



BALSHAM *Review*

ISSUE No. 674

OCTOBER 2025



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Photo: Gill Watters



Photo: Dick Paden

Red Kite



Photo: Mike Beer

Balsham welcomes careful drivers?



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Hawthorn Shield bug



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Yellow Shell

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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

DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE:

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Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

Email balshamngns@gmail.com
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Editorial



This month's editorial is coming from Devon, although I will be home again before you read it, even before it is printed! I've just had a week in North Portugal with family. This involved logistical problems, easily solved by a considerable number of miles driven. We flew from Stansted at eight in the morning which meant everyone staying at my home the night before - with only two bedrooms. However, before that I needed to drive to Devon to leave Lizzie for a week or two on the farm, change her for my sister, who was coming with us, and bring back some bags of well-rotted manure for the garden. We had an enjoyable week staying by the sea and sightseeing inland, before returning, getting back at eleven, so more cramped sleeping. It all worked, and now I am here, returning Barbara and collecting Lizzie, who has had a great time walking in fields and woods, swimming in a large farm pond, and playing with the two dogs here. Back home tomorrow, in time

for the Macmillan coffee morning in the Pavilion.

In Portugal we saw signs of fires, and a helicopter flying in the hills with a water bucket hanging beneath. We were told that this summer hasn't been as hot and dry as last year, but seeing burnt vines and hillsides, right up to small villages, as well as parts of forests, is sobering, and climate change is certainly being felt there. Much of the forest areas was filled with eucalyptus trees, which have become a weed. Apparently they drink 30-40 litres of water each day, and prevent any undergrowth surviving. They spread everywhere and when fire is about any spark will set them alight with the leaves exploding so the fire spreads at speed. There had been nothing to be done to stop the eucalyptus, but now there is a small industry making paper, and harvesting the trees can create safety areas to help stop fire spread. Perhaps this will be a possible solution, but it is early days.

We were surprised to see how few houses or industrial areas had solar panels, but apparently Portugal gets all the electricity it needs from Spain, where there are vast areas of solar fields. They have land suited for this, unlike here in South

Cambridgeshire, where good agricultural land will be spoiled for ever if covered in solar panels. Do please manage to get to at least one meeting arranged by the Kingsway Solar Community Action Group. Even if you don't yet have an opinion about solar, you will learn about the plans for our area and be prepared for the developments that may happen.

I heard on the radio that this year we are to have a spectacular display of autumn colour, after the hot dry summer. Certainly the fruit production in my garden has been amazing, and the Blenheim Orange apple tree has had amazing enormous red apples in abundance. This is the first year recently that the apples have matured - previously they have all been pecked and eaten by the moorhens, who fly up into the top

of the tree, higher than I can get. But no moorhens has meant plenty for me, and others who pass by.

Back to the beginning of September and Rev Hannah, Nigel and I were outside the Post Office gratefully accepting your returned envelopes with gifts for the church. Amazingly it didn't rain, the first dry collection day I remember. A big thank you to everyone who contributed, the building really does need work done to it. Whether you worship there or attend concerts, use the children's area, or the loos, the church is there for all the village, as it has been for centuries. We need to keep it in good condition for future generations so they too can use it.

Gill Parry Brown

EDITOR, BALSHAM REVIEW

Christianity Explored

Christianity Explored is an informal and relaxed 8-week course for anyone who is thinking about the meaning of life. It's run by ordinary Christian people in conjunction with the village church and is completely free. You don't need to know anything about the Bible, and you won't be asked to pray or sing. You can ask any question you like, or you can just sit and listen.

It takes place in the **Balsham**

Church Institute through **September** and **October** on **Sundays** from **6:30** to **8pm**.



Whoever you are, whatever you're thinking, Christianity Explored is a place for you to explore what life's all about. It might be the best news you've ever heard.

For more information contact Steve at **cexplored25@gmail.com** or phone or text on **07494 982 475**

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

KNITTING WOOL

Many thanks for those of you who dropped in bags of wool into my garage – many came with no name of the donor. I now have a good selection of wool to share with my knitters.

Joanna Sanders

FRUIT & VEG

I should like to extend a big thank you to all the kind residents of Balsham who have shared their fruit and vegetables during the summer by putting them outside their houses. I have had a great selection of fruit and vegetables and with the kindness of neighbours I have hardly had to buy anything. Also those kind people who left flowers at my back door, but I managed to work out who they were from!

Thank you again

A grateful Balsham resident

NOW IT'S OVER

About 25 years ago we brought them home from the garden centre, half a dozen koi carp each about 10cm long. They went into the pond

newly dug in our garden. They floated around, getting bigger and fatter. Not very fast, not very clever, but a reliable presence whenever I stood near the pond in summer, gaping up gently and awaiting food. Yesterday the Balsham otter paid us a second visit, and now the koi are all gone. Bodies, getting towards 50 cm long, lying at waters' edge, each with a gaping wound where something tasty (perhaps the liver) had once been. Their large gentle bodies otherwise intact. That's two visits, six dead fish.

I know that otters are iconic, part of our ecological heritage. Playing in families at the waters' edge they are a delightful sight. But my personal view is now coloured by this glimpse of their true carnivorous natures. Just like foxes, simultaneously beautiful and awful, wanton destroyers of living creatures.

I still support efforts to protect them, but the starry look has gone from my eyes. The empty pond is a daily sadness.

Martin Bobrow

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

Rural Dean: Revd Michael Wilcockson associate.priest@stmaryslinton.org.uk

Revd Hannah Threlfall 01223 481090 revthrelfall24@outlook.com

Church Warden: Nigel Clark, 01223 893043 n.clark5@btinternet.com

Administrator: Cazy 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

METHODIST: Haverhill Methodist Church, Camps Road

From the Church

As the last of our Harvest Festivals are celebrated and the final tables of bread, fruit, and flowers are cleared away, October feels like something of a pause. It is the month when crops in the fields are gathered in, evenings draw closer, and the colours of autumn deepen all around us. There is a gentle slowing to life, a moment to catch our breath, and to notice the subtle beauty in the changing landscape. The golden light on the trees, the rustle of fallen leaves underfoot, and the crisp, cool air all invite us to reflection and gratitude.

Harvest is always a reminder of how much we depend on one another and on God's provision. Thank you to everyone across our villages who helped make this season so special - from decorating our churches, to providing food for suppers, singing in our choirs, welcoming visitors, and supporting local charities. These acts of generosity and community are as much a part of harvest as sheaves of corn and baskets of apples. In them, we see God's love made tangible, reaching into the lives of those around us.

October is also a month of change. Leaves fall, temperatures drop, and routines settle after the busyness of summer. Change can be challenging, unsettling even, but it can also be a gift. The beauty of autumn reminds us that God is

with us through every season - in the flourishing of summer, the fruitfulness of harvest, and the quieter, reflective days of autumn. There is encouragement here to embrace the transitions in our own lives, trusting that God's presence brings meaning and peace, even when the rhythm shifts.

And, just over the horizon, Advent waits. In only a few weeks we will turn our eyes to hope and light, preparing for the coming of Christ. October offers us the gift of in-between time - a season to pause, give thanks, and be ready for what lies ahead.

May this autumn season bring you peace, gratitude, and the quiet joy of knowing God's presence in the changing rhythms of life, in every leaf, every gathering, and every moment of stillness.

Blessings always

Revd Hannah Threlfall



October Services	9:30am	11:00am	6:00pm
5th		United Service with Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop/ Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	
12th	Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Morning Worship West Wrattling <i>Steven Wheeler</i>	Harvest Songs of Praise Weston Colville <i>Steven Wheeler</i> Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Holy Communion Great Abington <i>Revd Jane Butler</i> Café Church Hildersham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	Taize service Weston Colville <i>Steven Wheeler</i>
19th	Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion West Wrattling <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Morning Worship Little Abington <i>Alistair Collen</i>	6.00pm Taize service Hildersham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>
26th	Pet Service West Wickham <i>Alastair France</i> Holy Communion Weston Colville <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> 10.00am Creative Church Abington <i>Rosemary Mead/Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> 11.15am Holy Communion (BCP) Hildersham <i>Revd Michael Wilcockson</i>	4.00pm Evening Prayer Little Abington <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>

Regular Midweek services

Every Tuesday at Hildersham church – 7.00pm Silent Space followed by Compline
Every Thursday at Balsham church – 9.30am Holy Communion (said service)
Every Friday at Weston Colville church – 8.45am Morning Prayer

Kingsway Solar Community Action

Have your say at the Statutory Consultation

The statutory consultation will run from **Wednesday 17 September** to **Wednesday 29 October**. At the time of writing, we have not received formal notification, but we understand that Kingsway Solar will be holding events to present the updated design and further information about the proposed solar farm. We strongly encourage you to attend these events, ask questions and raise your concerns. In addition, KSCA will be hosting our own workshop events to help residents prepare responses to the consultation. Submitting a letter is vital: this stage is your opportunity to comment on the specific design and details of the proposal, not just to state opposition. The more responses received, the stronger the community's voice will be. See the **Get Involved** page at kingswayaction.org

Workshop dates and locations:

- **Sat 4th October:** Balsham Sports Pavilion, 10.30am–12.00pm
- **Sun 5th October:** West Wrattling Village Hall, 10.30am–12.30pm
- **Sun 5th October:** West Wickham Village Hall, 2.00–4.00pm
- **Sat 11th October:** Weston Colville Reading Room, 10.30am–12.00pm
- **Sun 12th October:** Brinkley Memorial Hall 10.30am–12.30pm

Display a sign and say No Way Kingsway!

Signs, banners and posters are now appearing across our villages. If you'd like one, please complete the online **Sign Request Form**. We are not charging for these, but donations via our GoFundMe are greatly appreciated. You can also download and print your own poster and A3 wheelie bin stickers are now available and being distributed.



As well as our GoFundMe page, we have launched a CrowdJustice campaign to fund the legal challenge against Kingsway Solar. With legal costs expected to top £150,000, every donation counts. Keep recording your wildlife sightings. As part of our **Step Into Nature** campaign, we encourage everyone to continue logging wildlife sightings on iRecord, especially now, as migratory birds begin to arrive. These records are vital in showing the diversity of wildlife that could be affected by the solar farm's glass panels, fencing, lighting, and noise. Every sighting counts.

Useful links

- Become a KSCA member to stay involved
<https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us/>

- Request a **No Way Kingsway** sign <https://forms.gle/mZH5aGseUVm3yRuq9>
- Donate via GoFundMe to support our work www.gofundme.com/f/no-to-kingsway-solar-farm

- Follow KSCA on Facebook for real-time updates.

Kathy Day

Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

Thanks to all residents who didn't ask for transport over the past few weeks when we were short of drivers. Many drivers have now returned from holiday and we have three new volunteers. We always need more, so if you are interested, get in touch!

We restarted our **Community Café** on **Tuesday 16th September** and had a good number there. Joining us were two members of ACRE, Action with Communities in Rural England. This organisation can help with applications for support on a wide range of issues. Kari Payne from ACRE will join us for the next three cafés on **14th October, 11th**

November and **9th December**.

Everyone is welcome. The cafés take place in the **Balsham Institute** from **10 to 12** (*not in the Pavilion as advertised in the previous Balsham Review!*).

We also have a monthly **Community Lunch** with 40 to 50 people attending. If you are interested, do get in touch.

We are still in need of additional volunteers and if you are interested, please contact:

balshamgns@gmail.com or phone or text **07508 430057**

Steve Jordan

BALSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME



An update from your MP: Pippa Heylings



I've made it my mission during the parliamentary recess to get out and about across South Cambridgeshire. I've listened to residents at surgeries, 'meet your MP' events, on the doorsteps, and at fantastic local community fetes. It has been a pleasure to connect with our vibrant communities.

During this period, I brought together GPs from across our communities to discuss the issues they and their patients are facing. GPs raised concerns about the unfair funding formula that sees Cambridgeshire's practices receive less government funding per head than any other part of England. They want to see decision making brought closer to our communities with patients put first. Now I am challenging ministers to listen.

Without urgent reform to social care, the NHS will remain in crisis. I hear regularly that the NHS and social care access are among the

top concerns for residents, so I will continue to fight for better provision and to ensure something is done to address the crisis.

I've also used the opportunity to check on the health of our rivers and chalk streams. I joined the Wildlife Trust, local campaigners, and stakeholders for a tour along the Granta - one of South Cambridgeshire's many precious chalk streams. It was a pleasure to hear from Parish Councillors, Friends of the River Granta, Anglian Water, and County Councillor Laurence Damary-Homan, about how we can work together to achieve clean and sustainable waterways. I know from my many conversations with residents and years of campaigning on this issue that protecting our precious local environment is vital to our way of life here in South Cambridgeshire, so I will continue working hard as your MP to bring people together and drive meaningful action on this urgent issue.

These are just a few of the things I've been working on over the last few months that I wanted to share with you. If you would like to sign up to my weekly newsletter to find out more about what I am doing in parliament, you can do so by going to pippaheytings.org.uk/newsletter

Pippa Heylings

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Linton & District Historical Society

ADA LOVELACE 1815-1852

The English Mathematician often referred to as 'the first computer programmer'.



Our new season got off to an excellent presentation by Alan Osbourne who gave a fascinating insight into the life and times of Ada Lovelace, only legitimate daughter of Lord Byron and Annabella Millbanke. The turbulent lifestyle of her father meant that when Ada was only a few weeks old, Annabella left Byron, divorced him, and she was given custody of their daughter. Encouraged by Annabella and her grandmother, Ada, a bright intelligent girl, showed great interest in the world around her.

She saw potential in a new Jacquard weaving loom 'punchcard' system which she adapted for use in mathematics, joining forces with

Charles Babbage when he built a Mathematical Adding machine named 'a difference engine'. A copy of this can be seen in the Science Museum, London.

Ada became a baroness when marrying into aristocracy and had three children; she continued her pursuits but sadly died after health complications aged just 37.

Unfortunately inheriting some of her father's lifestyle, she left gambling debts of £2,000. Her wish was to be buried next to her father Byron, which upset Annabella very much and she did not attend her daughter's funeral.

For further details of the LDHS please email

ldhscamb@gmail.com or 'phone **01223 893915** or **01223 678835**

**LINTON & DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
TUESDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2025



We welcome Ann Fletcher with a talk on
Western Canada

LINTON VILLAGE HALL
COLES LANE - 7.30 p.m.

Refreshments and Raffle

Visitors and new members always welcome

The Meadow Primary School

Welcome Back to a New School Year

We are delighted to welcome everyone back to school for the start of another exciting year. It has been wonderful to see familiar faces return as well as to meet some new members of our school community, all of whom we warmly welcome.

Staff Training and Preparation

To begin the year, all staff took part in essential training to ensure they are fully prepared to support our pupils. This included safeguarding and “**Keeping Children Safe in Education**” training, alongside a full day of paediatric first aid. This means our team is equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to keep every child safe and supported throughout the year.

Reception Settling In

Our new Reception children have made a fantastic start, settling quickly into their new routines with enthusiasm and confidence. A big thank you goes to our Year 6 pupils,

who have been excellent buddies – particularly at lunchtimes – helping the youngest members of our school feel comfortable and cared for.

Playtimes and OPAL Journey

Playtimes have also been a real highlight, as our **OPAL** (*Outdoor Play and Learning*) journey continues to grow. The addition of a brand new sandpit has been a big hit, with children thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to play, dig, and create during break times. We are also excited to continue expanding the opportunities available on the playground, with a new mud kitchen currently being created for the children to enjoy.

Looking Ahead

We are looking forward to a year full of learning, growth, and fun, and can’t wait to share more of our school’s adventures as the months unfold.

Faye Facer

ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



West Wickham & District Garden Club



The winning photo in the 2025 Ralph Westwood-Bate photography competition.

The winning photographer was Lucy Cameron.

The Seeds of Success!

Thank you to everyone who came, contributed and helped out at The West Wickham & District Gardening Fair last month. We very much appreciated everybody's support and enjoyed sharing an entertaining morning with you.

The winner of the **2025 Ralph Westwood-Bate Photography trophy** was **Lucy Cameron**, with this winning photograph in the Frozen category capturing the fleeting frost from last winter. Other category winners were Ciarán McNally in Terrific Trees, Linda Upton in Light and Dark and Clive Boase whose photograph of a tree was voted the People's Choice.

Building on the remarkable success of the Club over the past year we

are hoping members will enjoy the new-look **AGM** on **20th October** at **7:30pm** in **West Wickham Village Hall**.

We are looking forward to sharing ideas about how we can enhance the monthly talks, visits and the experience for members over the next 12 months. This conversation will be continued after the formal meeting as wine and refreshments will be provided to make the evening a primarily social event.

Of course, if you are not a member and would like to join on the day you are very welcome!

For Club information or if you'd like to help at one of our events, please contact **Sally Collins** at: wwdgc@westwickham.org

Linton Village College



Head Students Declán, Ruvi and Sree.

We've had a brilliant start to the new academic year here at LVC. Our new Year 7 cohort have settled in really well and are already an integral part of our school community. It's amazing how quickly they adapt to new routines.

With the new school year also come some exciting changes at Linton. One of the key developments is the relaunch of our **Linton Learner** ethos. Originally introduced around ten years ago and based on six core values, we've taken the opportunity this year to refine and focus the concept. After careful consideration, we've distilled the Linton Learner values down to two: Caring and Independent. We believe these truly capture the essence of what it means to be a learner at LVC.

The newly appointed Junior Leadership Team at Linton Village

College are passionate about making a meaningful impact. From enhancing student wellbeing and communication to improving facilities and celebrating creativity, Head Students Ruvi, Declán and Sree are committed to fostering an inclusive, inspiring school environment where every student feels valued and empowered to thrive.

It was great to open the school to visitors for our Open Evening at the end of September. We are also offering morning tours during the school day for prospective families ahead of the secondary school application deadline at the end of October. Please get in touch via **reception@lintonvc.org** to arrange to visit.

Laura Heard

PR & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Email: lheard@lintonvc.org



Photo: Kathy Day



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Bee on Duckweed



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Kathy Day



Photo: Lesley Bennett

The Bell

Hi All,

I'm Rich, the new face at The Bell. I'd like to take a bit of time to introduce myself to you and tell you a bit about me and the plans at the pub.

I moved in to Balsham with my partner, Beth, in the middle of August, you may have seen us floating about, we will soon be joined by Charlie, one of Beth's family dogs. He's a Jack Russell cross - crossed with what? I have

no idea, but I'd guess it's an apple so I like to tell people he's a Jack Russet. Charlie loves other dogs and people so we think he will adapt well to being a pub dog.

A bit about me and my history: I started working in the hospitality industry 19 years ago, working

in pubs and restaurants in both Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. I did take a 5-year break from the industry to become a carer, starting off working with adults with learning disabilities, then going into the mental health sector and working on a PICU ward, so I have a lot of experience working with people and that's where my passion for this industry comes from: people.



Customers are the life blood of the industry and that's why my aim is to ensure the Bell stays a community pub and welcoming to everyone, as much as everyone I've met so far has been

welcoming to me.

We have been lucky enough to inherit the pub's pool team when we took over, with the winter league just around the corner. We hope to see a lot of people on a Thursday

night showing their support both home and away (*still awaiting the official schedule, but will keep everyone updated via social media*). We do hope to expand on the bar sports teams and if anyone is interested in forming a darts team feel

free to pop in and see me and we'd love to make it happen.

The plan is to continue being a big part of the community with our **Lunch Club** (*the last Wednesday of the month*), hosting the **Charity Quiz** (*the last Tuesday of the month*), as well as helping the ancient tradition of **Plough Monday** stay alive and happily contributing to next year's efforts. As my time



at the Bell goes on I will be looking to introduce a lot more things for the community to enjoy, I just ask for your patience at the moment as I get settled into the pub and the village.

New Menu

Some of you may have noticed we have new opening and food service times to offer more availability to Balsham and surrounding areas.

These are

- 3pm until 11pm on Monday,
- 12pm until 11pm Tuesday to Saturday, with food being served 12pm until 9pm Tuesday until Saturday
- 12pm until 11pm on a Sunday, roast dinners and the rest of the menu served 12pm –6pm.

I've also been in talks with a mobile caterer to have one of their **Flavour Trailer** vans in our car park one Monday a month. If you follow us on Facebook I will keep everyone informed there of their next visit.

Should you have any questions for me you can email me at **enquiries@thebellbalsham.co.uk**, you can book a table with us online through the link on our Google page, or over the phone on **01223 699567**.

I look forward to meeting more of you over the weeks, months and years that I'll be here as part of the community.

Kind regards

Richard (Rich) Nicholson

Balsham October Diary

DATE	EVENT & TIME	VENUE
3rd Friday	Harvest Supper 6.30pm for 7.00pm	Institute
4th Saturday	KSCA workshop 10.30-12.00pm	Pavilion
4th Saturday	Picture House: The Salt Path 7.00 for 7.30pm	Institute
14th Tuesday	Community Coffee Morning, 10.00am-12.00pm	Institute
14th Tuesday	Balsham WI 7.30pm	Pavilion
20th Monday	Parish Council, 7.30pm	Pavilion
21st Tuesday	Linton & District Historical Society 'The Last Best West' , Canada	Linton Village Hall

Linton Library News

It's a long way off but: **Clueless at Christmas** with crime authors **Nicola Upson** and **Mandy Morton** takes place on **Wednesday 5th November 2nd – 3.30pm**, introducing their latest Christmas titles. Tickets are £5, book in the library or contact **cambourne.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk**.

Congratulations to all those who completed the **Summer Reading Challenge**, pop in soon to pick up your medal and certificate.

Daylight Readers: Our Book Groups meet on **Friday 17th**, one at **10.30am** and the other at **2.30pm**. The morning group has space for new members!

Rhyme then Duplo: Tuesday mornings 10-11am for 0-4 years. We would love to see you and your little ones there!

Knit and Natter: every Tuesday, 2pm – 4pm. Bring along any craft project you're working on.

IT Drop In: every Wednesday 5-7pm, knowledgeable volunteers are here to offer help with Information Technology, including how to use the Addenbrookes MyChart patient management software.

Games Afternoon: weekly, Thursday 2-4pm. Come and meet new people, board/card games provided or bring your favourite to share.

Lego/Duplo: Friday 10-11am, weekly (every 1st, 2nd & 4th Friday). Come along and entertain your 0-4 year old.

Vicky Anandraj & Ann King

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 5225**
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

Balsham WI

Our September meeting featured the **1990s** which was a decade which saw much conflict in the world – Gulf War, break-up of Yugoslavia and Waco siege amongst others. We also saw the reunification of Germany and dissolution of the Soviet Union, the launch of the Hubble Space Telescope and the cloning of Dolly the Sheep. The Euro was launched during this decade and the World Wide Web came into

existence changing many things in our lives. Sadly, Princess Diana was killed in a car crash in 1997 and there was an outpouring of grief. During the 90s the WI was a founding member of the Fair Trade Foundation, and celebrated its own 75th anniversary in 1990.

Our next meeting will take place on **14th October** in the **Pavilion at 7.30pm** and will feature the **2000s**. We are a friendly group, and new

members are always welcome. 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

Is Your Landline Your Lifeline?

Landlines are changing. By **January 2027**, traditional landlines will be upgraded with digital technology. This national upgrade is known as the Digital Switchover and will mean that landline calls will be made over the internet instead of the old telephone network. Telephone providers are responsible for switching customers to the upgraded service, but everyone is encouraged to check if and how the change will affect them.

Do you rely on a personal alarm or telecare device?

It's important to check how the Digital Switchover will affect you, especially if you also rely on personal alarms or telecare devices (like fall detectors or lifelines), which may stop working.

For many, the change will be simple. All you will have to do is plug your landline phone into a broadband router instead of a traditional phone socket. But if you don't have an internet connection at home, or if you rely on your landline every day, this change might affect you more.

3 things you can do now to prepare for the Digital Switchover

- 1** Call your phone company – Ask if the change affects your phone line or any connected devices. Ask to speak to customer services and use the number on your most recent bill.
- 2** Ask for help if you need it – a trusted friend, family member or neighbour can help you make the call to your phone provider or speak to your provider on your behalf.
- 3** Watch out for scams – your phone provider will not ask for money upfront. If something doesn't feel right, hang up and call the official number.

The good news is landlines are not going away, you can usually keep your existing phone and number, and it's the responsibility of your phone company to guide you through the process.

We know that for many people, the landline is more than just a phone – it's a lifeline. That's why **Connecting Cambridgeshire** is here to help make sure no one is left behind.

Don't wait - call your phone provider today.

For more information visit:

www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/digitalswitchover



Balsham Parish Council

The Parish Council Meeting took place on 15th September, 2025 in Balsham Pavilion

The next **Parish Council Meeting** will be held on **20th October, 2025** at **7.30 pm** in **Balsham Pavilion**

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND

Planning:

For Discussion:

Site address: 95 High St, Balsham

Reference: 25/0868/TTCA PC

Proposal: Red Horse Chestnut - C1 - Pollard to 5m from ground level, crown is dying and the tree is in decline.

PC Decision: Approve

Site address: Worsted Lodge Farm, London Rd, Old A11, Babraham

Reference: 25/03417/LBC / 25/031416/FUL

Proposal: Conversion of existing granary, cart-lodges, and shelter sheds into a two-storey self-build dwelling.

PC Decision: Approve

Site address: 56 Fox Road, Balsham

Reference: 25/03383/HFUL PC

Proposal: Proposed first floor side extension.

PC Decision: Approve

Decisions:

Site address: 18 West Wickham Rd, Balsham

Reference: 25/0651/TTPO

Proposal: T1 - Reduce lateral spread by approx 1-1.5m ensuring front side is cut back to hedge line

and crown reduce to give a 0.25-0.5m clearance to BT cables - this is to maintain shape and to ensure crown is clear of BT wires
SCDC Granted permission

Allotments:

There are 2 full sized plots and two half plots available Please contact the PC for more details.

The PC were very pleased to welcome 11 volunteers from AstraZeneca who worked hard to clear some of the allotments.

The Allotment Committee arranged a picnic on **Sunday 14th Sept** which was enjoyed by all and the 'Most Improved Allotment Cup' was presented to Katharina Lorenz.

The PC approved the quote of £2,650 to cut back hedges at the allotments.

Solar Panel Grant for the Pavilion:

The PC have been awarded the grant for **£9,769.00** towards the cost of solar panels at the pavilion. Solar Barn will start the installation in September.

Solar Farm:

The statutory consultation opens on **17th September to 29th October**. KSCA are organising their own workshop events to help residents prepare responses to the consultation.

Saturday 4th October – Balsham Sports Pavilion 10.30 – 12pm.

KSCA are continuing to promote signs and wheelie bin stickers please contact them for details. KSCA are raising funds to support their legal costs. The PC have attended a KSCA fundraising meeting and will feed back their comments from their meeting on 23rd September.

Trimming of Leylandii trees in High Street:

The trees were very badly cut back by the utility company last year and are an eyesore when entering the village. The PC approved a quote of £2,200 to remove the trees and rubbish that has been dumped

behind the trees.

Allotment water grant

The PC has applied for a grant to put a new water supply at the Princes Close allotment area.

Leylandii hedge at Recreation Ground

The PC approved for the leylandii hedge to be removed on the left through the gates. The hedge was inspected by the contractor and it has dead patches in it. There will be discussion with the neighbouring properties before removal.

Tracy Coston

PARISH CLERK

Tel: 01223 894462 / 07929930385

Email: clerk@balsham.net

Website: www.balsham.net

Balsham Allotment News

The inaugural **Allotment Picnic** took place on **Sunday 14th September**. Approximately 20 allotment holders congregated at the Woodhall Lane allotment site where Andrew Clarke had brought along his barbecue and there were lots of cakes and scones and some surplus produce brought along to share.

Thanks to everyone who provided food, I think most people enjoyed the opportunity to socialise with their fellow plot holders. Following

discussion, it was decided that we should make it a twice-yearly event and have the next picnic in May 2026, when we expect to have surplus seedlings and seeds to swap.

The Allotment Cup was presented to **Katharina Lorenz**, for the most improved plot (**plot A3b**). Katharina has transformed an overgrown plot into a colourful and productive garden.

Jennie Tipler



District & County Councillors' Report

September 2025

Kingsway Solar Farm

The application for a new solar farm in the vicinities of Balsham, West Wrating, Weston Coville & Carlton is moving forward. The next step will be that the applicants, Kingsway Solar, will release some actual detail (not just lines drawn around fields on a map) into the public domain. This detail will then be publicly consulted on via what's called a 'Formal Consultation'. This is a very important stage of the process as the responses to this will form a part of the planning application which is submitted to a planning inspector. We would strongly advise everyone to engage with this consultation, once it's open, as this potential development will affect us all in some way, regardless of proximity to the solar sites.

The applicants have indicated that they'll launch the formal consultation on **September 17th**.

Wastewater Treatment Works

You may have read in the local press that the proposed relocation of the wastewater treatment works has been cancelled by government due to the rising costs. A result of this is that the District Council now needs to find another site that can deliver circa 5000-6000 houses to ensure that the Local Plan (the housing development plan for the next 30-ish years) remains sound. The likely site that is the front-runner to replace this is Grange Farm in Abington. This is TBC, and dependant on lots of other factors, but is currently the local authorities preferred site.

Contact Information:

Geoff Harvey

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
geoff.harvey@gmail.com

Henry Batchelor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR
henrybatchelor89@gmail.com



Granta Medical Practices

Are you booked in for your flu jab yet?

If you are eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination, it's not too late to book into one of our flu clinics running throughout October. While you are here we can also check if there are any other vaccines you may be eligible for.

Ring now on **0300 234 5555** and choose the Granta site of your choice or wait to receive your SMS link via your mobile phone to book your appointment.

And finally, it's time for me to say goodbye. After 17 years, I am hanging up my NHS hat! It has truly been both a privilege and a pleasure to work in primary care. While we are all aware of the many challenges facing GP practices and the wider NHS, I feel very proud to have played my small part in it all. I will greatly miss my colleagues and, of course, all of you.

Sandra East

HEAD OF PATIENT SERVICES

Email: cpicb.grantapatientsservices@nhs.net

Poppy Appeal 2025

During this year with VE Day 80 and VJ Day 80, many of us have seen vivid images from World War II and the celebrations as hostilities ended in 1945. With only one year since without any war, the annual two weeks fundraising by the Royal British Legion leading up to Remembrance Sunday (this year on **9th November**), is so important to enable their amazing support of our ex-servicemen and women and their families. Many of us will have relatives or friends who have served in our country's armed services and know of the huge need for support in so many ways. Poppies will be available in exchange for donations in the **Post Office**, **The Bell** and **The Black Bull** in Balsham, **The Chestnut Tree** in West Wrating and at church services and events in the four

villages of Balsham, West Wickham, West Wrating and Weston Colville, whenever possible during the last week of October and the first week of November. In recognising that lots of people no longer use cash, the Royal British Legion have issued a QR code specific to each district by which any donation can be made, with gift aid if wished. Gift Aid increases donations by 25% at no charge to the donor. The QR code is displayed on Poppy boxes, collecting tins and posters. Poppies will be mixed, the previous paper poppy on plastic stalk and the new fully paper poppy.

Thank you in anticipation of your donations once again.

Margaret Johnson

HONORARY POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER

The Balsham Plough Monday Club



It's that time of year again, the leaves are falling, the wind is howling and members of the **Balsham Plough Monday Club (BPMC)** are starting to become more active. Between now and **Plough Monday 2026** you will spot BPMC members having meetings at The Bell to organise the various activities that have become our village traditions. You will also certainly see more articles in the Balsham Review informing everyone of the key dates. In the Review next month you may even be treated to a few old pictures that illustrate the history of the club. But, for now, please be aware that the BPMC will again be organising the following:

The Balsham Christmas Tree

We will once again be erecting and lighting up the Balsham Christmas Tree. The tree lights will be switched on in early December (weather permitting) at the Prince's Memorial

shelter (band stand!). There will likely be the usual carol singing, food will be available as well as the ubiquitous mulled wine and mince pies. This is a great family occasion and has been very well received in the Village in recent years and has become a new tradition.

The Balsham Plough Monday Club and Plough Monday

The Balsham Plough Monday Club consists of a group of men who live in or are associated with the village of Balsham and who, once a year, raise money for good causes on Plough Monday. Plough Monday is the first Monday after Epiphany (12th night) each year and historically was a night of celebration as it represented the beginning of the winter ploughing season. This day was particularly important in rural communities as agricultural labourers returned to work after

the short but unpaid Christmas holiday. Balsham is unique in the way we celebrate Plough Monday and it's something of which we are very proud.



Plough Monday 2026 will take place on **Monday 12th January 2026**.

Please put the date in your diary, come out and say hello, watch a Morris Dance or two, grab a mulled wine and donate what you can, all donations go to good causes. You may even win a raffle prize.

You're also welcome to join us for a pint or three at one of our amazing pubs, the Bell or the Black Bull.



Festivities tend to go on until the wee small hours, this is why we call the following day Harrowing Tuesday.

Organisational details for Plough Monday 2026 like the route and stops around the village will be publicised over the next couple of months during the run-up to this traditional village occasion. If you would like to host the Ploughmen in 2026 or know of a local good cause that needs funding then please get in contact with me or any Balsham Ploughman.

Terry O'Neill

Wind Farm Money

Grants of up to **£10,000** can be given for community projects benefitting residents within 5 miles of Wadlow Wind Farm in South Cambs. This includes any non-profit organisation in Balsham, eg sports, children, crafts, languages etc., (a trip to an exhibition, etc.)

The group has to be properly constituted, but this is not too difficult to do. If this includes your group then do put in an application, before the next closing date of **February 1st 2026**.

Jo Cormie

The Black Bull

October Greetings to all Balsham Villagers from all at The Black Bull!

Thank you to those who joined us last month – whether for a Busker Night, Quiz Night, Folk Night, or a Thursday coffee morning

Events Ahead:

Next Pint of Music – Folk Nights Thursday 2th October (*Pies Specials Board will extend to Friday*)

Tony and his entourage came back from their summer recess in full song last month – nine players filled the bar with their shanties.

Our Irish/Folk friends are well settled into the Black Bull bar. Great atmosphere, not to be missed. 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 ...

Pies Specials Board - Thursday 2th & Friday 3rd October

Rob will be laying on an array of special pies for a two-day Pie Fest.

Five Moments Tasting Menu Lite: Wednesday 22nd – Saturday 25th October

Rob's next extravaganza is set. He loves experimenting and autumn is a great month for this. You decide when to come – lunch or dinner over this period. We just ask that the whole table agrees to go for the Five Moments menu. The menu will be revealed over the coming weeks – keep an eye on the website and media.

Best wishes from all of us

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

Bin Collections October/November

DATE	BLACK	BLUE	GREEN
Wednesday October 1ST	✓		
Wednesday October 8TH		✓	✓
Wednesday October 15TH	✓		
Wednesday October 22ND		✓	✓
Wednesday October 29TH	✓		
Wednesday November 5TH		✓	✓

Cambridge Past, Present & Future



Restoring the Wandlebury Ring Wall

If you've ever walked around Wandlebury Country Park, you will have noticed the long circular wall that frames the centre of the Ring. This wall has stood for nearly 300 years, holding stories of families, orchards, gardens and wildlife. Now, thanks to funding from government, we're about to begin essential repair work to secure it for the future.

Why repair is needed

Much of the Ring Wall looks beautiful from the outside – but behind the scenes, time and weather have

taken their toll. Past repairs were carried out using cement rather than traditional lime mortar, which sadly causes bricks to crack over time. Add to that the strain of tree roots and overhanging branches pressing against the wall, and the damage has become impossible to ignore.

Allan, our Estates Manager, explains: *“In places the wall has been pushed out of line by tree growth, and whole sections of brick have fractured. Around 15 layers of brick will need to be carefully taken down, cleaned,*

and rebuilt. We'll also replace the original capstones with hand-cut Barnack stone – the same local material used to build many of Cambridge's historic colleges."



Estate Manager Allan

How the repairs will happen

Over the next few weeks, scaffolding will rise around the wall, allowing specialists to work at different heights. Six courses of brickwork will be dismantled along the most damaged stretch, before being reset with lime mortar – the traditional method that allows walls to breathe and flex with the seasons.

The wall will then be re-topped with slate and new capping stones, restoring both its strength and its distinctive silhouette.

Wildlife still welcome

Even as the wall is repaired, its role as a home for wildlife remains.

Those tiny round holes you might spot in the brickwork are not old nail holes for gardeners' vines, as first thought, but nest holes for solitary bees. Allan and the team

have taken care to preserve these habitats, ensuring the bees can continue to thrive at Wandlebury.



Bees in the wall

Looking ahead

This project is the final stage in a 25-year programme to safeguard the Wandlebury Ring Wall for future generations to enjoy. Thanks to the support of our members, donors and grant givers we have raised over **£250,000** to repair all 500 metres of wall since 2000.

For the current repairs, we are very grateful to receive a grant of **£83,000** from the Department of Environment, Farming & Rural Affairs towards 70% of the costs – and to our members for funding the remainder through their annual subscriptions.

Next time you visit, pause by the scaffolding and picture the hands shaping brick and stone, much as they did hundreds of years ago. In Allan's words: *"We'll make it right."*

Balsham Weather August 2025



Photo: Lesley Bennett

Temperatures (maximum & minimum) & Rainfall



30° on 12th August



17° on 15th August



19° on 30th August



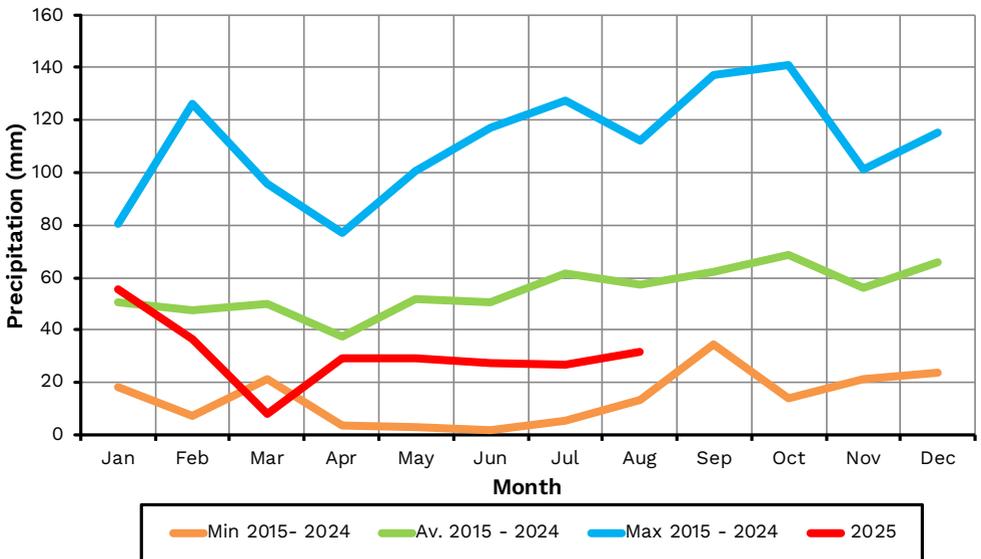
11° on 6th August



Total rainfall: 31.5mm (1.2")



Rain fell on 8 days





Saturday October 4th

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

The Salt Path (12)



The Salt Path is a book and film based on the true story of Raynor and Moth Winn, who, after losing their home and livelihood, embarked on a 630-mile walk along the rugged South West Coast Path in England. The story explores themes of loss, hardship, and finding healing and hope in nature while coping with Moth's terminal illness.

However, recent investigative reports have questioned the veracity of some aspects of the narrative, leading to a controversy regarding the accuracy of the events depicted in the book and film.

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

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