

Watlington's Latest Gossip

Spring 2024

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As we bring together this issue of the Gossip it feels as though Spring finally is in the air.

In this quarter's issue, as well as looking forward to warmer Spring days, we take a look back at Watlington as it was 60 years ago with the help of Kate Carpenter (p26) and Dr Nichol reminds us that medical advice from even further back in time is still very relevant today (p31).

But of course we also have plenty of news of Watlington present. We are so lucky to live in a place where we are surrounded by nature, as our regular articles from the Millennium Green (p24), Chris Dyson (p19) and Watatunga (p18) show. But we also know that the natural world is under threat, so it is interesting to read in the Parish Council report (p7) that the Council has a new commitment to fostering biodiversity.

With Spring in the air, and perhaps a little less rain, it feels like a good time to get out and enjoy our surroundings, and Hugh Pearce invites us to stride out around our neighbouring villages of Shouldham and Shouldham Thorpe (p20).

While out and about, these days most of us have a camera with us in the form of our seemingly ubiquitous Smartphones. So, if you see a captivating view of Watlington, or the surrounding countryside, please do take a snap and send it to us. We are always on the look out for cover images for the magazine, and would love to feature your work. The wonderful picture of the river on this issue's cover was taken by Emma while dog walking.

Or perhaps you are a talented artist? If you have a painting or drawing of a local subject and would like to share it with the village we'd love to see it.

In this issue we start what we hope will be a new regular feature, highlighting the work of local charities. You can read about the work of the Purfleet Trust in tackling homelessness on p33. Please do let us know about other local charities that we should be featuring in these pages.

Finally a massive thank you to our wonderful volunteer distributors. We are aware that there have been some mix ups and that some households received their Winter issue late - but the fact that you are getting in touch if you don't get your *Gossip* makes us feel like we must be doing something right! It would be great to have some 'stand by' distributors to call on in case someone is unable to deliver their copies one month, so if you could help in this way, or would be willing to take on a delivery route if one becomes vacant, please get in touch.

Enjoy the Spring,
Emma, Judith and Kirstie

Watlington's Latest Gossip

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Front Cover

The River Ouse between Watlington and Magdalen, Emma Burry

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Deadline for the Next Issue

The deadline for **Issue 102** of the *Gossip* is
1 May for publication
by **1 June 2024**

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Parking on Footpaths

To those residents who are unable to park their vehicles off the road.

Will you please allow room for walkers with pushchairs or those using mobility scooters to pass by your residence without going into the road? Some properties have a white line of about a metre or so parallel to their properties. This, I believe, is known as a 'ghost' footpath and should be treated in the same way as a curbed pavement. It is there for walkers, not to be parked on. If you park on footpaths or pavements in an effort to make the roadway wider you are putting lives in danger. Leave your vehicle on the roadway; this will possibly slow traffic down, making Watlington a safer place to walk.

Jean Golding

Watlington Fête

It's that time of year again! Watlington fête is confirmed for Saturday 8 June '24, 11am - 4pm. We had a very successful first meeting of the year in January and welcomed some new people to the team. Roger and Liz have a particular interest in the Vehicle Rally while Ed and Claire are happy to help out wherever we need a hand. Welcome aboard!

We are in desperate need of a **TREASURER**. Everything is up to date and the spreadsheet organised by our lovely outgoing treasurer, Sarah, who has done a fabulous job, but we need a replacement to be able to continue. If you are interested, please contact me for an informal chat.

We have so much planned for this year's fête with a new funfair, attractions, stalls, crafts, face painting, WI refreshments, a treasure hunt, Pimms stall, dog show, food vendors, the arena displays and, of course, Watatunga and their wonderful tours. If you would like a stall, please contact me as booking forms are available. We hope everyone will enjoy the day.

Last year, with the money raised, we gave £400 to each of the four community groups that had requested a donation towards their projects. All we ask is that, if you are receiving a donation, some members of your group will help on the day with setting up / taking down. There's a lot to do but it's fun and the committee work so hard to make the day memorable. If you'd like to apply for a donation, please email us with the details.

Emma, Chair

E : watlingtonfete@outlook.com

T : 811521 M : 07551 757679

Allotment Vacancies

Plots are now available to rent on the Parish Council's Paige Close allotment site. Please contact the Parish Clerk on 01553 810777 or clerk@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk

Warren Close Play Area to Rowan Close Footpath

Despite Planning permission being refused by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKL&WN), the footpath adjacent to 16 Rowan Close remains walled off and unusable. A further appeal to the Secretary of State has been made by the residents of 16 Rowan Close for the footpath to remain as it is.

People had until the 26 February to comment on the above closure to the Planning Inspectorate. Details of how to do so were posted on the village Facebook page, as well as at the shop and in the doctor's waiting room and pharmacy. We must now wait for them to come to a decision about what happens next. Plans submitted by the landowner to have the pathway removed were rejected by the BCKL&WN. Hopefully the Inspectorate will rule that the wall to the east must be removed to widen the pathway to the width in the approved plans.

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE

Please note:

From 25 January 2024 the Parish Council office is now open **only on Thursdays**.

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Local Policing



Are you interested in taking a part in tackling important issues affecting your local community? Would you be interested in establishing a Neighbourhood Watch team in the Watlington area? The Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) website, www.ourwatch.org.uk,

gives lots of advice on the initiative and while, of course, part of its purpose is to help prevent crime, it is also about supporting communities and tackling issues that impact on the community. OurWatch describes that, *"Neighbourhood Watch schemes can make a real, long-lasting difference to communities: increasing cohesion and connectedness; helping to prevent crime; increasing neighbourliness and community wellbeing; supporting vulnerable people and increasing the voice of the community with councils, the police and other organisations."*

As a member or co-ordinator of a NHW Team you can work with the police. The Local Policing Team Beat Managers and the Engagement Officer for your area will share crime prevention advice and you can be involved in police drop-in surgeries where you can discuss and advise on local concerns.

There are no hard and fast rules about how schemes should be managed or run and the OurWatch website provides lots of information on getting started and suggestions about how to manage your team.

For more information about starting a Watlington NHW team, or if you would like to be included in Police alerts, please do get in touch with me at Paula.Gilluley@norfolk.police.uk. Paula Gilluley

Village Hall

The solar panel project is nearly within our reach! Fingers crossed. Our wonderful secretary, Vicky, has sent in numerous grant applications and we are keeping everything crossed that we will be accepted by one newly offered from the Council. It will make such a huge difference and is particularly important as we are named in the village Resilience Plan as an emergency contact point and evacuation centre, should we have need. The batteries that store power would be invaluable if we ever needed to use the village hall as emergency accommodation, perhaps due to flooding, for example.

We are still in need of a treasurer. It's a position which doesn't take up a great deal of time but an interest in the running of the village hall would be preferable. Please contact me for an informal chat if you think you could help.

We continue to be fully booked virtually 24/7 which is amazing but makes booking in private events, such as parties, challenging. It is our long-term plan to extend the hall to the side where the storage containers currently stand. This would provide further storage, an additional hall, kitchen and toilet facilities, much like the Jubilee extension. Priority has been given to the building of the Football Pavilion so we've put our plans on hold for the time being but we look forward to seeing it built, to future proof the village hall for years to come and cater to our growing community.

The 200 Club has some spare numbers! To pick your number and be in with a chance of winning next month's draw, see the 200 Club ad on page 15.

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Emma, Chair

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Since the last report in the *Gossip* the Parish Council has met twice, on 21 November and 16 January. Here is a summary of what has been happening.

At the November meeting Mr Roy Bailey was co-opted as a Parish Councillor. This leaves four vacancies on the Council. Contact the Parish Clerk if you would be interested in joining.

Footpaths and Community Spaces

Two new signs for each end of the Glebe Field were approved, with roundels warning against dog fouling, golfing, unauthorised vehicles, the use of drones and littering, at a total cost of £151.20.

Councillor Golding reported that she had been in discussion with the proprietor of White House Cottage, whose hedge neighbours the Tot's Play Area on the Church Recreation Field. This conifer hedge has become very overgrown, but the house owner had already started the process of getting it under control by reducing the height. The conifers represent about half the length of the hedge, with the rest being made up of mixed native species. The homeowner proposes to remove the conifers to ground level and to plant more native species to replace them, with a small fence erected in front.

The householder has erected Heras fencing as a temporary measure to keep children playing in the area safe while the work is carried out. Although he has already taken many loads of hedge cuttings to the tip, he said he would appreciate the Council's help in disposing of the waste, and support with the cost of new fencing, although he is happy to do all the work himself. Furthermore, removing the conifers will expose about 2-3 metres of ground which is part of the play area, and this ground will need to be re-grass seeded.

After discussion the Councillors agreed that, as the majority of the work to be undertaken arose from the Council's limited maintenance of the hedge over the past few years, all costs for fencing, to a maximum of £1,500 + VAT, should be borne by the Council. Reseeding of the bare ground has been contracted to Holly Landscapes at an additional cost of £300 including VAT. The Council extended a vote of thanks to the

Interested in following up on any of the Parish Council news items?

- ♦ Full minutes and agenda of meetings are available on the website: watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk
- ♦ All local planning applications and decisions can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/watplanning>

The Parish Council Office at the Village Hall is open on Thursdays but times may vary. Please call 01553 810777 to confirm that the office is open.

Full contact details for the Parish Council are on page 38

owner of White House Cottage for undertaking the work.

Letters have been sent to two properties whose hedges adjoin the Warren Close Play Area, asking that they be trimmed. Meanwhile, the picket fencing at the Stone Close Play Area has been vandalised. It was suggested that the Community Payback Team may be able to reinstate the fencing as most of it is still at the site and simply needs reassembling. The Council approved costs of up to £150 + VAT for any additional materials required and Councillor Golding would coordinate with the Community Payback Team.

The Council approved the cost of Holly Landscapes weed spraying the surface under the swings in the Warren Close Play Area, and the paved area at The Pound, at £30 a time, a maximum of four times per year.

The Council currently spends £192 per year on maintenance of a strip of land in Fairfield Lane which belongs to CJC Developments and Persimmon Homes. Councillors felt that without the Council's input the land would become unkempt, and so the contract for maintenance should continue, unless objections were received from the public, in which case it would be withdrawn immediately.

Councillor Golding had contacted the Highways Engineer, Mr Wallace, to enquire whether the trod in Station Road could be extended on the south side of Station Road in front of Station Farm, where at present it is necessary to cross the road. He had confirmed this would be possible and that a bid could be placed under the 2025/26 Parish Partnership Scheme to fund the work. This would require a formal agreement between the landowners of Station Farm and the Parish and County Councils, which the Clerk would draw up once the Parish Council had decided to bid for the scheme later in the year. Councillors raised concern that the current trod in the same area was very uneven. Councillor Golding reported that Highways are considering reinforcement of the edges here to alleviate land slippage.

Litter

Councillor Leedell had obtained a quotation from Limetree Printing for a large sign to be placed on the council's waste container at the village hall, to ask people not to use it, nor to fly tip in the area, the total cost being £24. This was approved by the Council.

The sandbags anchoring the large litter signs at the entrances to the village have been stolen, and as a result, in the recent inclement weather, these have fallen over many times. Councillor Rockcliffe had purchased replacement

Forthcoming Parish Council Meetings

The next meeting, on **9 April**, will be held in the **Jubilee Hall** at 7pm.

This will be the **Annual Parish Meeting** followed by an ordinary Council Meeting. The Annual Parish Meeting is not a Council meeting. It is a meeting of the parish electors and must take place between 1 March and 1 June. Electors can contribute to the agenda and in practice these meetings often celebrate local activities and debate current issues in the community.

The meeting on **14 May** will be held in the **Meeting Room** at the Village Hall (Jubilee Hall entrance) at 7pm as usual.

This is the **Annual Meeting**, where a Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected and Committee Members and representatives to other bodies are appointed. Policies and contracts of the Council are also reviewed. This is a meeting of the Council, followed by the usual Council business.



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sandbags as an emergency measure at a cost of £24, but a more permanent solution had been investigated. The Council approved the purchase of 18 galvanised steel pins at a total cost of £56.85 to anchor the signs more securely.

Neighbourhood Plan

The referendum for the Watlington Neighbourhood Plan 2019-36 was held on Thursday 7 December, with residents asked: *'Do you want the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Watlington to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'*

The results had been as follows:

Number cast in favour of a Yes	186	83.4 %
Number cast in favour of a No	37	16.6 %

Following the referendum, the Borough Council adopted the Neighbourhood Plan on 13 December 2023.

Biodiversity

Under the Environment Act 2021 all public authorities now have a 'biodiversity duty', to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Clerk explained that the Council must consider how it can protect and develop sites in the parish to ensure the future survival of animals, insects and plants. Councils are being encouraged to set goals to ensure habitats and species are maintained, protected and revived. As an initial action the Councillors agreed to create a list of potential areas in the village which would benefit from conservation and the enhancement of biodiversity.

Councillor Berliner agreed to be on a biodiversity working party and would invite some current members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to join with non-voting rights.

At the January meeting the Council adopted a biodiversity policy (<http://tinyurl.com/WatBiodiversity>). In early February, the Parish Clerk would attend an online biodiversity course being run by the Norfolk Association of Local Councils. The cost of this would be split between Watlington PC and the other two Parish Councils for which the Clerk works, making the cost to Watlington £12.

The Council had received a request from the Angel Field Millennium Green Trust for a donation to help with the cost of replacing worn out machinery and approved a donation of £1000.

Car Parking

A resident had emailed the Council about parking at the junction of St Peters Road and Station Road. The Councillors agreed that the current situation, where vehicles are frequently parked on both sides of St Peters Road at the junction, was a danger to road and pedestrian users. Unfortunately, Councillor Golding had been told by Highways that double yellow lines cannot be placed on the junction and had advised that issues relating to parking in the area should be raised with the police.

Councillor Burry reported that residents in Bennett Close were parking vehicles on the green area adjoining the Stone Close Play Area and

churning up the grass. It was felt that fencing and bollards would be expensive to install and that 'no parking' signage should be erected in the first instance.

Sports Pavilion

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) application to the Borough Council for £100,000 towards the project was approved on 28 November. Borough Councillor Bhondi was given a vote of thanks for his canvassing on behalf of the CIL application. This application had, however, caused considerable extra work for the bid writer, Mr Wall, who had asked if the Council would consider paying him an additional fee of £750 to cover the hours put into this. The Council approved this, but would approach the Football Club to ask them to consider paying towards this additional sum.

The Football Foundation application is still in progress but the Foundation has several requirements before they will agree to support the project. This includes receiving a letter from the Council confirming that it has £34,885.95 to part fund the project. The completion of the Neighbourhood Plan (see box) means that £8,223.35 which had been earmarked for that can now be transferred to the Pavilion fund. This, combined with £13,277.29 currently in reserves, leaves a shortfall of £14,185.31. A request for £19,000 from the 2024/25 precept would cover this and leave almost £5000 in reserves for contingency and/or project management.

It was noted by the Council that the Football Foundation requires further assurances and input from Watlington Football Club regarding its contribution to the financing of the project and its accounting. Furthermore, the Council is required to provide details of a Caretaker position, someone who will be responsible for bookings, cleaning, health and safety and so on. The Council also needs to provide a detailed plan for proposed wider use of the facilities.

Allotments

Two plots have recently become vacant at the Paige Close site. These are to be split into more manageable half plots. There is currently only one person on the waiting list, but availability would be advertised in the *Gossip* and on the village Facebook page.

Councillor Golding noted that bonfires are not usually permitted on the allotment sites, but requested that a one-off allowance for a bonfire be made to enable the clearance of waste and prunings from the two newly empty plots. This was approved.

Financial Matters

The Clerk reported that the village hall treasurer had been in contact regarding an increase in the Council office rent from £75 to £85 per quarter with effect from 1 January 2024. The Council approved this increase.

The Council approved and adopted the Precept for the financial year 2024/25 (see box).

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St Peter and St Paul Church, Watlington

With Easter being early this year, there are two major celebrations in the Church's calendar within the space of a few months, although Christmas now seems such a long time ago. The annual Crib and Carol service by candlelight, remembering the birth of Jesus, was well supported on Christmas Eve by both young and older people, welcomed by the chiming church bells ringing out the good news.

Then suddenly, it seems, we will be remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ at Easter, which occurs at the end of March. Easter is preceded by the season of Lent and Good Friday, before Easter Sunday itself, heralding an enormous change in the history of humankind.

Easter Services will be on the Church website (www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk), Church noticeboard and other noticeboards in the village.

March, springtime, new birth, trees bursting into fresh leaf after the dormancy of winter, it does seem like resurrection when the dark skeletal tree shapes become clothed in green again, their shape changes and the cycle begins again.

We have several dates which we would like to invite you to in the Church calendar or cycle of events. After a gap of a few years, we are going to have a Flower Festival with the theme of Spring into Summer. Any organisation or individual is very welcome to take part, you don't have to be an amazing flower arranger, just look around you - aren't the trees and flowers and shrubs just so amazing in their own right? So come and have a go, all will be welcome. You can put your display in the church on Friday 3 May at any time while the church is open!

The Flower Festival will be from Saturday 4 May to Monday 6 May, 10am - 4pm each day.

Another date in the Church Calendar is Christian Aid Week which is from 12-18 May this year, with the theme of 'Seven days, so many ways to fund lasting change'. There is always national advertising for the week, through leaflets, TV and newspapers but we will be holding a Coffee Morning in the Church on Saturday 18 May, 10am-12noon. Please put the date in your diaries or on your phone and come along and join in this life changing fundraising event. Please make contact if you would like to take part by putting up a display.

Then our final date for your diary is Saturday 29 June when we will have the Church Fete in the Church and south churchyard. Yes, this is a change of venue, but so many people have not been inside this historic building at the heart of our village. Come and see the carved pew ends, the leper's squint, the ancient font, the bell tower and help to support this building which has been witness to events over hundreds of years.

John Murfitt and Barbara Church, Churchwardens

From the Vicar

My dear reader,
Sometimes when I speak to people, they assume that the Church of England is paid for by the government. But this is not true. Your local parish church gets no money from the state at all.

Being the Established Church brings no additional income, and the considerable monies that the Church Commissioners have nationally rarely make their way to parishes but exist to fund clergy pensions, subsidise poorer diocese, fund bishops and cathedrals and new missionary endeavours. Anything we want to do we have to pay for ourselves. What we do we do well and professionally, but I fear that has meant that people think we have plenty of money; whereas we are frequently operating on a shoestring with a lot of hard work and goodwill from various people, and a certain quantity of smoke and mirrors!

As we begin a new year, I write to thank you for all your support for your local parish church, financial and otherwise. Above all, we thank Almighty God for His goodness in the past year and look to Him for all our needs in the new one. In these days of financial stringency, may this God also provide for all your needs and those of your loved ones too.

With prayerful good wishes for 2024,

The Revd Canon Dr David

www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk

Watlington Parish Council

YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU

Are you interested in having a say in how your community is managed?

Use your experience to contribute to important decisions to improve your environment?

Do you have a few hours a month to spare?

Then why not enquire about joining our team of dedicated Councillors and make a difference.

The Parish Council meets approximately 9 times a year on Tuesdays at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall

Interested in finding out more?

Contact the Parish Clerk - Mrs Sara Porter

email: clerk@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk

Drop in at the Parish Council Office at the Village Hall or phone KL 810777

Thursdays 10.00am to 2pm

There are currently 4 vacancies on the Council

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Watlington Preschool

Well Spring is definitely in the air at preschool. We've been patiently waiting for our daffodil bulbs to poke their heads through the soil and they are on course to look very lovely. Thank you to preschool friend Katherine for helping the children plant them before Christmas.



Playing in the garden is one of our favourite things at any time of year and we've been using our new waterproof suits so we can splash in puddles and have



as much water and mud play as we like, whilst keeping nice and dry. We've made some bird food outside too that we hung in our tree. At the time of writing this we have yet to

get any snow play in, but we are keeping our fingers crossed as we like a bit of the white stuff here.

Our cohort of children this year really do love "making things". We've done soup making, cake making and pizza making recently, with great results. Working in small groups, taking turns with measuring ingredients, preparing vegetables and mixing provide fantastic learning opportunities, and of course having a tasty end product is a bonus!

And as a result of huge support, as always, from our parents and the wider community, we have a very exciting new resource in preschool: a wall mounted interactive screen. The children can use it for touch screen drawing, we can listen to stories and do interactive music and movement and a favourite has been yoga that we can watch and copy on the screen.



Our committee continue to be busy and proactive raising funds so we can offer our children the best experience and environment possible.

Our next fundraiser and community event is on Saturday 23 March when there will be a Children's Bingo at the Village Hall starting at 2.30pm. Please come along with your child or children to have a fun afternoon and maybe win some lovely prizes too.

As we head towards the last full term in preschool for many of our children, thoughts will turn to preparations for their school transitions. Goodness doesn't time fly?

Best wishes from
The Blue Team

Watlington CP School

We have had a fantastic time as we approach the half way mark of this academic year. Christmas was an absolute hoot in school this year. We celebrated with our carol service at the Church, a Christingle service in school and a very rowdy visit from Father Christmas and Buddy the elf at Christmas Dinner!

That said, we are already looking forward to the Spring. We have our new vegetable beds filled with soil ready for planting and work is underway in our soon-to-be forest school area, with hedge trimming before the bird nesting season.

There are many improvements going on in school and we continue to fundraise for our library refurbishment project. As a school we value reading and would like to make our library a place where children want to spend time, share books and enjoy reading. We understand that reading is a vital part of children's education to help them gain knowledge. We also appreciate the joy that reading for pleasure can bring. If you shop in Tesco you may see the Tesco stronger starts collection; please vote for our library project which will allow us to receive some funds towards this.



Please come to our Easter Fayre on 20 March, 3.30pm at school, run by our fabulous PTA, with proceeds going towards the library refurbishment project. We'd also like to thank all the reading volunteers who have been in school listening to children read.

Although the shortest, Spring is always one of the busiest terms, with so many exciting topics in our curriculum to cover. Year 6 have impressed us all whilst studying Macbeth; the pupils have really enjoyed learning about Shakespeare and studying the complexity of the play.

We are also looking forward to a Spring and Summer term full of trips and events. We hold our termly reading cafes and warmly welcome parents to join their child in some learning activities. This term we will also be holding our Sports4School fundraiser, house maths event and will be celebrating British Science week.

If you have a child who is pre-school age why not stop by our Stay and Play held on the first Monday of each month? We'd love to see you there.

Claire Chapman

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I promised to let you know how much was raised at our 13th annual Children in Need (CiN) mini fete. The amazing sum of £613.44 was the result. An incredible amount of money for an evening of barely two hours. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported us. Thank you to all parents who helped their children realise their own particular ideas. And thank you to the children themselves for following through their plans with energy and enthusiasm. Pippa Lacey, the initial driving force behind our fundraising for CiN, was able to add her support to the evening. It was good to see her back with us for the evening, especially as it was her birthday.

Our next production, *Beauty and the Beast*, is now cast and rehearsals are well underway. As mentioned in the last *Gossip*, we have decided to present three performances this year – Saturday 13 July at 3.30pm and also 7.30pm, and Sunday 14 July at 2.30pm. Tickets will be on sale shortly through Ticketsource as before. If you are interested, please book early as last year we sold out a month before the show. We have a stellar cast and a wonderful production team all raring to go!

Sadly this winter we lost one of our closest friends and supporters in Margaret Mould. This lovely lady was always willing to create any props we required, both for us and our 'parent company' the Watlington Players. Her last contribution to us was to paint a portrait of Oliver's mother, taken from a photograph of Brandon, who was playing Oliver in our production of 2022. She encapsulated the likeness passed from 'mother' to 'son' beautifully and painted in the style of the Victorian period. A lady of so many talents will be sorely missed.

We do have a waiting list which continues to grow, but if you think your son or daughter would be interested in joining then please contact me. I cannot guarantee at this stage when they would be able to start as the list is quite long. We take young people from Year 3 to Year 11 and usually recruit at the beginning of the school year in September.

Penny Cooke

E: watdance@talktalk.net

Watlington Village Hall 200 Club

Each number costs £1 per month (£12 a year) and is entered into a draw each month, which takes place on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall at 8pm.

Every 4th month the 1st prize is £100

The profits from the draw all go to the Village Hall and will help to fund several ongoing refurbishment projects.

There are still numbers available.

Please contact Vicky on vling@hotmail.co.uk

Recent Winning Numbers

	£100	£40	£15	£10	£5	£5
Nov	-	132	199	11	152	158
Dec	28	-	176	12	11	104
Jan	-	140	90	8	46	-

2nd Runcton Holme and Watlington Beavers, Cubs and Scouts took over Strikes in King's Lynn back in December to compete in the 10th Worldwide Scout Ten Pin Bowling Competition. Many of us wore our Christmas jumpers, along with our neckerchiefs. Fun was had by everyone and it was lovely to see so many of our young people, leaders, helpers and parents and guardians take part with smiles, laughter and cheers whatever the scores!

The great part of scouting is that we are part of something bigger, and we love it when we feel part of that

worldwide family of scouting! To bring this to a simple, fun game of bowling is a high aim, but why not?

The principal organiser is a scout leader from Farnham Explorer Scouts, in Surrey, who initially ran a postal bowling competition. Now technology has made it global and all electronic. To quote Baden Powell, "Look wide, then look wider."

As this publication comes to your homes we will have been back at Beavers, Cubs and Scouts for a few months. The leaders and helpers have been working hard, since last summer, to put a schedule of activities in place for the forthcoming year.

Beavers have moved from a Monday to a Tuesday, and extended our times from 18:00 - 19:15 so that we have extra time with our young people at meetings to achieve more.

Cubs continue to meet on a Wednesday 18:30-20:00.

Scouts continue to meet on Mondays, but at slightly earlier time of 18:30-20:30.

Scouting is about adventure for everyone and at every level. Our idea of adventure is about fun, friendship, trust, being confident and inclusive.

Would you like to be part of our adventure? We're always looking for volunteers to help run our groups or help out behind the scenes. And we always welcome young people who would like to join.

2nd Runcton Holme & Watlington Scout Group

Meet at the Scout Hut in Runcton Holme, next to the School

Beaver Scouts (6-8yr olds) Tuesdays 6.00-7.15pm
Cub Scouts (8-10.5yr olds) Wednesdays 6.30-8.00pm
Scouts (10.5-14yr olds) Mondays 6.30-8.30pm

For more information contact
 Andy Nicol (Group Scout Leader)
 on 01553 811201 or andy-nicol@hotmail.co.uk





Sun 10th March
Treat your
Mum on
Mother's Day

IT'S SPRING TIME AT THE HERON

The Heron is set between two rivers and easily accessed by river, road or foot along scenic walks between Downham Market and Watlington.

We opened six years ago following a total renovation. We are dog friendly and the perfect place to warm up around the wood burner in the Bar Lounge after a walk along the riverbank.

Enjoy a drink from the wide range of beers, spirits and gin shelf, choose from a variety of classic home-cooked dishes and exciting specials for a peaceful lunch, or a delicious dinner in our cosy bar, bright Restaurant, Garden Room Extension or on our extensive outside dining area whilst watching the boats pass by.

The Heron is the perfect place to celebrate your special occasion. We will happily cater your event however big or small with gorgeous afternoon tea, colourful cocktails and always fabulous food, fun and friendship.

We are open Tuesday-Sunday 12.00p.m.-11.00 p.m.

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Tuesday-Friday

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Saturday 12-9 p.m. Sunday 12-6 p.m.



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Watlington Players

Congratulations to all the cast and crew of *Sword in the Stone* – what a fantastic show! Thank you to everyone who supported us.



Legally Blonde

29 May – 1 June

Our next production will be our musical, *Legally Blonde*. Rehearsals have only just started, and we have already sold 20% of the tickets, so please book as soon as you can! www.ticketsource.co.uk/watlingtonplayers

The show tells the story of Elle Woods, a sorority girl who enrolls at Harvard Law School to win back her ex-boyfriend, Warner. She discovers how her knowledge of the law can help others, and she successfully defends exercise queen Brooke Wyndham in a murder trial. Throughout the show, very few characters have faith in Elle, but she manages to surprise them when she defies expectations while staying true to herself.

Recommended viewing age 10+

Fundraising

Everyone is welcome at our fundraising events! Our next is a **Race Night** at Watlington Sports and Social Club on Saturday 23 March, 7.30pm, £1 per bet.

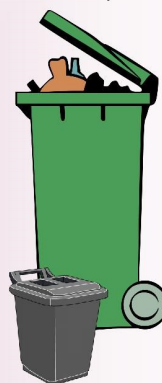
Music and Lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe and Neil Benjamin
Book by Heather Hach, Based on the novel by Amanda Brown
This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Musical Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk

Bin & recycling collection dates

Food waste is collected every week in its separate caddy.

Bin Collection day is usually **Wednesday**, but note the alternative days due to Bank Holidays

Wednesday 6th March	Black Bin
Wednesday 13th March	Green bin
Wednesday 20th March	Black Bin
Wednesday 27th March	Green bin
Wednesday 3rd April	Black Bin
Wednesday 10th April	Green bin
Wednesday 17th April	Black Bin
Wednesday 24th April	Green bin
Wednesday 1st May	Black Bin
Wednesday 8th May	Green bin
Wednesday 15th May	Black Bin
Wednesday 22nd May	Green bin
Wednesday 29th May	Black Bin



For latest details, check :
<https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/bin-dates>

Watatunga Wildlife Reserve

As the gates of Watatunga open for the season from 28 March to 31 October, we are eager to welcome the local community back. Hopefully, by the time you come it'll look a little less like a water-park – what a wet winter it has been!

This year, we're excited to enhance the experience with a diverse lineup of events, workshops, and guest speakers, all designed to deepen your connection with the natural world. Look out for willow weaving workshops - crafting basic baskets, willow-obelisks for your garden and more; wildlife talks from Norfolk's own, Nick Acheson; and some pop-up dining events in the reserve's lakeside BBQ hut this August.

This season, we're already thrilled to introduce a new addition to our wildlife family – a newborn Kafue Flats lechwe calf. This arrival is a welcome reminder that



Kafue Flats lechwe calf

Spring is on the way, and Spring tours, when guests are sometimes the first to see the latest newborn, lie ahead.

In the Autumn we welcomed two female white-lipped deer from the Highland Wildlife Park to join our solitary male and we are hopeful for offspring this year. These deer originate on the Tibetan plateaus and are now threatened in the wild due to poaching. They are magnificent, tall animals with soft white muzzles and exaggerated downy whiskers and they have been making themselves at home in the reserve over Winter. As the only place in the UK to now hold a breeding group, we have recently joined the European initiative to maintain the best possible genetics for this species in captivity and will keep you updated on their progress.



white-lipped stag

We have also welcomed, Dean, a new team member, as Reserve Ranger. In his role, Dean will be collaborating closely with our Operations Manager, Molly, ensuring the smooth functioning of our reserve. Alongside Molly

and the rest of the animal team, Dean is responsible for morning and evening rounds, care for our diverse wildlife, and managing daily feeds, in addition to the unexpected of each and every day! Dean's hands-on approach and proficiency in various tasks has already



Welcome Dean!

made him a crucial part of the team.

As we look forward to the season ahead, we're excited to unveil new experiences and learning opportunities for

our visitors. Look out for our midweek 'twilight' tours starting in June, which aim to get you into the reserve just before sunset when many of the animals are most active. From guided tours that offer intimate encounters with our wildlife to workshops that delve into the intricacies of ecosystem conservation, there's something for everyone at Watatunga. Our guest speakers, experts in their fields, will share insights and stories that highlight the critical role each of us plays in preserving our planet's natural heritage, and our workshops and experiences including photography tours, BBQ hut hire and willow weaving workshops showcase a diverse range of activity happening at the reserve this year to cater for all audiences.

Whether you're a long-time friend of the reserve or planning your first visit, we're here to ensure your experience is both enjoyable and enlightening. Join us in embracing the wonders of the natural world, right here in our community, at Watatunga Wildlife Reserve.

In appreciation of the incredible support from the local community, we're pleased to offer a **10% discount** to our local visitors this season, applicable on all buggy tours with the code **GOSSIP24**. For those inspired to contribute more actively to our conservation mission, we warmly invite you to explore volunteer opportunities with us. It's a rewarding way to engage with nature and become an integral part of the Watatunga family.

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Since the last issue of the *Latest Gossip* our weather has been rather wet, windy, and frosty. In December there were not many days when we did not have rain.



flooded fields

The land is absolutely waterlogged and many of the surrounding fields are flooded to a greater or lesser degree. When I visited the Millennium Green

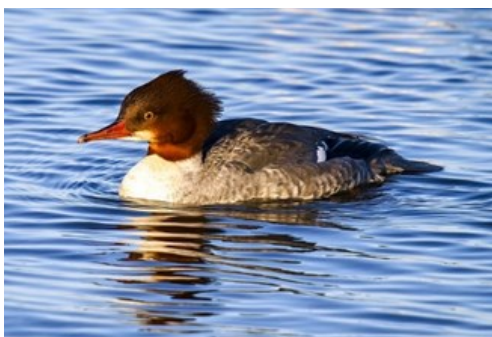
in early January it was so waterlogged that water was running down the central path.

Unlike other parts of the country, we have had virtually no snow, only some light flurries on the first two days of December. We had a few frosty mornings in December but January brought us some very cold days. We had a number of consecutive very frosty mornings, with the lowest temperature that I recorded minus 5.9°C on 18 January.

The frosty mornings encouraged more birds to come to our bird feeders including, as usual, some very territorially minded blackbirds. They will allow a dunnoek to feed with them and maybe some house sparrows but anything else will be told in no uncertain terms that this is their territory so "clear off". On several occasions, I have heard or seen whooper swans and pink foot geese flying over the village. Unlike last year when hundreds of whooper swans were feeding on a field alongside St Peters Road from November until late January I had not seen any on that field until 8 January when I observed about 50 feeding on it. I observed my first whooper swans of the season on 11 December, feeding on a field next to the railway line, when travelling by train to Kings Lynn.

Also, on 11 December I observed a sparrowhawk fly swiftly over our garden. I have observed small numbers of fieldfares on several occasions whilst

travelling in the area but no large flocks as I used to see years ago. On a visit to Snettisham on 26 December,



merganser

as well as observing thousands of birds feeding out on the mud flats and sand banks, a notable sighting was that of a merganser swimming on one of the lakes behind the chalets.

Whilst travelling about in the local area I have noticed the increasing amount of mistletoe growing on various

trees. Mistletoe is a parasite living off its host tree's resources. When present in small amounts the host tree can tolerate the mistletoe. However, when large amounts of mistletoe are present on one tree it can debilitate the tree to such an extent that the tree will die. Mistle thrushes will feed on the sticky white berries as will some other birds. Mistletoe is poisonous - both its leaves and its berries are toxic - so children and animals should be kept away from it, especially if you use it in your Christmas decorations. In ancient times mistletoe was sacred to the Druids who purportedly



mistletoe

harvested it using a sickle made of gold. It was associated with fertility which is presumably where the custom of kissing under the mistletoe originated from.

I hope that by the time you receive this issue of the *Gossip* the weather will have improved, and the land will have dried out. We should by then be looking forward to all the things that nature will show us as Spring returns for another year.

Chris Dyson



Monthly

RAINBOW CAFÉ

Watlington Village Hall

9.30am - 12 Noon

Your Community Café!

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Crafts and Preserves

Friday 22 March

Friday 26 April

Friday 24 May

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Watlington Walks

Hi everyone. I hope some of you managed to enjoy the Watlington to St Germans walk in the last issue. If you were too busy, or put off by the weather, it's a nice one to save for another time. It's a lovely evening walk once the days get longer as you have the benefit of a distant horizon and the opportunity for some stunning sunsets.

Anyway, here's to the start of another year and Spring is in the air! This walk sees us exploring another nearby village, namely Shouldham, and its smaller cousin Shouldham Thorpe. Shouldham was where I spent my childhood, having moved there in 1963 when mum and dad purchased a new bungalow in Woodward Close from Barker Brothers. I'm told the front door key was left under a brick, ready for us to move in, with no contracts exchanged or legalities completed, all on the back of a small cash deposit and a promise from my dad that the rest would be paid once the mortgage came through. How different it is now!

Shouldham and Shouldham Thorpe circular 4½ miles

Start point: Shouldham playing field car park



what3words location
///rationing.horn.infants

We start our walk at Shouldham playing field car park, (1) just at the north end of Westgate Street. You can park here for as long as you like and there are

toilets there too. If you want to bring your kids, they won't be disappointed as there is an extensive, modern playpark with lots of lovely apparatus, including a rather nice zip-wire which I can say from experience is brilliant fun!

Leave the car park via the main



entrance onto Westgate Street, turning right, then head down Fairstead Drove, passing the village bowls club on your right. Follow this wide, sandy lane

eventually passing cottages on your left (2) and pigs (enjoying the black mud) on your right.

The lane narrows down to a tree-lined footpath (3) but keep going until it



widens again, with another track going off to the right. Ignore this turning but bear left shortly after. At this turning point, you should have a view of Heath Farm



(4) up the slope, ahead of you.

Turn left following the yellow arrow on the post and follow the straight, tree-lined lane heading south (5).

After half a mile, having passed some horses (6) and the Community Orchard you come to a road (7).

Take care and cross straight over, then turn right, up the hill for a few yards before turning left, following the sign to Shouldham Thorpe ¾ (8).



Follow this quiet road, keeping an ear open for oncoming cars, and taking special care walking around the bends. Pass by some allotments and Middle Road on your right. Continue past the small pond and South



Road on your right and then round the left hand bend out of the village.

At the next right-hand bend is a junction where

we turn left into Gallow Lane to head east (9). This almost-straight road heads across open fields with views of Fincham to the south and Shouldham



to the north. Head along Gallow Lane for approximately 1 mile until you see a hedge with electricity poles heading to your left (north) and a finger post on the right-hand side of the road (10).



Turn left here and follow the grass path on the left-hand side of the hedge (11).

The hedge eventually stops but keep going straight, passing a small wood on your left. Continue straight ahead, following the line of electricity poles and you will come to a road. Someone has kindly installed some steps here to help you down the bank.

Cross the road with care, then turn left (west) up onto the field edge. Stick to the edge of the field which



follows the road round the bend near the farm. Keep going and you should have Shouldham

church in front of you (12). Continue to follow the field edge round the next bend, keeping off the road and going behind a hedge.

As you round the bend, look straight ahead and you should see a small gap in another hedge (13). Head straight for the

14



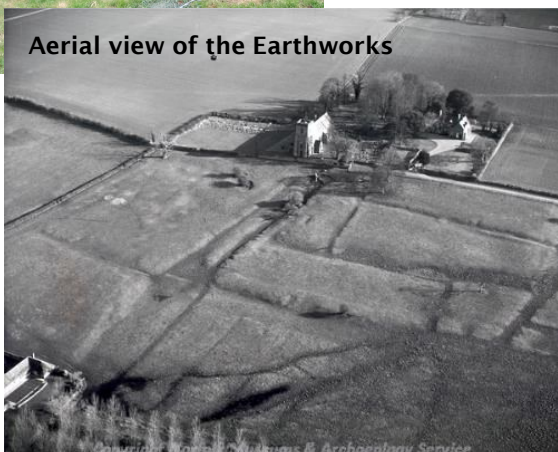
15



gap across rough, uncut grass, through the hedge and onto Church Road. Turn right and head towards the church (14).

Go through the church gates and into the churchyard. Look left

Aerial view of the Earthworks



over the low wall towards the village and you should notice a lot of humps and bumps in the field (15). These are what remain of an extensive complex of buildings, streets, gardens, stockyards, fishponds and waterways which were once part of the settlement attached to Shouldham Priory. The Abbey and main buildings were over at Abbey Farm just a few hundred yards to the North. The whole area from where you are standing, right over to Abbey Farm supported the Priory which housed Nuns and Monks of the (English) Gilbertine order. This Priory was founded in 1190 and dissolved during the reformation in 1538.

There is a lovely view



of the village from this elevated position and a handy spot to rest with a perfectly placed bench.

You should see a gate in the low wall (16). Go through the gate (please make sure you chain it shut again), turn right, walk to the hedge, then turn left to follow the hedge down the hill towards the village.

17



Exit the field through the gate (17) and turn right onto Eastgate Street. Follow the road north, and then round bends keeping the high chalk wall on your right. Eastgate Street becomes New Road. As you come to

the end of the wall, turn left, back onto Westgate Street and back to the car park where we started.

Whilst every effort has been made to make this walk as safe as possible, please remember to take great care, especially near traffic, and when crossing roads. Neither myself nor the Gossip can accept responsibility for your safety.

Take care and enjoy,

Hugh Pearce



16





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Tuesday Closed
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Friday 11:30am to 2pm & 4pm to 8pm
Saturday 11:30am to 2pm & 4pm to 8pm
Sunday Closed

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Large orders catered for - phone for details

Gluten free and Vegetarian available

Menu

- Chips *small regular large*
- Cod *regular large*
- Plaice
- Haddock
- Rock
- Skate
- Scampi (9)
- Cod bites (6) or (8)
- Fishcake
- Sausage
- Footlong sausage
- Saveloy
- Chicken 1/4
- Chicken bites (6) or (12)
- Chicken fillet burger
- Battered burger
- Plain burger
- Cheeseburger
- Onion rings (5) or (12)
- Meat fritter
- Pineapple fritter
- Mozzarella sticks (5)
- Vegetable samosa (5)
- Vegetable spring roll (5)
- Chilli cheese bites (5)
- Halloumi fries (5)
- Garlic mushrooms (9)
- Battered mars bar
- Battered snickers
- Pukka pies
 - Beef and onion
 - Steak and kidney
 - Chicken and mushroom
 - Steak and ale
 - Potato, cheese and leek
- Children's box meal
 - 4 Cod bites,
 - 4 Chicken bites or
 - 1 Sausage
 - + chips and drink
- Mushy peas *regular large*
- Curry sauce *regular large*
- Gravy *regular large*
- Beans *regular large*
- Cheese
- Pickled egg
- Pickled onion
- Pickled gherkin
- Bread roll
- Heinz sauce sachet
- Heinz sauce bottle
- Bottle vinegar
- Cans
- Small bottles

Ever changing choice of desserts

please don't hesitate to ask what's on offer this week

Gluten Free (some are also dairy free - please ask for details)

- Cod
- Haddock
- Plaice
- Skate
- Rock
- Scampi (9)
- Cod bites (6) or (8)
- Jumbo sausage
- Meat fritter
- Chicken bites
- Pineapple fritter
- Mushy peas *regular large*
- Curry sauce *regular large*
- Gravy *regular large*
- Beans *regular large*

for Vegetarian or Gluten free please call in advance as we light seerate fryers for these.

What to Look Out for Around Watlington

Chris Dyson gives us some things to spot now Spring is in the air!

March



hazel catkins



brimstone



chiff chaff

Look out for catkins on hazel, poplars, alder and pussy willow. Look out for primrose, violet, wild daffodil and other early wildflowers. Listen out for the first of the summer migrant birds to arrive the chaffinch. It usually arrives at the end of March and can usually be heard all over the village. Look out for peacock, brimstone and small tortoiseshell butterflies.

April



buttercup



house martin



comma

Look out for wildflowers including dandelions, buttercups and cowslips. Look out for the return from Africa of the swallows, house martins and cuckoos. Look out for the comma butterfly as well as those which emerged from hibernation in March the peacock, small tortoiseshell and brimstone.

May



turtle dove



common blue



bluebells

Look out for the return of the swifts and maybe, if you are very lucky, a turtle dove. Look out for the very pretty common blue butterfly. Look out for the many different wildflowers including bluebells.

Rodwell's Celebrates 10 Years of Trading

April marks ten years since Rodwell's served its first portion of fish and chips to Watlington residents. To mark the anniversary, which falls on 15 April, everyone who comes in to buy their chips during the week of the anniversary (17 - 20 April) will have the chance to guess the number of gherkins in the jar. The ten nearest guesses will win cash prizes or vouchers, with the top prize worth £50.

Rodwell's was born out of great sadness after Jeanette and Helen lost their husband and father, Ray. Those who have lived in the village a while will remember that

he ran a garage on the site for 30 years. When he sadly passed away from a brain tumour, Jeanette felt the time was right to rekindle her dream of opening a chip shop. Her grandparents had run the Magdalen chip shop in the 60s. The very first portion of Rodwell's chips was served to Magdalen denizen Peter Allen, who remembered Jeanette's grandparents running the Magdalen chippy.

Without the team behind them, Helen and Jeanette would not be marking this milestone, and the whole team look forward to another decade of serving the people of Watlington.

February Fill-Dike

*February fills dikes, overflows fields
and streams, turns paths to slippery ooze.
Petulant winds crease the surface of the lake
and agitate the fast-flowing river.
Hail and sunshine play follow-my-leader
across a shifting sky where lazy seagulls swing.
Gorse brags bright yellow flowers.
On hawthorn hedgerows, buds swell with red tips
and tight clusters of dark green leaves.
Daffodils force green shoots through layers of leaf
mould
Moss creeps and bark rots on fallen trees
New stems and shoots glow red in the setting sun.*

William Barton

Spring is in the air for the Millennium Green

2024 started with a mix of temperatures, more than our fair share of rain and a series of sharp frosts followed by mild weather. At the time of writing February, still the shortest month, even in a leap-year, is on the horizon. The second month of the year has a reputation for being amongst the wettest, which William Barton captured in his poem, *February Fill-Dike*. Nonetheless, we can now look forward to enjoying the longer daylight hours, warmth and harbingers of Spring. In our gardens snowdrops and aconites are giving way to daffodils and buds bursting with life.

Hopefully March and April will be warmer, brighter and drier. New life, in all its varied forms, be they flora or fauna, brings great joy and interest in prospects ahead.

Some additional whips, which were provided by the Woodland Trust, have been planted and they certainly did not need watering in this year. Some mixed poppy seeds have been sown along with yellow rattle which it is hoped will spread in future years.

Work on surveying the plants on the Green has found some 190 different species of plants, many of which will flower and bring benefits to all, particularly birds and insects. The Field Studies Council has a little poem to help with some basic identification:

"Sedges have edges
Rushes are round
Grasses are hollow
Right down to the ground".

We will be working to replace damaged bird boxes, and clean and sanitise existing nest boxes in readiness for more amorous activities from the various bird populations around.

After this the major task to undertake is to restore the maze paths and remove the spreading grass which seems determined to cover the entire brickwork design.

If you would like to get involved in any way tackling jobs on the green do not hesitate to contact any volunteer. We are often on the Green from 10am - 12 noon on the first Saturday of the month.

Disappointingly some people believe the Green is a place to put their garden rubbish, to accompany the litter and dog waste left by other inconsiderate users of this most valued open space. It is very important for dog waste to be put in the dedicated dog waste bins provided as it is collected separately and dealt with carefully. Hopefully this will stop as it creates work for the volunteers which we can do without.

Mike Carter

A Farewell to Winter

*The bitter grip of Winter loses sway
A little less darkness every day
Daffodils raise yellow trumpets to the sun
You can buy chocolate eggs and a hot cross bun.
The trees start to uncurl their leaves
The brave and hardy wear short sleeves.
You finally lose that winter cough -
Might even take the thermals off!
Carpets of snowdrops everywhere -
Yes, Spring is really in the air.
And we stir from our chilly gloom
To beautify each neglected room.
Then we look at ourselves and panic
With diet plans and exercise manic
To try and shift that Christmas bulge -
Why oh why did we overindulge?
But oh - the magic of early Spring
The promise of just what it may bring
In beauty, something new each day
To gladden hearts along the way.
And we blossom under Nature's care
And rejoice that Springtime is now near.*

Elaine Carpenter

With Christmas events a hazy memory, members turned their attention to bringing along 'anything old which meant something to you' to our first January meeting of 2024. There were photos and mementoes, newspaper cuttings, gifts, china items, all triggering special memories of people, places and events which led to much sharing, discussion, fun and laughter. There is so much wisdom and experience in a group of people of a certain age - two of our members are celebrating their 90th birthdays in the next few months.

So now Spring is in the air and speaking of age, I think we had our youngest speaker ever in January. Lily Goretzki came to talk about her climb of Kilimanjaro last September, having raised funds for Cruse, the charity which supports bereaved people. Lily showed a selection of pictures which showed the early climb through the rain forest, the tented night encampments, and the later stages which brought home the bleakness of the volcanic landscape and the sheer difficulty of climbing in the dark with headtorches to reach the crater rim and summit on the final day of the climb.

By the time this *Gossip* hits your doormat we will have enjoyed our usual pancakes and be looking forward to hot cross buns. At the time of writing hazel catkins are dancing in the breeze, snowdrops and winter aconite in flower and winter flowering shrubs are scenting the air on a warm day.

For those people who have recently moved into the village and don't know us, we are a social afternoon club which meets in the Village Hall on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Unbelievably we celebrate our 30th birthday in May, so of course we will have a party! New members are always welcome, and it can be a way of establishing a network of friends. We know how hard it can sometimes be to go somewhere where you don't know a soul, so please make contact if you need a lift or just want to come and try us out. It costs £5 *per annum* membership, plus £1.50 at each meeting you attend; visitors pay £2.

Our programme for the next few months looks like this:

March 13 Lusitania: Loss and Deception in WW1, Jim Stebbings
 March 27 Hot cross Buns and Rabbit Racing with Richard and Pat Aisthorpe
 April 10 The Role of the Town Crier: Ray Wales
 April 24 Fete Games: John Murfitt
 May 8 Club's 30th Birthday Party
 May 22 D-Day and the Normandy Aftermath, Richard Gibbons
 June 12 Wild plants found in Watlington, Annie Bird
 June 26 Croquet at Stow Hall

Barbara Church

T: 01553 810584

E: barbarachurch@phonecoop.coop

We continue to enjoy our Members Meetings on the second Tuesday of the month (7pm at the village hall) and have some great beading workshops coming up in our craft group on the third Tuesday of the month. Everyone is welcome to come to our craft sessions; we meet in the committee room or Jubilee hall, depending upon what we're doing, 9:30am - 12 noon.



We have some interesting speakers booked for our Members Meetings in the coming months with 'The Art of Paint and Decoupage' in March, 'London Fashion House and Stage Costumes' in April and in May we have 'Gin - a local Specialty'; we're all looking forward to testing their products! This is also our open meeting of the year, so we look forward to welcoming members and non-members, men and women. It's £4 on the door which includes our lovely refreshments. The rest of the programme is on the Watlington website, just click on 'Watlington WI' and choose the appropriate tab. We're so lucky to have the website and the volunteers that produce and update it; it's crammed with essential information all about our village.

In April all WIs are invited to walk for the ACWW - Associated Country Women of the World - a charity that supports women's rights in all areas, worldwide. This year, we plan to combine our walk with a guided tour around the grounds of Stow Hall, followed by refreshments, of course!

The Rainbow Café continues to grow and we are often asked to put on extra cafés, perhaps even weekly! The café is very enjoyable and we are thrilled it's so popular, but it's also incredibly hard work for the ladies involved

and, as I'm sure you'll agree, they do an absolutely fantastic job. The café is on the fourth Friday, it always catches people out in a five week month. The raffle at the December café raised an incredible £205 which was donated to the village hall solar panel fund.

All ladies over 18 are welcome to join the WI. Our members are simply amazing and you'll find plenty of new friends. No-one is ever left to sit alone, come and see!

For more information please contact us:

T: 811521 M: 07551 757679

E: watlingtonwomensinstitute@gmail.com



Emma, President

Watlington Past

I thought people might be interested in what Watlington was like in 1965 when my husband and I, fresh out of the Navy, moved here. The village was surrounded by orchards and strawberry fields, with a few green, open spaces within the village itself. The fruit picking supplied seasonal work for young wives with the accompanying children playing in the strawbales in the barn. Indeed, children seemed to play outside a lot more then, climbing trees or floating homemade rafts on flooded gravel pits.

The village was very self-sufficient because we had several shops. The butcher (Mr Spencer), and a general store and Post Office on the opposite corner to the present day shop, with the store run by Mrs Williams and her son being the Postmaster. Mr Turner had another general store in Downham Road with a bakery run by his sisters. Mr Wally Simmons ran another grocery store in a converted chapel in Mill Road, and Mr Seaman called with his travelling shop. Daily papers were supplied by a man from Kings Lynn. He travelled on the bus loaded with papers, then delivered them around the village on his bike (which I think was stored around the back of the Post Office). We also had a man with a horse and cart delivering samphire when in season, and his call, "fresh samphire, long and green", followed by the ringing of his bell was heard all around the village.

This was before supermarkets had really arrived, although Lynn had a small Tesco in the High Street. The open market in Lynn at that time was huge, filling the Tuesday market place. It sold everything from crockery, clothing, fresh local fruit and veg to locally caught fish and Cromer crabs. Many people shopped on the market and there were many local shops, privately owned. It was very much a market town.

There was a regular bus service to Lynn and Downham, plus a railway station called 'Magdalen Road Junction' - at that time still lit by oil lamps. Trains ran to Lynn and Hunstanton, March and Wisbech and then onwards to the Midlands, plus of course down the line to London. Tickets were bought from the Station Master's house, where the waiting rooms were furnished with coal fires lit in the pretty Victorian fire places.

However, the station was closed in 1967 following the Beeching Report as it was deemed part of the March line. The London train now ran straight through without stopping. A group of villagers formed a pressure group and distributed questionnaires throughout the village - as a result British Rail were happy to reopen the station if it was updated, although they were not allowed to spend money on doing

so. The group had a general but thorough clean up of the waiting rooms and outside spaces, with no damage done - not one pane of glass was broken. Then funds had to be raised to install electricity and some fencing. Once all was accepted and agreeable with British Rail the station was reopened in 1974 to great acclaim. It made the national TV and the *Sunday Times* as it was the first station ever reopened.



Bill and Dolly in the Angel

There were two pubs in 1965 - The Angel, run by Bill and Dolly Cameron, and the hub of social life with cribbage, darts etc, and the Railway Tavern (now Yoxford House) in Station Road, which had a bowling green opposite. The bowling green was moved to the church field when the pub closed.

The other community meeting place was a black 'tin hut', set in what is now the entrance and garden of the present village hall. This old building, an army hut from the First World War, was given to the men of the village as a Reading Room. Needless to say it was very run down and very little used. The presiding vicar, Reverend Brown, asked a group of villagers to 'run it and improve it'. The leaking sky lights were removed and windows fitted along a side wall. After being cleaned and painted and a new pot belly heating stove installed it was open for business, all achieved through voluntary labour.

Consequently, it was used more and more with many clubs starting up: a Play Group, Drama Group, a Youth Club



and a Dancing School to name a few. The Watlington Players put on three shows each year, the Dancing School was a regular booking and with many dances (the years of the disco) we were bursting at the seams and needed a larger hall. Again, this was all achieved with voluntary fundraising - after a lot of work the new hall was opened in 1988, with the Jubilee Hall extension coming a few years later.

All this volunteering and fundraising created the social community we enjoyed, holding carnivals, an 'It's a Knockout' competition, pram races and dances to raise the money for reopening the station, the preschool building and the new hall. This community we still have today as the self-help persists. All our clubs and societies are run by volunteers: this magazine, the Millenium Green, the annual fete which also helps the village charities, plus monthly coffee mornings at the Rainbow Cafe to name but a few.

Long may it continue.

Kate Carpenter



Ukrainian Easter Eggs



Tonya and her daughters, from Kyiv, are living in Watlington through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Here she tells us how to make, and eat, Easter eggs, Ukrainian-style.

First find some interestingly shaped leaves. Make one side of a leaf damp, and press it onto the surface of an egg, making sure it is really flat and smooth on the surface.

Once you have decorated all your eggs, hold the leaves in place by putting each egg inside a tube cut from an old pair of tights. Tie the ends closed tightly with thread.



Now hard boil your eggs, but add something to the water that will dye the eggshell. The ones in the picture were dyed using onion skins. Boil them for about 7 or 8 minutes, and then let the eggs cool in the water to give the dye the best chance of working.



Carefully remove the eggs from their wrapping and wipe a little sunflower oil over the surface using paper towel to make them shiny.



At Easter breakfast each person around the table takes an egg. One person starts and taps the round end of their egg against the round end of the egg belonging to the person next to them. The shell of one of the eggs will break, but the other will stay whole. This winning egg now challenges another egg in the same way as before. Continue to find the champion egg!



Finally, peel your eggs and eat with Easter bread.

Tonya Harbovska

New Exercise Class for Older Adults

From the end of February, adults aged 60+ are invited to a free weekly exercise class in Watlington. The classes are suitable for those taking their first steps into being active or those who want to get a bit fitter after a few (or more!) years away from structured activity. Sessions are social and delivered by friendly, experienced instructors.

The weekly classes will run for 10 weeks and take place at Watlington Village Hall on Tuesdays between 1pm and 2pm. Contact community@alivewestnorfolk.co.uk to book your place.

Mobile Library Service

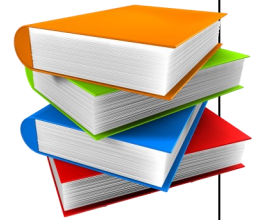
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The mobile library service calls in Watlington on Thursday, normally every 28 days. It will call on the following dates:

14 March, 11 April, 9 May, 6 June

It is scheduled to stop at the following locations at these times:

- John Davis Way - 12.35 - 12.50
- Britton Close - 12.55 - 13.10
- Lacey Close - 13.15 - 13.30
- The Angel - 14.50 - 15.05
- Warren Close - 15.10 - 15.30
- Chestnut Close - 15.35 - 15.50
- Rectory Lane - 15.55 - 16.10
- Plough Lane - 16.15 - 16.30
- Orchard Close - 16.35 - 16.50
- Downham Road - 16.55 - 17.10



Please note: this information is subject to change or amendment both on a permanent and temporary basis.

Remember to bring your library card with you!

Watlington Knitters & Stitchers



We meet on the first and third Monday in the month, 2 - 4 pm.

Everyone is welcome! Chat, tea and cake provided.

It's ideal if you enjoy knitting, but don't know what to make. There is so much need in the hospital, care homes, and international aid. I am always glad to receive any items to be passed on, if it's not convenient for you to join us.

Patterns are available on the Norfolk Knitters and Stitchers website: www.norfolkknitters.org.uk

I also collect used postage stamps in aid of The Parkinson's group.

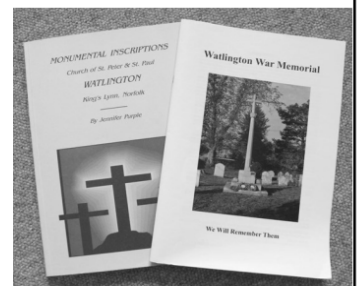
Janet Jones

16 Warren Close, Watlington PE33 0TA 01553 810868

Watlington History

If you are interested and/or actively researching your ancestors in Watlington then there are two books which are a must have on your shelf. Watlington Church Memorial Inscriptions, compiled by Jennifer Purple (£3) and

Watlington War Memorial and Roll of Honour by Brenda Leedell (£2) now both available to purchase in Watlington Church (open every day). Proceeds to Church Funds.





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How easily are we scammed?

Consumers lose about £5 - 10 billion to scams each year. In my previous job in the police, I made it one of my priorities to try and educate as many people as I could as to 'what is a scam', and how to prevent them. We all feel that we would not and could never fall for a scam. That's what I thought but, as savvy as I am, I was scammed.

So, after being scammed, and working in my new role for a housing association, I decided to do some further training so that I could become a Scam Marshal. A Scam Marshal is any resident in the UK who has been targeted by a scam and now wants to fight back and take a stand against the scammers. Scam Marshals do this by sharing their own experiences, helping others to report and recognise scams, and sending any scam mail that they receive to the National Trading Standards Scams Team so that it can be used as evidence in future investigative and enforcement work. As a Scam Marshall I can give talks to local groups, and have up to date knowledge of current scams to help people spot these.

One current scam is the police impersonation scam. Criminals call their victims and tell a series of elaborate lies, such as claiming to be investigating a fraud case or that a relative is in custody, to convince them to part with their money or personal belongings. In some cases, someone posing as a courier or police officer has shown up at the victim's home, after the phone call, to collect the items.

If someone has called you and you are unsure whether they are a genuine police officer, you can hang up and call the police on 101 to check their identity. It is recommended you wait at least five minutes before you call, as there have been cases of fraudsters keeping the line open after a victim has hung up.

Top 10 tips to take a stand against scams

- 1 Say NO to unwanted, uninvited callers.
- 2 Be wise to rogue traders. Too good-to-be-true offers probably are.
- 3 Don't feel pressured to make a decision. Say No, or say you need advice first.
- 4 Be wise to postal scams. No legal company will ask for money to claim a prize.
- 5 Keep personal details safe. They could be used fraudulently in the wrong hands.
- 6 Research the credentials of the company. Be certain they're not bogus.
- 7 Be online savvy. Check who you're communicating with online.
- 8 Talk to someone you trust if you're suspicious.
- 9 Report a scam. Help expose the criminals.
- 10 Know you are not alone. Anyone can be a victim. Report it and get the right support.

For further information please visit <https://www.friendsagainstscaams.org.uk>

Stephen Staniforth, Wiggshall St Mary Magdalen

TRIVIA TWELVE

With Spring in the air, quiz master Richard Abel is going green...

1. **People.** Television compere Hughie Green was the father of Paula Yates; which Irish singer-songwriter did she marry?
2. **Places.** Stepney Green and Parsons Green are stations on which London Underground Line, which is coloured green on the network's map?
3. **Sport.** Which West Country football league club has played in green shirts for most of their existence, one of the few clubs to do so?
4. **Music.** Who released the 2022 single "Green Green Grass"?
5. **Film.** Adapted from a Stephen King novel, in which 1999 film does Tom Hanks play a death row prison guard?
6. **Television.** "The Green Green Grass", which ran from 2005 to 2009, was a spin-off from which long-running comedy series?
7. **Science.** Which chemical element, a yellowish-green gas at room temperature, derives its name from the Greek word for green?
8. **Nature.** The yaffle is a dialect term for which British bird?
9. **Arts.** Who painted "Green Wheat Field with Cypress" in Provence in 1889, the year before his death?
10. **Books.** The 1908 novel "Anne of Green Gables" is set in which country?
11. **Food and Drink.** Which alcoholic spirit, that contains wormwood, has often been referred to as "the green fairy"?
12. **General Knowledge.** Which landlocked European country has a flag that is a horizontal tricolour of red, white and green?

Answers on p 35

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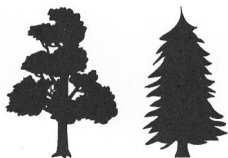
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Email: theschoolofdance@hotmail.co.uk

www.theschoolofdance.uk

Facebook: The School of Dance - Watlington

Phone no: 07708597114



Watlington Medical Centre

Medical Centre Opening Hours

Monday	08.30 - 13.00	14.00 - 18.30
Tuesdays	08.30 - 13.00	Closed
Wednesday	08.30 - 13.00	14.00 - 18.30
Thursday	08.30 - 13.00	14.00 - 18.30
Friday	08.30 - 13.00	14.00 - 18.30

Outside of the above times call 111

General: 01553 810253 Pharmacy 01553 811045

Watlington Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Who are we & what do we do?

We are volunteers who work with our Practice to represent patients views on services and facilities that are provided.

What we are not?

We are not a forum for individual agendas or personal complaints.

When do we meet?

We meet about four times a year at The Surgery with a doctor and one of the operational team.

Future Plans

We would like to encourage more patients and carers of our patients to join our group or make suggestions through our dedicated e mail address: watlingtonppg@gmail.com

Joining our PPG

To join the PPG e mail watlingtonppg@gmail.com or contact Watlington Medical Centre Reception on 01553 810253 and we will arrange for the relevant application form to be sent to you.

Jim's Monthly Collection Box

Each month the monies collected in the charity box on the counter in the Watlington Post Office Store are donated to local organisations. Recent recipients:

Nov £32.20 Watlington Football Club

Dec £34.23 Watlington & Runcion Holme Scouts

Jan £48.01 Watlington Brownies & Guides

Thanks to Jim and Ann, and to June for her assistance.

Jim has extended the distribution area to local villages that use Watlington shop and Post Office. If you know of a worthy cause in Runcion Holme, Tottenhill, Wormegay or Magdalen please let Brenda know - brendell48@gmail.com.

In my last article I reflected on the importance of hobbies and following your passions.

One thing I love to do is read old medical textbooks. I like seeing the old remedies that were recommended, for example some 18th Century advice for a cold: 'take a walk in stout shoes'. Reading books like this gives me a chance to reflect on how far our medical knowledge has moved on. Recently I found a copy of 'Virtue's Household Physician - A Twentieth Century Medica' in the Antiques Warehouse in Setchey. The exact date of publication is unclear, but it is from the pre antibiotic era (1940s) though the use of insulin for the treatment of diabetes is mentioned (this was developed from 1921).

The book, with its yellowed pages and faded ink, revealed a mass of remedies and practices that harken back to a bygone era. It spoke of nasal polyps being removed by a 'competent physician' done 'by the use of cocaine and a wire snare' (don't try this at home), tinctures made from mercury and arsenic for toothache (again, not to be tried at home) and two whole chapters on the ideal bath temperature and its effects on the body. Many of the medical procedures outlined in these old texts have become outdated in light of scientific advancements, but as I delved deeper into its contents, I was struck by how the lifestyle recommendations have enduring relevance.

In an age where instant gratification reigns supreme and quick-fix solutions abound, the wisdom of our forebears reminds us of the importance of cultivating habits that nourish the body, mind, and spirit.

I finish with this excerpt from the book that I think is as relevant today as the day it was written.

'Pure thoughts, pure actions, plenty of work, but no overwork, sufficient recreation and outdoor exercise, fresh air in the house, the daily sponge bath with friction, a reasonable amount of sleep in a well ventilated room, keeping the feet dry, drinking several glasses of water each day between meals, wearing loose and suitable clothing, the avoidance of stimulants and over eating, the cultivation of amiability are all aids to health that nothing else equals. No medicines will take their place.'

By marrying the advancements of modern medicine with the timeless wisdom of our forebears, we can forge a path towards a more holistic approach to better health.

MMR Newsflash

There are measles outbreaks around the country. For most measles is a trivial illness, but for some it will lead to pneumonia, meningitis or death. Most people will have been vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella, however if you are a parent who has missed immunisation dates for your child (MMR is normally given at one year and then a preschool booster is given at age 3) then please contact the surgery which can arrange a catch up regime for you. If you are a young adult who is not sure of your vaccination history, contact the surgery and we can check your record and get you booked in for vaccination if required.

For more information see: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/mmr-vaccine/>

Dr Nichol



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Volunteering With Children in West Norfolk

For the last 6 years I have been volunteering as an Independent Visitor (IV) for the Norfolk Independent Visitors Service. This is a Norfolk County Council funded statutory service run by children's charity Coram Voice.

I have found the role really rewarding, if sometimes challenging, but overall great fun. One day a month, usually at weekends, I spend a few hours with my young man, who is now 16. Among many other activities, we have visited historical sites around King's Lynn, been to the beach at Hunstanton, crabbing at Wells, visited the pantomime and of course eaten at McDonald's. We have a great deal of fun and I return from each visit feeling uplifted.

Sadly, many children who grow up in the care system face a chaotic and challenging time. Their Social Workers may change, foster care placements can break down and they can be moved from school to school. This would be difficult for any child to handle, but for children who have already been seriously failed and harmed by adults, it creates a downward spiral which progressively erodes their trust in adults, their confidence in the world around them - and their future life chances. Studies have shown that having just one consistent, trustworthy, supportive adult in their life can change that trajectory completely; someone the child can look up to, rely on, depend on and turn to for advice, for comfort, and even to share a joke or celebrate an achievement. Someone who knows them well and remains in their life unflinchingly through good times and bad. That single, stable presence in their life could be an Independent Visitor.

As well as these studies there are many testimonies from the young people themselves saying how important their IV has been in their lives. One of these begins: "Independent Visitors are really important for children and young people in care, not just because they make sure we get to go out and do interesting things, but because for us, spending time with them can be the one time when you don't feel reminded you are different."

We are currently looking to recruit new Independent Visitors. Post pandemic, volunteering has hit an all-time low and we are really struggling to recruit new volunteers to the role, so much so that we now have over 40 young people on our waiting list including several in West Norfolk.

Full training is given, and a lot of care is taken in matching an IV with their young person. Out of pocket expenses are paid for mileage and activities.

If you would like to find out more you can email me on keyseaj@gmail.com or visit the Coram Voice website <https://jobs.coram.org.uk/vacancy-details?v=165588>.

Andy Keyse, IV Ambassador for West Norfolk

The Purfleet Trust is a charity that supports people experiencing homelessness in King's Lynn and West Norfolk. We believe that everyone has the right to live in a decent, suitable and affordable home and should have access to services that support and enable them to live independently.

From our Health and Wellbeing Centre at Austin Fields, people experiencing homelessness can access wellbeing services, housing advice, skills workshops and more. The Centre is also home to our clinical practice with regular visits from a nurse and a podiatrist, as well as a hairdresser for our clients to use. We have supported living Training Houses across King's Lynn that help our clients learn how to be a valued member of the community and maintain sustainable independent tenancies.

The Purfleet Pantry social supermarket on Southgates Roundabout is a shop offering affordable food, essentials and furniture to the wider public in South Lynn and beyond to help tackle the cost of living crisis in our area.

Volunteers are so vital to the work at The Purfleet Trust, and we are currently looking for new volunteers to join our team. Volunteers at the Trust are the friendly face on reception welcoming our clients to the Health & Wellbeing Centre, they represent Purfleet collecting donations out in the community, they help at the Purfleet Pantry, and so much more.

We are currently looking for:

- Volunteer Van Drivers/Helpers
- Events volunteers
- Purfleet Pantry Sales Assistants
- Health and Wellbeing Centre Volunteers
- Donation Sorters
- Online Sales Assistants

And more.

If people would like to find out more about volunteering and getting involved with The Purfleet Trust to tackle homelessness in West Norfolk, please visit our website <https://www.purfleettrust.org.uk/volunteer/> or download our Volunteering Pack: <http://tinyurl.com/PurfleetVolunteer>

Do you work for or support a local voluntary organisation, or a local branch of a national or international charity? Would you like to see your cause featured in the Gossip? We would like to highlight the great work that goes on to make life better in our area, so please email watlatestgossip@gmail.com, or drop a note in our box in the post office to tell us about it.



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Once Upon a Wedding

I feel like Cinderella. Francesca, my step-mum, is always flitting about with her fancy friends while I do all the housework. It sucks.

Her son Adam is no better – he’s just come in, grabbed a beer from the fridge and slumped on the sofa in front of the telly.

‘All right, Sis?’ he shouts over to me. ‘Looking forward to Saturday?’

Yeah, right. He’s so spoilt. He had a brand new Mini Cooper for his birthday while all I got was a takeaway.

There goes the phone. Adam’s picked it up, thinking it’s for him. ‘It’s Eileen,’ he shouts, dumps the receiver on the worktop and lollops back to the sofa.

I quickly dry my hands. ‘Hi, Gran. How are you?’

‘Not bad love but I think I’m coming down with a cold. Listen, I want to come a day early so I can spend some time with you. I’ll be at the bus station at seven o’clock tomorrow evening, OK?’

‘Wicked! We can go shopping.’

‘Yes, that’s what I thought. See you tomorrow, then.’

That’s cheered me up; I haven’t seen Gran for ages.

*

Gran’s in bed with flu. By the time Francesca and Adam had finished arguing about who was going to pick her up, poor Gran was freezing to death. But we had such fun yesterday even though she was feeling rubbish. She’s a star. She treated me to afternoon tea in Charlotte’s, then she bought me this really cool dress. When we came back she showed me how to put my hair up. I couldn’t believe it was really me when I looked in the mirror. But I didn’t show *them*. It’s our secret.

*

I’ve brought Gran up a cup of tea, but she’s still asleep so I’ve left it on the bedside table. She looks dreadful. No way is she going to the wedding.

Dad pops his head round the door. He looks great – his best grey suit with a pure white shirt and a red carnation in his buttonhole. Francesca is lucky to have him. He frowns at my jeans and tee shirt. ‘You’re not ready.’

‘I’m not going.’

‘Oh, come on, Ella. Please? Francesca will be upset.’

‘Yeah, right.’

Dad looks at Gran. ‘How is she?’

‘Not good. But don’t worry, I’ll look after her.’

Francesca shouts up the stairs. ‘Come on, Bill! Get a move on, the car’s here.’

Dad sighs. ‘I might see you later, then?’

‘Yeah, maybe.’

He kisses me on the cheek. Francesca shouts again so he closes the door and races downstairs. I hope Gran will be all right. Still, sleep’s the best medicine, that’s what she always told me when I was little.

*

In the end, Gran insisted I went to the do in the evening. She dragged herself out of bed to help me get ready. I told her she didn’t need to but she insisted I looked my best, bless her. She even did my make-up. It was just like she’d waved a magic wand.

I was just giving myself a final once-over in the mirror when there was a knock at the door. Oh my God! You should’ve seen him – tall, dark and drop-dead gorgeous.

He said, ‘I’ve come to escort you to the reception, if you’re ready?’ and held out his arm, like some guy from *Pride and Prejudice*. Honestly, you could’ve knocked me down with a feather.

It all went quiet when we walked into the hall. The next thing I knew he was whisking me around the dance floor like in *Strictly*. He’s so cool. I can’t believe he fancies me. At midnight I half expected to turn back into my old rags and have to skulk out, but we were together all night. And he wants to see me again! I must go and tell Gran.

Julie Newman © 2024



WATLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

New Contact Information

with immediate effect

clerk@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk
website: watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk

Please note!

Emails to watlingtonparish@hotmail.co.uk are no longer monitored.

TRIVIA TWELVE Answers

(see p29)

1. Bob Geldof
2. District Line
3. Plymouth Argyle
4. George Ezra
5. “The Green Mile”
6. “Only Fools and Horses”
7. Chlorine
8. Green Woodpecker
9. Vincent van Gogh
10. Canada
11. Absinthe
12. Hungary

Watlington Sport



Watlington Short Mat Bowls Club

Watlington Short Mat Bowls Club meet twice weekly at the Watlington Village Hall which we hire every Monday morning from 9.30am to 12.30pm and Friday afternoons from 12.30pm to 5pm.

As the sport is played indoors, we play throughout the year. It provides an excellent opportunity for social interaction and gentle exercise. We have 3 mats available for use at any one time, are a friendly bunch, with players of all standards and it is our usual practice to hold in-house competitions, outings and Club lunches on a regular basis according to numbers participating.

The cost is £3 per meeting, with refreshments at half time. There is also an annual membership fee of £10. If you have never played bowls before, coaching and the use of a selection of Club bowls is available completely free.

We comply strictly with current Government legislation on the Covid pandemic and the Hall is wheelchair friendly.

Come along and watch a session or two and see if it is for you, just pop in, no appointment necessary. All we ask is that you wear flat soled shoes that you don't wear outside (carpet slippers will do) so that the mats are not damaged.

Watlington Badminton Club

meets in the Village Hall on Wednesdays, 7-9pm



Watlington Bowls Club

is looking for new players for next season. Anyone interested, experienced or not, please drop your details into the social club or contact:

Pete on 07826447409 or Nigel on 07789046093.

Watlington FC Training Schedule

Please check with the Club, or with individual coaches, as locations can vary due to pitch conditions.

First Team	Wednesday	18:30 - 20:30	Runcton Holme
Reserves	Tuesday	19:00 - 20:30	Watlington
Development	Wednesday	19:00 - 20:30	Watlington
U16's	Friday	18:30 - 20:30	Watlington
U14's Girls	Monday	18:00 - 19:30	Watlington
U14's	Tuesday	18:00 - 19:30	Watlington
U12's	Friday	17:30 - 18:30	Watlington
U12's Girls	Monday	18:00 - 19:30	Watlington
U10's	Friday	17:00 - 18:00	Watlington
U8's	Friday	17:30 - 18:30	Watlington
U7's	Tuesday	17:00 - 18:00	Watlington

Watlington Sports & Social Club WSSC

WSSC is situated opposite the Village Hall and is a Members Club where families are welcome.

Family Membership £30 per year

Single Membership £20 per year.

**New Weekly
Wednesday
Coffee Morning
10 a.m - 1 p.m
All Welcome**



We are signed up to both Sky Sports and TNT Sports Channels which enables us to show all the big games on the 2 large screens throughout the club. We have a pool table, dart board, juke box and we put on numerous events throughout the year for adults, children and families. The Club can also cater

for private events for Members and Non-Members. We are open every
Mon-Thurs: 17.00-23.00 Fri: 16.00-01.00 Sat:12.00-01.00 Sun: 12.00-22.00



These times are under constant review and subject to change where needed.



Regular Monthly events:

Second Friday of Month: Quiz night
Last Friday of Month: Children's Disco
Second Monday of Month: Jazz Night

March 2024 Events

9th Live Music 7.30 p.m.
11th Jazz Night 7.30 p.m.
15th Special Music Quiz Night 8 p.m.
23rd Race Night in association with
The Watlington Players 7.30 p.m.
28th Bingo 7.30 p.m.
31st Easter Funday Kids Party and
evening entertainment T.B.A.

April 2024 Events

6th Live Music Last Train to London 8.p.m.
8th Jazz Night 7.30 p.m.
12th Quiz Night 7.30.p.m.
20th Kids Disco 5-8 p.m.

All events are displayed on the board outside the club

May 2024 Events

5th Play Your Cards Right 8.p.m.
10th Quiz Night 7.30 p.m.
13th Jazz Night 7.30 p.m.
25th Karaoke with
KJ Entertainments 8.p.m.
31st Kids Disco 5-8 p.m.

Website: www.watlingtonsportsandsocialclub.co.uk

Email: info@watlingtonsportsandsocialclub.co.uk

Telephone: 01553 810171

At the time of writing we are around half way through the season, which has started well for most of our sides, with some exciting matches and excellent results over the Christmas period and into the New Year.

Off the field we have been very busy. We have been progressing with the fundraising for the new changing room pavilion which will add well needed facilities for the club, and potentially other new village sporting clubs. Our race night in late November was a great success raising much needed funds; thanks to our Fundraising Committee, the Social Club, and everyone who turned up to support this event. Our Fundraising Ball which will take place Saturday 2 March at The Red Barn is now a key event for us in the near future. Proceeds will help go towards the Pavilion fund and it should be a great evening. The organisation of this event has been carried out by our Fundraising Committee, and they have worked extremely hard. The club would like to send huge thanks to the ladies involved, also some key sponsorship from Limetree Printing which has provided all of our printed product needs for this event.

We have also great pleasure continuing to be a registered as a club for the Wildcats and Squad girls programmes. These initiatives allow us to offer training and squad opportunities for all girls in the village and surrounding areas. As a result we have two active girls sides, with our new Under 14s Girls side joining our established Under 12s. Further to this we are hoping to start more girls teams; please contact douglasparker@hotmail.co.uk for more details of how to get your lionesses involved.

Let's see how the teams have been getting on!

Under 7's (Mixed) 5V5 Format (Non-Competitive)

Halfway through the season this newly formed side are gelling well, with results showing that they have some very talented players. The U7s have made a fantastic start to the season notching up several wins and scoring lots of goals. The future is bright for this talented bunch. For details please contact coach Luke Jackson 07949 197645 or Wayne Hansell 07746 226858.

Under 8's (Mixed) 5V5 Format (Non-Competitive)

After starting the season very well the league has given us some more challenging fixtures. This has tested the side, but overall the team are developing well and getting some really positive results, scoring lots of goals and playing some great football. The future is very promising for this side. This team is at capacity currently with a waiting list to join. However they are happy to coach players ready for next season when the squad can expand.

Under 10's (Mixed) 7v7 Format (Non-Competitive)

Continued development from this team has resulted in the league placing them in the top division for the remaining fixtures. This has proven to be a great challenge to this side who are very determined to keep winning games and scoring goals. They are now also playing some really nice passing football and they have developed some very good players, and work well as a team. This team is currently at capacity.

Under 12 Girl's 9V9 Format (Competitive)

The halfway point of the season has seen a mixed bag of results for our Under 12 Girls. On their day they are a challenge for any of the regional girls' sides. They play some great football and are a really friendly bunch working well as a team. (Currently third: P9 W5 D1 L3). We would also like to pass on thanks to departing coaches Livvi Hodges and Atlanta Stevenson who have decided to step down. Thank you, Livvi and Lanta, for all you have done for these girls, and remember the door is always open should you want to get back into coaching with us.

Under 12's (Mixed) 9V9 Format (Competitive)

This team has started this season really well in the top division. It was perceived as a big step for the side, playing against the

best West Norfolk has to offer. However, they are holding their own and are developing well. They are playing some attractive football and have been competitive in the games played. (Currently fifth: P9 W2 D4 L3) They are hoping to add experienced players to the squad; please contact coach Wayne Hansell for details 07746 226858.

Under 14's 9V9 (Mixed) Format (Competitive)

The Under 14s are another team with a mixed bag of results so far this season - some good wins mixed in with some defeats. The league has such a huge gulf between the top sides and the bottom sides that the results are very inconsistent. They have found it tough in recent weeks but remain competitive. (Currently sixth: P11 W4 D1 L6) They are still looking for a few experienced players to add to the squad; please contact coach Alex Butler for details. alexrbutler@hotmail.com

Under 14's Girls 9V9 Format (Competitive)

The Under 14s girls are a newly formed team and coaches Alex and Matt are working really hard on the training ground with these wonderful young ladies. They are coming up against well-established sides who have been playing for a year or two now. As expected this will be a season of learning and we expect heavy losses, but the girls are improving weekly and are now scoring and being competitive in most games. (Currently fifth: P9 W0 D0 L9)

Under 16's 11V11 Format (Competitive)

The Under 16s have had a topsy turvy middle of the season with some good results and some not so good. The side, however, are always competitive and have been unlucky not to get more wins on the board with some extremely close matches. They are creating chances on a regular basis, but just not putting the ball in the back of the net; I am sure this will click at some point. The team has a really positive team spirit, and we hope some of these boys stay with the club and progress into men's football. (Currently seventh: P13 W4 D0 L9)

Men's First 11V11 Format (Competitive)

A continuation to the great start in Anglian Combination division 4 sees our newly promoted side top the table with a 100% record. The first team are hoping to secure a third successive promotion this season and were hoping to defend the CS Morley cup after getting through the first two rounds. However a first taste of defeat this season saw us bow out 3-2 to Holt Reserves. On a positive note they are still in the hat for the County Cup and hope to improve on last season's semi-final appearance. They are looking for top quality additions to add to an already talented team; if you're that player get in touch. Training at Runcton Holme on Wednesdays.

Men's Reserves 11V11 Format (Competitive)

It has been a difficult start to the season for our reserves who continue to be unlucky in some very close games. They have now chalked up a couple of wins in league and cup. I am sure more wins will come as they have some talented players and have been playing some good football. This has been rewarded by the team making the League Cup semi-finals going through on penalties against Clenchwarton. They are looking for experienced players to add to the squad; please get in touch if you are interested. Training in Watlington on Tuesdays.

Development Team 11V11 Format (Competitive)

The development side have continued to do well and have had some good wins, currently sitting fifth with their only losses coming against the top three sides in the league. The future looks bright for our young side; already we have seen players from this side represent the reserves and the first team. Recently they just fell short of a county cup final appearance losing 4-2 to Swaffham A. We are hoping they continue their early season form and get another year of experience behind them. New players are always welcome, Training at Watlington on Wednesdays.

Doug Parker, Chairman

Watlington What's On & Village Directory

All events and activities take place in the Village Hall, unless otherwise stated.

Every Week

See p36 for Watlington Football Club's training schedule.

Monday

9.30am - 12.30pm Short Mat Bowls
2 - 4pm Watlington Knitters & Stitchers (every 1st and 3rd Monday), see p27
4 - 9.15pm School of Dance*, ballet, tap and jazz lessons for children, young people and adults
6.30 - 8.30pm 2nd Runcton Holme & Watlington Scouts, Scout Hut, Runcton Holme

Tuesday

Alive West Norfolk **

10 - 11am Women Only Workout
11am - 12 noon Community Fitness Class
1 - 2pm Older Adults (see p27)
4 - 9pm School of Dance*, tap lessons
6 - 7.15pm, Beaver Scouts, Scout Hut, Runcton Holme
7.30 - 10pm Watlington Players

Wednesday

9am - 12noon Under 5s
10am - 12noon Mini Wild Things, outdoor activities for small people, Watatunga
6.30 - 8pm Cub Scouts, Scout Hut, Runcton Holme
7 - 9pm Badminton Club

Thursday

4 - 8.45pm School of Dance*, tap, ballet, and modern dance lessons,
1st Watlington and Runcton Holme Brownies & Guides, Scout Hut, Runcton Holme
6 - 7.15pm Brownies; 6.30 - 8pm Guides

Friday

10am School of Dance* Rhythm and Rhyme, for toddlers
12.30 - 5pm Short Mat Bowls
7.30 - 10pm Watlington Players

Saturday

9am - 1.15pm School of Dance*, ballet and tap lessons

* see www.theschoolofdance.uk for more details

** email community@alivewestnorfolk.co.uk to sign up

2nd Runcton Holme & Watlington Scout Group
Andy Nicol: 01553 811201 andy-nicol@hotmail.co.uk
1st Watlington and Runcton Holme Brownies & Guides
Chloe: watlingtonbrownies@gmail.com
Watlington Young Players Penny Cooke: watdance@talktalk.net
Football Doug Parker douglasparser@hotmail.co.uk

Community School: 01553 810468
Preschool: 01553 811035
Under 5s: Contact through Facebook

Village Hall Bookings: 0300 3110234
Village Hall Website: www.watlingtonvillagehallnorfolk.com
Village Hall Email: watlingtonvillagehallnorfolk@gmail.com
Sports & Social Club: 01553 810171

Angel Pub & Restaurant: 01553 811588
Post Office Stores: 01553 810263
Rodwell's Fish & Chips: 07943 844133

Medical Centre: 01553 810253
Emergency: (out of hours) 111 **Pharmacy:** 01553 811045
Health Visitor: 01366 389249
Patient Participation Group: Judith Leigh 07919 280879, watlingtonppg@gmail.com
Hospital: 01553 613613

Month by Month

March

12: WI: The Art of Paint and Decoupage, 7pm
13: Wednesday Club: Lusitania - Loss and Deception in WWI, Jim Stebbings, 2pm
20: Easter Fayre, 3.30 - 5pm, at Watlington CP School
23: Children's Bingo, 2.30pm, in aid of preschool
23: Race Night in aid of Watlington Players, Sports and Social Club, 7.30pm
27: Wednesday Club: Hot Cross Buns & Rabbit Racing, 2pm

April

09: WI: London Fashion House and Stage Costumes, 7pm
09: Annual Parish Meeting, followed by ordinary meeting of the Parish Council, 7pm
10: Wednesday Club: The Role of the Town Crier, Ray Wales, 2pm
24: Wednesday Club: Fete Games, John Murfitt, 2pm

May

04 - 06: Flower Festival, 10am - 4pm, SS Peter and Paul Church
08: Wednesday Club: The Club's 30th Birthday Party, 2pm
14: WI: Gin - a local speciality, open meeting, all welcome, 7pm
14: Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, 7pm
18: Christian Aid Week coffee morning, 10am - 12 noon, SS Peter and Paul Church
22: Wednesday Club: D-Day and the Normandy Aftermath, Richard Gibbons, 2pm
29 - 1 June: Watlington Players, Legally Blonde, 7.30pm

June

08: Watlington Grand Village Fete, 11am - 4pm, Glebe Field

Parish Council - Village Hall Office 01553 810777

All email addresses for the Clerk and Councillors are
@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk

Clerk: Mrs Sara Porter; 42 Church Road, Watlington Village Hall, Watlington, King's Lynn, PE33 0HE ; E: clerk@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk (Urgent Matters outside office hours 01366 502165 / 07941 105697)

Mr R Bailey	07957 366236	cldr.roy.bailey@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk
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Mrs B Leedell	01553 810848	cldr.brenda.leedell@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk
Mr R Rockcliffe	01553 810331	cldr.richard.rockcliffe@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk

Borough Council: 01553 616200

Borough Councillor: Jim Bhondi 07542 229013 / 01553 810263

County Council: 0344 800 8020

County Councillor: Brian Long 07885 258448

MP: Elizabeth Truss: 01842 766155

Churchwardens:

John Murfitt 01553 811086
Barbara Church 01553 810584 / barbarachurch@phonecoop.coop

Norfolk Flooding Helpline: 0344 800 8013

Police: Non-emergency 101

Gas Emergency: 0800 111 999; **Electricity Emergency:** 105

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