

Watlington's Latest Gossip



1999 - 2023

Winter 2023

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Welcome to the Winter issue of your *Latest Gossip*.

In this issue we are celebrating a milestone for the *Gossip* as we reach our 100th issue. This is only the fourth issue for the 'new team' - marking the end of our first year of *Gossip* production - and we can only salute the efforts of our predecessors who produced the first 96 issues.

Our theme for this issue is *Looking Back and Looking Forward*, as we invited our contributors to reflect on the past 25 years of village life, but also the past year and to look forward to the new - after all, this issue covers the month of January, named for Janus, the Roman god of beginnings and endings.

The *Gossip* wouldn't exist without those wonderful contributors, so we toast everyone who has written for the magazine over the past quarter of a century - thank you for your news and views.

Of course, without our advertisers, the *Gossip* could not be produced and distributed free to every household in the village. A particular 'shout out' to Ward Gethin Archer, Mr Beeby, Lynda's Dog Grooming and the School of Dance. Why? Because they have been advertising with us right from the very first issues!

Looking back, you might wonder about the origin of our community magazine's name. The primary school ran a competition and the winning suggestion came from Helen Rodwell, still living in our community and playing an active (some might say vital?!) role in village life.



Helen, now and then!

Speaking of the primary school, turn to page 13 for wonderful news about their triumph in the *Eastern Daily Press* Education Awards. Huge congratulations to everyone at the school. We are so lucky to have a village school where the staff are making sure that every one of our youngest citizens can thrive. In this issue we also have news from the preschool, scouts, guides and Young Players. The village can look forward to a great future with all these busy young people as part of our community.

As we look forward also to issues 101 and beyond, please let us know what you would like to see in these pages. On page 31 we ask for your news about local charities and voluntary organisations. But what else should we be featuring here? We look forward to hearing from you!

Emma B, Judith L and Kirstie U

Watlington's Latest Gossip

Published by the Volunteer Committee of
Watlington Community Magazine

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All advertising enquiries, correspondence
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single email address:

watlatestgossip@gmail.com

No internet access?

Pop your article or letter into the *Gossip*
box in the Post Office.



The Watlington Community Magazine is compiled by
volunteers from the village and relies upon advertisers
for its continued funding.

The committee does not accept any responsibility for
the accuracy or otherwise of any article or
advertisement appearing in the pages of the *Gossip*,
nor does it necessarily agree with any of the viewpoints
expressed by our contributors in articles or other items
in these pages.

Front Cover

*Jean Papworth planting the original tree at the
centre of the Millennium Green /
The Millennium Green tree today, Martin Berliner*

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Deadline for the Next Issue

The deadline for **Issue 101** of the *Gossip* is
1 February for publication
by 1 March 2024

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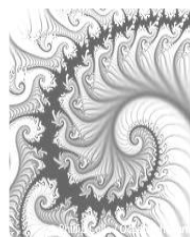
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Bill and Dolly's Donkey Field

Twenty-five years ago a small group of villagers had an idea, borne out of an opportunity that comes around every thousand years or so. What if we could buy the donkey field from the holding company of the local pub and create something special for the village? After much hard work, eight trustees came forward (five from the Parish Council) and in 1998 a charity was established to acquire the field and manage it as an open area for the village as a millennium project. The Angel Field Millennium Green was required to include a wild flower meadow as part of the design, with a view that it remains an area to benefit the inhabitants, providing opportunities for informal recreation and a meeting area for community events.

With all such projects, securing funding involved a lot of applications to various funders, most important being the government through their Millennium Green initiative. When securing funds local commitment from the Parish Council was essential, and with this pledged, a cocktail of funding was secured, each having criteria which brought differing obligations.

Money was obtained from grants to purchase the land, lay hard footpaths and start landscaping. The main features are the puzzle path, the sundial, the pond and bog area and the amphitheatre. Planting wild flower seeds and plug plants came later, along with the hedging plants. Now everything has matured and, of course, it needs managing.

A survey in 2014 found 54 types of wild flower and nine different grasses. By 2021 a survey found over 100 varieties of wild flower and grass – so clearly the biodiversity objectives which are the essence of the green are working. Inevitably seeds are often wind-borne, whilst bird and insect activity have also enriched what can be found here.

The pétanque pitch is part of the Millennium Green and could do with more use to keep the weeds at bay. Weeding this is to be the focus of the volunteers over the coming weeks to ensure it can be readily enjoyed by all come next spring and summer.

The Parish Council has been hugely important over the years to cover many fixed costs, such as grass cutting, public liability insurance, and maintenance materials. Without such support the handful of Trustees and volunteers who work hard to manage the green could not continue. Inevitably some of the original volunteers have retired or passed on but the benefits left are part of their legacy to the community.

Regular grass cutting has largely been contracted out but some particular grass cutting is still carried out. Wet summers are a particular challenge as, to optimise benefits for plant and wildlife, it helps to allow the plants to drop their seed prior to cutting. This gives chase to the major grass cut, drying

for hay and getting it baled and carted before everything is ruined. On occasions, when the weather is against us, the result is a huge amount of hard work and sometimes extra costs which we try to avoid if at all possible.

The village pound, historically for stray animals, was recreated around the village sign and belongs to the Parish Council.

If you are under 30 and walk through the green think on the past efforts by former villagers, who had the foresight and willingness to try and build something for future generations to enjoy for many years. There is always plenty to do and if you want to help, just turn up on the first Saturday of the month when volunteers can often be found tackling something.

Mike Carter

Continuity

I used to visit Watlington

When I was just a kid.

I always had a lot of fun

Thought - "I'll move here" - so I did.

I remember more shops, and more than one pub

A portacabin was the social club.

The "Old Black Hut" was the church hall

Where villagers met and had a ball.

Where houses now stand there once were fields

And orchards, with enormous yields.

But time's relentless march goes on

And change has come to Watlington.

The Gossip has recorded 25 years

Of village fun, shared joys and cares.

The social hubs are smart and bright

We've got a chippy - what a delight!

But one core thing has just not gone -

What it means to live in Watlington.

For no matter what the changes bring
Constant, unchanging, is one thing.

We are a great community

Welcoming, as you welcomed me.

And looking forward, as youngsters mature

There is one thing of which I'm sure

That they too will cherish this place

As they the older folk replace

And take on the mantle of those who are gone

To fly the flag of Watlington.

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Planning for next year's fête is well underway with the main attractions and necessary attendees, such as the PA system and First Aid, all booked in. We have confirmed a different funfair for next year due to several issues, the main one being the cost of the rides. The new funfair is very happy to do a full day wristband to help keep costs down and let everyone enjoy their day's entertainment while not breaking the bank. We also hope to have a fly past of a Spitfire, Hurricane and possibly even the Red Arrows. The application has been submitted by a resident of our village. How exciting!

All our planning and preparation does depend on the support we receive from volunteers. To enable the fête to go ahead next year, we hope to see lots of people at our AGM on 16 January 2024. Posters will be put up nearer the time with more details. You would be most welcome to join the committee, help on the day or put new ideas forward, but we do need help to be able to continue. Every year the fête gets bigger and better and is enjoyed by so many. It would be a real shame to lose such a wonderful family day.

For more information, to book a stall or arena demonstration, please contact us at
E: watlingtonfete@outlook.com
T: 811521
M: 07551 757679

Emma, Chair

The quest for solar panels continues! We have been advised of a particular grant, opening at the start of 2024, and we hope to make a successful application. We need a significant portion of installation costs to be in with a chance of success, so we have a few fundraisers coming up. By the time you read this we will have held a Table Top sale, on 26 November, and the last quiz of the year will be on Saturday 9 December at 7pm. I promise it won't be as hard as the last one! Who knew Dingbats could be so confusing?

Regular hirers may have noticed we now have a shiny, new fridge freezer after the old one broke down and couldn't be repaired. Everyone is welcome to use it but please throw away any out of date items; some things nearly crawled out by themselves last time I looked! We have also installed a motion activated light sensor in the ladies' toilets (main hall) as a trial before doing other areas. The lights will automatically turn off seven minutes after the last movement detected and we hope this will help reduce our outrageous electricity bill. To that end, we now also have Smart thermostats that turn the hot water and heating on and off according to the village hall bookings diary. If we can only sort the new internet connection out, we'll be golden!

Any booking enquiries please look at our interactive booking diary on watlingtonvillagehallnorfolk.com or call 0300 311 0234.

Emma, Chair

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Saturday 9 December
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What is it? Where is it?

It is a designated desk top computer with internet access, provided in the

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Using the CIP instead of travelling into King's Lynn could save you time, travel or telephone expense.

What you can do at the CIP?

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- pay for Borough Council services online (for example, Council Tax, and car park season tickets)
- pay or appeal parking fines
- make a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support
- get information on refuse and recycling, view bin collection times, report a missed bin collection and apply for or cancel a garden waste bin
- register to vote

You can also use the CIP computer to:

- book theatre tickets for the Corn Exchange, Princess Theatre or Arts Centre
- search for and apply for jobs

Printing and photocopying is also available

The **Community Information Point (CIP)** is usually available on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11am and 2pm in the

Watlington Parish Council Office

(by the small car park at the Village Hall).

Tel: 01553 810777 to check office is open

Help is available if required.

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.

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Recent Winning Numbers

	£100	£40	£15	£10	£5	£5
August	116	-	73	36	90	149
Sept	-	69	26	44	65	116
Oct	-	142	57	5	29	160

Since the last report in the Gossip the Parish Council has met three times, on 25 July, 5 September and 14 October. Read on for an update on the work of the Council.

Community

The Council arranged to purchase a poppy wreath from the Downham Market and District Branch of the Royal British Legion, to be laid at the war memorial in the churchyard on Remembrance Sunday, and voted to increase the donation for this from £30 to £35.

The Council adopted the Emergency Plan prepared by the Community Resilience Support Working Party. It is available on the Parish Council website here: <https://tinyurl.com/WatEmergency>

The Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group's work is also nearing completion. A **referendum** will be held on **Thursday 7 December** for parishioners to vote on the question, *Do you want the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Watlington to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?* More information, including a copy of the plan itself, can be found on the Parish Council website: <https://tinyurl.com/WatNeighbourhood>

Footpaths and Community Spaces

The Council noted that the hedge along the footpath from Fairfield Lane to Fendley Close was overgrown and impeding access. Councillor Rockcliffe undertook to identify the landowner, so that the Clerk could write to them about this.

The Council had been contacted by a resident regarding two silver birch trees on Meadows Green which had become overgrown and were encroaching on his and a neighbour's garden. The Clerk confirmed that her investigations showed that the Council is in breach of the law so action must be taken. Quotes obtained for work to reduce the size of the trees were much higher than expected. The Council has therefore asked the Clerk to investigate the possibility of a contract with Treelink, to trim all the Council-owned trees, hedges and bushes annually, so that they are kept maintained and to prevent problems arising in future. Meanwhile, the

Council has contracted Treelink to reduce the height of the two silver birch trees at a cost of £600.

Funding has been granted from the National Lottery Community Fund for the installation of the Monkey Challenge Climbing Wall on the Stone Close play area. However, the Clerk had received a complaint from local residents, because children climbing on top of the wall had waved to them while they were eating lunch in their kitchen. As it is impossible to relocate the wall, the Clerk had ordered child and animal friendly climbing deterrents to stop people from climbing on top of the wall, together with signs warning against doing so. Unfortunately, shortly after the spikes were installed an incident took place in which a child was hurt and a claim has been made against the Council. The matter is being handled by the Council's insurance company, and the spikes have been removed. The residents have been informed and asked to contact the Council if they see children climbing on top of the wall and intruding on their privacy.

Councillor Golding reported that the picnic bench on the Martingales Green needs to be moved; unfortunately its position under the silver birch tree meant that it had attracted a large number of bird droppings. The Council approved funding of £43.20 to buy an anchoring kit and would ask the Community Payback Team to move and fix it in its new position.

CCTV of the Glebe Field had shown a family playing golf. In view of this, the Council agreed to investigate erecting large, pictorial safety notices at both ends of the field. It was also noted that signage in all the village play areas should be reviewed to ensure that all relevant safety information is up to date.

Sports Pavilion

A donation of £400 has been received from the Watlington Village Fete towards the pavilion fund. A Community Infrastructure Levy application for £100,000 has been submitted to the Borough Council, the outcome to be known by November. Together with £200,000 which Mr Wall, the bid writer, hopes to obtain from bids to the Football Foundation and Norfolk Football Association, this should represent about ¾ of the required budget.

At a meeting in October representatives of the Watlington Football Club had expressed concern that they would be expected to pay much higher fees for the use of the new pavilion, compared to the amount they currently pay. However, Mr Wall explained that costs for utilities, caretaker maintenance, cleaning and so on would need to be included in the bids, and that although other sporting groups would use the pavilion, the Football Club is likely to be by far the largest user. The Club's match and membership fees are currently very low, and it is therefore essential that the Club raises its fees and restructures its finances in order to ensure the success of the project.

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 Tuesdays and 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



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1/8	£65	£55	£60	£65	£65
1/4	£95	£80	£90	£95	£95
1/2	£135	£125	£130	£135	£135
Full	£225	£175	£195	£225	£225

Traffic, Roads and Transport

One of the SAM2 speed signs has been vandalised. The Council approved costs of £427.80 to get this repaired.

The Council heard that PC Cowen has undertaken three speed monitoring sessions on Downham Road, resulting in four drivers being issued with Traffic Offence Reports.

Councillor Golding has been in touch with the Highways Engineer regarding the faded zig zag lines at the school and zebra crossing by the Angel, and he has confirmed that these are on the programme of works to be repainted this year.

Litter

Large litter signs were placed on the roads entering the village in July by Councillors Berliner and Rockcliffe, assisted by the Community Payback Team. A post about this on the village Facebook page had received 46 likes, but time is needed to see how effective this is in reducing littering along the roadsides. County Councillor Long donated £555 from his Annual Local Member Fund to cover the cost of the signs.

The Council donated £20 to the 2nd Runcton Holme and Watlington Scout Group to cover the cost of 1000 dog waste bags that they had purchased to fill their hand made dog bag dispensers, located around the village, and in recognition of their hard work in support of keeping the village clean.

A resident had been in contact about dog fouling on Gypsy Lane, and had asked whether a dog bin and sign could be placed there. Unfortunately the Borough Council will not collect dog waste from a private road, and in addition the cost of dog bins has increased substantially. It was suggested that, since a bin cannot be placed on a private lane, the scouts might be asked to place a dog bag dispenser there, and the Clerk would investigate the possibility of some signage, in the hope that these actions would encourage dog walkers to clean up after their charges.

Meanwhile the large dog bin at the Great Ouse Relief Channel car park has been completely destroyed after a hot disposable barbeque had been placed in it. The Rapid Relief Team had donated a 50L capacity replacement, but the Borough Council will now only empty bins with a maximum capacity of 25L, so it cannot be used as is. At the following meeting Councillor Golding reported that the plastic dog bin on Fendley Close had also been damaged. She suggested that, if the Fendley Close bin could be repaired it could replace the metal bin at the junction of Fairfield Lane and the Millennium Green, allowing that bin to be relocated to the River Ouse car park.

The waste bin in Fairfield Lane, at the Jackson Close link, had been vandalised beyond repair. Unfortunately the cost of replacement bins has increased considerably, and as there are bins at either end of Fairfield Lane, the Councillors felt that the bin should not be replaced.

At the May meeting, Councillors had approved relocating the litter bin on the Langridge Circle green closer to the bench. However, in the interim it had been discovered that the bin was cemented into the ground and therefore cannot be moved. In light of the high cost of bins, it was decided that the purchase of an additional bin could not be justified, particularly as one should be sufficient for such a small space.

Two members of the public had visited the office to report an increasing rat problem by the commercial waste container units at the village hall. The Councillors feel that the issues are arising from the village hall container, not the Council's, since food products are typically found in the hall's rubbish bags, and these are sometimes left on the ground if the container is full. The matter would therefore be referred to the village hall committee.

WATLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

New Contact Information

with immediate effect

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

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Watlington Parish Council

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Watlington CP School

We have been so busy since the start of term. We have celebrated our second Annual Pumpkin Carving competition and have been so impressed by the creativity of the children's designs.



We also had our first Halloween disco at school and were delighted to share this with the pre-school.

We had a lovely service in school with Barbara and Rev. David for Harvest Celebration; thank you to everyone who donated food for the Downham Market Food Bank.

We have been busy after school as well, with clubs on Monday to Thursday each night: football, craft and dodgeball.

In other exciting news, we are so pleased to announce that the school was voted 'primary school of the year' at the EDP Education awards. This award recognises how much the school has improved in the last year and we thank everyone for their support in making that possible.

We have embraced the British value of democracy and elected our school council representatives and house captains, and look forward to seeing our pupils develop their leadership skills.

Our cross country runners had a fantastic day out at Hillcrest to compete in our local competition; congratulations to Jack, Libby, Freya and Florrie who all qualified for the next round.



The fantastic cross country runners.

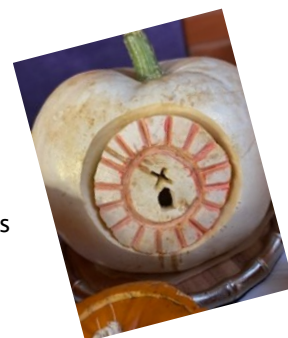
qualified for the next round.

If you have a child due to start school in September 2024, why not join us at our stay and play each Monday of the month at 3.30pm. If you would like a

tour of the school please contact the office to make an appointment.

As we look forward to the remainder of 2023, we are excited about a huge variety of events in school including:

- Poppy Appeal
- Remembrance Assembly
- Diabetes Awareness Day
- 17th Children in Need
- PTA AGM
- House Day - World Religions
- Christmas Countdown Day
- Christmas Fayre
- Key Stage 1 Nativity
- Key Stage 2 Carol Service at Church
- Christmas Jumper Day



From all at Watlington CP School, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and very Happy New Year.



WATLINGTON CP SCHOOL

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Ages 2-4 years

Play and activities on offer

1st Monday each month (excluding holidays)
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15th April, 13th May, 3rd June, 1st July
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Watlington Preschool

We had a lovely, exceptionally mild, Autumn term. This meant we were able to spend lots of time outside which is one of our favourite things to do. We had a large intake of new little people who have settled in brilliantly well and the children who returned to us after the summer break are now enjoying being the "bigger" guys in the room!



water play

Each set of preschoolers is different in their interests and we try to offer lots of experiences to the children, based around these, to enhance their learning and of course to have lots of fun too.

Lots of our children are loving construction activities and have great ideas for making models. We love our water play and constantly have a washing line of drying clothes as we get pretty wet!! Many of our activities these days stem from spur of the moment interests such as when the children spotted some apples on the tree in the school garden. We picked some and then the children prepared them and we tasted and cooked them too. Our friend Katherine helped us plant some radishes too, and those that were brave had a little taste.

We had a fab Halloween disco over at the primary school where lots of spooky costumes were on show. Thanks as always to our committee for organising this and our other fundraising events.

We like to be physically active and this term we've been looking at different types of dancing and having a go. Irish dancing and ballet dancing have both proved popular with the children and at time of going to press one of our parents, who is a dance instructor, is going to come in and teach us some routines.

Along the theme of "Looking back and forwards", when the *Gossip* first went into print our preschool was operating from the village hall and looking back it was very hard work getting all of the toys and furniture out every morning and packing away at the end of the day. We moved to our new home in the school grounds in 2011 and we love it. It is such a bonus having our own big garden areas and being able to be as messy



preparing apples for tasting

as we like!! As carers and educators our whole job works around looking back at what children have done and then looking forward at how we can move their learning on and prepare them ready for school.

By the time you read this *Gossip* we will be well into the mad season of Christmas crafts, bathing in glitter and singing our favourite seasonal tunes and, unbelievably, the year will be coming to an end.

Merry Christmas one and all!

Best wishes from the Blue Team

Watlington Young Players

Since we returned in September we have been busy with various workshops which we hope will improve our performance skills. We also had a welcome back party and invited Tim Owen, one of the 3 Men Walking group, who received the cheque for £452 on behalf of Papyrus, the society whose aim is to support the prevention of young suicide. Tim spoke to the children about the exciting time he has had since the walk, including meeting the Prime Minister in the garden of Number 10. He also said that, as a result of the monies raised since the walk, their helpline (Hopelink UK - 0800 068 4141) will now be operating 24 hours a day. He was very impressed with the amount of money we raised for the charity as a result of the raffle and bucket collection during the performances of *Matilda Jr* in July. Thank you to all our parents, family members and audiences for your support, both for the production and for this worthwhile cause. The photograph shows Tim Owen being presented with the cheque by Debbie Bennett, director of *Matilda Jr.*, surrounded by members of the cast and some new WYPS recruits.



We have welcomed several new members this term and at the moment we are full. However we do have a waiting list and I am still willing to take names to add to the list.

By the time you all read this we will have held our annual Children in Need mini fete on 17 November. I will be able to tell you how much money we raised during that evening in the next *Gossip*. This will be our 13th CiN fete since we formed in 2011.

We shall shortly be starting our rehearsals for our next musical - *Beauty and the Beast*. This year we are going to hold three performances as we sold out our last production a month before the show. The dates are Saturday 13 July at 3.30pm and 7.30 pm and Sunday 14 July at 2.30pm. So please make a note in your diaries if you wish to see our young stars of the future!!

I should like to end by congratulating the *Gossip* teams, past and present, on this the 100th edition. What an achievement and so many thanks for keeping all of us in the village of Watlington informed of all the activities held here.

Penny Cooke



IT'S WINTER 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.

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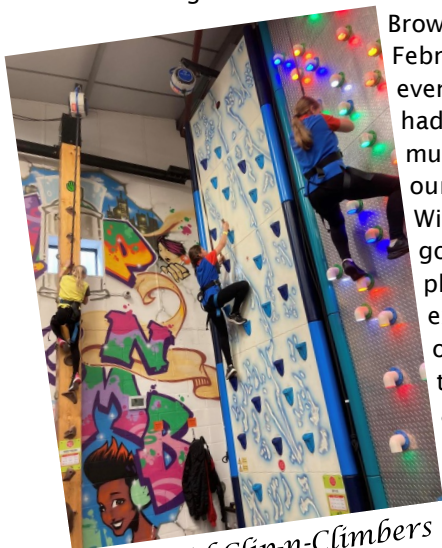
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Cakes, climbing, and camps!

If you were a Brownie or a Guide, you will likely have very fond memories of camping. Since Girlguiding was established over 100 years ago, camping has changed quite a lot - the beds are more comfortable, and the torches have better battery life, but camps are still an opportunity for fun, friendship and independence.

1st Watlington and Runcton Holme Brownies last had a Brownie sleepover in February 2020, and it's been even longer since the Guides had a camp. So we're very much looking forward to our upcoming Guides' Winter Sleepover! We've got lots of activities planned which will help us explore Christmas and other winter festival traditions. One of the activities we're most looking forward to is cooking an African curry as we learn about the African-American winter celebration Kwanzaa.



Intrepid Clip-n-Climbers

The sleepover will finish off a fantastic term. So far this term...

- 16 girls with five leaders visited Cambridge for a treasure hunt and to climb as high as they could at Clip'N'Climb.
- six girls were invited to celebrate Halloween with the Grange nursing home in Downham Market. They took part in crafts with some of the residents, many of whom had been Brownies and Guides themselves and had lots of stories to share.
- everyone brought a baked treat they'd made at home for our "Halloween Bake Off", to be judged by some of the leaders. The winners were a cheese straw snake and some incredible decorated cupcakes.



Star Bakers!

We've welcomed several new Brownies and Guides this term. Although we're now two brilliantly-sized groups, if your daughter would like to join Brownies (ages 7-10) or Guides (ages 11-14), please email watlingtonbrownies@gmail.com

Chloe

2nd Runcton Holme & Watlington Scouts have started the new school year welcoming lots of new members to each section and our Trustee Board. Our AGM at the start of term was attended by lots of parents and carers who were not only able to find out about our Group's activities over the past year, but also learn about and handle some unusual creatures with our special guests JSL Chams. The bearded dragons, giant land snails, stick insects and the very friendly and chilled out chameleon were a real hit with everyone.

We also presented a special award to Bob Keens, who retired as group Scout Leader this year, to thank him for his many decades of leadership and support of the group. Bob will continue to be involved as our Group President.



On a very warm weekend at the start of October, some of our Scouts joined 42 of their peers from across North West Norfolk District, along with eight Explorers and 30 adults, to take part in the annual Survival Camp at Wolferton. The scouts were mixed with other local troops and, with the support of the adults, first had to construct a shelter ready for the Saturday night. They were given coloured tokens to "spend" on their meals. Red tokens for protein, green for fruit and veg etc to create balanced menus. It was a fun weekend for all involved, focusing on teamwork, leadership, camp tidiness, shelter construction, fire maintenance and so on, and each Scout has been awarded their Survival Activity Badge.



Survival Camp at Wolferton

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

Watatunga Wildlife Reserve

A Roundup of the 2023 Season at Watatunga Wildlife Reserve

As the year draws to a close, Watatunga Wildlife Reserve reflects on a season filled with both remarkable achievements and unexpected challenges, a testament to the resilience and unwavering dedication of our team.

The 2023 season kicked off with a bang when we were awarded the prestigious Best Small Visitor Attraction of the Year for East Anglia, a recognition that affirmed our commitment to providing an exceptional wildlife experience for our visitors.

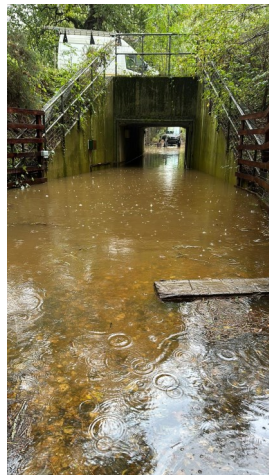


Dr Robert Aruho

In April, we welcomed the esteemed Head of the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy, Dr Robert Aruho, and other key members of the Bongo Future initiative, further strengthening our ties with conservation efforts in Africa. This was followed by

the arrival of our new Reserve Operations Manager, Molly Ruder, who brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to our team.

May brought a sudden and challenging turn of events when heavy rainfall triggered severe floods, inundating the reserve with over 115mm of rain in just two hours. Our team rallied together to ensure the safety of our animals and visitors. Despite the disruption, the return of the beloved bongo to the reserve added a silver lining to the stormy clouds; one of the world's rarest antelope species, who had been temporarily relocated.



Storm Babet's chaos

June marked a triumphant moment as we were awarded Gold at the Visit England Awards for Excellence; the pinnacle accolade for small visitor attractions in England. We are so proud to have brought this calibre of recognition to the East of England and to highlight our commitment to excellence and dedication to creating a memorable experience for our visitors.

July saw us return to the annual Royal Norfolk Show, the largest agricultural show in the UK, where we exhibited the unique biodiversity of our reserve to a wide audience of over 80,000 visitors. Amidst the festivities, the long-awaited Visit England accolade arrived, having undergone a



roan antelope

tumultuous journey of its own, surviving a previous tumble after an excited victory dance from Anna, adding a touch of comic relief to an otherwise momentous occasion.

August brought a wave of exciting additions to our wildlife family, but first we welcomed British Deer Society's Graham Downing for a thrilling visit. His full-page spread in the summer edition of Digital Deer highlighted Watatunga's



significance in the conservation landscape. Later on, we also welcomed Hattie, a beautiful Eurasian crane from our partners at Pensthorpe, and a trio of roan antelope, further enhancing the diversity of our species.

September marked a pivotal moment as Julian journeyed to Scotland to welcome two female white-lipped deer to the reserve, kicking off a new

month of further expansion and innovation. Our latest Forest School program Mini Wild Things commenced, providing young children with the opportunity to connect with nature in a fun and theatrical setting every Wednesday from 10.00-12.00. We also launched our first art experience, offering visitors the chance to express their creativity inspired by the beauty of our reserve. To celebrate our most successful summer to date, we hosted a Harvest Celebration for our entire team, fostering a sense of camaraderie and appreciation for their hard work.



Mini Wild Things

October saw our first external conservation event as our stretch tent was used to host the Saola Foundation, supporting a critically endangered ungulate found only in the Annamite Mountains of Laos and Vietnam. We also welcomed renowned conservationist Nick Acheson to the reserve, further strengthening our commitment to wildlife preservation.

However, the month ended on a sombre note as one of the UK's largest storms of the year brought yet more widespread flooding, disrupting our activities, if only for a short while. Despite these setbacks, we remain optimistic and determined to continue our mission to conserve and educate about the world's endangered wildlife.



Nick Acheson and bongo Mtoto

As we look back on the 2023 season, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support of our visitors, staff and supporters. Your belief in our vision has enabled us to achieve remarkable milestones and continue to make a positive impact. Next year, our focus will be on communicating our conservation work regularly and we're excited to have some groundbreaking projects afoot. Please do sign up to our newsletter via the website for monthly updates and please consider giving a Watatunga tour voucher as a Christmas gift that will be enjoyed by multiple generations next year.

In keeping with the theme of this 100th edition of the *Gossip*, 'Looking back and looking forward', I have been thinking about my interest in nature. From a very small boy my parents encouraged my interest in nature. On visits to my Norfolk grandparents, we would go for walks in the lanes and droves and they would find birds' nests and wild flowers for me to look at. In those days, in spring and summer there would be turtle doves, cuckoos and yellowhammers singing everywhere. My grandparents' house would have numerous house martin nests under the eaves. People I have spoken to who have lived in Watlington for a long time have told me that it was like that here too. This year I have not seen or heard a turtle dove and only occasionally the cuckoo and yellowhammer. I do not know of anywhere in the village where house martins are nesting.

However house martins nest under the bridge at Magdalen and there are breeding projects for turtle doves in order to reintroduce them to the wild. The number of nature reserves and their continued development suggests the future for nature looks quite promising. Our own nature reserve in Watlington, Watatunga, as well as doing a wonderful job in breeding endangered antelopes is also a haven for all our local wildlife.

Although climate change is something we should all be concerned about as it could be catastrophic for humans and some other animal species, other species will benefit and thrive; we are already seeing some species extend their range. It is quite common whilst travelling along St Peter's Road to see egrets on the fields or standing on the edge of the dykes. There were no egrets to be seen in this country when I was a boy. Also within Watlington it is quite common to see buzzards and red kites and they are wide spread so they are seen on most of the journeys that I make. Again, they were not seen at all when I was a boy. I have seen spoonbills feeding in the saltmarsh channels of the North Norfolk coast and this year bee eaters were recorded in Norfolk.

A recent example of this was the discovery of a new addition to the wildlife of the Millennium Green by volunteer Annie Bird whilst doing her wildflower survey. This was a wasp spider which was first recorded in this



Wasp spider, a recent arrival in Watlington

country in the south of England in 1922. It has slowly extended its range north and now we have it in Watlington. This year many other people have reported seeing it in their gardens or whilst out in the countryside. It is a rather attractive spider, its body mimicking that of a wasp which makes predators think twice about making a meal of it. It is in fact quite harmless so if you see one there is nothing to fear.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries any unusual bird would have been shot and stuffed for someone's collection. Although to us it seems awful it was different thinking then. Then the adage was "what's hit is history, what's missed is mystery". The people doing the shooting were not always just callously shooting them, they were genuinely interested in the birds and



Bee eaters. Can we look forward to seeing them more often in Norfolk?

would record and measure them. Thankfully today we can shoot them with our cameras and build up our collections of photographs. We can also instantly share our observations of nature with others via our computers, tablets or mobile phones.

So while I look back on my nature watching of the past with fond memories, I look forward to nature watching in the future as there is always something interesting to see and anticipate.

Chris Dyson



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Watlington Walks

Hi everyone. I hope some of you managed to enjoy the Downham and Denver walk in the last issue. I heard that a few may have sampled the cider in the little bar at Denver mill! One of the many advantages of using the train.

So, onward to our next walk and I have a circular walk for you from Watlington, along the River Ouse to Wiggenhall St Germans and back to Watlington. The modern name "Wiggenhall" is derived from "Wicga's Nook" suggesting a parcel of land belonging to Wicga. "St Germans" refers to Germanus, Duke of Burgundy who became a priest after an altercation with a local bishop, to whom the village church is dedicated.

Watlington and Wiggenhall St Germans Circular 6½ or 4½ miles

You have a choice of two convenient starting points, so you can make this walk a distance of 6½ or 4½ miles depending on how energetic you are feeling. The river bank path is well maintained and drains well but there are a couple of slippery sections in the winter, so walking boots or shoes with good grips are advised. There is a village shop *en route* so you can reward yourself with a drink or snack in St Germans, the halfway point in our walk.

The start for the longer walk is the centre of the Millenium Green, opposite the Angel pub (A). The shorter walk starts at the car park just outside Magdalen (B), on the Watlington (East) side of the Relief Channel (1).



Starting from the Millenium Green, head down Station Road towards the railway station. Cross the tracks and join the trod on the left-hand side of the road. This trod was installed as the result of cooperation between Watlington and Magdalen parish councils, which secured funding through Norfolk county council's parish partnership scheme, to allow villagers to walk safely between the villages. Unfortunately, the trod does switch sides a couple of times so you need to cross the road twice as you head towards Magdalen. Be careful! The crossing points are near a bend in the road so it can be hard to see what's coming. Keep going, past the entrance to Bell's Drove and on towards the Relief



Channel where we find the start point for the shorter walk at the car park on the left.

Head over the Relief Channel (2) and then the River Ouse and then cross the road to end up outside The Cock pub (3). Beside the pub, next to the



river is the entrance to the river bank path (4). Join this path (it could be muddy) and head North along the river bank.

You will spot what looks like a very old house on the left. This is River Bank

House (5). Well it is old, but not as old as its style implies. It was built mid-18th century.



Here we are, above the surrounding landscape with lovely views to the East and West. As you walk (North) along the river bank, look ahead and you should see two churches. The first one you'll encounter is the derelict remains of



St Peter's (6), on the opposite side of the river. We'll visit this on our way back to Watlington. The

second church you'll see is St Germain's (7).



Follow the river bank path and soon we have reached St Germans village and its bridge over the Ouse. Descend, carefully, the muddy slope next to the house with the lifebuoy on the wall (8) and join the road, turning right to cross the bridge on Lynn Road.

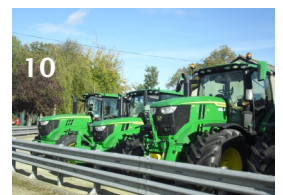


On the other side of the bridge is the Crown and Anchor pub (9), sadly closed, but the subject of a community pub project that is just getting underway as I'm writing this. There is also the village shop where you can take a well-earned stop for a rest and refreshment. This is the halfway point in the walk.

If you want to visit the church of St Germain's, take the lane between the pub and the John Deere dealership with its lineup of lovely shiny tractors (10).



After your break and visit to the church, continue along Lynn Road in the same direction as before, past the bus stop and tractors. You will come to a bend in the





road with a junction on the right. Take this right turn into St Peters Road (11).

Keep straight on and exit the village. You are heading in the direction of Wiggenhall St Peters.



You will come to a junction with a grass triangle in the middle of the road (12). Take the right turn to stay on St Peters Road. You should see "dead-end" and "uneven road" signs, and St Peter's church in the distance.

Follow this road past a tumble-down shed on the left and neat horse paddocks on the right. Pass a few nice houses and you will eventually arrive at St Peter's church (13).

You can go into the churchyard and find the information board where you can read a little about the history of this, now derelict, church.

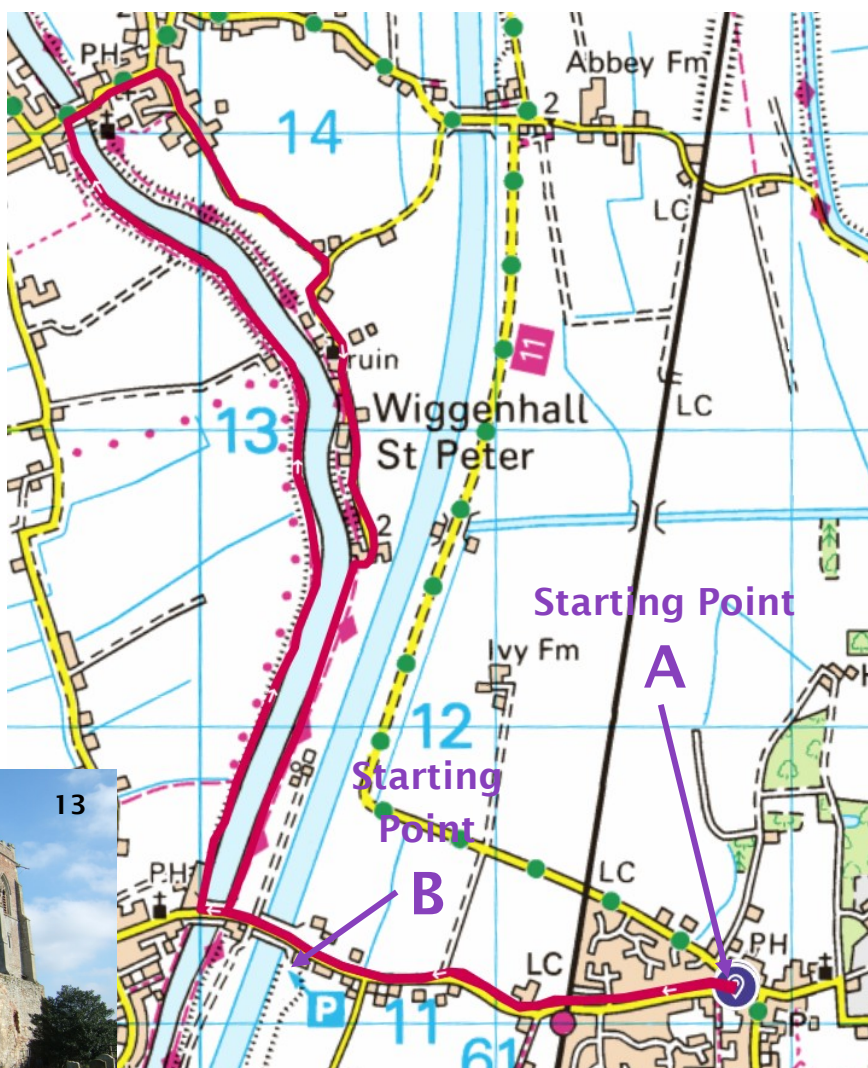
After visiting the church, continue down St Peters Road, past terraced cottages, old barns and farm buildings, modern bungalows, hedgerows and fields. The tarmac will eventually stop and grass will be in the middle of the road but keep going right to the very end (14).



The road finally bends to the right and takes you up onto the riverbank past a shiny metal gate (15). Interestingly, this road only became a dead-end when the Relief Channel was dug in the 1960s. It originally carried on and joined the St Peters Road that we all know leaves Watlington. What we all call the "back-road".

Anyway, you are now on the opposite river bank to the one we were on earlier and turning left (South), you will head back towards Magdalen (16).

Halfway along this section you might find yourself



speeding up a bit as you walk past, and experience the aromas coming from, the sewage plant. It sometimes seems like a theme park for the seagulls, complete with "log" flume! Ewww! Well, this is what keeps our toilets flushing!

Once past this, when you think it is safe to breathe again, continue towards the bridge ahead and eventually descend off the bank and onto the road. Turn left heading East and cross the Relief Channel bridge to the car park, if you started here, or continue back towards Watlington, crossing the railway tracks and back into the village and the Millenium Green. Make sure you give those boots a good clean!

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

Take care and enjoy,

Hugh Pearce





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What to Look Out for Around Watlington

Looking forward, Chris Dyson suggests what we should be keeping our eyes peeled for in...

December



dark nights



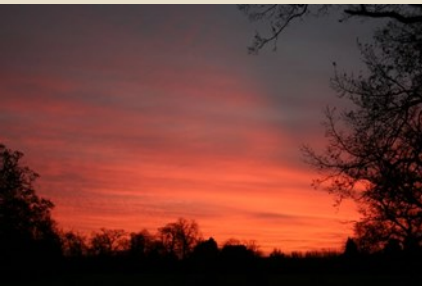
blue tit visiting the garden



Christmas rose

Look out for long dark nights as we approach the shortest day on the 21st, increasing numbers of birds coming to our bird tables and feeders, Christmas roses (*Helleborus niger*) in bloom in gardens and holly full of red berries.

January



winter sunset



snow



snowdrops

Look out for beautiful winter sunsets and possibly some snow, although hopefully not too much! Look out for snowdrops and aconites blooming in the gardens and woods.

February



hazel catkins



blackbirds feeding in the frost



Iris stylosa

Look out for catkins on the hazel, alder, elm and poplar trees. Look out for repeated frosty mornings. Look out for the Algerian iris, *Iris stylosa*, in bloom and, depending on the weather, other plants beginning to show signs of growth.

Watlington Village Fete AGM

Tuesday 16 January, 7pm
Village Hall committee room

Do you have an interest in vintage vehicles, crafts or dogs? Perhaps you're an excellent organiser or keen on balancing the budget? If you would like to do something for the village community, why not join us? You'll meet some fantastic people along the way, and it won't happen without you!

NO Allotment Vacancies

There are **no** plots available to rent on the Council allotment sites at the time of going to press. Please contact the Parish Clerk if you would like to join the waiting list.

Watlington Players

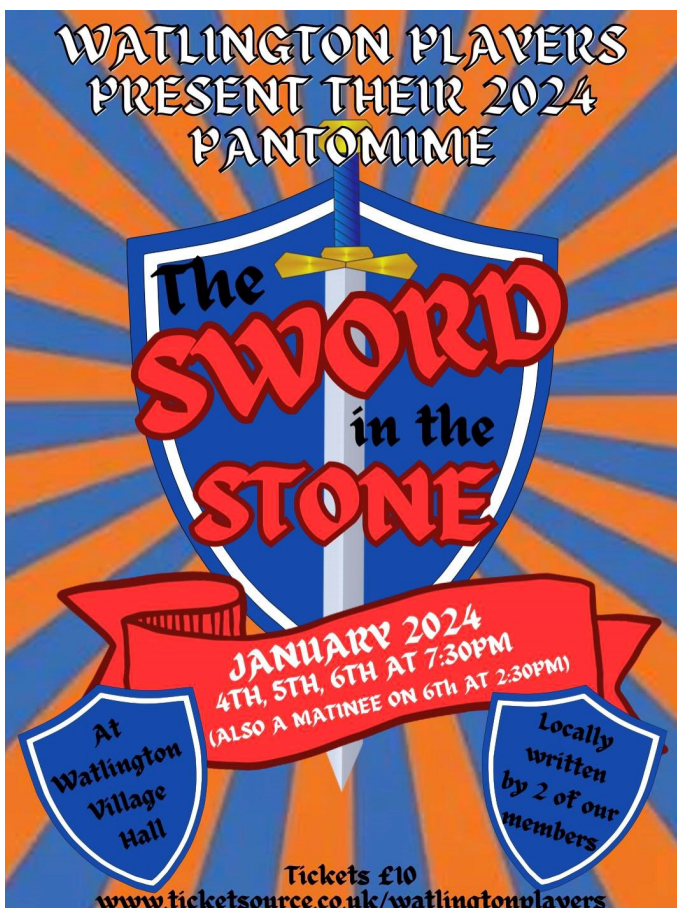
Congratulations to all the cast and crew of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* – what a fantastic show! Thank you to everyone who supported us.

Our next production will be our Christmas pantomime – *The Sword in the Stone*. A traditional pantomime filled with myth and fun! All the details are on the poster. Please book tickets before they sell out. *Chitty* proved to be another sell-out success (as have most of our recent shows) so don't delay!

You can book tickets at:
www.ticketsource.co.uk/watlingtonplayers

Following the panto we will have our summer musical – *Legally Blonde*. Please see the poster for more details or catch-up on our Facebook page or other social media.

We are always looking out for new people to join the society, whether that be on or off stage. We are particularly looking for more technical volunteers to help us with set, lighting and sound, so if you are interested in getting involved (or know anyone who is) please get in touch on Facebook or watlingtonplayers@gmail.com



A Recipe for Soul Cakes

Ingredients

225g SR Flour
100g sugar
100g butter or margarine
mixed spice and cinnamon to taste
1 egg
50g currants

Method

Heat oven to 150°C.
Mix sugar and fat until smooth, add beaten egg, mix in flour and spices and currants to form a soft dough.
Roll out on a floured board to 5cm thick.
Cut out with round cutter and score a cross on top with a knife. Place on a greased baking tray.
Bake for 15 mins until golden brown.
Cool on a wire rack and enjoy!

St Peter and St Paul Church, Watlington

This is being written on the 29 October, when the Church in Watlington celebrated a late Harvest Thanksgiving together with all our sister churches in the West Norfolk Priory Group. Our Rector, David, is priest for Watlington, Runcton Holme, Wormegay, Tottenhill, Stow Bardolph, Stow Bridge, Wimbotsham, Nordelph, Marham, Fincham, Shouldham and Shouldham Thorpe; twelve parishes in all.

As 29 October was so close to significant dates in November, All Saints Day on the 1st and All Souls Day on the 2nd, we enjoyed eating Souls Biscuits with our tea and coffee after the service. You may wonder what these are? Souls biscuits are traditional English cakes or biscuits, a cross between a scone and a biscuit, lightly spiced, with currants added to the mix. They were traditionally made for All Souls Day to celebrate and commemorate the departed. They were usually given out to children and the poor who would go from door to door, begging for alms -- or 'souling' -- on All Soul's Day. In exchange they were asked to pray for peoples' souls.

The giving and receiving of soul cakes started in the Middle Ages and is widely seen as the origin of 'trick or treating'. See the recipe opposite, if you would like to try making some.

Talking about Saints, one of our church members, Joyce Venni, died this summer, well into her 90s. She was a gracious, salt of the earth lady who still enjoyed cleaning the brass in the church, especially the eagle lectern. As a young woman she helped her farmer father with everything on the farm until her parents retired to Watlington. She was one of those people with green fingers and her garden, on the corner of Fen Road and Downham Road, was a joy in every season.



We were also very sad when Mary Greeves, our treasurer for the Church, died in October. She had contributed much to the community life of this village in so many ways. A gracious lady who has left a legacy of service to the community as an enthusiastic and inspiring president of the WI on a couple of occasions.

By the time you read this we will have had the traditional Remembrance service with laying of wreaths at the war memorial in November. But now looking ahead we have the Christmas season approaching with our traditional Crib and Carol Service taking place on Christmas Eve at 4pm, partially by candlelight. A warm welcome is extended to all.

There is always a church service on Sundays at 11am in Watlington Church with a short midweek Morning prayer on Wednesdays at 10am. The church is open during daylight hours for visits, a quiet place to sit and just be, taking time out from the pressures of everyday life.

John Murfitt and Barbara Church, Churchwardens

From the Vicar

My dear reader,

I recently led an RAF service to honour the crew of a Lancaster bomber which crashed near Wimbotsham in 1943. The disaster, which happened on the night of 29 September following a bombing raid over Bochum in western Germany, saw all but one of the Pathfinder crew lose their lives -- and all aged between just 19 and 26. The young men's plane had been returning to its base at Warboys near Huntingdon when it came down in bad weather. You can read more about this in the Lynn News of Friday 6 October 2023.

But here is one brief comment: "I just wanted to say thank you for all your help in setting up and conducting the Dedication Service on Saturday. It all went so smoothly and we have received so many kind comments about the whole event... It was all beautifully done and a fitting tribute to those brave young men and wonderful to see so many people coming along to pay their respects... I particularly enjoyed the Blessing of the Memorial and both you and Eddie placing your hands on the memorial as the words were spoken, I found it most poignant".

As we approach Christmas and another New Year, may God grant to the living, grace; to the departed, rest; to the Church, the King, the Commonwealth, and all humankind, peace and concord; and to us and all his servants, life everlasting.

TWELVE CHURCHES. ONE MISSION.

With prayerful good wishes,

The Revd Canon Dr David

www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk
T: 07596 707469 (9am to 1pm, Mon-Friday)
E: louise.vigus@westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk
Follow us on Facebook!



Christmas Services at Watlington

Christmas Eve, Crib and Carol Service, 4pm

Christmas Day, Holy Communion, 10am

Sunday 31 December, joint service for our 12 churches at Stow Bridge Church, 11am

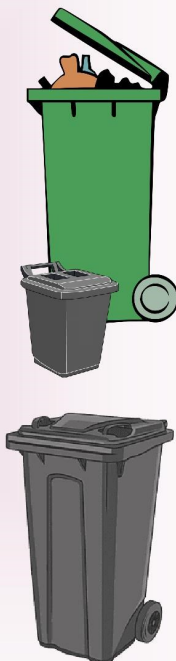


Bin & recycling collection dates

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 December	Green bin
Wednesday 13th December	Black Bin
Wednesday 20th December	Green bin
Friday 29th December	Black Bin
Friday 5th January	Green bin
Thursday 11th January	Black Bin
Wednesday 17th January	Green bin
Wednesday 24th January	Black Bin
Wednesday 31st January	Green bin
Wednesday 7th February	Black Bin
Wednesday 14th February	Green bin
Wednesday 21st February	Black Bin
Wednesday 28th February	Green bin



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



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 Sunday Closed

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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.

Winter Wellness for Pets

It's the time of year when ice starts to appear, maybe even that white stuff. But one thing is for sure, the gritter lorries will be out and people will start gritting roads and pavements. This can cause irritation and discomfort to dogs. In bad cases it can cause tissue dehydration and damage. Remember to wash your dog's paws and tummy with some warm water when coming back from a walk.



Be aware of snow — before heading out, trim your dog's fur around their paws to avoid any ice getting trapped. The experts suggest that dogs should not be allowed to eat snow as there could be items hidden in it, such as glass, or even dangerous chemicals.

Spot changes in behaviour — signs of frostbite include whining, shivering, slowing down and regularly stopping. Elderly dogs should also be taken on shorter walks as arthritis can be exacerbated by the cold.

However, did you know mental stimulation is just as good as physical stimulation for those times you can't walk your dog? Five minutes of mental stimulation is equivalent to 10 minutes of physical stimulation.

So, you can use a product like *Lickimats*, which are great for both dogs and cats. You can put great enrichment products on them for your pet to lick. They last even longer if you pop them in the freezer overnight.



You can rub on dog pate, dog meat, raw meat, dog peanut butter (make sure it does not contain sweetener such as Xylitol), Greek yoghurt, pureed vegetables, cream cheese (again please make sure it has no sugars), grated cheese, blueberries, grated apple, mashed bananas... I think you get the idea.

We love them. There is a huge range from the *Lickimat* company (<https://lickimat.co.uk/collections>), but you can buy cheaper alternatives. Amazon has similar products starting from £4.99.



Woofing for the Gossip
BCBruvz

Mobile Library Service

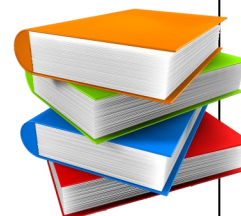
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The mobile library service calls in Watlington on Thursday, normally every 28 days. It will call on the following dates:

21 December, 18 January, 15 February, 14 March

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

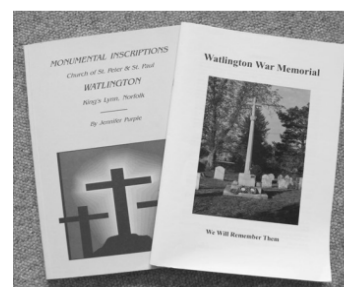
16 Warren Close, Watlington PE33 0TA 01553 810868

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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The Club had its AGM at the beginning of October when a new committee was elected. Below is the Chairman's report which covers our activities.

Chairman's Annual Report to the Annual General Meeting, 11 October 2023

2023 marks a successful year in the annals of the club in terms of enjoyable meetings, new members joining and finding it all enjoyable too and some of us just grateful that we are still here and able to meet in a beautiful village hall and enjoy a sociable gathering.

We have had our usual mix of games afternoons, talks and mini excursions. Our speakers included Emma's Hedgehog Hotel, Jim Taylor talking about Taylors Seed Shop, the role of the First Responder and CPR with Andrew Plover, and The Topsy Turvy World of Gilbert and Sullivan with Jim Stebbings, all of whom kept us interested, informed or entertained.

Several of our members organised activities like quizzes and card games such as Hoy! which made for some furrowed brows on occasion, and we marked the seasons of the year foodwise with Pancakes and Hot Cross Buns and a Christmas party. We also planted bulbs in pots with a wide range of success!

Our non-Village Hall meetings included a Strawberry Tea in John and Barbara's garden when we also marked Vi Kent's 100th birthday, and croquet at Stow Hall where Jonathan Toye patiently showed us how to play again in the wonderful tree-filled parkland and gardens. The BBQ at Terrington St Clement at the home of Richard and Pat Aisthorpe was another highlight of our calendar.

Although pétanque was on the programme it was another hot day, and without shade we cancelled it again, but gave a donation to the Millennium Green. As a committee we reluctantly feel that we should not include this in future programmes as the game is too difficult for us physically.

Our Christmas meal in 2022 attracted friends and partners and 31 people gathered at the Chequers in Wimbotsham.

The aim of the Club continues to be that we provide an afternoon of sociable activities where everyone can feel welcomed and included and I would like to thank everyone for enabling that to happen.

I would also like to thank everyone who has served on the Committee. Marion has done sterling work with the accounts, Pat looks after birthday cards for members and Janet has served as our representative on the Village Hall Committee.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to set up tables and chairs and put them away at the end of meetings, served refreshments and washed up afterwards, it is much appreciated.

Thank you everyone for being here today and for your support in so many ways.

We're coming to the end of a very busy year. We've enjoyed a full programme of different speakers and events, meeting old friends and new and sadly saying goodbye to some of our dear friends. Mary Greeves had been a member for as long as I can remember and she sadly passed away on 1 October. She will be very fondly remembered for her infectious laughter and warmth, a truly lovely lady I had the privilege to call my friend. We also say farewell to one of our founding members, Margaret Mould. While she hadn't been a member for some time, without her and her fellow founders, we wouldn't have the WI we have today, involved in so many aspects of our village life. Margaret was one of the most wonderful people with a fierce intelligence, full of joy and compassion, always ready to reminisce over a cuppa and cake - it must be a WI trait! Rest in peace, two very special ladies.

We still have a speaker or two to come this year, our annual Christmas wreath making workshop and Christmas lunch at the Novus restaurant in the College of West Anglia, followed by the Christmas party where we plan to enjoy a social evening, quiz and, of course, refreshments! The last Rainbow Café of the year is on 15 December, earlier in the month than usual due to the festive season. We will have a Christmas raffle and the final chance to pick up some handcrafted gifts created by the talented ladies.

We have plenty in store for next year with all ladies over 18 invited to come along to our meetings. You will receive a very warm welcome from the ladies, they are all lovely. It is £4 on the door for guests which includes tea or coffee and cakes.

For any information, please contact us:
E: watlingtonwomensinstitute@gmail.com
T: 811521
M: 07551 757679



Emma, President

~~~~~

Since the AGM we have had a most entertaining afternoon with Three's Company reading a range of poetry under the umbrella title of Tarts, Toffs and Traitors. We were joined by several guests who we hope enjoyed it all too. We look forward to our November events and Christmas Party.

Members agreed to donate £100 to the Village Hall for the solar panels fund.

*Barbara Church, Chairman*

***We meet every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month, all welcome.***

***See Watlington What's On (p38) for details of future meetings.***



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www.theschoolofdance.uk

Facebook: The School of Dance - Watlington

Phone no: 07708597114



## The Volunteer Hub

*Are you a local organisation in need of an extra pair of hands?*

*Are you a local person with a little time to spare and looking for a way to contribute?*

The *Latest Gossip* volunteer hub aims to bring you together. Email us and tell us about your needs or skills, and we'll aim to play 'matchmaker'.

### Help Wanted:

The **Magpie Centre**, home of West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled Association, is always in need to volunteers with a range of talents, from tea and cake-making at events, through DIY abilities, to hands-on work with the horses.

Right now, our need is for **volunteers with experience of working with horses**, to bring horses in from the paddocks, pick out feet, groom, tack up and lead horses into lessons. This role might suit people who 'used to ride' or 'had a pony when they were younger', and now want to regain their connection with horses. On Tuesdays, lessons run till 7.30 pm, and on Wednesdays till 6.30 pm, so these later slots might be possible for people who work during the day.

If this sounds like you, or you know anyone with experience of horses who might like to join the Magpie Centre's friendly group of volunteers, please call 01553 810202 or visit our website: [www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk](http://www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk) and download a volunteer form.

**Caring Together** is a local charity supporting unpaid carers who look after a family member or friend who needs help because of an illness, frailty, disability, or a mental health issue, and cannot cope without support.

Our **Norfolk Befriending Service** aims to offer an inclusive, trusted service that links volunteers with unpaid carers to help reduce loneliness and isolation, build confidence and improve their wellbeing. If you are able to give some time to help carers near you, or know an unpaid carer who would benefit from receiving this service, please contact us for more information:

0345 241 0954

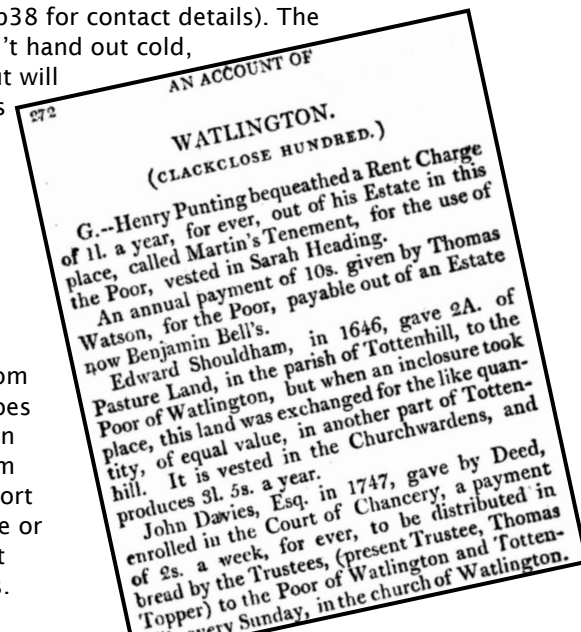
[volunteers@caringtogether.org](mailto:volunteers@caringtogether.org)

[www.caringtogether.org/befriending](http://www.caringtogether.org/befriending)

Email [watlatestgossip@gmail.com](mailto:watlatestgossip@gmail.com) to be included in next issue's Volunteer Hub.

## Edward Shouldham's Charity

You have to look back a really long way to find the origin of a charity that exists to help Watlington residents facing financial hardship. In 1646 Edward Shouldham gave two acres of pastureland to the poor of Watlington, the original plot later being exchanged for the same area of land in a different part of Tottenhill. Today the annual rent from that land is still held in trust for the benefit of the people of Watlington. Anyone who has been a resident of Watlington for at least 12 months, and who finds themselves in need, hardship or distress, can complete the application form which is available from the Clerk to the Parish Council, who is also the clerk to the trustees of the charity (see the village directory on p38 for contact details). The charity doesn't hand out cold, hard cash, but will pay for goods or services which will help to alleviate financial difficulties. Importantly, receiving assistance from the charity does not prevent an applicant from seeking support from the State or other support organisations.



## 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:

**April / May £43.90 Watlington Defibrillator Fund**

**June £41.75 Watlington Church Repair Fund**

**July / Aug £46.87 Watlington Under 5s**

**Sept / Oct £32.60 Wormegay & Tottenhill Over 60s**

**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 Runcton Holme, Tottenhill, Wormegay or Magdalen please let Brenda know - [brendell48@gmail.com](mailto:brendell48@gmail.com).

*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](mailto:watlatestgossip@gmail.com), or drop a note in our box in the post office to tell us about it.*





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## 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)

We are looking forward to arranging a variety of events for the benefit of the patients of Watlington Medical Centre. We will be starting with some meet and greets at the medical centre and pharmacy to share with you how we plan to develop stronger links between the medical centre team and you, the patients. We also hope to visit established groups in the village to spread the word in the coming months.

We have a dedicated email address to receive questions and constructive comments from patients of the practice. This is not for complaints (the surgery has its own complaints procedure which can be found on the medical centre's website). We are actively looking for new members to join the PPG, so you can also email [watlingtonppg@gmail.com](mailto:watlingtonppg@gmail.com) if you would like to join.

### Pharmacy update

The practice is aware of the current issues and is initiating a thorough review of the pharmacy.

Many regular and much-used medications are frequently unavailable from the suppliers. Apart from the inconvenience caused to patients this means that staff are in effect having to deal with each prescription twice. The prescribing technician in the pharmacy can tidy up patients' scripts to bring the dates for repeat medication to the same date which hopefully will reduce trips. In addition, we suggested that, for those patients who have signed up to receive a text when their medication is ready, the process should be reviewed. The medical team are going to investigate whether an interim text could be sent when part of a prescription is ready rather than waiting until all the medications are in place.

Buzzers which vibrate when a prescription is ready have been obtained so patients can sit in their cars and return to the pharmacy when the buzzer vibrates. We have suggested that the pharmacy puts up a notice to inform people that buzzers are available, and institutes a dedicated queue for patients whose buzzer has vibrated, so that they do not have to wait a second time. The screens in the pharmacy have been taken down, which should make access to and communication with staff easier. We have suggested installation of a retractable awning outside to give cover to waiting patients, and that perhaps the consulting room in the pharmacy could be used as a waiting room on wet or busy days.

See full minutes of PPG meetings on the Watlington Medical Centre's website: [www.watlingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.watlingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk)

*Judith, Margaret and Sue*

## Your Health Matters: The Vital Importance of Attending Medical Appointments

With the nights slowly drawing in, winter is well and truly on its way, but with this comes the risk of winter illnesses and viruses. We successfully vaccinated over 900 people at our flu clinic on Saturday 7 October. However, disappointingly, 86 patients failed to attend.

In the fast-paced hustle and bustle of modern life, it's easy to overlook or even skip routine medical appointments. Many people tend to downplay the significance of these visits, but in reality, attending your medical appointments is a cornerstone of proactive healthcare and can make all the difference to your overall wellbeing.

### Early Detection and Prevention

One of the most significant benefits of attending regular medical appointments is early detection. Your GP team can identify potential health issues long before they become serious problems. Conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, or even cancer can be managed much more effectively when caught in their early stages. Think of these appointments as opportunities to intercept potential health threats before they escalate.

### Chronic Disease Management

If you have a chronic condition like asthma, heart disease, or arthritis, regular medical appointments are essential for monitoring and managing your condition. Skipping appointments can lead to uncontrolled symptoms, increased pain, and complications that could have been prevented. Staying on top of your condition can greatly improve your quality of life.

### Mental Health Support

Mental health is just as crucial as physical health. Appointments can provide a safe space to discuss your mental and emotional wellbeing. Many individuals face challenges like anxiety, depression, or stress, which can affect their overall health. Attending appointments can lead to proper diagnosis and access to resources for mental health support.

### Preventing Future Health Costs

Avoiding medical appointments might seem like a way to save time and money in the short term. However, in the long run, neglecting your health can lead to hospitalisation and treatments for conditions that could have been managed or prevented. Medical appointments are an investment in your future health and financial wellbeing.

### Accountability and Motivation

Medical appointments can serve as a form of accountability and motivation. Knowing that you have a scheduled appointment can encourage you to make positive lifestyle changes, such as quitting smoking, losing weight, or adhering to a prescribed exercise routine. Your GP team can also offer guidance and support on these changes.

We all know how frustrating it can be to obtain an appointment. In the month of September 65 appointments were lost to non-attendance. These could have been reallocated for other patients.

Attending medical appointments is not just about following a routine; it's about taking charge of your health and wellbeing. It's an investment in your future, a proactive approach to health, and a demonstration of self-care. So, the next time you receive a reminder for your medical appointment, remember that it's more than just a date on your calendar—it's an opportunity to safeguard and enhance your health for years to come. Prioritise your health by attending your medical appointments, and you'll reap the rewards of a healthier, happier life.

*Amanda Moss, Nurse Practitioner*



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## Father Christmas Delivers

Santa loaded the last of the presents onto his sleigh and arched his aching back. Christmas Eve again. Where had that year gone? His memory wasn't what it was but he did remember a little girl named Jenny who had started to ask questions – things like, 'How does Father Christmas know what I want? How can he deliver presents to all the children around the world in one night? And how come there are so many Father Christmases in different grottos?' He scratched his head. He needed something to make the child believe. Now where were those big foil-covered chocolate discs?

Santa went back indoors, stamped the snow off his boots and slumped down in his armchair beside the fire. He'd look for the chocolate discs later, when he'd thawed out a bit. He never used to mind snow, quite enjoyed it really, but he was becoming less and less enamoured with the stuff. There was never anywhere to park the reindeer on those modern estates, and what with the vet's bills and the M.O.T. on the sleigh – it was all getting a bit much.

He went to put the kettle on. He was tempted to have a glass of rum punch but that would have to wait; he couldn't risk being drunk in charge of a sleigh on top of everything else.

As he sipped his Earl Grey his mind began to wander back to when things were much simpler, when children were happy with a stocking, an orange and a few nuts. Not like today, always wanting the latest Xbox or whatever. To be honest, it all went over his head.

He awoke with a start. Rudolph was banging on the window with his antlers.

'All right, all right, I'm coming.'

Santa glanced at the cuckoo clock. Oops! Five to twelve. But what about the foil-covered disc? Oh well, he didn't have time to look for it now.

It was just the sort of night he liked, crisp and clear with good visibility. Racing through the skies had always cleared his head. Ah, now he remembered! Chocolate discs, kitchen cupboard. He quickly spun round, parked the sleigh, went to find one and put it in Jenny's sack.

Meanwhile, Jenny was sitting up in bed hoping to see Father Christmas come in with her presents. She desperately wanted to believe but Lisa at school had said she was silly. 'Of course there's no such thing as Father Christmas!' Even so, Jenny couldn't help wondering...

Her eyelids began to droop.

Santa parked his sleigh, dug out Jenny's sack of presents and the saucer-sized chocolate disc. He wrote in the foil with his special pen and placed it on top of her sack. That should do it.

It was still dark when Jenny opened her eyes. The sack was there! But how had she missed him? She jumped out of bed to see what he'd brought her. Lying on the top was a big foil disc like a big old-fashioned penny. She rubbed her eyes. There was a message: 'To Jenny with love from Santa.' Wow! He'd written it with his own hand! She couldn't wait to tell Lisa.

Julie Newman

## Coffee Break

### TRIVIA TWELVE

*Our quiz master Richard Abel looks forward to some anniversaries coming up, and back to some events from the past.*

1. **People.** 2024 will mark the 240th anniversary of the invention of bifocal spectacles, by which American Founding Father?
2. **Places.** 2024 will mark the 130th anniversary of the opening of which bridge over the River Thames?
3. **Sport.** In 2023, Luca Brecel became the first player from which country to win the World Snooker Championship?
4. **Music.** 2024 will mark the 200th anniversary of the first performance of which of Beethoven's symphonies?
5. **Film.** Which 90-year-old actor confirmed his retirement in October 2023?
6. **Television.** Which BBC school-based drama returned in 2023, after an eight-year absence?
7. **Science.** 2024 will mark the 220th anniversary of the demonstration of the world's first working steam locomotive by which Cornish engineer?
8. **Nature.** Which rodent, introduced into East Anglia in 1929 for fur farming, was confirmed as officially eradicated in the wild in 1989?
9. **Arts.** 2024 will mark the 150th anniversary of the first exhibition in Paris by which group of artists?
10. **Books.** 2024 will mark the 230th anniversary of the publication of the poem that begins "Tyger, tyger burning bright..." Who was the author?
11. **Food & Drink.** Which British cookery writer popularised European cuisine in the 1950s with works such as "A Book of Mediterranean Food" and "French Country Cooking"?
12. **General Knowledge.** Which comic celebrated its 85th birthday in 2023 with a special edition featuring, among others, Sir David Attenborough, Adele, Harry Styles and King Charles and Queen Camilla?

*Answers on p 36*



# Watlington Sport

## Watlington Sports and Social Club



WS&SC is situated opposite the Village Hall and is a family members club with lots to offer for all ages.

**Family Membership £30 per year**

**Single Membership £20 per year**

We are signed up to both Sky and BT TV, which enables us to show all the big games on the large screens throughout the club. The club has 2 pool tables, dart board, juke box and puts on numerous events throughout the year for adults, children and families.

### Current Opening Times

**Monday to Thursday : 17:00 - 23:00**

**Friday: 16:00 - 01:00**

**Saturday: 12:00 - 01:00 Sunday: 12:00 - Close**

Further details and more up to date info can be found on the notice board in the club and on Facebook

[www.watlingtonssc.com](http://www.watlingtonssc.com)

[watlingtonsportsandsocialclub@outlook.com](mailto:watlingtonsportsandsocialclub@outlook.com)

Watch out for updates on Facebook and Instagram

## 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.

## TRIVIA TWELVE Answers

(see p33)

1. Benjamin Franklin. 2. Tower Bridge.
3. Belgium. 4. Symphony Number Nine (the "Choral" Symphony). 5. Sir Michael Caine. 6. Waterloo Road.
7. Richard Trevithick. 8. Coypu.
9. The Impressionists.
10. William Blake. 11. Elizabeth David.
12. The Beano.



## 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 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 | Runcion 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       | Tuesday   | 18:00 - 19:30 | Watlington    |
| U12's       | Friday    | 17:30 - 18:30 | Watlington    |
| U12's Girls | Monday    | 18:00 - 19:30 | Watlington    |
| U11's       | Friday    | 18:00 - 19:00 | Stow Bridge   |
| U10's       | Friday    | 17:00 - 18:00 | Stow Bridge   |
| U8's        | Friday    | 17:30 - 18:30 | Watlington    |
| U7's        | Tuesday   | 17:00 - 18:00 | Stow Bridge   |

### Friday Training Schedule

| 17:00 | 17:30 | 18:00 | 18:30 | 19:00 | 19:30 | 20:00 | 20:30 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|       |       | U8's  |       |       |       |       |       |
|       | U10's |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|       |       |       | U11's |       |       |       |       |
|       |       | U12's |       |       |       |       |       |
|       |       |       |       | U16's |       |       |       |

I hope this report finds you all well. For those who do not know, Watlington Football Club is an FA Accredited Club with three adult teams, and various mixed youth sides from U7 to U16. We also have great pleasure in announcing that we are 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 are pleased to announce a brand new Under 14 girls' side. Further to this we are hoping to start more girls' teams, after the success of the Under 11 & Under 14 girls' programmes. Please contact Livvi on 07584 085408 for more details of how to get your lionesses involved.

At the time of writing we are now around a third of the way through the season, which has started well for most of our sides with some exciting matches to come over the Christmas period.

Off the field we have been very busy. We have been progressing with the fundraising for the new changing room pavilion which will add much needed facilities for the club, and potentially other new village sporting clubs. A race night in late November has been arranged, with further events in the pipeline: "watch this space"! We are also now selling tickets for our inaugural Fundraising Ball which will take place on Saturday 2 March at the Red Barn; it should be a great evening. If any local businesses wish to sponsor this event please get in touch with the club: douglasparker@hotmail.co.uk

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

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

A brand new team this season, they have some very talented players, and have made a fantastic start, 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)**

Another team starting the season very well. The team are developing well and getting some really positive results, scoring a lot 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)**

Great progress from this team; they have started the season really well, winning games and scoring some great goals. They are now also playing some really nice passing football, 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)**

A great start to the season for our Under 12 Girls who are currently pushing for the league title. They play some great football and are a really friendly bunch, working well as a team. (At the time of writing sitting third: P5 W4 D0 L1)

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

They have started really well this season in the top division. It is

a big step for the side playing against the best West Norfolk has to offer. They are playing some attractive football and have been competitive in the games played. (At the time of writing sitting seventh: P5 W1 D2 L2) They are hoping to add experienced players to the squad, so please contact Coach Wayne Hansell for details 07746 226858.

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

The Under 14s started the season with 18-0 and 16-0 victories in the first three fixtures, but there is a real mix of quality in the division with some really class sides. They have found it a little tougher in recent weeks but remain competitive. A solid start (At the time of writing sitting seventh: P6 W2 D1 L3) 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 we welcome new coach Alex to the club. 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 smiling and improving weekly, which is what it's all about. (At the time of writing sitting fifth: P4 W0 D0 L4)

## **Under 16's 11V11 Format (Competitive)**

The Under 16s have started the season well and have been really unlucky not to get more wins on the board with some extremely close matches. They have got some new faces in the side this year and the team is bonding well and playing some great football. (At the time of writing sitting seventh: P6 W2 D0 L4) They are always on the lookout for a few experienced players to add to the squad; please contact Coach Tony Leggett for details Legosw6@gmail.com

## **Men's First 11V11 Format (Competitive)**

A really positive 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 are hoping to defend the CS Morley cup having got through the first round already. 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)**

The season has not started as expected for our reserves who have been unlucky in some close games. At the time of writing they are still in search of their first league victory. I am sure the wins will come, as they have some talented players, and have been playing some good football. They have also lost some key players due to injury early in the season including highly rated goalkeeper James Goldspink. They are looking for experienced players to add to the squad so please get in touch if you are interested. Training in Watlington on Tuesdays.

## **Development Team 11V11 Format (Competitive)**

The development side have started the season really well and have had some good wins. They are 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. They are hoping to continue their early season form and get another year of experience behind them. New players are always welcome. Training in 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

### Monday

9am – 1pm 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Runcion Holme & Watlington Scouts, Scout Hut, Runcion Holme

### Tuesday

Alive West Norfolk \*\*  
10-11am Women Only Workout  
11am-12 noon Community Fitness Class  
4 – 9pm School of Dance\*, tap lessons  
6 - 7.15pm, Beaver Scouts, Scout Hut, Runcion 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, Runcion Holme  
7 - 9pm Badminton Club

### Thursday

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

### Friday

10am School of Dance\* Rhythm and Rhyme, for toddlers  
1-5pm Short Mat Bowls  
7.30 – 10pm Watlington Players

### Saturday

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

\* see [www.theschoolofdance.uk](http://www.theschoolofdance.uk) for more details

\*\* email [community@alivestnorfolk.co.uk](mailto:community@alivestnorfolk.co.uk) to sign up

#### 2nd Runcion Holme & Watlington Scout Group

Andy Nicol: 01553 811201 [andy-nicol@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andy-nicol@hotmail.co.uk)  
1st Watlington and Runcion Holme Brownies & Guides  
Chloe: [watlingtonbrownies@gmail.com](mailto:watlingtonbrownies@gmail.com)  
Watlington Young Players Penny Cooke: [watdance@talktalk.net](mailto:watdance@talktalk.net)  
Football Doug Parker [douglasarker@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:douglasarker@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](http://www.watlingtonvillagehallnorfolk.com)

Village Hall Email: [watlingtonvillagehallnorfolk@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:watlingtonppg@gmail.com)

Hospital: 01553 613613

## Month by Month

### December

02: Bingo fundraiser for the Preschool, 6.30pm  
07: Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan, 7am - 10pm  
09: Quiz in aid of Village Hall funds, 7.30pm  
12: WI Christmas Party (members only), 7pm  
13: Wednesday Club Christmas Party, 2pm  
15: Rainbow Cafe, 9.30am - 12 noon  
24: Crib and Carol Service, SS Peter and Paul Church, Watlington, 4pm  
25: Christmas Day Holy Communion, SS Peter and Paul Church, Watlington, 10am  
31: Joint Church Service of all the churches in the West Norfolk Priory Group, Stow Bridge Church, 11am

### January

04 - 06: Watlington Players pantomime, *The Sword in the Stone*, 7.30pm (also 2.30pm matinee on 06)  
09: WI, The Life of a Gamekeeper, 7pm  
10: Wednesday Club: Bring Any Old Item (and what it means to you), 2pm  
16: Village Fête AGM, 7pm  
16: Parish Council Meeting, 7pm  
24: Wednesday Club: Lily Goertzki - Lily, Cruse and Kilimanjaro, 2pm  
26: Rainbow Cafe, 9.30am - 12 noon

### February

13: WI, AGM, quiz and social evening, 7pm  
14: Wednesday Club: Pancakes and Quiz, 2pm  
20: Parish Council Meeting, 7pm  
23: Rainbow Cafe, 9.30am - 12 noon  
28: Wednesday Club: Games afternoon, 2pm

### March

13: Wednesday Club: Speaker, tbc, 2pm  
27: Wednesday Club: Hot Cross Buns and Rabbit Racing, 2pm

#### Parish Council - Village Hall Office 01553 810777

All email addresses for the Clerk and Councillors are  
[@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk](mailto:@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](mailto:clerk@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk) (Urgent Matters outside office hours 01366 502165 / 07941 105697)

|                 |              |                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr J Bellamy    | 07771 755233 | <a href="mailto:cllr.james.bellamy@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk">cllr.james.bellamy@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk</a>           |
| Mr M Berliner   | 07879 628243 | <a href="mailto:cllr.martin.berliner@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk">cllr.martin.berliner@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk</a>       |
| Mrs E Burry     | 01553 811521 | <a href="mailto:cllr.emma.burry@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk">cllr.emma.burry@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk</a>                 |
| Mrs J Golding   | 01553 811362 | <a href="mailto:cllr.jean.golding@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk">cllr.jean.golding@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk</a> (Chairman)  |
| Mrs B Leedell   | 01553 810848 | <a href="mailto:cllr.brenda.leedell@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk">cllr.brenda.leedell@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk</a>         |
| Mr R Rockcliffe | 01553 810331 | <a href="mailto:cllr.richard.rockcliffe@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk">cllr.richard.rockcliffe@watlington-norfolk-pc.gov.uk</a> |

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](mailto:barbarachurch@phonecoop.coop)

Norfolk Flooding Helpline: 0344 800 8013

Police: Non-emergency 101

Gas Emergency: 0800 111 999; Electricity Emergency: 105

Public Road Water Leak: Anglian Water 0800 771 881

Street Light Faults: 0344 800 8008 or [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)



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 Sunday/Bank Holidays Closed

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We are an RAC approved dealer, the  
 only one in the Downham Market area.

