



The Swaffham Crier

Volume XLIX Number 11

November 2025



Editorial

Halloween, don't you just love it? Possibly not! But it was the celtic New Year's Eve so they say, when ghosts and spirits walked the earth. It was quickly rechristened Halloween (Eve of All Hallows, ie Saints) by the arriving Christians — never ones to miss out on a party — exported to America by migrating Scots and Irish and is now right back where it came from. And what a procession of fairies, angels monsters, witches not to mention an absolutely superb JELLY FISH who had also had the very best trick—*she* turned out to be a *he*! See page 3, and we hope to do better with the photos next year.

But for other Monstrous Activity right on our doorstep, don't miss this month's PC Reporter Keith Carter. If, like me, you've not been concentrating recently, you may not have noticed that our District and County Councils are going to merge. And ECDC has got it into their head ('*honestly* believe' apparently—surely that usually means the opposite!) that we should go in with Peterborough rather than Cambridge. What?? And we're not even getting a say because now they've now shut the survey — read Pages 4, 23, 26 and 27 for everyone's thoughts.

Advent Windows are nearly upon us—get your applications in by the 20th November, and don't miss out on the huge list of fun events that are taking place this month — see you ceilidhing, Christmas marketing, meeting the authors and especially at Advent by Candlelight, a very special annual event in Swaffham Prior, but bring your coat and scarf!

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Caroline Matheson

Cover Picture: *Winter Fen*, oil on panel by **Karen Fisher**



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Thank you to everyone who came, or donated in other ways to the **Macmillan Coffee Morning on Friday 26th September**. In spite of there being fewer people who were actually able to come we made the amazing amount of **£814** which I have now paid to Macmillan. There were, as usual, delicious cakes, the raffle and the inevitable game to part you with your money! I am very grateful to Hilary Grant and Kate Muscroft who ran the cake stall, Andy Tozer for organising the game and for my husband Robin for selling the raffle tickets. The amount raised was a truly incredible total and I am so grateful for everybody's contribution, be it in time, baking of cakes or donations.

I look forward to seeing you all again next year, 2026, same time, same place and same cause.

Ruth Scovil

Dear Editors,

Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities

Once again the time has come to remind everyone who lives in Swaffham Prior and who considers himself or herself eligible for our Christmas Grant, now is the time to apply.

The majority of applicants come from pensioners, in particular those who have to manage on the State Pension, and it may be that in the present times of uncertainty support is required. If you are in need of help, or know someone who may be in difficulty but who are unlikely to apply on their own behalf, please do get in touch.

The Trustees will always be happy to consider requests for assistance and confirm that ALL applications will be dealt with in confidence. Financial support will be available throughout the year, not only at Christmas.

Please apply to:

Pam Waters

Clerk to the Trustees

01638 741035

Pam Waters

This Month's Cover Picture

Karen's painting shows storm clouds over Barston Drove between Swaffham Prior and Reach. This is just one of the local landscapes that inspires her work. She regularly takes part in the annual Cambridge Open Studios during July as well as other local exhibitions. In her own words: *I'm a self taught artist, living in Swaffham Prior. I use traditional techniques to create oil paintings on canvas or panels.*

Barston Drove can be explored on foot by heading out of the village along Lower End towards Reach and then turning left along the public footpath just before the bridge.

Email: kfpaintingsuk@gmail.com, Instagram: Painting by Keren Fisher

Celia Tyler



Halloween preparations near us and a few of our mysterious callers (when we finally got the camera flash going...)

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

As a concept, I like the idea of the English Parish Council. It is situated in my cluttered mind alongside Magna Carta, common law, the English Civil War, the Glorious Revolution and parliamentary democracy – strands that form part of the complex fabric of how things work. Of course, for those who remember the ‘you have no authority here, Jackie Weaver!’ incident, a lazy, meme-influenced and less positive idea of the Parish Council can hold sway for the more feeble-minded. Having said that, as I pulled out my stand-in-reporter’s pad and headed for the Village Hall, part of me was hoping for some sort of Jackie Weaver moment – that sort of thing sells newspapers.



The small meeting room at the Hall was surprisingly full, with seven people around the table and two in the ‘public area’, not accorded table space. One of these two represented the District Council and I recognised our own dear MP, Ms Cane; the other – I learned by deduction – was Ms Malinowski, a councillor from the mightier County Council. All four tiers of our system of government represented in one small Swaffham Prior meeting room. Like I said, Magna Carta etc...

I slotted myself in at Ms Cane’s right hand in the hope of osmosing some power.

I’m sure all concerned will forgive this observation, but with the exception of the Clerk none of those seated at the table was in the first flush of youth. Or indeed any flush of youth. Is this a worry? After all, wisdom comes with experience which, broadly, comes with age. But there is a nagging fear that maybe those under 60 have been stuffed to bloated somnolence on a diet of Blair/Brownite technocratic governance; that they are generationally too distant from the Silent Generation to share their sense of duty.

Someone reported that the council tax on a band D house in Option A would be £12 per year higher than in Option B, but even this was insufficient to bring the mood around the table to support Option B...

After some formal preamble, Ms Malinowski was asked to give her report from the County Council. The first issue concerned the unitary council reorganisation; Anna Bailey (me neither; Claude tells me she is leader of the current East Cambs District Council, ECDC) had ‘gone for Option B’. Although with my exception this, it seemed, was not news for anyone, it was met by a general murmur of disapproval. I got the impression that few present

would vote for the hapless Ms Bailey in a free ballot. Option B, for the less well-informed reader (and me, until now) is that as part of a reorganisation of local government both District and County councils will go and we should join with the new ‘unitary’ Peterborough, Fenland, and Huntingdonshire Council; under Option A we would be part of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, which admittedly does sound classier. This important consideration was not raised.

In later discussion someone reported that the council tax on a band D house in option A would be £12 per year higher than in Option B, but even this was

insufficient to bring the mood around the table to one of support for Option B. We are a much better fit with Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire (Option A), and the PC has already responded fully, clearly and timely on this issue.

Ms Malinowski also raised the subject of the fire risks associated with the emerging technology of battery storage linked to solar power installations - tech which, she informed the meeting, is advancing faster than the relevant legislation. She has joined the Fire Authority Committee. One councillor suggested using the probability and impact matrix (a business tool) to assess these risks: although there is a *low* probability of a battery fire, the impact if one happens is *very severe* with polluting gases emitted and a threat to our groundwater.

Ms Malinowski moved smoothly on to Roads, reporting that, following teething issues, the 'Highways Reporting Tool' is live and working. She handed out some leaflets, but not to your Crier reporter; I'm sure they are fascinating.

Despite this exciting deflection the meeting returned to the issue of solar-related fire risk: funds will be required to address these risks, which are higher in our area owing to the presence of / plans for solar infrastructure; the nature of our water courses imply heightened risk; lessons could be learned from electric vehicle fire handling; freight transport insurance rates might illuminate (Ms Malinowski was urged to approach the Freight Transport Association). Ms Malinowski expressed confidence and has good relations with other councils' fire authorities. Ms Cane said that owing to the use of old census data our area was underfunded and that more money was required (she's a Lib Dem, that's their thing...).

There was a brief discussion of the current recruitment process for a new Chief Executive of ECDC. That the replacement should happen at all, given the looming unitary change, was questioned and concerns aired that the position was only being recruited from inside the organisation and that the recruitment committee was not balanced to reflect the current LibDem:Conservative councillor numbers. The confused implication seemed to be that the power-hungry Tories were trying unfairly to snag an appointment to a position doomed to be transitory and the need for which minutes earlier had been questioned, but maybe I misunderstood.

Policing was raised by Ms Cane, who remarked on a vicious circle whereby people report less crime because their confidence in the police to take action has been damaged; this results in reduced reported crime and a consequent reduction in police resources. She stated that the police required more money (LibDem...) but that there needs to be more statistics to support this. A £100 shopping voucher was mentioned.

Their business being over, the two big council representatives, Ms Cane and Ms Malinowski, made their excuses and left.

Other business included correcting and approving the minutes of the last meeting, lamenting the fact that the Village Hall cannot access the Heating Scheme unless the school agrees to do so, and the school not clearly agreeing to do so (whilst not ruling it out either). It was remarked that of the five public buildings supposed to benefit from the scheme at the start (our two churches, pub, school and village hall), none was in fact likely to do so - albeit voluntarily in all cases except the poor

village hall. There was a brief discussion about the PC finances, which all appear to be in good order. The Kingsway Solar project was raised but deemed not to affect us too much, the Burwell-wards march of its mega-pylons across the countryside spanning the Devil's Dyke is to take a route more detrimental to Reach than us, it seems. Maybe Reach can sleep easy, as Kingsway Solar is an NSIP (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project); this puts the relevant government minister - environmental zealot Mr Miliband - in charge. Surely he will never approve so environmentally-damaging a plan? Nevertheless, a member our council attended a meeting of KSCA (Kingsway Solar Community Action), an admirable group with an excellent website <https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk> whence objections before the looming deadline of 29 October can be generated.

A lively exchange over the maintenance of footpaths and the trimming of hedges and other vegetation ended in unanimous agreement that 'public money should not be used to do jobs that people should be doing themselves'. Bravo! It was agreed that the people in question should be written to with a firm hand, informing them of their civic obligations. A footpath monitor and the naming and shaming of continued

transgressors were mentioned.

Other transgressions - including the dumping of a heavy oil tank behind the Scout Hut (removed) and sundry caravan-related detritus including wheelie-bins and discarded fridges - were noted as ongoing business.

There was no Jackie Weaver moment; it's all Magna Carta. Recently our esteemed Prime Minister was subject to some criticism for his attempt to define British Values. I think cutting oranges and painting fences were involved. He would have done better to have simply pointed to our Parish Council - and thousands like it across the country - men and women who voluntarily come out on a Thursday evening and spend time trying incrementally to make life in their parishes a little better for their neighbours. We should be grateful for them and to their members.

Keith Carter



Swaffham Prior Village Hall

Christmas Carol Singing

With Village Band

10th December 6:30 – 8:30

Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

All Are Welcome





Christmas in Swaffham Prior Needs You

Join us for our second
Village Window Advent Calendar

Sign up now to create an Advent Window
which will be revealed on a given date during Advent
for everyone to see

If you would like to participate in this event

Please contact Janet on

janetwillmott@icloud.com

or 07833 960678

by no later than 20th November

Please be aware that in agreeing to participate you
are also agreeing to have your address identified so
people can look for your window and take photos

There is no need to be religious or arty and there
is no "theme", the aim is for each window
to be a surprise as it is revealed
Googling "Advent Windows" will give you
lots of ideas – if you need it!!

CEILIDH

SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER

SWAFFHAM PRIOR VILLAGE HALL



6.30PM



TICKETS £10 ADULT - £5.00 CHILDREN

INCLUDES A BAKED POTATO SUPPER

BAR



To book tickets contact: jenny.brand26@gmail.com

karenlynn580@gmail.com

Newmarket Cinema

Here our film shows for October - December 2025 at The Stable, High Street, Newmarket.

November 17th - My Old Lady (12)

December 15th - The Penguin Lessons (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

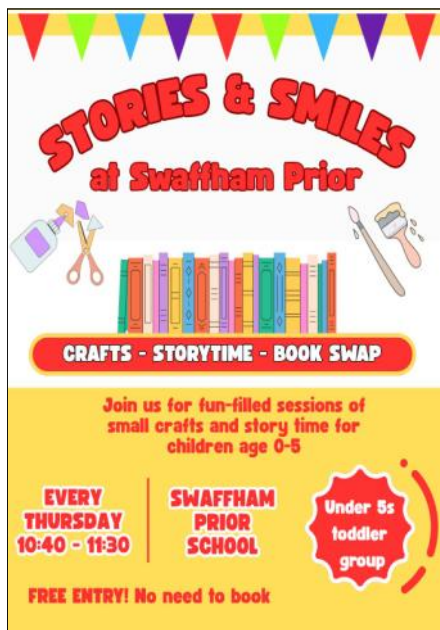
Stories and Smiles

Our Swaffham Prior term-time toddler group for under 5's and their carers.

Mrs Rowley, (Nursery Teacher) and Charlotte (local childminder), would love to welcome you and children in your care to be a part of our community group. Pop by for stories, crafts, play and social time at Swaffham Prior school. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, nanny, childminder, foster carer or any one who cares for a child on a Thursday, we would love to see you there!

Session Dates:

13th November, 20th November, 27th November,
4th December, 11th December, 18th December



STORIES & SMILES
at Swaffham Prior

CRAFTS - STORYTIME - BOOK SWAP

Join us for fun-filled sessions of small crafts and story time for children age 0-5

EVERY THURSDAY 10:40 - 11:30

SWAFFHAM PRIOR SCHOOL

Under 5s toddler group

FREE ENTRY! No need to book



ST MARY'S, SWAFFHAM PRIOR

CHRISTMAS CAFÉ
AND MARKET

SWAFFHAM PRIOR
VILLAGE HALL

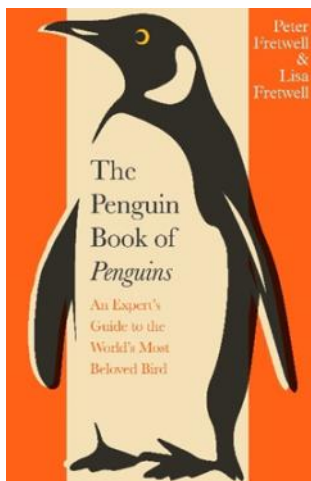
FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER
1 - 4 PM

CAFÉ WITH SEASONAL BAKES PROVIDED BY THE
POP-UP TEASHOP

FESTIVE STALLS INCLUDING JEWELLERY, GIFTS,
CARDS, CRAFTS, PLANTS, ECO PRODUCTS, BRIC-A-
BRAC

RAFFLE IN AID OF RED2GREEN

ALL WELCOME



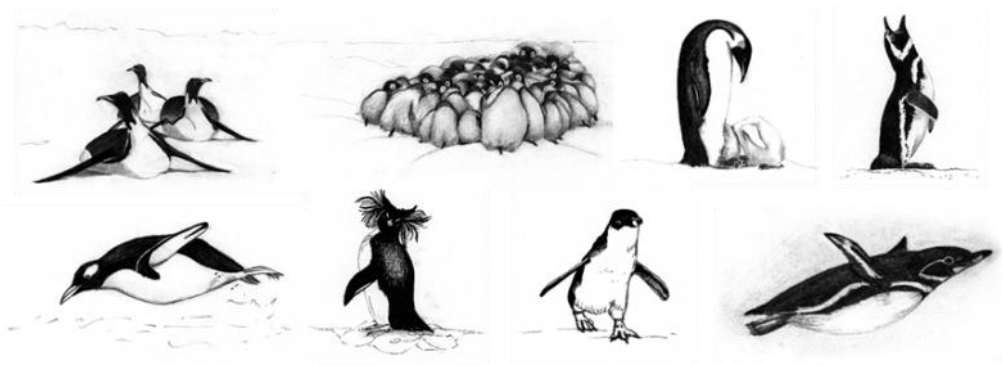
Meet the Authors The Penguin Book of Penguins

*Red Lion pub, Swaffham Prior,
13 November 7-9pm*

Written by a local couple, Peter
lead Scientist at the British Antarctic
Survey, illustrated by Lisa, an artist and
teacher.

A local couple, Peter and Lisa Fretwell produced a charming and beautifully illustrated book about the world's most beloved birds. There's something about penguins. Maybe it is their comical waddle, their black and white 'tuxedo' plumage, or their apparent cheerfulness in the face of extreme weather conditions. Penguins can tell us so much about the world we live in – and what the future of both our species might look like.

If you would like to hear more about the book, and see the illustrations, come along to our free event, at the *Red Lion pub, Swaffham Prior, 13 November 7-9pm*. A selection of the illustrations will be on display until the 13 December 2025. Framed prints will be available to buy, or originals created, upon request. If you have a copy of our book we will sign it for you. Otherwise, you are welcome to buy one.





SAVE THE DATE!

ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT

SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER

AT

THE TWO CHURCHES

OF SWAFFHAM PRIOR

**4.00pm Admission £10 (children free)
Followed by mulled wine and mince pies.**

In aid of Emmaus and The Churches Conservation Trust



SONGS OF HOPE AND PEACE

A CANDLELIT CELEBRATION OF ADVENT IN MUSIC AND VERSE

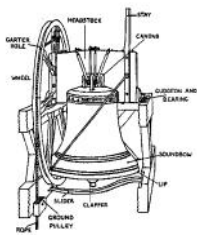


**Tristan Latchford and
Cambridge Voices with
music by:** Bastable, Sharma, Weir,
Latchford and a selection of works
from Arthur Henry Mann's 1918 service
in King's College Chapel

**And lyrics and poetry
from:**

Amichai, Auden, Dickinson,
Hardy, Henderson, Thomas,
Williams, our very own Edwin
Muir and others





SWAFFHAM PRIOR BELLS

It has certainly been a busy few weeks at the Tower of St. Cyriac! We had a farewell “ring” to say goodbye to our lovely curate Revd Rhona McEune on her departure from this parish. Rhona, an accomplished ringer herself, joined the band for a Plain Bob Minor Quarter Peal, and we wish her all the very best as she moves to Norfolk.

There has been a major spring (or should I say autumn) clean and maintenance session and the ringing room looks fabulous. All the nuts and bolts were checked and tightened, the stairs were thoroughly cleaned (no small task), and a start was made on cleaning the actual bell chamber. This will be an ongoing task but was enthusiastically tackled by all those there on the day.

Our newest members are making fantastic progress, but we would still love to see one or two more interested would-be ringers. Do get in touch if you would like to find out more or come along to Swaffham Bulbeck on Wednesday 19th November, 7.30-9.00pm, when there will be an open evening for anyone to pop in.

Last but not least, John Chalmers, successfully completed a Plain Bob Minor Quarter Peal (47 minutes of continuous ringing) supported by ringers from Swaffham Bulbeck Brin, Clare and Jo and from Prior, Lesley and our Tower Captain Gareth.

Janet Willmott and Mandy Kingsmill

email: swaffhampriorbells@gmail.com



Goodbye to Rhona,
second from right



Bric-a-brac donations wanted!

St Mary's Church, Swaffham Prior, is running a bric-a-brac stall at the Church Christmas Market in the Village Hall on Friday 21st November 2025

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.



POEM OF THE MONTH

Plums

Gillian Clarke

When their time comes they fall
without wind, without rain.
They seep through the trees' muslin
in a slow fermentation.

Daily the low sun warms them
in a late love that is sweeter
than summer. In bed at night
we hear heartbeat of fruitfall.

The secretive slugs crawl home
to the burst honeys, are found
in the morning mouth on mouth,
inseparable.

We spread patchwork counterpanes
for a clean catch. Baskets fill,
never before such harvest,
such a hunters' moon burning

the hawthorns, drunk on syrups
that are richer by night
when spiders pitch
tents in the wet grass.

This morning the red sun
is opening like a rose
on our white wall, prints there
the fishbone shadow of a fern.

The early blackbirds fly
guilty from a dawn haul
of fallen fruit. We too
breakfast on sweetnesses.

Soon plum trees will be bone,
grown delicate with frost's
formalities. Their black
angles will tear the snow.

In 2008, Gillian Clarke became the third National Poet of Wales, which, in a country with such a proud bardic tradition, is some honour.

In this poem, which, at this time of year, could equally have been about apples, pears or quinces, I love her accomplished use of assonance and alliteration, often both in the same sequence of words – *secretive slugs crawl home to the burst honeys, are found in the morning mouth on mouth; dawn haul of fallen fruit* – which creates a rich sonic texture suggesting the lush ripeness of the fruit. Contrast those lines with the harsh monosyllables, plosive consonants and sharp vowel sounds of the last stanza when gentle autumn has given place to implacable winter.

Andrew Grant

Julie's Winter Warmers

One pot chicken tagine

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4 boneless chicken breasts | 100g dried apricots, halved |
| 1 tbsp harissa paste | 400g can chopped tomatoes |
| 1 large onion, sliced | 1 tablespoon olive oil |
| 1 chicken stock cube | |

1. Mix the chicken with the harissa paste, heat the olive oil in a large pan, add the chicken and fry for 2-3 minutes. Remove and set aside.
 2. Add the onion to the pan and fry until soft. Return the chicken to the pan,
 3. Stir in the stock cube, apricots and tomatoes and cook, covered over a slow heat for 45 minutes.
 4. Serve with couscous and garnish with coriander.
-

Spiced lamb hotpot

1. Preheat the oven to 150c. In a large oven proof pan, dry heat or toast the cumin seeds and cardamom pods for a few minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent burning.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 tsp cumin seeds | 1 tsp ground cinnamon |
| 6 cardamon pods, slightly crushed | ½ tsp cayenne pepper |
| 2 tbsp vegetable oil | 1 tsp English mustard powder |
| 2 large onions, sliced | 2 & 1/2 tbsp plain flour |
| 1 large garlic bulb, cloves peeled and left whole | A few pinches of salt |
| 8 whole shallots, peeled | 500ml chicken or veg stock |
| 2 large carrots, cut into 2.5m pieces | 750g red-skinned, washed and cut into slices |
| 2 x 450g diced lamb | 40g butter, melted |
| 1 tsp ground ginger | A sprinkling of thyme leaves |

1. Pour in the oil and fry the onions until they are translucent.
2. Add the garlic, shallots and carrots and stir for a few minutes before adding the meat. Add the ground spices, cayenne, mustard, flour and salt until well combined before adding the stock. Stir again and take off the stove then arrange the potato slices on top and brush with melted butter.
3. Sprinkle over thyme and season well, Cover with a lid and place in oven for 2 hours. Turn the oven up to 200c and remove lid so potatoes are uncovered and cook for a further 30 minutes until the potatoes are golden brown.

Serves 4-6

Red2Green

Red2Green is a registered charity celebrating 25 years of supporting and promoting adults 16+ with autism and learning disabilities. We are based across 2 sites in Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham; 2 converted barns (Harvey's and Granary) in Park End and our Community Garden on the Bottisham Village College site. We support 90 service-users, 5 days/week, 50 weeks/year.

What have we been up to?

A huge thank-you to everyone who participated in, supported and donated to the Red2Green Sponsored Walk 2025! We're thrilled to share that we raised an incredible £2,000, and we're so grateful to everyone who made it possible. A special thank-you goes to The Black Horse for their ongoing collaboration and to the Minster Tavern Ely for their generous contributions. It was a truly wonderful day, filled with sunshine, laughter, and a great sense of community as staff, learners, and friends came together. We're already looking forward to next year's walk!

What's coming up?

Mark your calendars! Our Christmas Carol Service and Fair will take place on **Monday 1st December 2025.**

Carol Service: 11:00 – 11:35am

Christmas Fair: 11:35am – 2:00pm

We'd love for you to join us for a festive morning of carols, followed by an afternoon of refreshments, crafts, and raffle fun. If you'd like to run a stall at the event, please get in touch via info@red2green.org or give us a call on 01223 811 662.

Ways you can get involved:

There are lots of ways you can help support Red2Green:

Volunteering opportunities

Start a fundraiser in aid of Red2Green

Visit our Community Garden in Bottisham and buy some plants (Mon-Fri, 9:30-4)

One-off or monthly donations

Sign up to our monthly newsletter

Follow our social media pages and keep up to date with all things Red2Green

For more information about the wonderful work we do at Red2Green, please visit our website red2green.org or if you want to get in touch, feel free to email us at info@red2green.org or call us on 01223811662.

PEACEFUL
& PRAYERFUL
ART GROUP
for adults

November
7th, 14th
& 21st
1.30 - 3.30 PM

A wide range of art materials supplied:
Charcoal / felt tips / pencils / crayons /
watercolour pencils / paints / pastels

All required is the wish to create!

Those of all faiths or none are
WELCOME

ST JAMES' CHURCH | LODE

THE VIEW FROM LOWER END

Where have all the House Sparrows gone? We know they have been declining for years but it seems the situation is now dire. A recent newspaper article has revealed all. It began in the 1920s when the horse was taken over by the internal combustion engine. No longer could the birds thrive on the spilled oats and corn given to all the “trade nags”. When war came we needed more efficient killing instruments and mankind set to it. What would another 4 years of war have produced. After the Second World War came the increased efficiency of the combine harvester which left less than 1 percent of the cut wheat in the field. I remember often after Harvest Time setting off with my grandmother and her neighbour, all pushing prams, to glean corn to feed the chickens. All that has now gone, including “sticking”.



The story gets worse. The RSPB reckons that since 1966 the UK has lost 22 million House Sparrows.

But not all is totally lost. At this top end of Lower End there is a hedge which for years housed families of the chattering noisy birds. For various reasons I have not watched these for the last two years. 2026 I hope will have good news. Mean-time the news is certainly good at the other end of Lower End. The House Sparrow is being looked after, cherished and is in very good health and numbers. Is this chirpy chappy doing well in other parts of the village?

We can only hope. I am not so sure this can be the case with our government, or all opposition parties. The China debate has left the Commons a collection of – well the only word for them is House Sparrows with their twittering, chattering and chirping over who said or wrote what, and whose fault it is. And so on.

Alastair Everitt



Gleaning in the 1950's. There was also a Gleaning Bell to tell everyone when they could start—see October's WI



The Swaffhams' WI

This month there are two items to report on for The Swaffhams' WI. In September our annual outing was to the Cambridge Mosque and please see Kaye's lovely report below:

September

There was an immediate sense of wonder, calm and tranquility when entering the garden in front of Cambridge Mosque. Traditionally the garden would be placed at the centre of the site but there was a strong belief that this should be a space for the whole Mill Road community to enjoy. Originally a brown-field site where once stood a saw mill, the building of Cambridge Mosque started in 2014 and finished five years later. And you can really see why it took so long. It is beautiful! Weaving in both Islamic and English religious designs, the



ancient and the timeless Cambridge Mosque brought in artists, architects, garden designers and craftsmen to work closely with the community to create Europe's first eco-mosque.

Our tour guide was so welcoming, interesting and informative. She explained its history and design concepts, took us to the portico, then the atrium, through to the ablution areas and onto the magnificent grand prayer hall explaining rituals and traditions as we went.

Our trip was rounded off nicely, as always, with a very welcome tea and cake at The Edge Cafe a few doors down on Mill Road. Thank you to Margaret for organising this inspiring visit.



Kaye Lewinski

October

Now on to the October report. I am sure that many of you eagerly gather in your gardens on a Tuesday evening in Swaffham Prior and on a Wednesday evening in Swaffham Bulbeck to hear the practice sessions of the local bell ringers. So the fact that we had Gareth Davies, the Swaffham Prior Tower Captain and local expert on all that is to do with bell ringing, come to talk to us in October was a real treat. The intriguing title of Gareth's talk was "Who Wants to be a Millionaire Bellringer" and we were not disappointed!

Did you know....?

The familiar ding-dong-ding-dong quarter-hour Westminster Chimes of 'Big Ben' was copied from the chimes of the clock at Great St Mary's in Cambridge.

Before 1753 bells were rarely rung at weddings. In 1753 Lord Hardwicke's Clandestine Marriage Act came into being. This Act declared that secret marriages were illegal and that all marriages had to be performed by an Anglican minister in a

church or chapel. The peeling of the bells was an important way of telling people that the wedding was all above board.

For most of the 18th and 19th centuries bells were rung for almost any occasion or for any person who would pay. Being a bellringer could be an extremely profitable position!

The bells used to be rung to announce the death of a person in the Parish: three times three for a man and twice times three for a woman, followed by a bell ringing the age of the deceased.

Swaffham Prior once rang a gleaming bell. This bell signalled the end of the commercial harvest and marked the time when the poor could enter the fields to collect leftover grain.

Gareth also talked about the mechanics of bell ringing and the methods rung. He demonstrated the complexities of managing the sequencing with handbells and four of us were guided slowly through a very simple tune, demonstrating how the bells swop places to create the tune.

We heard about the mechanics of the bells and therefore the challenges that playing them brings. The rope has to be controlled; the timing of the toll depends on the weight of the bell and how long the rope is. Each bell has to be struck at the correct moment. Sequences have to be memorised; Swaffham Prior's church has 6 bells which allows a certain amount of complexity when ringing, Swaffham Bulbeck has 8 bells, but a church with 12 bells would allow millions of changes to take place. Great St Mary's in Cambridge has 13!

If this has struck a chord with you, do please look out for the information about the celebration of 205 years of the Swaffham Bulbeck church bells taking place on Sunday 16th and Wednesday 19th November at St Mary's Church, Swaffham Bulbeck. And do please come and see what life is like in the Swaffham Prior bell tower by emailing swaffhampriorbell@gmail.com to arrange a tour.

Thank you, Gareth, for such an interesting and entertaining talk and for letting us have a go at ringing on the hand bells.



Our next meeting of the Swaffhams' WI is on 17th November, where Ali Racine will be demonstrating how to paint on silk and we will be giving it a go too. For this meeting we need to know numbers in advance (there is a £7.50 charge) so that we can organise the supplies needed. If you would like to join our friendly and welcoming group for the silk painting session, do please email me on katemuscroft@gmail.com to book a place.

Kate Muscroft



VILLAGE GARDENERS

At our October meeting, the Village Gardeners were treated to a presentation by Bottisham bird expert Gerry Daish on 'The Birds of Swaffham Prior'. Gerry has been a member of the RSPB for more than 60 years since joining a bird watching club at primary school. He explained that identification of birds relies on several aspects; an anatomical description (size, colours of different body parts), where it is seen, habitat, movement, flight, song/call, feeding, silhouette and the overall character or 'jizz'. Sounds complicated, but he showed pictures of the many birds that commonly visit our gardens and played recordings of their songs to help us identify the differences between them. We realised what a variety we see in Swaffham Prior; the garden regulars such as sparrows, robins, blackbirds and blue tits, the buzzards and red kites hunting in the skies over the village, and of course our favourite summer visitors, the swifts. Gerry suggested we could provide swift nesting boxes on the shady side of our houses, and told us that once a young swift leaves the nest, it flies for 3 years before landing again! Apparently it sleeps when flying and has mastered the art of 'cat-napping' whilst gliding on the wing.

According to the RSPB, perhaps surprisingly the wren is the UK's most numerous breeding bird with over 11 million pairs, but being so small and prone to hiding they are not easily seen. Woodpigeons are second, followed by robins and blackbirds. Although surveys suggest that house sparrows are the bird seen most in UK gardens, their numbers are actually declining, with loss of breeding habitat suspected to be the main cause. Another cause of decline in several birds such as greenfinches, is infectious diseases that are spread by birds in shared feeding places. The RSPB now recommend not to provide food on flat surfaces such as bird tables, and instead to use hung bird feeders which are regularly cleaned to assure good hygiene. A mixture of foods such as mealworms, suet-based food, mixed seeds and peanuts will attract a variety of birds to our gardens. Outside the village, we are spoilt for choice of local places to visit for bird watching, with Wicken Fen, Kingfishers Bridge Nature Reserve (near Upware), Lackford Lakes, Lakenheath Fen and Fowlmere Nature Reserve all within an easy drive, with many other beautiful reserves situated on the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts. Not forgetting Burwell Fen, which is a great place to see starling murmurations at dusk during November.

The next meeting of the Village Gardeners will be held on Tuesday 18th November at 8pm (doors 7.45pm) in Swaffham Prior Village Hall, when Nigel Start will give a talk on 'Poisonous Plants'. Everyone is welcome at the Village Gardeners meetings; attendance is free for annual members or £4 for visitors, and tea and homemade cakes are on sale after the talks. We hope to see you soon.

Fiona Geraghty



**Now is the time to see the starling
murmurations—some are unbelievable**

THE READING GROUP READS....

JAMES by Percival Everett

The last book club meeting was like serving the wrong people with the wrong meal at the wrong time and on the wrong day. *James* is a retelling of Mark Twain's masterpiece *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) from the perspective of James, an enslaved black, whose escape parallels and overlaps some of young Huck's journey.

I had found it gripping, and an irresistible page turner. A dead cert, an absolute winner. How wrong I was. It didn't even get over the first fence. Possibly the warning signs were there. Several people had already said they could not come, including a person who had also suggested the book. Someone had become poorly at the last moment, another who was not impressed by the beginning and did not finish it. Our American was not able to come. It would have been good to have heard her views on what is considered to be "the greatest American work of fiction", which since publication had often been compulsory reading for American school children.

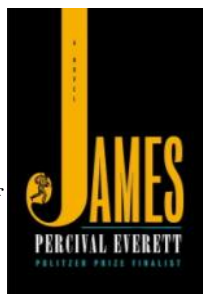
The greatest concern of the remaining few was the economic success or otherwise of slavery. It was reasoned that if slaves cost so much how could owners treat them so badly. The meeting moved on to other aspects of slavery. Though they never got as far as "Who built the pyramids", or the successful use of slavery today.

The book itself was barely discussed. Briefly the description of slave language was raised before another person needed to go to another meeting. This was not discussed again, and neither was any other aspect of the book. I myself being a bit of a softee still wince and flinch at the thought of the bullwhip across my back and legs, and had a secret/silent pleasure when James killed Hopkins the brutal overseer who regularly raped Katie. James, and the reader, had to watch this rape silently and helplessly. There was so much to experience and learn. So much was unforgettable, fleeing and surviving in the Amazonian jungle, catching a catchfish with the finger, just being a slave.

It took place just before the Civil War (1861-1865). If the people at the meeting had lived in a Southern State at that time, all of us would have owned slaves. How would we have behaved? Possibly like the kind good Miss Watson who had to sell James for economic reasons. And after his flight had then to sell James's wife Sadie and their nine year old daughter Lizzie. She sold them to Graham – a breeder, who bred slaves and sold them. Graham was very successful, very rich, and owned a huge white house. Poor Lizzie.

James arranges an escape plan and everyone escapes and runs towards possible freedom in the north. "How many do you think escaped capture?" was asked. "We don't know, – no one told us" came the answer. What a failure of a book.

This just shows how opinions can vary. Just as I once did not finish Barbara Kingsolver's 'Demon Copperhead' for a couple of reasons. Yet that book was enjoyed by the group, and by the critics, and also picked up prizes. So "horses for courses".



Alastair Everitt

Swaffham Prior Heat Network — November' 25 Update



Construction & Connections Update

We now have 104 properties connected to the heat network, and the current batch of connections is complete.

The next batch has been finalised, and we plan to start external works later this year, followed by internal works after winter. We're waiting for a detailed construction schedule from our main contractor, Equans. Once received, we'll share individual timelines directly with all property owners included in this batch.

During the street works, access to homes will always be maintained. Where trenches are open, steel plates will be used to safely cover them and allow vehicles and pedestrians to pass.

If you'd like to be considered for the 2026 connection batch, please submit your Expression of Interest in advance so that we can plan surveys and construction efficiently.

Heating Tariffs Update

We know many of you are planning ahead for winter costs. We're currently waiting for the updated Consumer Price Index figures, which should be available by the end of November. Once we receive and review them, we'll share the revised heating tariffs for 2026 with the community.

Thank you for your patience as we work to make sure the prices accurately reflect the latest cost updates.

Billing update

Quarterly bills for June to September have now been prepared and are being sent to all connected customers.

If anything on your bill is unclear, or if you'd like to discuss your bill or energy use, please get in touch with us as soon as possible so we can help before the payment due date. Please note that late or missed payments may incur extra charges in line with our terms and conditions. For any billing queries, you can email heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or call 0345 045 5210.

Feedback Required

We'd love to hear your feedback about your heating and hot water experience. You can share your feedback using the QR code here.



Open House Visits

If you'd like to see how the system works, we're hosting Open House visits where you can look around a connected home, see the installation (including the HIU and pipe layout), and ask questions to the residents and our team.

To register your interest, please email us with "Open House" in the subject line, and we'll get back to you with the available dates.

Meet the Team

If you prefer a conversation, we can meet at the Village Hall, at your home, or via video call. Whether you want a general overview or a technical discussion, we'll

arrange our team member to talk through benefits, costs, timelines, and what to expect during installation and commissioning.

Get in Touch or Register Your Interest: To be considered for next year's connection batch, please submit the Expression of Interest form using the QR code here.



Questions, issues, or Open House sign-up:
heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Customer Service (General Queries) : **0345 0455210**
24/7 Helpline for existing customers: **01782 390777**

Thank you for your continued support as we grow the network and keep Swaffham Prior warm and low carbon.

Local Gov Shakeup—go for Option B?

As you will be aware the council is nearing the point at which it must submit a business plan to the Government as part of Local Government Reorganisation.

There are 5 options on the table, and all of them have benefits and disadvantages for different areas across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

East Cambridgeshire District Council has been contributing to the development of all business cases, and we currently believe that Option B provides the best solution, and we are concerned that Option A provides the least best solution for our area.

We aim to consider all business cases at Full Council on 20 November 2025.

You can read more detail on all the options in the attached Pdf and on our website, but the purpose of this email is to provide you with more information about Option B and why we are favouring this over Option A.

Option A would see East Cambridgeshire join with councils in Greater Cambridge, and

Option B would see East Cambridgeshire become part of a larger unitary authority, joining forces with Huntingdonshire, Fenland and Peterborough councils.

We recognise the obvious choice for many people and organisations in East Cambridgeshire is Option A – after all Cambridge has the wealth, affluence and prestige associated with it.

However, at East Cambridgeshire District Council we honestly believe Option B is the best for our residents.

It will mean they pay lower Council Tax, inherit less debt and have more say in services that are provided locally. Crucially Option B won't sacrifice our beautiful district to become a housing site for Cambridge. East Cambridgeshire is a special place and we want to keep it that way, not play second fiddle to Cambridge.

**But see Our
Reporter, District
Councilors and
County Councillor
(p 4, 26 and 27)**

If you have any questions, or would like more information please ECDC's webiste or email lgr@eastcamb.gov.uk

This November at Anglesey Abbey

The Snowman™ trail

Join us for an adventure this winter at Anglesey Abbey with The Snowman™ trail from 8 November 2025 to 4 January 2026. Enjoy a magical day out with friends and family in search of the twelve giant sculptures, each painted with designs inspired by the English carol, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*.



The Wild in Art trail is inspired by Raymond Briggs' heart-warming picture book, *The Snowman*. You can pick up a trail map in the visitor centre and make your way around the autumnal gardens in search of each sculpture, creatively painted by national and international artists.

Earth Photo exhibition

It's the last chance to come and see the shortlisted works from the international Earth Photo competition, displayed in The Orchard at Anglesey Abbey until 23 November. Caffé Mobile are open daily in the Orchard throughout the exhibition, selling hot drinks and homemade bakes.

Christmas in the house

From 17 November to 4 January, the house at Anglesey Abbey will be beautifully decorated for the Christmas season, with traditional festive displays highlighting Lord Fairhaven's vast and significant collection. Children can also continue their journey with The Snowman™ indoors by spotting The Snowman™ toys in each room, hidden among the decorations.

There are still a few spaces left to meet **Father Christmas** in the house – but hurry! Tickets are selling fast. Head to the Anglesey Abbey website to find out more and plan your visit.



And don't miss out: **the specialist snowdrop tour** tickets go on sale this November.

THE SNOWMAN™ ©
Snowman Enterprises Limited
2025

Photo credit: © NT Images /
Mike Selby, Arnhel de Serra

Issy Vetoshkina

Wicken Fen, November- December 2025

W i n t e r i s approaching, a magical time on Wicken Fen. Hedgerow fruits and berries are food for thrushes, while the wetland hosts hundreds of ducks, geese, swans and wading birds. Sometimes, murmurations of thousands of starlings swirl above the reedbed before dusk. And sparkly, silver dawns are a beauty to behold. So why not wrap up warm and head for a walk on the Fen?



Once you've blown the cobwebs away, head to our café for a warm drink, soup, scone or sweet treat. Throughout winter, the Docky Hut Café and Visitor Centre are open 10-4.30pm everyday except for Christmas Day.

As always, we have themed activities at the Family Discovery Area in the visitor centre and there will be a new winter trail around the boardwalk. Why not browse the gift shop or second-hand Book Nook for festive gifts. Our popular Father Christmas at the Fen events are running each weekend from

Father Christmas at the Fen spaces are disappearing fast! Step into a festive wonderland in the charming Fen Cottage, where children can join the Elves for a Christmas craft, then meet Father Christmas himself and receive a gift. Drop into our Family Games Station to play a festive board game and transform into an Elf for a fantastic photo opportunity. This popular event is almost sold out, so book now to avoid disappointment. Tickets are £14.50 per child.

New for 2025, we have a special **Twas the Night Before Christmas** storytelling. Step into the warmth of Fen Cottage this Christmas Eve, where one of Santa's very own Elves will be reading the beloved festive poem *Twas the Night Before Christmas* beside a crackling open fire. This group storytelling session is perfect for children aged 3 and up, offering a magical moment to pause, imagine, and soak up the spirit of Christmas. Every child will take home their very own copy of *Twas the Night Before Christmas* to keep the festive magic alive. Festive attire is encouraged — think Christmas jumpers, pyjamas, or elf hats. Come along for a heartwarming start to your Christmas celebrations.

For the latest reserve news, visit: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen

Events: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve/whats-on

Tegala Ajay

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The political leadership of East Cambridgeshire District Council has now launched a campaign in favour of Option B, with East Cambridgeshire along with Huntingdonshire and Fenland being run from Peterborough. Neither Peterborough nor Huntingdonshire is supporting this option.

If you believe it will be deeply damaging to East Cambridgeshire to cut off our influence over the places where we work, study, and receive health care, and to be run from a city miles away with which most of us have no connection, **please get in touch with us and/or your PC.**

FULL COUNCIL MEETING

A long Full Council meeting on 18 September.

New Homes Ombudsman: the Lib Dems proposed that the Council should require its Trading Company to join the scheme which gives people moving into new build homes the right to take complaints to the New Homes Ombudsman. This was rejected by the Conservatives, on the grounds that it wasn't compulsory, and that the Trading Company had joined an inferior scheme, which didn't give access to the Ombudsman.

Ely junction: the proposal that the Council should continue to press the Government to invest in upgrades to the rail network north of Ely, to open it up to more rail journeys for passengers and freight was passed.

It was pointed out that four years ago, the Conservative group had promised an army of uniformed volunteer traffic wardens — that has now shrunk to, possibly, part-funding one PCSO; the illegal and inconvenient parking continues in the villages and Ely.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE RETIREMENT AND REPLACEMENT

East Cambridgeshire District Council Chief Executive John Hill will be retiring at the end of this year, and the Council has set in motion plans to fill the vacancy.

Of the three members of the recruitment panel, two are Conservative despite both groups being equal on the council.

STREAMLINING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The Government is consulting on removing the requirement for statutory consultation as part of the process for determining large national infrastructure projects such as the solar farm at Sunnica, or the incinerator at Wisbech. This proposal is set out in Government's Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

The consultation can be found on:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-streamlining-infrastructure-planning>

AFFORDABLE HOUSING—A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Lib Dems on the Council's Finance & Assets Committee voted against plans to

hand over £72,000 of affordable housing funds to East Cambs District Council's own company, East Cambs Trading Company, for use at Arbour Square Ely. The money came from developer contributions that must be used to create extra affordable housing. However, ECTC had already signed binding contracts to deliver all twenty-seven houses on this site as affordable housing for social rent.

Lib Dem Councillors said this means the grant does not secure a single additional house—it simply gives taxpayers' money back to a Council-owned company that has already committed to deliver the scheme. Local residents in housing need are being denied the extra houses this money should have provided.

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 29 September.

The Council's recycling rate is lower for the last two quarters than the equivalent periods a year ago.

The Council has admitted that on most days the street cleaning service operates below the minimum number of staff.

It was noted that residents had received letters about the forthcoming changes to the waste collection service, and that there will be follow-up communications.

POLICE SURVEY

Cambridgeshire Constabulary have created a short survey to understand how people currently report crimes and how the police can improve the process. It only takes 10–15 minutes, and as a thank you, you'll have the chance to win a £100 shopping voucher in a prize draw. https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CIR_Cambs_Constabulary/

There will be no surgery in November but you contact us by telephone (07976 607512, 01223 812120) or email (charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk).

Local Gov Shake-up—Go for Option A

With Local Government Reorganisation thrust upon us, Cambridgeshire County Council voted to submit Option A to government for consideration, placing East Cambridgeshire with South Cambridgeshire and the City as one of the two authorities to replace our current district, city and county councils.

Locally many parishes and councillors are working together, coordinated by county councillors Yannifer Malinowski (Burwell and Fordham) and Jonny Edge (Woodditton), in writing a letter to ministers that appeals for them to consider the unique geographical challenges of our corner of the county and to ensure our area's future aligns with Cambridge. This is opposed to the option to tie East Cambs to Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough that is proposed by East Cambridgeshire District Council - otherwise known as Option B. Ultimately the national government will decide, but Swaffham Prior Parish Council have joined as signatories to Yannifer and Jonny's letter.

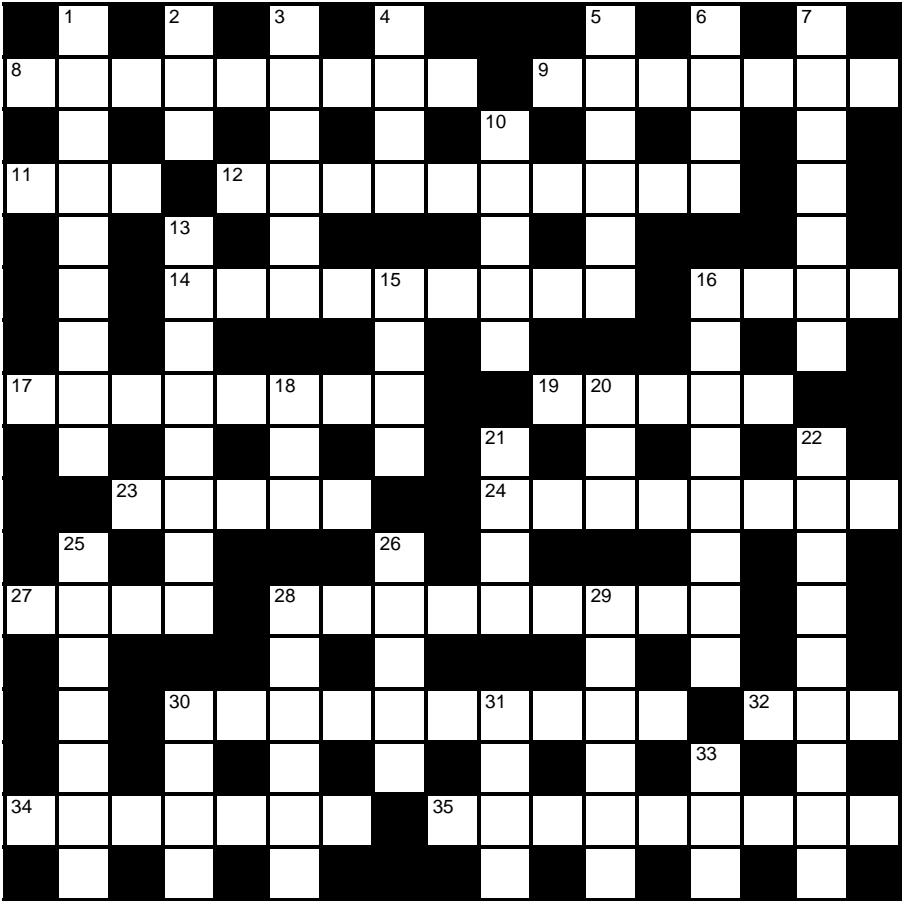
Consultations have now closed, but one of the key findings was that around 60% of East Cambs respondents preferred Option A, with a higher turnout from East Cambs in participation than in other areas of the county - suggesting strong strength of feeling.

Cllr Yannifer Malinowski

Crossword Number 232

Compiled by **OUNCE**

This is a themed puzzle with linked answers marked * or **. Clues marked * have no definitions. The answers (marked **) are linked and have no other clues: 17A, 17A the 23A of 24A, 8A, 9A 34A. Send your answers to the editors by 22nd November 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

- 8 ** (9)
 9 ** (7)
 11 Back of a female cat's tail (3)
 12 Priests set false (non-blood) relative (10)
 14 Order of the day: remove roof, demolish, desiccate (9)
 16 Fat found in Poplar Drive (4)
 17 ** (8)
 19 Slight odour as West Indies swallows hydrogen very loudly (5)
 23 ** (5)
 24 ** (8)
 27 Peace-loving bird plunged (4)
 28 * Kickstart frowsier development (9)
 30 Rampant lie fabricated in Westminster Houses? (10)
 32 Cook baby fish (3)
 34 ** (3,4)
 35 Phoney found oath disorderly. (3,2,4)

Down

- 1 *Man with Dumbledore's phoenix (3, 6)
 2 Choose terrible top (3)
 3 Exchange cane? (6)
 4 Initial decision: enter; ending: peril. Not shallow! (4)
 5 Squirm, wither, twist (6)
 6 Couple with quiet appearance (4)
 7 * Iron Robin badly (7)
 10 Purple flower (5)
 13 Glue broken sieve had smashed before (8)
 15 Bother! American lawyer meets Russian leader mid-morning (4)

- 16 Majority follows the French foot, furthest right? No! (8)
 18 Mammal begins bobbing and twisting (3)
 20 Pathogen which I view internally (3)
 21 Understand king won back (4)
 22 Disincentive? Right. Entered awkwardly (9)
 25 Black circle on lump of wood. Article flipped in Italian city (7)
 26 Path of gold piece (5)
 28 Stroganoff fans leave stew - didn't remember (6)
 29 Payment for mangled manors (6)
 30 Tube ends jump, alumni stop horse (4)
 31 Savage Mike a posh beginner (4)
 33 Introverted coconut for example (3)

Solution to crossword no. 231

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

We congratulate Shirley Wilkins, the winner of last month's competition, who will receive a prize certificate from the editors. Honourable mentions go to Robert Nunn and Dainin O'Dowd.

Notes from the Swaffham Prior Parish Council meeting

The Parish council meeting of the 9th October was chaired by Cllr Covill and attended by 6 parish councillors and 3 members of the public.

Reports

Cambridge County Council. Cllr Yannifer Malinowski attended.

- Cllr Malinowski and Cllr Johnny Edge are holding a meeting on 22nd October to put together a letter to make sure East Cambs is fully represented in the Local Government Reorganisation. Cllr Kent-Phillips to attend for Swaffham Prior PC. Business cases for the options to be considered in November.
- Cllr Malinowski is consulting with the Fire Authority regarding emerging technologies safety considerations. Cllr Greenfield noted that although the likelihood of a fire in solar batteries are low, the consequences could be very high risk. Cllr Covill asked if funds would be needed for new fire-fighting equipment and Cllr Malinowski said yes, funding is an issue.
- The Highway fault reporting tool is live; there were some teething issues that have now been fixed. Cllr Kent-Phillips to pass on details to Cllr Malinowski regarding a faulty repair on Cage Hill.

East Cambs District Council. Cllr Charlotte Cane attended, report circulated by email.

- Local Government Reorganisation. East Cambs had the highest response rate and favoured Option A, but a letter sent out by Cllr Bailey favoured Option B. Cllr Kent-Phillips had responded to the survey for Swaffham Prior PC in favour of Option A. Cllr Cane noted that most of the district uses Cambridge facilities and want a say in how they are run.
- Cllr Cane noted concerns that the post of chief executive for East Cambs is only advertised internally
- The government is consulting on removing the need for statutory consultations on some planning applications.
- a police survey is taking place on how people report crimes. Cllr Cane noted it is important that people report all crimes so that the crime figures reflect the level of crime accurately.
- Black bins will be distributed in March 2026.

Clerk's Report

- The tap on the Upper Allotments has been put back up and will be re-insulated shortly.
- Highways were able to confirm that the traffic survey on Heath Road had taken place and provide the name of the company that carried it out but were unable to give any other information.

Parish Councillors' Reports

- Kingsway Solar Farm – report by Cllr Greenfield. The Kingsway Solar Community Action website has a good overview of the proposed development (Action: Clerk to put the link to the KSCA website on the village Facebook page). DG attended the 23rd Sept meeting of the Kingsway Area Parish Council Alliance and will email round a synopsis. The KAPCA are currently:
 - gathering legal reports, putting together legal arguments,
 - fundraising for significant amounts

- undertaking community engagement by presenting to the public, drafting proforma letters of objection for use by members of the public
- talking to landowners and landscape architects.

A meeting held in Burwell on 24th September 2025 at the Gardiner Hall was organized by a Reach resident to raise awareness in Burwell and had a high attendance.

Cllr Hart asked who chairs the KAPCA? Cllr Greenfield said Fay Parker of Weston Colville PC.

- Heating Scheme – report by Cllr Greenfield. The village hall cannot be connected to the heating scheme unless the school is as well. The school is being pressed to make a definite decision whether it will or will not join the scheme. The ammonia alarm is there to alert anyone on site or in the building and cannot be adjusted. SKP asked if the churches, school, pub or village hall were on the scheme. DG confirmed they were not.
- Cllr Hart. The footpath on Greenhead Road is still overgrown. The Clerk will check the address and write to the relevant householders.
- Cllr Kent-Phillips. The oil tank abandoned behind the Scout Hut has now been removed.

Planning applications.

Approved: 25/000914/TRE 3 x Lime pollard. Towers and Hill Charitable Trust Village Hall, 36 High Street, Swaffham Prior.

Kingsway Parish Council briefing of 9th October 2025.

The PC felt there were too many unknowns for constructive discussion to take place.

Footpaths

The PC decided against paying for maintenance of the footpaths; instead regular inspections should be undertaken and reminders sent to household with vegetation overgrowing paths.

Allotments

The PC agreed to the putting up of a polytunnel (maximum size 6ft x 8ft) on an upper allotment. A new tenant was agreed for Upper Allotment plot 5; there are two lower allotment plots available for renting.

Greater Cambridge Partnership's Newmarket travel hub consultation

Cllr Greenfield noted that A-B1102 group has discussed the consultation and is feeding back on behalf of the PCs.

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 November 2025 starting at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Eds note: The wrong minutes were accidentally published in the paper version. Apologies!

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH BOTTISHAM



COFFEE & CAKE CONCERT

SATURDAY 6th DECEMBER 10.30am

Stuart Field, (raconteur and violin), Sarah
Maxwell (Soprano), Richard Ayres (Organ)

The History of our Christmas Carols

Come along and sing your favourite
Christmas Carols.

Suggested donation £5 (children free) including coffee & cake
towards church heating & building funds



ALL ARE WELCOME



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

Mahogany wardrobe medium to small; Single bed with drawers bedding/duvet; Chest of drawers. Robin Sewell 01223 811632

Ikea desk - In excellent condition ('Micke' desk, white, 105x50cm, 75cm high. Two drawers. One cupboard with three shelves. Has been assembled); Ikea shelving - In excellent condition ('Kallax' shelving unit, white, 150x150cm, 30cm deep. 16 cubes. Is fully assembled.) Text or call Lucinda on 07531 021733

Grey/Black comfortable swivel officer chair; Free standing 5 shelf black bookcase (180x90x35). Ian 01223 811169 or Ian.Cannie@btinternet.com

BURWELL SURGERY PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP – HAVE YOUR SAY!

The Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group of patients and GP practice staff who meet in person, and with the option to join online, for 90 minutes, four times a year.

Members of the PPG get to hear about any upcoming changes at the surgery as well as being able to provide feedback on the patient experience to help improve the service. We also act as a consultative group for any changes at the practice and the wider NHS.

Our next meeting will be at 6.30-8pm on Tuesday 27th January at the Burwell Day Centre with an option to join online via Teams.

At January's meeting we hope to have a speaker from the Surgery team responsible for Perinatal Services. We also hope to hear more about upcoming national changes to prostate cancer screening.

At each meeting we now have a 7.30pm slot specifically focused on the views of younger people and parents with young families. In January we will also be having the Perinatal Services talk at this time. Do please feel free to join the meeting for the 7.30pm slot either in person or remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Joining the PPG does not mean you have to come to every meeting or attend for every item on the agenda. You can dip in and out, or send feedback in advance of the meeting, but by being part of the group you will receive the agenda and minutes of each meeting.

If you would like to be part of the group, please contact the Surgery on 01638 741234 or by email at cpicb.burwellsurgery.admin@nhs.net.

For more information, including a wide range of articles about Surgery services such as weight loss injections, health checks, social prescribing and health and wellbeing coaching, please visit: <https://www.theburwellsurgery.co.uk/patient-group/about-our-ppg/>

Bottisham Patients' Participation Group

The Way You Access Medical Care Is Changing

From the 1st of October 2025 we have improved how you access care at Bottisham Medical Practice.

You can contact us with an issue from 8am (Monday to Friday).

You don't have to join the morning queue on the phone to contact us. We recommend contacting us via the [NHS App](#) or our website with any admin or clinical query.

We will also be available on the telephone and in person for you to contact. Reception will need to ask you the same triage questions which are on the online form.

All requests for care will be triaged by a clinician and we will get back to you with the most appropriate support. However you contact us, your request will be handled in the same way to ensure fair and equitable access to all.

To locate the online form visit our website <https://www.bottishammedicalpractice.nhs.uk>

Then click on "contact us online". You will be asked for your name and date of birth and then message us your query.

At the time of writing we are one week into the new system which has received very positive feedback in terms of speed of response and appointments given.

Why has the system changed? Total triage means those in most urgent need are prioritised and patients are directed to the most appropriate clinician for their problem which is not always a GP. Patient continuity is possible, but you may have to wait to see the GP of your choice. Triageing all requests means everyone is treated equitably whether you phone, turn up at the door or use online access.

The next group meeting will be in early January, at the surgery, details to be advised.

Bottisham Medical Practice Patients Group

BON MOT NUMBER 164

**"We can never give up longing and wishing
while we are thoroughly alive."**

George Eliot (1819 - 1880)

Services in November

Sunday 2 November – All Saints’ Day

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

Wednesday 5 November

8pm CbyC on Zoom

Sunday 9 November – Remembrance Sunday

9am Online service on Zoom
10.50am Remembrance Service, Quy, with Bottisham
Act of Remembrance, Lode
Remembrance Service, Swaffham Prior – with Scout’s parade
Remembrance Service, Swaffham Bulbeck

Sunday 16 November – second Sunday before Advent

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

Sunday 23 November – Christ the King

9am Online service on Zoom
Holy Communion (BCP), Swaffham Bulbeck
10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 30 November – Advent Sunday

9am Online service, on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Lode
4pm Advent by Candlelight, Cambridge Voices concert, Swaffham Prior

Each Thursday

10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

Revd Max Osborne: max9@btinternet.com; 01223 481187 (Rest day: Tuesday)
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 November 2025

Tue	4	(all Tuesdays) Bell-ringing, St Cyriac's Tower, 7.30-9pm [12]
Wed	5	Book Club, 5 Lower End, 6pm [21]
Fri	7	(And 14 th & 21 st) Peaceful and Prayerful Art Group, St James' Church Lode, 1.30-3pm [16]
Sat	8	Snowman Trail, Anglesey Abbey, until 4 Jan [24]
Sun	9	(To 4th Jan) Snowman's Trail, Anglesey Abbey [24]
Thu	13	Stories & Smiles, SP School, 10.40—11.30am (&every Thursday) [9] The Penguin Book of Penguins, Red Lion, 7-9pm [10] PC Meeting, VH, 7.30pm [30]
Sat	15	Ceildih, VH, 6.30pm [8]
Mon	17	WI, VH, 7.30 [19] <i>My Old Lady</i> , Newmarket Cinema, 7.30pm [8] Christmas at Anglesey Abbey House, until 4 Jan [24]
Tue	18	Village Gardeners, VH, 8pm [20]
Wed	19	Bell-ringing Open Evening, Swaffham Bulbeck, 7.30-9pm [12]
Thu	20	Advent Window Application Date deadline [7]
Fri	21	Christmas Café & Market, VH, 1-4pm [9, 13]
Mon	24	Crier Copy Deadline
Sun	30	Advent by Candlelight, St Mary's & St Cyriac's, 4pm [11]
December		
Mon	1	Red2Green Carol Service (11.00-11.35) & Fair (11.35-2pm) [16]

Numbers in square brackets indicate page number of an accompanying article

Club	Contact	Tel/Email	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 Wed 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
Bell Ringers*	Gareth Davies	07886 323686 swaffhamprior bells@gmail.com	Every Tuesday	7.30-9.00pm	St Cyriac's