



The Swaffham Crier

Volume XLIX Number 2

February 2025



Editorial

Spuds in Buckets are back! Requested by many, won by few, this has been one of the village's most popular contests. All you need to go with the bucket and spuds you are provided with is some choice muck of your own choosing—see page 9 for the details and get ready for March. Meanwhile check out the Crier website (put the magic incantation *site:www.swaffham-crier.co.uk* Spuds in Buckets into Google) to suss out past years' competition.

Who's for Solar Panels? Well, you'd think our planners would have had plenty of time to decide on what's appropriate for Conservation Areas such as our High Street, but ... see *Letters*.

Boxing Day Hockey — oh no! Even with our plucky International Players, another Bravely Fought defeat. But a great time was had by all, and see page 7 for the younger generation that will certainly sort out these Bulbeckian upstarts in years to come...

More from the recently deceased Henry Brown in this month's issue - Henry was a remarkably good pilot, having been trained by US crop-dusters who didn't go in for chichi flying aids, and brought his crew back safely every time. Which was something of an achievement, considering what else they had to put up with — did we really win this war?



Andy Pumfrey's 2.782 Kilo winning yield in 2008 when the competition first started—can you beat it?

Incidentally, Henry was also the leader of the "Upper Village" movement to prevent the clock striking at night (See November 2001 *Crier Letters*). In fact, this admirable mechanism went awry for some considerable time and not even Henry noticed. But I LIKE hearing it at night when I'm awake — do we have to stop it?

And lastly — the Heating Scheme of course. It seems that the list of meeting dates was not a success (see *Letters*), so this month, we advise everybody books! Happy Valentining!

Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: Evening Hues, mixed media by Janene Elise Pike

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Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

More on the Heating Scheme

Just to say first, I do feel somewhat misrepresented by the Eds' note to my account of having to call out the heating scheme engineer on a Sunday morning at the end of November (see January Crier). Of course I wasn't complaining about a quick call-out, ie I called at 8am and the engineer arrived at 9.30; that would make no sense. But I was told when I phoned, that someone would call back within 4 hours, so it was just a slight surprise the engineer arrived without calling and way sooner than anticipated. No big deal; my point was more that it was so simple to fix it just involved turning a handle in my airing cupboard for a few seconds and so it should not have needed an engineer to come out on a 40-mile drive. I could have fixed it myself: the next time I need to bleed a radiator I will then go and turn that little handle again. No callout will be needed.

And I query whether (as the Eds replied) oil service maintenance calls have gone up in price, to justify the heating scheme standing charge being raised? Have they? How much? Did the heating scheme do a survey? I don't know any boiler service engineers to ask them. Just one of the many questions I have.

And to try to be fair the very best I can, I responded to the information in the Crier that the Heating Scheme folk would be in the village hall, 10-4pm, on four dates in January. Although in absolute fairness to them, two of those dates had passed by the time the Crier was published.

So I thought I would try the next one coming, to go and have a chat with them and get the full picture of what is going on heating scheme-wise; I was looking to have an open and wide-ranging conversation; there are still so many known unknowns.

So: 20 January. I arrived at 12.45pm. Village hall all locked up, nobody there. Oh well.

I emailed them later and got a reply - they had been out on a call to a home with a problem in the village, and were back there later. Ok, so you should have put a note on the door, I wrote in reply.

I tried the next one, the last published date: 29 January. a bit after 2.30pm. All locked up BUT there was a note in the window saying they were out on a call to a home in the village (sounds familiar) and with a mobile number to call. Progress!

I thought well, the callout is likely to be more urgent than my hope of a general chat and answers to a lot of questions, so not wanting to put them under pressure, I thought I would just sit in the car and wait. which I did, till gone 4pm, about an hour and a half. I spent some of the time watching all the children being picked up after school, remembering that once was me, except not in the car: we used to walk them to and from school, but I guess others live further away.

But I digress.

Two attempts just to meet the heating people eye to eye in January, and have a chat: failed. I'm 2 nil down.

And I wonder how many callouts a week they have to go to.

Then this morning, I find the heating pipit thing here says a totally different total to what it said yesterday. It's about a thousand units off course from the day before. Since this was the end of January, I now cannot record my January usage.

Do electricity or gas meters ever put out wild readings like that? I've never experienced such a thing.

So I guess I will just have to email them again. And ask what is going on.

Mark Lewinski

Dear Editors,

Mark Lewinski and the Heating Scheme

The village owes a vote of thanks to Mark Lewinski for yet another of his timely interventions. In his letter in January 2025, he mentions that the village needs a Heating Scheme Users' Group. He also reminds us of our good fortune in having the heating costs based on the price of oil which is low at the moment. If my memory serves me correctly this will not be forever. Some years back when the revolutionary Heating Scheme was first proposed I thought it was agreed that after a few years the costs would be increased to be the same as electricity. This may be happening quite soon.

Perhaps the first thing that Mark's User Group should establish is when the change will occur and the difference this will make to the costs.

The only disappointment about Mark's intervention is his snatching at Caroline's impulsive statement that she would set up a Users' Group herself if no-one else did it. Caroline's role as one of the Editors of the Crier is far more important and I urge Mark to pick up the gauntlet himself. His letters have already made a great contribution. Much more is needed **and he can do it**.

Alastair Everitt

This Month's Cover Picture

Our cover features the wind pump at National Trust property Wicken Fen.

Janene is a mixed media artist based in Wicken. She has exhibited with Prior Arts Goup in Swaffham Prior and is a regular exhibitor with Cambridge Open Studios during July when you can visit her studio in Wicken village.

Janene uses different mediums from pastel, paint, photography and everything in-between combined together digitally to create spaces and landscapes with a dream-like quality.

In her artwork Janene's objective is to invite you, the viewer, to enter each scene, to explore for yourself and to place yourself where you wish to be.

<https://janene-art.weebly.com/> janene_je@hotmail.com

Celia Tyler

The following correspondence has recently taken place between a Swaffham Prior resident and the local Conservation Officer.

Letter to Conservation Officer:

OR Solar panels in a conservation area

My house is at 19 Lower end, Swaffham Prior, CB25 0HT, which is within the village conservation area. There is an extensive roof line facing the road which formerly would not have been suitable for solar PV panels on account of the orientation, but now is because the cost of panels and battery storage has reduced significantly.

I have the resources to invest in this but don't want to waste anyone's time in looking into it in detail if it will not be permissible.

Please advise me.

John Chalmers

.....
I have been passed your query by the Conservation Officer to respond to.

As your property is located within a Conservation Area, and the panels would be located on a roof slope fronting a highway, planning permission would be required for their installation. You can submit a planning application through the Planning Portal where there is also information available to guide your submission: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/>

Unfortunately I am unable to comment on whether or not an application could be supported as there are a number of factors that we would need to consider at the application stage with an understanding of the number of panels that are proposed and how they would appear on the property.

Duty Planning Officer

.....
Thank you for responding to my query. However, your response is unhelpful: as I understand it you require me to go to the expense and effort of preparing a detailed planning application which you will then consider under a set of criteria which are not in the public domain and which you are not prepared to divulge to me in advance.

Please provide me with copies of the minutes of all and any meetings held in the last two years during which similar applications have been discussed.

John Chalmers

To be continued?

BON MOT NUMBER 157

"Mistakes are a fact of life.

It is the response to error that counts."

Nick Giovanni (1943 -)

CH--CH

What or Who is Missing?

Hello! I think I stood behind you in the Corner Shop? or was it buying Chips? Perhaps it was at the Summer Fete, or the local Garage, or collecting our children from School or simply seeing you across the street. I may have met you at my door with a whole group of children on Halloween's Trick or Treat or the wonderful school Nativities, or those splendid School Carol Services in our amazing historic churches?



It has famously been said that the Church is the only organization that exists for its non-members. Clever, but I am not an organization. I am a Vicar who has spent most of my life trying to help people understand that Christian faith is other than old buildings, old hymns, old religion, and old people. The Christians I know are warm, good humoured, emotionally intelligent, and basically kind. They struggle with the cost of living, raising children, caring for elders, making sense of life. Ordinary people with an extraordinary belief and trust that knowing God in Jesus Christ makes a difference. At all our churches UR Welcome! I may have just described part of your life experience. The people that worship with us are made up of all ages from all walks of life. They come with their own anxieties, doubts, and fears and yet there is something quite heartwarming about their willingness to walk their journey of faith together. These days Sundays include shopping, car-boot sales, children's sports/dance clubs or just recovering from an exhausting weekly schedule. May I respectfully encourage you to make time for that inner-voice where you just might hear an invitation from the God who has made all things bright and beautiful to know Him better. We believe that knowing Jesus Christ makes a difference and brings a greater joy in sharing our friendship and faith together. Somebody recently asked "Vicar, what is your vision for the future?" It is simply this. To follow Christ and build a joyful church where all people feel welcome, known and loved on your doorstep, sharing the love of God for the sake of every home and our flourishing local community. "Come and join us!"

Reverend Canon Max Osborne

Donations!

Very many thanks to the Village Gardeners for their very kind donation to the *Crier* this month.

We are very grateful for donations such as this, because although everybody who helps with the *Crier* does so on a purely voluntary basis, printing costs and other expenses mean that each of your free copies (394 per month) costs us on the region of £1 to produce.

Boxing Day Hockey Match 2024

This year's hopefuls gathered on the Denny on Boxing Day hoping to avenge a run of previous defeats by Swaffham Bulbeck. The band of regular players welcomed some returning overseas players, and some new younger players which is great, and the team was soon warming up ready for the whistle.

The first quarter flew by; when asked for his first impression of the unique hockey skills and level of commitment on show on the Denny, our visiting first-time player reported "that's savage"! Later confirmed when he was penalised for a crick-eting hook shot.

The match continued with both sides doing lots of running but no clear shots at goal. We hoped that playing downhill in the second half would give an advantage but this was not to be and, after a goal-mouth scramble, Swaffham Bulbeck managed to get the ball over the line, followed shortly by another goal.

Final score 2-0 to Bulbeck and the trophy made its way to the Black Horse for another year.

Thank you to all those who turned out to play, and the spectators who supported the two teams; it was lovely to see the babies of current and former players watching from the sidelines (future players maybe?). Thank you also to our officials (Jo Jones umpiring and Phil Kingsmill running the touchline) and to David Turner for organising the Bulbeck team, preparing the pitch and collecting for MAGPAS.

Mandy Kingsmill



....And the next generation



Appeal following serious collision at Stow Cum Quy

Officers investigating a serious collision on the A1303 at Stow Cum Quy are appealing for witnesses.

The crash, which involved a silver Honda CR-V, a Honda ANC 125 motorbike and a Volkswagen Transporter, happened at about 12 noon on Tuesday (21 January) at the junction of Newmarket Road and Little Wilbraham Road.

Emergency services attended the scene and the motorcyclist, a man in his 40s, was taken to Addenbrooke's Hospital, in Cambridge, with serious injuries.

The other two drivers were uninjured.

A 34-year-old man from Cambridge has been arrested on suspicion of causing serious injury by dangerous driving, drug driving and driving while unfit through drink or drugs.

He has been released on police bail to return on 14 April.

Anyone who saw what happened or has dash-cam footage should report it through the [force website](#) using references Op Shaftbury and incident 189 of 21 January.

Anyone without internet access should call 101.

Update Proposed Changes to Bus Routes: Feb 2025



At last there is more news about the planned new T4 and T5 bus routes which will replace the 11 (Newmarket – Burwell – Cambridge) and also provide a new link between the Swaffhams, Lode, Bottisham, the Wilbrahams, Fulbourn, the Cambridge 6th Form Colleges and Addenbrookes Hospital, as reported in recent editions of *The Crier*. (The existing bus service 12 between Newmarket and Cambridge, via Bottisham, is unaffected by these new routes and will continue).

The tender process to run T4 and T5 was carried out at the end of last year by CPCA (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) and the winning bus operator was decided. However, prior to contract finalisation the winning operator raised some issues of clarification with CPCA. At the same time its underlying cost base had to be recalculated because of the recent increase in employers' National Insurance contributions, so it enquired about the possibility of raising its tender prices. (There's been a bit of dispute about what actually happened at the end of the tender process: this was reported on in the Cambridge Independent recently).

The result of all this was that CPCA decided to re-run the tender process. At the moment it appears that CPCA expects the bus services to start in May. But of course nothing is fixed until contracts are signed and the new bus services have gone through the necessary legal process of being registered with the East of England Traffic Commissioners. The AtoB1102 Group, which has played a major role in providing the demand evidence base for these new bus services and in lobbying for them, will publicise and give details of the new T4 and T5 as soon as CPCA provides it with public information that can be shared.

Meanwhile, a new type of 'flexible' midibus service has just started (on the 11th of January) in the part of East Cambridgeshire around Soham, Ely and Little Downham: it's called 'TIGER-on-Demand 6'. Over the last 2 years the Government's Department of Transport has been funding trials of such Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) midibus services across rural parts of England, and now they have come to

THURSDAYS
10.30am - 12.30pm
Those of All Faiths or None are
WELCOME !

NO ART EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
Support given to Get Started if required

A wide selection of Art Materials Supplied

CHARCOAL
FELT TIPS
PENCILS
WATERCOLOUR PENCILS
VARIETY OF PAINTS
OIL / SOFT PASTELS

PEACEFUL & PRAYERFUL art group

We are given this day,
In all its Glory,
Light
And Love.
We are given this time
Of companionship
And creativity.
We are part of this World
With all its difficulties.
We ask for Guidance
Along our Paths.
Amen

For Adults

Thursdays in February
6th, 13th, *, 27th
*(not during half term)

**HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
BOTTISHAM**

this part of the CPCA's area (though not to the Swaffhams, Lode or Bottisham). The way they work is that the midibuses run within a set time period (in TIGER-on-Demand's case it's 06:30 to 19:00 Monday to Saturday) and operate over a defined area, and they are booked via a smartphone app. The app has a map on it to show the area where the DDRT service runs. To use the service you first have to register online, and then book your journey. When you make a journey booking via the app the software will choose stops, a route and a time nearest to what you specify within the constraints both of vehicle availability and of the other journey requests it has from other passengers. So it is possible that the journey that's provided by the service might actually be some time away from your preferred time and might involve a walk at one or both ends of your journey! To find out more, download the TIGER-on-Demand app on your smartphone or go to www.tigerondemand.co.uk.

Happy travelling

National Traveline Enquiries (for bus services) - www.traveline.info or 0871 200 22 33 (a Premium-rate service), National Rail Enquiries - www.nationalrail.co.uk or 03457 48 49 50

John Austin & Jon Cook, A to B1102 Group



Spuds in Buckets Returns for 2025!

Beat your neighbours in the great village competition 😊

Just £5 will buy you a bucket and a spud! It is then up to you to grow the heaviest yield of potatoes in your bucket to be weighed at the Harvest Show and Dog Show on Saturday 6th September.

Call Mandy Kingsmill on 07796 091855 or contact mandy@kingsmills.uk to sign up.
In aid of St. Mary's Church

The Rules:

1. Spuds and buckets will be available for delivery or collection up to 19th April
2. Spuds to be grown in the buckets in whatever manner the grower chooses
3. Spuds and buckets should be delivered to the Village Hall at 2.00 pm on Saturday 6th September for the grand weigh-in
4. There will be prizes for the adult and child (under 16 at that date) with the heaviest yield of potatoes from an undisturbed bucket
5. The judge's decision will be final
6. The winners will be announced at the Harvest Show and in the Swaffham Crier



POEM OF THE MONTH

Mending Wall

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them
made,
But at spring mending-time we find them
there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are
turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling
them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:

He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good
neighbors.'
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no
cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to
him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good
neighbors.'

Robert Frost

As I surveyed the lumps of clunch spalled from my garden wall in the recent cold weather, this poem came to mind. As so often in Robert Frost's poetry, much more is going on beneath the surface than appears from the literal narrative. Here, though, the analogy between the literal and metaphorical walls we build between us is pretty clear.

Andrew Grant

Julie's Valentine Treats

Chocolate truffle cookies

4oz of plain chocolate, chopped	1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups semisweet chocolate chips	Half a cup of plain flour
6 tablespoons butter	¼ teaspoon baking powder
3 eggs	2 tablespoons of cocoa powder
1 cup white castor sugar	¼ teaspoon of salt

1 In a microwave or in a metal bowl over simmering water, melt the chocolate and 1 cup of chocolate chips. Add the butter stirring occasionally until smooth. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool. In a large bowl, whip the eggs and sugar until thick and pale. Stir in the vanilla extract and then the chocolate mixture until well mixed. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt into the chocolate mixture. Finally fold in the remaining cup of chocolate chips. The final result should resemble a soft dough, cover dough and chill for a couple of hours.

2. Preheat the oven to 180c. Roll out the dough into 1inch balls and place on a greased baking sheet at least 2 inches apart. Bake for about 10 minutes until firm on top and still soft in the middle and a bit gooey.

Makes average 30 cookies.

Stuffed Strawberries

- 1 carton of fresh strawberries
- 8oz soft cream cheese
- ½ cup of icing sugar
- 2 tablespoons of orange liqueur

1. Cut of the tops of the strawberries, stand them upright and crosscut ¾ of the way down.

2. Beat the cream cheese, sugar and liqueur using an electric mixer or processor until smooth. Transfer to a piping bag with a star tip. Pipe the filling into each strawberry, arrange on a serving platter and keep cool until serving.

White chocolate fondue

- 12oz white chocolate chips
- ½ cup of heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup light syrup
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Melt the white chocolate chips, cream, syrup, butter and salt in a metal bowl over a pan of simmering water, stirring frequently until smooth and glossy. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla extract. Transfer to a bowl and decorate with fresh strawberries and use strawberries to dip.

Swaffham Prior Heat Network – February Update

Dear Community Members,

Progress Update

The external works for the current batch of properties have been successfully completed, and surveys are under-way for the next batch. Currently, 84 properties are connected to the network, with more in the pipeline for connection. To ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness, installations are carried out only once we have a minimum number of properties in each batch. In January, our contractors completed the planned remedial works at the Energy Centre and technical team continues to regularly monitor the performance at the Energy Centre. Should any planned interruptions arise, we will provide a minimum of 48 hours' notice.



Billing Update

We've sent out the quarterly bills for October to December to all connected customers. Additionally, yearly statements will be provided in February. If you have any questions or concerns about your bill, please don't hesitate to contact us. Our team is here to assist you.

Hear from Our Customers

We're delighted to hear positive feedback from our community members. One resident from Lower End shared:

"Our house is much warmer compared to our previous heating system. We are very happy with the heat network and the service. It's great to be part of this community heat network scheme, and we hope to see more people join. We believe it's important for residents connecting to the network to understand the equipment installed in their homes and to be ready to maintain their internal systems."

Their support motivates us to continue improving and expanding the network for the benefit of our community.

Your Responsibility for Your System

As highlighted in the Heat Supply Agreement, once connected, you are responsible for maintaining your existing heating system, which includes internal pipework and radiators. While the Heat Interface Unit (HIU) and other equipment installed as part of the network are supported by CCC, any issues with your internal systems are chargeable.

To help you manage our heating system, we provide:

A user guide for operating the in-home display and HIU.

A FAQ manual covering minor fixes, such as topping up system pressure.

If you haven't received these materials, please email us, and we'll send you a copy. Our engineers and technicians are also available during installations to provide guidance on using and maintaining your system.

Interested but Still Unsure? We Have a Solution!

To help you make an informed decision, we're arranging visits to properties al-

ready connected to the network. You'll have the chance to hear from homeowners about their experiences and see how the system operates. To express your interest, please email us at heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk. More details on these visits will follow.

24/7 Helpline for Existing Customers

As winter continues, remember that we're here for you. If you experience any issues, contact our 24/7 helpline at 01782 390777, and our engineers will provide prompt support.

Meet Our Team

We'd love to meet you and discuss how the heat network could benefit your home. Our team will be available in the Village Hall in February on the following dates:

7th, 12th, 19th, and 24th Time: 10 am to 4 pm

Please give us a call before visiting to the Village Hall so we can book a meeting slot for you.

If you're interested in connecting to the Heat Network or have any questions, please reach out to us or register your interest online. You can register your interest through our online form at: <https://forms.office.com/e/8mg3xtEpnY>

We're here to help you make the switch to a sustainable, community-focused heat network.

Our contact details

Email us at heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk,

Call our customer service line at 0345 0455210

Siddhant Malhotra

On behalf of the Heating Swaffham Prior Team
Cambridgeshire County Council

NEWMARKET CINEMA

February - March 2025

The Stable, High Street, Newmarket.

February 17th - Scrapper (12)

March 17th - One Life (12)

Doors open at 6.45pm with the film starting at 7.30pm. Admission is £6 which includes free refreshments. If you would like to reserve seats either send an email to richardjbowler@outlook.com or call 01638 666810

Richard Penny

**Continued from last month and reprinted from the 2017 May Crier.
A long term resident, Henry Brown died last year aged 102.**

Henry Brown's WW2 Part 2



A wartime pilot, Henry was sent to Canada then the USA for pilot training, but for advanced training the US would not take pilots under 21 so he was sent home, then to South Africa, to continue training out of sight of the US as it was thought it would annoy them if we were training pilots they had refused to take!

The troopship was a foul-smelling ex-refrigerated meat boat, 6 weeks at sea. At Cape Town we were sent to a holding camp in the Transvaal. Bullets were coming through the windows at night so the first thing we did was to dig a trench around the camp perimeter against a Boer attack.

Typical of the RAF, our flying training in the USA was not recognised. We were sent on a basic Tiger Moth course at Kroonstat in the Orange Free State; meanwhile Rommel was winning in the desert. The Boers, hoping for a German victory, sabotaged our Tiger Moths, putting sand in the engines, until a ruling that the mechanic servicing the engines had to go up as passenger on the test flight!

Not surprisingly we went on to advanced flying training on a variety of aircraft, starting with the Hawker Hart Audax with Rolls-Royce engines. These were highly manoeuvrable but very old-fashioned. Then the mono-plane Havards arrived, very manoeuvrable and with a machine gun for gunnery practice. Our extra US training gave us the advantage over other pupils. I gained my wings and met a girl in town who I dined with on Sundays. I considered her a match. I was right; we corresponded every week for three years till the war was over and she came to the UK to marry me.

On qualifying we were sent to Cape Town, where we embarked on the liner Mauritania, which was a luxury - we had bunks to sleep on! I was now a sergeant pilot. In about 20 days we were in the UK.

A fighter squadron posting was required but weeks went by and there were few casualties in our squadrons and Fighter Command's own UK training squadrons were supplying all replacements. Other fighter pilots were sent for bomber conversion but two of us were kept standing by.

During this time I was able to attend an auction of the wine cellar of a large house in Harrogate on behalf of H. Brown & Co, using their licence. A large amount of port, etc. was purchased for resale at the shop back in Swaffham Prior!

The commanding officer then considered his two reserve pilots should be given some exercise so we were sent on an N.C.O. (Non-Commissioned Officer) course

The German-supporting Boers sabotaged our Tiger Moths, putting sand in the engines, until a ruling that the mechanic servicing the engines had to go up as a passenger

at Whitley Bay. This turned out to be a commando-type course, which we survived. After 6 months the a we were sent on to convert to bombers. The first stage was at Chipping Warden where we flew twin engined Oxfords. This was the summer of 1943 and the living was easy in Oxfordshire. My hobby was visiting farms to beg for spare eggs for the mess, which made me very popular.

The little Oxford was a boring aircraft to fly. It was very sedate, and we were ordered to fly straight and level on cross-country trips as navigation exercises. After completing the primary twin engine course, the next stage was the large Wellington bomber. We were operating out of a base at Wymeswold, near Leicester, and it was here that we recruited flight crews to take part in bombing operations. The Wellington was an unusual aircraft. It was not fully rigid - it had a geodesic construction which allowed it to flex. Consequently it wallowed around the sky! It started life with twin 1000 hp engines and then was upgraded with 1600 hp engines which shook it about, but it was still more serviceable than the Oxford. When we had completed the flying instruction course we were sent to a hangar full of navigators, bomb aimers, engineers, wireless operators and gunners and rather than being organised, we were told to sort ourselves out into crews! This required luck and I had a 5 out of 6 success rate, with only my first navigator failing to stand up to the stress of operations after a short while.

Our first trips together were cross country expeditions to the Western Isles. The next stage was conversion to 4 engine aircraft which took place at Sandtoft, Lincolnshire. with Halifax bombers, which were old and badly serviced. There were burnt patches all around the airfield where planes had crashed on take-off. My plane had an engine not revving properly. One day I stopped it and asked the instructor, "Where is the mechanic?" He replied, "He'll be at cricket practice. The CO is a fanatic." There were as many casualties at Sandtoft as on operations and I could not understand why the instructors allowed this. A degree of mutiny would have worked wonders! Despite this we survived and were posted to 1 Group for familiarisation with the Lancaster bomber and from there to 100 Squadron at Waltham, Grimsby, where we quickly settled in. It was not long after D Day and we were sent on daylight raids over France. One was against the German big guns firing at Dover. We heard that their firing rate increased during the bombing to prove how well they were protected!

The CO of 100 Squadron was an odd character who would turn up for Ops briefing just to wish us good luck. He would often explain he would not be coming with us because his crew always got lost! They consisted of senior administration officers who were supposed to take part in missions to show support to the air crews. They had flown just four operations.

The Army used heavy bombers vary sparingly. It seemed the Army had to do what the Army had always done; they took little account of the lives that could have been

The Halifax bombers, were old and badly serviced. There were burnt patches all around the airfield where they'd crashed on take-off. My plane had engine trouble and I asked the instructor, "Where is the mechanic?" He replied, "He'll be at cricket practice."

spared by bombing the enemy instead of tackling them face-to-face on the ground.

We had complete air supremacy within the range of our fighters, but as air crews we were spectators to a struggling army below us.

Before going on a mission you were given a meal which was usually a fry-up, always including an egg. One day there were no eggs, so I went to the cook house to enquire why; “no issue”, they said. The next day I went to see the WAAF catering officer. “What is the reason for this?” I demanded, whereupon she started to cry. “It was Squadron Leader Irving,” she said, “He told me to give the sergeants’ mess eggs to the officers!” I advised her firmly that I would report the matter to the Air Ministry if the egg ration was not reinstated. Eggs returned to the menu the next day...

Henry Brown

Edited by Mark Lewinski



VILLAGE GARDENERS

At the January meeting of the Village Gardeners, Liz Taylor, CEO of the registered charity Red2Green, spoke very passionately about how their Community Garden in Bottisham supports people with autism and learning disabilities. Originally Red2Greenhouse, the organisation was set up by two Bottisham Village college teachers in the late 1990s to work with college students. 25 years later the charity is located at 3 sites; Harvey’s Barn and Granary Barn in Swaffham Bulbeck plus the Community Garden at Bottisham; and supports 90 clients aged 16+, with the mission to help them to live a fulfilling life and to enable opportunities to progress towards independence, education and employment. The positive physical, emotional and mental benefits of time spent outdoors growing and tending plants are well known, and the garden also provides sensory benefits by the presence of plants of varied colours, scents and textures. The clients have access to a kitchen, so they can cook the vegetables and fruit that they’ve grown, learning valuable life skills and the importance of healthy eating. Clients also take their gardening skills out into the community, supporting residents of Bottisham to help them maintain their home gardens.

The current Community Garden was established in 2017 after redevelopment of BVC forced a site move from the back to the side of the college. It is now located in an accessible position at the village centre end, and the garden is open to visitors from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm. The Garden Shop sells a variety of seasonal plants from the garden, as well as crafts made by the clients. Securing grants and funding for the charity is increasingly challenging, and community support for the garden is encouraged and appreciated. For more information, please see the Red2Green website <https://red2green.org/the-community-garden-bottisham>.

The next meeting of the Village Gardeners will be held on Tuesday 18th February at 8pm (doors 7.45pm) in Swaffham Prior Village Hall, when Peter Jackson will be coming to speak to us about ‘Plants for Shade’. Everyone is welcome at our talks; attendance is free for members (£20 for the year) or £4 for visitors. Gardeners and non-gardeners of all ages are very welcome.

Fiona Geraghty

The Reading Group Read...

A Review of 2024 Books

At our meeting on January 8th, Book Club took the opportunity to revisit all the books we read last year. Here is the list:

I Capture the Castle - Dodie Smith
Still Life - Sarah Winman
Demon Copperhead - Barbara Kingsolver
Lessons in Chemistry - Bonnie Gamus
The Giver of Stars - Jo Jo Moyles
Good Behaviour - Molly Keane
Lucy by the Sea - Elizabeth Strout
Black Beauty - Anna Sewell
Wandering through Life - Donna Leon
The Mandelbaum Gate - Muriel Spark
Bournville - Jonathan Coe



The Giver of Stars by Jo Jo Moyles met with universal approval and, I would suggest, is our book of the year. We plan to read another by this author this year. Still Life by Sarah Winman was so good and many-layered that it is a book we agreed we would happily read again. Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Gamus was also enjoyed.

Our list for books and dates agreed so far for this year are as follows:

Wednesday 5th February: These Precious Things - Ann Patchett

Wednesday 5th March: The Untouchables - John Banville

Wednesday 2nd April: Requiem for a Wren - Neville Shute

Wednesday 7th May: The Wrong Shoes - JoJo Moyes

We are a friendly group, enjoying a glass of wine and a chat about books and other things! Currently we are meeting at 5 Lower End at 6pm. We would welcome new members. Do come and join us!

Roz Chalmers



Mothers' Union

For our first meeting of the New Year we joined the usual Thursday morning Communion Service at Lode Church, followed by a warming lunch of homemade soup, rolls and cake, which was greatly enjoyed. Donations raised £138 for the Mothers' Union Holiday scheme AFIA (Away From It All). This scheme provides breaks for families who may be experiencing stress or difficulties in life – on average 2,500 people are helped in this way across the UK and Ireland every year.

Our next meeting will take place on Thursday 20th March at the Passage Hall in Lode at 2.30pm, when we shall be thinking about Lady Day (this year taking place on 23rd March) and enjoying a Spring Social and Bring and Buy.

All are welcome to join us.

Alison Martin

Not much has happened at the Council in December.

Extraordinary Council on 11 December

Due to equal numbers on both political Groups, it was resolved that the four main Committees (Finance & Assets, Licensing, Operational Services, and Planning) would have 12 members with six from each Group, and that other committees would be increased by one to make the membership even numbered.

The four main Committees have almost half the number of ECDC members, and both Charlotte and John supported the motion that was seconded by the Independent that the membership ought to be only ten. With the ruling that members of the F&A Committee cannot be members or substitutes on the Audit Committee, it means that all 14 members of each group are members or substitutes on these two committees.

Furthermore, it was resolved that the Chairs and Vice-chairs of each Committee would be elected at the special Council meeting in May, as is done by other Councils in Cambridgeshire.

The Ward Surgery will be at Fassage Hall, Lode, on Wednesday 26 February 2025 from half past six to half past seven.



**GIGA CLEAR
WOZ HERE!
On a telegraph
pole down Lower
End— but who
knows what they
are doing? We've
heard nothing.**

Snowdrop season at Anglesey Abbey

Anglesey Abbey is famous for its snowdrop collection and the gardens are home to over 500 different varieties of snowdrop now. Throughout February, you can see thousands of delicate snowdrops along the woodland paths, Jubilee Avenue and in among the daffodils and heliobores in the Winter Garden.



You can also join an exclusive **Specialist Collection snowdrop tour** – a chance to see some of the snowdrops that are not usually visible to the public and hear about the intriguing stories behind how there came to be such a vast collection at Anglesey Abbey. Head to our website for more information and to plan your visit.

If you're visiting us in **February half-term**, you can pick up a nature spotter-sheet, enjoy an adventure in the Woodland Play Area, build a den and walk among the beautiful snowdrops throughout the grounds. The House at Anglesey Abbey will also be open in February – you can enjoy exploring the ground floor from 11am to 3.30pm daily, or join a tour to see the upstairs of the house and some conservation in action on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Looking for even more fun?

We are excited to host Wild in Art's Find the Flock trail at Anglesey Abbey from 1 March to 27 April 2025. Pick up a trail map and embark on a journey around the gardens at Anglesey Abbey in search of twelve ewe-niquely designed **Shaun the Sheep** sculptures.

Each super-sized sculpture, standing tall at 160cm, will be displayed at iconic locations around the estate



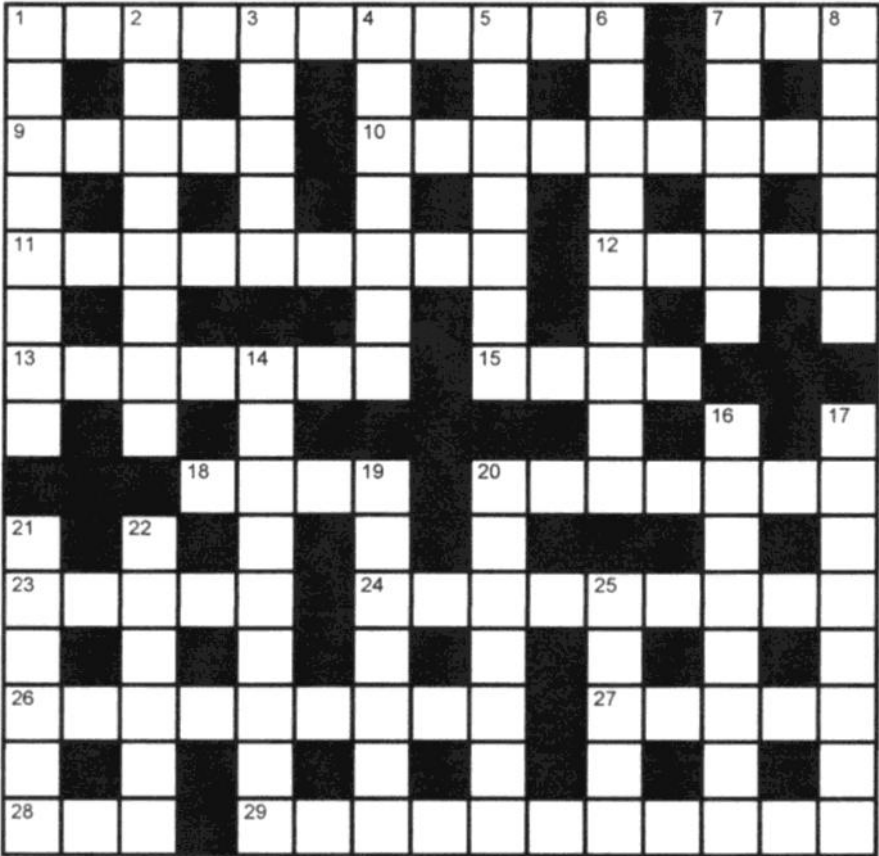
and each one has been painted with bright colours and funky, bold patterns. Find the Flock is put on in collaboration with Wild in Art and Aardman animations and, just like the recent Bear Hunt trail, is set to delight both children and adults alike.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abbey

Crossword Number 224

Compiled by OUNCE

Broken Keyboard! Alas, once I'd completed the grid, one letter on my keyboard no longer worked. Asterisks in the clues show how many times that letter appears in the answer. Send your answers to the editors by 22nd February 2025. 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

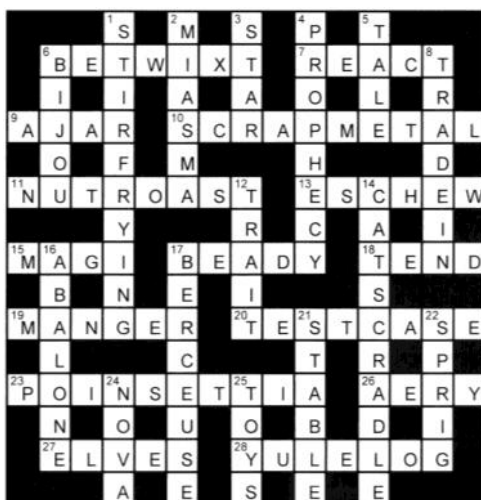
- 1 * Cerise apes damaged emergency exits. (4,7)
- 7 * Egghead bearing toll. (3)
- 9 * Physicist tossed in mire. (5)
- 10 * Tangled wool plus later appointments. (6-3)
- 11 Noticing nothing, readjusted disguise. (9)
- 12 * Last hippopotami run Angola trail. (5)
- 13 ** Single star concocted taxes. (7)
- 15 Tie wading bird? Negative, we hear. (4)
- 18 *** Middleclass bother! (4)
- 20 * Rove around old city with eagerness. (7)
- 23 Uncovering Oldham is so wrong. (5)
- 24 Amorphous spinning records hassle. (9)
- 26 Process sick pirate on ocean. (9)
- 27 * Cooled below zero by accident. (5)
- 28 * You old backward mystic! (3)
- 29 * Menials may translate clan identities. (6,5)

Down

- 1 ** Strangely tithe one part. (8)
- 2 String behind soldier about to tape again. (8)
- 3 Looking at big money crooked mob abandoned. (5)
- 4 ** Guineas, perhaps enclose caskets. (7)
- 5 Cut back hair, Jackson! (7)
- 6 * Posh loo, royal broke in workplace. (4,5)
- 7 * Articulate beginner starts using extraordinary new technique. (6)
- 8 Simply laid eyes on? Done gone mad! (6)
- 14 *** Greylag stands around standard pole. (9)
- 16 * Condemn duck journalist in chamber. (8)

- 17 * Careless researchers? Careless new students! (8)
- 19 * Donkey swallows 101 million - result: totalitarianism. (7)
- 20 * Lakes surround Queen with small towel? (7)
- 21 *** Not close in centre of black acrid cloud. (3-3)
- 22 * Short measure on Eastern railway, what splendour. (6)
- 25 * Delicate little river returns. (5)

Solution to crossword no. 223



We congratulate Martyn & Debbie Clerk, the winner of last month's competition, who will receive a prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Colin Dailly, David Taylor, Robert Nunn and Dainin O'Dowd.

Notes from the Swaffham Prior Parish Council meeting

The monthly meeting of the Parish Council took place on Thursday 12th December, attended by 4 Parish Councillors and 2 members of the public.

Due to the absence of the both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, it was agreed that Cllr Kent-Phillips take the Chair.

Public participation.

A member of the public asked questions of details of the minutes.

Reports

East Cambs District Council. A report was circulated by email; Cllr Charlotte Cane attended. Cllr Cane noted that a seminar on the ECDC budget would take place next week and the budget would be discussed by Council at the end of February 2025.

Matters arising from previous minutes.

- The Paper Sheds' application for the Heritage List is pending.
- The Voneus network was reinstated yesterday.
- The Clerk had spoken to the ECDC Conservation Officer regarding solar panels on the Village Hall and passed the response on to the Village Hall committee.

Correspondence.

- Email from SLCC regarding the Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England' Government Consultation. Noted.
- Email from A-B1102. The preferred supplier for the new bus routes has pulled out, therefore the new routes will not begin before May 2025. The number 11 route will continue to run as normal in the meantime.

Planning applications.

24/01287/FUL and 24/01288/LBC Addition of 3No. Conservation style roof windows to the rear including internal changes. The Smock Tower Mill, Mill Hill, Swaffham Prior, Cambridge, CB25 0JZ.

The PC agreed that there are no objections - as the alterations would not be visible from the road, the PC is happy for the application to be decided according to the advice of the Conservation Officer.

Approved:

24/01140/FUL Single storey side extension. Sheldricks Cottage 42 Lower End Swaffham Prior Cambridgeshire CB25 0HT. Noted.

Lower Allotments.

Cllr Latchford reported. The unrented allotments are overgrown, 3 of the rented allotments are in good order and the 4th is somewhat neglected. It was noted that weed suppressing ground cover for the unrented allotments have previously been rejected as too expensive an option.

Cllr Latchford to gather quotes for weed suppressing ground cover for the unrented allotments – the Clerk to forward details of past quotes.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write to allotment tenants noting that the tenancy agreement includes keeping the paths on site in a reasonable state.

Proposed “digital front door”.

The Clerk noted that the survey appeared to have closed on 15th November 2022 and therefore no further action could be taken at present.

2025-26 budget and precept.

The PC discussed the budget for 2025 and likely increases in costs. It was agreed that the precept will rise from £17,000.00 to £17,500.00 for 2025-26; an increase of 2.94%.

Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England’ Government Consultation.

The PC agreed not to respond to this consultation.

Heating Scheme.

Cllr Greenfield had emailed a report that was read out by the Clerk.

Although the installation in November of the CPEN went extremely smoothly it wasn’t until December that dropouts started to occur; the issue being the Distribution Pumps protection circuits occasionally tripping out. Once the problem was identified it was possible to put in place a manual reset procedure whilst the issue and a solution was investigated; although a temporary work around was possible which was successful for most occasions, but unfortunately not all. Those with a ‘combi’ style system would notice immediately e.g. the shower would go cold quite quickly. It was decided not to implement the planned resolution program due to the holiday period and action it in early January – the works are in hand and will be scheduled in the coming days/weeks with the work around continuing until then.

Clerk’s Report.

- The response to the Law Commission consultation was completed.
- Ivett and Reed had emailed to confirm the making safe of the tall Benstead gravestone.

Parish Councillors’ Reports.

Report from Cllr Greenfield, read by the Clerk.

Fibre to Premises (FTP); I’ve had recent discussions with Connecting Cambridgeshire and GigaClear including the new liaison manager Andrew Lipski. The GigaClear team are in the village installing ‘anchors’ on the telegraph poles. The schedule is being worked on and I’ll have an update by the end of this week, hopefully giving some intended date lines/stamps. The scheme will rollout in two phases 1) FTP from poles and/or ducts then 2) the start of the sign up and connection program. I’ll keep you informed as and when.

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, 13th February 2025 starting at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Maintaining Your Independence

Patients visiting the Living Well Service at Arthur Rank Hospice, picked up some useful tips.:

Tips to reduce the risk of falls

Good lighting

Use cable tidies

Use non slip underlay under rugs

Put things at reachable levels

Install grab rails

Avoid steps

Consider moving downstairs

Put bells or bright coloured collars on your pets

Never store things on the stairs

Make sure nothing is trailing from your clothing

Take care of your feet

Make sure your shoes are fitted correctly and replace slippers before they are worn out.

Avoid walking with just socks or tights

Avoid shuffling when walking

Avoid caffeinated drinks

Avoid multiple medications

Avoid alcohol

Get your eyesight and glasses regularly checked.

Planning ahead in case of a fall was also discussed.

Consider a personal alarm.

Key safes, located outside the home, are a consideration if you are at risk of falling or needing support and can't get to the door.



Sensible precautionary measures to put in place **in case of a fall:**

Place cushions, blankets and a bottle of water in a handy place in the home.

What to do if you do fall:

Lay still for a minute to see if you have injured yourself anywhere.

See if you can get on to all fours, or bottom shuffle to summon help.

Whilst you wait for help:

Stay warm.

Keep moving where you can.

Keep up your fluids.

The Bobby Scheme offer advice, information and guidance to increase confidence whilst living in your own home. More information can be found at <https://thebobbyscheme.org/> or by telephoning 01480 413311

News from Bottisham Medical Practice

Patients' Participation Group.

Practice Car Park: Due to an increase in antisocial behaviour and activities in the Practice car park, it has become necessary to install a chain barrier at the entrance of the car park to stop vehicular access. If you are dropping off a repeat prescription, there is room to park and walk to the post box by the main door.

The chain barrier will be deployed after the last person leaves the premises.

Thank you for your understanding.

Next Meeting Details: To be decided. Details in next month's magazine. 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

FREECYCLE

As a reminder, everything is offered for 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/text (07980 423210) or 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:

HP LaserJet P1005 A4 USB Mono Laser Printer. Robert 07785 110 434

Large pine dining table (~150cm x 100cm) with a deep gouge in the top. Exact measurements+ photo of gouge available on request; purple fabric spinny, wheeled office chair; black leatherette spinny, wheeled office chair. Jun 07980 423210



Swaffham Prior Village Hall

There are lots of things going on in the village hall every month. Why not try something new from the list of regular events below:-



WI Meeting	3 rd Monday of each month 19:30 – 21:30	Contact Kate at kate-muscroft@gmail.com
Village Gardeners	3 rd Tuesday of each month 19:45 – 21:30 Each Tuesday of each month (not 3 rd)	Contact Fiona on 01638741712 Contact Daphne at hanson16@virginmedia.com
Bottisham & Burwell Photographic Society		
SF-Fit Pilates	Each Tuesday 17:30 – 19:00	Contact Sarah on 075999072008
SF-Fit Pilates	Each Wednesday 10:30 – 11:30 & 19:00 – 20:00	Contact Sarah on 075999072008
PhysiOptima Pilates	Each Wednesday 09:00 – 09:50	Contact Kristin on 07799323867
Quilters sewing group	Each Thursday 10:00 – 12:30	Contact Ruth on 01638743720
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, for a wedding, party or other family gathering go to our website for availability, bookings & prices at:-

www.swaffhampriorvillagehall.co.uk

For anything else contact Philip Blackburn on 07501230256

Services in February 2025

Sunday 2 February – Presentation of Christ in the Temple

9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Bottisham
4pm Village Service, Quy Village Hall

Wednesday 5 February

8pm CbyC, a contemplative service, online on Zoom

Sunday 9 February – Fourth Sunday before Lent

9am Online service on Zoom
Holy Communion, Quy
10.30am Family Worship, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 16 February – Third Sunday before Lent

9am Online service on Zoom
Morning Prayer, Quy
10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Bulbeck
Morning Prayer, Bottisham

Sunday 23 February – Second Sunday before Lent

9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Prior

Each Thursday

10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

Revd Canon Max Osborne max9@btinternet.com; 01223 481187 (Rest day: Tuesday)

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Rhona McEune: rihm67h@gmail.com

Churchwardens: 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 February 2025

Wed	5	Bookclub, 5 Lower End, 6pm [17]
Fri	7	Heating Scheme, VH, 10am-4pm (Booking required) [13]
Wed	12	Heating Scheme, VH, 10am-4pm (Booking required) [13]
Thu	13	PC Meeting, VH, 7.30pm [23]
Mon	17	Newmarket Cinema, <i>Scrapper</i> , 6.45 for 7.30pm [13]
Tue	18	Village Gardeners, VH, 8pm [16]
Wed	19	Heating Scheme, VH, 10am-4pm (Booking required) [13]
Sat	22	Crier Copy Deadline
Mon	24	Heating Scheme, VH, 10am-4pm (Booking required) [13]
Wed	26	Cllrs Surgery, Fassage Hall, Lode, 6.30pm-7.30pm [18]

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	gsl@1st Swaffhamprior scouts.org.uk	Wed (Term) Mon	5:15-6:30pm 6:30-8.00pm 7.00-8.30pm	Scout Hut
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 st Weds of month	6:00pm	Variable
Village Gardeners	Fiona Geraghty	07785 971853	3 rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Kate Muscroft Kaye Lewsinski	07752011308 Kayejanelew@ gmail.com	3 rd Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall