



BALSHAM *Review*

ISSUE No. 657

SICUT CANIS CUM OSSIS

APRIL 2024



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The opinions expressed in the letters and articles in this magazine are those of the writers who are responsible for the accuracy of the information contained within them.

DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE:

FRIDAY,
APRIL 19TH 2024

*Copy should be submitted where possible to
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Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

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Editorial

The event of the month was the meeting in the pavilion before last month's Parish Council meeting. It seems that the intention of the group from the Glasgow office of Downing LLP was to introduce their proposed plans for a **large solar park** in the Balsham/West Wrattling area. The difference between the map on page 15 this month and the map on page 21 of the March Review, reflects the fact that some land owners have already rejected the idea of selling, or renting, their land to the group. It seems that the majority of land still under discussion is in West Wrattling, and the Balsham land is mainly beyond the skyline as we drive in to Cambridge. However, what is in our vision is not the only area for consideration, and there must be some concern about how and where access would be made to the sites, both for construction and for maintenance, and where the link to the National Grid would be, something that would be more problematic with at least two sites, separated by the areas either side of our road to the A11. I have been told that there are many firms jumping on the 'Let's build solar parks' band wagon all over the country, and most of them fail at the first or second fence, and very few actually get built, so perhaps we should wait to see first what the land-owners say, and next whether this company find other areas where everything is much easier, and more

profitable. It could be like the Great Bradley/Borough Green Reservoir which has been considered more than once and then after considerable dismay from the villagers, the plan disappears.

Another meeting which will be much less controversial is the **Gardening Club** meeting on **3rd April, 7.30pm** in the Pavilion, when thatching will be the subject. All villagers who live in thatched properties are invited, whether they are club members or not—see you there!

When I was extracting the information about the football fixtures from the FA website, I found that in April our team have seven matches and six of them are on our pitch on the rec. I do hope the pitch will be able to cope with the constant use. It is pretty muddy now, but if April brings the usual showers, or more of the heavier rain we have had lately, we will be able to have bog-snorkling on Saturday afternoons!

I am just about on equal terms with the squirrels at my bird food. My problem now is that a pair of rooks have arrived and found how to hang on to the feeders while not only consuming the seeds and fat at great speed, but also scaring off the smaller birds. I have to admire their skill but I do prefer the tits, goldfinches and all the others that wait in the bushes for their turns.

Gill Parry Brown

EDITOR, BALSHAM REVIEW

Letters



Letters to the Editor for publication **MUST** be signed and include your telephone number. Names can be withheld, if requested.

The opinions expressed in the letters and articles in this magazine are those of the writers, who are responsible for the accuracy of the information contained within them.

DEAR EDITOR

ROAD SAFETY

The time has come for me to highlight the danger caused by speeding drivers that drive the road from Balsham to Fulbourn. Every time we leave our driveway, we are running the gauntlet.



On the 21st February there was a very serious head-on collision just outside Dungate Lane, in which the Air Ambulance was called and the road was closed for several hours. These sorts of accidents are a regular occurrence on this road. At speed there is never just one car involved there are always innocent drivers.

This morning I was overtaken at 7am by a careless inconsiderate driver as I was turning right into Dungate Lane, I indicated in plenty of time, the car just came up the outside and over took, there is no

way the driver could see what was coming down the hill. This is not the first time this has happened. If you are reading this. **PLEASE SLOW DOWN!!!** Let's not have any more accidents.

Concerned Resident

BALSHAM WOOD WALK

Robin Vestey has kindly offered a short guided walk (about 1½ hours) of Balsham wood for Balsham villagers on **Thursday 25th April** at **2pm**. Bear in mind that the ground is very rough, and is likely to be quite sticky, dependent on weather. Send an email to **pargeterlegal@gmail.com**, and I'll add you to the list and pass on details when I know them. However, there will be a limit of about 25 people, so first come first served. Dogs welcome, but must be on lead. There are lots of bluebells and oxlips in the wood, and other rare and interesting plants. We expect to have the County Plant Recorder with us, should you be really interested in this.

Richard Pargeter

Jim and Hilary Potter

On March 18th, Balsham said farewell to Jim Potter at a moving funeral ceremony in the garden of 2A Nine Chimneys Lane. Jim's wife, Hilary, had sadly died last October following a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer.

Jim and Hilary moved to the Manor in Balsham 36 years ago and rapidly became involved in a host of village activities. They opened their house to all kinds of social events and fund-raising activities for the benefit of others including events such as Balsham Singers' Christmas dos and Plough Monday celebrations. Hilary was a devoted and knowledgeable gardener and many villagers and the wider public visited the garden to support 'Open Gardens' and Macmillan Nurses.

Both Jim and Hilary supported several charitable organisations.

Notably, Hilary was involved with voluntary work for MAGPAS, the first Air Ambulance Service in the region.

Jim was a non-executive Director of Addenbrookes for several years, working alongside Dame Mary Archer, and initiated some transformative changes for the hospital.

As a young man, Jim had spent two years working in Zambia. Later, when Jim and Hilary travelled back to Zambia to visit old friends, they were so impressed with a charitable

organisation called Zambia Orphans Aid (ZOA) that, back in the UK, Jim became the founding trustee of Zambia Orphans Aid UK as a means of raising funds to support the venture in Africa. ZOA is dedicated to providing resources to help orphaned children with schooling and to acquire life skills.

In 1993, it was with a degree of curiosity that we in Balsham heard about the planting of a maze in the back garden of the Manor. Two of Jim's many interests were labyrinths and music. In his youth he played the French horn. So the music maze arose from a plan to construct a yew maze in the shape of a treble clef with two French horns. It is a significant landmark and is known around the world by lovers of labyrinths and mazes. It has been open to visitors at certain times of the year and loved by children of all ages but, regrettably, it is now closed to visitors.

In 2000, Jim was involved in the establishment of the Rosie Green (Millennium) wood. Five acres of land, owned by the Parish Council, were divided into sections for residents to plant saplings of native trees. Since then it has grown to become a peaceful wooded green space for the village.

Concerned about climate change

and our use of fossil fuel, about 15 years ago, Jim and Hilary decided build a passive (eco-friendly) house in the Manor grounds in which to live more sustainably. The Passivhaus, made in Germany, has little airflow and is highly energy efficient. It is unique in the area with rainwater collection and storage underground for flushing toilets and garden watering, solar PV panels for electricity and one of the first air source heat pumps in the village. It requires very little heating.

Jim and Hilary were not only passionate about the environment but also opera. In 2020 Jim commissioned an opera for young people loosely based upon Greta

Thunberg's school strikes that raised worldwide awareness of climate change and consumption of fossil fuels. The opera, called *Uprising*, has been composed by Jonathan Dove and will be performed at both Glyndebourne opera house in Sussex and at Saffron Hall in spring 2025. It is sad that Jim did not live to see it but he leaves an extraordinary legacy.

Jim was generous and philanthropic but never wore his success ostentatiously. It is truly the end of an era for Balsham but one in which we have all, in one way or another, been beneficiaries.

Dave Arnold

BALSHAM SINGERS

PRESENT A

Spring Concert

Directed by John Clenaghan and
accompanied by Ralph Woodward

At Holy Trinity Church Balsham on
Saturday 18th May 2024 at 7.30pm.

*To include music by Faure, Bruckner, Stanford and medleys from
West Side Story & Little Shop of Horrors.*

ADULTS **£12**, UNDER 16s **£1** | REFRESHMENTS | CHARITY RAFFLE

Tickets available online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/balshamsingers
or from Balsham and Abington Post Offices

Church Services



Services will be shown on the benefice website and the Church Notice Board.

Information about services in Holy Trinity Church, Balsham can be found on the Church Notice Board and on the website www.grantavale.org.uk under the calendar section, or by signing up to our weekly newsletter, details of which can also be found on the website.

CHURCH CONTACTS

Rev. Iain McColl	01223 890693	mccoll.iain@gmail.com
Curate: Rev. Ben Brady	01223 344920	revdbenbrady@btinternet.com
Church Warden: Nigel Clark,	01223 893043	n.clark5@btinternet.com
Administrator: Cazzy Walsh		7churches.seven@gmail.com

SERVICES at other CHURCHES when possible

ROMAN CATHOLIC Masses at:

Cherry Hinton: St Philip Howard Church

Saturday: 5.30pm (Vigil Mass) & Sunday: 10.00am & 12 noon

Haverhill: St Felix, Saturday 6.30pm & Sunday 10am

Sawston: Our Lady of Lourdes, Sunday: 8.45am & 11.15am

FREE CHURCH: Horn Lane, Linton. Sundays: 10.30am

CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH, meeting as a house group, for further information please contact. www.facebook.com/Linton_cornerstone

METHODIST: Haverhill Methodist Church, Camps Road

From the Church

This Spring is a time of farewells in our Granta Vale churches. Our wonderful curate **Ben Brady**, is shortly to leave for pastures new as he



will be taking up a new post as Team Vicar in the Berkhamsted Team Ministry - with special responsibility for Holy Trinity, Potten End - in the Diocese of St Albans. Typically, a curacy is around three years but because Ben had already completed a first curacy of a year and a half in the Manchester diocese before he came to us in November 2022, he is now ready to move on to his next role.

It's been a great joy to have Ben as part of our ministry team. He has carried out his ministry with a sense of warmth, prayerfulness and dedication and he will be much missed, especially in Great and Little Abington where he lives. We will be praying for him as he prepares to move house and start his new role. Ben's last service here will be our united service on **Sunday 5th May at 11am**, after which there will be refreshments and an opportunity to say goodbye to Ben. All are welcome to attend!

We will also be saying farewell to

Hannah Threlfall in her role as community minister in late May. I'm delighted to say, however, that Hannah won't be leaving us as

she will become our new curate in the summer! Hannah will be ordained at Ely Cathedral on **Sunday 30th June** after which she will be serving her curacy in our group of churches. Our other two ordinands, Natalie and Rhona, however, will be departing in June as they prepare for ordination and their curacies: Natalie in the Salisbury diocese and Rhona much closer by in the Anglesey group of churches.

The book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament says that *'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens'*. As we acknowledge the coming weeks as a time of farewell and pray for Ben, Hannah, Natalie and Rhona as they prepare for their new roles, these changes may remind us we may look for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all the times and seasons of our lives.

Revd Iain McColl

April Services	9:30am	11:00am	6:00pm
7th		United Service with Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	
14th	Holy Communion Weston Colville <i>Rev Ben Brady</i> Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>	Holy Communion Great Abington <i>Rev Ben Brady</i> Morning Worship Balsham <i>Hannah Threlfall</i> Holy Communion Hildersham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>	Evening Prayer West Wrattling <i>Alistair Collen</i>
21st	Holy Communion Weston Colville <i>Rev Ben Brady</i> Holy Communion West Wrattling <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Alistair Collen</i> Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Rhona McEune</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion Little Abington <i>Rev Ben Brady</i>	Evening Prayer Hildersham <i>Rhona McEune</i>
28th	Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Rhona McEune</i> Teddy Bear Service Weston Colville <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> 10:00am Café Church Abington Institute <i>Hannah Threlfall Rosemary Mead</i>	Café Church Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> Holy Communion Balsham <i>Rev Ben Brady</i>	Evening Prayer Little Abington <i>Rhona McEune</i>



Buttercups Community Pre-School

Where is this year going, we're asking ourselves!

We've been very excited to welcome back **Super Star Sports** each week to Buttercups and the children are enthusiastically going out into the playground with one of the coaches to have great fun while learning new skills. We're obviously very pleased to see the sun again even if it teases us by coming out from behind those grey clouds in little bursts!

The children have been making the most of our outside time, wearing wellies and armed with magnifying

glasses we've been hunting out all manner of creepy crawlies in our much-enjoyed bug hunts.

Buttercups embraced **World Book Day** this year with many of the children sending in photographs of all the wonderful places they found to look at a book – from inside a tent to a park bench. Keep up the good work all of you bibliophiles or for us ordinary folk, bookworms!

Kirsty Salmons

LEAD PRACTITIONER & MANAGER

Balsham April Diary

DATE	EVENT & TIME	VENUE
3rd Wednesday	Gardening Club 7.30pm	Pavilion
5th Friday	Community Café, 10.00am—12pm	Mays Ave Room
6th Saturday	Picture House, Maestro , 7.00 for 7.30pm	Church Institute
9th Tuesday	WI, 7.30pm	Pavilion
12th Friday	Bowls: Pre-Season Social 6pm	Pavilion
15th Monday	Parish Council Meeting, 7pm	Pavilion
16th Tuesday	Community Café, 10.00am—12pm	Church Institute
16th Tuesday	Linton & Dist Historical Soc. 7.30pm	Linton V Hall
22nd Monday	Bowls Opening Club Evening 6pm	Pavilion
25th Thursday	Balsham Wood Walk 2.00pm	Balsham Wood

District & County Councillor's Report

MARCH 2024

Home Energy Support

The District Council is in a partnership with 6 other local authorities in Cambridgeshire, called **Action on Energy**. This partnership is aimed to help people create more energy efficient homes, therefore making them cheaper to run. There are various grants available which many people aren't aware they may be entitled to. Full information, and links, can be seen here - <https://www.scamb.gov.uk/home-energy-support-for-south-cambridgeshire-residents/>

Household Support Fund

Earlier this year the government announced that it would stop funding the **Household Support Fund**, which was administered through the County Council. As this fund was vital to many in Cambridgeshire, and would have put some in difficulty to not have it, the County Council has decided to keep funding it themselves. The County Council website will be updated soon to reflect this.

The same approach from the County Council applies to Free School Meals, which also recently had its funding pulled by central government.

Bespoke Wedding Services

The County Council has broadened its offering of wedding ceremony,

should people choose to use the Registration Service. People can now register to get married in non-approved venues, such as private gardens or community centres. It's aimed at making the day more bespoke to suit the couple getting married.

Budgets

Both the County & District Councils have set their budgets for the forthcoming municipal year. Both opted to raise Council Tax, which means, in real terms, this equates to: **County Council** – increase of 4.99% – £76.98 per year on band D properties.

South Cambridgeshire District

Council – £5 per year D properties.

Also, this year will be the second that the Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority will have a precept too, meaning that you will still see this line on your tax bill. This money goes exclusively towards public transport

Weekly Food Collections

DEFRA (the government department that has responsibility for the environment) announced that they will be changing the law around food waste collection and all local councils will eventually need to collect this separately to

other green waste. Local councils have been asked how much it would cost for them to do this and have been offered money to them to help with the transition.

After some lengthy negotiations an agreement has been reached and we will be getting separate food collections in South Cambridgeshire

before the end of 2026

Contact Information

Geoff Harvey

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
geoff.harvey@gmail.com

Henry Batchelor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR
henrybatchelor89@gmail.com

Granta Medical Practices

Spring COVID-19 vaccine

NHS UK will contact you direct if your NHS medical record suggests you may be eligible for a spring COVID-19 vaccine.

You may be offered a spring COVID-19 vaccine from April 2024 if you:-

- Are aged 75 years old or over
- Live in a care home for older adults
- Are aged 6 months old or over and have a weakened immune system

When available, there will be different ways to obtain your vaccine, including:

- Booking online

■ Going to a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site

■ Through your care home

■ Via one of the community services

If you go to a walk-in centre please remember to take your invitation letter with you.

As and when we receive further information about the spring vaccine we will let you know.

Sandra East

GRANTA PATIENT SERVICES
cpicb.grantapatientsservices@nhs.net

Bin Collections April/May

DATE	BLACK	BLUE	GREEN
Wednesday April 3 RD	✓		
Wednesday April 10 TH		✓	✓
Wednesday April 17 TH	✓		
Wednesday April 24 TH		✓	✓
Wednesday May 1 ST	✓		
Wednesday May 8 TH		✓	✓

Balsham Parish Council

The Parish Council Meeting took place on 18th March, 2024 in Balsham Pavilion

Solar Farm Presentation:

Downing Renewable Developments LLP/Kingsway attended the PC meeting. There were approximately 100 people present at the meeting.

The proposed plans are for a solar farm, generating 500 MW. The land used by the solar farm would be approximately 700 hectares. In addition to the solar panels the site would have large battery units that will store the energy that's generated until it is needed These storage units are each the size of a 20 ft shipping container, and there will be several hundred of them over the solar farm.

The location is favoured due to the convenient access to a very high voltage power line, the same as used by Wadlow Wind farm. A substation will need to be built to connect to that line, and access roads may need to be built. The life of the solar farm is expected to be 35-40 years, after which it would either be decommissioned and the land returned to as it is now, or the solar farm might be updated for another phase.

The proposed solar farm is in very early stages and there will be further meetings arranged when more information is available.

The presentation will be shared on

the PC website: www.balsham.net when available.

Planning:

Site address: Balsham Place, 86 High Street, Balsham.

Proposal: T1 Elm, Fell. T2 Sycamore, Fell. T3 Willow, pollard on main leaders to 4m and 2m respectively.

Reference: 24/0260/TTCA

PC Decision: No objections.

Site address: 19 Princes Close, Balsham.

Proposal: Erection of a two bedroom detached dwellinghouse.

Reference: 23/04799/FUL

PC Decision: Neighbours comments to be taken into consideration.

Planning Decisions:

Site address: 41 Plumian Way, Balsham.

Proposal: T1 - Field maple. Lapsed pollard - re pollard at previous pruning points. Leaving a pollarded stem of approximately 4m.

Reference: 24/0138/TTCA

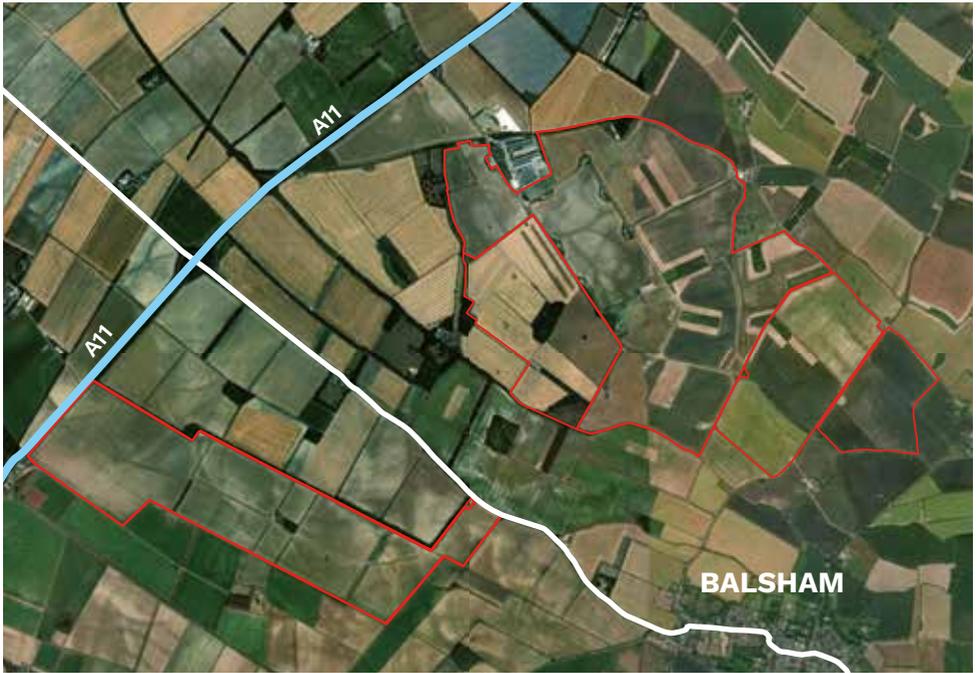
Approved.

Website:

The PC is very pleased that Clive Bennett has offered to help with the website.

Highways:

The PC are in regular contact with CCC Highways for investigations in West Wrating and West Wickham



Proposed area of solar farm (shown in red)

Road. Local residents have contacted Highways concerning the recent accident near Dungate Lane for improvements to the road and issues with speeding vehicles.

20 is Plenty Campaign:

The PC has submitted the application to CCC and await the decision.

Tracy Coston PARISH CLERK

Tel: 01223 894462 / 07929930385

Email: clerk@balsham.net

Website: www.balsham.net

The next Parish Council Meeting
will be held on
15th April, 2024 at 7.30 pm
in Balsham Pavilion.
ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND



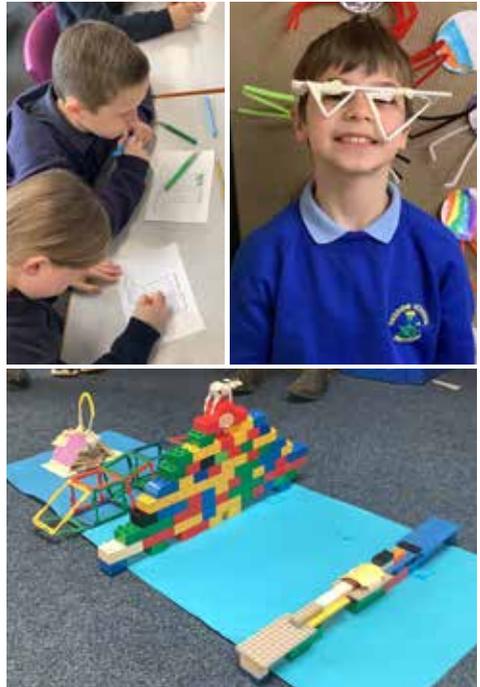
Photo: Richard Pargeter

The Meadow Primary School

The month ahead promises to be an exciting and bustling time for our school community! Our talented Year 3/4 students are diligently preparing for their highly anticipated production of Snow White, where they will showcase their acting skills and musical talents to captivate audiences. Meanwhile, we are practising lots for our Easter service at Balsham Church, where students will come together to reflect on the significance of the season and celebrate the spirit of renewal and hope. Additionally, our adventurous Year 5 students are gearing up for an unforgettable residential trip to How Hill, where they will embark on hands-on learning experiences amidst the beauty of nature. With so much to look forward to, it's bound to be a month brimming with creativity, spirituality, and unforgettable experiences for all our children!

World Book Day

In celebration of **World Book Day** on **7th March**, our students embarked on an exciting literary journey diving into Mariajo Ilustrajo's captivating tale, "*Flooded.*" Engaging their imaginations, KS1 students envisioned our school submerged underwater, brainstorming innovative solutions such as crafting goggles, constructing bridges, and inventing



flotation devices. Meanwhile, KS2 students unleashed their creativity by designing bespoke wellington boots and crafting poignant acrostic poems inspired by the themes of resilience and adaptation within the book. It was a day filled with literary exploration and inventive thinking, showcasing the boundless possibilities ignited by the power of storytelling.

Comic Relief

Friday 15th March looked a little different at The Meadow. A spirited fundraising initiative for **Comic Relief**, spearheaded by our dedicated school council saw the children 'Break the Rules' for a day! Pupils

were granted the exhilarating opportunity to defy convention by bending traditional school rules. From sipping squash in water bottles to indulging in tasty snacks at breaktime, and even ditching the uniform for fancy dress or own clothes, the day was a whirlwind of excitement and rebellion. With wild hairstyles and rule-breaking spirits in abundance, our school community united in support of a worthy cause. The event proved to be a resounding success, as we proudly raised over

£250 for Comic Relief, demonstrating once again the immense generosity and goodwill of our families and students.

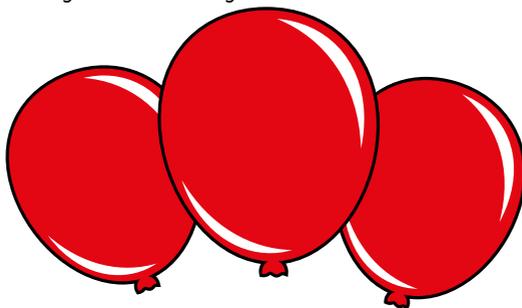
From everyone at The Meadow Primary School, we hope you have a wonderful and restful Easter filled with love, laughter and cherished moments with loved ones. We'll see you in the Summer Term!

Faye Facer

ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER & EYFS LEAD

Big Balsham Sale

Sunday 19th May 2024, 10am – 2pm



Time for a good clear out and sell all those unwanted items?

The **Big Balsham Sale** is our annual community sale where householders can sell from their own garages / driveways etc. To those newcomers in the village this has always been a very successful event for sellers and buyers alike.

It only costs **£5** which includes advertising and a village map showing the location of all participants so visitors and traders will know where

to spend!!! You will also receive red balloons to fly so pinpointing your pitch to the buyers.

Full information with a booking form will be in the May issue of the Balsham Review. Nearer the date we will be delivering a flyer sheet to each house, again with details and booking form.

Glynis Hanlon

Tel: 01223 890 219

Email: bigbalshamsale@gmail.com

Facebook: bigbalshamsale

Linton Village College

World Book week at LVC's library

At LVC we are lucky to have a thriving and popular library. Run by our amazing librarian, Mrs Hay, the library serves as a hub for our student community in a variety of different ways. Dawn has been our librarian for over six years now and works tirelessly to instil in our students the love of literacy and reading. The reason, she says, she became the librarian in the first place.



To commemorate World Book Day, we welcomed **Mark Woodley**, an ex-LVC student and published author, for a visit. Mark entertained students across all year groups on World Book Day with a book signing and informal chat over lunch followed by a year 8 talk on the struggles of writing and becoming a published author. Students were enthralled by a giant-sized lost hammer of Darkerden which features in Mark's first book.

The library is first a centre for learning and love of books. Students in year 7 use the space for a paired reading initiative before school,

where some of our Year 10 students sit down and listen to them read and support them in being more confident readers. The Lexia literacy programme for Years 7 to 10 helps students improve their grammar, comprehension techniques and ability to use language and new words. Homework club after school provides support and IT access for some of our students that may need to stay after the end of the school day.

The library is also very popular in the school's social times. In fact, it is so popular that the queue often reaches all the way down the corridor. Students can play chess, Warhammer and a variety of different games, as well as using the computers to help with their learning. **Knit and Stitch** on



Thursdays provides an opportunity for students to talk and craft.

In the next few weeks, the library will host our infamous **Harry Potter night** for students in Year 7.

Dressing up, games, Harry Potter

crafts and a themed buffet make this night one the students always remember.

Laura Heard

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE PR & COMMUNICATIONS

Collection for Ukraine



Saffron Walden Rotary thanks all those who kindly donated food, clothing and household items and cash at our collection held on March 2nd, at Great Abington School, thanks to the support of headmaster Guy Underwood.

Residents from Abington and the surrounding villages responded so well to the third collection held in Abington that the parked UK-Aid van was full by the end of the morning. In addition, over one thousand pounds was also generously donated that will buy four generators that are desperately needed where no power supplies are available.

Organiser Rotarian Tony Collett, said *'We are very appreciative of the support we receive which together with the ten collections we have held on Saffron Walden Common means that we are one of the major donors to UK-Aid, the Felsted based charity that takes everything to distribution centres in Moldova and Ukraine for the benefit of Ukrainian refugees. This all starts with the kindness and generosity of local people – thank you.'*

Tony Collett

SAFFRON WALDEN ROTARY CLUB

Make Your Mark With Volunteering

*New **Volunteer Cambs** website calls on the local community to make their mark with volunteering*

A new website has been launched by **Support Cambridgeshire**, promoting exciting opportunities for residents of Cambridgeshire to explore volunteering near them.

Whether you have 10 minutes to spare or 10 hours, in a few clicks you can be matched with an organisation or group in the community which inspires you to make your mark, expand on the skills you already have, discover new ones, unlock your potential or create lasting friendships with like-minded people.

All you need to do is visit the **Volunteer Cambs** website at volunteercambs.org.uk, create an account and hey presto! At the click of a button, you can find the ideal cause to support right on your doorstep.

“Volunteering is not just about helping others”, say the creators of the new volunteer matchmaking service – “it’s also about what they’ll get in return. This includes a sense of purpose, wonderful experiences, and a whole lot of thanks from the causes they are helping.”

Volunteer Cambs works by asking organisations and groups to load up their opportunities and profiles directly so there’s always something new for a volunteer to look at every

time they visit the site. And the good causes who are promoting their work benefit by having a continuous stream of potential volunteers.

An enquiry form featured on the website will help groups and volunteers match up, contact each other, and there is even a chat function for those who want to dip their toe in first. Would be volunteers can search for opportunities by location if transport is an issue, for instance, or by topics that match their skill set and interests.

The Volunteer Cambs team will be out-and-about in Cambridgeshire over the coming year. You can also keep an eye on the site for more information and inspiring stories and photographs of great volunteer/group matches transforming lives and raising awareness of the value, impact and importance they’re having in their local area.

To find out how you can match your precious time to local good causes visit volunteercambs.org.uk. It all starts with one act of kindness.

***Support Cambridgeshire** is a partnership funded by Cambridgeshire County Council, bringing together infrastructure organisations who work together to support community groups and organisations across Cambridgeshire. The partnership delivers better outcomes for local organisations across the county, with the expectation of a more robust and more vibrant voluntary and community sector.*

Linton & District Historical Society

Born in Cambridge in 1811 the vision of Frank Fenner, a tobacconist trading in Market Square in the mid 1800's, to see dedicated sporting facilities in the city was a most interesting story presented by Nigel Fenner, a descendant of this remarkable man. Surprisingly, Frank Fenner's only legacy is the University Cricket Ground being named after him. Nigel started his talk by saying Frank actually trained as a teacher and went on to become a University Football Blue; 1848 saw students from Cambridge University write the first set of football rules. Today, a memorial stands on Parker's Piece to mark this event.

At one point there was a gym based in the back of his shop (*now the site of Marks and Spencer*). He was involved with football, boxing and athletics; it is said that Frank Fenner was the best cricket player of his time. Despite a somewhat challenging relationship between 'Town and Gown' he astonishingly brought together a cricket team selected with players from both sides.

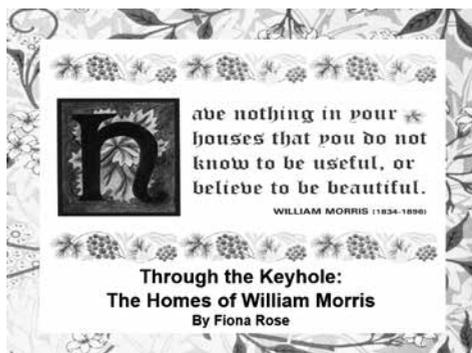
In 1861/62 Frank left Cambridge and it is understood he tried to create similar facilities in other cities. Whilst living in Bath, his death in May 1896 aged 85 was reported in two short sentences, easily overlooked, on someone who was a pioneer in obtaining 'sport for all'.

With a question and answer session after the talk, it transpires that

'camping' was a medieval version of football played on a green, now mostly a recreational area, and Nigel was able to follow questions he had about Linton. Frank Fenner was inspirational, even if you were not interested in sport everyone attending enjoyed a well-presented evening.

Published in 2023, Nigel Fenner has written a 300 page book - *Cambridge Sport: In Fenner's Hands*; he is also involved in Cambridge Sporting Tours.

Our next meeting:



A reminder our talk on **16th April** will feature the **Homes of William Morris** when our speaker will be **Fiona Rose**. As always our meetings start 7.30pm in Linton Village Hall, Coles Lane. Easy parking in the Health Centre/Public Car Park opposite. Raffle and refreshments during the evening. All members welcome, visitors £5

For further details of the LDHS please email ldhscams@gmail.com or call: **01223 893915** or **01223 678835**.

Balsham Gardening Club



Balsham Gardening Club met on 6th March, with Andrew Clark showing us how to make blue tit nest boxes and suet block and simple fat ball feeders. He explained the importance of the 25 mm nest box hole, to stop larger birds, and that the boxes should face north so they don't overheat in the sun. We had a go at making the boxes and feeders ourselves or took them home to finish.

Harold Gawthorp gave us some gardening tips. Despite the record warm February, his advice was to wait for drier conditions. This winter's rain will have washed nutrients from the soil, so plants will need careful feeding.

The Club is thinking ahead to its plant stall at the **Balsham Feast** on **6th**

July. We'll be growing spare plants when sowing seed and taking cuttings this spring. Nearer the time, contributions from all gardeners in Balsham will be very welcome. Dave Arnold is planning a practical quiz on peat free composts, where we can guess what they're made from and see how well they grow seed.

We're planning a visit to **RHS Hyde Hall** near Chelmsford in May or June. Hyde Hall is well worth a visit at any time and known for its dry garden.

The Gardening Club meets again on **Wednesday 3rd April** at **19:30** in the Pavilion. We have a very interesting speaker lined up: master thatcher **Chris Dodson**, on the **Principles and Practice of Thatching**. Guests will be welcome.

Linton Library News

Come and visit Linton library this April for...

Easter holiday fun activities for kids

– Drop-in crafts, picture hunts and more.

Our **Monthly Talk** on **Wednesday 10th**,

2 – 3.30pm, will be from the volunteer group **FROG**, Friends of the River Granta, whose aim is to protect and enhance the local River Granta. It's free but please book your place by contacting the library or email: **cambourne.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**

Storytime. Rhyme-time. Duplo-time, our friendly group for 0-4-year olds, **10am – 11am, every Tuesday** (in term time) for stories, songs and Duplo play.

Knit and Natter, which is now on **EVERY Tuesday, 2pm – 3pm**. Bring along any craft project you're working on – it doesn't have to be knitting and table space is available.

Daylight Readers. Our Book Groups meet on **Friday 19th**, one at **10.30am** and the other at **2.30pm** and always welcome new members!

Bus Passes - We can help with new or renewals. Contact us to book an appointment.

Books – Come in and find a new

book to read. If you can't see the one you want here, you can reserve books from other libraries in Cambridgeshire and pick them up from Linton library. Ask us for more details.

If you are having problems working out your smart phone or laptop, the **IT Club** are here to help. Drop-in any **Wednesday** from **5pm – 7pm**.

There was great interest in the recent talk we hosted about **Cathodeon Crystals**. We are keen to offer more talks about Linton community history, so please let us know if you have any ideas.

Ann King & Melanie Symonds

COMMUNITY LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

Opening hours

Mon CLOSED	Thurs 2-5pm
Tues 10am-5pm	Fri 10am-5pm
Weds 4-7pm	Sat 10am-1pm

Customer Services

(regular office hours): **0345 045 522**

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library



Rehab 4 Addiction

a UK-Based Addiction Helpline in Cambridgeshire

Rehab 4 Addiction offers a wealth of resources and information about addiction and mental health, which could be invaluable to those in need. We provide a helpline that offers immediate assistance to those struggling with addiction in Cambridgeshire, a service that could be life-saving. We offer a comprehensive directory of treatment centres throughout the UK, making

it easier for those in need to find help near them.

As we approach Easter, it's important to remember that this can be a particularly challenging time for those dealing with addiction and mental health issues. Many people feel more vulnerable during this period and may be in desperate need of the resources and support that Rehab 4 Addiction can provide.

This is a link to a resource on the website:

<https://www.rehab4addiction.co.uk/country-wide/drug-alcohol-rehab-cambridgeshire>

Balsham Football Club

RESULTS

DATE	HOME	AWAY	SCORE	RESULT	COMP
2 March	Balsham	Fulbourn	2-3	L	League
3 Feb	Comberton Utd	Balsham	2-1	L	League
17 Feb	Ashdon Utd Sat	Balsham	4-0	L	League

FIXTURES

DATE	HOME	AWAY	VENUE	COMP
6 April 3pm	Balsham	Ashdon	Balsham Rec	League
9 April 6.15pm	Balsham	Steeple Morden	Balsham Rec	League
13 April 3pm	Girton Utd	Balsham	Girton Rec	League
16 April 6.15pm	Balsham	Girton Utd	Balsham Rec	League
20 April 3pm	Balsham	Linton	Balsham Rec	League
27 April 3pm	Balsham	Cambridge Ambassadors	Balsham Rec	League
30 April 6.15pm	Balsham	Sawston Phoenix	Balsham Rec	League

Balsham Bowls Club 2024 Season

Fixtures for the various Teams have been agreed and we are aiming for the Club Handbook with fixtures to be correlated, printed and available for members by **Sunday April 7th**.

The first fixtures, on **April 23rd** involve our two Steeple Bumpstead 'Arthur Spackman' Pairs Teams. As usual split Home and Away. These matches start a little earlier in the season so the top two teams from each league can be established for the Final's Day in early August.

With this early season start in mind, we plan to open the Club on **Monday April 22nd** around 6pm to meet the President and Chairman, and Members take the opportunity to pay subscriptions etc. Hopefully, weather permitting, we can also have some roll up practice.

This is a good opportunity for anyone to come along and join us , watch how the game is played, even have a go, and find out more about the Club.

We also have an **Open Day**, very much in the early part of the season planned for **Saturday May 11th** from **2 - 6pm** subject to acceptable weather.

Members will be on hand to help with coaching and give you the opportunity to have a go. All

equipment will be provided and all you need is to wear flat soled shoes/trainers. All ages are welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult. Refreshments will be available. Please feel free to come along and try the game or watch, finding out more about the game the Club in and becoming a member.

Finally we are having a **Pre-season Social** get together for Club members and anyone else interested. This will be held at the Pavilion on **Friday April 12th** from **6pm to 10pm**. Supper provided at £7 pp with bingo and a raffle for fun also. Check out posters around the village!

We have been a village club since 1946 and a big part of the community over the years. To continue to help our club grow we are always looking for new members to join our club, benefit from playing the game, have the opportunity to meet more people from Balsham and surrounding villages, and make new friends!

Contact us:

Website: balshambowlsclub.co.uk

Email: balshambowls@gmail.com

For any further information contact Christine Till **07530 649 573**

Good luck to all members for the coming season!!

The Bell

We hope you all had a great Easter break.

At the time of writing this, we are planning to get the Beer Garden ready for Spring and Summer, weather permitting. Our Summer houses are available for dining bookings for up to 6 people.



beginning at 7.30pm.

Wednesday 24th - Lunch Club, advance bookings & pre orders only.

Monday 29th - Book Club 3.30pm and 7.30pm

Tuesday 30th - Charity Quiz 8pm. All welcome

Diary for April:

We are continuing with our **BOGOF Wednesday** nights, which is available on sausage and mash and scampi and chips. Please book if possible.

Wednesday 10th - Easter-themed Bingo with chocolate and cash prizes. Eyes down at 8pm.

Friday 12th - Bell Inn Spring Golf Day. Still a few spaces left, contact Phil to enter.

Tuesday 23rd - St George's Day. Traditional pie 'n' mash and liquor from 5.30pm. **Fun Darts Knockout**

The darts team has finished the winter season, and are not entering the summer league, we will be meeting at The Bell for practice and fun darts, **every Tuesday from 7.30pm.** Please come and join us for a throw.

For events etc please see The Bell Inn Balsham Facebook page, call **01223 892999**, or call in the pub to see us.

Thank you for your continued support.

Phil & Mary

The Black Bull

April Greetings to all Balsham Villagers from all at The Black Bull

Thank you to all who joined us for Rob's latest Taster Menu on 14th February. It turned out that we also had a reviewer from Cambridge Edition – a lovely write up in the March edition.

Rob's next **Taster Menu** night is **Thursday 18th April** – teaming up with a local mystery foodie guest – so save the date. More details to

be revealed shortly

We will have a **Rob Specials Board** over the **Easter Weekend - Friday 29th & Saturday 30th March.**

Our next Events Night will be Music, Sushi & Tacos on Bank Holiday weekend Friday 3rd May

We are continuing our **Black Bull Brunch Weekends** every few weeks – next ones:

Saturday 23rd /Sunday 24th March
Saturday 6th/Sunday 7th April

Saturday 20th/Sunday 21st April

Saturday 4th/Sunday 5th May

Places are limited so that we can still get ready for lunch, so please book ahead.

Best wishes from all of us

Alex, Rob, Liz, Luke & the teams

info@blackbull-balsham.co.uk

Balsham WI

At our meeting on 12 March, we had a session on Mindfulness by Mel Cunningham. Mel explained a little bit about mindfulness and how it could be used to help relieve stress. She then did some mindfulness

tasks with the group – I have never heard it so quiet during a meeting!

We tried eating a square of chocolate in a slow, mindful way by looking at it, then smelling it and nibbling it slowly while trying to work out what ingredient had been added to it. By doing this you are slowing down and thinking about one thing rather than the myriad of things that are usually going through our minds. I think we all felt quite serene at the end of her talk!

This was followed by our annual meeting when plans for the coming year were explained. We have plans for varied talks and events during the year, leading up to our Centenary celebrations in 2025

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

New members are always welcome – why not come and try us out? We are a friendly bunch and welcome anyone over 18 who

identifies as female. Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Pavilion, Balsham.

Please get in touch if you are interested in joining us –

balshamwi@gmail.com or send a message on Facebook, **@Balsham WI**

Debbie Mower

Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme Community Cafés

Community Cafés are held from **10:00 to 12:00**.

Tuesdays at the Balsham Church Institute on:

16th April; 14th May; 25th June; 16th July

Fridays at the Mays Avenue Community Hall on:

5th April; 3rd May; 7th June; 5th July

If you would like to support the work of the Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme in any way, get in touch on:

07508 430057 or email **balshamgns@gmail.com**

The Giant Sequoia Tree



If you are one of the many dog owners in the village you will know how lucky we are to have such a choice of footpaths along which to walk them. One of my favourite footpaths, and convenient for me, is Woodhall Lane through to the Roman road which takes you past Woodhall farm. In the garden of this farm are two very tall trees which I love looking at simply for their extreme height but I also use them as a landmark knowing that after one of my longer walks I am getting close to home.

One day recently on remarking to my husband that they seemed to have grown even taller and

remained undamaged by the recent high winds, I was surprised to be told that they are Giant Sequoia trees which are apparently similar, although a different species, to the great Redwoods and also grow in California. He said that as a young boy the farmer, Mr Randall, who some of you may remember living at Woodhall, had shown him these trees and invited him to punch the bark which is surprisingly soft and pulpy and won't hurt your hands. This really captured my imagination and got me wondering just how these two impressive trees came to be growing and flourishing right here in Balsham.

Turns out it's all down to the good old Victorians. As soon as these 'forests of giants' were discovered growing in the Californian mountains by both explorers and the influx of people during the gold rush (1852) word soon got out about these trees described at the time as the world's largest living organisms.

The giant sequoia was first brought into cultivation in Britain in 1853 by the horticulturist Patrick Matthew of Perthshire from seeds sent to him by his botanist son in California. Around the same time horticulturist William Lobb was visiting California and on seeing the huge trees knew that this would trigger an enormous craze in British Horticulture circles so he collected seed, shoots and saplings for distribution. In less than two years' time this would give rise to wealthy Victorians eager to buy these to adorn their great British Estates.

Which brings us back to Woodhall Farm. The farmhouse itself was built in 1837 by Charterhouse and the first tenants were John and Sarah Symonds. The family retained the tenancy until the late 1880s, so given the size of the trees now it would seem feasible that either Charterhouse or the Symonds family were responsible for the planting.

The tree does well in our climate, tolerating extreme cold, heat and



strong wind. Their root system is unique; although relatively shallow for their height they grow towards each other and intertwine roots between themselves. They hold on to others throughout their long life and it's said that this is why it's rare to see a single sequoia and why the biggest tree can be found surrounded by others. Loneliness is their biggest threat. Growth in Britain is very fast with the tallest being recorded at Benmore in Scotland reaching 180 ft in 2014, aged 150 years. Given that they can live up to 3,000 years old our British ones are just getting started!

Jan Ellam

March Hares, Birds & Bats at Wandlebury

Wandlebury is bustling with life as the days get longer and if you are lucky you may get to see the Mad March Hares! They can often be seen boxing in Varleys Field at Wandlebury in March and they have got more common in recent years thanks to our conservation efforts and efforts of local farmers.



The Wardens and Volunteers have been busy reviewing our bird (and some bat) nest box around Wandlebury. Removing last year's nesting material (and even the odd unhatched egg!), and replacing any boxes that have deteriorated.

We have been fortunate to receive some match funded public support which has enabled us to install a series of new nest boxes in the wooded edges of the newly planted chalk grassland at Wandlebury. All our boxes, new and old, have now been mapped so we can keep track of the birds that move in.

We expect them to attract, amongst others, blue tits, great tits, fly catchers, robins and wrens. So keep your eyes peeled for birds carrying nesting material!

For your little explorers, why not

download our **Spring Trail** and help them spot the signs of spring. You can also enjoy **Easter Holiday**

Bushcraft Tue 2 April - Fri 5 April or join our **Volunteer Work Parties** at Wandlebury on **Tuesday 02 April.**

Holiday Bushcraft for 5-12 year olds Monday 2 - Fri 5 April, 8.30am to 4pm, Wandlebury Country Park.

Holiday Bushcraft at Wandlebury is designed for children aged 5-12 and is run by experienced qualified teachers from Wild Thyme & Embers, who will inspire children and share their knowledge and skills of surviving in the wild.

Wandlebury Wildflowers in Spring

Tuesday 16 April, 10am – 12noon, Wandlebury Country Park

Gentle guided walk to learn about spring wild flowers at Wandlebury Country Park. Led by a knowledgeable guide who will help you to identify wild flowers using features such as colour, form and habitat. Please wear footwear and clothing for being outdoors. Meet at the large noticeboard in the car park. Free event, suggested donation £3. No need to book.

Balsham Weather February 2024



Photo: Lesley Bennett

Air Temperatures: Maximum & Minimum

FEBRUARY:

Daytime temperatures (*in the shade*)

Highest: 15° C on 15th February

Lowest: 7° C on 7th February

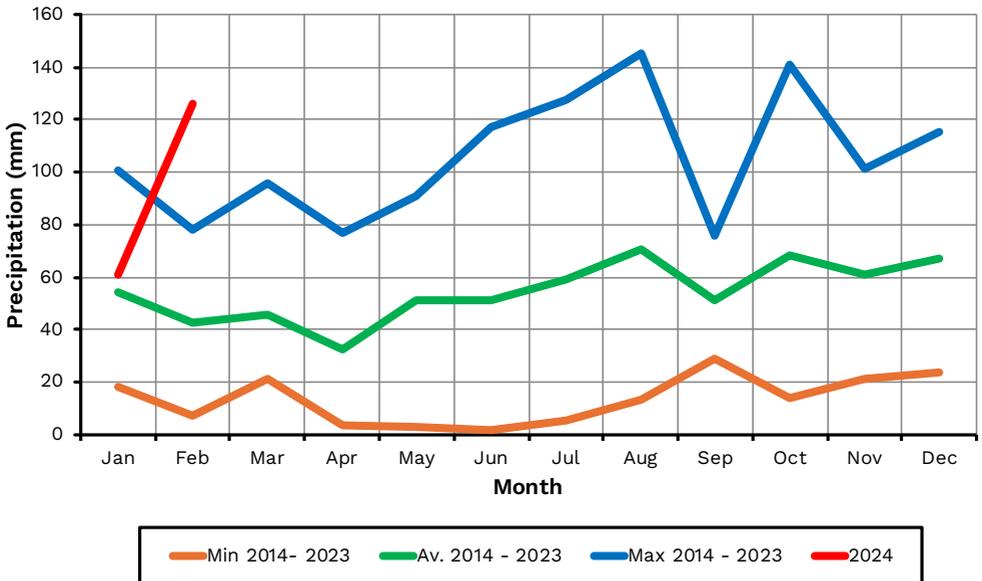
Night time temperatures

Highest: 11° C on 3rd February

Lowest: -1° C on 27th February

February Rainfall at 11 Nine Chimneys Lane, Balsham

Total February 2023 rainfall: 126mm / 5.04" with 16 days of rain.





Saturday April 6th

Doors open 7.00pm and film at 7.00pm in Balsham Church Institute

Maestro (15)



The film for April is the Oscar nominated film **MAESTRO (15)** and stars include *Bradley Cooper* and *Carey Mulligan*.

MAESTRO tells the complex love story of conductor-composer Leonard Bernstein and actress Felicia Montealegre Cohn Bernstein, a story that spans over 30 years—from the time they met in 1946 at a party and continuing through two engagements, a 25 year marriage, and three children.

*Balsham Picture House is now starting its 8th Year of showing newly released films every month and has built up a huge library of Blu-Rays which are available for any member to borrow to show again at home for a small donation - please contact **Nigel Clark** (n.clark5@btinternet.com) for details.*

Dave's bar open as usual before the film for refreshments!

The **May film** will be the Oscar-awarded film **The Holdovers (15)**. A good natured comedic drama set in a 1970s USA private school featuring 3 diverse people who get stuck in the school over the Christmas break and form an unusual bond!.

***Join the Picture House with annual membership of just £12
or come as a guest member at £3/film show***