



The Swaffham Crier

Volume XLVIII Number 3

March 2024



Editorial

When, after a Month of Mayhem, 831 people rang Bottisham Surgery in a *single day* for an appointment (that's one in seven of the population), Bottisham Surgery were about ready to throw in the towel — see page 26). Well, if it's the 100 day cough that's the problem we're quite surprised it wasn't one in one of the population, we don't know anyone who HASN'T got it. ...

Many of us will remember Mark Towriss who was a much-beloved GP at Bottisham in times gone by. When he died (unfortunately, much too soon) his wife Ute started the Mark Towriss Bursary Fund in his memory and in this edition (p, 12) you can read all about the things it has achieved during the 14 years of its existence, although the time has now come to close it. Many people round here contributed to it, and a great many thanks to them.

We have some School News!!! See page 20, and in our index, we have classed it as a Regular, in the hope that it now will be again! Many thanks to Becky Wilkes and the new PTA — they will shortly be having an Auction of Promises to raise money to repair the school's play equipment, so can readers contribute anything?

The road to Upware (otherwise known as Alton Towers) along with other similarly entertaining Fen Roads round here have at least got the attention of our Council (see p. 29) but what they will do about it is another thing — read their report.

Bulbeck Theatre has NOT closed, but instead has been reborn as Cambridge Light Opera (CLOG) after losing their performance barn in Bulbeck last year. This year's Iolanthe will be at Burwell's Gardiner's Memorial Hall.

AND ... it's time to start planning and planting! Your entrance form to this year's Autumn Show is on our Centre spread. Happy Easter All!

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Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: *Blossom Moon*, pen and ink drawing by **Rachael Ainscough**



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Heating Scheme Problems

I see in the February *Crier* notes from the Parish Council January meeting regarding the Heating Scheme

"There have been no reported issues so far this winter..." This is not true. They know it isn't. How could they say this?

There were significant problems in connecting our property in the first week of December, partly down to waste material discovered in the network hot water, part problems with installation. I am still having issues and have been appealing to the heating team to respond since early in the year, with many messages to them. I have had few in response, in which I have been told things have happened which I know absolutely are not true. The last visit was on 31 January where it was evident that problems still existed. The engineers acknowledged those things to me on site; they took photos to be submitted back to the heating team as evidence; I saw that evidence myself, as I watched the entire time they were there. But I was told afterwards by email from the heating team that there were no problems, and that a check had been undertaken that I had specifically asked for had been done, but which the engineers on site said when I asked them to do it, they could not undertake that check as they had not been asked. Even when I said to the engineers, I have been asking for this check for weeks now, they couldn't do it.

I am not going to go into the rest of the details here; I am still trying to give them the opportunity to rectify matters. At time of writing, mid-February, this has not happened. If it does, before the *Crier* goes to print, I will submit an update.

But what really concerns me is that the engineers said in that January visit, we cannot be told what problems others are experiencing. This is wrong. there should be complete openness about the heating scheme, and what problems are out there and happening. And sure, what is working well too. We need the whole picture.

I hope to God that there is no comparison to be made with the Post Office scandal, but isolating individuals and telling them they're the only ones raising issues and suggesting that those issues are not real is what happened there, and it created terrible situations for those people.

I have supported the heating scheme from the start and I want it to work. I am not an activist, nor am I sniping from the sides, as has been suggested by someone who supports the scheme wholeheartedly.

I need it to work. My old oil boiler stands outside, wrecked by when they took it out. I have no way back.

Mark Lewinski-Grende

PS. Since the above letter was written, attempts have been made by Huttie and the network people (Equans) to resolve the problems we are having, and these efforts are ongoing. They think they now understand what the problem may be caused by, and they think it's to do with the configuration of pipework within our house. This remains to be explored and fixed, soon, if indeed it is the root cause.

For the Fenmen in Swaffham Prior Churchyard

Half hidden by a spreading Yew,
In flickering shadows stands his tomb
The fragile cobwebs hung with dew,
Like fine-spun lace upon a loom
Obscure the green and crumbling stone
That looks across the misty Fen
The wastelands that he made his own
With other geese and water hen,

Who can recall his moleskin coat,
The battered hat upon his head
The passing stranger who would gloat
Not understanding half he said
King of his watery domain
His spirit for the fenland yearned
We'll never see his like again
His soul to the black earth has returned

Michael Michalak
Burwell



**Submitted by
Andrew Camps,
this poem was
published in the
Cambridge
Evening News on
Sep 17th 2016. If
anyone knows
which tomb might
be referred to,
please write in.**

Dear Editors,

Easter Lilies in Church

As you will see from the separate Easter lilies announcement (*page 12*) we will be doing the Easter lilies in church for Easter. However, there is an important change this year. I'm afraid I **must** have the names of your loved ones by **Sunday 24th March, at the latest.**

Please can you let me have: the name/ names of your loved ones to be remembered, your donation (bearing in mind the cost of the lilies) and also your name or that of your family.

If you could just put all these details in an envelope, through my door at The Oaks, Manor Farm Court, Lower End, S.P. and, as you'll see in the other article, the front door and letterbox are at the back of the building!

All the money goes towards paying for the lilies and if there's any left over then it goes to the church flower fund.

Ruth Scovil

Dear Editors,

Solar Farm Grants

As a Community Benefit Society, Reach Community Solar Farm is able to offer small grants every year to organisations with a community focus. The beneficiaries of these grants are decided upon by our members at our AGM, which usually takes place in June. We are therefore inviting organisations with a community focus to apply for one of this year's grants. There is an application form on our website (<https://reachsolarfarm.co.uk/docs/RCSF-Grant-Fund-Application-Form.docx>) and forms need to be received (to info@reachsolarfarm.co.uk) by 31st May.

We look forward to hearing from you,

The Board, Reach Community Solar Farm.

Dear Editors,

Open Meeting at Village Hall

Ever since I was first elected, I have tried to be as accessible as possible, hosting regular meetings and surgeries across the constituency.

I wanted to let you know that on Friday 22 March 2024 at 3:30pm (*see poster on page 27*) I will be hosting an open meeting at Swaffham Prior Village Hall, 36 High Street, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0LD. All residents of Swaffham Prior and Swaffham Bulbeck are invited to discuss any issues or concerns with me, whether local or national.

If residents are planning on coming along to the open meeting, it would be very helpful if they could email me at lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk so that we can make the necessary practical arrangements.

Very best wishes,

Lucy Frazer

MP for South East Cambridgeshire

BON MOT NUMBER 147

"According to modern diversity and inclusion practice, you can say what you like about your own kind, but anybody else who says the same thing is a bigot."

Trevor Phillips (1953 -)

This Month's Cover Picture

Inspired by fairytale illustration and Japanese Sakura blossoms, our cover celebrates the arrival of Spring. Cherry blossom is considered the national flower of Japan and blossoms are at their peak in Tokyo in late March and early April.

Rachael designs silver jewellery and exhibits her work locally with Prior Arts Group.

Celia Tyler

New Year Quiz!

This was a closely fought contest, and Big Congratulations to all those who took part — we've no idea how they did it! The answers were:

1. Botticelli 2. Dali 3. Matisse 4. Michelangelo 5. Mondrian 6. Monet
7. O'Keeffe 8. Picasso 9. Seurat 10. Van Gogh 11. Vermeer 12. Warhol

and the Leader Board was:

1st: (with 12 out of 12!)

Clare, Julian and Darcy Luttrell (Congratulations, Luttrell family—they will be collecting their star prize from the editors)

2nd Equal: (with 11)

Bob and Julie Nunn

Lisa Fretwell

3rd Equal : (with 10):

Ruth Dalton and family

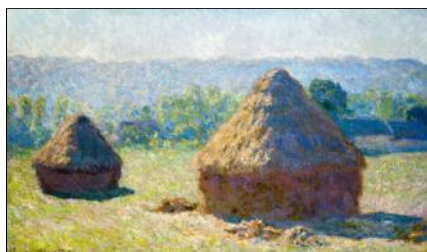
Alastair Everitt and daughter Catherine

These trees came to us from a cousin who got them from her old art teacher in Sheffield — we will try to ferret out the original artist! Clues were in the content (for which a magnifying glass was a plus), as well as the style. Mistaken attributions were:

6. Van Gogh, Constable
7. Friedrich
9. Damien Hirst
10. Munch
11. Bridget Riley

with no-one making the same error, although Monet's haystack did come up twice. Here's his original:

Caroline Matheson



From our Reporter

Was the first half of February trying to tell us something. Out of a dozen eggs, nine of mine had double yolks. Surely this must be very rare if not unique. Is it an ill omen for the rest of the year? An early Ides of March? Has anyone else ever experienced it?

Is there going to be a world catastrophe? World wide there are 60 general or presidential elections coming up - India, China, America, Russia, Britain, Rwanda, Pakistan etc. Some of these may have a major impact on world affairs. Never has there been a year with so much world-wide potential change going on. It is almost as if the earth is already moving under our feet.



Or maybe the omen only applies to Britain. It is doubtful if it is King Charles' cancer. Are there dangers such as the popping up of PopCons with Rees-Mogg and Truss with possibly the backing of Farage and Nadine. So many more could be added.

The eggs in question were Traditional Leghorn Whites. What do our poultry keepers think?

**Out of a dozen
eggs nine of mine
had double yolks
- is it an ill
omen?"**

Last month I featured the Neighbourhood Plans requested by ECDC. But I failed to mention that last July Reach had also submitted its own plan to ECDC. As with Bulbeck the plan describes the various features of the village as well as showing why there needs to be some constraint on development. They also proposed suitable site/sites for any development. All this work had gone ahead before Michael Gove decided, with or without any local consultation, that Cambridgeshire should have an additional 250,000 houses. Late last year he decided, with or without consultation, that this should only be 150,000, mainly

in the North East of the county. At the same time both major parties are promising to build 300,000 houses each year. This is ridiculous. We simply do not have sufficient builders, bricklayers, plumbers, electricians, carpenters to build that number.

Under Grant Shapps more attention is being paid to our armed forces. The news is not good. One of our giant new carriers has let the side down again with prop problems. Not that this matters much because without the necessary support vessels, insufficient planes, and possibly shortage of crew it would just be a sitting duck in any war. And the physical fitness of our armed forces has been questioned over the last decade. It is still claimed that about 30 per cent of British soldiers are obese or overweight. This is nothing new. On 1st July 1876, in Hyde Park, there was Review of Volunteers. 35,000 soldiers turned up to display the nations reserve strength. The Times reported that "a little camp life and short rations would certainly improve the figure of the majority." Apply today? But there is no denying that our servicemen are getting the short straw on pay and living conditions. Result - many are leaving

and recruitment is poor. Come on Shapps - make your mark.

There has been some excellent rugby and many in the Village are fans. What I find irksome this year is that they regularly flash up "Sage" measurements on how far a kick has gone, and the distance to the try line. Do we need to know so often that the "territory gained is 27.4 metres" or that it is "8.3 metres to the try line." Cannot we judge by ourselves whether it is a short or a long distance? It could get worse. Sage has made the following statement:-

"We're proud to be the official Insights Partner of Six Nations Rugby. Together we're driving innovation in rugby through the power of data - on and off the field of play for players and for fans.

"INSIGHTS. TEAMWORK. HEART. They're all the key to success in rugby and in business. We have teamed up with the Guinness Six Nations, TikTok Women's Six Nations and the Autumn Nations Series, providing powerful data behind the AI-enabled smart ball."

To learn more, look up Sage, Rugby and TikTok on line. Where are they taking us? I just want a good game of Rugby.

Equally many are irritated by art programmes which think it necessary to provide accompanying music when showing an important work of art. Why do you need music to appreciate art. It is not a film. But it is about to get worse. The most recent suggestion is that pictures should be flashed on big screens to accompany large music concerts. Just imagine what would accompany a performance of Beethoven's Eroica.

Fortunately there is always joy in the song of the Robin during February. It never fails. I would like to quote from Stephen Mass' delightful *The Robin. A Biography*. He shows how birds anticipated our own recent societal changes and rethink. I quote:

"Until well into the last century, it was widely assumed that male birds took the lead in choosing a mate. The idea that dominant males were in charge over the submissive females suited the ornithologists at the time, who were almost all men.

But during the course of the 20th century this mistaken theory was gradually overturned. Simple observation showed that although the male usually takes the lead in visual displays and also in singing to defend a territory, it is the female who makes the final choice.

"Because they have no territory to defend, the females have the freedom to wander around a local area checking out a succession of males."

There is also some other very good news. We now have a cure for snoring. Latest research shows that about 40 percent of UK adults snore in their sleep. A good solution is to use a nasal dilator which is a small flexible plastic device placed into the nose. There is just one small downside. Do not push it up too far as it may cause nose bleed and inflammation. Could make a very thoughtful present for your partner.

Alastair Everitt

Julie's Spring Recipes

Rack of Lamb with Purple Sprouting Broccoli, Chilli and Anchovy

4-bone rack of lamb, fat criss-crossed
1 sprig of rosemary
2 tsp unsalted butter, softened
1 garlic clove, smashed
200g purple sprouting broccoli
2 red chillies, roasted to slightly blacken skin
30g anchovies
250g tub of ricotta, strained for 24 hours
Sea salt
Olive oil, to serve

Preheat oven to 200C.

Season the lamb well with sea salt, Sear the lamb in a frying pan, fat side down, to render and brown the fat, then put the lamb in the oven for around 20 minutes, the meat should be pink in the middle.

Carefully massage the lamb with the rosemary, butter and garlic into the lamb while it rests.

Heat a griddle pan over a high heat, add the broccoli, cover for 5 minutes, turning now and again until slightly charred. Then mix in strips of the chilli and anchovies.

Slice the lamb rack, serve with the broccoli alongside, break over some chunks of ricotta, spoon over any meat juices and drizzle with olive oil to serve.

Serves 2

Rhubarb Meringue Tarts

300g sweet shortcrust pastry
Flour for dusting
Butter for greasing
3 free-range eggs, separated
700g rhubarb, cut into 2cm chunks
260g castor sugar
1 lemon, juice and zest
5 tbsp corn flour
4 tbsp water

Preheat the oven to 190C. Roll out the pastry on a floured surface and line individual tart tins with the pastry. Prick the base of the pastry with a fork. Bake blind for 10 minutes using baking beans to reduce shrinking of the pastry. Ready when slightly browned.

Place the rhubarb, 7 tablespoons of the sugar, lemon juice and the zest in a pan and cook until softened, then mash with a fork.

Mix the cornflour and water to form a smooth paste, stir into the rhubarb, bring to a boil and stir until thick, Remove from the heat and stir in 2 of the egg yolks. Use a ladle to spoon the mixture into the baked pastry cases.

Whisk the egg whites in a large clean bowl until they form stiff peaks. Gradually add the remaining sugar, whisking between each addition.

Pipe the meringue over the fruit filled tarts and bake for 20 minutes or until the meringue is golden brown.

Serves 4

QUIZ NIGHT

Swaffham Prior Village Hall

7.30 pm Saturday 13 April

Tickets £7 each. To book a table, contact



Jenny Brand
(01638) 742161

or

Lynne Rand
(01638) 741960



Jacket Potato Supper

Bring your own drinks and glasses !!

Proceeds in aid of St. Mary's Church, Swaffham Prior

A VISIT TO HOOK NORTON

PART 3

In the Hook Norton beer tasting, the very knowledgeable guide explained to us why dark ales like Mild Winter Warmers, London Porters and Guinness fill you up quickly and ones like light summer ales do not; even though they are essentially the same stuff apart from the malt roasting. There used to be four senses of taste – sweet, sour, salt and bitter; then in 1908 a Japanese chemist discovered “savoury” and called it “Umami”. In 1985, an international “Umami Symposium” used lots of long words like “Guanosine Monophosphate” to identify what’s going on. Appar-



ently, one side effect is telling you that your stomach is full, even when it isn't.

Darker beers have more Umami in them than lighter ones, as it is generated by the malt roasting process; which is why dark ales fill you up more quickly – it is literally telling your stomach you are full, even when you are not. The guide proved it by serving us a dark IPA – essentially a dark pale ale – which had the same effect.

It is also present in the MSG, soy sauce and miso used in Oriental cookery, and so proves the old wives' tale about eating Chinese food and feeling hungry again in an hour – the Umami has worn off. An interesting footnote is that all Labrador dogs lack the Umami taste receptors in their tongues; so it is literally true that *all Labradors are permanently hungry* – they never know when their stomachs are full !

Steve Kent-Phillips

PS He also explained that all your taste buds are round the sides of your tongue, at the tip and at the back. This explains why proper Real Ale drinkers slurp their beer and ice cold fizzpop lager drinkers do not – *they can't taste anything anyway*.

Your Local Brass Band needs you!

Newmarket Town Band needs more players, we currently have 23 members. Wednesday evenings 19:30-21:30 at Kennett Village Hall is when we rehearse. It is free to come along and play! Where else can you go and make friends, socialise and practise playing the instrument you love for free 2 hours a week.



We have a fantastic new musical director. Jamie. He is a brass instrument teacher by trade, very enthusiastic. The music we play is varied, if you want to listen to us play look us up online or contact us on the details below.

Are you having an event and would like a band there? Not just your traditional brass band, we can however play the traditional stuff, think Marches and the film *Brassed Off*. Organising a dance, wedding, festival, air show, garden party, Oktober-Fest, Christmas function, works party, open day, grand opening, carnival, beer festival, halloween party, birthday party, school fetes, summer fayres, county shows. I challenge you to challenge us.

You don't have to be a professional musician to play in our band, if you are just starting out please come along, equally if you are grade 8 cornet player we will make sure you are not bored.

We have instruments that can be played by members.

The band is divided into sections, cornets, flugel, horns, baritones, euphoniums, trombones, basses (most people know these as tuba's) and the percussion section consists of drum kit, timpani's, and lots of other bits and pieces.

We are very social, often staying behind for a chat and a catch up or turning up early especially when someone has been baking! Our band is for everyone, our young and old

Speak to us about playing or hiring!

Charlie Kirk - Chairman Newmarket Town (Brass) Band, 07923 191949

chairmanntb@outlook.com, <https://www.newmarkettownband.co.uk/>



**Find us on
Facebook and
search Newmarket
Town Band on
Youtube**

The Mark Towriss Bursary Fund

The Mark Towriss Bursary Fund was set in motion with the proceeds from a memorial concert given for Dr Towriss in Swaffham Bulbeck church a few months after his death. I wanted to fulfil his wish to make a connection to primary health in East Africa and was glad to discover that a group of doctors in Kenya had recently set up a Family Medicine/GP training programme and were looking for scholarships. This would indeed fulfil Dr Towriss's wish. Initially we hoped to support one student, then we became more ambitious and agreed to fund three – and so it has rolled on. There have been so many gifts from residents and patients in Bottisham where Dr Towriss practiced, from Swaffham Bulbeck where he lived, and the surrounding villages, from medical friends and my family.



In 2017 I visited their four rural training hospitals and the university where our bursary scholars studied. I followed those doctors around in clinics and on the rural hospital wards, sat in on training sessions and talked to them about the fund and primary health care in the UK. The scope of their chosen work is huge, daunting. But they are dedicated to their vision – giving neglected communities access to medical care. I had good reason to be impressed, and moved by their dedication – and glad that this fund has supported such doctors in gaining much needed skills.

I recently received the following update from Dr Bruce Dahlman, a founding member of Family Medicine training in Kenya and ex-Director of Family Medicine Training at Kabarak University Kenya:

Ute, these family doctors (sponsored by the Towriss Bursary Fund) are all continuing to serve across Kenya and in Ethiopia with others intending to return in due time to their home countries of Uganda, Burundi and DR Congo. You likely are aware that Dr. Elijah Terer from the first class is now the CEO of AIC Litein Hospital; Dr David Mung'ara leads the family medicine program at Kijabe Hospital; Dr. Faith Lelei is the Clinical Services Director over all clinical and support staff at Kijabe; Dr. Boaz Niyinyumva leads AIC Litein residents but plans to return to his native Burundi to help start family medicine there next year; Dr. Sifora Fanta returned to her home in Soddo, Ethiopia and will assist starting family medicine at her hospital later this year. This very partial "reading out" of who the Mark Towriss Bursary has helped will continue into the future as the newer graduates also take their places of leadership and service.

The countries in which these doctors will practice have no primary health care as we know it. Most of them will work in small rural hospitals where a wide variety of medical, psychiatric and surgical skills are required. All of them will need to be teachers of the next generation of Family Doctors



– for there are still so few of them. I feel positive now, after fourteen years, that Family Medicine has a strong enough foundation to survive. The greater the number of Family Doctors, the more likely it will be to become a more common career choice/possibility.

Now, after fourteen years I will close the fund. I do so with great sadness but also with a lot of gratitude. Gratitude to the donors for your generosity, gratitude for insight into the skills and dedication of the Kenyan Family Doctors – and gratitude to those who have enabled this fund to reach those who needed it.

Do watch the on-line video: Why Kenya Needs Family Medicine
<https://youtu.be/6FJKWizd-qI?feature=shared>

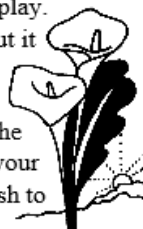
Ute Towriss Uvt.tow@gmail.com

Easter Lilies

Each year we have had lilies in St Mary's Church at Easter time and, recently, many people have contributed to these in memory of a loved one.

Donations can be made anonymously or with your name and the name of your loved one. A list will then be compiled and placed in church for Easter Sunday. As a guide the Easter lilies will cost £3.00 per stem this year. All contributions will be *very* welcome and will enable us to have a beautiful display.

If you would like to make a donation please put it through Sue Rust's door at 23 Greenhead Road or Ruth Scovil's door at The Oaks, Manor Farm Court, Lower End (the letterbox is in the door at the back of the house!). Please include the name of your loved one and your own unless, of course, you wish to make your gift anonymously.



Ruth Scovil

'Why We Sing' - A celebration of Song

Serenata sings at St Mary's Swaffham Prior

on Sunday April 14th at 4.00 pm

**Adults £15.00, Children £5, Family ticket £32 on the door or in advance
from 01223 892001**

Come and hear us sing in this lovely church!

"Serenata simply have a beautiful tone – a magical concert"

*"The singers clearly love singing and really communicate
with their audience."*

Serenata is a choir of 25 accomplished female singers from the East of England who are bonded by their love of singing. We perform music dating from the 12th century to the present day, in three or more voice parts. Andrew Foxley directs us, with energy and skill and Bethany Kirby is our sensitive and talented accompanist. Serenata performs in varied locations, most recently in the glorious acoustic of St John's College Chapel, where we were thrilled to sing for a fifth consecutive year at "Maggie's Cambridge Christmas Fundraiser". We are delighted that our first concert of 2024 is at St Mary's Church. Your Village Hall is our favourite rehearsal venue: maybe you have heard us rehearsing?

For April 14th, we have chosen a rich repertoire to illustrate *Why We Sing*. Showcasing the power and emotional intensity of song across the ages, our programme includes Renaissance music by Thomas Weelkes, exquisite settings of religious texts by Fauré, Gjeilo and Pitoni, folk songs arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams, and modern gems, such as Whitacre's *Sing Gently*, exploring aspects of why we sing. Close your eyes to the lilting lullaby, *Hushabye Mountain* and revisit rousing favourites from the enduring *Sound of Music*.

Music is woven within the human experience. Throughout humanity's existence, music and singing have played a crucial role – whether in praise, to lull a child to sleep, in celebration, to build a sense of community or express emotions of



joy and sorrow. Cognitive archaeologist Stephen Mithen theorises that music pre-dates language. Neanderthals, who lacked physical and cognitive ability for complex speech and language, developed a "music-like communication system". A 5000-year-old Neanderthal flute from Slovenia, carved from cave-bear bone, with a **haunting scale that matches** modern diatonic scales, indicates a deep-

rooted human need to express emotions through music.

Singing, quite literally, makes us happy. Scientific studies confirm that, as choirs breathe and sing together, their heartbeats synchronise and collectively mirror the structure of the song. Singing is proven to boost endorphins - natural pain relievers and mood boosters - and increase Oxytocin, which promotes bonding and wellbeing. We know this instinctively, but it was never more apparent to thousands of choir singers as during COVID lockdowns, when we were left bereft by the inability to participate in this most joyful of hobbies.

Singing is for everyone and there is a choir for every ability or musical taste - even a network of Tuneless Choirs, inspired by a woman who realised that, whilst unable to hold a tune, she gained valuable physical and emotional benefit from singing with others. Health and wellbeing benefits of singing are not restricted to the choir! Those who listen to music can also experience its positive impacts, as stress hormones decrease and chemicals that promote wellbeing increase.

Why not come along to hear us sing on April 14th and see if the magical power of song works for you!

Sheila Tucker

<https://serenatafemalevoices.co.uk/>

Bric-a- brac donations wanted! Calling all Springcleaners!

St Mary's Church, Swaffham Prior, is running a bric-a-brac stall at the Swaffham Prior Village
Feast on Saturday 18th May 2024

We are currently collecting donations for the stall – small, clean, preloved items in good condition.

If you have any items to donate, please get in touch with Kate Muscroft (07752011308/katemuscroft@gmail.com) and she will happily collect your items within the Swaffham Prior area.



Anglesey Abbey – March

Snowdrop season has been another success, with visitors arriving from far and wide to see the beautiful carpets of snowdrops and aconites in the gardens at Anglesey Abbey. We'd like to say a special thank you to our volunteers who have helped us welcome visitors during such a busy time,

And now we turn our attention to daffodils and Easter! Returning after popular demand, we are holding daffodil tours every Sunday to Friday from 18 March – 21 April 2024. Join one of our knowledgeable garden guides to find out more about the exciting collection of daffodils. Did you know? There are over 40 varieties to spot across the estate! This tour is the perfect opportunity to learn some history, uncover the subtle differences between the daffodils and take in some of the other seasonal highlights along the way. There's no need to book, just ask a member of the welcome team to join a tour on the day.

Spring not only brings swathes of daffodils, but bright tulips and hyacinths as well. We're excited to have another Easter adventure trail for children (and adults!) again this year. There'll be games and activities on the trail, including some welly-wanging, dressing-up, a giant bird box, an egg and spoon race and plenty of photo opportunities too. Normal admission applies plus £3 per trail, which includes a chocolate egg, or a vegan 'Free-From' chocolate egg, both made using cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms. Children can also get creative with some craft activities and face painting over the bank holiday weekend. The trail will run from Friday 29 March to Sunday 14 April – we hope to see you there!



Wicken Fen – March

We've enjoyed a busy February with lots of activities on for both children and adults, including the return of our popular Stick Trail. It's been a good month for wildlife too – we've been seeing lots of cranes as well as hen harriers and barn owls hunting over Sedge Fen at dusk.

We celebrated World Wetlands Day on 2 February and one of our rangers, Ajay Tegala, took part in a podcast for BBC World Service, discussing the question: are wetlands our secret weapon for fighting climate change? If you'd like to find out more about the importance of our wetlands and the work we are doing to protect them, you can listen on BBC Sounds. Search for: The Climate Question.

So, what's coming up in March?

National Lottery Open Week is 9 – 17 March and we will be offering free entry for lottery players during this period. Our free February half-term workshops were made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and with thanks to lottery players, so we'd like to show our appreciation by offering lottery players the chance to visit free of charge.

Boat trips along Wicken Lode will be starting up again (with a brand-new engine too!) and you can enjoy a bike ride on the wider reserve. The **Cycle Hire** will be open from 9 March 2024.

We are excited about putting on our **Easter Adventure Trail from 23 March – 14 April** along the Boardwalk at Wicken Fen. Normal admission applies, plus £3 per trail which includes a chocolate egg, or a vegan 'Free-From' chocolate egg, both made using cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms. We look forward to welcoming you!



Photo credit: National Trust Images / Mike Selby

Swaffham Prior Autumn Show

NAME:

Vegetables (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
A	4 French beans	
B	4 Runner beans	
C	3 Beetroot	
D	3 Onions	
E	4 Shallots	
F	3 Carrots	
G	3 Potatoes	
H	6 Cherry tomatoes	

Class	Entry	Tick
I	4 Tomatoes	
J	3 Courgettes	
K	Squash or Marrow	
L	Cucumber	
M	Any other vegetable	
N	Odd and/or Rude vegetable	
O	Display of mixed herbs	
P	Trug of mixed fresh produce (vegetables and fruit)	

Fruit (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
Q	3 Dessert apples	
R	3 Cooking apples	
S	3 Pears	

Class	Entry	Tick
T	3 Plums	
U	6 Soft fruit (same variety)	
V	Any other fruit	

Flowers (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
W	3 roses	
X	3 Other flowers (same variety)	
Y	4 Mixed flowers	
Z	Sunflower	

Class	Entry	Tick
AA	3 Dahlias (same or mixed)	
AB	Flower arrangement (See rule 1)	
AC	Mini arrangement (See rule 2)	
AD	Pot plant (See rule 3)	

Additional classes (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
AE	Jam or jelly	
AF	Pickle or chutney	
AG	Marmalade	
AH	Any other preserve or honey	
AI	Homemade wine or alcoholic drink	
AJ	4 eggs	

Class	Entry	Tick
AK	Victoria sponge (W.I. See rule 4)	
AL	Fruit cake	
AM	Decorated and/or filled cake	
AN	Any other cake	
AO	Hand-made bread	
AP	Bread-machine bread	

Children's classes (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
AQ	Miniature garden (See rule 5)	
AR	Vegetable or fruit animal	

Class	Entry	Tick
AS	3 Decorated cupcakes	
AT	Junk Model (See rule 6)	

Photography (up to three entries per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
AU	"Playful pets" (aged up to 16 years)	

Class	Entry	Tick
AV	"Local wildlife" (aged 16 years & over)	

General Information and Rules

Please read this information carefully to prevent disappointment

All competitions are open to residents of Swaffham Prior and Reach. There is no entry fee.

Only one entry per person per class is allowed, so choose your entries carefully. Extra entry and quiz forms can be downloaded at www.SwaffhamPriorVillagehall.co.uk

All entries (including quizzes) should be brought to the Village hall between 10:00 and 11:50 on the morning of the show. Doors will be locked at 12:00 to allow judging.

Points will be awarded to decide on the winner of the overall prize as follows:

Prizes will be awarded by 14:00. The Grand Auction of produce in aid of the Village Hall will be at 15:00. (If you don't want your entry to be sold, please remove it before the auction starts!)

Presentation of Gurning Trophy.

Produce Competition

All produce must have been home-grown. There are no specific display rules, but, in addition to quality and size, entries will also be judged on regularity and neatness.

The flower arrangement theme is "Enchanted Wood". Entries should not exceed 45 cm (18") tall.

The miniature arrangement should not exceed 6 cm (< 2½") in height.

The Pot plant should have been owned for at least 12 months.

Baking Competitions

Victoria sponge W.I. recipe

(<https://www.thewi.org.uk/what-we-do/recipes/baking/victoria-sandwich>). A 20 cm (8") basic Victoria sponge with a raspberry jam filling (no cream), topped with caster sugar.

Bread can be made with any combination of flours and other ingredients. Hand-made bread should not have been mixed in a bread machine.

Children's Competitions

The miniature garden should be no larger than an A4 sheet of paper (approx. 20 x 30 cm).

The junk model can be any subject, but must be made mainly from waste items (egg boxes, yogurt pots, etc.). The footprint for the model should be no larger than an A4 sheet of paper.

Photography Competition

Theme and age groups as indicated on form. (No 'adult' themed photos will be accepted). Only one entry per person allowed. Photos will not be auctioned and should be removed immediately after the end of the event.

Entries may be colour or black and white and must be unmounted and unframed.

Maximum size per entry is A4. Photo entries will be pinned to the noticeboard for display.

If photos are significantly edited, please explain this on your entry form.

It is the entrant's responsibility to ensure that all the necessary permissions are obtained from people featured in photographs.

Copyright remains with the photographer.

Please see left for list of classes.

School News

Hello from the new PTA at Swaffham Prior Primary School! We have just taken over this year and are finding our feet, launching off the sterling work of our predecessors.

So far this year we have run a couple of discos for Halloween and Valentine's Day and a Christmas Fair in the Village Hall. Coming up we have an Easter Egg Hunt and the Summer Fair which will be great fun.



We'd love to keep you in the loop with what's going on at the school as I know many of you have been connected to the school in various different capacities over the years. I'm sure you will have heard that the school has soared from "Inadequate" to "Good" in the latest Ofsted report under the wonderful leadership of Helen Bartley.

One thing that we need some help with is raising enough money to replace the school playground. It has fallen into disrepair, forcing the school to rope off some of the equipment that's not safe to use. We are hoping to raise enough money through grants, events and donations to be able to replace the rotten climbing apparatus and cracking tarmac. We have had some plans drawn up and it's all very exciting but a daunting task since, as we are finding out, playgrounds are not cheap!

How you can help: the Friends of Swaffham Prior School are planning an Auction of Promises for May and would so appreciate anything that you can do to add to the auction. Are you an expert on birds and can take a group birdwatching? Do you have access to the Cambridge colleges and can do a tour? Do you have a holiday home you would be willing to rent out? Whatever you can think of to help

we would love to hear from you! Please get in touch with Becky on 07827318351 or Ben on 07825610033 or email fosps@swaffhamprior.cambs.sch.uk.

More details of the event will follow for those who would like to attend. Any donations towards our playground would also be gratefully received.

Thank you! Friends of Swaffham Prior School

Briony Nicholson: Co-Chair

Victoria Roberts: Co-Chair

Claire Remington-Wilding: Co-Secretary

Ben Wilkes: Co-Secretary

Becky Wilkes: Treasurer

The Reading Group Reads...

I Capture the Castle

by Dodie Smith

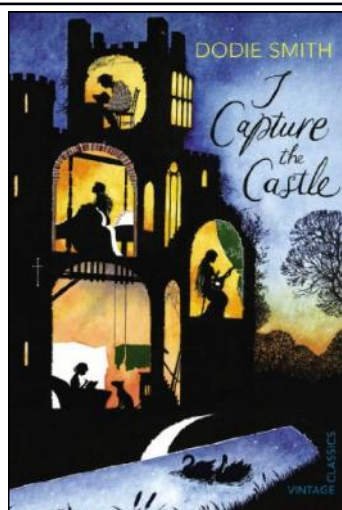
What a great evening we had discussing this book! Everyone had so much to say. Some of us remembered reading this when young; others were coming to it for the first time.

Cassandra Mortmain lives with her bohemian and impoverished family in a crumbling castle in the middle of nowhere. She keeps a journal, filling three notebooks with sharply funny yet poignant entries about her home and her eccentric and penniless family. Her beautiful sister, Rose is desperate to escape from the poverty of home, her fading glamorous stepmother, Topaz, once an artist's model and painter, likes to commune with nature, her eccentric novelist father, after a triumphant first novel suffers from a financially crippling writer's block, her little brother Thomas and Stephen, a lodger who loves Cassandra and the only person capable of earning any money, labouring on a nearby farm. However, all their lives are turned upside down when the American heirs to the castle arrive, two young men and wealthy parents. By the time the last diary shuts, there have been great changes in the Mortmain household, not the least of which is that Cassandra is deeply, hopelessly, in love.

It is a beautifully written coming-of-age story, one that took Dodie Smith (of A Hundred and One Dalmations fame) years to hone to this perfection. Not a word is wasted and we truly inhabit our narrator's world. And that is why there was so much to talk about. We dissected every character.

Next month we discuss Barbara Kingsolver's *Demon Copperhead* and in April, its Sarah Winman's *Still Life*. Do join us!

Roz Chalmers





VILLAGE GARDENERS

It was the expansion of the Roman Empire into Britain that first saw Mediterranean plants such as 'English' roses and apple trees

At our February meeting, the Village Gardeners were treated to an entertaining presentation on 'A History of Gardening in England' by Nigel Start. It was the expansion of the Roman Empire into Britain that first saw Mediterranean plants such as 'English' roses and apple trees being brought to our shores and planted in formal villa gardens. But for years after they left, our gardens became functional places in which to grow food, whilst the monasteries grew plants with medicinal properties to use in their infirmaries. In the 1500's, our knowledge of plants and their cultivation expanded as explorers such as Sir Walter Raleigh brought home new species, and the invention of the printing press enabled horticultural information to be more widely shared. In the 1700's wealthy landowners began to commission landscape gardeners to design grand estates and the Royal Family established the botanic garden at Kew. In the 1800's, Victorian inventions such as the lawn mower, glass houses and pesticides helped to make gardening easier for everyday people, and cottage gardens fashioned for beauty as well as food really started to take shape. Today gardening is one of the main hobbies in the UK,

and modern gardens have become extensions of our homes with space for leisure and entertaining as well as horticulture. We gain our plant knowledge from television and radio shows with their celebrity presenters and have a wealth of plants available to buy at our garden centres.

The next meeting of the Village Gardeners will be held on Tuesday 19th March at 8pm in Swaffham Prior Village Hall, when Peter Jackson, formerly of Scotsdale Garden Centre, will be giving a very seasonal spring talk on 'How to Grow Your Own Fruit and Vegetables'. Everyone is most welcome; visitors can come along to any meeting for £4 per evening, with tea and homemade cakes for sale.

Fiona Geraghty



Mothers' Union

During our New Year Holy Communion Service, Rev. Roger Bowen enrolled new member Iris Stannett. After the short ceremony Roger presented Iris with her membership card and badge. Mothers Union members served coffee directly after the service, followed by soup lunch, which was most welcome on a very cold and frosty day.

Our meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of each month at 2.30pm in Passage Hall, Lode. Our March meeting will take place on Thursday 20th March, when we will be holding our Spring Social and Bring & Buy Stall. You are most welcome to join us.

Ann Langran

The Swaffhams' WI

How often have you thought about what life was like in the past? Maybe when you find an old document or an old photograph and you puzzle or delight over the information in front of you? Our February meeting certainly got us all thinking about diving into our personal family histories and seeing what treasures we might uncover. Julian Luttrell's stimulating talk was entitled *Genealogical Surprises: Unexpected Discoveries in Family History*. Julian is a part-time genealogist working under the name of *The Tree Sleuths*.

The first hurdle when looking into the past is to decipher the clues in the handwritten documents, which often seem to the modern reader to be undecipherable. Julian showed us how to find patterns amongst the letters and marks on the documents and to recognise 'shorthand' symbols. Even up to 1935 the handwritten scripts can be a bit of a challenge to read.

The second hurdle is to decipher what the document is trying to say. Although most legal documents tend to be factual and rather 'dry', occasionally little gems of information can appear. This became particularly apparent from 1841 onwards when the 10 year census formally started in England and Wales. For example, we can now access the original household returns from the 1911 census and, as this was the point in history when the suffragettes were at their height of campaigning, there are many examples of women refusing to give information on the census while they continue to be deprived of a voice: no vote, no census. Emily Wilding Davison even hid in a cupboard in the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft in the House of Commons on Census night 1911. Her census form gives the postal address as 'Found hiding in crypt of Westminster Hall.'

A huge thank you to Julian for inspiring us all to think about our histories and the history of Swaffham Prior. I will definitely be recording all of those gems from the past handed to me from my parents for future generations to discover.

Our next meeting is the AGM on Monday 18th March 2024 at 7:30pm in Swaffham Prior Village Hall. New members and visitors are always very welcome. Please do come along to play button bingo and sample our delicious home baked cakes!

Kate Muscroft



The Conservative majority on the Council's Finance & Assets Committee pushed through a recommendation to the Full Council to build their crematorium and cemetery at Mepal. John and his Liberal Democrat group colleagues on the committee voted against this for several reasons. We both feel it's a misuse of the land – which used to be an outdoor centre enjoyed by countless young people – and of £9 million of Community Infrastructure Levy funds – which could have been spent on amenities in our towns and villages.



One of the stated aims of the plan for a crematorium is to have a facility in the District, and to make it more convenient for residents in East Cambridgeshire. However, Mepal is at the very edge of the District, the nearest possible location to the Council's major competitor at March, and for residents here in Bottisham it will be no more convenient than our current nearest providers.

ECSS were given a £500,000 increase to their fee for 2022/23 and 2023/24. Despite this increased fee, they are now asking for a further £200,000 for 2023/24. This will be considered by Full Council in February. Earlier this year, the Chief Executive of ECDC (who is also Managing Director of ECSS) reviewed the arrangements for ECSS and introduced various changes to address the weaknesses which he found. Charlotte proposed an external review but this was blocked by Conservative Councillors. Internal Audit have now reviewed the Governance Controls between ECDC and ECSS and found that there are gaps in the internal control framework.

The Combined Authority will be introducing a new bus service between Soham and Cambridge, via Burwell, Swaffham Prior, Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham. This will restore the connection with Bottisham, lost when the route for the No 11 changed. Charlotte has pressed the officers to consult locally on the details of this new service. She has also suggested that rather than going into Cambridge Centre they consult on if it should go via the Wilbrahams and Fulbourn to Addenbrookes, Long Road and Hills Road 6th form colleges and Cambridge rail station.

The Combined Authority has given ECDC £300,000 to distribute as grants to local businesses. The grant scheme will support local businesses who are looking to scale and grow within the District with capital and/or revenue grants. The scheme will target businesses from start up to a maximum turnover (2022) of £10million. Applications open on 1 April and funds will be allocated as eligible applications are received, so businesses would be wise to get their applications ready to submit on 1 April. Details can be seen at - [UK Shared Prosperity Business Grant Scheme appendix 1 \(eastcambs.gov.uk\)](http://www.uksharedprosperity.gov.uk)

Our next surgery will take place on Thursday 21 March 6.30-7.30 at Reach Vil-

lage Hall. Between surgeries, residents can continue to contact us by email or phone – charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk 07976 607512 john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk 07942 685599



Heating Scheme News

Spring is nearly here, and we are excited about the next phase of connections we will be making in 2024 to our heat network. As more residents choose renewable energy through this groundbreaking scheme, we get closer to our shared vision with the community of making Swaffham Prior the UK's first zero carbon village. If you have been thinking about transitioning off oil or other fossil fuels for heating and hot water, now is the perfect time. Heat your home while helping cool the planet!

For our 63 existing customers we will be sending out a customer satisfaction survey this month. We are very keen to hear about your experiences and use this feedback to ensure we run the best possible service for you. We'd be very grateful if you can spare the few minutes it takes to complete.

We welcome Siddhant Malhotra who recently joined as the Business Development Manager for the Swaffham Prior Heat Network project. He will be dedicated to moving the project forward and managing key expansion efforts, partnerships, and promotions. Siddhant looks forward to engaging with residents and stakeholders and we aim to maximize the community participation.

If you are interested in finding out more about connecting to the heat network, you can: Fill out our online expression of interest form through

<https://forms.office.com/e/8mg3xtEpnv>

Email us at heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Call our customer service line at 0345 0455210

The Heating Swaffham Prior Team

FREECYCLE

Everything is free and nothing is expected in return.

If you have any offers or wants, please contact me by the 14th of each month by phone (01223 813362/07980 423210), e-mail (junthompson44@gmail.com) or drop a note through the letter box (23 Longmeadow). Please let me know if you would like anything repeating in subsequent issues.

Offers

LG flat screen TV (32 inch LG3000) - needs a new remote control, otherwise in good working order. Coral 01223 81457

Smoothie maker (will also chop, puree, crush ice, liquidise etc, but no heating element). Jacqui 01223 811190



News from Bottisham Medical Practice

Patients' Participation Group

Two Important Messages from the Practice: Reception staff have been receiving an unprecedented level of verbal abuse in recent weeks. This will not be tolerated.

GPs and their staff have a right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused. To successfully provide general practice services a mutual respect between all the staff and patients has to be in place. All our staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to all patients' individual needs and circumstances.

We respectfully remind patients that very often staff could be confronted with a multitude of varying and sometimes difficult tasks and situations, all at the same time. The staff understand that ill patients do not always act in a reasonable manner and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint.

However, aggressive behaviour, be it violent or abusive, will not be tolerated and may result in you being removed from the Practice list and, in extreme cases, the Police being contacted.

Patient demand outstrips capacity: Our contract from the NHS states we supply 90 appointments per 1000 practice population per week, that is 531 appointments per week. We supply between 700-800 appointments per week. 34% more than we are funded to do.

Tuesday 6th Feb 2024 we had 142 appointments available. We received 831 phone calls. 382 of these being before 9:30am. We have a population of 5900. 1 in 7 of those wanted an appointment yesterday alone.

Last month 31 people did not attend a booked appointment. This is more than one patient a day.

The government has proposed an increase in funding of 1.9% for general practice this year. All other areas of the NHS have had 5-6% to deal with inflationary pressures so effectively general practice has had a cut in funding but is expected to provide more every day.

The doctor is explaining this so next time you are cross there are no appointments it truly isn't our fault. All our staff work flat out to provide a high standard of care. We are not sitting here doing nothing, we are often here 12-13 hours a day. We care hugely about our patients and want to provide the best possible care we can, but we must do this safely.

How can you help?

Use 111 where you can. Use walk in centres where you can for minor injuries. Go to A&E if you have an emergency like chest pain - coming to us merely delays your treatment.

Attend for check ups when you are asked. Cancel appointments you can't make. We understand your frustration when there isn't an appointment. This is not lack of appointments or lack of us working, but simply that: **Demand outstrips capacity**

Closure: The Surgery will be closed on 27 March from 1430 – 1830 for training.

Please use 111 Service during this time.

Medication Storage: It is important that drugs are stored according to the instructions accompanying them. This is usually related to keeping them at the right temperature.

The Patient Participation Group: We are happy to have new members to join the committee, all patients of this Practice are eligible. Please contact our chairman as below to find out more information and how you can be involved

Next Meetings: These will be at 6.30pm Thursday 28 March 2024 and the AGM at 6.30pm on Thursday 18 April both in the Surgery waiting room. If you wish to join our meetings, please email our chairman s.j.gilson@btinternet.com. Or speak to reception.

Bottisham Medical Practice Patients Participation Group

SWAFFHAM PRIOR AND SWAFFHAM BULBECK OPEN MEETING

Lucy Frazer MP will be meeting local residents
and listening to the issues that matter to you.

**Swaffham Prior Village Hall, 36 High Street,
Swaffham Prior, CB25 0LD**

**Friday
22nd
March
2024
3.30pm**



LUCY FRAZER MP
A strong voice for South East Cambridgeshire

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA t: 020 7219 5082 w: lucyfrazer.org.uk
e: lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk f: [Fb.com/FrazerLucy](https://www.facebook.com/FrazerLucy)

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Cambridgeshire Light Opera (CLOG)

Formerly **Swaffham Bulbeck Summer Theatre**, Cambridgeshire Light Opera is opening a new chapter as a friendly, amateur light opera group based in East Cambridgeshire. We perform to a high standard and are keen to involve all members of the community who share a love of, or would like to learn more about light opera and operetta.

We perform regular charitable concerts and an annual staged production in the summer in a local venue. Rehearsals take place in and around the village of Swaffham Bulbeck, approximately 8 miles east of Cambridge.

Our aim is to support and develop light opera and operetta, particularly the works of Gilbert & Sullivan, through modern performances but grounded in the best traditions. We seek to further the appreciation of the wonderful funny, satirical, poignant and entertaining world of light opera in a way that is relatable and easily accessible to all.

Iolanthe - The Plot

Iolanthe, a fairy, commits the ultimate crime by marrying a mortal and is banished from fairyland. Twenty-five years later, and her illicit half-human, half-fairy son (a fairy from the waist upwards) now wishes to marry a mortal – but it's a crime against fairy law. Having fallen foul of this law herself - Iolanthe sets out to help her son; and obtain a pardon for herself from the Fairy Queen.

Strephon loves Phyllis, a ward of the Lord Chancellor who is not keen on the young lovers' proposed marriage. Chaos ensues - driven by misunderstanding; snobbery; misdirected jealousy; a bit of romance; and a healthy satirical dose of poking fun at the law, parliament and the establishment, including a fairy takeover of the House of Lords.

All ends happily, as always - with Lords and Fairies, Peers and Peris, united.



Wed 19th - Sat 22nd JUNE 2024 7.30pm and 2.30pm Sat
Gardiner Memorial Hall, High St, Burwell, Cambridge CB25 0TF

Tickets: £12 Wed, £15 Thu- Sat eve; and £12 Sat matinee

From <https://cambridgeshirelightoperagroup.org.uk/>,
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/clog> (booking opening from 1st April),

or Telephone: 07708 577570

Parking, disabled access and licensed bar

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT - FEBRUARY 2024

The Environment & Green Investment Committee received the council's carbon footprint report for 2022/23. This reports on the council's carbon emissions, and the carbon emissions of the county of Cambridgeshire as a whole. The Council's total known greenhouse gas emissions in 2022-23 amounted to 99,104 tonnes CO₂e. The largest share, nearly sixty per cent, was from waste, with construction materials second at nineteen per cent, and transport third at ten per cent. This is 46 per cent lower than the council's baseline year of 2018/19.

For Cambridgeshire as a whole, the most recent year of data is 2021—the figures are published by Government. Total greenhouse gas emissions for Cambridgeshire that year were 6.78 million tonnes CO₂e. Transport was the highest emitting sector in the county, accounting for 27 per cent of emissions, followed by land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF), at 23 per cent.

East Cambridgeshire produced the highest volume of greenhouse gas emissions per person in the county, mostly from land use and agriculture.

There has been a twenty-five per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridgeshire between 2005 and 2021. However, there was a 6.1 per cent increase in 2021 compared to 2020, because of the effect of Covid in 2020.

The council's Highways & Transport Committee has changed its policy on highways weed spraying. It will now be reverting to regular twice-yearly weed killing in the places where it used to do this before last year's policy change. Communities which do not want chemical weed spraying in their area will however be able to opt out in favour of manual weed removal by volunteers.

The Highways & Transport Committee approved a report on action to address the problem of Cambridgeshire's collapsing fen roads. The report identified 156 such roads which are increasingly failing due to historic lack of maintenance, and more extreme weather. Most of these roads were not constructed to carry the volume and weight of traffic they are now seeing.

In this area, these roads include Barston Drove, Ducketts Farm/Prior Fen, Great Drove, Harrisons Drove, Headlake Drove, Little Fen Drove, Lords Ground Drove and Station Road.

In 2018 £5M was spent on ten roads, and in 2021 a further five received investment. Further crack and safety repairs have been carried out to a number of roads in 2023. However, the problem has been growing for years, and is now growing much faster.

Various repair types have been used, some more effective than others. Individual routes are being managed through localised repairs, more extensive patching, signage, and weekly inspections. The council's Highways Operational Standards have been revised to reflect the risks.

Short term measures being used include temporary speed limits, traffic signals, and consideration may be given to temporary road closures or weight restrictions.

In the medium term a number of roads have been included in the council's capital programme for more extensive works over the next three to five years.

Longer term however, the primary focus must be lobbying together with partner organisations including parish councils to gain the required substantial amount of funding to provide a systemic solution. Council officers have already been working with the Department for Transport to raise awareness.

The Highways & Transport Committee has approved changes to the Highways Operational Standards to improve recognition of, and response to, faults on cycleways and footways. These changes will help ensure a safe environment for cyclists and pedestrians, encouraging and facilitating active travel.

Notes from the Parish Council February Meeting

Cllr Covill chaired a meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 8th February, attended by 5 parish councillors and 3 members of the public.

Reports

Cambridgeshire County Council. Cllr Charlotte Cane noted that the budget was the key event. A 4.99% increase in council tax is mainly to cover adult social care and special needs school transport. Also emergency peat road repairs are taking place but central government funding will be needed for full repairs.

East Cambs District Council. Cllr Cane highlighted her concerns about the proposed Mepal crematorium.

Planning applications

24/00015/FUL Reduction in length of front wall and demolition of rear extensions. 4 Lower End, Swaffham Prior, Cambridge, CB25 0HT.

No objections or comments made.

Laid down grave markers and tall Benstead grave marker

After 12 months, 19 grave markers laid down following safety testing remain prone outside the bounds of their grave plots. Following PC policy, the PC require quotes to move the grave markers onto their relevant plots, face up so as to be readable. As some are awkwardly shaped and all are heavy, the Clerk suggested that the PC get specialists help with the work, such as memorial masons, to ensure that all the markers are lying flat and stable when the work is complete.

The PC agreed to approach Meads to quote to move prone gravestones onto the relevant grave plots as well as obtaining quotes for the same work from memorial masons.

Cllr Gynn noted that anecdotally, the text on headstones laid flat may weather faster so it was agreed that the Clerk will record inscriptions on laid down markers.

Cllr Kent-Phillips suggested an addition to be made to policy/regulations that once the marker has been finally positioned, a photo of it plus the information that the inscription may weather faster should be sent to any contact that has been unable/unwilling to repair the marker so that they had full knowledge of how the marker was left. The Clerk will draft amendments to the relevant policies for agreement at the March meeting.

The Clerk noted that the 12 months seeking a living owner for the tall Benstead grave marker would be finished in March, so far without success so that it was time

to get quotes for the making safe of that grave marker.

Heating Scheme report from Cllr Greenfield.

The investigations and rectifications of the sound issues experienced from the Energy Centre are ongoing, including noise level monitoring within one property to help identify direction and timings. Some works have been identified and contractors have been contacted to provide quotes.

Cambridgeshire County Council Estates have so far acquired two of the three quotations it requires for the tree planting and landscape works needed on and around the site.

Clerk's Report

Allotments – the Clerk requested a map of the lower allotments from Cllr Latchford and enquired on progress with sourcing ground cover.

Cemetery. Category 2 grave marker inspection has been scheduled for 29th April and notices put on boards and in local parish magazines and PC websites as only 2 out of 15 plots had potential recent contact details. The Clerk is in the process of photographing all grave markers and recording the inscriptions where legible.

5 grave markers have been put back up with PC permission or a living owner, so the PC has no idea who put them up, to what standards and has no contact details for any future issues or information. The Clerk consulted with the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management, who advised that the 5 be retested for stability as soon as possible, so the Clerk will set date of tests and issue notices as per policies.

Parish Councillors' Reports

Cllr Greenfield had attended a Zoom meeting of the A-B1102 group; there were attendees of all the villages from Fordham through to Quy. Over 9000 responses to the survey had been received and work had commenced on analysis and review to generate useful information and statistics on the wants and needs for transport movement. There was also an update from the Mayors budget (combined Authority) of improving the interconnections along the B1102 to access parts of Cambridge other than just Drummer Street, plus a new bus service between Soham and Cambridge via Burwell, Swaffham Prior, Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham.

Cllr Gynn noted the presence of many potholes locally. Cllr Cane emphasised that there are still funds available for repairs, so it is worth reporting potholes on the Cambridge County Council website.

Cllr Covill noted fly tipping of cables on Great Fen Drove.

Cllr Kent-Phillips noted that the horse fence was still waiting to be fixed - Clerk to contact carpenter for quote.

Open Question Time.

A member of the public noted the presence of some substantial potholes on the High Street.

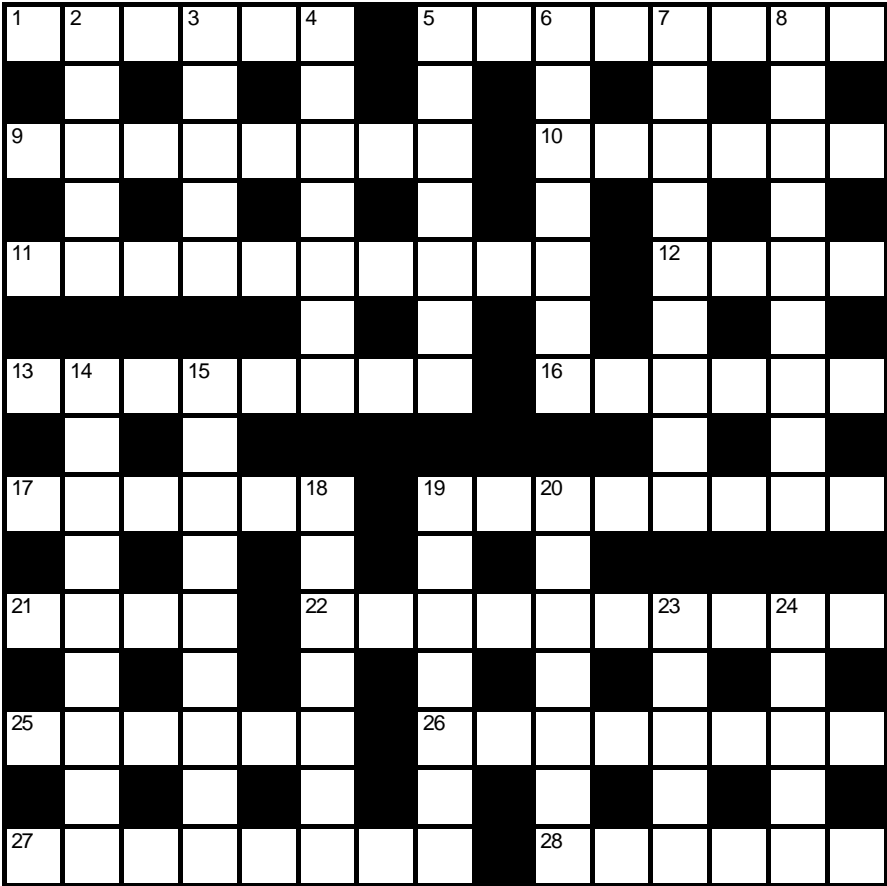
Produced from unapproved minutes and may contain errors; approved minutes can be found at <http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/minutes.html>. If anyone would like any further information on any of the above items, please contact the Clerk.

The next monthly Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 14th March 2024 starting at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Crossword Number 214

Compiled by NIBOR

This month’s puzzle is a simple cryptic crossword. Send your answers to the editors by 18th March 2024. The sender of the first correct solution out of the hat will win a free Sunday Lunch at *The Red Lion* - See the pub manager for full details. Emailed solutions are acceptable but please include “CROSSWORD” and the crossword number in the header.



Name:.....
Address:.....
.....Tel:.....

Across

- 1 Live in tents? Yes, in French tents (6)
- 5 Pay for organised bus rides... (8)
- 9 ...Get sports car to find fish (8)
- 10 Drum design (6)
- 11 Target earth? Farm animal takes ages (4,6)
- 12 Mongrel holding ham utterly intact (4)
- 13 Get wellies and shout out in back street assault (8)
- 16 Yellow French car with no key (6)
- 17 Absentee is first to run up a new tab (6)
- 19 Passionate CIA characters leave corrupt achievement (8)
- 21 Beginner in weekend connection (4)
- 22 It's irrelevant, but no matter (10)
- 25 Order credit arrangement (6)
- 26 Medicinal vapour for trendy computer bug (8)
- 27 Global organisation's board is changeable (8)
- 28 Song about fashion centre causes excitement (6)

Down

- 2 Country of birth in southern Africa (5)
- 3 Cockney says Vietnam capital is trouble (5)
- 4 99 live in Iberian city porch (7)
- 5 Doctor with ponytail and cape gets dehydration (7)

- 6 Diabolical students and teachers are not ideal cult initiators (7)
- 7 Last month I sat on mat, er... to make my last offer (9)
- 8 Shown to do damage and kill ruthlessly (5,4)
- 14 Britain gets shower before Scotsman finds eastern European (9)
- 15 Expert fighter in US deep south (5,4)
- 18 Maybe Siamese but coming back for washer (4,3)
- 19 Ramp I've converted to bat (7)
- 20 Fiery skinhead and scorching champion (7)
- 23 Sovereign yardstick (5)
- 24 Cancel Almanac lacking article (5)

Solution to crossword no. 213

T	A	H	I	T	I	K	E	Y	H	O	L	E	S			
A	A	A	H			T	E	I			P					
B	O	R	E	A	S	C	H	A	R	I	S	M	A			
U	M	N				I	M	B			R					
L	O	O	F	A	H	A	C	H	E	L	O	I	S			
A	N	T				I	T	S			S	N	E			
T	R	I	T	O	N	R	G									
E	A	S				S										
						X	P				P	O	N	T	U	S
A	L	A				E	O	S			R	E			C	
T	R	A	W	L	E	R	S				S	P	I	R	E	A
L	C	T				E					H				N	L
A	B	U	D	H	A	B	I				H	E	M	E	R	A
S	N	E				U					U	S			T	
T	H	A	L	A	S	S	A				T	S	E	T	S	E

We congratulate Martyn & Debby Clark, the winners of last month's competition, who will receive a prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Robert Nunn and Trish Whitehead.

Swaffham Prior Village Hall

March 2024

If you've ever visited Swaffham Prior village hall – perhaps for a village event, a regular class, a wedding reception or party then you'll know what an important local asset it is for people to meet and come together.

Many hundreds rely on it every month and appreciate it being well presented and accessible.

Making this happen is a small group of volunteers, some working through a committee and steering its direction and some in a more hands-on capacity and both are invaluable. For this to continue we need help so if you have a few hours to spare, even on an occasional basis we would love to hear from you so please contact Philip Blackburn on 07501230256

There are plenty of activities happening in your village hall every week. Here are just some of the regular ones but for a full listing check out our online calendar in the village hall website at www.swaffhampriorvillagehall.co.uk.

WI Meeting	3rd Monday of each month 19:30 – 21:30	Contact Margaret on 01638744390
SF-Fit Pilates	Each Tuesday 17:00 – 20:00	Contact Sarah on 075999072008
Village Gardeners	3rd Tuesday of each month 19:45 – 21:30	Contact Fiona on 01638741712
SF-Fit Pilates	Each Wednesday 10:30 – 11:30	Contact Sarah on 075999072008
PhysiOptima Pilates	Each Wednesday 09:00 – 09:50	Contact Kristin on 07799323867
Walking in your shoes – Dementia Care	Each Thursday 10:00 – 16:00	Contact Mike on 07884042590
Slimming World	Each Thursday 17:30 – 19:00 & 19:00 – 20:00	Contact Sharon on 077601925638
Tai Chi Life Academy	Each Friday 10:00 – 12:00	Contact Sharyn on 0774017917
Lok Hup	Each Friday 12:00- 13:00	Contact Sharyn on 0774017917
SF-Fit Yoga	Each Friday 17:00 – 18:00	Contact Sarah on 075999072008

If you're looking to hire the village hall, go to our website www.swaffhampriorvillagehall.co.uk for availability, bookings & prices.

For anything else contact Philip Blackburn on 07501230256

Anglesey Group of Churches

Services in March 2024

Sunday 3 March – Third Sunday of Lent

9am Online service on Zoom

10.30am Holy Communion, Bottisham

4pm Village Worship, Quy Village Hall

Wednesday 6 March

8pm CbyC, a contemplative service, online on Zoom

Sunday 10 March – Fourth Sunday of Lent/Mothering Sunday

9am Online service on Zoom

Holy Communion, Quy

10.30am Family Worship, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 17 March – Fifth Sunday of Lent

9am Online service on Zoom

Morning Prayer, Quy

10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Bulbeck

Morning Prayer, Bottisham

Sunday 24 March – Palm Sunday

9am Online service on Zoom

10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Prior

Thursday 28 March - Maundy Thursday

10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

Friday 29 March - Good Friday

10.30am Open Air Service, Churchyard, Quy

Sunday 31 March - Easter Day

9am Online service, on Zoom

10.30am Holy Communion, Bottisham

6pm Evensong, Swaffham Prior

Each Wednesday during Lent (not 6 March – CbyC) 13, 20 March

7pm Compline, on Zoom

Each Thursday

10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

While the Benefice is in vacancy, please contact your churchwarden as follows:

Bottisham: bottisham@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 604019

Lode: lode@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 811222

Quy: quy@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 812652

Swaffham Bulbeck: bulbeck@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 812525; 01223 811501

Swaffham Prior: prior@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01638 743937

For general enquiries: admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; churchwardens@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/angleseychurches;

A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7380/benefice>

Dates for Your Diary March 2024

Wed	6	Bookclub, Brenda Wilson's, 6pm [21]
Sat	9	Start of National Lottery Open Week, Wicken Fen [17]
Thu	14	PC Meeting, VH, 7.30pm [31]
Mon	18	WI AGM, VH, 7.30pm [23]
Tue	19	Village Gardeners, VH, 8pm [22]
Thu	21	Mothers' Union, Fassage Hall, Lode, 2.30pm [22] Councillors' Surgery, Reach Village Hall, 6.30-7.30pm [24]
Fri	22	Open Meeting with Lucy Frazer, VH, 3.30pm [27, Letters] Crier Copy Deadline
Sat	23	First day of Easter Adventure Trail, Wicken Fen [17]
Sun	24	Easter Lilies Deadline [13]
Thu	28	Bottisham Patients Participation Group, 6.30pm [27]
Fri	29	GOOD FRIDAY
SUN	31	EASTER DAY
April		
Sat	13	Quiz Night, VH, 7.30pm [9]
Sun	14	Serenata Choir, St Mary's 4pm [14]

Numbers in square brackets indicate page number of an accompanying article

Club	Contact	Tel.	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS	Becky Wilkes	07827 318351	2 nd Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Tim Doe	01223 861083	Variable		
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 st Weds of month	8:00pm	Kent House
Village Gardeners	Fiona Geraghty	741712	3 rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Margaret Joyce	744390	3 rd Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall