



BALSHAM *Review*

ISSUE No. 677

FEBRUARY 2026



Photo: Lesley Bennett

The Ploughmen return...



Photo: Kathy Day



Photos: Richard Pargeter



Photo: Larry Davies

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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 (MARCH):

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 17TH

Copy should be submitted
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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.



Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

Email balshamngns@gmail.com
 or phone or text **07508 430057**

Editorial



Christmas seems so long ago, yet when I wrote the last editorial it was still a month in the future. So much has happened in the world, it is good to remember our own community events like the Balsham Singers' concert and all the Ploughmen's exploits. We have been a busy 'little' village, and hope to stay that way.

Do keep an eye on the news about Grange Farm, Abington, the proposed new town that has suddenly become prominent. It would seem to be filling much of the land between A1307, A11, the Roman Road and the back road to Hildersham and Linton. I realise housing is needed but do we need a new town of 6,000 houses for about 15,000 people so close? It looks as if it will be next door to 'our' set of solar panels, so goodbye to our beautiful countryside, our secret bit of Cambridgeshire in the hills.

At the Parish Council meeting this month I heard of something new to me: a Pump Track. AI says "A pump track is a continuous circuit of

rollers (bumps) and berms (banked turns) designed for wheeled sports, allowing riders to generate and maintain momentum through up-and-down body movements ("pumping") instead of pedalling, making it fun and accessible for all ages and skill levels on bikes, skateboards, scooters, and even wheelchairs." If you feel you or your children would enjoy (and benefit from) one in our village please contact Kate at **K8martin77@hotmail.com** and offer help.

Some of us have felt that we enjoy watching films and would appreciate some shown in an afternoon, especially at this wintery and dark time of year. We are experimenting with some, two each month in February and March, to see whether others feel the same. The first film will be **High Society**, a cheerful, colourful and musical film with many stars. After that we are open to proposals from our audience of films many will enjoy. We are not wanting to show films that would be chosen for the Saturday film shows. See you there!

I've had daffodils out since before Christmas, now joined by aconites, snowdrops and crocuses. Beautiful, but what is happening to our climate?

Gill Parry Brown

EDITOR, BALSHAM REVIEW

Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

Dates for the next **Community Cafés** have been booked. They are all on **Tuesdays** from **10 to 12 noon** and will be on:

- **February 10th**
- **March 17th**
- **April 14th**
- **May 12th**
- **June 9th**
- **July 14th**

Contact details:

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

If you need assistance, especially with transport to medical appointments, contact us using the links above. If you would like to volunteer with us, do get in touch.

Steve Jordan

BALSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

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

DAVID KIDDY

The Kiddy family would like to thank everyone who sent cards and visited Anne and the family during this sad time following the passing of David. We would also like to thank everyone who helped with David's funeral - Alison and the flower ladies, the bell ringers, and the Balsham Ploughman who stepped in from the Suffolk Punch horse to lead David into the church. Our sincere thanks as well to Hannah and Kathy for conducting such a fantastic service to celebrate David's life.

Thanks must also go to Betty and



her team who cared for David so amazingly for the last 18 months. Finally, thank you to the staff at the Black Bull for laying on a memorable wake, which David would certainly have enjoyed — he always loved a good party!

James, Anne & all the Kiddy Family

A PUMP TRACK FOR BALSHAM

I attended the Parish council meeting on Monday 19th January to ask for help regarding a pump track in the village.

A pump track, as you might know, is a narrow, looped path with a series of undulations and banked curves. They are generally built with tarmac and gravel which minimizes maintenance. They can be used for any age group and are suitable for bikes, scooters and skate boards. There are many who live in the village who would appreciate this.

For this project to proceed it would need funding, therefore if you would like to sponsor this project, have any ideas regarding fundraising or would like to contribute in any way please let me know. Thank you!

Kate

Email: K8martin77@hotmail.com

NORTHANGER ABBEY

Tired of the dull winter months? Looking for something bright and cheerful? Why not come along to St John's Players production of Jane Austen's "Northanger Abbey".

2025 was the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth so why not step into the shadows of Austin's satirical and observant imagination - where love turns perilous, friendship hides a sting and imagination runs deliciously wild. This sharp adaptation stays true to Austen's elegance and sparkle - a coming-

of-age tale that parodies the gothic, personal vanity, disastrous flirtations and very bad decisions with a dash of delicious delusion.

Northanger Abbey will be presented by St John's Players from **18th - 21st February** at **The Fulbourn Centre, Home End, Fulbourn CB21 5BS**.

Tickets £12 and £10 are available from **www.ticketsource.co.uk/stjohnsplayers**.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Please come to the **World Day of Prayer** service.

It is on **Friday 6th March 2026** at **11am** in **Balsham Church**.

This year the service is from Nigeria and the theme is **"I will give you rest, come"**.

All are welcome.

Join us for refreshments afterwards.

For more information contact **Anna McColl** on **annamccoll3@gmail.com** or **01223 890 693**

Anna McColl

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: 07986 692 277

Email: alisonclarke15@hotmail.com



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

Revd. Iain McColl	01223 890693	mccoll.iain@gmail.com
Revd Hannah Threlfall	01223 481090	revthrelfall24@outlook.com
Church Warden: Nigel Clark,	01223 893043	n.clark5@btinternet.com
Administrator: Cazzy Walsh		7churches.seven@gmail.com

SERVICES at other CHURCHES when possible

ROMAN CATHOLIC Masses at:

Cherry Hinton: St Philip Howard Church

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

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

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

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

CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CHURCH, meeting as a house group, for further information please contact. [www.facebook.com/Linton](http://www.facebook.com/Linton%20cornerstone) cornerstone

METHODIST: Haverhill Methodist Church, Camps Road

From the Church

February: Light, Dust, & the Journey Ahead

February often feels like a turning point. Winter still clings on, yet the days are unmistakably lengthening. Snowdrops push through the cold ground, if they haven't already?! Lambing season begins, and there is a sense - however fragile - that spring is on its way.

In the Church, February holds that same sense of transition and invitation.

Early in the month we celebrate Candlemas, marking the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple. It is a festival of light. Candles are lit to remind us that light has come into the world - quietly, vulnerably, and with hope. Candlemas asks us where we see light today: in kindness offered, in community strengthened, in perseverance through difficult times. Holding on to the fact and knowing that even the smallest flame can make a difference in dark places.

Later in the month comes Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. It is a very different kind of moment - quieter, more reflective. Palm Leaf ashes are used to mark the sign of the cross on foreheads, accompanied by words that remind us of our humanity and our need for God. It may sound stark, but it is deeply honest. With lent, as always

inviting us to pause, to reflect, and to ask what really matters within our lives.

Lent can often be misunderstood, seen as a season of gloomy self-denial. In fact, it is about making space--letting go of what distracts or drains us so that something new can grow. Some people give something up; others take something on: more rest time, more prayer, more generosity, more care for neighbours and the environment. At its heart, Lent is a journey towards renewal.

Across our villages, February is a month of quiet faithfulness: schools, shops, cafes, farms, community groups, volunteers, and neighbours simply getting on with caring for one another. The Church's seasons mirror this rhythm of everyday life - light offered, honesty faced and hope nurtured.

As we move through February and into Lent, may we each find moments of light, courage for reflection, and signs of new life already stirring among us.

Revd Hannah Threlfall

Christmas Wreaths on Graves in the Churchyard

As in previous years any Christmas Wreaths still on graves near the beginning of Lent will be removed. Lent this year starts on **Wednesday 18th February.**

February Services	9:30am	11:00am	PM Services
1st		United Service with Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	6.00pm Candlemas service Weston Colville <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>
8th	Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> Morning Worship West Wrattling <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Holy Communion Great Abington <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Café Church Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	6.00pm Taizé service Weston Colville <i>Steven Wheeler</i>
15th	Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Holy Communion West Wrattling <i>Revd Jane Butler</i>	Morning Worship and Baptism Balsham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Holy Communion Little Abington <i>Revd Jane Butler</i>	6.00pm Taizé service Hildersham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>
22nd	Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion Weston Colville <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Steven Wheeler</i> Creative Church Abington Hub <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	Morning Worship Balsham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion (BCP) Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Steven Wheeler</i>	4.00pm Evening Prayer Little Abington <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>

Ash Wednesday Communion services - Wednesday 18th Feb
9.30am, Balsham and 7.30pm Hildersham (*Revd Kathy Bishop*)

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

NB No Thursday communion on Thursday 19th February

Kingsway Solar Community Action

Just when we thought we could have a break, many of you will have received a leaflet from Kingsway Solar about a Targeted Consultation on six changes and one clarification to its solar farm proposal. This is not a full re-consultation and is not primarily about incorporating feedback from the statutory consultation. It runs from **7 January** to **4 February 2026**.

Most of the changes result from larger battery storage and substations being required, after these were under-provided in the original design. This has forced changes to solar panel layouts across Areas A, B and C. While no extra land is proposed, the impacts on farmland, wildlife, public rights of way and open space are being shifted into new areas, not removed. Please make your voices heard. If you haven't yet responded to the Targeted Consultation, you have until 4 February to contact Kingsway Solar by email at **enquiries@kingswaysolar.co.uk** or by post to **FREEPOST DOWNING KINGSWAY** (*no stamp required*).

If emailing, please copy KSCA at **hello@kingswayaction.org**.

Important update

This update follows an important decision by the National Energy System Operator for Great Britain

(NESO).

There is intense competition for grid capacity, with far more solar and battery projects proposed than the network can accommodate. In its December 2025 review of projects seeking 2030 connections, NESO confirmed that while Kingsway Solar has passed Gate 1, it has not secured a confirmed grid connection at Gate 2. As a result, access to the national grid is not guaranteed and battery storage now appears less likely.

Despite this uncertainty, Kingsway Solar has said it still intends to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) application in spring 2026. Without a confirmed grid connection, this raises reasonable questions about whether continuing through the NSIP process is a good use of resources, given that the potential local and environmental impacts remain unchanged.

AGM and next steps

We will be holding our **AGM** on **11 February**, from **7–8pm** at the **Reading Room** in **Weston Colville**. Please come along to hear the latest updates on our community and legal campaigns. We have some committee vacancies, so do consider putting yourself forward if you would like to get involved.

We are also planning a further

walk-and-talk in March, timed to coincide with the lead-up to the DCO application. We will again be asking for donations to the KSCA community fund. We have a new target of £55,000 by the end of March for the Parish Council Alliance legal fund, which will allow us to continue our work and ensure expert support is available to provide evidence for our concerns.

Useful links

- Join KSCA
[https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.](https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us/)

[co.uk/how-to-join-us/](https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us/)

- Request a sticker:
hello@kingswayaction.org
- Support our campaign:
www.gofundme.com/f/no-to-kingsway-solar-farm
- Contribute to legal funds:
<https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/kingswaysolarcommunitylegalaction/>
- Follow us on Facebook and Instagram: #kingswaysolaraction

Kathy Day

Linton & District Historical Society

January 2026 Meeting: Borley Rectory - The most haunted house in the Kingdom *presented by Bryan Thurlow*

With lights suitably dimmed Bryan proceeded to regale us with the stories surrounding this infamous and well documented Suffolk Rectory. Some strange activities could be explained; others not so. A captive audience were left to come to their own conclusions!.

February Meeting 2026: 'Helicopter Adventures' *presented by Duncan Bickley*
Tuesday 17th February 2026 starting 7.30pm

Duncan Bickley to share his 'Helicopter Adventures'. I
In March a welcome return of local historian **Charmian Thompson** to enlighten us about the '**Waltons of**

Haverhill'. Slightly further on: **21st April Phillip Stott** will tell us about the '**Darwin Family of Cambridge'**, and on **19th May, Anne Stott** will bring to life '**The other Princess Charlotte'**.

Members of our group have recommended this programme of speakers as they have found the topic to be extremely interesting and are sure other members of the society will agree.

We meet at **Linton Village Hall**, Coles Lane, starting **7.30pm**. Refreshments & Raffle
(Easy parking in the Health Centre Public Car Park opposite)

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

Balsham Bowls Club

We would like to thank everyone for supporting our **Bingo Social Event**. We plan to hold another event in April so please look out for further information.

Thank you to all members who have helped maintain the green over the Winter months; moving forward help will be appreciated in the Spring.

Colin Mepsted will continue in the roll of **President** for the coming year with the support of **Phil Elliott** as **Chairman**. This year we will once again have teams in Cambridge and District League, Steeple Bumpstead Triples A and Triples B and Pairs Fixtures for A and B teams Leagues. The Season starts late April until late August.

Open Day will be held on **Saturday 9th May 2026**, if you would like to have a go at Bowls you would be very welcome to come along as long as you can provide flat-soled shoes. There will be more information nearer the day and on our website: **balshambowlsclub.co.uk**

Open Pairs Competition: this has been popular for many years and this year it will be held on **Sunday 20th September 2026**.

Each Monday from the start of May, weather permitting, roll up evening is from 6pm. If you are interested in the opportunity to join the Club please come along with flat-soled shoes; equipment will be provided.

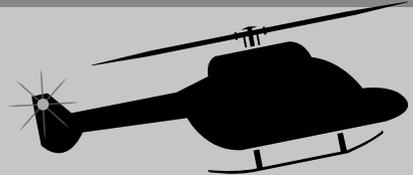
We would be happy to offer the opportunities for other clubs and organisations to be invited for a roll-up. If this is something you would be interested in with the view that you may like to become a member then we would be happy to arrange an evening for you to find out more. Contact either **Christine** on **07530 649 573** or email **balshambowls@gmail.com**.

Annual Tour: This year is **Sept 4th** to **Sept 7th** at **Eastbourne**

And finally: **Carpet Bowls** is played all year round on **Tuesday** afternoon from **2 - 4pm**. We welcome all ages from 10-90+. If you need more information please contact **Jeanne Clements** on **07535 954 909**

LINTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TUESDAY 17TH FEBRUARY



Adventures of Helicopters

Duncan Bickley talks about his life of flying

7.30pm

Linton Village Hall, Coles Lane
Refreshments & Raffle

Visitors and new members welcome

Weston Colville: its Church and People

a talk by Tim Cockerill

This talk by Tim Cockerill (a longstanding resident of Weston Colville and a keen researcher into its history over many years) will be interspersed with clips from a recently-recorded film of an interview with him in the church. There will also be an illustrated booklet (in return for small donations)

to take away and read at your leisure if you wish. The event will otherwise be free. There will be refreshments and time for informal questions afterwards.

6.30 - 7.30 pm,
Saturday, February 28th 2026
St Mary's Church, Weston Colville

Films in the Afternoon

There is going to be a trial to see whether films in the afternoon would be popular, particularly with some of you who don't like having to go home in the dark after the Saturday films.

These films will be shown in the **Institute** on two Tuesday afternoons in **February** and **March (10th & 24th)**, doors open **2pm**, film shown at **2.30pm**. It is likely that the films will

be old favourites, musicals or those generally less seen on TV, and the first film will be **High Society**. The Saturday films won't be repeated in the afternoon.

This project is jointly put on by the Picture House, the Good Neighbour scheme and the church. There will not be a fixed charge, donations will be gratefully accepted and initially will go towards church funds.

The Bell

Opening times:

BAR

Monday **3.00pm - 11.00pm**

Tues - Sunday **12.00pm - 11.00pm**

FOOD

Monday **CLOSED**

Tues - Saturday **12.00pm - 9.00pm**

Sunday **12.00pm - 6.00pm**



Balsham WI

Our first meeting of the year featured a visit from Charli Bitten to talk to us about Tropic Skincare and give us a chance to try out the products and order from her. We heard about the history of Tropic, their zero carbon-footprint policy and the charity initiatives they are involved with. One lucky member had a mini facial done and was left with much hydrated skin, and we had a very amusing game of bitchy bingo with three bags of samples up for prizes.

Our next meeting will be on **10th**

February 2026 and our speaker will **Rev Hannah Threlfall** with a talk about her journey to the Ministry.

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](https://www.facebook.com/BalshamWI)

Debbie Mower

Balsham February/March Diary

DATE	EVENT & TIME	VENUE
Monday 2nd	Hope Food Hub 12pm -1pm	Prince Memorial
Wednesday 4th	Last day to contact Kingsway re survey	
Saturday 7th	Picture House, Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale 7.00 for 7.30pm	Institute
Tuesday 10th	Community Café, 10-12pm	Institute
Tuesday 10th	Afternoon Films: High Society 2.00 for 2.30pm	Institute
Tuesday 10th	WI, 7.30pm	Pavilion
Wednesday 11th	Kingsway Solar Community Action AGM 7.00-8.00pm	Weston Colville Reading Room
Monday 16th	Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm	Pavilion
Tuesday 17th	Linton & District Historical Society, 7.30pm	Linton Village Hall
Wednesday 18th	Ash Wednesday Communion 9.30am	Church
Tuesday 24th	Afternoon Films: to be chosen , 2.00 for 2.30pm	Institute
Saturday 28th	Weston Colville History talk, 6.30-7.30pm	Weston Colville church

Pity the Poor Old Ploughboy

You may have noticed that the Balsham Plough Monday celebrations this year happened on **Monday 12th January**. The Ploughmen started at Princes Close and processed around the village stopping at West Wrating Road, The Manor, The Rookery, Frog Hall ending the evening at The Black Bull and then, finally, The Bell to see in Harrowing Tuesday. As ever, we're extremely grateful to the hosts of the stops for providing us with much needed sustenance. This year the Balsham Ploughmen raised around **£3,900** although this figure will almost certainly increase as further donations come in. We'll use these funds to provide funding for a range of local good causes, more about these next month. Thanks to everyone who donated and for the continued amazing support of the

wonderful people of Balsham.

The Balsham Ploughmen have been quite active during the 2025/26 season. We've turned out in our shabby 'uniform' four times this year. At the Christmas tree switch on, at the Plough blessing on Sunday 11th January, on Plough Monday itself and at David Kiddy's funeral where the Ploughmen provided the guard of honour for one of our own, we'll miss him! At this rate, we'll be making ourselves available for weddings and parties of all kinds (*joke!*).

I'll write a longer article with more photos for the Review next month that will highlight some of the good causes and, perhaps, elaborate on Plough Monday 2026 shenanigans.

Terry O'Neill



Photo: Terry O'Neill



Help Keep the Balsham Feast Alive!

The Balsham Feast is a beloved village tradition, but to make the 2027 event a reality, we need your help.

We are looking for fresh faces and new ideas to join our committee and ensure the Feast offers something for everyone, from our youngest residents to our oldest.

Whether you want to join the committee or can simply lend a hand on the day, please join us for an informal meeting where we can share ideas and get your feedback:

When: Thursday, 5th March @ 6:00pm

Where: The Black Bull
(perfect for a quick stop on your way home from work!)

No experience is necessary - just bring your enthusiasm! We'll be sharing the recent survey results and would love to hear your suggestions. Sadly, without more support, the Feast may not be able to continue.

Let's work together to save this wonderful village tradition!

Balsham Singers



Balsham Singers celebrated with tea and cake prior to singing at their **30th anniversary concert on 13th December**.



The concert sold out a fortnight beforehand with every seat in the church being filled. The raffle, supporting Royal Papworth charity, also celebrating 30 years, raised **£400**.

The choir has about 65 members but we always welcome new voices. We don't hold auditions and it isn't necessary to be able to read music. You just need to be keen to sing and learn. We are particularly keen to encourage some new lower voices, tenors and basses.... don't be shy!

We meet at **7.30pm** at the **Balsham Sports Pavilion** almost beside the church every Thursday.

John Clenaghan can answer any queries: contact him at: **john.clenaghan@sky.com**

Jo Stinton

St John's Players in association with Samuel French proudly present

Northanger Abbey

Wed 18th - Sat 21st
Feb 2026: 7.30pm

"I sometimes do not hold a young lady in less veneration who read such books as these."

Jane Austen

The Fulbourn Centre, Home End, CB21 5BS

Tickets £12 and £10

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/stjohnsplayers>
Box Office: 01223 210737 (5pm - 6.30pm)

NODA

David Kiddy



Photo: Roger Scotland



Photo: James Kiddy

Father was born on 27th March 1932 at Lawn Farm, Withersfield, the youngest of three brothers.

He grew up in a house that was often full of visiting relatives and friends: his parents, Albert and Dorothy, enjoyed entertaining, and this is probably where his love of a

good party came from.

Father went to school first at Withersfield village school and then as a boarder at King Edward VI, Bury St Edmunds, where he said the food was awful.

During the war he used to watch the bombers taking off from RAF Wrating Common. The fuel pipe for Wrating Common airfield ran through the garden of Lawn Farm and father used to collect the fuel from the various leaks which was then used to start the petrol/paraffin tractors on the farm.

Following school, he knew he wanted to farm so went to Chadacre Agricultural College to learn about both agriculture and Rugby. I can remember him playing in old students'

rugby matches in the 1960s.

Like many young people living in the countryside father joined his local Young Farmers' Club at Haverhill. This led to two important events in his life, first meeting Anne Samworth, who of course he would later marry, and also the chance to go on a YFC exchange trip to Australia. Travelling to Australia in the 1950s was a real adventure by ship through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, Sri Lanka and eventually Australia, taking 5-6 weeks in total. He told us that at some ports he stopped at such as Port Said he bought gifts and paid for them with duty free cigarettes. He also said that the ship going to Australia carried a lot of displaced persons from Europe looking for a new life in Australia.

Returning from Australia father became involved in the family farm and moved to Wissett Lodge. He married mother on 26th April 1956 and Wissett Lodge was their home for the first 3 years of their marriage. In February 1959 they moved to Lower Farm where Guy, Simon and James were born.

Mother and father have both been very involved in the life of Balsham, father was a parish councillor for most of his time in the village and also served on the parochial church council and was a church warden. He was chair of the pavilion committee when the monies were raised to

build the first part of the pavilion and joined the Ploughmen when Jim Daniels first revived the tradition in 1972.

The farm has always been his passion. When mother and father arrived in Balsham in 1959 the farm was trading as Samworth Brothers and included Lower farm, Yole Farm and Oxcroft Farm. In 1963 the farms were split with L Samworth and Partners retaining Lower farm and Yole Farm, with Mill Farm added later, along with some fields along the Hildersham Road and in 1980 some land at Fulbourn.

Father loved his livestock, the farm has always been mixed, initially pigs and beef cattle, with sheep from 1970. The first ram on the farm, called Jerry, had been raised on the bottle by mother, but he could be rather temperamental as he got older and one day he chased father round the meadow and on to the top of a heap of firewood. Lambing time can be tiring, one night father got up in the night to find a ewe lambing and thought he had better stay with it, but ended up falling asleep with the sheep. Throughout father's time working on the farm he always worked closely with Terry Pask and between them they would come up with various machinery modifications or build trailers and other items for the farm. It was always joint planning which Terry then brought to fruition.

Father unfortunately had health issues for many years, but he always looked on the bright side of life. Until 18 months ago he would drive his Freelander around the farm to see what was happening and chat to anybody he met and to enjoy the wildlife.

Father loved a party and at both Nick and Sarah's weddings he and mother were the first on the dance floor. Although father spent the last 18 months confined to a chair he never complained but enjoyed life as best he could. He and mother

have been very lucky to have some fantastic friends in Balsham who have visited them on a regular basis, in fact I would call in sometimes to find they had a house full of visitors. Father wanted this day to be a celebration of his life.

Guy Kiddy

For the family, taken from the eulogy at David's funeral.

Editor: for many years David used to send the Review reports on farm life through the year.

A Very Special Milestone:

Kirsty Celebrates 20 Years at Buttercups!

Buttercups Community Pre-school is marking a very special milestone; our manager Kirsty has celebrated her 20th Anniversary! Yes, twenty years how amazing is that!

Kirsty started at Buttercups in 2006, initially covering maternity leave before becoming a permanent member of staff. After a couple of years, she was asked if she could step into the role of temporary manager. Kirsty did such a fantastic job that she was invited to remain in that role-and the rest is history.

Kirsty's leadership, dedication and passion for early years education have helped shape Buttercups into the caring, nurturing, and happy

setting that so many families know and love. Over the years, she has supported countless children and families, always putting the children at the heart of everything she does. Kirsty has kept this amazing Pre-school thriving.

Twenty years is a remarkable achievement and truly shows how committed Kirsty is to delivering a wonderful early-years setting that children from the past, present and future can all enjoy. We are incredibly proud of Kirsty and

grateful for her commitment to Buttercups! The staff and committee would like to say a huge thank you to Kirsty and congratulations on 20 wonderful years!



The Meadow Primary School

A Happy New Year from Meadow Primary School

As we begin a brand-new year, everyone at Meadow Primary School would like to wish our whole community a very happy New Year. With the months ahead, we are excited about the many opportunities that lie before us and the ways we can continue to grow, learn and work together.

Working Together as a Community

Being an active part of our local community is incredibly important to us. We are always keen to build meaningful connections and to welcome new ideas, skills and experiences into school life. If there is anything you feel you could offer our school – whether that's your time, knowledge, experiences or expertise – we would love to hear from you.

We are continually looking for ways to enhance our links with the community and to broaden our children's experiences and outlooks, helping them to better understand the world around them.

Celebrating Diversity and Beliefs

As a non-denominational school, we aim to give our children knowledge and understanding of a wide range of faiths, religions and beliefs. We believe these experiences are vital in promoting curiosity, respect and open-mindedness.

This month, we are pleased to be welcoming a Humanist to facilitate discussion with our children, followed a few weeks later by a member of the Sikh community who will be sharing their religion and experiences. These visits offer invaluable opportunities for learning and dialogue, and we would love to continue providing more throughout the year. If you are, or know someone who might be, interested in supporting us by sharing their faith, beliefs or life experiences with our children, please do get in touch. You can contact our RE Leader, **Mrs Anderson**, via the school office on **01223 894400** or by email at **kanderson@meadowprimary.org**.

A Creative Start to the Year

The start of the year certainly brought with it some unexpected challenges, as cold weather and frozen pipes caused problems during the first few days of children returning to school. As a result, our teachers, children - and parents! - were forced to embrace the creativity we have been practising by moving learning online from home.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone for how well they coped with this unpredictable situation. With practically full classes joining us where possible and nearly all children taking part in learning from home, it was a real

testament to our strong school community. It was also a wonderful opportunity for children to explore, play and enjoy the snow!

Looking Ahead

As we move forward into the year ahead, we look forward to strengthening our community links, enriching our

curriculum and continuing to provide exciting and meaningful experiences for our children. Thank you, as always, for your continued support - we can't wait to see what this year brings.

Faye Facer

ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

Linton Village College

Linton Village College is proud to be recognised as a **Trinity Champion Centre** for 2025/26, celebrating our successful delivery of Arts Award qualifications.

Trinity College London is an international exam board and education charity specialising in music, drama, combined arts and English language. At LVC, the Arts Award is embedded in our curriculum, with all Year 7 students completing the Bronze Award. This achievement was recently highlighted in an Arts Award case study. Beyond Bronze, students can progress to Silver and Gold through extra-curricular opportunities led by trained staff. The Gold Award, usually offered by post-16 providers, carries 16 UCAS points, a fantastic way for us to stretch and challenge learners.

Arts Award encourages students to explore their creativity in areas such as dance, music and art. They also develop leadership skills by planning and running an arts-based

activity for a chosen audience, building confidence in communication, organisation and problem-solving.

Continuing the celebration of the arts, we are thrilled to share the success of **Mia** in Year 11. On **18 December**, Mia conducted *O Come All Ye Faithful* at Anna Lapwood's Christmas Concert at the **Royal Albert Hall**.

Performing in front of 6,000 people with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Mia rose to the challenge and was even gifted the conductor's baton, an unforgettable experience.

At Linton Village College, we are always committed to nurturing creativity and ambition, ensuring every student has the opportunity to explore the arts and develop leadership skills that open doors to exciting future pathways.

Laura Heard

PR & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Email: lheard@lintonvc.org



Linton Library News

It may be cold, dark or raining outside but here in the library you'll always find a warm and friendly welcome. Relax with a jigsaw puzzle, find a new author or use our free Wi-Fi.

2026 is the **National Year of Reading** (www.goallin.org.uk) and we want to encourage everyone to get into reading! Book groups are a great way to make new friends, discover new different authors and titles and get more enjoyment from reading. Two groups meet at Linton Library every third Friday, and the morning group would love to welcome new members.

Daylight Readers: Our Book Groups meet on **Friday 20th**, one at **10.30am** and the other at **2.30pm**.

Rhythm & Rhyme: Tuesday mornings 10.30-11am for 0-4 years (term time only), followed by Duplo. 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.

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

Mobile Library

With effect from **February 2026** we are cutting the afternoon visits to Church Lane by 15 minutes. This change is only because the stop is quite late, with a long drive back to our base and we don't really get anyone towards the end of the visits anyway so it is not going to impact Balsham customers at all.

2nd Tuesday of each month:

Church Lane 3.40-4.30

4th Tuesday of each month:

The Rookery 2.15-2.40pm,
Horseshoe Close 2.50-3.30,
Church Lane 3.40-4.30

Rachel Levitt

MOBILE LIBRARY DRIVER/SUPERVISOR

Balsham Parish Council

The Parish Council Meeting took place on 19th January, 2026 in Balsham Pavilion

The next **Parish Council Meeting** will be held on **16th February, 2026** at **7.30 pm** in **Balsham Pavilion**
ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND

Proposed development off Fox Road:

Andrew Dutton, a Land & Planning Consultant attended the PC meeting to put forward his ideas for land owned by the Long Family. Andrew Dutton explained that he was looking at applying for planning permission in a few months' time for 8 self-build houses which will have access near Orchard Close.

Pump Track:

A parent of two boys attended the PC meeting to ask if the PC would consider helping with a project to create a Pump Track on some PC land. The PC suggested the allotment field and the parent will work with the Clerk to apply for grants to fund the project. If anyone else would like to help please contact me.

Allotments:

There are 6 full sized plots and 5 half plots available. Please contact the PC for more details. The PC were very pleased to receive a grant from SCDC to provide two water taps at the Prince's Close allotments.

Mark Chennells has offered to voluntarily fill some of the holes in the tracks at the allotment track and near The Hawthorns gate. Mark

has also offered to help with the community orchard. The PC will purchase all the materials required. If anyone would like to help Mark please contact me.

Kingsway Targeted Consultation:

The PC will draft their response to the consultation and encourage all residents to send their comments.

Planning:

Site address: 2 Queens Close, Balsham

Reference: 26/00017/HFUL

Proposal: Single storey side extension. Erection of porch canopy to front and dormer to rear roof.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 100 High St, Balsham

Reference: 25/04814/FUL / 25/04815/LBC

Proposal: Pruning and felling various trees.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 100 High St, Balsham

Reference: 25/1188/TTCA

Proposal: Change of use from offices (Class E) to two four-bed dwelling houses (Class C3)

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 3 Anvil Close, Balsham

Reference: 25/04952/HFUL

Proposal: Single storey rear extension. Retrospective change of use of existing Highways verge to residential curtilage.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 1 School Lane , Balsham
Reference: 25/05058/FUL
Proposal: Retrospective change of use of existing Highways verge to residential curtilage.
PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 9 Nine Chimneys Lane, Balsham
Reference: 25/04621/HFUL
Proposal: Erect single-storey front and side extensions, front porch, raised hipped roof and extractor flue. Alterations to exterior materials palette and fenestration.
PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 9 Nine Chimneys Lane, Balsham
Reference: 25/04621/HFUL
Proposal: Single storey front and side extensions, raising ridge height of the roof and new flue.
PC Decision: No objections

Site address: Troy Green 2A Nine Chimneys Lane, Balsham
Reference: 25/1415/TTCA
Proposal: T1: Cypress: Fell and remove.
SCDC Decision: Approved

Site address: Balsham Recreation Ground, Church Lane, Balsham
Reference: 25/1329/TTCA
Proposal: G1 - Fell row of Leyland cypress and replant.
PC Decision: Approved

Precept:
 The PC discussed the budget and bank balances and agreed a set the precept at £ 78,000, which is the same as last year.

Tracy Coston
 PARISH CLERK
Tel: 01223 894462 / 07929930385
Email: clerk@balsham.net
Website: www.balsham.net

Bin Collections February/March

DATE	BLACK	BLUE	GREEN
Wednesday February 4 TH			
Wednesday February 11 TH			
Wednesday February 18 TH			
Wednesday February 25 TH			
Wednesday March 3 RD			
Wednesday March 11 TH			

District & County Councillor's Report

December 2025 & January 2026

Local Plan

The District Council has recently released its draft Local Plan – which is the development plan for the next 20 years and indicates the parcels of land in South Cambs that they feel can accommodate housing and commercial development to feed the population and economic growth during this time. As previously reported, the major development in our area is a site north of Abington called Grange Farm, which can accommodate up to 6,000 new houses. This would be a significant development in our area, as it would represent a new town, about 3 times the size of Linton. The reason this is proposed here is that the location is deemed to be 'sustainable', as it's close to employment sites like Granta Park and Babraham Research Park and is also located on major roads – the A1307 and the A11.

Although the first public consultation on this draft document is now closed, please do engage with this.

Cambridge South Station

The new train station being built at the Addenbrooke's site, that will be called Cambridge South, has had

some construction delays and now won't be open until June 2026

Weekly Food Waste Collection

The changes to how our food waste will be collected will be implemented this year. Every household will get a separate food caddy for all of their food waste, this will still be collected by the District Council in the same way that our bins currently are.

The reason for this change is in response to DEFRA changing the law around how food can be disposed of, so locally we need to collect it separately to the waste in other bins, specifically the green bin.

Full detail at:

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/news/greater-cambridge-councils-set-out-arrangements-for-new-weekly-food-waste-collections>

Contact Information:

Geoff Harvey

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
geoff.harvey@gmail.com

Henry Batchelor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR
henrybatchelor89@gmail.com



Become a Scouting Volunteer!

Join the Adventure!

Do you believe in helping young people grow, explore and reach their full potential?

Are you ready for new challenges, friendships and fun?

We're looking for enthusiastic adult volunteers to join our Scouting team in Balsham.

Whether you can give an hour a week or a few days a month, you'll make a real difference supporting young people to:

- Build confidence and resilience
- Learn new skills and independence
- Enjoy outdoor adventures and teamwork

No previous experience?

No problem!

We provide full training, support and a welcoming community.

Interested?

Please contact our Chair, **David Weir** via email: chair@balshamscouts.org.uk or **Juliet Bevan**: juliet.bevan@balshamscouts.org.uk

Ever Considered Having an Allotment?

We have 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**. People living 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.

We have a competition for the most improved allotment and are planning to have a picnic get together in the autumn. There is a wealth of experience out there to guide you if you need advice.

So, if you want to improve your diet, your fitness and your wellbeing, now is the time to apply by sending your name, address and phone number by email to balshamallotments@balsham.net so we can arrange to view the available plots.

HOPE: Mobile Food Hub

The van bringing free fresh fruit and vegetables, if available, and other essential affordable items to Balsham attends on **alternate Mondays** from **12-1pm (Feb 2nd and 16th)** [*no bank holiday visits*].

Up to four items are allowed free:

pasta, tomato pasta sauce, tinned tomatoes and baked beans, and other items are for sale at a reduced price. Anyone can access the hub, just turn up on the day, no means test etc.

The Black Bull



Happy New Year to Balsham all from The Black Bull!

Thank you to those who joined us over the festive period – whether for a Folk Night, a Christmas gathering, a Christmas Eve Happy Hour, a Christmas Day lunch, a Thursday coffee morning, or just some other random visit.

Events Ahead:

Winter Warmer Specials Board Thursday 5th, Friday 6th and Saturday 7th February

Rob will be laying on an array of Winter Warmer specials to complement his new Winter 2026 menu.

NEW! Friendly Friday at the Black Bull – Friday 13th

Meeting up at the pub is all the more fun when there is a good gaggle from the village turning up at the same time – like Christmas Eve. But when are others going to be there?

Well they will be there at least one Friday a month because it will be Friendly Friday at the Black Bull

with Happy Hour **15% off** headline drinks **6-7pm**.

The next **Tasting Menu** will be available **Thursday 12th, Friday 13th and Saturday 14th February** – groups are just as welcome as couples! This will be one of our lighter “**Five Moments**” tasting menus and we can run these alongside our normal winter 2026 menu and at any time during our normal service times. The menus are on our website. Please let us know which menu you would like when you book your table. The same menu for all on your table please.

NB Mothers’ Day this year is **Sunday 15th 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 but right through from 11:45am to 5pm.

Lunchtime additional treats to continue

Our new offerings to supplement our main menu at lunchtimes are to be continued while they continue to be in hot demand: the likes of Eggs Benedict and Full English Breakfast Also Rob’s latest inspiration – Black Bull Pie Roll: think sausage roll but with Rob’s stand out pie mix filling of the week. It is superb!

Best wishes from all of us

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

REACH Community Projects Questionnaire



REACH, the Haverhill based charity that serves parts of South Cambs, including Linton & Balsham as well as parts of Suffolk and north Essex, is conducting a questionnaire survey within its area to assess its priorities for the future.

The charity celebrated its 20th anniversary last November and has been fighting to break the cycle of financial hardship faced by families and individuals within its area of service. It provides advice and help to enable people to move on from financial difficulties through casework, advocacy and practical help. REACH works with schools to help them introduce financial literacy and budgeting at a younger age that may help future generations manage challenging events should they occur. The charity works with all age groups and has supported pensioners suffering financial hardship, particularly with matters such as eligibility for pension credit.

Last year the charity supported 4905 people, including 1800 children, and provided food to over 2000 people through its Foodbank service.

In our village the Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme has links to this charity should any resident need help from its specialist services. I am the liaison person for the Good Neighbour Scheme with REACH, having been a volunteer with the charity for eight years.

The questionnaire enclosed with this month's Balsham Review is short and easy to complete in a few minutes. Completed questionnaires can be returned to the collection box at the **Balsham Post Office by 28th February 2026.**

Thank you for your help with this exercise to shape the future work of REACH.

Reg Smith

Tel: 0800 0096710

Email: info@reachhaverhill.org.uk

REACH services - your opinion matters to us

1 What do you see as the most important aspect of REACH's work in the community?

Please tick below

- Foodbank
- Schools work (financial lessons)
- Debt work
- Benefits work

Other *(please specify)*

2 In your opinion, is REACH meeting the needs of elderly people in the communities we serve?

Please tick below

- Yes
- No, could do more *(if you wish to, please suggest what more we could do below)*

3 Is REACH doing enough to help families in the communities we serve?

Please tick below

- Yes
- No, could do more *(if you wish to, please suggest what more we could do below)*

4 Is REACH doing enough to help young people in the communities we serve?

Please tick below

- Yes
- No, could do more *(if you wish to, please suggest what more we could do below)*

5 Is REACH doing enough to help people with disabilities (mental or physical)?

Please tick below

- Yes
- No, could do more *(if you wish to, please suggest what more we could do below)*

6 Lastly, have you got lived experience of hardship?

Please tick below

- Yes
- No
- No, but I know someone who is being helped by REACH
- No, but I know someone who was helped by REACH



Balsham Weather November/December 2025



Photo: Lesley Bennett

Temperatures (maximum & minimum) & Rainfall



NOVEMBER



17° on 6th November



3° on 20th November



13° on 6th November



-2° on 20th November



Total rainfall: 98.5mm (3.84")



Rain fell on 17 days



DECEMBER



13° on 9th December



0° on 5th December



10° on 9th December



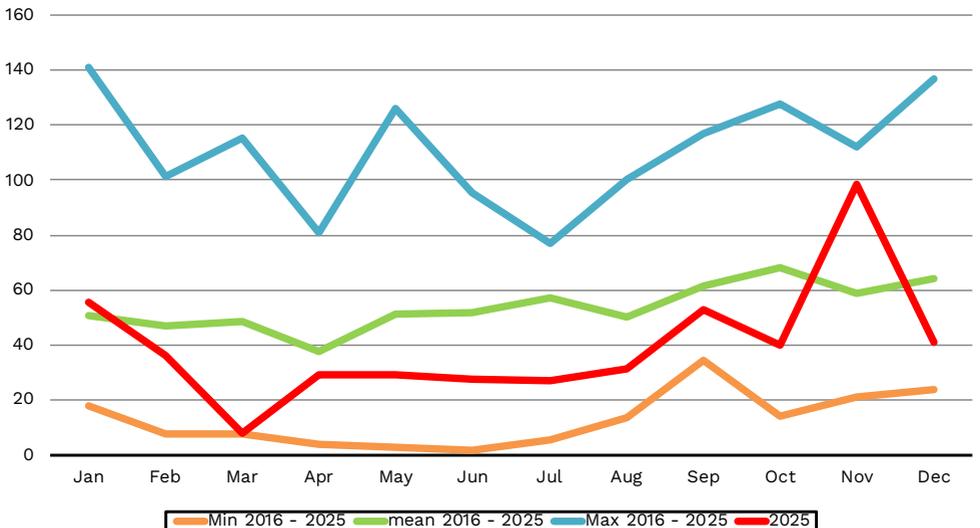
0° on 5th December



Total rainfall: 41mm (1.61")



Rain fell on 13 days





Saturday February 7th

Doors open 7.00pm & film at 7.30pm in Balsham Church Institute
Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale (PG)



The cinematic return of the global phenomenon, **Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale** follows the Crawley family and their staff as they enter the 1930s. When Mary finds herself at the centre of a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble, the entire household grapples with the threat of social disgrace.

The Crawleys must embrace change as the staff prepares for a new chapter with the next generation leading Downton Abbey into the future.

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***