



# Challenge



The Parish Newsletter of Weston Colville and West Wrating  
The views expressed herein are those of the contributors.  
Printed by E & E Plumridge Ltd, Linton (Cambridge 891407)

West  
Wrating  
Church

## Christingle

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 4-5 pm  
Children – come at 3.45 to make  
your own Christingle

Mulled Wine Tea Cakes

### *Kingsway Solar*

This is a proposed solar farm, with solar panels and battery storage areas to be located on parcels of land in the vicinity of Balsham, West Wrating, Weston Colville, and Weston Green.

The public consultation will run for six weeks from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024. This is an opportunity for the public to share their views before a further, statutory consultation in 2025.

Your involvement is vital. Please read further details on page 2, and in the parish council minutes on pages 8 to 11.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE with  
CHRISTINGLES by CANDLELIGHT  
St Mary's Church, Weston Colville  
CHRISTMAS EVE, 4 pm

All ages welcome. Festive refreshments afterwards.

Come and discover the meaning of Christ at Christmas time.

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## A Christmas Carol

by Charles Dickens

This Christmas audiences are invited to celebrate the festive season as critically acclaimed theatre company **This is My Theatre** brings Charles Dickens' classic tale **A Christmas Carol** to life in a stunning one-act adaption.

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7.00 pm  
at  
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***Kingsway Solar***

*This is an announcement from the developers.*

The first stage of consultation has opened on a proposed solar farm in the South Cambridgeshire area. Kingsway Solar would have the potential to supply around 500 Megawatts (MW) of electricity to the National Grid and, if consented, as an NSIP (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project), Kingsway Solar will have to apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008 and go through an independent examination managed by the Planning Inspectorate.

The solar panels and battery storage areas are proposed to be located on parcels of land in the vicinity of Balsham, West Wratting, Weston Colville, and Weston Green. An approximately 14 km transmission connection to the National Grid’s proposed new substation at Burwell South, to be located to the south of the existing substation at Burwell, is also required. The predominant technology for this connection will be an overhead line, with undergrounding where necessary.

The proposal is being developed by DRD (Downing Renewable Developments), a certified B-corporation with significant experience in owning and operating renewable energy, battery storage, and other infrastructure.

The public consultation will run for six weeks from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024. This is an opportunity for the public to share their views before a further, statutory consultation in 2025.

There will be an online webinar on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 6.00 – 7.00 pm, open to members of the public to view our proposals and speak to members of the project team. To register online and for more information, visit:  
[www.kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk](http://www.kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk).

You can provide feedback on the proposals by emailing the community relations team at [enquiries@kingswaysolar.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@kingswaysolar.co.uk) or completing a feedback form on our website.

***David Vernon – Head of NSIP Projects for DRD***

***Solar Farm Feedback***

Please send your comments to Kingsway before the end of their consultation period on 12<sup>th</sup> December.

This is our best opportunity to influence the design of the solar farm so that if it does go ahead its impact on our lives will be minimised.

Use any of the methods described on the back page of Kingsway’s leaflet, or if you prefer you can just write to them at FREEPOST DOWNING KINGSWAY.

Do tell Kingsway your overall feelings about the solar farm, but for this consultation focus on giving constructive suggestions that could influence the design for the better. It will be most effective if you say “it should be like this because . . .” rather than “if it’s like that it’ll be terrible”. If describing a particular location, eg, “the view from my house”, give enough detail so it can be identified.

If you want to protest about the solar farm the best time to do that is after the 12<sup>th</sup> December consultation deadline, when you, the parish councils and Kingsway Solar Community Action can collaborate to do that most effectively.

***Simon Chandler, West Wratting Parish Council***  
***Ray Vidler, Weston Colville Parish Council***

**Margaret & Wally**

**Kate**

**Charlie**

**Christmas Café Studio**

**West Wratting Village Hall**

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November**  
**10.30 - 12.30**

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**Karen**

**Ellie**

**Sally**

**Charlie**



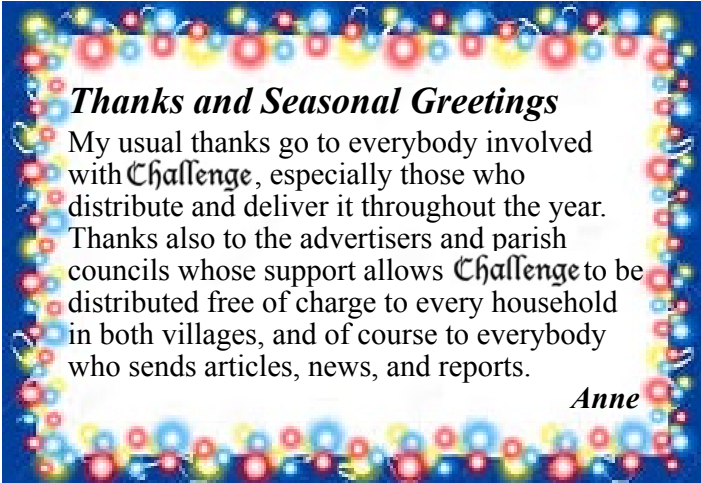
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**Thanks and Seasonal Greetings**

My usual thanks go to everybody involved with **Challenge**, especially those who distribute and deliver it throughout the year. Thanks also to the advertisers and parish councils whose support allows **Challenge** to be distributed free of charge to every household in both villages, and of course to everybody who sends articles, news, and reports.

*Anne*

**West Wratting Christmas Café**

Please note, there will be no café on the first Saturday in December.

Instead, our special 'Christmas Café' will be held on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November in the village hall, from 10.30 until 12.30. Do join us for our usual offerings of delicious homemade cakes, tea and coffee as well as the chance to buy Christmas cards, tags and lovely gifts from our talented stall holders.

The New Year Café will be on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January, 10.30 - 12 noon, a perfect chance to catch up on everyone's Christmas news.

*Sherry and Jan*

**Tea & Cakes**

Hello to everyone who supports our monthly Tea & Cakes. The next meeting will be our Christmas one, on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 3.30 - 5.00 pm as usual.

We will be collecting donations for the Emmaus Charity in Landbeach which provides housing, training and jobs for the homeless on their site. They also provide support to enable individuals to get their confidence back, so when they are ready they are able to move on with their lives.

Please come along and join us for a chat, meet friends, and make new ones over a cuppa and delicious cake.

*Val and the Team*



**Oil Co-operative**

Ordering deadline: noon, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

**Church End to the bottom of Mill Hill:**

Alastair Douglas (291475 or [salguoda@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:salguoda@hotmail.co.uk))

**Chapel Road, Common Road, The Green, Horseshoe Lane:**

Anne Vidler (290010 or [anne.vidler@talk21.com](mailto:anne.vidler@talk21.com))

**West Wratting**

Peter Harris (07879 444126 or [sowesticom@gmail.com](mailto:sowesticom@gmail.com))

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There is a minimum order of 500 litres. We can no longer order fill ups, due to pre-payment requirements. Please don't phone before 8 am or after 10 pm. If you are close to running out, please tell us so we mark you as urgent.

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for information on:

What's On	Directory	Parish Council
Parish History	Local Sports	Village Hall Events
Church News	Parish Matters	Village Calendar

**Please send us your contributions, events, notices, photos and comments.**

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### West Wrating Village Hall

The AGM of the Village Hall Management Committee is scheduled for Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm, when the report and accounts for the last financial year will be presented. All interested residents of our village are welcome to attend in the Committee Room, not the Main Hall.

Martin Davey (07740 774625),  
 Diana Edwards (01223 290616)

Our November wine tasting night was a success; Adam from Corney and Barrow (wine merchants since 1780) introduced us to wines from small vineyards in faraway places ranging from the foothills of the Andes in Argentina to Transylvania. Adam’s knowledge of each vineyard’s location, climate, altitude, grape types and viticulture was insightful. Many of us stocked up for the festive season.

We continue to raise the profile of our beautiful village hall by promoting village events and hiring the hall out as a venue. Our fund raising/promotion working group is organising events for next year, starting with a Race Night in March. Regular events such as Games Night, Bingo, and Table Top Sales are in the plan.

To help secure regular funding we plan to run a ‘100 CLUB’ monthly lottery. Planning is in the early stages so watch out for further news.

We are delighted to announce that our bid to the Wind Farm Trust for a grant to install acoustic dampening panels in the hall has been granted. The project, when completed, will reduce echoes/background noise and help people converse more easily, especially when the hall is noisy.

**Martin Davey,**  
**Chair, West Wrating Village Hall Committee**

### Weston Colville Playground

Thank you for your patience while the playground renovation has been going on. At the time of writing this, the works are still in progress, but hopefully they will be completed by the time *Challenge* is published.

We have been very impressed by Setter Play, who have carried out the first stage of the refurbishments, and hope everyone enjoys playing on the equipment.

The second stage, for equipment outside the fenced area – new swings, roundabout, climbing tower for older children – will begin at some point in the new year.

The parish council would love to hear your views, so they can be fed back to the grant awarding bodies.

**Jess Ashbridge** ([clerk@westoncolville.org.uk](mailto:clerk@westoncolville.org.uk))



### Thanks to Weston Colville’s Volunteers

We wish to thank all the villagers who hold events, clean, cut grass, clear gutters, etc, maintaining the Reading Room, cricket pavilion and recreation field.

Special thanks to those individuals who have taken responsibility for the book exchange, and our regular users who help maintain the hall in between sessions.

Congratulations to Florrie Green who painted the fences for her Duke of Edinburgh volunteering award.

Wishing you a peaceful festive season and we are looking forward to seeing you in 2025.

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***Village Christmas Drinks at St Mary's***

Please join us around the Christmas tree in the church for a drinks reception on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 6.45 pm. To celebrate Christmas there will be drinks, canapés and of course mince pies. Everyone is very welcome!

It's a chance for the village to catch up and enjoy a social occasion. We are trying to make the church a useful resource for the village community and we'd like to engage as many as possible in supporting the use of this historic religious building. See elsewhere in 'Challenge' for details of theatre events and Christmas Crib services.

**Bob Coates** ([cheviotbob@me.com](mailto:cheviotbob@me.com))

**Ian Ashbridge** ([ian@agrarian.biz](mailto:ian@agrarian.biz))



***West Wrattling Progressive Supper 2025***


This will take place on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February, and is open to anyone living in West Wrattling – couples, singles, threesomes. Please consider joining us. Payment of £5 pp (cash) in support of our village hall by Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December will secure your place.

I will be in touch in mid-January to let you know which course to serve. If you are living on The Common I will allocate you a dessert course to be served in the village hall. This supper will see all desserts served in the village hall, which is where we will conclude our evening.

For more information, please contact me.

**Sherry** ([sherry.odonovan@gmail.com](mailto:sherry.odonovan@gmail.com))

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**West Wrating Book Club**

The book chosen for November was ‘Paper Money’ by Ken Follett, somewhat unlike our usual choices. It takes us back to 1970s London and takes place over a single day. It is set in the world of high finance, organised crime and journalism, and highlights the links between ‘policeman and crooks, bankers and call girls, reporters and politicians, . . .’. One of us was reminded of the TV series ‘Life on Mars’.

We all enjoyed reading this, in particular, how everything fits together and overlaps. The descriptions are particularly good and the way everything is pulled together is very clever. It is an easy read that keeps you drawn in.

Scores were between 7 and 8 out of 10.

We will be meeting at The Chestnut Tree on 11<sup>th</sup> December for our Christmas meal and will then meet at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January to read the Booker Prize-winning ‘Orbital’ by Samantha Harvey.

*Linda Gorman (290653)*

**Weston Colville Christmas Party**

All Weston Colville residents are invited to a village Christmas Party in the Reading Room on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December, 7 - 11 pm. Bring your own food and drink, but there will be music through the years, a live singer, and karaoke.



*Steve Gibson*

**Weston Colville Folk Evening**

Thank you to Camus and all who attended this special concert. The music was wonderful as ever, and the audience appreciative. Funds raised from entry and refreshments were £369.50 which will go to Jimmy's in Cambridge.

Our applause at the end of the evening has convinced Camus to come and play for us again next year, so watch this space.

*Jacqueline Douglas*

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**From the Rectory**

Here we are, in the festive season, looking ahead to Christmas but also with the invitation to savour Advent.



I love Advent time. I know it may seem anachronistic in our modern world, where Christmas trees go up at the beginning of December and shops get in the Christmas swing of things long before that, but I think it still has much to offer, both to those who follow the ‘church year’ and for those who may feel they are on edge of the Christian faith, looking in to see what they can see.

Advent indeed may offer us a pause, an opportunity to step back from the hustle and bustle of the lead up to Christmas; to recover some of the mystery and deeper excitement which Christmas ought to have, and to ponder the life-changing message conveyed by these simple words: that Jesus is ‘Emmanuel, which means, ‘God is with us’. Who is greeted at his birth, as Luke’s gospel says, as ‘Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord’.

We may enjoy different ways of marking the special time of Advent: perhaps through the doors on an Advent calendar or through lighting an Advent candle. I like to do this on each day of Advent and enjoy some time just quietly looking at the flickering flame. The symbolism of lighting a candle may also be seen through our Advent wreaths. Traditionally, each Sunday in December a candle on the wreath is lit as important Biblical figures are commemorated, because they helped to prepare the world and us for the birth of the Christ child.

These kind of Advent customs take for granted that we should walk slowly and intentionally towards Christmas, really noticing our surroundings, and not just rush into it headlong. They also remind us of the

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art of waiting, a waiting that rests not in frustration or frenzied anticipation but in stillness; we may savour the future whilst still embracing the present.

So, as we hopefully enjoy the build up to Christmas, Advent may offer meaning in the waiting as we prepare to hear anew the good news about Jesus being proclaimed in the stillness and joy of our Advent and Christmas celebrations. Good news which may speak to each one of us, whatever our circumstances. Good news worth responding to, celebrating and sharing at this time of year and in all the times and seasons of our lives.

*Revd Iain McColl*

**St Mary’s Friday Morning Worship**

We have started a regular, short Morning Worship service on Fridays at 8.45 am for half an hour or less. It’s a very simple and informal devotional activity with Bible readings, topical prayers, and a psalm led by Revd Iain McColl or one of the ministry team. It’s a very good way to start the day or end the week, depending how you see it. Please join us, you are assured of a warm welcome.

*Bob Coates (07785 361345)*



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## West Wrating Parish Council

At the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November the following items were discussed:

### Open Forum for Public Participation –

A parishioner reminded the village of access to a fund of approximately £80,000 from the Wind Farm developers, for the purpose of improving local infrastructure. Individuals/organisations may apply for grants from *Cambridge Community Foundation*.

A parishioner identified that the council and the electorate should be proactive in producing an objection to the proposed solar farm development rather than standing by.

### Council business –

It was resolved to approve the grant of £25 yearly to the Royal British Legion for a remembrance wreath.

Further research into the matter of remote attendance at parish council meetings is required and councillors will investigate to ascertain whether a response is required.

It was resolved to approve for the clerk to attend four planning webinars by CAPALC.

**Finance** – full details of the authorised payments and receipts are shown in the minutes available on the website or noticeboards.

### Planning –

*Solar Development* – there will be a private meeting between the parish council and Kingsway Solar Farm on 12<sup>th</sup> November and a public meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November. A poll had been circulated to approximately 200 parishioners via the *Challenge* magazine and a Google form, and 40 replies had been received. The majority of responses are against the proposed development.

It was noted that Pippa Heylings MP is also opposed to the proposal and that the chair will meet with her imminently to discuss further.

The chair had attended the Kingsway Solar Farm Community Action Group meeting for information gathering purposes.

The chair will endeavour to obtain guidance on the above matter from CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England).

It was resolved to organise an extraordinary meeting of the parish council in December for the purposes of

conducting a joint meeting and alignment between the parish councils of Weston Colville, West Wrating, Balsham and Carlton/Willingham, and KSCA. Also, to discuss status and give guidance to parishioners on submitting feedback to Kingsway, and for WWPC to make a formal statement about their position on the solar farm.

*Randswood Farm* – the following response had been submitted with regard to application 24/03836/TTR, hedge works at Randswood Farm: the application states that the reason is ‘to allow required visibility splays for the principal farm access’. In plain English, this means to enable vehicles leaving the farm to see well in advance any vehicles approaching from the Haverhill direction.

Local residents have responded both for and against this application. One has registered a strong objection to removing a well-established hedge on environmental grounds, whereas others have said that it is very necessary for road safety reasons.

Members of the Parish Planning Sub-Committee have considered this application. We all agree that it would be very regrettable to remove this hedge from the environmental perspective. However we acknowledge that vehicles travel fast along this road, sometime well in excess of the speed limit, and that it is very difficult for vehicles to exit the farm safely when these are approaching from the Haverhill direction. The view is very obstructed on the right by the hedge.

We thus on balance feel that the hedge should be modified to improve visibility. Removing over 100m appears to us to be excessive and it may be possible to modify it in another way to allow safe exit. We thus recommend the County Highways Department is consulted to establish how much of the hedge would need to be removed, before a decision on this application is made.

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*Lambs Yard* – it was noted that the archaeological survey was due to commence on 18<sup>th</sup> November at the Lambs Yard site, and any findings will be displayed on the village website. There may also be provision for a physical display, dependent on the findings.

The Wildlife Area must be maintained for at least the first year by the developers, and then it would be taken over by the parish council on the provision of certain conditions, albeit fully funded for 10 years.

It was suggested that signposting of the amenities and wildlife activities would be useful.

The developers are required to procure a report on the potential costs of maintaining this area, and that it will be shared with the council on receipt. ETA approximately the end of 2024.

**Village Hall** – it was noted that the parish council, Village Hall Management Group, and Dyason Developments have now established a good working dialogue.

**West Wrattling Sports Pavilion Club** – the chair will submit an application to the Cambridge Community Fund for the provision of a grant for repairs and redecoration of the exterior of the club. It was resolved that in lieu of grant funding (if no longer available) the parish council will allow the club to use a percentage of the sink fund in order to carry out the repairs, on the premise that this fund is replenished by the club as a priority.

The fire brigade had been contacted to update the legal maximum capacities within the venue.

**Small Assets** –

The playground equipment has been checked and is in working order.

The grit bin outside the village hall had been damaged by the demolition contractors of Lambs Yard and it will be replaced at their expense in due course.

The defibrillator has been checked and is OK.

A fence post near the basketball area is damaged and will be repaired imminently.

**Road Safety, Highways and Footpaths** –

The LHI (Local Highway Improvement) application was successful and will require a £2,000 contribution from the parish council, to include road markings and gating.

The 20 mph application was not successful in 2024 but can be updated for consideration in 2025.

Advice has been sought from Susan Rooke at SCDC with regard to a representation two residents would like to make about road safety concerns on Six Mile Bottom Road.

An update on footpaths from the Paths Officer was noted.

The ‘active travel hierarchy questionnaire’ was distributed by Cllr L Chandler.

**Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January.

*Cameron Biggs, Clerk*



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## **Weston Colville Parish Council**

A meeting was held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November. For full minutes please go to: [www.westoncolville.org.uk](http://www.westoncolville.org.uk)

### **Kingsway Solar Farm Public Participation Session**

– Cllr Vidler started the session by advising that as a break from the norm, up to half an hour would be allowed for the discussion on the Kingsway Solar Farm Proposals. He advised that the company had many proposals across the country, and at this stage they were looking for as many views as possible from residents through the initial consultation, running from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 12<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr Vidler had found information online ([stopscottonsolarfarm.co.uk/](http://stopscottonsolarfarm.co.uk/)) about stopping another solar farm, and that some of the points could be used in this case.

Questions raised from parishioners included concerns over the flooding risk; whether there could be a more public defence, along the lines of ‘Muck Off Haverhill’; how to get as many people engaged as possible to complete the consultation; why Weston Colville was not hosting a public meeting, when Balsham and West Wrating had dates set. The parish council would try and arrange a meeting with Kingsway in Weston Colville that would be open to the public, but also recommended that people attended the meetings in Balsham or West Wrating. It was also reported that a Balsham Community Group had been set up about the solar farm, which people could join. Further information could be found at <https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/information/>

The parish council welcomed the views of parishioners.

**Flooding** – the Stour behind The Green/Horseshoe Lane had been cleared; Cllr Harvey was asked to investigate whether the work would be carried out annually. The ditch by the Reading Room and along the recreation ground had been cleared. The Highways Officer had commissioned a consultant’s report into the flooding on Common Road, seeking longer term solutions. A parishioner was thanked for clearing the culvert and drainage between Old Orchard and Stour House.

**Bridleway 14 Diversion Consultation** – it was determined to support the proposals. Both hedges would remain, but would be faced back to widen the bridleway. (*Bridleway 14 runs towards Lower Wood.*)

**Footpath 16 Diversion Consultation** – no comments were to be made on the proposal, as the footpath would follow the fence line. (*Footpath 16 is at the bottom of Horseshoe Lane, behind the houses.*)

**MVAS** – The former Cllr that had been looking after the MVAS (mobile vehicle activation signs) had asked to step back. He was thanked for all his hard work. Cllr Russell volunteered to take on the responsibility, and present the data at meetings. Stepping back from the shared scheme was also discussed, as the technology was very outdated, and hard to access. The clerk will raise it with some of the other shared parishes.

### **Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership (GCP)**

**Presentation** – Cllr Vidler had attended a GCP presentation. There would be a new park and ride – transport hub, in Babraham, which would link a guided bus way to the Addenbrookes campus. The new South Cambridge station was under construction, and would have four platforms. Plans for the expansion of the facilities at Addenbrookes were revealed including a new A&E building, plus a children’s hospital and oncology hospital. The campus would extend towards Babraham, and would be completed over the next 15 years.

**BT Digital Voice** – Cllr Batchelor was asked to chase this, as the PC was not sure how to proceed.

**Grass Cutting Tenders, March 2025 – November 2027** – the clerk will circulate letters to contractors, aiming to make a decision at the next meeting, but allowing time to push it back to March if necessary.

**Poppy Appeal** – £15 will be donated for the Royal British Legion Poppy Wreath.

**LOL’s Pizza** – A request had been received for LOL’s Pizza to park in the Reading Room car park once a month to serve food. The proposal was approved

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**Village Event 2025** – it was reported that the Reading Room Committee would be happy to support an event, if it was organised by the parish council. Insurance would need to be checked. It was suggested that there could be a joint celebration of VE Day and officially opening the new playground in May.

**Playground** – work on the first stage of the playground renovation (works inside the fenced in area) were to commence on 11<sup>th</sup> November. An update was required for the funding gap for the second stage. It was suggested that the Thurlow Estate or Field Compost could be approached for a donation towards the playground. Once funding had been sourced, the deposit could be paid on the second stage of the playground development (works outside the fenced area).

**Dates of Next Meeting** – 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

*Jess Ashbridge, Clerk*

### ***District and County Councillor's Report (extracts)***

**Kingsway Solar Farm** – the proposal by Downing Renewables/Kingsway Solar for a very large new solar farm on the land between Balsham, West Wrating and West Colville, will be moving forward for informal public consultation starting on 31<sup>st</sup> October. This is an 'informal' consultation being run by the proposers of the scheme, who are looking to gather local feedback on the plans, as they currently stand. We understand that this consultation will involve public events, an online webinar as well as marketing material to be posted to every property within a kilometre of the proposed site.

Given the size and scale of this scheme, the decision to approve, or not, will be made by a central

government planning inspector, rather than any of the local planning authorities. This would be a major development covering a very large part of our countryside, so please do engage if you have any views on this proposal.

**Cambridge South East Transport (CSET) Update** – the upgrades on our stretch of the A1307 over the past five years have been a part of a wider package of upgrades in South Cambridgeshire to improve transport to and from Cambridge and employment sites. Those that have kept tabs on this will recall that there was a proposal for a new Transport Hub (Park & Ride site) just outside Babraham and a new off-road bus route linking the new hub to the hospital site. This part of the scheme had stalled over the past few years but is now moving forward; the County Council agreed to proceed to the next stage, which is to present a business case to a government inspector, who will decide whether this proposal is sound or not.

An important part of this scheme is that the Linton Greenway, which currently finishes in Abington, can't progress until there is an agreed plan for what will be happening on the Cambridge side of the A11.

**Household Support Fund** – the County Council manages a fund called the Household Support Fund which is aimed to support individuals who are in receipt of benefits. The fund has different tranches of application and is currently asking for applications from 'Trusted Partners': <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/support-with-the-cost-of-living/household-support-fund>

**Mobile Warden Scheme** – the District Council has had a scheme running for many years, aimed at supporting mobile warden schemes within South Cambridgeshire, and have just agreed to continue this scheme for another ten years.

**Winter Gritting Scheme** – the County Council is always looking for people to volunteer to help with community gritting in the winter months. If you're interested in this, please do register via the website or your local parish council: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/gritting-roads-cycleways-and-paths/help-with-gritting-and-clearing-snow>

**SCDC: Geoff Harvey** ([geoff.harvey@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.harvey@gmail.com))

**CCC: Henry Batchelor** ([henrybatchelor89@gmail.com](mailto:henrybatchelor89@gmail.com))

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### Sponsored Winter Ultra Race

I am on a mission to raise sponsorship funds by running a 25-mile Winter Ultra Race on the Cornish Coastal Path in January. Funds will help support an amazing friend who has been diagnosed with a rare cancer and is undergoing treatment, and also raise funds to improve my daughter's school at the same time. Any funds raised will be split 50/50.

I would like to offer the following services in return for donations. I am available most Saturday afternoons for two hours between 2 and 4 pm. Please feel free to contact me, I may be able to be more flexible.

I can do odd jobs like gardening, dog walking, hoovering/cleaning, and window cleaning; I am a qualified insured Chartered Accountant, and am willing to undertake accounting and bookkeeping work, tax preparation, and admin; also any other work such as painting and DIY, car washing etc.



Please contact me:  
barleyw@hotmail.com , 07901 665490.

My donation page is: [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/barley-woodcock-1?utm\\_term=eGW4vNNaw](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/barley-woodcock-1?utm_term=eGW4vNNaw)  
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### Balsham Picture House

On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December we will show the classic Christmas film HOME ALONE (PG), a feel-good and ever popular Christmas film for all. The McCallisters are preparing for a vacation in Paris but the youngest in the family, Kevin, gets into a scuffle with his older brother Buzz and is sent to his room on the third floor.



Next morning the family rushes to make it to the airport on time and completely forget Kevin! Being home alone was fun for Kevin: having a pizza, jumping on his parents' bed, and making a mess, but he then discovers two burglars, Harry and Marv, about to rob his house on Christmas Eve. Kevin acts quickly by wiring his own house with makeshift booby traps to stop the burglars and to bring them to justice!

Join us for our Picture House Christmas celebration with FREE drinks and nibbles for all before this classic film to kick off your Christmas.



Much deliberation has gone into the film choice for January, but we decided that we might all need our spirits uplifting after Christmas, so we chose that perennial favourite for all the family, THE GREATEST SHOWMAN (PG). We will show this classic story of the visionary P T Barnum

and the birth of show business, with Hugh Jackman heading up an all star cast, on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January.

Normal start time of doors open at 7 pm and films at 7.30 in the Balsham Church Institute. Dave's bar will be open as usual before the film for refreshments, all FREE for the December party!

*Dick Paden*





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### Balsham Singers Christmas Concert

The Balsham Singers Christmas Concert will take place in Holy Trinity Church, Balsham, at 4 pm on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December

Tickets have been selling fast: online ticket sales have been very brisk (at <http://ticketsource.co.uk/balshamsingers>) and they are also available at Balsham and Abington Post offices. It looks like tickets may not be available on the door, so we advise you to buy your tickets now.

*Jo Stinton*

### Balsham WI

The speaker at our meeting in November was Susan Widlake from Millhouse Millinery. She told us about some of the basics of hat making, illustrated by the large display of her hats she had brought along with her. She also explained her inspiration for some of the hat designs, which included the Sydney Opera House and Barcelona. She then taught us how to make a lily from sinamay fabric, before we all had great fun trying on all of her hats.

Our next meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December will be our Christmas celebration and include wine tasting and a quiz.

*Debbie Mower*

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### Balsham Gardening Club

The club enjoyed a stimulating talk on 7<sup>th</sup> November by Clive Boase of local charity Climate Change Gardening. The expected changes will be challenging for gardeners, especially hot droughty summers, unpredictable late frosts and intense rain.



Clive gave us ideas for adapting to and softening the changes, for example by planting dry gardens and shade trees, storing more rainwater, growing perennials instead of annuals, mowing lawns less, and providing ponds for wildlife. We can reduce carbon emissions by using electric tools and peat-free compost, and we can capture carbon in the soil by less digging and more mulching.

Clive explained that individual actions do matter, with domestic gardens the third largest UK land use, and 25 million of us enjoying gardening. He finished with a checklist of achievable actions, and pointing us towards the [climatechange Gardening.org](http://climatechange Gardening.org) website for more ideas.

At the AGM, the club reluctantly decided to close at the end of December. Our membership has fallen to a low level and it is difficult to find committee members. We decided to donate the remaining club funds to local charities. We all thanked the committee for keeping the club going this year, with fascinating speakers on topics from thatching to winter gardening, a garden-themed Christmas quiz, and visits to some lovely gardens.

Our final meeting, on 4<sup>th</sup> December, will be for Christmas food and drink, preceded by a talk from John Gibson on ‘The History of Medicinal Plants at the Papworth TB Hospital’.

*Andy Mitchell*

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[www.westwrattling.org.uk/village-hall/](http://www.westwrattling.org.uk/village-hall/)

### A Baroque Celebration

with the **Azur Ensemble** on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm. This is the second concert in a series of events in support of the Friends of Holy Trinity Church, Hildersham.



The performers are graduates from the Royal College of Music, Historic Performance Faculty, under the guidance of Professor Ashley Solomon.

The programme will include music by JS Bach, Telemann, Vivaldi, Scarlatti and Handel, and will have harpsichord accompaniment.

Tickets at £15 are available from [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-baroque-celebration-tickets-1045008517607?aff=oddtcreator](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-baroque-celebration-tickets-1045008517607?aff=oddtcreator) or at the door.

For more details contact Athene Hunt:  
[huntcam2015@gmail.com](mailto:huntcam2015@gmail.com)

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**West Wickham & District Gardening Club**

Members of the club are turning their thoughts to how we can bring our homes to life with plants that excel in this chilly season. The events team are out and about, foraging in their gardens and local hedgerows to create a ‘Sustainable Christmas’ display at the West Wickham Christmas Fayre. The stall is designed to



*Winter stems are ideal for dried arrangements*

give visitors creative ideas for festive decorations at the same time as being kind to the environment. Please do visit us on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2 – 4 pm at West Wickham village hall for a chat to compare notes and share gardening tales.

Our final event of the year is our Christmas

social evening on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm at West Wickham village hall. With a light-hearted gardening quiz, raffle and prizes as well as the traditional wine and nibbles for our end-of-year celebration, we are hoping members old and new will come and join in the fun.

Membership for 2024 - 2025 runs from October to October. With talks, social events and garden visits, there is always something for everyone – experienced or novice. Annual membership is £8 per person with discounts at local suppliers and half-price entry to RHS gardens. Please contact Sue Boase on 07716 401646, [wwdgc@westwickham.org](mailto:wwdgc@westwickham.org)

*Sally Collins*

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**Peter and Ruth Lloyd Trust Award 2025**

We are now inviting applications for pupils starting university in September 2025. Normally one scholarship is awarded each year to the amount of £1,000.

Broadly speaking the degree course should be from one of the following:- Architecture, Engineering, Geography, History, Law, Mathematics, Sciences, Education, Medicine, Nursing, or Veterinary Medicine.

The applicant should be living in one of the parishes bordering the old RAF Wrattling Common airfield – Great & Little Thurlow, West Wickham, Carlton cum Willingham, West Wrattling, Weston Colville, and Withersfield.

The award is intended to be of assistance in the purchase of books, materials, equipment etc. The final decision and award will be made immediately after 'A' Level results and university offers are confirmed.

For further information about the trust and the award please contact: Jonathan Drury -01223 290087.

For an application form please apply via email to: [peter.ruthlloydtrust@sky.com](mailto:peter.ruthlloydtrust@sky.com)

The application form and supporting documents must be received at the latest by 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

*Jonathan Drury*



## *The Meadow Primary School, Balsham*

November has been a time for our school to focus on important causes.

This Remembrance Day, children and staff at The Meadow gathered around a giant poppy, holding their pennies as a symbol of respect for those who sacrificed their lives in service. After the two-minute silence, each child placed their donation on the poppy, understanding that these coins were a powerful gesture of remembrance and honour.



In addition to this act of remembrance, the school also took the opportunity to raise money for Children in Need. Pupils were invited to come to school dressed in patterns – spots, stripes, leopard print, and more—and bring a donation. We were delighted to raise over £170 for this important cause.

As part of our ongoing commitment to celebrating the diverse cultures and faiths within our school community, we would like to invite parents, guardians, and members of the Balsham village community to join us. If you come from a different religious or cultural background, we'd love for you to share a child-friendly story or talk about a special celebration that's meaningful to you. Whether it's a beloved tale passed down through generations or a special festival that holds deep meaning for your family, we believe that sharing these stories and experiences can greatly enrich our children's understanding of the world around them. Not only do we aim to honour our diverse community, but we also want to foster a spirit of inclusivity and respect for each other's beliefs.

If you would like to be included, please get in touch by contacting Mrs Anderson, RE subject lead, at [kestrel@meadowprimary.org](mailto:kestrel@meadowprimary.org)

Additionally, if you have any skills or knowledge you think would be valuable to share with the children at our school, we'd love to hear from you! We're always looking to grow our network of enthusiastic and supportive volunteers to enrich the learning experiences of our students.

***Faye Facer, Assistant Headteacher***

## *Marsh Mail*

At Linton Village College, we pride ourselves on being part of our local community. Our annual sponsored walk took place in October and is always a highlight in the LVC calendar. The event is run by the Friends of LVC, an incredible group of volunteer parents and carers, and involves the whole school dressing up and embarking upon a 7-mile walk around Linton and the surrounding villages. All funds raised contribute directly towards enriching student lives at LVC such as the Year 7 and Year 8 school discos, the Year 11 Leavers' Prom, new furniture in our common

rooms, and brand-new sound and lighting



equipment for performances and for students to utilise for GCSE exams.

November saw the 'Platform 24' Art Exhibition taking place at the Michaelhouse Café in central Cambridge. The exhibition involves all of the secondary schools and sixth forms within Anglian Learning Trust and gives students an opportunity to exhibit their work in a local exhibition space that is open to the public.

The Primary Singing Festival was also held in November, involving Year 2 students from some of our catchment primary schools, who came together at LVC to celebrate their love of singing. Each school performed their own song on the theme of 'Autumn' and then sang as a group alongside the Linton Heights Junior School Choir and the LVC Lower School vocal group.

***Laura Heard***



**Linton & District Historical Society**

November's 'A Peek in Some Hundred Parish Churches' was a most interesting talk accompanied by excellent pictures, presented by Ken McDonald from The Hundred Parishes Society. A collection of these centuries-old buildings are scattered throughout Cambridgeshire, Essex and Hertfordshire, and we were able to 'peek inside' just some of these little gems during the course of the evening.

Apart from the outside architecture, a wealth of magnificent craftsmanship can be found inside on the ceilings, windows, walls, and pews, and surprising finds in one particular crypt! It inspired us to look into the nooks and crannies of these historic buildings as we would in any National Trust or English Heritage property.

For further information you can visit [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk), 01279 813226, or [hundredparishes@btinternet.com](mailto:hundredparishes@btinternet.com).

*Margaret Creek*  
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**140 Years Ago . . .**

It was reported in the *Cambridge Chronicle and Journal* of 19<sup>th</sup> December 1884 that Arthur Miller of Balsham, labourer, was fined with costs, 15/- (75p) for riding upon a waggon drawn by four horses, in the Parish of Linton, on the 25<sup>th</sup> ult (*previous month, ie November*) without reins, or having proper control over the horses.




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HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
TUESDAY 17<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2024**



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**Refreshments and Raffle**

*Visitors and new members always welcome*



## Granta Medical Practices

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

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

Don't forget, there are Prescription Collection Points at Sawston, Linton and Shelford. Sign up today via [cpicb.grantadispensing@nhs.net](mailto:cpicb.grantadispensing@nhs.net) to pick up your medication at your convenience over the holidays, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – including Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years' Day.

essentials at home will not only save you time and help you feel better quicker, but will also help save the NHS much needed resources.

Your local pharmacist can offer you advice and guidance on the best treatment for you. They are available on every high street and in supermarkets, with many open in the evening and at weekends.

Pharmacists can now also prescribe some medications under the 'Pharmacy First' service. Please go to <https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first/> for further information and eligibility criteria.

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

Date	Opening hours	Repeat prescriptions
Friday 20.12.2024	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 27.12.2024
Saturday 21.12.2024	Open for pre-booked appointments only (Sawston/Royston HC)	Place order today, pick up 30.12.2024
Sunday 22.12.2024	Closed	Place order today, pick up 30.12.2024
Monday 23.12.2024	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 30.12.2024
Tuesday 24.12.2024 (Christmas Eve)	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 31.12.2024
Wednesday 25.12.2024 (Christmas Day)	Closed	Place order today, pick up 02.01.2025
Thursday 26.12.2024 (Boxing Day)	Closed	Place order today, pick up 02.01.2025
Friday 27.12.2024	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 02.01.2025
Saturday 28.12.2024	Open for pre-booked appointments only (Sawston/Royston HC)	Place order today, pick up 03.01.2025
Sunday 29.12.2024	Closed	Place order today, pick up 03.01.2025
Monday 30.12.2024	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 03.01.2025
Tuesday 31.12.2024 (New Years' Eve)	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 06.01.2025
Wednesday 01.01.2025 (New Years' Day)	Closed	Place order today, pick up 07.01.2025
Thursday 02.01.2025	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 07.01.2025
Friday 03.01.2025	Open as usual	Place order today, pick up 08.01.2025

Be prepared for common health problems by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home. You can treat many minor illnesses such as colds and coughs, sore throats, and upset stomachs by having a supply of health care essentials such as pain relief (paracetamol ibuprofen), cough and sore throat remedies, a first aid kit, upset stomach treatment, rehydration treatment and heartburn/indigestion treatment. Having these

For further information on available healthcare services, please go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or our website [www.grantamedicalpractices.co.uk](http://www.grantamedicalpractices.co.uk)

**Sandra East, Head of Patient Services**  
[cpicb.grantapatientervices@nhs.net](mailto:cpicb.grantapatientervices@nhs.net)

**GRANTA** Medical Practices

**1st Horseheath Brownies**

So far this term we have completed the first aid skills builder – who knew that if you show a Brownie how to put on either a plaster or a bandage and sling, that they will merrily work away for over half an hour putting plasters and bandages on each other. They did look like they had been in a war zone but they had fun, which is what Brownies is all about.

For our Christmas activities, we have already made gingerbread shapes, and reindeers out of clothes pegs. We will be making angels out of dolly pegs, Christmas trees out of old reading books, and decorations for the church Christmas tree festival. We will also be joining 1st Linton Guides in a night walk around Linton, followed by hotdogs.

**Pauline & Katie** (horseheathbrownies@gmail.com)

**The Ellesmere Centre, Stetchworth**

Ellesmere Devils Pantomime Society presents **Wendy! A Peter Panto**. Have you got your tickets yet? Don't miss out on a guaranteed cure for the January blues. Tickets at: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/edps](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/edps)

Ellesmere Devils Pantomime Society  
Presents  
**WENDY!  
A PETER PANTO**  
Based on the original play 'Peter Pan' by  
J. M. Barrie  
Adapted by  
Matthew Attwood

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Performances	Prices
Wednesday 29th January 6.30pm	£8
Thursday 30th January 7pm	£9
Friday 31st January 7.30pm	£12
Saturday 1st February 2pm matinee	£12
Saturday 1st February 7.30pm	£12

The Ellesmere Leisure Centre, Ley Road, Stetchworth, Newmarket CB8 9TS

*noda*  
This amateur production of "Peter Pan" is presented by arrangement with Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity and Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. [www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)

The Granary Barns, Woodditton  
Tuesday 10th December  
7.00 for 7.30pm

**Yule be Merry & Bright!**

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Sarah Mardon: [sarahannemardon@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahannemardon@hotmail.com), 07535 001291

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Facebook: @kitchenchoir | [www.kitchenchoir.weebly.com](http://www.kitchenchoir.weebly.com)

**Churchwardens:**  
St Mary's – Ian Ashbridge (01223 291344)  
Bob Coates (07785 361345)  
St Andrew's – Sebastian Bain (07736 198101)  
**Church Administrator:** Caroline (Cazzy) Walshe,  
[7churches.seven@gmail.com](mailto:7churches.seven@gmail.com), 01223 891443  
**Weston Colville Parish Clerk:** Jess Ashbridge,  
[clerk@westoncolville.org.uk](mailto:clerk@westoncolville.org.uk), 07779 277647  
**West Wratting Parish Clerk:** Cameron Biggs,  
[clerk.westwrattingparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.westwrattingparishcouncil@gmail.com)  
**Community Warden:** Lucy Cameron,  
[Lucy.Cameron@AgeUKCAP.org.uk](mailto:Lucy.Cameron@AgeUKCAP.org.uk), 07436 102865

**Black bins:** Wed 11<sup>th</sup> & **MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>** December, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> January  
**Blue bins:** Wed 4<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> & **MONDAY 30<sup>th</sup>** December Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> January  
**Green bins:** Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> December, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January

**Mobile Post Office:** Thursdays, Reading Room car park, Weston Colville, 12.30 - 1.30 pm  
**Mobile library: fourth Thursday:**  
High Street, West Wratting 11.10 - 11.50 am  
Reading Room, Weston Green 12.00 - 12.35 am  
Mill Hill, Weston Colville 12.40 - 1.05 pm

DEC	9.30 am	11.00 am	Afternoon & Evening
1 <sup>st</sup>		<b>United Service with Holy Communion</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	
8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Holy Communion</b> – West Wickham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	<b>Morning Worship</b> – Great Abington, <i>Alistair Collen</i> Balsham, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> <b>Café Church</b> – Hildersham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	<b>Christingle Songs of Praise (4.00 pm)</b> – West Wrating, <i>John &amp; Scilla Harvey</i> <b>Taizé service (6.00 pm)</b> – Weston Colville, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>
15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Morning Worship</b> - West Wickham, <i>Alistair Collen</i>	<b>Holy Communion</b> – Little Abington, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> <b>Morning Worship</b> – Balsham, <i>Alistair Collen</i>	<b>Christingle (4.00 pm)</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> <b>Evening Prayer (6.00 pm)</b> –Hildersham, <i>Alistair Collen</i>
22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Holy Communion</b> – Weston Colville, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> <b>Holy Communion</b> – West Wickham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> <b>Christingle Creative Church (10.00 am)</b> – Abington Hub, <i>Rosemary Mead/ Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	<b>Holy Communion</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> <b>Holy Communion</b> – Hildersham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>	<b>Carol Service (3.00 pm)</b> – Hildersham, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> <b>Carol Service (4.00 pm)</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> <b>Carol Service (6.30 pm)</b> – Great Abington, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>
24 <sup>th</sup>		<b>Christmas Eve Crib Service (10.30 am)</b> – Little Abington, <i>Rosemary Mead / Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	<b>Carol Services with Blessing of the Crib</b> – West Wrating (4.00 pm), <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> West Wickham (6.00 pm), <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> <b>Carols &amp; Christingle Service (4.00 pm)</b> – Weston Colville, <i>Steven Wheeler</i> <b>Midnight Mass (11.30 pm)</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> Little Abington, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>
25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Christmas Day Communion</b> – West Wrating, <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> West Wickham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> <b>Christmas Day Morning Worship</b> – Great Abington, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	<b>Christmas Day Communion</b> – Hildersham, <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> <b>Christmas Day Morning Worship</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	
29 <sup>th</sup>		<b>United Service of Holy Communion</b> – Balsham, <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Steven Wheeler</i>	

Details of all our services can also be found on the website: [www.grantavale.org.uk](http://www.grantavale.org.uk)

## DIARY

### DECEMBER 2024

Sun 1 Oil Co-operative Orders Cut-off  
 Wed 4 Balsham Gardening Club  
 Sat 7 Balsham Picture House, 'Home Alone'  
 Sun 8 Christingle, St Andrew's, West Wrating  
 Santa's Grotto, Linton  
 Mon 9 West Wrating Village Hall AGM  
 Baroque Concert, Hildersham  
 Tues 10 Balsham WI  
 Wed 11 West Wrating Book Club  
 Thur 12 LOL's Pizza, Weston Colville  
 'A Christmas Carol', St Mary's, Weston Colville  
 Sat 14 Balsham Singers Christmas Concert

Sun 15 Candlelit Carols & Readings, Burrough Green  
 Village Christmas Drinks, St Mary's  
 Mon 16 West Wickham & District Gardening Club  
 Tues 17 Linton & District Historical Society  
 Thur 19 Lunch Club, The Chestnut Tree  
 Fri 20 Weston Colville Tea & Cakes, Reading Room  
 Sat 21 Weston Colville Christmas Party

**Editor:** Anne Bragg ([editor@challengemag.co.uk](mailto:editor@challengemag.co.uk))

Thank you for all your articles, news, etc. If these are sent by email, they are always acknowledged; if you don't get a reply, your items haven't been received, so please resend. Some contributions may have to be edited, to fit the space available, and are published at the discretion of the editor.

**EARLY COPY DATE for January issue:**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December**