheted red poppies for their *'For You Tomorrow'* display. In total 37,000 poppies were sent in from WI members across the country and formed a central part of a display

around the 18 soldier stillage crates in Normandy. *'Standing with Giants'* are now planning the restoration of this project which involves carefully removing all poppies for cleaning and, where possible, reapplying them. However, after prolonged exposure to the elements a



number need replacing. Therefore the charity have asked WI members to craft additional poppies for their display. We are proud to be sending over 60 poppies to the charity.

If you are interested in joining the WI why not come along come along to the village hall on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm where you will receive a warm welcome.

- Dining Divas (lunch group)
- Chatterbox (afternoon with tea and cake)
- Knit and Natter
- Book club

For more information please contact our Secretary, Lyn Beer on **07961 357526** or email lyn@the-brook.net.

Polstead Community Shop CIC 100 Club

Become a member of the Polstead 100 Club for just £30 a year and enjoy the chance to win a cash prize every month. Three prizes are drawn monthly - £50, £25 and £12.50 - with an additional £75 bonus prize awarded in June and December. Application forms are available from Polstead Community Shop, or you can contact Anita Hair on 07894 909181 for more information.



THE CROWN
BILDESTON

*The ultimate estate-to-plate
dining experience*

POP IN FOR BREAKFAST

Monday - Friday 7-10am
Weekends 8 - 10am
Book a table and join us...

LUNCH IN MARCH

Monday - Friday, 12pm - 2.30pm
Three courses £25

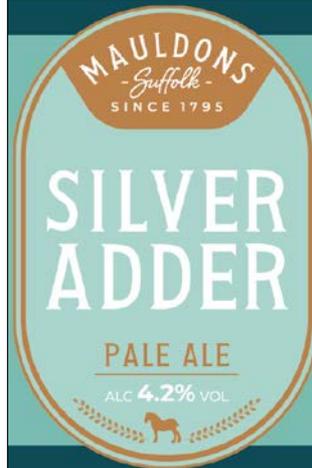
THURSDAY STEAK NIGHT

8oz Steaks *from 6pm*

www.thebildestoncrown.com/

MAULDONS
- Suffolk -

BREWING AWARD-WINNING BEERS SINCE 1795



**SUFFOLK'S
SUPER
PALE ALE**

A MAULDONS FIRST.
LIMITED
PRE-RELEASE CAN

13 Church Field Rd, Sudbury CO10 2YA
01787 311055 | www.mauldons.co.uk



HOLLOW
TREES
FARM

EASTER AT HOLLOW TREES FARM
TALES ON THE TRAIL

SATURDAY 28TH MARCH - SUNDAY 12TH APRIL
CLOSED EASTER SUNDAY (5TH APRIL)

Bringing your favourite fairy tales to life this Easter...

Explore our Farm Trail, meet the animals
and enjoy some classic farm fun

Don't miss your turn on the Barrell Train and
Cresta Run Sledges in our Activity Field



SCAN TO
BOOK YOUR
TICKETS

HANSEL AND GRETEL

Goldilocks and the
Three Bears

RAFANZEL

EMPTY QUINITY

**PRE BOOKED
TICKETS
£8.50 PER PERSON**

2 YEARS & UNDER FREE

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Nedging Hall Estate buys The Angel

Nedging Hall Estate is a family-owned country estate, covering 5,000 acres deep in the beautiful Suffolk countryside, between Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich. The estate is a collection of hospitality businesses and includes The Crown in Bildeston - an award-winning pub with rooms focusing on estate-to-plate dining, The Lindsey Rose - a Suffolk country pub, Nedging Hall - an exclusive-use country house and Mauldons Brewery.



Husband and wife team Charles & Harriet Buckle announce *"We are thrilled to have purchased The Angel. It has been serving the village of Lavenham since it was first licensed in 1420. We have a considerable amount of work to do but we can't wait to open the doors once more"*

Harriet, who grew up in Lavenham and has always loved The Angel says *"To now own The Angel in the beautiful market town of Lavenham surrounded by so much heritage is a dream come true - we are so pleased to be joining this wonderful community."*

A Collection with Purpose

The estate is incredibly proud of their Suffolk roots and want to breathe life back into a once-thriving pub. The pub will go through a period of transition with extensive building works throughout. You'll find local Mauldons ales on tap when The Angel reopens - the brewery has been a key part of Nedging Hall Estate since 2019.

Charles, Managing Director of Nedging Hall Estate concludes: *"We are confident that The Angel will be a great addition to Lavenham once more. It's an exciting time for Nedging Hall Estate as we expand our offering into a thriving town."*

Boxford Village Hall

Exciting Updates at Boxford Village Hall - A New Kitchen and a Centenary Year to Celebrate!

There is plenty of exciting news to share from Boxford Village Hall as we step into a very special year for our community space.

Over the past few months, we have been hard at work renovating the hall's kitchen and we are absolutely delighted with the transformation. The old floor has been replaced, a completely new kitchen installed and the space refreshed with new worktops and splashbacks, creating a bright, modern and practical area that will better serve the community.



We are very grateful that the funds raised at one of last year's quiz nights at The Fleece were able to contribute towards the project. Community support like this plays an important part in helping us maintain and improve the hall, and we truly appreciate everyone who helped.

This year is particularly special as we celebrate the village hall's centenary. For 100 years the hall has been a place where our community has come together, and we're excited to mark this milestone with a series of fantastic events.

We kick off our centenary celebrations with Boxford Drama Group's production of *The Ghostlight Club* on 23rd, 24th and 25th April. We are thrilled to have this feature as part of our birthday year, and we hope it will be the first of many memorable occasions.

Then on 4th July, we invite you to join us for a delightful Afternoon Tea Dance. There will be live music from The Three Chordettes, plenty of dancing, and a traditional afternoon tea - the perfect way to celebrate summer while honouring 100 years of community spirit.

We will be sharing more details about all of our centenary events in the BRN, on our social media channels, and via our website, so please keep an eye out.

This milestone year is not just about looking back at the hall's history, but about celebrating the people who

have made it such a special place - and those who will continue to do so in the future. We look forward to the whole community coming together to celebrate the village hall's 100th birthday and to making many more memories in the years ahead.

Jessie's Marathon Madness

I was lucky enough to get a London Marathon place this year to run for *Meningitis Now*, a charity that means a huge amount to our family.

My daughter, Xanthe, contracted pneumococcal meningitis as a baby and was critically ill. She has been left profoundly learning and physically disabled as a result of the damage that it caused. She is a warrior 18 year old now but life is still very challenging for her (full story on my just giving page).

Meningitis Now have been an amazing support for us as a family and I wanted to do something to repay them for all their help.



I'm training hard for the event and testing out my Mary Poppins outfit, as you can see in the photo!

I would be so grateful if you were willing to have a look at my just giving page, as below, and make a donation for my marathon cause. Every donation makes a huge difference to the care and support that the charity can give families like ours, especially coming to terms with the affects of this devastating illness.

Thank you very much.

Jess

www.justgiving.com/page/jessie-carter

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The Suffolk View

Constable, Gainsborough & the Suffolk landscape we know today

If you take a walk along the River Box, pause on a footpath above the Stour, or look out across winter fields waiting for spring, you are standing in a landscape that has quietly shaped artists for centuries.

This spring, Gainsborough's House in Sudbury opens a new exhibition programme that brings that idea into focus, not as distant art history, but as something rooted in the fields, skies and rivers many of us know well.

To mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of John Constable, the gallery is

presenting a major exhibition exploring the emergence of landscape painting in Britain through the work of three artists closely tied to Suffolk - Thomas Gainsborough, John Constable and JMW Turner.

Alongside this historic exhibition sit two contemporary shows by artists still working from direct experience of the landscape today. It is a reminder that Suffolk's countryside has long been more than a backdrop; it has been a source of observation, reflection and inspiration.

Constable was born just a few miles away in East Bergholt and famously described how deeply the landscape of this area shaped his way of seeing.

Above:

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), Landscape with Cattle, a Young Man Courting a Milkmaid, early 1770s. Oil on canvas. Private collection.



“The rivers, lanes and skies of this part of the county were not simply painted; they were lived with, walked through, and returned to repeatedly.”

He once wrote that he could see Gainsborough “in every hedge and hollow tree”, acknowledging the influence of his Suffolk predecessor. The rivers, lanes and skies of this part of the county were not simply painted; they were lived with, walked through, and returned to repeatedly.

The exhibition at Gainsborough’s House brings together rare works by Gainsborough, Constable and Turner,

many of which are seldom seen, alongside paintings and drawings by their contemporaries. Together, they chart a shift in how landscape was understood - not as an idealised scene, but as something observed closely and shaped by weather, season and light.

For local visitors, there is something quietly powerful about encountering these works so close to where they were first imagined. The fields beyond

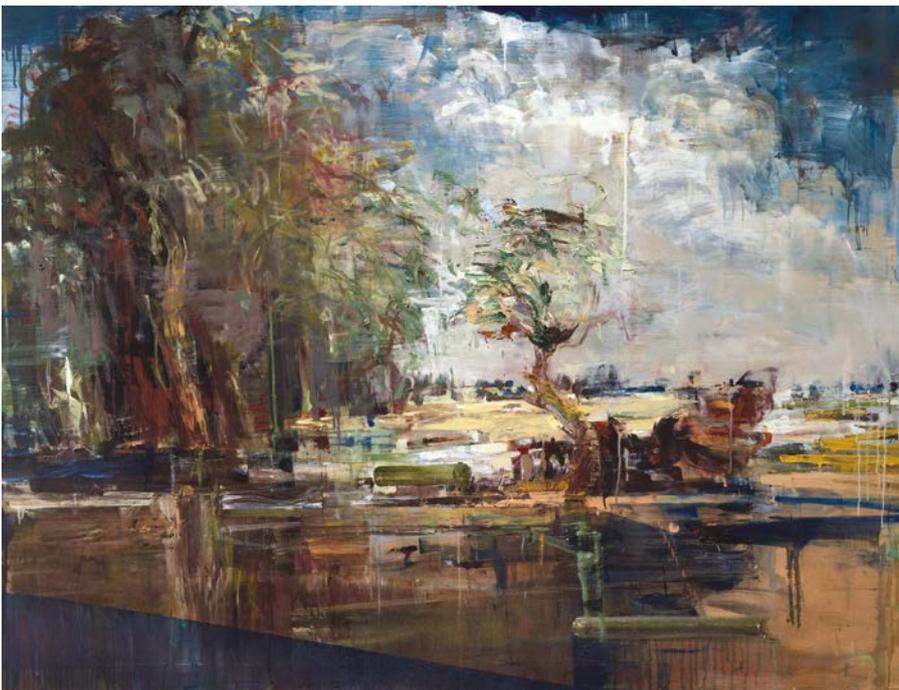
Above:

John Constable (1776-1837),
The Leaping Horse, 1825. Oil on canvas. Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Right:

JMW Turner (1775-1851),
Abergavenny Bridge, Monmouthshire: Clearing up After a Showery Day, 1799. Pencil and watercolour. Private collection..





Above:
David Dawson (b. 1960), Perfect light, 2025. Oil on canvas.

Left:
Kate Giles, Leaping Horse Study III, 2025. Charcoal, oilstick and oil on paper.

the gallery walls are not so different from those captured on canvas two hundred years ago. The same big skies still roll across the Stour Valley; the same sense of movement and change is there if you stop long enough to notice.

What makes this exhibition programme particularly timely is the way it opens a conversation between past and present. Alongside the historic works are two contemporary exhibitions by artists responding to landscape in their own ways today.

David Dawson's paintings, created outdoors in the Welsh countryside

across different seasons, are built slowly through observation and return. Painted first in the open air and then worked on over time, they reflect a deep attentiveness to light, weather and the experience of being in the land. His work shares something with Constable's belief that the sky governs everything.

Closer to home, Suffolk-born artist Kate Giles presents new work rooted in the landscapes of East Anglia. Her paintings are expressive and physical, shaped by familiarity with place and by repeated looking. Like Constable before her, she returns to the same

stretches of river and land, allowing something new to emerge each time.

Together, these exhibitions invite visitors to think about landscape not as something fixed, but as something continually experienced and reinterpreted by artists and by those of us who live alongside it.

For villages just a short drive from Sudbury, this feels like an invitation rather than an occasion - an opportunity to reconnect with familiar surroundings through fresh eyes, and to see how artists across centuries have responded to the same fields, rivers and skies that frame daily life here.

As spring approaches and the days lengthen, this opening chapter of the exhibition programme offers a thoughtful place to begin - a moment to pause, look again, and recognise the extraordinary within the everyday landscape we call home.

The exhibition programme opens at Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, on 25 April and runs until 11 October 2026.



Natural Boxford

A brief look at Suffolk's woodlands and native trees

It's been so wet that you'll definitely need your wellies for a wander around the woods at the moment: early spring can be a surprisingly beautiful time to visit. We have several protected areas of woodland in Suffolk although they are all rather small, reflecting the fact that the UK is one of the least wooded countries in Europe with only around 12% woodland cover - more than half of which is timber plantation and only 1.2% is semi-natural ancient woodland. Unfortunately conifer plantations offer little for wildlife or other native flora, whereas true woodland provides rich habitats. Most woodland we see today has been impacted by humans – only very few untouched truly 'wild' woods remain, mostly in inaccessible places.

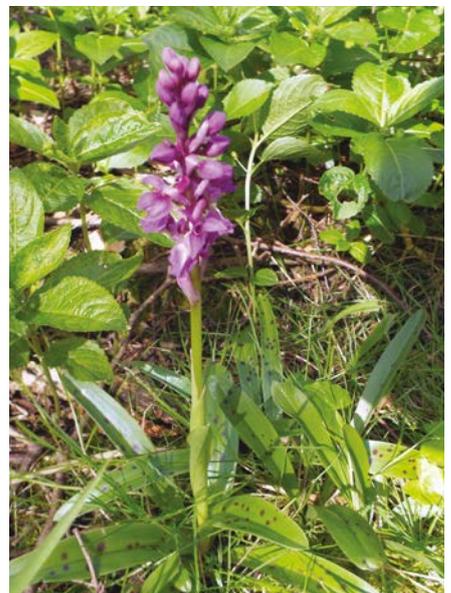
In Suffolk, we have ancient woodland - classified as having been present since at least 1600AD. Many in Suffolk are 800 years old, with a few ancient trees dating to more than a thousand years old. Some is broad-leaved woodland, the trees having leaves

that are broad and different shapes rather than needles. They are mostly deciduous, meaning they lose their leaves in autumn. There is also wet woodland with trees such as willows, birches and alder that thrive in poorly drained or seasonally-flooded soils which contribute significantly to natural flood management.

Other native trees in our woodland are: Field Maple, English Oak, Hazel, Willow, Hornbeam, Black Poplar (rare), Lime, Small Leaved Lime (rare), Ash, Beech, Wild Cherry and Holly.

Visiting the woods in winter and spring gives a great opportunity to view the structure of trees more clearly than when they are in leaf. It is helpful to use a good reference book or spotter's guide to help with identification or a more scientific 'key' which takes you through a process of identification and elimination to land on the species you are looking at - whether in-situ or via a collected twig and photos. As well as the structure and shape of the tree,

its bark, twigs, buds, catkins, flowers, leaves and berries are considered in addition to whether it is deciduous or evergreen (eg Holly).





To stay healthy woodland needs to be looked after to maintain space, light and variety: this is now mostly carried out by human intervention but in times past would have been a function of the large herbivores roaming the land. Something to look out for in the woods is signs of pollarding and coppicing: two methods which both harvest wood and prolong the life and health of the tree. Most woodland trees can be pollarded -the upper branches are cut off which allows dense new growth without compromising the stability of the tree. It often results in the tree living longer than unpollarded ones and it will develop creviced and cracked bark which is valuable habitat for many insects, birds, owls and bats as well as providing fertile growing conditions for mosses and lichens.

Coppicing is a slightly different process usually applied to hazel, ash and lime, whereby the branches are cut down to the ground leaving a 'stool' from which new branches sprout. You can see recent evidence of this up in Groton Wood. Another aspect of healthy woodland management is to leave plenty of dead wood around as it supports a wealth of insects, moths, butterflies and fungi.

Have you had a walk in any of these well-known and loved Suffolk woods? Wolves Wood, Groton Wood, Captain's Wood, Bull's Wood, Bradfield Wood, Arger Fen and Spouse's Vale? Some species of woodland flower can take a very long time to establish, so if you find a carpet of wood anemone you know you are in ancient woodland. Spring is the time to see stunning arrays of anemone, as well as violets, cowslips, celandines, primroses, orchids, oxslips and of course English bluebells - these all give off delicate scents that contribute to that feeling of spring.

Native woodland supports birds, bats, badgers, deer, foxes, hares, mice, voles and amphibians - providing cover, shade, water from ponds and food. You never quite know what you might meet round the corner, or who might wander past if you sit still and quiet for a while enjoying the bird song.

The benefits of woodland and the trees they contain are well documented, particularly in relation to health - both our own individual human health and the wider health of our planetary ecosystem. Woodlands soak up about a third of the carbon dioxide emitted by cars in the UK, and woodland soils sequester even more.



Pictured opposite from top:

Looking up into a winter tree canopy, bare branches etched against a clear blue sky.

Early purple orchid emerging on the woodland floor in spring.

This page from top:

Lichen and moss thriving on tree bark in Groton Wood, an indicator of clean air and healthy woodland.

A carpet of wildflowers in Groton Wood, signalling the arrival of spring in ancient woodland.

Tree cover helps keep temperatures down, their root systems hold water in the soil preventing flooding and they provide us with the life sustaining oxygen we rely on.

Despite this, precious woodland is still being destroyed (e.g. HS2 construction, Sizewell C construction) and faces many challenges. As demand for wood for tools and crafts declined many woodlands were left unmanaged leading to a lack of trees at different stages of growth and therefore opportunities for animals to thrive. The fragmentation of woodland destroyed for building projects leads to islands of extinction for the species that would otherwise be able to thrive in a larger intact area and decreases the viability of the woods itself. They are also under attack from overgrazing by large deer populations which reduces young tree growth, and assists diseases like ash dieback. So it is vitally important that our existing and surviving areas of woodland are protected and looked after.

Luckily, there is wide and growing interest in planting new woodland too. We have a wonderful example here in Boxford - Primrose Wood, planted by the community in 1998, which has grown well and fast and has since been added to and is currently looked after by the Woodland Trust. There is a lot to be considered in creating a woodland so if you have land and would like to plant woodland trees it is a good idea to seek advice from the woodland and wildlife trusts who are more than happy to assist and also have guides on how to manage woodlands.

Maybe see you in the woods one day!

*Much love,
Louise, on behalf of the
Natural Boxford group.*



Jackie Ha joins The Crown

Owned and managed by Nedging Hall Estate, The Crown at Bildeston is well-recognised within the Suffolk food scene. Known for its fabulous dining, The Crown welcomes Jackie Ha to the team as General Manager.

Jackie comes with experience at some of the best gastropubs in the country, including managing The Unruly Pig, twice named the number one gastropub in the country.



Estate-to-Plate

The Crown takes its estate-to-plate dining seriously with produce picked from their own kitchen gardens or sourced locally. The garden team at Nedging Hall and the talented team of chefs at The Crown work together to create an incredible dining experience focused on seasonality.

With a team of full-time gardeners, The Crown ensures the best homegrown produce is used within the pub. The front-of-house team at The Crown are aware of their 'estate-to-plate' ethos and are happy to talk to everyone about where their produce comes from.

Proud of our Suffolk Roots

The countryside of Suffolk is something the whole team feel incredibly proud of and want to look after for generations to come. People warm to The Crown's friendly service and genuine commitment to environmental and social responsibility.

Jackie remarks, *"The Crown is one of the best spots to dine in Suffolk. It's not just the food offering, but the pub has such a warm and welcoming atmosphere, with a roaring fire in the winter months and real ales from our own brewery. I knew I wanted to be part of it."*

Award-winning Dining

Last year, The Crown was recognised as the East Anglian Daily Times Sustainability and Environmental Business of the Year, an incredible achievement for a hospitality business. It was recently awarded Velvet Magazine Suffolk Pub of the Year. Executive Chef Grieg Young has also just been named a finalist in the Suffolk Magazine Food & Drink Awards, Chef of the Year 2025. The Crown has its sights set on being one of the best gastropubs in the country.

Charles Buckle, Managing Director of Nedging Hall Estate, commented:

"There are hundreds of places to eat in Suffolk; it's an incredible county that we're all proud of. The Crown is all about local food, comfy rooms, a beautiful pub, and top-class chefs. Our front of house team is second to none and we wanted to find someone who would lead us to great things, whilst remembering the little touches that The Crown does so well."

The Crown has recently launched a February Special Lunch, a 3-course set menu for £25 between 12 and 2.30pm, Monday to Friday.

French's Care Haven

Sunday 29th March is fast approaching for our dog walk, which everyone who has joined us on previous walks has enjoyed. Please meet at French's base in Castling Heath at 11am for the walk. People with or without dogs are very welcome. On our return there will be drinks, tea, and cakes, and we kindly ask for £5 per person. You can also meet our animals.



In our photo are two of our lovely horses, Faith and Boris. Boris will be 15 years old on 12th March, and Faith will be 25 years old on 21st March. Also not in the picture is Skinny, who will be 27 years old on 21st March. If you would like to come along, meet the horses, and make a birthday donation, please contact me to arrange a time and day.

We are still desperately looking for 20 to 30 acres of grazing land within approximately a 10 mile radius of this area and Hadleigh or Polstead, if possible.

Do you own land and are able to sell to us? Do you know someone who does and could help? Could you put feelers out for us, please, and contact me if you have any ideas, know of someone to approach, or are in a position to sell.

We are also preparing for when we do move, as we have a lot of belongings to take with us. We will need hands and vehicles to help us, so if you have any time to spare please call me. If you own, or know of, a business that could sponsor or help with our move, that would be brilliant.

I will be going back on BBC Suffolk radio and in the East Anglian Daily Times, as well as on our website and Facebook page, once we find somewhere. I would be happy to promote your business in return for your help.

We have opened a GoFundMe page to try to raise much needed funds for the move, as it is going to be a huge financial challenge. With just our field shelters alone needing to be taken down, moved, and put back up, we are being quoted thousands and thousands of pounds. Go to: <https://tinyurl.com/frenchs-relocation-fundraiser> or you can visit our website and click on the GoFundMe link, or donate through our PayPal.

Any financial help you can give would be very much appreciated by all our animals and the people we support through our charity. We need an army of volunteers and professionals to help with the move and the new set up. Please call me.

Jann

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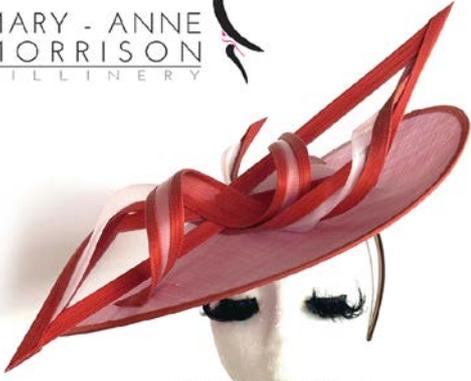
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Life at the Shelley Centre

Caring for our horses through winter & into spring

Spring is starting to feel like it might be just around the corner, which will be very welcome after all the rain we had earlier in the year. Wet weather is no fun at The Shelley Centre for Therapeutic Riding. The fields can get churned up, rugs get wet and muddy and any part of a horse not covered with a rug stands a high chance of being covered in mud instead.

But one of the real issues that the centre has faced over the winter - along with many other horse owners - has been the rising cost of hay. Last year's dry summer meant lower yields of hay, bringing higher prices now. For those who have visited The Shelley Centre it may come as a surprise that all our equines are fed hay in winter, when we are fortunate enough to have extensive grazing for them. But our fields have to be managed carefully to ensure the horses remain healthy and happy and in cold weather horses need extra food to stay warm.

Our fields are divided into smaller fields so that each horse has its own space, while still having their friends

close by and some of the fields are able to rest and recover. This will be critical after this winter. The grass won't grow if the temperature is under eight degrees Celsius and is also less nutritious in the winter, meaning hay is an essential supplement to the diet. But even when the spring grass starts to come through this can bring its own issues. The new grass can be very high in sugars, which can cause health problems too. Rotating our grazing throughout the year helps to look after the land - we are currently in the middle of a five-year plan that will renovate the condition of the soil and grass - and keeps the equines' diets healthy.

Which brings us back to the need to supplement with hay. If you have visited our JustGiving page recently at www.justgiving.com/charity/shelleyrda (and thank you so much if you have) you may have noticed that one of the suggested amounts will allow us to buy a bale of hay. You might also see a link from that page to a fundraiser by Emily Walker who's the mum of seven-year-

Above from left: *Tiny Tim enjoying his winter hay.*

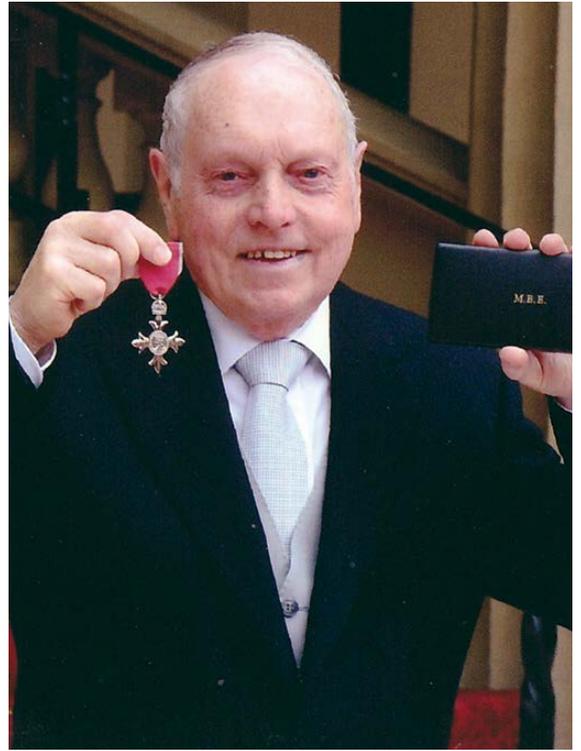
Seven-year-old Poppy riding Thomas, who is challenging herself to raise £1,000 for the Shelley Centre in 2026.

old rider Poppy. Poppy is hoping to raise £1,000 for the Shelley Centre in 2026. That will help our hay supplies considerably. We'll update on how she's getting on throughout the year, but by the time you read this she'll have completed her first challenge of a ten-mile bike ride.

You can also find out more about our work by visiting www.shelleyrda.com or find us on Facebook - Shelley RDA Centre.

www.shelleyrda.com
01473 824172





Cecil Hughes MBE 1926–2018

*Boxfordian, builder, soldier & community champion.
A life recorded in the **Boxford Society Archive***

Cecil Hughes was born 100 years ago on May 19th 1926 at No. 6 Stone Street Road, Boxford. Jessie Mary Griggs, his mother, had married his father George Henry Hughes in 1903. They lived in a small cottage bearing the inscription I.S. 1841 which refers to the builder



Isaac Strutt, nephew of Isaac Strutt, who features in the Box River News June 2025.

His paternal grandmother died when Cecil's dad, George, was eight, so Cecil's grandfather walked his children to Serner Workhouse and left them there so that he could still go to work. The workhouse gave an inadequate formal education to Cecil's

father George and siblings. Once George married, Cecil's mother took charge of all written and accounting business in the household. When George and his siblings grew older, the children, one girl (Laura) and four boys, walked to Yorkshire for work. The two boys remained and made a life for themselves in Yorkshire while the others returned to Boxford. This must have been before 1903, since Laura later went to Australia and was shipwrecked off the Indian coast on the way.

Above:

Cecil Hughes receives his MBE from Queen Elizabeth II. Left: the medal is presented. Right: Cecil displays his MBE following the investiture.

Far left:

Cecil's mother, who was educated at Boxford School.

Left:

Cecil's maternal grandmother, Mrs Clackson, who lived next door.



Clockwise from top left:
 Studio photograph of Cecil aged 12 months, 1927. A rosy-cheeked, well-fed little boy.

Cecil's sister Hettie in a cloche hat, clearly a fashionable young woman. She later married and had five children. Cecil visited them often in East Hanningfield, Essex.

Cecil and his sister Agnes. He had four older sisters and one brother. A seventh child, Gertie, died at three months from burns sustained when a hot coal flew from the fire.

Cecil was very close to his friend Joan Gant, who lived next door at her grandmother's house. Sadly, she died soon after this photograph was taken.

Cecil was the youngest of seven children. His maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Clackson, lived next door. He had a strong attachment to his siblings who were all older than him. Hettie, the eldest, was much loved by him and his early years were often spent in Essex with her children who were of similar age to Cecil. He was mainly educated at Boxford Voluntary Church School, but spent many spells at schools in Purleigh and East Hanningfield, Essex where his married sisters Hettie and Agnes lived. He went there with his mother when she attended her daughters and their newborns as each family steadily grew.

Cecil's first memories:
"The first thing I remember is going with my brother David to Rectory Park

to help him feed the chickens and a big cockerel, who was as high as me at the time. It attacked me and knocked me to the ground. David had to come to my rescue. I was only two years old."

"When I was four I was playing outside the house with Joan Gant, my friend, and we decided to go indoors. We heard a horse out of control racing down the road from the Stone Street direction with my brother hanging on to it. He had been ploughing with it when an entanglement occurred, the horse bolted and David was thrown to the ground by the time it reached Boxford main street. He spent a year in hospital recovering." Sadly he never fully recovered.

"Only once do I remember having

to stand in the corner as punishment for misbehaving in class. I was about 12. Basil Smith and Johnny Munson took my toy sparking gun from me and would not let me pass to my seat, so we had a scuffle. [Desks used to have fixed seating and accommodated two, but were often pushed together end to end against a wall so three people had to climb over others or disturb them all for access to their seat. Scuffles were not uncommon!] The teacher took my gun away. She said, 'You three can stand in the corner for the rest of the day until you behave yourselves and you, Cecil, will get your gun back when I am satisfied with your behaviour.' I got it the next day." Cecil also remembers Miss Sillitoe, his teacher, putting one lozenge on the desk of





One winter night he was accosted by an unknown man. He was so terrified, having been warned by his father about 'bogeymen', he dashed into his friend Fred Fletcher's garden and hid by the back door before rushing home later to his own house a few yards away. Cecil was brought up in the Church of England faith and was in the choir as well as earning £2 a year for pumping air for the organ.

In the lead-up to World War II there were fears that the Germans would attack the UK with poison gas. Cecil was 12 in 1938 when the government

Above:

Cecil's sister Dolly (third daughter, Dorothy) at Boxford School in the early 1920s. Cecil was not yet born. She is third from the left, second row from the front. Like many of the children, she appears sad, in stark contrast to later photographs in which she looks full of joy. The Village Hall had not yet been built (erected 1926), and the site was still covered with trees from the 'Plantation'.

Left:

Cecil on Agnes's bike.

Cecil's paternal aunt Laura emigrated to Australia and married there after being shipwrecked en route. She is pictured on her way to the post office, having clearly done well in her new home despite losing everything in the shipwreck.

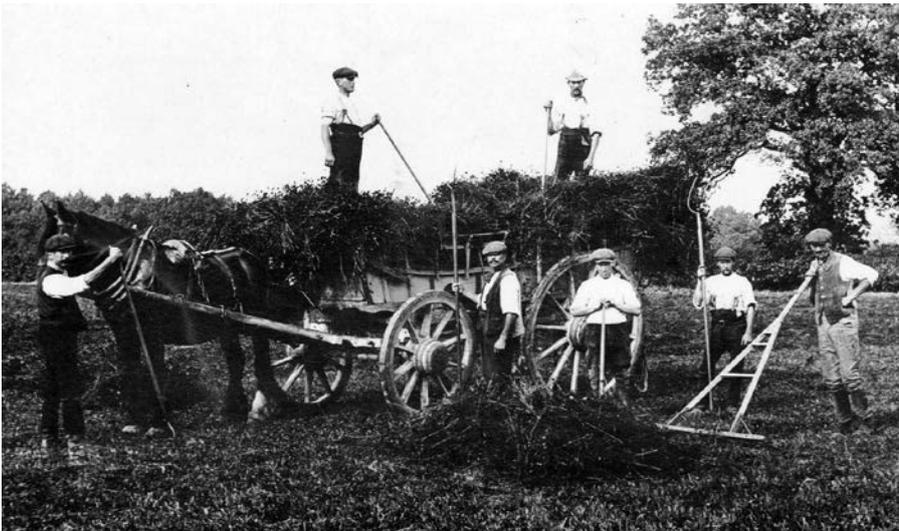
each pupil on Monday mornings and they had to be good to get that weekly treat!

There were a few bullies about and one day he had his left arm twisted behind his back by a perpetual bully. Cecil was unusually angry and launched a blind thrust over his shoulder with his right which hit the bully's nose. A lot of howling and bleeding took place as well as threats about getting his mother to sort Cecil out, but he never bullied Cecil again. A further memory is of underage boys visiting the White Hart pub where they could get lemonade and crisps even though they were not permitted inside.



issued respirators to every man, woman and child in the nation. More than 40 million gas masks were issued. Cecil recalls the gas mask drill in school and taking cover under their desks every time even a British plane flew over the village. Once evacuee children arrived to stay in Boxford, the local children went to school in the mornings and the London children in the afternoons. As there was still not enough space, the room over the coach arch at Chequers in Church Street was also used as a classroom.

At 14 Cecil left school to work at



Matthews & Leach, seed growers, then on to Alf Peachey's the village newsagents and bakers. At 15 he broke his ankle while playing around in a crab-apple fight and falling off a straw stack at Raynham's Farm where The Causeway now lies. He was off work for 17 weeks but received £1 a week from a benefit fund he had paid into. At 16 he graduated to driving Peachey's van for deliveries.

In 1942, when Cecil was 16, boys were expected to join the Home Guard or Air Training Corps. Cecil was a keen cadet member of 1287 Squadron Air Training Corps in Hadleigh. He got a lot of flight experience with the local RAF and USAAF as well as square bashing drill and Morse Code training. He trained as an air gunner and wireless operator. It all came in handy when he joined the Army in 1944 at 18 years old.

After a short basic training he joined the Suffolk Regiment in Bury St Edmunds. After three more months he left for France with the Reinforcement Group in February 1945. He then took part in the Allied push over the Rhine in March 1945. Here at the gathering point on the west bank of the Rhine, he experienced the reality of war with the terrible sound of heavy artillery

shelling, aircraft overhead, sleeping rough, praying for safety the next day, burying the dead of both sides and the shocking fact that German prisoners in British hands could be dispatched for a very aggressive attitude. It was a learning experience that influenced how he decided he would react if captured. ("Arrogance is not wise under capture").



The Allied push over the Rhine in WWII culminated in Operation Plunder (March 23-24, 1945), a massive river crossing by the British 21st Army Group and US 9th Army, supported by the airborne Operation Varsity, marking a decisive final invasion into Germany. As the 6th Airborne Division flew over head, Cecil and his comrades were told they were going to join them as part of the push through Germany. That night he slept on straw in a barn.

Operation Plunder was a military operation to cross the Rhine on the night of 23 March 1945, launched by the 21st Army Group under Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery. The crossing of the river was at Rees, Wesel, and south of the river Lippe by the British 2nd Army under Lieutenant General Miles Dempsey, and the US 9th Army under Lieutenant General William H. Simpson.

Operation Varsity (March 24, 1945 - part of Operation Plunder) was the largest single-lift airborne operation in history, deploying more than 16,000 British and U.S. troops behind German lines to secure Rhine crossings near Wesel. This daylight assault enabled rapid, successful Allied expansion into Germany, effectively accelerating the end of WWII.

This all became part of Cecil's story as he was now in action in B Company 9th Platoon 3rd Section of 9th Parachute Battalion and the fighting that followed, including the 350-mile march across Germany to meet up with the Russians.

Data taken directly from interviews with Cecil, his picture archive and his written notes. To be continued April 2026.

Tina Loose

This page, from top:

Cecil's father, fifth from the right. Roadmen workmates outside the Brewers Arms. Was Hoggie Hughes, third from the right, a relative?

Cecil's father and siblings went north for work before 1903. His father returned, while others stayed. This photograph shows a brother with a pitchfork working in Yorkshire.

Cecil Hughes, aged 17 years 6 months, as a cadet in the Hadleigh Air Training Corps. Photograph taken behind the Chequers, Boxford, in 1944.

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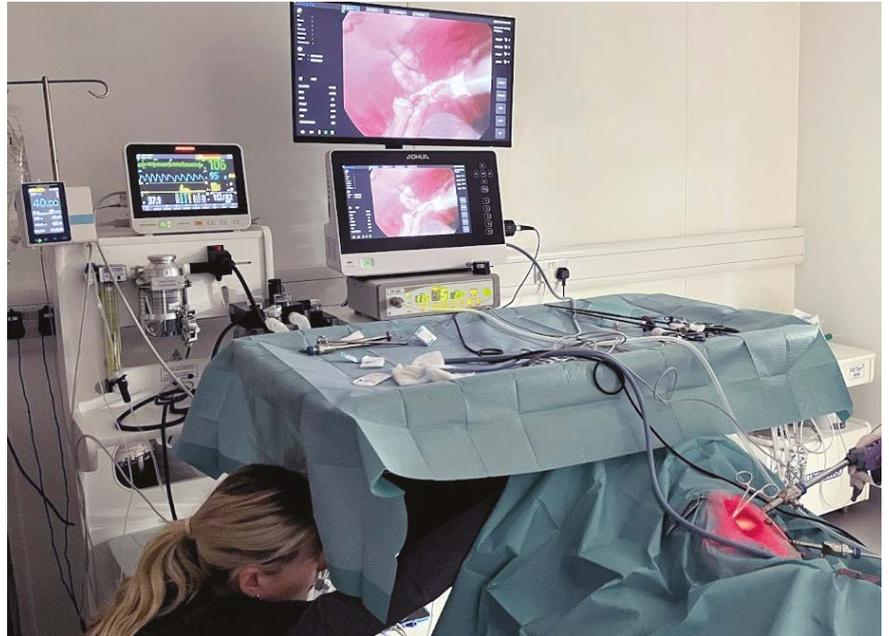
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Orla's Day at the Vets!

A big day out: my keyhole spay adventure

Hello lovely humans of Box River. My name is Orla, proud owner of four paws, one waggy tail, and a deep, unwavering commitment to breakfast. Which is why my day started with a shocking betrayal.

My owner took me for my usual morning walk, lots of good sniffs, a respectable number of pigeons to glare at, but then... no food. None. Not even a crumb. I checked my bowl, checked my owner's pockets, checked the bowl again in case it had magically filled. Nothing. Apparently this was "because of my operation today," but, honestly, I still feel this could have been handled better.

After the *Great Breakfast Disappointment*, we hopped in the car and headed to the vets. I quite like it there – I get lots of fuss and the humans always seem delighted to see me. Today I was booked in for my keyhole spay, which my owner explained is a clever, less invasive way of doing an operation. Apparently a spay is the name of the procedure that stops ladies like me from having puppies. It also protects us from certain serious illnesses later in life, such as a womb infection and some types of cancer. So, all in all, I appreciated it was a sensible idea.

When we arrived, I was greeted by vet Jess, who sat down on the floor with me to give me a proper hello. She checked me over from nose to tail, listened to my heart, and asked my owner lots of questions about my health and medical history.

Once everyone was satisfied that I was fit and well, it was time for the next step: me setting up my bed for the day in the dog ward, followed by a tiny intravenous cannula placed in my leg. I was very brave. Through this little cannula they gave me a special medication that made me feel relaxed and a little bit dreamy. It also had pain relief in it, which is very thoughtful. I decided I liked this part.

Next, the nurses gently shaved the fur on my tummy. They gave me cuddles and kept telling me what a good girl I was. Honestly, I could get used to this level of attention.

Then came the moment when the room got a bit fuzzy. They induced me under anaesthetic, which is a fancy way of saying I had a lovely sleep while Jess did all the clever work.

When I woke up, I was in a warm, comfy bed with a nurse right beside me. She stroked my head and told me everything had gone beautifully. Apparently, Jess had made just two tiny incisions in my tummy and used a special camera with slim instruments to do the operation. Very high-tech. I felt quite proud of myself for being part of such advanced veterinary science.

I was a bit sleepy for an hour or two (understandable, given the morning I'd had!) but then something wonderful happened. Food arrived. Real, edible, delicious food. I perked up immediately. The nurse laughed and said, "There she is," which I think means she understood me on a spiritual level.

The team kept a close eye on me. They checked my heart rate, my temperature, my breathing, and made sure I was comfortable. Every time someone walked past, they gave me a gentle pat. I felt very safe and cared for.

By early afternoon, I was ready to go home. My owner arrived, looking relieved and happy to see me. I showed her my two tiny wounds (she was very impressed) and my stylish protective pet shirt (much better than the satellite dish of humiliation), which I will be wearing for the next few days.

Jess explained that I will pop back in later this week for a post-operative check, and after that I can return to my normal exercise. For now, I am under strict instructions to take it easy (no zoomies?!), no diving head-first onto the sofa and definitely no chasing squirrels for two days. I plan to negotiate on the sofa part.

So that was my big day: no breakfast, lots of lovely humans, a clever operation, and a very cosy recovery. I am feeling good, my tummy is healing nicely, and I am milking the 'post-op princess' role for all the extra cuddles. I am well on my way back to full spaniel capacity.

Now, if you will excuse me, I believe it is time for my next nap. Or walk. Or snack. Preferably snack.

*Dr. Jessica Hudson BVMedSci (Hons)
BVM BVS (Hons) BSAVA PGcertSAECC
MRCVS
www.thehadleighvets.com*

Hadleigh Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Out of Hours Doctor: Need a doctor when the Hadleigh Health Centre is closed, including weekends Call 111 for advice and details of your nearest 'out of hours' duty doctor or visit www.111.nhs.uk

Patient Appointments FYI: On average the practice has 7,700 appointments per 1,000 patients each year. The average for England is currently 6,500 per annum.

Covid Jabs: Covid vaccinations for patients aged 75+ and the clinically vulnerable will take place in the spring. Dates and times to be confirmed.

Pharmacy First: The Pharmacy First scheme is an NHS initiative that offers professional healthcare advice and treatment for seven common illnesses: UTIs, shingles, sore throats, ear infections, impetigo, sinusitis and infected bites.

Anima: Some patients have raised concerns about patients who are not confident using IT. There is no cause for concern. Patients in these circumstances can still receive help by telephone or in person at reception on 01473 822 961. Patients who can use a computer or smartphone can help reduce waiting times by using Anima. There has already been a noticeable reduction in telephone calls. Registering in advance means the online triage system is ready to use when you need it: www.hadleighhealth.co.uk/anima or www.nhs.uk/nhs-app

IT Help: Communities Together offer helpful IT advice in the upstairs room of the Hadleigh Library. The next session will take place on **Tuesday 3rd March from 10am to 12noon**. Booking is essential as places are limited. Email Tracey: info@communitiestogether-ea.org or call 01449 707031

Paramedic: This month we consider the role of another member of the practice. Paramedics are registered healthcare professionals who have a unique role that crosses healthcare, public health, social care and public safety. They work autonomously providing care in a range of situations. Although most well-known for working within the Ambulance Service, paramedics now also work in other areas of healthcare, for example GP practices.

A paramedic is one of the medical team at the Hadleigh Health Centre. As her knowledge is varied and considerable she is able to help reduce the GP's workload and improve patients' access to same day appointments. How does her expertise help the practice? She is often available to deal with same day urgent appointments and decide the next best place for treatment. She will take care of minor illnesses and injuries and if necessary, prescribe the appropriate medication. She can visit frail, housebound patients and attending to their needs in-situ can often prevent hospital admission. She would also be able to attend to emergency incidents in the practice by stabilising the patient and if necessary, arranging appropriate onward care. In addition to this medical support for her practice colleagues she also works in the wider community with other public healthcare professionals. Given a paramedic's depth of knowledge and expertise you are in safe hands in their care.

Boxford Community Car Scheme: This service is available for patients needing transport to hospital or health centre appointments. Contact Jen Eastwood on 01787 211853 or jen.eastwood8@gmail.com

Website: www.hadleighhealth.co.uk

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Great by What Standard?

Groton History Society on rulers, legacy, & the uneasy business of judging history

I am writing this before the February 26th talk, which will explore the possible 'greatness' of some of our monarchs, and so cannot comment on the audience's reactions to the candidates proposed. Instead, I want to step back and look at figures who history has already labelled 'great'. That question can and should be widened beyond monarchs. Why should rulers alone qualify for such distinction? Can non-rulers be great? Of course they can. Even nations have described themselves as great, or aspired to be, often by looking backwards to earlier periods through lenses coloured by dissatisfaction with the present, cocooned in an imagined past.

So, what is greatness in a ruler? This is where we must begin if we are to assess history's qualifications for those given such a nickname. The epithet "The Great" has not been applied to many rulers over the last three centuries. How, then, was such greatness achieved - through quantitative measures, qualitative judgement, or a combination of both?

Ramesses II built more statues and monuments than any other pharaoh, including the 33-foot, 83-ton Colossus of Ramesses. He was the first pharaoh to name a city after himself. He lived longer, reigned longer, and sired more offspring - apparently around 100 - than any other Egyptian ruler. His



achievements, and his tyranny, which often seems an accompanying shadow of greatness, inspired classical poetry and continue to echo through modern popular culture. Is this what greatness means?

Fast forward 600 years to Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian Empire, the largest on Earth at the time, covering an area greater than the continental United States today. Despite being an expansionist he was perceived as tolerant, more liberator than conqueror - don't they all say that? He was religiously accommodating, provided taxes were paid. He freed some 40,000 Jews from

Above:

Roman mosaic from Pompeii depicting Alexander the Great in battle.

Left:

Colossal statue of Ramesses II at Luxor Temple, Egypt - monumentality.

Babylonian captivity, returning them to Jerusalem, and left behind the Cyrus Cylinder as a statement of human rights, understood in the context of his own time, not ours. A step up on Ramesses?

Then came the young, dashing warrior king determined to destroy Cyrus's territorial legacy. Alexander the Great was arguably one of the greatest military strategists and warriors in history, ambitious without bounds yet capable of adopting Aristotelian virtue in his governance of conquered peoples. For many of us, he was probably the first historical 'Great' encountered at school. Unlike Ramesses, he died young and ruled for only a few years. Lacking clear familial succession, he attempted to preserve his empire through the naive diplomatic solution of multiple successors governing different regions. The outcome, even without hindsight, was predictable - the Successor Wars.

Pompey the Great, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, was also a serial winner on the battlefield, compared by some to Alexander. It was he who defeated Kirk Douglas, aka Spartacus, expanding Roman influence from Syria to Spain, from Armenia to Africa. Never a sole ruler he was one of a triumvirate with Crassus and his future nemesis Julius Caesar - he who was never given the epithet! Constantine the Great makes a stronger case a few hundred years later, becoming the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity and arguably founding, through saving, the young Christian church. He also founded Istanbul, one of the greatest cities of the world, known then as Constantinople. Quite a legacy, for legacy must be a key criteria for the 'Greatness' of Rulers?

And that brings us on to Charlemagne ('Charles the Great' in old French), often considered the founding father

of both the French and German monarchies. Like Alexander and Pompey before him, he was a highly skilled military strategist and 'winner', expanding the Frankish Empire into Rome, Bavaria and Spain. Pope Leo III elevated him to 'Emperor of the Romans', the Holy Roman Emperor. Beyond conquest, his legacy includes reforms to government, law, the arts, administration, currency, accounting and bureaucracy, and he spurred the Carolingian Renaissance through the Church. He left quite a legacy - military conquest, famous buildings, transformation in governance, and the extension of welfare and rights to the ruled. Let us look next at *'saving a nation, then building the foundations of a country'*, with our very own Alfred the Great. I have always thought this something of a Victorian stretch. Extremely pious, a reformer of education and classical translation, and enlightened in a dark age, he made his last stand in the Somerset Levels against the great heathen Viking army, securing victory at Eddington.

Wessex, the kernel of a future England, fought back. Alfred converted Guthrum, established the Danelaw peace, and cemented a dynastic legacy that would ultimately overturn Viking dominance and help build an 'England' of pastures green under his grandson, Athelstan. Of course Suffolk was well and truly within the Danelaw until it, too, was relieved. Should Athelstan, the founder of England, have been the better candidate for 'The Great'? The Victorians thought not. This raises the question: who names a ruler 'The Great' - contemporary opinion, or centuries-later reflection through different lenses?

Let us fast-forward a century. One of our very early talks was by Jenny Antill, on *'Histories teachings of Russia today'*. Long associated with strongman tsars,

Below:

Statue of Constantine I in York, marking the place where he was proclaimed Roman emperor in AD 306.

Right:

Peter the Great of Russia.

eighteenth-century Russia produced two rulers given the epithet 'the Great' - Peter the Great and Catherine the Great. Let us take Peter first. Not a pleasant chap at all, quite a nasty bully in fact.

On the lighter side, he was a moderniser of maritime development, commerce and culture, and a deep learner through wide, disguised travels in western Europe. He transformed Russia from an eastern-looking backwater into something closer to a western state. He established St Petersburg, built the first Russian navy, and adopted the title 'Emperor' in 1721. Yet had he not defeated Sweden's Charles XII at Poltava in 1709, it might all have been very different. He was lucky in part: the once all-conquering Swedish army was heavily fatigued, poorly-supplied after years of campaigning to satisfy Charles's sense of invincibility, and far from home. Timing is everything when it comes to 'greatness'.

Catherine the Great acceded controversially in 1762. She was very successful militarily, massively expanding the borders of Russia to include Crimea, the North Caucasus, Belarus, Lithuania, and the right bank of Ukraine. Initially enlightened, she hardened her position in reaction to the French Revolution. Her 'greatness' was more quantitative, territorial rather than reformist. Vladimir Putin would be jealous, methinks.

Frederick the Great of Prussia carries the epithet 'the Great', earned through the awe inspired by his military achievements, but also through his enlightenment. He conversed with Voltaire, and promoted literature, music, and the arts. An enlightened despot. 'Great' military credentials seem a necessity, but enlightened patronage and a deep legacy should also be part of the measure.

So that leads us to our own monarchs, for whom contemporary or later recognition has failed to assign the epithet 'the Great', apart from Alfred the Great, albeit not a king of England or the United Kingdom. Eight Edwards and Henrys, six Georges, five Williams, three Richards, three Charles, two Marys and two Elizabeths, a





Stephen, a John, and an Anne - surely a 'Great' among them? What must a monarch deliver for their country and subjects?

This differs between an absolute and a constitutional monarch. The former is fully accountable; the latter no longer so, as Parliament has assumed that responsibility. Secure territorial borders, stable internal peace, balanced financial control, and a secure dynastic legacy are the basics. Beyond that come improving the lot of the people, encouraging innovation and learning, sponsoring cultural enlightenment, and, yes, expanding secure territory to generate sovereign and commercial wealth. Is this a demanding test for our monarchs in history?

At the end of February, we will explore the cases for Henry II of England, Henry VII of England, and Elizabeth I of England, along with others proposed on the night - perhaps Edward III of England, maybe Henry I of England. We will also look at a power behind the throne in Eleanor of Aquitaine. Take a moment to look again at the list above. What do you think?

Constitutional monarchy is more difficult territory when recognising greatness. Monarchs are no longer accountable in the way described above, but they retain significant responsibilities: supporting the government of the day, elected by the people; providing a focal point for the nation; setting personal standards; staying in touch with the country; and offering a steady ship rather than a rocking boat. Above all, not bringing disgrace upon the nation, the government, and thus the people. Elizabeth II fulfilled these responsibilities well, albeit with the occasional blip, particularly following Diana's untimely death. Great? Maybe. I am sure the debate on 26th February will be lively.

What about non-rulers, regular Joes and Janes? Could we assign the epithet 'the Great' to outstanding individuals in history? If so, what criteria should apply, given that they do not carry ruler accountabilities and responsibilities? Contemporary achievement? Long-term legacy that has positively shaped our society and world? Do they need to be blemish-free when viewed through today's lens - and is that even possible?

Can you really judge William Shakespeare alongside Horatio Nelson? Martin Luther alongside Marie Curie? Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart alongside Martin Luther King Jr.? I could make cases for each of these remarkable figures, and I am sure you could add many more to the list.

I admit I have been guilty of wanting to debate who might be the 'greatest of all time'. Reflecting on this while writing the article, I realise the question itself is rather absurd. Perhaps a top ten, in no particular order, as television likes to say - or a top three by category? What do you think?

Nigel Chapman
nigeljchap@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

The Secret World: Successes and Limitations of Spying with Dr Michael J Reynolds

Friday 27th March

Dr Michael Reynolds is ex SIS/MI6 of 29yrs, former Head of MI6 anti Terrorism and Head of Berlin Station, spanning the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Reggie and the RAF: the Air Force's Part in WW1 and a Pilot's Short Story

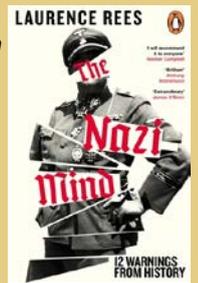
Thursday 23rd April

This is brought to us by David Hearn, former head teacher, military and aviation history researcher and enthusiast.

Recommended Reading, Listening & Viewing

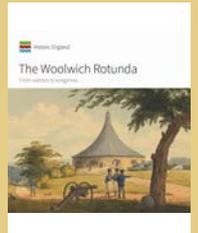
'The Nazi Mind: Twelve Warnings from History' by Lawrence Rees

I will be getting this book, adding it to the 'America' section of my library.



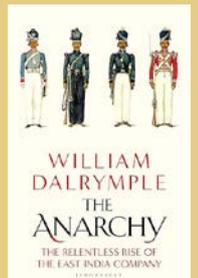
'The Woolwich Rotunda: From waltzes to Wargames' by Emily Cole and Sarah Newsome

The story of a remarkable building and its landscape, sadly in danger of collapse due to bureaucratic buck passing!



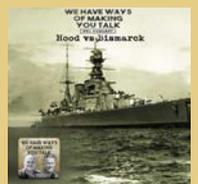
'The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company' by William Dalrymple

Leading expert on the East India Company and he of Empire Podcast fame.



Hood vs Bismark: Battle of the Denmark Strait.

A 4-episode series from the 'We have Ways of making you talk' podcast team of Al Murray and James Holland.



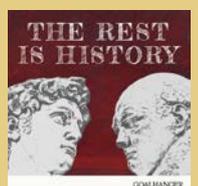
Sink the Bismark!

A four episode sequel to the above podcast, from the 'We have Ways of making you talk' podcast team. Two iconic Battle of the Atlantic conflicts! Awesome.



Nelson

A 6 episode series from 'The Rest is History' podcast team of Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook. Brilliant!! What a hero!





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Marketing Today

Looking beyond logos to build real trust



There was a time when a good logo and a well-designed brochure were enough to represent a business. If it looked professional, it felt trustworthy. That made sense. Branding was often the only visible signal a company had. Today, that

isn't quite true. We're surrounded by polished identities. Beautiful websites. Carefully chosen colour palettes. Perfectly aligned fonts. And yet many businesses still feel strangely distant. We can see what they look like, but we don't always know who they are. That distance matters more than it used to.

Trust has become more personal. Whether we are choosing a solicitor, a café, a consultant or a contractor, we are drawn to businesses that feel human. The ones where we can picture the person we might speak to. The ones that show the team behind the service. The ones that give us a sense of why the business exists. This

doesn't mean every founder needs to be filming daily videos or sharing every detail of their life. It does mean people want reassurance. They want to know who is behind the email address, who will answer the phone, who is responsible for the work. Before they enquire, they are often asking themselves, "Can I trust these people?"

In many cases, businesses are hiding in plain sight. Not intentionally. Often it comes from a desire to look professional, to stay neutral, to let the work speak for itself. The website is polished. The logo is consistent. The messaging is careful. But when branding becomes a shield rather than a foundation, something gets lost. Logos are powerful. So are brand colours and carefully crafted messaging. They create recognition and consistency. But they are only part of the picture. A brand is also its values, its tone, its team and its story. Without those elements, even the most beautifully designed identity can feel flat.

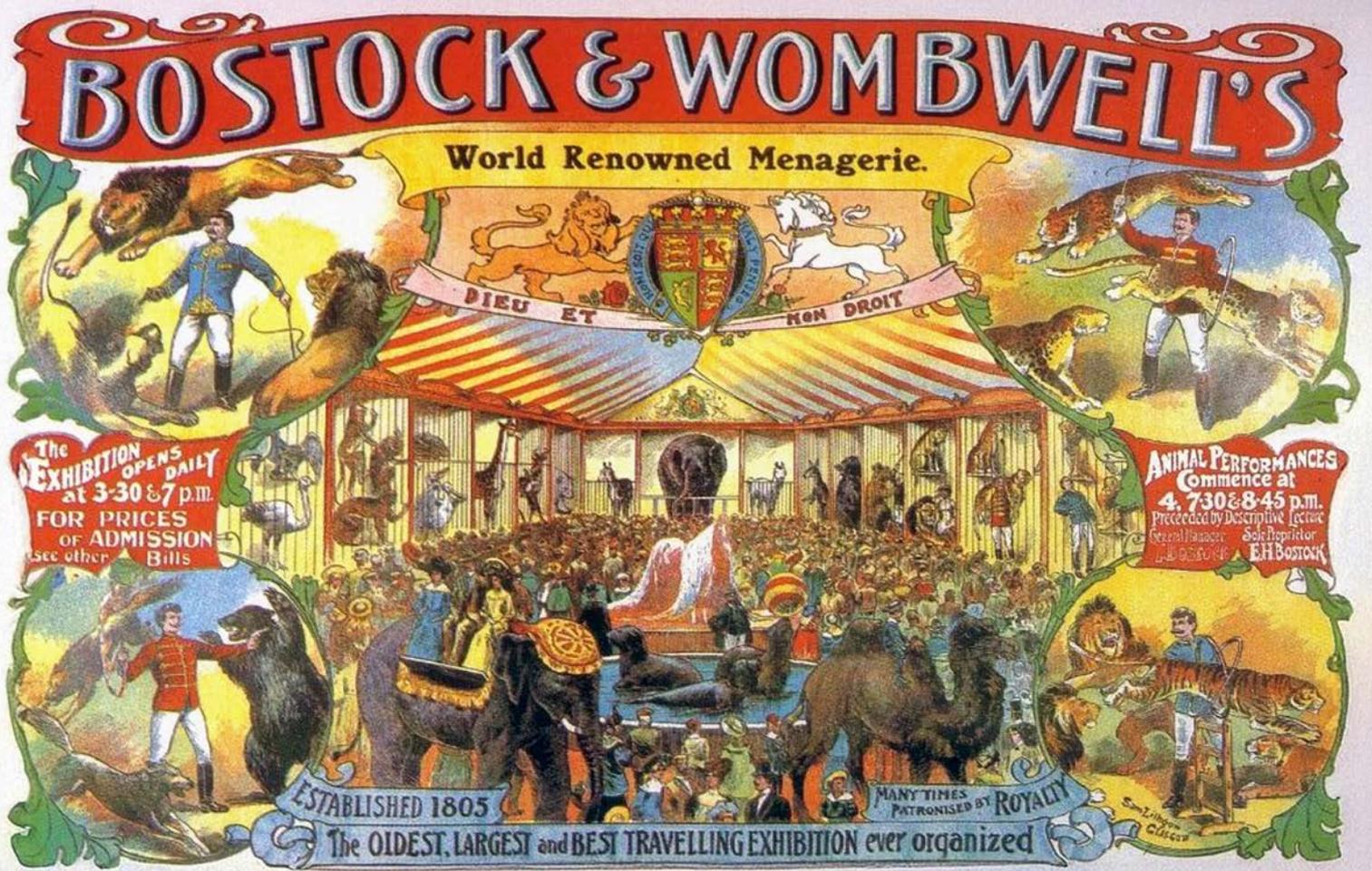
Over the past decade working in marketing, both here in Suffolk and further afield, I've seen that the

businesses which build lasting trust tend to do one thing well. They let people see the people. Not in a forced or overly polished way, but in a way that feels real. That might be a founder explaining why they started the company, a team member sharing insight into their role, or a glimpse into the thinking behind a project. Small moments turn a brand into something recognisable and relatable.

This shift isn't limited to social media. It's happening across marketing as a whole. We are less persuaded by perfection and more persuaded by presence. We want to feel confident not just in what a business offers, but in who is offering it. The strongest brands aren't simply well designed. They are well understood. They allow people to see beyond the logo and into the values, the thinking and the people behind the work.

Because in the end, businesses don't build trust. People do.

Xandrina Allday
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www.alldaymarketing.co.uk



George Wombwell, England's Greatest Showman

Pip Wright brings to life the spectacle, animals & popular entertainment of England's most famous travelling menagerie

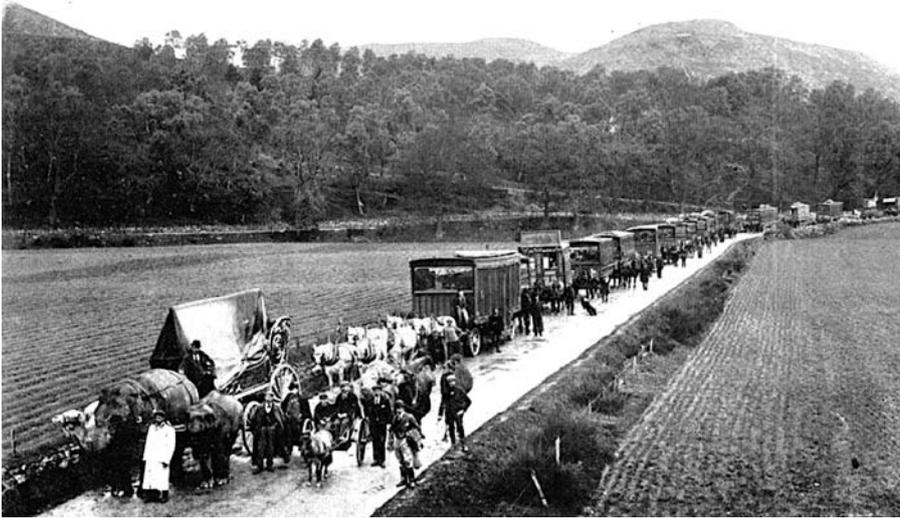


Little Waldingfield History Society welcomed Pip Wright back to the Parish Room for an illustrated talk based largely on contemporary newspaper accounts. He explained that while newspapers are a major source for his research, in the case of George Wombwell they often reflected little more than what Wombwell himself wanted to be reported, as he was, by all accounts, a gifted self-publicist.

George Wombwell was born in 1777 in Duddenhoe End, a tiny hamlet in the parish of Elmdon, halfway between Royston and Saffron Walden. Today it has a village hall, erected in 1931, and a thatched church converted from a barn in the nineteenth century. It has no shop and the last pub was

converted into a house in the late 1990s. Even today the roads are barely more than an uneven single track with passing places, and it did not have a mains sewer system until 2005. George's father was probably a craftsman, and George is thought to have received an education, most likely up to the age of twelve. However, his main love was animals, and he became known for caring for sick and injured specimens that people brought to him.

Around 1800 George moved to London, and by 1804 was working for a cordwainer (shoemaker) in Soho, most probably in the shop. At that time songbirds were frequently kept by cordwainers for display and sale to customers. George is thought also



to have become proficient in making cages for sale, which brought him a little money, but he clearly wanted more.

When a ship from South America arrived at the London docks carrying two boas, he bought them for £75 - a huge sum, equivalent to some £5,500 today, and of uncertain origin - and he began exhibiting them in taverns. He was soon making a good profit and at his yard began building wagons for transporting the animals. In 1805 he put his growing menagerie on the road, and the rest, as the saying goes, is history.

George subsequently began buying all manner of exotic animals from ships arriving from Africa, Australia, and South America, assembling a menagerie which he put on display. In 1810 he founded *Wombwell's Travelling Menagerie* and began touring the fairs of Britain. By 1839 it totalled fifteen wagons and was accompanied by a brass band for added spectacle.

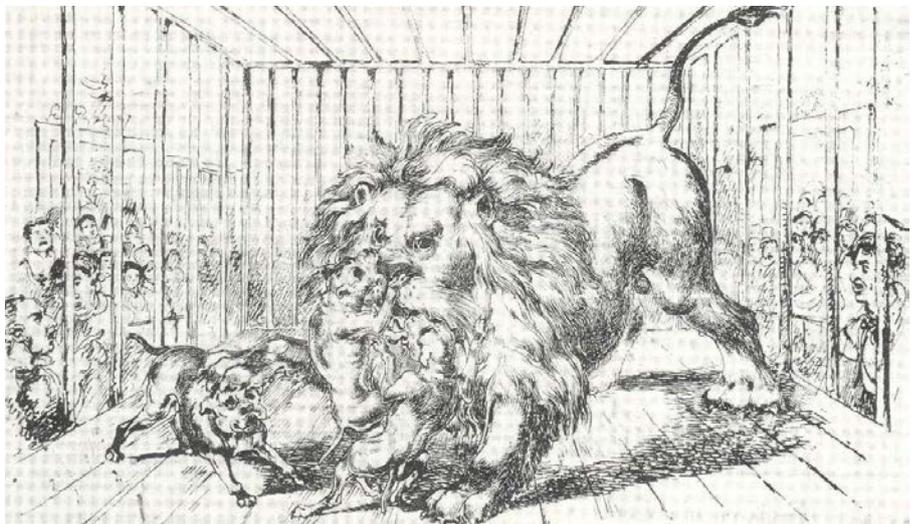
His travelling menagerie included elephants, giraffes, a gorilla, hyena, kangaroo, leopards, six lions, llamas, monkeys, ocelots, onagers (Asiatic wild ass), ostriches, panthers, a rhino, which he called "*real unicorn of scripture*", three tigers, wildcats, zebras, and snakes. Because many of the animals were from hotter climes, some died in the British climate, but George could usually sell the body profitably to a taxidermist or medical school. At other times he would exhibit the dead animal as a curiosity, which added to the attractions.

George also bred and raised many animals himself, including what was said to be the first lion bred in captivity in Britain, which he named William in honour of William Wallace.

In 1825, in collaboration with dog dealer Ben White's assistant Bill George, Wombwell sponsored a lion-

baiting contest in Warwick between his docile lion Nero and six bulldogs. Around five hundred people assembled in a disused factory yard, where he arranged for the dogs to attack Nero three at a time, ignoring the pleas of Quaker Samuel Hoare, who asked "*how thou wilt feel to see the noble animal thou hast so long protected, and which has been in part the means of supplying thee with the means of life, mangled and bleeding before thee?*"

Nero appeared indisposed to use his full strength against the first three



Opposite from top: Poster advertising Bostock and Wombwell, successors to George Wombwell's travelling menageries, illustrating the scale and spectacle used to attract Victorian audiences.

Portrait of George Wombwell (1777–1850).

Left: "On the march": travelling menagerie wagons moving between towns, illustrating how exotic animals were transported around Britain in the nineteenth century.

Below: Wallace the lion now on permanent display at Saffron Walden Museum.

"The Lion Fight", from *The Illustrated London News*, illustrating the 1825 lion-baiting contest at Warwick.

dogs, simply swatting them away with his paws and never biting. After a twenty-minute respite, the next three dogs were set upon him and pinned him to the floor. When a third round produced the same result, Wombwell conceded defeat for the lion, fearing that "*the death of the animal must be the consequence of further punishment.*"

In a second contest less than a week later, a Scottish-born lion known as Wallace fought back ferociously, holding one dog in his teeth and deliberately walking around the stage with him as a cat would a mouse. A second dog died moments after being taken out of the cage, and a third remained in Wallace's jaws until a keeper threw a piece of raw flesh into the den. A fourth was left in critical condition, with several ribs broken.

The spectacle was widely condemned in the press and helped to inform a

new sensitivity towards cruelty to animals, but it was another ten years before bear-baiting was outlawed in the UK, so it was perfectly legal at the time, though widely regarded as immoral. In 1838 one commentator remarked, "what dogs and lions can achieve in the arena of combat having now been ascertained, let us hope that no closer approximation to the sanguinary games of the Roman amphitheatre may ever be attempted in Great Britain, nor her soil again polluted by a repetition of such spectacles."

Over the years, George expanded his business into three menageries that travelled around the country, and he was also a regular exhibitor at the annual Knott Mill Fair in Manchester, a venue he sometimes shared with Pablo Fanque, the first recorded Black circus owner in Britain. On five occasions George was invited to exhibit his animals to the royal court, three of them before Queen Victoria.

In 1847 she noted the bravery of the "British Lion Queen", a nickname given to Ellen Chapman, who appeared inside cages with lions, leopards, and tigers. Chapman had no formal education and was illiterate, but became known as the lion tamer Madame Pauline de Vere, and was said to be the first woman to put her head into a lion's mouth. When interviewed about her bravery, she said it was simply routine, and that she performed each show with no thought for danger.

Sadly Ellen Bright, another famous nineteenth-century British teenage lion tamer known as "The Lion Queen", died in 1850 after being mauled by a tiger in her uncle George's menagerie. Having turned her back on the animal, the tiger pounced, seized her by the throat, and killed her.

Following an inquest into her death, the practice of "Lion Queens" was banned and only men were thereafter permitted to enter the cages.

An engraving of Ellen's death appeared in *The Illustrated London News* on 10 January 1850, titled "Death of the Lion Queen in Wombwell's Menagerie".



at Chatham", just eight days after the event. The death caused such public shock and interest that it was also commemorated in ceramic by Staffordshire potters, who rarely missed a marketing opportunity. Somehow George escaped sanction or even criticism, and his travelling menageries continued as before.

On another occasion Prince Albert summoned George to examine his dogs, which had been dying, to see whether he could do anything for them. George concluded that their water was poisoning them and advised that they be given rainwater instead. In a short time the dogs recovered, and when Albert asked what he could do in return for the favour, George replied, "what can you give a man who has everything?"

He did, however, request some oak timber from the recently salvaged HMS Royal George, from which he had a coffin fashioned for himself. He then proceeded to exhibit the coffin, made from the famous timbers, for a special fee.

George frequented Bartholomew Fair in London and developed a rivalry with another exhibitor known as Atkins. On one occasion, when George arrived at the fair to find that his elephant had died, Atkins put up a sign announcing "The Only Live Elephant in the Fair". Seeing this, George responded by displaying another scroll reading "The Only Dead Elephant in the Fair", explaining that seeing a dead elephant was an even rarer experience than seeing a live one.

The public, realising they could see a living elephant almost anywhere, flocked instead to view and even poke the dead carcass. Throughout the fair Atkins' menagerie was largely deserted, much to his disgust, while George's

was much frequented, to his evident delight.

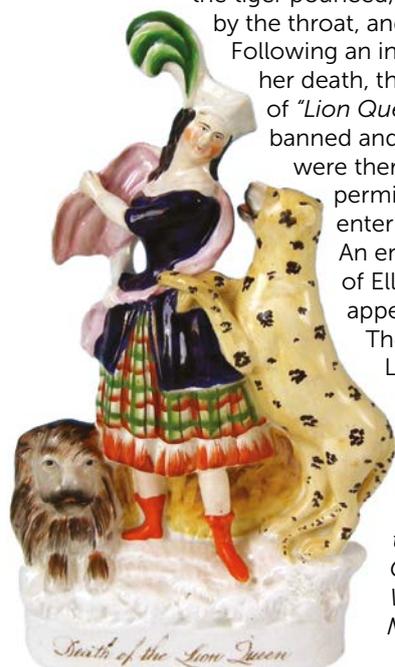
Travelling menageries were often careless with their animals, and escapes were not infrequent. During the nineteenth century, escaped animals usually attacked local livestock and caused public panic. Animals recaptured by staff, sometimes after causing injuries, often led to sensational stories in local newspapers.

In 1835 a lion and tigress escaped from one of George's travelling menageries and caused the deaths of four people. It appears that George was not blamed for this event, though on this occasion he most probably gave money to the relatives of the deceased to maintain his 'good guy' image. This was certainly the case after an incident in which someone picked up a rattlesnake, was bitten, and subsequently died.

George employed members of his family in the business, and they too were involved in accidents. On one occasion his nephew was gored by an elephant and died of his wounds. An inquest followed, but the transcript of George's testimony showed no anger towards the elephant and no

Above: "Death of the Lion Queen in Wombwell's Menagerie at Chatham", engraving published in *The Illustrated London News* in January 1850, depicting the death of Ellen Bright.

Left: Staffordshire ceramic commemorating the death of Ellen Bright, known as "The Lion Queen", reflecting the intense public interest surrounding the event.





attribution of blame. He understood that his animal charges retained a level of wildness and unpredictability, and that this had to be respected.

Other accidents included a keeper losing an arm, another dying after infection following a leopard bite, and a drunken female visitor being mauled to death. Visiting travelling menageries could be a dangerous business.

Virtually the entire country was visited by travelling zoos, with cages transported on wagons and hauled around the countryside by horses, often in appalling conditions for much of the year. Cages were cramped and the horses pulling the wagons were grossly overworked. There were no animal rights, and as the Church taught that animals had no souls, they could be worked until they dropped, then left to die, be eaten, or be sold by George.

The menageries toured widely, and George travelled with them throughout his life because it was something he simply loved to do. He died at a good age in Northallerton on 16 November 1850 and is buried at Highgate Cemetery in his *Royal George coffin*, beneath a statue of his pet lion Nero.

On his death the menagerie passed to his niece, Emma Wombwell, and was managed by James Bostock, who had joined the business in 1838, progressing from horse keeper to contracting and advertising agent, and becoming instrumental in securing two Royal Commands for exhibitions at Windsor Castle in 1847 and 1854.

Emma married James in October 1852 at Tollesbury, after which he established a new company, *Bostock & Wombwell*, to continue the business. The couple had nine children, and the

family dynasty was carried forward by three of them: Edward Henry, who succeeded his father; James William, who managed a separate menagerie business and sideshow; and Frank Charles, who went on to tour the UK, Europe, and America in his own right.

The fascination with the exhibition of wildlife, curiosities, and displays of human endeavour informed emerging trends in entertainment throughout the Victorian era and into the early twentieth century. However, the success of the business depended on novelty, and as public familiarity with such displays grew, the appeal began to fade. The exhibition of wild animals subsequently evolved into a different form of entertainment, incorporating performance and shifting from the fairground to the circus arena.

Although *Bostock & Wombwell* continued presenting menageries until the first third of the twentieth century, branches of the family diversified into other forms of business as early as 1897, when Frank's brother, Edward Henry, opened *The Scottish Zoo*. Edward became one of the most



prominent members of the Bostock family in the twentieth century, expanding his operations into the travelling circus, including *The Royal Italian Circus* (formerly Volpi's Circus), as well as several hippodromes and picture palaces.

Bostock & Wombwell's Menagerie appeared for the last time at the Old Sheep Market in Newcastle in December 1931, when the entire menagerie was sold in lots and dispersed, with some animals going to Whipsnade and other zoos.

The talk offered a wide-ranging and engaging account of George Wombwell's life and legacy, leaving a vivid impression of the world of travelling menageries.

Andy Sheppard
www.littlewaldingfieldhistorysociety.wordpress.com

Next Little Waldingfield History Society Talks:

The Women's Land Army in Suffolk with Nicky Reynolds
 Wednesday 11th March, 7:30pm:

Journeying through social history, Nicky will examine the roots of the organization from the industrial revolution, then growing on the shoulders of the Women's Suffrage movement to become a vital response to feeding a nation during the Great War.



The History & Natural History of Spices with Ian Anderson
 Wednesday 15th April, 7:30pm:

The dramatic search for spices through history, and how the pursuit of rare flavours changed and opened up our world.



Above from left: *Elephant drinking from a horse trough.*

George Wombwell's tomb at Highgate Cemetery, beneath a statue of his pet lion Nero.



The Blooming Garden

The Chin Chin Tree

I am a stickler for using the correct botanical nomenclature when talking about plants. But in its native Chile, the tree I am talking about today goes by the delightful name of Chin Chin tree, so I thought I would introduce it under this fun name today. I refuse to use the common name for it, Box-leaf Azalea, as it is neither a box, nor an azalea. I suspect this ridiculous name might be American as American gardeners, even serious ones, are averse to using Latin names. The correct name for it is *Azara microphylla*. It was named after Felix de Azara, an eighteenth century Spanish naturalist and explorer. *Microphylla* simply means small-leaved.

It is a delightful tree, growing up to about 15 to 20 feet. It has sprays of small shiny, evergreen leaves. Graham Stuart Johnson described it as having "fern-frond branches." The whole effect is light and airy. What



makes it particularly delightful is the herringbone arrangement of pairs of what appear to be small and minuscule leaves. These baby leaves are actually stipules and I don't know what purpose they serve apart from looking cute.

As well as looking good all year round, this tree has the most delicious-smelling flowers in March. I was intrigued to read the late Christopher Lloyd's description of scent in flowers. He wrote about classifying flower scents into those that are moral and those that are immoral. He said: "*The distinction, when you come to think about it is quite clear. Moral scents include all those warm, foody, daytime smells, like coconut-scented gorse, clove carnations, vanilla Azara microphylla, mignonette, lupins, wallflowers, stocks and thyme. The immoral kind reserve their main strength, appropriately for evening and night.*"

I presume he was tongue in cheek when he wrote about moral and immoral flower smells. But flowers that smell of food are somehow universally appealing and wholesome. It is odd, you would think we would like food to smell of food and flowers to smell of flowers, but flowers that smell of food are irresistible. Personally, I think gorse has the coconutty smell of sun cream rather than food. The honey scent of the shrubby *Euphorbia mellifera* smells good enough to eat, but don't try it



as all euphorbias are toxic. Flowers which are said to smell of chocolate are always popular although I question whether the blooms of the Chocolate Vine, *Akebia quinata* actually do smell of chocolate. I feel the same way about the lovely chocolate *Cosmos atrosanguineus*. I suppose it does smell of chocolate after a warm day but you have to put your nose right in it to catch a whiff. I prefer scents that waft around the garden on the breeze and stop you in your tracks. The elegant tree, *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* has heart-shaped leaves which turn a beautiful colour in autumn and just before they fall let off a glorious scent of toffee apples. OK, it is quite fleeting but on a breezy day it wafts round the garden. As I only have a small garden and I don't want to be without this



autumnal treat, I grow a small version of this tree called 'Boyd's Dwarf'.

But back to *Azara microphylla*. If you haven't grown this tree and many people have never heard of it, then I recommend you seek it out. The flowers are tiny; in fact they have no petals and consist of yellow stamens. They look like minuscule mimosa flowers. You don't grow it for showy flowers but for the treat of walking down the garden on a breezy spring day and having a strong scent of vanilla following you round. Some people say it smells of chocolate, marzipan or custard but I stand by my description of vanilla. Christopher Lloyd might think it is a moral scent but I think it is intoxicating.

Pretty, evergreen foliage and glorious smelling flowers are reason enough to plant this tree. But in my new garden I am trying a variegated one called *Azara microphylla* 'Variegata'. The little leaves, edged with cream, lighten up my winter garden. I would grow this tree for its lovely winter foliage even without the delicious vanilla-scented flowers.

There are other azaras which are pretty but don't have the intense scent. You sometimes find *Azara serrata* in

nurseries. It has more finely serrated, glossy green leaves. It blooms in May with golden yellow blooms which give it the appearance of a mimosa. It is not so strongly scented though. I have grown the rarer *Azara uruguayensis* for years now. It is similar to *Azara serrata* and I have found it easy from semi-ripe cuttings in summer. Even though I have moved a few times in the last thirty years I have brought pieces with me and planted it in every garden where it quickly grows into a reasonable sized tree. Again it blooms in May with mimosa-like flowers. But if I only had room for one azara it would always have to be *Azara microphylla* for that delicious and very moral vanilla scent drifting through the garden in early spring.

Not all azaras are hardy and the ones I have mentioned sometimes get a few black leaves during a hard winter. But in my experience they always recover. In their native South America, they grow at the edge of woodlands, so I try to imitate this by planting mine in semi-shade. They enjoy that famous horticultural oxymoron 'moist but well drained soil.'

Chloris



Opposite page clockwise from top:

Azara microphylla 'Variegata'

Euphorbia mellifera

Azara microphylla

This page, from top:

Akebia quinata 'White Form'

Chocolate *Cosmos atrosanguineus*

Citizens Advice

Sudbury Citizens Advice is here to provide free, independent, and confidential advice and support. We offer advice and support on a wide variety of subjects, problems, and concerns, one such subject being benefits and their entitlements. Our benefits advisers are widely recognised as being at the forefront of their knowledge and experience.

By way of example, a husband and wife contacted us seeking advice on a particular benefit, namely Pension Credit. Pension Credit may give you extra money to help with your living costs if you are a state pensioner.

The couple were in their late 70s and were convinced that they were not entitled to claim Pension Credit. However, having recently attended one of our presentations on the subject, they decided to contact us. They were very organised and precise with their finances and informed the adviser that their weekly income was over £600 and that they had nearly £100,000 in savings.

With that information, the adviser could have advised them that they were quite correct and that with that income and level of savings, there would be no entitlement. Thankfully, our advisers are trained and experienced to look beyond the obvious. In further discussion with the couple, it was identified that both were in receipt of a disability benefit valued at over £200 a week. The adviser was able to inform them that the value of disability benefits does not count as income. Additionally, because they were both receiving a disability benefit, they were in fact entitled to apply for Pension Credit.

Whilst the value of Pension Credit they were entitled to was only around £5 a week, what pleased them more was that any amount of Pension Credit also provides a free TV licence, a Warm Home Discount of £150 a year deducted from their electricity bill, and a Cold Weather Payment of £25 a week. All of these extras are automatically provided once in receipt of Pension Credit.

The moral of this tale is never to assume the obvious and, most importantly, not to hesitate to contact our advisers at Sudbury Citizens Advice on 01787 321400. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Sudbury & South Suffolk Citizens Advice

We are only a phone call away.

01787 321400

www.citizensadvice.org.uk



Notes from a Beekeeper's Diary

Winter bees & a surviving queen

Bees can always surprise me. After three months of almost continuous rainfall, with single-figure temperatures and high winds, the bees took advantage of the first day of relative calm and a short spell of sunshine to leave the hive on their first foraging mission of the year. And all this in only the second week of February.

Of course, bees will leave the hive briefly when they can for 'hygiene' flights, but this was different. They were bringing pollen back into the hive. This was the pale, creamy-yellow pollen of winter aconites, the first flowers to bloom after the snowdrops, and could only mean one thing – the queen bee was starting to lay eggs.

The queen is the last survivor of the colony that was in full swing back in the summer. She is now surrounded by winter bees that carry an extra layer of fat in their bodies to help get them through the long, dark days.

As the winter bees return with their pollen the queen is stimulated to begin laying eggs once. Later in spring she will increase production to over 2,000 each day, more than her own bodyweight. To sustain this she is fed and groomed continuously by an ever-changing retinue of workers. At the peak of summer there will be over 60,000 worker bees in the colony, all from eggs laid by the same queen.

Between 1%-2% of the eggs will develop into male drones. These are produced from larger cells in the wax comb. The workers decide how many drones are required; the queen simply recognises the different-sized brood cell and acts accordingly.

At some point in the spring or early

summer the workers will decide that the time is right to swarm. When swarming the queen and up to half the bees leave the nest and establish a new colony elsewhere. Before doing so the workers build special swarm cells around the edges of the frames, larger than worker or drone cells and built out from the surface of the comb like unhusked peanuts. The eggs laid in these cells become new queens.

The queen lays an egg in each swarm cell, and when they are sealed the swarm is ready to go.

The first of the new queens vibrates her wings against the side of the cell when she is ready to emerge, causing a piping sound. The workers respond by tearing down the walls of the cell to help her get out quickly. Immediately she sets off to hunt down the other queen cells, tear down the walls, and kill the occupants. The workers will help her, clustering round the victim until she is suffocated.

When the weather permits, the virgin queen leaves the hive in search of the nearest drone congregation area, a particular location where drones from all nests within flying distance gather for the sole purpose of mating. The virgin queen flies through the crowd of drones, drawing them to her with her own particular pheromone or scent. Soon the drones form a comet-like cloud behind her. Finally, the closest drone will impregnate her with semen, a process which takes place in mid-flight, lasts less than a second, and results in the immediate death of the successful donor.

The process is repeated until she has mated with anything up to a

dozen drones. She stores around five million sperm in a specialised gland, called the *spermatheca*, where they are nourished and sustained with her own body fluids. She might repeat this process over several days to ensure good genetic variety, but afterwards she will not visit a drone congregation area again.

Returning to the nest, she now commences her lifelong work of laying eggs to produce the next generations of bees. The workers themselves decide which cells will house worker larvae or drone larvae. The queen fertilises each egg destined to become a worker or future queen with sperm from her *spermatheca*. Drones are produced from unfertilised eggs, so the drones only carry the genes of the queen. The genetic inheritance of the workers derives from the queen and any one of perhaps ten different drones, thereby multiplying the possibilities of beneficial variation.

As well as feeding and grooming the queen, the workers also pick up her own special pheromone, known as 'queen substance'. In her prime the queen produces this in abundance but it declines as the queen ages. The weakening of the pheromone stimulates the workers to create new queen cells, from which one emerged imago will survive. Any rivals are dispatched, as were those of her mother. This process is called *supersedure* and is essential to retain the viability of the colony. The ageing queen will soon disappear, her life's work completed.

And so the cycle is repeated.

Tony Rand

Boxford Bike Club

Boxford Bike Club is a community cycle club based in the picturesque Suffolk village of Boxford. Founded in 2012 and with a membership of around 60, we take pride in being an open, friendly and inclusive group catering for riders of all ages and abilities.

We are pleased to announce that we will once again be hosting our annual cycle sportive event, **The Boxford Tornado, on 26th April 2026.**

The event offers 32 or 65 mile routes and a 10 mile family route, all fully signed. The event is supported by a mobile mechanic and first aid and recovery service with free event photos and a post ride BBQ at The White Hart.



Through the event we support local charities and good causes and since the inaugural Tornado have donated more than £25,000. In 2026 we will again be supporting the East Anglian Air Ambulance, having raised over £3,700 for the charity in 2025.

For more information or to book, please visit www.boxfordbikeclub.co.uk/boxfordtornado.

If you are new or returning to cycling or would just like to join us on a Sunday ride, please contact Kevin at kevbike@btopenworld.com. For more information on membership check our website.

www.boxfordbikeclub.co.uk

Milden Cricket Club

"For the rain it raineth every day." So sang Feste, the clown (or jester), at the end of William Shakespeare's play Twelfth Night. Given the seemingly constant rain this year so far (another 16 millimeters on 15 February), Shakespeare might have been writing in England in 2026, rather than over 400 years earlier in around 1602!

However, to quote Monty Python, *"always look on the bright side of life"* since, by the time you read this the 2026 domestic cricket season will be less than two months away with, hopefully, some dry, sunny, weather to look forward to. (And, maybe, England will have reached the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup tournament in India/Sri Lanka!)



Milden's first league match is at home against Hadleigh Academy on Sunday 10 May. (The full list of league fixtures was set out on page 55 of the January BRN.) The following friendly matches - all at home - have also been arranged:

Sunday 26 April	Intra-squad match
Monday 4 May	Milden v Superstars CC
Sunday 24 May	Six-a-side tournament
Wednesday 8 July	Milden v Army Air Corps (evening T/20 match)
Sunday 2 August	Milden v Suffolk Swingers

Details about the Tissa Rigby Trophy to follow.

Meanwhile, in preparation for the 2026 season, indoor nets are taking place, held on Thursday evenings, alternately at Sprotts Farm Indoor Cricket Lane, Holt Road, Polstead CO6 5BT and the sports hall at Wattisham Airfield, IP7 7RA. If you are interested in playing for the club or, in the first place, coming to nets, or would just like more information, please contact club captain Alex Cunningham via e-mail info@mildencr.com.

The club AGM and pre-season social is on Friday 6 March 2026 - 7.30 pm at The Fleece Hotel, Boxford (AGM at 8pm)

David Lamming
Media Officer

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Feedback From James Finch

County Councillor for the Stour Valley

Council sets out plans for 2026/27 budget

The £850 million plan aims to safeguard frontline services, support the most vulnerable, and invest in Suffolk's future despite rising costs, growing demand and shortfalls in national funding. Key themes of the draft budget include:

- Savings and efficiencies: £46.5 million of savings through service transformation and efficiencies, including a temporary reduction in employer pension contributions, made possible by the strong position of the council's pension fund.
- Rising financial pressures: Increasing demand, in particular for adult and children's social care, will add £32.2 million in costs, alongside continued pressures from the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit.
- Reserves: A one-off use of reserves will bridge a £5.9 million funding gap, while keeping reserves above the minimum level needed to manage financial risks.
- Capital investment: The capital programme has been shortened from 4 years to 3 ahead of local government reorganisation in 2028. It continues to fund essential projects like school expansions and infrastructure upgrades, as well as new schemes, such as improvements to bus services, public rights of way, and cycling and walking infrastructure.

To support these plans, the council has proposed a 4.99% rise in Council Tax, comprising a 2.99% general increase and an extra 2% for adult care. Alongside a forecast 1% rise in the taxbase, this would generate an additional £27.4 million.

For households, this would mean:

- Band B property (the most common band): £25.90 per week, an increase of £1.23 a week
- Band D property: £33.30 per week, an increase of £1.58 a week.

A Council Tax increase is proposed as part of this, to be debated and finalised at a Full Council meeting on 12 February.

Young people's voices shape Suffolk's 2025 Annual Public Health Report

The event brought together partners from across all sectors to listen to

young people involved in creating the report, using hackathon events to explore what matters most to them. Attendees discussed how youth social action improves physical and mental health, with potential to address health inequalities across Suffolk.

For the first time, Suffolk's Annual Public Health Report (APHR) is predominantly video based, sharing real-life stories and experiences from young people countywide. A key part focuses on 3 youth-led events bringing together young people and local partners to talk about what helps/hinders young people.

This year's APHR represents an important step forward for Suffolk. By listening directly to young people, we have a clearer understanding of the challenges they face and what supports their wellbeing. The report shows that youth social action can play a central role in improving health and reducing inequalities. Our focus now must be on acting on what young people have told us and working with them to make lasting improvements.

The launch is part of a programme that will support young people aged 11–20 (and up to 25 with additional needs) to design and lead projects that make a positive difference in their local areas led by young people.

The 2025 APHR, including all videos and supporting case studies featured in the report, can be viewed here:

<https://tinyurl.com/scc-health-2025>

Department for Education (DfE) acknowledges progress - and sets clear expectations for Suffolk's SEND improvement

In a recent stocktake visit, officers from the DfE reported progress in governance, quality assurance and timeliness, leadership and multi-agency working. They praised a shared commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and laid out a number of recommendations for further improvement.

The findings of the visit have been published in a letter addressed to Sarah-Jane Smedmor, Executive Director of Children & Young People's Services at SCC, and Dr Ed Garratt OBE, Chief Executive Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board. You can read the letter here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SCC-letter>

The DfE acknowledged work to clear the backlog of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) by January and the fact that plans will be delivered above the national average for timeliness.

Officers noted a need to ensure that plans reflect families' views and lead to

timely, appropriate support.

The next review of SEND services by the DfE is scheduled for the end of the spring term.

SCC has approved much-needed provision for children with complex needs

Papers published in January set out plans for the new provision, which will provide purpose-built Ofsted-registered accommodation, improving outcomes for children and reducing reliance on high-cost, private placements.

Following a successful bid, £1.4m of DfE funding has been secured for the project, which will be match-funded with a further £1.4m from SCC.

Suffolk is facing the same pressures, with more children coming into care, and children entering care later with lived experiences meaning that they often require more specialist care and support at higher costs. A lack of choice in the current care market means there is a critical need for Suffolk based, Ofsted-registered placements for children with complex needs.

SCC has approved plans by Unity Schools Partnership, a trust that runs 40 schools across Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire, to open the 126-place school on the site of the former Saxmundham SET School in Seaman Avenue, Saxmundham.

Nationally significant Anglo-Saxon burial ground found at Sizewell C site

Among the most remarkable discoveries is a high-status grave containing two individuals buried alongside a fully harnessed horse, weapons, and personal items. These finds, dating to the 7th century, suggest the individuals were elite members of Anglo-Saxon society and reflect their complex burial traditions.

The team from Oxford Cotswold Archaeology (OCA), working on behalf of Sizewell C, identified at least 11 burial mounds, known as barrows, along with cremation and inhumation burials. All had been carefully arranged across a prominent point in the landscape near Theberton in Suffolk.

Despite poor bone preservation caused by the local sandy soils, detailed excavation and recording have preserved valuable information about burial practices and social status in early Medieval Suffolk.

James Finch

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Mobile: 07545 423796

Feedback From Bryn Hurren

Babergh District Councillor for Box Vale Ward.

As I write this report for the latest edition of the Box River News, it is St Valentine's weekend and love was certainly all around in Boxford yesterday. I lost count of the number of bunches, posies and bouquets of flowers being carried through the churchyard, either bought from Boxford Stores, or taken through to lay on graves of loved ones in our cemetery. Many families were also walking through to and from lunches at one of our thriving hostelrys.

We are so fortunate to have such a good range of businesses in this village and it is important that we keep them. This is one thing that sets Boxford apart from many other larger villages within the Babergh area. Long may that continue, and they continue to be supported and patronised by villagers and visitors alike.

I spent a long day in Boxford myself, not on a love mission, although some might call it that, but I was working hard to change the hefty church gateposts at the main entrance to our church. Apart from three ladies I knew well, the only thing I got to hug was the old dirty, rotten gateposts as we levered and bear-hugged them out of their metre-deep holes where they had stood for probably 50 years or more. I've been trying to do this work, as commissioned by the village parish council, since Christmas, but the 14th February was the first day this year without rain at all, which enabled this much-needed work to be carried out at last. Thank you to all those who stopped to chat and offer general encouragement. I always love working in Boxford and other local villages.

Our next big mission at Babergh District Council is to set a balanced budget for April 2026-27. This again has not been easy with costs going up and the need to keep any rises below inflation if possible for the year ahead. We have managed to achieve this again through careful financial planning and the Babergh share of the budget will once again be below a fiver per week for Band D properties, for all we do. That's less than a cup of coffee if you go posh, and I think is a tribute to our councillors and staff alike.

I am aware of course that my council's share of the total budget is now only around 8.5% of your total council tax bill and other authorities

are going for larger than inflation increases. I'm aware also that it contains a rise in car parking charges which I feel is contrary to what was promised a year ago and a bad move all round. No one is more aware than myself of the horrendous increase in the Government's business rates on our Babergh-owned car parks but I make the point once again that these areas were originally purchased and made available by the council to help businesses within our market towns and shouldn't be penalised by business rates at all.

An even bigger task for Babergh at the moment is to implement the new government initiative for statutory recycling throughout all council areas in England and Wales. This is a good thing to save confusion and increase recycling rates, which is something we all support. We certainly need to keep the wastage down in society as a whole. We have gone for a three weekly collection of black bin rubbish. This could get smelly in a hot summer and we know that, but it is impossible to achieve everything we have to do by any other method, without then having to invest in more collection vehicles at a cool cost of approximately £500,000 per vehicle. A hard choice indeed!

At least now we will be recycling more materials at kerbside, including Tetra Paks, lower grades of plastics/film, carrier bags etc.

Also we endeavour to update our JLP (joint local plan) across both councils and to include within it the new housebuilding ambitions of this government. Although Angela Rayner has long gone from the cabinet, the housebuilding targets she set remain for the present moment and into the short term future at least. The problem for the longer term is whether we can maintain supply of skilled labour and materials with which to build 775 new dwellings across Babergh district each year. We have carried out a call for sites that has certainly produced some quite possible locations for providing housing into the coming 30 years of the plan. We have to be careful what we plan and where we put it and have environmental and commercial plans that link together. This requires skill and good consultation, but we will reflect everyone's views as well as we possibly can and we will be trying not to put housing in rural areas and villages, except where it is wanted, needed or accepted under rural exception policies.

Greenfield areas will I expect be protected for the next ten years of the plan and hopefully after that as well.

Also I hope we will go back to building houses that are needed for families of all sizes to be lived in, including first-time buyers, renters and downsizers, not just for the profit of national housebuilders and their shareholders.

This is all a very ambitious programme but can be done successfully, without destroying the good stuff we have already put into place.

As predicted, it seems that we will now have no more elections across the Babergh area for two more years. This does not affect myself as I was elected in 2023 and I have two more years of my term to run anyway. It does mean however that present county councillors will be in place for seven years without having to face an election which seems very wrong to me. As previously stated the elections are run and organised by the District council, which in our case is Babergh Mid Suffolk, the other councils have very little to do except training and welcoming the newly elected councillors when they arrive to take office. Can there be another sinister reason why the elections have been called off, maybe a political one? Surely not I hear you all cry. What are we coming to?

Local Elections Update

Shortly before the print deadline of the BRN and since the above was written the government has had a rethink due to political pressure from other political parties (including my own through Ed Davey) and have quite rightly given in to peoples' democratic rights to have their say and not succumb to others political whims. Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council issued a statement an hour after the announcement was made to say that we already were at a very advanced state of planning to run the elections for Suffolk County Council and as a precautionary measure had continued to put measures in place. This means we were not caught out by late correcting decision. Democracy Must Rule.

If anyone needs their to talk to their well-elected mid-term councillor, you all know what to do!

All love at this time.

Bryn
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Mobile: 07771 508348

BOXFORD

Summary of Council Meeting 27th January 2026

Public Forum: It was reported that the permissive footpath between Fen Street and Cox Hill is becoming increasingly dangerous, the clerk will request Cllr Finch takes this matter forward.

The yellow lines at the junction of Swan Street and Church Street and Broad Street and Swan Street need to be repainted. The clerk will advise Cllr Finch.

It was noted that the response from Highways to reported potholes was inadequate as most were rejected without an inspection being carried out.

District Council Report: DCllr Hurren's full report can be found on the BPC website.

County Council Report: Cllr Finch's full report can be found on the BPC website.

Finance: The finance report was accepted and can be found in full on the BPC website.

The finance group have recommended an increase in the precept from £65,107 to £73,200, based on budget allocations. It was resolved to accept the recommended increase.

Planning: The full planning details can be seen in the minutes on the BPC website.

Stone St 20mph speed limit: It was reported that there has been some confusion regarding the 20mph speed limit for Stone Street; further discussions were due to take place that did not take place. A process to take the matter forward was suggested and resolved – full details can be found in the full minutes.

Boxford, Massachusetts: An enquiry has been received from a resident in Boxford, Massachusetts regarding the 50 year anniversary of the visit and was keen to see if the parish would like to do the same again. Cllr Troke will make contact and take the matter forward.

Update on Parking: Contact has been made with the diocese to ask if the land on School Hill behind the cemetery could be sold to make into a car park. Due to issues that have been raised regarding the proposed car park down Stone Street Rd, this proposal has been put on hold. A suggestion has also been put to the playing fields

committee to extend the car park at the playing field and to resolve the drainage issues and resurface the existing car park.

Consideration of grants: FoBS have requested that the previously awarded grant of £2,000 be used for IT equipment instead of playground equipment. It has been established that FoBS are £460 short of the total funds needed. It was proposed that the PC approve the request and increase the grant to £2,460. This was resolved.

Date of Next Meeting: 24th February 2026 at 7pm in the village hall.

Full minutes and other documents mentioned above can be found at: <http://boxford-pc.gov.uk>

Zoe Rumsey
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clerk@boxford-pc.gov.uk

LITTLE WALDINGFIELD

Summary of Council Meeting 3rd March 2025

The Little Waldingfield Parish Council (LWPC) met on Tuesday 3 February in the Parish Room, joined by our district councillor and one resident. A lively and wide ranging discussion covered everything from elections and recycling to buses, planning, and the ever mysterious fate of our road markings.

County & District Updates: The main issue covered: delays to elections; 5% council tax rise; and new recycling bins

Buses: A small step forward. The 112 bus timetable has been updated, with new request stops and a slightly altered route. Copies will be encapsulated and displayed at the bus stop, in the phone box, and (if the landlord agrees) in the pub.

GoStart also wrote to the council outlining the value of their community service. LWPC will respond with thanks and a gentle reminder that the parish does contribute financially to the service each year.

Residents also raised concerns about the Connect Bus service, which still does not serve the village directly despite passing nearby. Councillors will continue to press for improvements.

Planning: The planning applications were discussed and considered on their merits.

Highways: The newly resurfaced road through the village is smoother but now lacks white lines. Suffolk County Council has been asked to reinstate them and LWPC will follow up.

The Lorry Watch scheme remains on the agenda. LWPC is waiting for Suffolk Highways to confirm a site visit to assess whether a weight limit could be introduced - an essential requirement for joining the scheme.

Speeding through the village remains a concern.

Footpaths and Grounds: Cllr Wheeler reported that the new bridge on FP6 is complete, hedge cutting along the church path has restored full width, and discussions continue about installing waymarkers on the cross parish route into Great Waldingfield. Weed killing and bramble clearance in the churchyard and cemetery has been completed.

Councillor Recruitment: Two vacancies remain on the parish council. Cllr Turnbull will begin house-to-house engagement once the weather improves.

And finally... The council continues to work through its action plan, which now includes tasks ranging from emergency planning volunteers to website updates and the new bus timetable.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 3 March 2026 in the Parish Room. Residents are warmly encouraged to attend - your questions, ideas, and concerns help shape the work of the council.

For more updates and to get involved, visit the LWPC website:

<https://tinyurl.com/lwpc-council> or contact the parish clerk.

Your village needs your voice!

Mark Freeman
07554 592425
clerk.littlewaldingfield@hotmail.co.uk

NEWTON

Summary of Council Meeting 11th February 2026

NPC is looking for an applicant to fill the councillor vacancy. If you would like more information on the role, please contact Dave Crimmin as below.

26/029 Planning

The councillors reviewed Planning Application DC/25/05504 Village

Hall, The Green - Resurfacing of car park and resolved to support the application.

The councillors reviewed the additional information supplied relating to Planning Application DC/26/04864 Land west of Manders Auctions, Assington Road - Change of use of land. Erection of 9No. single-storey dwellings (including 4No. affordable). Improvements to access and public highway (including pedestrian crossing, new footpath provision etc.). Biodiversity enhancements and resolved unanimously to object to the application as it does not comply with the Newton Neighbourhood Plan.

The councillors reviewed the amended proposal for Planning Application DC/25/04963 Land Rear of Juglans, Sudbury Road - Application under Section 73a of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Variation of Condition 1 (Approved Plans and Documents) of Planning Permission DC/25/02375 dated: 25.07.2025 - For design changes to Plot 1 only as per submitted plans and documents. The councillors resolved to support the application.

26/030 Saracens Head as an Asset of Community Value

The councillors reviewed the agent's sales brochure in relation to selling the Saracens Head and requested the clerk to obtain the financial information pack in relation to the business. The councillors agreed to hold a public briefing session in relation to the sale on Wednesday 4th March 2026 starting at 8pm.

26/032 Walking Infrastructure Project

The councillors reviewed the progress of applications for grants towards the cost of the walking infrastructure

improvements. To date, applications have been made to the National Lottery (£20,000) and Sport England (£15,000) for grants towards the project. SCC has agreed to pay for the costs (£25,956) of relocating the bus stop and shelter on the Green. Babergh's CIL Team has agreed that the project is eligible for a grant up to £100,000, subject to a successful application. A Suffolk-based charity will consider if the scheme falls within their criteria in early March.

The councillors resolved to allocate £20,000 of its CIL receipts towards the project, and that a grant application be made to the NGT for their consideration.

26/033 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Presland updated councillors that the first meeting with the working party had been held on 27 January 2026 and that draft minutes have been circulated to councillors. Further members of the working party are still being sought. The next two events will be:

- Meeting with consultants LUC on 25 February 2026.
- Presentation to residents at the NPC coffee morning on 28 March 2026.

26/035 GoStart

The councillors reviewed the request to help inform residents of GoStart's services and agreed to update the website, electronic newsletter and Facebook page with the details.

Full minutes can be found at:
www.newton-pc.gov.uk

Dave Crimmin CiLCA, PIALC, PSLCC
01787 375085
clerk@newton-pc.gov.uk

Parish Council Contact Details

Boxford PC

Clerk: Zoe Rumsey
01787 739317
clerk@boxford-pc.gov.uk
<http://boxford-pc.gov.uk>

Edwardstone PC

Clerk: Richard Jones
01473 828246
edwardstoneclerk@outlook.com
<http://edwardstonepc.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/minutes>

Groton PC

Clerk: Richard Jones
01473 828246
grotonclerk@yahoo.com
<http://groton.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/documents>

Little Waldingfield PC

Councillor & Clerk: Mark Freeman
07554 592425
clerk.littlewaldingfield@hotmail.co.uk
<https://bit.ly/LW-parish-minutes>

Newton PC

Clerk: Dave Crimmin PSLCC
01787 375085
clerk@newton-pc.gov.uk
www.newton.onesuffolk.net

Each of our villages has its own Parish Council, representing local residents and dealing with matters that affect everyday life, including planning issues, footpaths, and local facilities. Parish Councils also act as a link between the community and district and county authorities on wider issues.

Parish Councils rely on local involvement to work effectively, and residents are encouraged to raise issues, attend meetings, or consider standing as councillors to help shape decisions in their own community.



Report a Pothole

Suffolk
County Council

<https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk>

Halls & Facilities to Hire

Boxford Pavilion	Natalie Woods 07772 916 135 nataliewoods25@gmail.com
Boxford Spinney	Mark Miller 01787 211596 www.boxfordspinney.co.uk mark.miller@talktalk.net
Boxford Village Hall	www.boxfordvillagehall.co.uk booking@boxfordvillagehall.co.uk
Brent Eleigh Village Hall	Karen Marshall 07946 209103 karenemarshall6@gmail.com
Edwardstone Parish Hall	Daphne Clark 01787 210698 daphne.clark@btopenworld.com
Edwardstone Millennium Green	Marijke Morris 07914 767 013 marijke_e@yahoo.co.uk
Groton Village Hall	Joanna Roberts 07845 940 008 jgant87618@aol.com
Little Waldingfield Parish Room	Sue Bowen 01787 249473 sd.bowen@btopenworld.com
Little Waldingfield Pavilion	Jennie Jordan 07522 352 558 52Jennie1@gmail.com
Marquee Booking	BoxfordMarqueeBooking@gmail.com
Milden Pavilion	Pearl 01449 741 876 info@mildenvillage.co.uk
Newton Village Hall	The Secretary 07955 199 000

Scouting

1st Boxford Beaver Scouts	John 07966 690317 johnaves@hotmail.co.uk
1st Boxford Cub Scouts	Susie 07843 280396
1st Boxford Scouts	David Talbot-Clarke 07946 550519
1st Boxford Explorer Scouts	Neil Barkham 07734 108257
1st Boxford Rainbows	Janice Macmillan 07779 303690
1st Boxford Brownies	Janice Macmillan 07779 303690 janice.macmillan@yahoo.co.uk
1st Boxford Guides	Bethany Ireland bethanyireland11@gmail.com

Children Families & Learning

Boxford Primary School	01787 210332 www.boxfordprimaryschool.co.uk office@boxford.suffolk.sch.uk
Friends of Boxford School (FoBS)	talktofobs@gmail.com
Sunflowers Childcare	Moira Grant 01787 211363 www.sunflowers-childcare.co.uk info@sunflowers-childcare.co.uk
Boxford Baby & Toddler Group	facebook.com/Boxfordbabyandtoddlergroup

Volunteers Make Our Villages Thrive

Our village halls, clubs, charities, and youth groups don't run themselves. Almost everything listed on these pages is organised by volunteers - neighbours giving a little time to keep things happening.

For anyone considering getting involved, help doesn't have to mean long-term or specialist commitment. Many groups need:

- occasional help at events
- someone to cover a role for a few months
- behind-the-scenes admin or publicity
- fresh faces with new ideas

Getting involved is one of the easiest ways to meet people and feel part of village life.

Additions or corrections

This guide aims to be as complete and accurate as possible. If a group is missing, details have changed, or you spot an error, please email editor@boxrivernews.com.

Clubs & Groups

Boxford Bellringers	<i>Richard Gates</i> 01787 210432
Boxford Bible Study Group	<i>Peter & Margaret</i> 01787 211077
Boxford Bike Club	<i>Kevin Bridge</i> 07876 798 617 www.boxfordbikeclub.co.uk
Boxford Bowls Club	<i>Ian Clark</i> 01787 211133
Boxford Carpet Bowls	<i>David Warren</i> 01787 211067
Boxford Drama Group	<i>Janice Macmillan</i> 07779 303 690 janice.macmillan@yahoo.co.uk
Boxford Friendship Group	<i>Alison Warren</i> 01787 211067 or <i>Wendy Hills</i> 01787 210342
Boxford Gardens Open	<i>Audrey Zuck</i> 07852 102 455 audrey@a2zriskservices.com
Boxford Gardening Society	<i>Elizabeth Wagener</i> 01787 210223 elizabeth.wagener@btinternet.com
Boxford Literary Group	<i>David Jones</i> 01787 211104 audav@hotmail.co.uk
Boxford Rovers Youth FC	<i>Melvyn Eke</i> 07873 971 701 m.eke@btinternet.com www.boxford-rovers-youth.com
Boxford Tennis Social	<i>Sue Moore</i> 07808 481 447
Boxford WI	<i>Lyn Beer</i> 07961 357 526
Fleece Jazz	<i>David Gasson</i> 01787 210796
Highway 12 Western Dance	<i>Chris</i> 01787 371006
Little Waldingfield History Society	<i>Diana Langford</i> 01787 248298 dianalangford765@gmail.com
Little Waldingfield Over 60s & Friendship Club	<i>Tricia Eddington</i> 01787 247932
Local History Recorders	Edwardstone <i>Daphne Clark</i> 01787 210698 daphne.clark@btopenworld.com
	Groton <i>Joanna Roberts</i> 01787 210619 jgant87618@aol.com
Madrigalia Choir	<i>Sue Price</i> 01787 210913
Milden Cricket Club	<i>Richard Robinson</i> 07807 229447 or <i>David Lamming</i> 07968 791 135
Milden Singers	<i>Pearl</i> 01449 741876
Natural Boxford	<i>Louise Carpenter</i> 01787 211862 louise Carpenter@proton.me
Newton Arts & Crafts Club	<i>Carole Langley</i> 01787 373548
Newton War Games Club	<i>Brian Lawson</i> 01787 312160
Newton Fireside Club	<i>Moira Evans</i> 01787 374652
Pilates (Edwardstone)	<i>Claire</i> 07772 074 750

Clubs & Groups

Primrose Wood Volunteers	<i>Evan Flockhart</i> 07968 336 883 obliquewoodland@protonmail.com
Swing Jive & Lindy Hop Dance	<i>Sarah Boldock</i> 07956 614 824
Yoga (Boxford)	<i>Marianne Marshall</i> 01787 210323
Yoga Paper Kite (Newton)	<i>Sophie</i> 01787 313662
Yoga with Lindsey (Newton)	<i>Lindsey</i> 07971 800 540

Charities

Boxford & Groton United Charities	<i>Guy Godfrey</i> 01787 211378
Edwardstone Millennium Green Trust	<i>Alison Barlow</i> 07765 401 952 crossways.jemali@gmail.com
Edwardstone Charities	<i>Nick Raymond</i> 01787 210461 ncraymond@hotmail.co.uk
Groton Educational Foundation	<i>Stephen Watkins</i> 01787 210977 stephen_watkins49@yahoo.co.uk
Groton Winthrop Mulberry Trust	<i>James Wills</i> 01787 210484
Little Waldingfield Charities	<i>Mary Thorogood</i> 01787 247658 littlewaldingfieldcharities@gmail.com
Newton Green Trust	<i>Philip Taylor</i> 07775 777 598 philiptaylor433@gmail.com

Community Groups

3PR Boxford 1st Responders	<i>Alistair Horne</i> 07887 716453 alistair.horne@eastamb.nhs.uk
Boxford Allotments	<i>David Burden</i> 01787 211926 d.burden379@btinternet.com
Boxford Bounty	<i>Mark Miller</i> 01787 211596
Boxford Community Car Scheme	<i>Jen Eastwood</i> 01787 211853 jen.eastwood8@gmail.com
Boxford Community Council	<i>Ward Baker</i> 07850 941 831 boxfordcommunitycouncil@gmail.com www.boxford.me.uk
Boxford Playing Fields	<i>Craig Needham</i> 07970 733 934 craig.needham@me.com
Boxford Society	<i>Jen Eastwood</i> 01787 211853 jen.eastwood8@gmail.com boxfordsuffolk.com/boxfordSociety
Boxford Tennis Courts	<i>Nick Moore</i> 07977 241229
Lt Waldingfield Playing Field	<i>Jennie Jordan</i> 07522 352 558 52Jennie1@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 2026

26 THU	GHS Our Greatest Monarchs Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
27 FRI	Little Waldingfield Pop-Up Pub Little Waldingfield Pavilion	6:30pm

MARCH 2026

3 TUE	Fireside Club - Marks Hall Newton Village Hall	2pm
3 TUE	Boxford Gardening Society Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
4 WED	Boxford WI - WW2 Women at War Boxford Village Hall	2pm
5 THU	Gardeners Question Time Hadleigh Old School	6:30pm
11 WED	LWHS: Women's Land Army in Suffolk Little Waldingfield Parish Room	7:30pm
11 WED	Charity Quiz Night The Fleece, Boxford	8pm
17 TUE	Fireside Club - Easter Egg Painting Newton Village Hall	2pm
17 TUE	PGC: Cutting Gardens Polstead Village Hall	7:30pm
18 WED	Ladies Get Into Golf Newton Green Golf Club	2-3pm
21 SAT	Coffee Morning Newton Village Hall	10am
21 SAT	Ladies Get Into Golf Newton Green Golf Club	11-Noon
21 SAT	Classic British Comedy Night Milden Pavilion	7pm
23 MON	Boxford Friendship Group Boxford Village Hall	2-4pm
24 TUE	NGGC Tea & Cake Afternoon Newton Green Golf Club	2-4pm
27 FRI	GHS: The Secret World of Spying Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
27 FRI	Little Waldingfield Pop-Up Pub Little Waldingfield Pavilion	6:30pm
28 SAT	Parish Council Coffee Morning Newton Village Hall	10am
28 SAT	Brent Eleigh Spring Quiz Brent Eleigh Village Hall	7pm
29 SUN	French's Dog Walk Castling's Heath, CO10 5EU	11am
31 TUE	Fireside Club - Medical Detection Dogs Newton Village Hall	2pm

APRIL 2026

1 WED	Boxford WI - Papyrus Boxford Village Hall	2pm
4 SAT	Family Fun Day Bridges Farm, Kersey Tye, IP7 6HB	11-3pm
7 TUE	Boxford Gardening Society Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
15 WED	Charity Quiz Night The Fleece, Boxford	8pm
15 WED	LWHS: The History of Spices Little Waldingfield Parish Room	7:30pm
17 FRI	Quiz & Curry Evening Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
18 SAT	St Nicholas Hospice Coffee Morning Newton Village Hall	10am
21 TUE	PGC: Garden Design Polstead Village Hall	7:30pm
23 THU	GHS: Reggie & The RAF Groton Village Hall	7:30pm
23-25 THU-SAT	Boxford Drama: The Ghostlight Club Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
24 FRI	Little Waldingfield Pop-Up Pub Little Waldingfield Pavilion	6:30pm
26 SUN	Boxford Tornado Sportive Boxford Playing Fields	TBC

MAY 2026

5 TUE	Boxford Gardening Society Boxford Village Hall	7:30pm
6 WED	Boxford WI - Annual Meeting Boxford Village Hall	2pm
13 WED	Charity Quiz Night The Fleece, Boxford	8pm

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