



# BALSHAM *Review*

ISSUE No. 667

MARCH 2025



Photos or articles to: [editor@balshamreview.com](mailto:editor@balshamreview.com)  
Website: [www.balshamreview.com](http://www.balshamreview.com)

**Photo:** Grace Langford (13)



Photo: Lesley Bennett

Snowdrops



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Fruiting moss



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Viburnum



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Aconites



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Cyclamen

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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.*

## **KEEP UP TO DATE!**

*All the latest news and events at:*

**www.balsham.net**

*Send content to: [clive@ben8and.co.uk](mailto:clive@ben8and.co.uk)*

### **DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE:**

**WEDNESDAY March 19<sup>TH</sup> 2025**

*Copy should be submitted*

*where possible to*

***editor@balshamreview.com***

*or delivered to the 'Balsham Review*

*Postbox' held in the Post Office*

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#### **Photographs supplied by:**

*Grace Langford, Lesley Bennett, Richard Pargeter, Liz De'Ath & Sally Collins*



## **Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme**

Email [balshamngns@gmail.com](mailto:balshamngns@gmail.com)  
or phone or text **07508 430057**

# Editorial

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By the time you read this editorial we will, I hope, have achieved some warmer weather. The East wind has been bitter for far too long, but at least it brought some sunshine after the gloom of several weeks. The sunshine has brought some spring flowers and my garden is beginning to brighten with aconites, snowdrops, primroses, hellebores, irises and many shrubs. The most spectacular at the moment is the cornus mas, by the gate, covered in tiny yellow flowers with a marvellous scent. In summer it has red fruits that I gather Americans make into jam, but I haven't had enough to try that yet, maybe there aren't enough insects about in the cold to fertilise the flowers.

The article from Cambridge Past, Present and Future this month is about **National Bird Box Week**, which I hadn't heard of before I read their article that same week. I had started checking my boxes early in February, and was very disappointed to find two had been totally chewed by squirrels, giving them access to the young birds. As I had metal rings round the entrance holes so they couldn't get in that way, one had a hole in the corner of the roof, and the other from the sliding base (removable to make cleaning out easy). Squirrels are too clever.

A big apology from me to the Christmas Tree Festival organisers. I missed their message to you all which they sent for the last magazine, so please do read about it and their thanks to you all, and admire the photos as well.

We have received a plea from the **Cambridgeshire Fire Service** about **parking in narrow roads**. All our roads count as narrow in the village here. There is a real problem for emergency vehicles, especially fire engines, getting through whether an emergency or not. This is especially noticeable around the school, in the High Street and the nearby Closes and roads. I know the school do advise parents and carers to park sensibly, but it seems to me too many drivers think they will only be 'two minutes' and it won't matter. To drive to Church Lane and use the car park by the church and playpark won't take much longer, and will be safer for everyone. And there are many other Closes especially at the ends of the village where ambulances need to call, and where parking makes access difficult. Do please be aware, and advise your visitors too.

Spring **must** be on the way, that's what the meteorologists say, so I hope they inform the powers that be of the natural world, and give us

what we need, some warm dry weather. I'm not listening to the gardeners who want a sustained period of cold to discourage the tiny creatures that cause chaos amongst the new shoots and plants that will soon be growing

well in our vegetable beds and allotments. Have a good growing season everyone!

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**Gill Parry Brown**

EDITOR, BALSHAM REVIEW

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## 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

#### **EASTER FLOWERS**

If you would like to make a donation for Easter lilies/roses in memory of loved ones please contact:

**Alison Clarke,**

Walnut Tree House,  
15 Woodhall Lane, Balsham

**Tel:** 01223 894031

**Mob:** 07986692277

**Email:** alisonclarke15@hotmail.com

#### **BALSHAM SINGERS ARE CELEBRATING 30 YEARS**

During the year we have 2 concerts, 5 singing for fun sessions and a **Come and Sing** event planned.

The first concert is on **Saturday 17th May** and has an exciting varied programme with an orchestra.

#### **PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.**

The last concert was a sell-out; we

are hoping for the same during our special year of celebration!

#### **Jo Stinton**

#### **ARTHUR RANK**

#### ***Popular Floral Wreath Making Workshop Returns***

Following the success of the festive wreath-making workshop, which raised over **£3,000** for hospice services, Arthur Rank Hospice Charity are excited to announce their first **Spring Wreath-Making Workshop** lead by Eco-Florist Flora Laura Flowers. Just in time for Easter, book your place for **Friday 4th** or **Saturday 5th April** by visiting **arhc.org.uk/whatson** or call **01223 675888**.

# Church Services

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## 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](http://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      |
| Rev. Hannah Threlfall          | 01223 481090 | RevThrelfall24@outlook.com |
| Church Warden:<br>Nigel Clark, | 01223 893043 | n.clark5@btinternet.com    |
| Administrator:<br>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/Lintoncornerstone](http://www.facebook.com/Lintoncornerstone)

**METHODIST:** Haverhill Methodist Church, Camps Road

# From the Church

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Despite the continuing cold weather, we now can see the light we were promised at Candlemas. Bulbs shooting up, snowdrops, daffodils, and aconites, new growth that



encourages us to look ahead to spring.

As time rushes on, Lent approaches, beginning on March 5th with a service of **Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday at 7.30pm at Hildersham**. As I was thinking about my Lent book for this year, I was aware that there are many different books we could follow with daily readings. There is a book called the *Lent Factor* by Bishop Graham James, appealing to those of us who like to listen to people's stories, or maybe a Franciscan one, or perhaps you might like to read something from Rowan Williams. We all have our own preferences. In the same way we may find being in church, or sitting in a peaceful place, helps to clear our minds of so much busyness. Many take their dog for a walk to see nature at work on a daily basis. Another way of engaging with God in nature is by looking out of the window to watch the birds on the feeders or notice the subtle start of spring.

I have been involved in the World Day of Prayer service for many years and this year we are celebrating the lives of the women in the Cook Islands learning about their culture.

The faith of these women in difficult circumstances gives us hope to overcome adversity, and this year the theme is "*I made you wonderful*" based on Psalm 139. The service this year is on **Friday 7th March 11.00am at Balsham church**. It promises to be a joyful service reminding us that we are all loved by God. Do join us.

I want to share with you a very special thing that happened last year in March. I was given a calendar of pictures of the Holy Land and in the month of March the picture was the Sea of Galilee. Every morning when daylight came, the light shone on the picture so that it looked like dawn was happening at that moment. It was a real joy to be reminded of a place where Jesus walked and lived.

May God show you his love and peace as we head towards Easter. Expect the unexpected.

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**Reverend Kathy Bishop**

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| <b>March Services</b>                  | <b>9:30am</b>   | <b>11:00am</b>  | <b>PM Services</b>   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>2nd</b>                             |   | <b>United Service with Holy Communion</b><br>Balsham<br><i>Revd Iain McColl/<br/>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>  |  |
| <b>9th</b>                             | <b>Holy Communion</b><br>West Wickham<br><i>Revd Iain McColl/<br/>Alastair Franc</i><br><b>Morning Worship</b><br>West Wrattling<br><i>Steven Wheeler</i>   | <b>Morning Worship</b><br>Balsham<br><i>Revd Jennifer Totney</i><br><b>Morning Worship</b><br>Great Abington<br><i>Revd Hannah Threlfall/<br/>Steven Wheeler</i><br><b>Café Church</b><br>Hildersham<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i> | <b>6.00pm</b><br><b>Taizé service</b><br>Weston Colville<br><i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>               |
| <b>16th</b>                            | <b>Holy Communion</b><br>West Wrattling<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i><br><b>Morning Worship</b><br>West Wickham<br><i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>  | <b>Morning Worship</b><br>Balsham<br><i>Alistair Collen</i><br><b>Holy Communion</b><br>Little Abington<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i>  | <b>6.00pm</b><br><b>Evening Prayer</b><br>Hildersham<br><i>Alistair Collen</i>                         |
| <b>23rd</b>                            | <b>Morning Worship</b><br>West Wickham<br><i>Steven Wheeler</i><br><b>Holy Communion</b><br>Weston Colville<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i><br><b>10.00am</b><br><b>Creative Church</b><br>Abington Hub<br><i>Rosemary Mead/<br/>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> | <b>Holy Communion (BCP)</b><br>Hildersham<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i><br><b>11.15am</b><br><b>Holy Communion</b><br>Balsham<br><i>Revd Michael<br/>Wilcockson</i>  | <b>4.00pm</b><br><b>Evening Prayer</b><br>Little Abington<br><i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>              |
| <b>30th</b><br><i>Mothering Sunday</i> | <b>Holy Communion</b><br>West Wickham<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i><br><b>Holy Communion</b><br>West Wrattling<br><i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>   | <b>Morning Worship</b><br>Balsham<br><i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i><br><b>Morning Worship</b><br>Great Abington<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i>  | <b>5.00pm</b><br><b>Mothering Sunday Evening Service</b><br>Weston Colville<br><i>Revd Iain McColl</i> |

**Ash Wednesday service** 5th March Holy Communion 7.30pm Hildersham

**World Day of Prayer service** Friday 7th March 11.00am, Balsham

# The Meadow Primary School

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February has been a month filled with exciting opportunities and achievements for our children at The Meadow. We are proud to share the highlights of some of the competitions and events that have given our children a chance to showcase their talents and hard work.

## **Hockey Tournament Success**

Our students recently took part in a thrilling hockey tournament, where they displayed great teamwork and sportsmanship, earning an impressive 7th place! This tournament was a fantastic opportunity for our children to challenge themselves and represent the school with pride.

## **Year 6 English Challenge**

In addition, our Year 6 students participated in an English challenge,

and we're delighted to announce that they did exceptionally well! Thanks to their dedication and skill, they have made it through to the next round of the competition – a fantastic achievement!

## **Young Voices Performance**

At the beginning of February, our Year 5 and 6 students had the chance to take part in the unforgettable **Young Voices** event. They had a spectacular time performing a variety of songs, including a Bob Marley medley, in front of a huge audience. The event was a celebration of music and unity, and our students thoroughly enjoyed every moment.

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## **Faye Facer**

ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

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## Hildersham Church

On **Saturday 22nd March** at **7.30pm** is our third concert in support of the **Friends of Holy Trinity Church**, Hildersham. This will be the professional vocal ensemble **Sonare Choir**, with one voice to a part, Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor and Bass, singing un-

accompanied. The title of their programme is '*Elements*' and includes works by Mozart and Britten as well as more popular and folk songs such as Linden Lea. For more information contact **Athene Hunt**, [huntcam2015@gmail.com](mailto:huntcam2015@gmail.com)

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## Wreaths

As is the custom for Balsham Churchyard any Christmas wreaths on graves will be removed before the start of Lent which, this year, occurs on **Wednesday 5th March**

# Kingsway Solar Community Action



Chancellor Rachel Reeves recently set out her vision for fast-tracking economic growth, stating, “*Focus on getting things built and stop worrying about the bats and the newts.*” Her speech reinforced the government’s push for major infrastructure projects.

## **But at what cost?**

Brian Eversham, CEO of the Beds, Cambs, and Northants Wildlife Trust, believes in responsible development - one that doesn’t just squeeze wildlife into whatever space is left but actively protects and restores nature.

This is why KCSA is standing against large-scale solar developments that threaten our rural landscapes and wildlife. We support renewable energy but believe there’s a better way. In the coming weeks, you’ll see posters raising awareness about the 500 MW Kingsway Solar Farm plus battery storage and its

impact on our local footpaths and wildlife. In March, we need your help to record local brown hares. They were left out of the scoping report but should be in the Environmental Impact Assessment. Meanwhile, the government’s much-anticipated Land Use Framework (LUF) has launched with a 12-week consultation period. It aims to balance housing, energy, agriculture and nature—but will it deliver?



## **Have your say!**

Visit the KCSA website for the consultation link, project timeline, and updates:

**[www.kingswayaction.org](http://www.kingswayaction.org)**

or find us on  
Facebook or Instagram.

# Linton & District Historical Society

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**January 2025:**

## ***Mercury, the mobile metal***

Following a most interesting and entertaining talk last year featuring the up and downsides of Arsenic, we welcomed back **Neil Dickinson** to tell the story of Mercury (Hg) – the mobile metal also known as silver water or quicksilver.

Vermillion, a brilliant red pigment made from mercury sulphide (cinnabar), has been found all over the world and used for various purposes going back thousands of years. Unfortunately, at times this involved treating some medical conditions! Mercury continues to be used in modern times, but handled in a much safer and controlled environment.

It was a most interesting and knowledgeable evening with

excellent pictures, facts and figures all presented in a light hearted manner.

Come and join us next time on **18th March 2025** to hear about the **Curiohaus Trials: Bringing the Nazis to Justice 1945-1949**, presented by **Russell Kent**

Meeting starts at **7.30pm Linton Village Hall**, Coles Lane, Linton (*easy parking in the Health Centre car park opposite*)

Refreshments and Raffle. All welcome – visitors **£5**

Future presentations will feature **‘A Poor Start in Life’** and **‘The History of Ashdon Windmill’**

For further details of the LDHS please email: **ldhscamb@gmail.com** or 'phone **01223 893915** or **01223 678835**

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## **Have an Allotment!!**

### **Spring is in the air and it's a great time to consider having an allotment**

This year there are a number of allotments available so this is your opportunity to get out there and grow your own fruit and veg.

If you feel that you can't manage a full plot, no problem, because you can try a half plot.

For Balsham residents a half plot costs £10 a year, while a full plot costs £20.00. Tenants who live outside of Balsham pay £15.00 for a

half plot and £30.00 for a full plot. A £50 deposit is returnable if the allotment is left in good order when it is relinquished. The charge for water, where available is £10 per annum.

So, if you want to improve your diet, your fitness and your wellbeing, now is the time to apply by sending your name, address, phone number and email to:

**balshmallotments@balsham.net** indicating what size plot you would be interested in.

# Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

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The **Community Coffee Morning** this month will be held on **Tuesday March 11th** from **10am to 12pm** in the Church Institute. This is a good opportunity to meet your friends in a warm room, having a chatter

while eating cake and drinking tea or coffee. There are also some table games to play together and a jigsaw to contribute to while you wait for your friends to arrive!

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## A New Class to Help Keep Safe & Active

**Living Sport**, a local charity, is starting a new '**Forever Active Strength and Balance Class**' in Balsham, starting on **Monday 3rd March**. It will be held in the **Church Institute** with a brilliant instructor called Maxine. The classes are £6 each and new participants can try their first class for free.

The **Strength and Balance** class is on every **Monday** at **11.15am-12.15pm** and is a mixture of seated and standing exercises designed to improve mobility, strength & balance. The classes are delivered by Living Sport as part of the Forever Active programme, which runs around 50

exercise sessions a week in Cambridgeshire for over 50s or those returning to exercise. The aim of these classes is to increase the number of over 50s participating in safe and effective exercises and to help participants stay active, strong and independent.

If you would like to try the class, please get in touch by emailing

**foreveractive@livingsport.co.uk**,  
calling **07432 480105**

or visiting the website:

**foreveractive.livingsport.co.uk**

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## Fitsteps

I am resurrecting the **Fabulous Fitsteps** classes at **Balsham Church Institute** on a **Thursday** evening with the first class at **7.30pm** on **April 3rd**. Fitsteps is a fun dance fitness class suitable for all levels - Ballroom and Latin - just think



*Strictly!* I will do the first class free, and people can contact me on this email address to let me know they are interested, or if they have any questions.

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**Frances Hall**

**Email:** [fitstepsfrances@gmail.com](mailto:fitstepsfrances@gmail.com)

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# Age UK

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Do you or a loved one need a little bit of extra support to live independently, happily and safely at home?

Are you or your loved one over 60?

Do you or your loved one yearn for more day-to-day companionship?

My name is Sheree, I am your Small Villages Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Community Warden. I started in my role in January, after working for nearly a decade at Addenbrookes hospital as a Healthcare

Assistant. I have a young family, live locally and my hobbies include

walking and visiting new places with my family. If you answered yes to any of the above questions, then I am sure my service could make a huge difference to your life. As a community warden, I am in daily contact from Monday through to Friday, either by phone or text message, with at least one face-to-face visit weekly. My service very much meets your specific needs outside of 'personal care' - I am known to pick up some light shopping, queue for prescriptions or wait in the dreaded automated queuing system to arrange appointments on your behalf!

And I can do so much more! I am

often described as a navigator of the outside world, a listening ear and a constant companion. My aim is to help grow confidence and nurture independence, being secure in the knowledge that someone is regularly checking in. I can also signpost you to local services and community events, to enhance and improve your health and wellbeing. As an organisation, we charge a weekly nominal fee for this service. In return you have reassurance that



**Cambridgeshire  
& Peterborough  
age UK**

you or your loved one has another lifeline in place, whether you have family that live nearby or far

away. I am in regular contact with next-of-kin and extended family to ensure a constant flow of communication. If you are interested in the Community Warden Scheme, please do not hesitate to contact me. You or your loved one can take advantage of an introductory 2-week free trial to assess whether this invaluable service meets your needs. I look forward to hearing from you.

## ***Best wishes***

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### **Sheree Geoghegan**

AGE UK CAP COMMUNITY WARDEN

**Email:** [warden@ageukcap.org.uk](mailto:warden@ageukcap.org.uk)

**Tel:** 07436 102865

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# Linton Village College



A Year 8 Enterprise Day with the Army. Students were tasked with combating terrorists.

At Linton Village College we are passionate about our students learning about the world of work and one of the most valuable programmes we afford our pupils is having exposure to future careers and next steps opportunities after their time here at LVC. The **'Future Careers and Pathways'** department works hard to ensure students of all year groups are well informed about their future.

In Year 7, students spend a day listening to external speakers from **'Form the Future'**, a Cambridge consortium that help young people find their route through education into employment. Additionally, 'Form the Future' provides employers with access to their future talent. Students are given talks by a series of professionals in a *'What's my Line'* format, guessing what each of the professions might be.

From Years 8 to 10, students enjoy

Enterprise Days, Apprenticeship talks and mock interviews. In Year 11, students are carefully guided through the post-16 process, where students choose what their next steps might be.

We are always looking for motivational and inspirational speakers that might evoke the notion that life is an 'ocean of possibilities' for our students. You may not have rowed the Atlantic, or climbed Everest, but may have completed other equally inspiring challenges, obstacles, adventures, overcome adversity etc. If you know of someone, be it yourself, a friend or family member, who would be interested in sharing their story with our students, please let us know - we would love to hear from you.

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## **Mrs Scally**

CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION,  
ADVICE & GUIDANCE LEAD

**Email:** [nscally@lintonvc.org](mailto:nscally@lintonvc.org)

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# The Christmas Tree Festival (CTF)

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The CTF is now some months in the past but this is now our opportunity to say “thank-you” through the Review.

A much needed **£2000** was raised for Church funds and so many people contributed to this successful outcome on what was one of the wettest and windiest weekends of the year – 7 and 8 December.

Thanks are due to all of them: to all the helpers and prize donors for the raffle and tombola; to those who manned the door, refreshments and gifts stalls – too many to name individually but you were vital to the success; to everyone who

sponsored a tree – there wouldn't have been a festival without you; and to everyone who attended on such a horrid weather weekend.

We must mention a few by name to whom special thanks are due:

**Cheffins**, our main and generous sponsor; our pubs, **The Black Bull** and **The Bell**, for their generous raffle prizes; “**the Post Office gang**” for sponsoring three trees; and **Steve Jordan**, for his musical ensemble on the Sunday.

***We are grateful to you all***

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**Liz, Karis & Cazy**

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Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Liz DeAth



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Liz DeAth



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Lesley Bennett

# What's in a Pellet?



Most birds regurgitate pellets, containing material from their diet which they can't digest. I once saw a robin regurgitate a pea sized

pellet, and I've found jackdaw pellets on the church tower roof when doing teddy bear parachuting. However, the most widely known pellet producers are birds of prey. Although they will usually be found at regular roost sites, I recently found a barn owl pellet under trees in our garden, and I decided to dissect it. The results are shown in the photos, and consist of at least three small rodents, one being a field vole (inset), and another probably a wood mouse.

**Richard Pargeter**



All photos: Richard Pargeter

**Concert: Saturday 29th March 2025**

**at St. Mary's Church,  
Linton, 7.30pm**



**Spring into  
Summer!**

with **The Kitchenettes** & 5 piece band  
**the Kitchen Choir**

*Serving up tasty morsels of  
musical entertainment!*

In aid of Parkinson's UK

Tickets: £12.50 (includes nibbles) Drinks by donation  
From: Charlotte Dodd via [events@stmmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:events@stmmaryslinton.org.uk)  
Or Sue Ellis: 01223 892257

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

## A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Balsham Picture House is now starting its 9th 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. Contact [balshampicturehouse@gmail.com](mailto:balshampicturehouse@gmail.com) for further details.



## LINTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY TUESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025



### The Curiohaus Trials presented by Russell Kent

Between 1945-49 the Curiohaus Hamburg held court over the trials of Nazi War Crimes.

LINTON VILLAGE HALL  
COLES LANE - 7.30 p.m.

**Refreshments and Raffle**

*Visitors and new members always welcome*

## So

### SONARE CHOIR

The vocal quartet

Victoria Stilwell - Soprano  
Stella Braecgirdle - Mezzo Soprano  
Dom Wallis - Tenor  
George Salmon - Bass

### ELEMENTS:

Mozart, JS Bach, Vaughan Williams, Poulenc, Britten, Byrd, Carmichael/Charles, Debussy and others



Saturday 22nd March, 7:30pm  
Holy Trinity Church, High Street  
Hildersham, Cambridge CB21 6BZ

Advance Tickets: [www.sonarechoir.com](http://www.sonarechoir.com)

# Uprising

## A community opera inspired by Jim Potter

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Many in Balsham knew Jim and Hilary Potter for their engagement with the local community, their passion for the natural world, their concern for the impact of climate change, and for their love of opera. Before Jim died last year, when, as he told us, steroids kept him awake at night, he had the idea of commissioning a community opera about climate change that would involve amateur singers and musicians: both teenagers and adults.

Jim gained the support of one of our most respected composers, Jonathan Dove, to write the score, and of the librettist, April de Angelis, with whom Jonathan had worked on an earlier opera, *Flight*.

The opera, called *Uprising*, follows the conflict between mother, a developer wanting to build a highway through a forest, and daughter who is vehemently opposed and who gathers young people to protest against the destruction of the environment. The issue symbolises the wider degradation of our planet and the consequences of human actions.

*Uprising* is supported by Glyndebourne Opera House where a fully staged production will take place, and Saffron Hall, where there will be a semi-staged production.

The opera requires separate teenage

and adult choruses. At Saffron Hall Simon, Jim's brother, and I are both singing bass in the adult chorus, joined by a number of Jim's friends singing other parts.

It is both daunting and exciting, not least because of the substantial commitment to rehearsals, and because we have to learn our parts by heart... and age doesn't facilitate short term memory!!!

By the end of this, thanks to Hilary's knowledge of botany, we'll know the Latin names of many native trees that we repeatedly sing out!

At the time of writing, in early February, the adult and teenage choruses have yet to rehearse together. By the time this article is published, we shall have had two all-day piano rehearsals together, followed by two further all-day rehearsals at Saffron Hall prior to the full dress rehearsal with orchestra on March 14th!

The performances at **Saffron Hall** are on **March 15th** and **16th** and tickets are still available.

Jim would have been so proud to see how the legacy that his philanthropy has given us all has been fulfilled.

It has been a privilege to be part of such an amazing venture

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**Dave Arnold**

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# Arthur Rank

## Maintaining Your Independence

Patients visiting the Living Well Service at Arthur Rank Hospice, picked up some useful tips.

### Tips to reduce the risk of falls

- Good lighting
- Use cable tidies
- Use non slip underlay under rugs
- Put things at reachable levels
- Install grab rails
- Avoid steps
- Consider moving downstairs
- Put bells or bright coloured collars on your pets
- Never store things on the stairs
- Make sure nothing is trailing from your clothing
- Take care of your feet
- Make sure your shoes are fitted correctly and replace slippers before they are worn out.
- Avoid walking with just socks or tights
- Avoid shuffling when walking
- Avoid caffeinated drinks

- Avoid multiple medications
- Avoid alcohol
- Get your eyesight and glasses regularly checked.

### Planning ahead in case of a fall

- Consider a personal alarm.

**Key safes**, located outside the home, are a consideration if you are at risk of falling or needing support and can't get to the door.

### Sensible precautionary measures to put in place in case of a fall:

- Place cushions, blankets and a bottle of water in a handy place in the home.

### What to do if you do fall:

- Lay still for a minute to see if you have injured yourself anywhere.
- See if you can get on to all fours, or bottom shuffle to summon help.

Whilst you wait for help:

- Stay warm.
- Keep moving where you can.
- Keep up your fluids.



## THE BOBBY SCHEME

The **Bobby Scheme** offers advice, information and guidance to increase confidence whilst living in your own home. More information can be found at <https://thebobbyscheme.org/> or by telephoning **01480 413311**.

A useful leaflet called '**Get up and go**' can be downloaded at [arhc.org.uk/maintainingindependence](http://arhc.org.uk/maintainingindependence)

# The Black Bull

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*Happy March to Balsham from all at The Black Bull.*

Thank you to those who joined us last month – whether for Valentine’s Tasting or normal menu, or a Folk Music night or just a random drop by for a bite or a drink.

**Next Events coming up:**  
**Pint of Music – Folk Night, on Specials Thursday 7th March (and Thursday 3rd April)**

Our Irish/Folk friends are back again. *"It's hard to find the real thing like this, even in Ireland."* A regular monthly fixture now. Tony Day brings along a varying melody of musicians for an informal evening of acoustic music and song. Local folk/Irish/acoustic roots - whistle, bodhran...

**Friday 21st March**

We are very excited to welcome the **Nick Antoniou Quartet Jazz Band**, a four piece local ensemble playing a cool mix of jazz standards. Think

‘Ronnie Scott’s arrives in Balsham’. Sets between 8 and 10pm. Book a table for drinking or dining. They are a very local group and have already had a number of sell out evenings at our sister pub The Red Lion Hinxton. They loved the look of our space and are keen to try an evening with us next. Free entry for these trial performances – get in for free while you can. Rob will be putting on a Special Board that night to complement his winter menu.

**Mothers’ Day** – this year is **Sunday 30th March**. This one gets very busy very quickly, so please do book well ahead if of interest. We will be offering our usual Sunday spread.

*Best wishes from all of us*

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**Alex, Rob, Liz, Luke & the teams**  
info@blackbull-balsham.co.uk

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# Collection for the Ukraine



Thank you to all those who kindly donated to our collection at Great Abington on the 25th Jan. We were able to fill one van with food,

household and personal items and received enough monetary donations that, together with gift-aid, will allow us to buy three generators too. Your kind support and that from Granta Churches and Abington School is sincerely appreciated – thank you all.

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**Tony Collett**

**Tel:** 01223 893447

**Email:** [tony.collett3112@gmail.com](mailto:tony.collett3112@gmail.com)

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## Balsham March Diary

| DATE          | EVENT & TIME  | VENUE               |
|---------------|---|---------------------|
| 1st Saturday  | Picture House <i>'The Critic'</i> 7.30pm                | Institute           |
| 3rd Monday    | Forever Active<br>Strength & Balance Class, 11.15-12.15 | Institute           |
| 7th Friday    | World Day of Prayer service 11.00am                     | Church              |
| 11th Tuesday  | Community Café, 10.00am-12.00pm                         | Institute           |
| 11th Tuesday  | Balsham WI, 7.30pm                                      | Pavilion            |
| 17th Monday   | Parish Council, 7.30pm                                  | Pavilion            |
| 17th Monday   | West Wickham Gardening Club, 7.30pm                     | WW Village Hall     |
| 18th Tuesday  | Linton & District Historical Society,<br>7.30pm         | Linton Village Hall |
| 22nd Saturday | Concert for<br>Friends of Hidersham Church, 7.30pm      | Hidersham<br>Church |
| 30th Sunday   | Mothering Sunday 11.00am                                | Church              |

# Balsham Parish Council

*The Parish Council Meeting took place on 18th February, 2025 in Balsham Pavilion*

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## **Presentation from Sarah Lees (Service Manager) from the Small Warden Scheme:**

Sarah Lees explained that the Small Warden Scheme covers 7 Parishes, and the new Community Warden **Sheree Geoghegan** started in January. The Small Warden Service is a bespoke needs giving service with a mixture of telephone calls and home visits. Practical support is given, and the clients are helped to navigate the outside world, whilst living in their own home. SCDC help to fund the scheme, but their funding is being reduced over the next 3 years. At present 4 individuals are using the Small Warden Scheme in Balsham and there is capacity for more users. The cost is **£15.00** for an individual and **£18.00** per couple for 5/6 hrs per month.

The PC agreed to increase their funding for the scheme to **£1,035.00** from May 2025.

For more information about the scheme please contact Sheree on **07436102865**

**wardens@ageukcap.org.uk.**

## **Highways issues - West Wickham Road:**

CCC have informed the PC that they will be replacing the highway surface drainage system across the carriageway as this is so root infested

from the gully outside No 37 to the chamber in the grass verge on the opposite side of the road, there could also be a section of pipe that will be replaced between that manhole and another manhole further down the grass verge.

The works will require a temporary road closure, and an application is being progressed, and the work will hopefully take place in early May.

## **Solar Farm:**

The Solar Farm Action Group have been discussing the Land Use Framework and are in the process of setting up a campaign for people to use the footpaths and engage with nature around Balsham and the surrounding area and will be promoting the Fleam Dyke and Roman Road.

## **Hedges overgrowing pavements:**

Please can all homeowners make sure that hedges/bushes are cut back from the pavements around properties to make walking on pavements easier in the village.

## **Solar panels for Pavilion:**

The PC have arranged two quotes for solar panels at the pavilion and quotes are being organised to improve the insulation at the pavilion.

## **Volunteer Group:**

A group of volunteers from Astra

Zeneca are spending the day in Balsham on 12th March to carry out improvements to the path near Hay Close to the allotments, pruning of the trees in the Community Orchard and clearance of some vacant allotments.

### **Planning Decisions:**

**Site address:** 17 Queens Close, Balsham

**Proposal:** : Single storey side/rear extension and replace and enlarge the existing opening for bi-fold doors

**Reference:** 24/04638/HFUL

**SCDC Decision:** Granted.

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### **Tracy Coston**

PARISH CLERK

**Tel:** 01223 894462 / 07929930385

**Email:** clerk@balsham.net

**Website:** www.balsham.net

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The next **Parish Council Meeting** will be held on  
**17th March, 2025 at 7.30 pm**  
in **Balsham Pavilion.**  
**ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND**

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## **District & County Councillor's Report**

February 2025

### **Acorn Biodigester**

The proposal by Acorn Bioenergy to build a new anaerobic bio digestion plant on the edge of Haverhill has taken a step forward. Suffolk County Council, who will be making the decision on this, had asked the applicant for more detailed information on various parts of the plan, to enable them to come to a decision on this. After some time, the applicant has now provided this information, and it can all be read and commented upon on the council's website. The planning application reference is SCC/0045/23SE.

<https://suffolk.planning-register.co.uk>

### **4-Day Week Consultation**

The District Council has been

trialling a 4-day work week for their staff since January 2023. The trial was supposed to last for a shorter period of time but the previous government had indicated that they would be levying financial penalties to the Council for running this trial, but wouldn't say how much this would be. Therefore, the Council couldn't decide on whether to make the trial permanent or not. However, the new government has said they won't be applying any financial penalties on the Council, so they can proceed to the next stage, which is a public consultation. This opened at the end of January and is running until March 23rd.

<https://engage.scamb.gov.uk/en-GB/folders/four-day-week>

## 20mph Applications

The County Council are now accepting bids for proposals for areas of our villages to be changed to 20mph. A few villages in our area have already been successful in these applications in previous years' rounds of bidding for this, so if you feel your area would benefit from a lower speed limit, get in touch with your Parish Council.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/improving-the-local-highway/20mph-funding>

## Street Light LED Replacement

The County Council are currently going through a programme of replacing the bulbs in streetlights with more energy efficient LEDs. Some of the villages in our area are designated for this upgrade, so if you see people working on the columns, it is likely that is what is happening.

## Land Use Framework

The Government has launched a consultation on the Land Use

Framework (LUF) promised in its manifesto. The intention of the LUF is to provide a more objective and rational framework against which to judge different land uses and encourage shared, multifunctional land use, for example in the competing needs for housing, sustainable energy infrastructure, food production and biodiversity. These are issues that affect our area more than most. The link to the consultation (closes April 25th) can be found following the link in an overview located here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-national-conversation-on-land-use>

## Contact Information:

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### Geoff Harvey

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR  
[geoff.harvey@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.harvey@gmail.com)

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### Henry Batchelor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR  
[henrybatchelor89@gmail.com](mailto:henrybatchelor89@gmail.com)

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### Pippa Heylings

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
[pippa.heylings.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:pippa.heylings.mp@parliament.uk)

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**BUTTERCUPS PRESCHOOL**  
**Cake Sale**  
**15<sup>TH</sup> March 8am - 11am**  
**OUTSIDE BALSHAM POST OFFICE**

ALL FUNDS RAISED TO SUPPORT BUTTERCUPS PRESCHOOL

The poster features a light grey background with decorative illustrations of birds, clouds, and various flowers (daisies, tulips, etc.) in shades of grey and white. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold, sans-serif and cursive fonts.

# Cambridgeshire Fire Service

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## Consider where you park!

Motorists are urged to take care when parking their vehicles so they do not prevent our fire engines from attending potentially life-threatening emergencies.

There are some areas that are notorious for motorists parking down both sides of a narrow street and there have been times when fire engines haven't been able to get past at all. This of course can cause us a significant delay in responding to emergencies where someone's life could be at risk and our attendance time is crucial.

This is a growing problem due in part to increasing car ownership,

reduced or unused resident parking areas, traffic calming schemes and thoughtless parking by some motorists. The problem can be compounded at night and during the school pick-up and drop-off times.

The average fire engine is 2.6 metres (nine feet) wide and 8 metres (26 feet) long - when you park your vehicle in a narrow street, always check you have left enough room for a fire engine to get past.

For more information log on to [www.cambsfire.gov.uk](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk), follow us on social media or call: **01480 444500**.

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## Balsham WI

For our February meeting we had a very interesting talk about Balsham WI, Balsham Village and the World during the 1930s. This was a difficult time due to the depression and the build up and start of World War II. We also had a new king after the abdication crisis. We heard that the WI campaigned vigorously during this time for piped water to the houses rather than everyone having to use the pump on the green and wells for all of their water. The school roll was halved when the senior children transferred to the newly built Linton Village College, but

was built up again when evacuees from East London arrived in the build up to the war.

Our next meeting on **Tuesday 11th March (7.30pm at The Pavilion)** will be themed on the 1940s

### **SAVE THE DATE!!**

We are planning an **Afternoon Tea** for members past and present on **Saturday 16 August** at the **Church Institute**.

*More details nearer the time.*

# Cambridge Past Present & Future



## **National Nest Box Week**

**14-21 February** was **National Nest Box Week** and traditionally the time of year we check all our bird and bat boxes, repairing and making them ready for the new breeding season. It is the best time of year to put up new boxes or clean out old ones as birds start to look for places to nest. Bird species such as Blue and Great Tits nest in holes but holes are only found in very old trees, so even if there's enough food for the birds there's often nowhere for them to nest.

We use boxes made from woodcrete, a mixture of wood and concrete, because they are very durable and predators like squirrels and woodpeckers can't get to the chicks inside. Boxes are an easy way to attract birds to your garden or workplace and it's so enjoyable to watch them bringing up a family.

If you are keen to hang your own bird boxes up at home, here are some helpful tips:

- There are many different types of nest box that each suit a different range of species, so do some research as to which might be most suitable for the species that you commonly see in your garden.
- Ideally, set your nest box up on a North to East facing surface. Never hang your box facing South, as it will become too hot and could kill any chicks inside!
- Boxes should be installed at least 1.5 metres above ground.
- Open fronted boxes, for Robins or Wrens, should be well hidden from view, perhaps in ivy on a tree or fence, in order to reduce visibility to predators such as Magpies.

# Bereavement Support with Grief Kind

Bereaved Cambridge residents can access free, informal support, as Arthur Rank Hospice Charity hosts a new **Grief Kind Space**, in association with Sue Ryder, held at The Bistro, in Shelford Bottom, Cambridge, **every Friday** from **10am** until **12 noon**.

By collaborating – with the Hospice hosting the space and Sue Ryder providing trained Grief Kind Space Volunteers – the two charities hope to tackle the isolation and loneliness felt by many people following a bereavement.

Annalie Graham, Bereavement Lead at ARHC said:

*“Research from Sue Ryder, found that 86% of people who had been bereaved said they felt alone in their grief.*

*“By working together, we hope we*

*can fulfil this unmet need by offering a safe, welcoming and supportive place for anyone to share their experiences of grief, helping them to feel heard and less alone.”*

*“Whether you want to attend regularly for the full two hours, or pop in to connect with others in a similar situation for a quick chat when you need to, you will receive a warm welcome from our team of Sue Ryder trained volunteers, who are there to support anyone who has experienced any kind of loss at any time.”*

The Grief Kind Space is open to anyone over 18 who has experienced a bereavement. There is no need to register or book.

For further details visit  
[arhc.org.uk/griefsupport](http://arhc.org.uk/griefsupport)

## Balsham Football Club

### RESULTS

| DATE   | HOME          | AWAY                 | SCORE                | RES | Comp |
|--------|---------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----|------|
| 25 Jan | Balsham       | Girton Utd           | 5-6                  | L   | L    |
| 1 Feb  | Clare Town    | Balsham              | <i>Home walkover</i> |     | L    |
| 8 Feb  | Comberton Utd | Balsham              | 3-0                  | L   | L    |
| 15 Feb | Balsham       | Thaxted rangers Res. | 8-1                  | W   | L    |

### FIXTURES

| DATE     | HOME           | AWAY           | VENUE                    | COMP |
|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|------|
| 1 March  | Whittlesford   | Balsham        | The Lawn                 | L    |
| 8 March  | Balsham        | Fulbourn       | Balsham Rec              | L    |
| 15 March | Mott MacDonald | Balsham        | Girton Rec               | L    |
| 22 March | Cambourne Town | Balsham        | Cambourne Fitness Centre | L    |
| 29 March | Balsham        | Mott MacDonald | Balsham Rec              | L    |

# Linton Library News

We have two special events for children this month:

On **Friday 14th** we have a **Science Event, 2-4pm**, to celebrate Science Week. We will also be holding a **Mask/Puppet Making Activity** for Shakespeare Week on **Friday 28th, 2-4pm**

**NEW Story & Rhyme:** this will be running alongside the **Duplo Club** on **Tuesday** mornings **10-10.20am**. We would love to see you and your little ones there!

**Do you like reading stories aloud?** We have a volunteer vacancy for story and rhyme time for 0-4 years. Tuesday mornings, weekly in term time. Pop in if you're interested.

**Duplo Clubs:** weekly in term time, **Tuesday 10-11am** and **Friday 11 - 12pm**. Come along and entertain your 0-4 year old while chatting to others at this free session in the children's section of the library.

**Games Afternoon:** weekly, **Thursday 2-4pm**. Come and meet new

people, board/card games provided or bring your favourite to share.

**IT Club: every Wednesday 5-7pm**, knowledgeable volunteers are here to offer help, including how to use the **Addenbrookes MyChart** patient management software.

**Knit and Natter: every Tuesday, 2pm - 3pm**. Bring along any craft project you're working on. All welcome.

**Daylight Readers:** our Book Groups meet on **Friday 21st**, one at **10.30am** and the other at **2.30pm**. New members always welcome.

## Vicky Anandraj & Ann King

COMMUNITY LIBRARY ASSISTANTS

### Opening hours

|                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Mon</b> CLOSED    | <b>Thurs</b> 2-5pm  |
| <b>Tues</b> 10am-5pm | <b>Fri</b> 10am-5pm |
| <b>Weds</b> 4-7pm    | <b>Sat</b> 10am-1pm |

### Customer Services

(regular office hours): **0345 045 5225**  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library)

## Bin Collections March/April

| DATE                             | BLACK | BLUE | GREEN |
|----------------------------------|-------|------|-------|
| Wednesday March 5 <sup>TH</sup>  | ✓     |      |       |
| Wednesday March 12 <sup>TH</sup> |       | ✓    | ✓     |
| Wednesday March 19 <sup>TH</sup> | ✓     |      |       |
| Wednesday March 26 <sup>TH</sup> |       | ✓    | ✓     |
| Wednesday April 2 <sup>ND</sup>  | ✓     |      |       |
| Wednesday April 9 <sup>TH</sup>  |       | ✓    | ✓     |

# West Wickham & District Gardening Club

## Into the Light...



Photo: Sally Collins

Windmill in Streetly End

As the days slowly lengthen, the pleasure of these early spring months for gardeners is that there is time to plan for the season ahead.

This month's talk\* on **17th March** by **Rosemary Buisseret** of Plant Heritage (*the world's leading plant conservation charity*) may give you some ideas about what to grow. Rosemary will be speaking about the role of **Plant Heritage** in conserving plants for the future for cultural, medical, culinary and aesthetic use. For those of you enjoying evening walks as the nights get lighter, it's a good time to capture the awakening natural world for this year's photography competition (*non-members are welcome to enter*). Images are all printed for our **September Gardening Fair**. This year's



titles are *Frozen, Light & Dark* and *Terrific Trees*. All categories are open to children with a special prize awarded for the best under 16's entry. Most of us are not expert photographers; it's just a way to have some fun interpreting the categories and having something to chat about over a cup of tea!

Email your entries or questions to **Sally Collins** at **photo@westwickham.org**. Details provided by return email when entries submitted. Final date for submissions: **29th August 2025**.

\*Meetings held in  
**West Wickham Village Hall**  
at **7:30pm**.

Annual membership of the  
Garden Club is **£8** per person,  
guests **£2**.

Please contact **Sue Boase** on  
**Tel: 07716 401646**

**Email: wwdgc@westwickham.org**

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**Sally Collins**

VICE CHAIR | WW&DGC

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# Balsham Weather January 2025



Photo: Lesley Bennett

## Air Temperatures: Maximum & Minimum

### JANUARY:

Daytime temperatures (*in the shade*)

**Highest:** 12° C on 5th January

**Lowest:** 0° C on 10th January

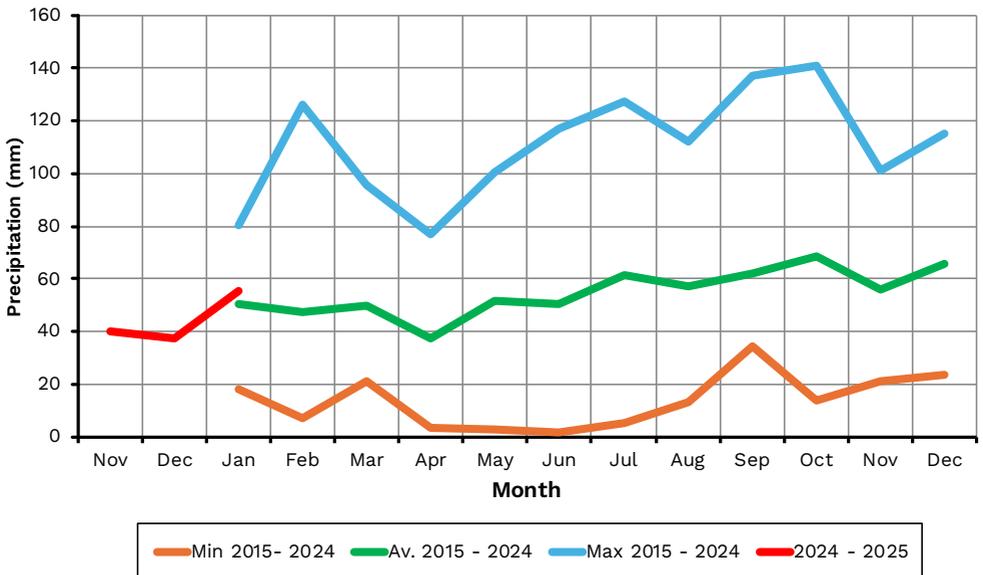
Night time temperatures

**Highest:** 7° C on 1st January

**Lowest:** -4° C on 11th January

## January Rainfall at 11 Nine Chimneys Lane, Balsham

Total January 2025 rainfall: 55.5mm / 2.19 inches





**Saturday March 1st**

**Doors open 7.00pm & film at 7.30pm in Balsham Church Institute**

## **The Critic (15)**



**The Critic** is a dark and sharp-witted thriller set in 1930s London theatreland. The feared and vicious critic Jimmy Erskine (*Ian McKellen*) finds himself in the crosshairs of the Daily Chronicle's new owner, David Brooke and strikes a sinister pact with struggling actress Nina Land (*Gemma Arterton*) desperate to win his favour.

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



Our next film on **Saturday April 5th** is **Conclave** (12A). Cardinal Lawrence (*Ralph Fiennes*) is tasked with running this covert process after the unexpected death of the beloved Pope. Lawrence uncovers a trail of deep secrets left in the dead Pope's wake - secrets which could shake the foundations of the Church. Award winning film acclaimed as one of the best films of 2024.

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