



BALSHAM *Review*

ISSUE No. 678

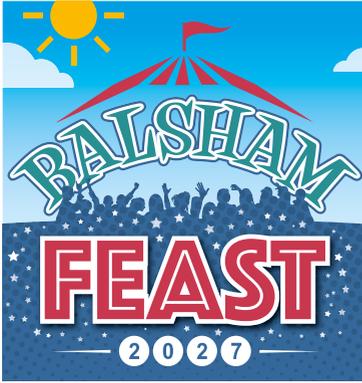
MARCH 2026



Looking forward to a hosepipe ban...

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Photo: Lesley Bennett



GET INVOLVED!

Come and join us at

The Black Bull

on **Thursday 5th March** at **6.00pm**
and share your ideas and enthusiasm
for the **2027 Feast**.

Help shape the future of the Feast
and make sure it continues!



Photo: Richard Pargeter



Photo: Larry Davies



Photo: Richard Pargeter



Photo: Richard Pargeter

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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 (APRIL):

FRIDAY MARCH 20TH

*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

Our new venture in the village, **Films in the Afternoon**, got off to a good start at the beginning of February, but several people asked if we could change to a Friday especially as the afternoon carpet bowls also meet on a Tuesday. As they are a great group, needing everyone possible to join them every week, they were unable to film-watch with us - consequently we have changed our day. After March we will have a break until October; summer months get busy with so much else. Many of the bowlers also attend the Mays Avenue Monday morning coffee and they also need more members, so don't sit at home, get out and meet new people!

I need to apologise for a small slip in the proof-reading last month with the council's planning report. We do our best to make sure we are accurate in what we print, but occasionally mistakes are made, so 'sorry'.

I know many villagers are very concerned about speeding cars in the village. When the A1307 and other larger roads have hold-ups, drivers often search for another way through, and unfortunately many have found our High Street which they then use regularly. If you see someone speeding, especially if you feel they are driving dangerously fast, you can note their number plate and car description, then ring 101 to report it. Another way

to help is to join the village **Speedwatch** group which needs more helpers. The more people who join and are then seen by the drivers making our village a 'rat-run' the better. It should encourage them to slow down.

In fact, there are many village groups that would benefit from new members. As an older person I find the groups I attend seem to consist of all older people and there is a dearth of younger people to take our places. I expect that many younger people are busy at work, looking after children and have little time for village happenings, BUT if you do have some time to spare to help a village activity please do more than just consider it. Occasions like the Feast depend upon **you**.

Thank you to everyone who filled in the **Reach** survey last month. Reach is a great charity based in Haverhill which also covers the villages around the area, and they are happy to help Balsham villagers too. 'Together giving hope' is their motto, and they specialise in giving help: financial, crisis and relationship advice, and food and necessities where they can make a difference. Phone: **0800 009 6710**.

In December I set 24 solar lights along the paths to the church door. They helped visitors get to carols and other Christmas activities, but

when I have been collecting them as the evenings lighten, I have found only 12. If anyone can help

find the others I would be grateful.

Gill Parry Brown

EDITOR, BALSHAM REVIEW

Letters



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

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

DEAR EDITOR

THANK YOU TO THE PLOUGHMEN

I would just like to say thank you to the Balsham Ploughmen for their generous donation to the Balsham Review. Without donations like this and the revenue generated by the businesses who advertise in the Balsham Review Advertiser's Directory we wouldn't be able to distribute the Balsham Review and the Directory free to all 800+ Balsham households.

Gill Clarke

BALSHAM REVIEW TREASURER

MAYS AVENUE COFFEE CLUB

We are a friendly bunch of people, many retired some semi-retired, who meet up for coffee/tea and biscuits (cake if we are lucky) on a **Monday morning at 10.15am** in the **Community Room, Mays Avenue**. A small charge is requested in order to keep the coffers balanced (£1 for Mays Avenue residents and £2 for other Balsham residents and those with a Balsham connection).

We usually play 2 games of bingo (not compulsory) for cash prizes. Raucous laughter can be heard during these games. We have a raffle

every other week again to keep our club afloat; also occasional lunches for members for which we charge a small fee. In 2025 we were thrilled to be able to send **£200** each to **MacMillan** and **Arthur Rank Hospice** from our special September coffee morning fundraiser.

If you are a Balsham resident or have connections with Balsham and fancy some time out on a Monday morning you will find a warm welcome awaits in the Community Room Mays Avenue.

Sandra Greatrex

CHAIRPERSON

Sue Moore

SECRETARY

EAST ANGLIA FAMILY HISTORY

I am helping to organise the East Anglia regional **Family History Show**. It is on **18th April** in **St Ives**. There will be more information in the next Review, but in the meantime make a note of the date so you can see what you can find about your East Anglian family roots.

Karen Orrell

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & HUNTINGDONSHIRE FHS

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 cornerstone](http://www.facebook.com/Linton%20cornerstone)

METHODIST: Haverhill Methodist Church, Camps Road

From the Church



The days are drawing out. The darkness is receding. We all feel better when we have more light. With this light comes new growth, we see snowdrops, aconites and bulbs beginning to sprout.

It could be said that March is a season of profound spiritual renewal, marking the transition from winter's quietude to spring's vibrant life, often aligning with themes of repentance, fasting, and rejuvenation during Lent. It invites believers to trust in God's timing, allowing His grace to blossom, while serving as a reminder that beginnings are sacred and hope is reborn.

We begin with Ash Wednesday and then during the next six weeks we are reminded to think about our spiritual journey which encourages us to be aware of God's presence with more than a fleeting glance. It is more than just giving something up like chocolate or alcohol. We are encouraged to slow down our pace of life. In today's society there is much anxiety coupled with the speed with which we live our lives, with

no time to pause a moment to see what riches we have been given. Rather than being negative I like to think of this as a time to do something that helps our understanding of what God might be saying to us. A few moments letting go of the preoccupations that weigh us down. Maybe we need to say sorry about something we have said that was hurtful, or for not supporting each other enough? On the other hand, it could be that we can reach out to someone in need. A phone call or offering help to a person who is struggling.

Having been made aware of ways to reach out to others, apart from making us feel good, it could be that at the end of the day it is possible to reflect back to see where God has been working. To thank him for those insights that lifted our spirits and realise that we were not alone. Think about the day with gratitude, thanking God for the big things and the small ones. Were there moments of joy and peace or disruption? Choose a particular experience and have a chat with God about it, this might be a high point or a low one, it does not matter. Spend time with it, then look forward to tomorrow and ask for God's guidance. Before we know it we are celebrating Easter with great joy.

Rev Kathy Bishop

March Services	9:30am	11:00am	PM Services
1st		United Service with Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	
8th	Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> Morning Worship West Wrating <i>Alistair Collen</i>	Morning Worship Balsham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion Great Abington <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall/ Alastair France</i> Café Church Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	6.00pm Taizé service Weston Colville <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>
15th <i>Mothering Sunday</i>	Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Holy Communion West Wrating <i>Revd Jane Butler</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall/ Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Morning Worship Little Abington <i>Revd Iain McColl/ Steven Wheeler</i>	6.00pm Taizé service Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>
22nd	Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion Weston Colville <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> Creative Church Abington Hub <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> 11.15am Holy Communion (BCP) Hildersham <i>Revd Michael Wilcockson</i>	4.00pm Evening Prayer Little Abington <i>Alistair Collen</i>
29th		Holy Communion for Palm Sunday Balsham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall/ Revd Iain McColl</i>	4.00pm Easter Songs of Praise West Wrating <i>John & Scilla Harvey</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

Services for the week before Easter

(Holy Week)

Monday 30th March:	Evening Prayer, West Wickham.....7.30pm
Tuesday 31st March:	Evening Prayer, West Wrattling.....7.30pm
Wednesday 1st April:	Evening Prayer, Weston Colville.....7.30pm
Thursday 2nd April:	Holy Communion, Great Abington....7.30pm
Friday 3rd April (Good Friday):	Devotional service, Hildersham.....9.30am
	Stations of the Cross, Balsham.....11.30am
	Last Hour, West Wrattling.....2.00pm
	Last Hour, Little Abington.....2.00pm

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, Balsham Church **Friday 6th March, 11.00am**

Please join us for a reflective and interactive service which this year comes from Nigeria. All are welcome with lunch served afterwards.

For more details contact Anna McColl:

Email: annamccoll3@gmail.com Tel: 01223 890693

Kingsway Solar Community Action

AGM and next steps

Thank you to everyone who attended our **AGM** on **Wednesday 11 February**. It was encouraging to see such strong community support.

The evening opened with a short campaign film created by Bob Coates in collaboration with members of our local community. Tony Day, Chair of KSCA, then outlined what has been achieved over the past year, where matters currently stand with the Kingsway proposal, and what lies ahead.

If Kingsway keeps to its current timetable, a **Development Consent Order (DCO)** application is expected at the end of **March 2026**. Once submitted, the Planning Inspectorate has 28 days to decide whether the application is “fit to be accepted.”

If accepted, the proposal moves into the Examination phase — the most important stage of the process. Parish Councils, community groups and individuals can register as Interested Parties and submit representations. We will provide clear guidance on how to do this when the time comes.

Our immediate priority is fundraising. We need to support our legal team in appointing independent experts in hydrology, BESS, landscape and related areas. Their evidence will be essential to presenting robust, well-founded arguments during the Examination phase. Please consider pledging funds using the QR code below.

Community Walk: Saturday 21 March
Join us in **Weston Colville** for a 2.2

mile (approximately one hour) community walk along a well-loved local circular route that would be significantly affected by the proposed development. Plans include solar panels up to 4.2 metres high and a haul road running parallel to the existing byway, cutting across footpaths and the River Stour. Dogs are welcome on leads. Routes may be muddy, so please come prepared.

Free refreshments and a talk will be available at the **Reading Rooms** from **2.30pm** (*open to all*). From **5pm** there will be **music, a bar** and **food** available.

Stickers Available

If you would like to continue showing your support for KSCA by displaying a sticker on your bins or elsewhere, please complete the form using the QR code below.

Stay Updated

Please follow the News page at **kingswayaction.org** to stay up to date and access links to the AGM presentations and campaign video.

Useful links:



Request a sticker



Contribute to KSCA campaign



Pledge money to legal team



Join KSCA

Kathy Day

Kingsway Solar Community Action | Community Walk

Saturday 21ST March 2.00pm

Meet at the Reading Rooms, Weston Colville CB21 5NX

Join us in Weston Colville for a 2.2 mile (*approximately one hour*) walk along a local circular route that would be affected by the proposed development.



- Dogs on leads are welcome
- May be muddy, so please come prepared
- Limited on-street parking - lift share if possible

FREE refreshments and a talk at the Reading Rooms from 2.30pm (*open to all*). From 5pm there will be music, a bar and food available.

For more information: www.kingswayaction.org

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:

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

Tea, coffee and cakes are served free, so come and meet your friends for a warm, comfortable chat.

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

Balsham WI

The speaker for our February meeting was **Rev. Hannah Threlfall** telling us about her journey into the Ministry. Prior to the meeting I had been told that Hannah was a true WI Baby. She had been present at many WI events when she was a young child as her mother was heavily involved with the WI.

Hannah told us about her life which led up to her deciding to seek a chance to become a priest around the turn of the decade. She described the studying and exams that she had to do, firstly to be ordained as a Deacon and then as a Priest. She followed this up with a selection of photos of highlights of her time at Holy Trinity, Balsham.

And as many of our members were present at the Remembrance Day

Service last November when she told the congregation about her ability to open a bottle of champagne with a sabre we asked her to demonstrate that unusual skill!

Our next meeting will be on **10**

March 2026 and three members will be presenting items from collections that they have, followed by our Annual Meeting.

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

The Future of the Balsham Feast

It's up to us!

For generations, the Balsham Feast has been a much-loved village tradition – a time to come together, catch up with neighbours, and celebrate everything that makes our community special.

This year, however, there will be no Feast. What happens after that depends entirely on you.

The good news is that the Balsham Feast could return in 2027 – but only if there is enough local support to make it happen. Like many community events, the Feast relies on a small team of volunteers who give their time and energy to organise it. Without a new committee and helping hands, this long-standing tradition may sadly come to an end.

To find out whether the Feast has a future, a **meeting** is being held on



Thursday 5th March at 6pm at the **Black Bull**. The aim is simple: to gauge interest, recruit new committee members, and welcome anyone willing to help in any capacity. You don't need experience, just enthusiasm and a bit of time to spare.

This is a chance for the village to shape its own future. If the Balsham Feast has ever brought you joy – whether as a child, a parent, or a long-time resident – now is the moment to get involved and help ensure it continues for years to come.

Please come along, have your say, and help decide the future of the Balsham Feast. Even showing up makes a difference.

Balsham Feast Committee

Balsham Singers

We started our 31st year by welcoming 6 new singers and I'm pleased to report our chaps have some new members. Every season we also get some retirees too and we send our best wishes to everyone who has sung with us over the years and wish them a happy retirement.

Rehearsals are well underway for the Spring Concert.

A Date For Your Diary

Saturday 16th May 2026 @ 7.30pm

Tickets will be available from **1st April** at **Balsham Post office**, via a choir member or online:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/balshamsingers>

Don't dilly dally: our last two concerts sold out fast.

Jo Stinton

The Balsham Plough Monday Club

Plough Monday 2026

Plough Monday 2026, what can I say, a great time was had by all and we raised **£3,880**. We now move on to Plough Monday 2027 (who knows where the time goes!). In this article we'll say some heartfelt thank yous and publicise the good causes that we'll support this year with your kind donations.

Plough Monday wouldn't be the same without the hospitality of the Balsham people. The stops this year were exceptional, we also had two first-time stops. Thanks to **Eleanor Stanley** for kicking the night off and to **Nick Blackburn** and **Mathilde Columbe** for a great stop at the Rookery. Thanks also to **Barry & Bev** at West Wratting Road, **Steve and Lucie** at The Manor and to **Dominic and Susie** at Frog Hall. Thanks also to all at **The Black Bull** and to **Rich** at **The Bell** for his patience, for putting up with the Ploughmen/Morris Men/ Gringo/ Kenneth Brannagh banter until the early hours and for the great meal on Harrowing Tuesday, the day certainly lived up to its name this year!

This year we'll be making a donation towards the purchase of outdoor **play equipment** for the **Meadow School**. This is part of a great initiative that will enable Balsham children to play more outdoors. The Balsham Ploughmen are proud to

support this great project. I'm sure that, like me, the other Ploughmen spent most of their own childhoods outside and there is no doubt that it builds resilience and a healthy respect for the environment.

Secondly, we will again be making a donation to the **Balsham Review**. Their coverage of village life is amazing and they've done the Balsham Plough Monday Club proud with their incredible coverage of Plough Monday 2026 in full colour!

We will maintain the practice of subsidising the **Easter and Christmas OAP lunches** at The Bell, watch out for dates. These events are usually well attended so please book a table in good time in order to secure your place. Rich has been a great supporter of the Ploughmen over the last few months so thanks Rich!

The **'Balsham: a village story 1617 – 2017'** book was published back in 2017. The production of the book was a major project, involved a large number of dedicated Balsham people and resulted in a professionally produced book that is full of amazing information about our wonderful village. Since 2017, the village has expanded somewhat with the addition of Farrier's Yard, Dairy Way and Samworth Close. The Ploughmen have decided to purchase

copies of the book to distribute to residents who live in these new developments. This will happen over the coming months so, if you live in one of the new developments, please expect a knock on the door and an offer of something interesting to read.

We'll be making a small donation to purchase balls for the **Balsham Badgers Touch Rugby Club**. They get decent numbers along on a Sunday morning and Wednesday evening (*summer only*) so, if you fancy a game, pop along, all ages and standards welcome. They also contribute to the economic wellbeing of the village by the amount of beer they drink at The Bell afterwards.

We also have a number of other good causes 'bubbling under' that I'll write about when they get closer to being finalised.

All of these activities add to the vibrancy of our wonderful village, the donations wouldn't be possible without your generosity.

So, that's about it for Plough Monday 2026, however, before I hang up my keyboard for another year, I would like to highlight the unique nature of the Plough Monday celebrations in Balsham, your village. Plough Monday in Balsham was celebrated annually for hundreds of years up until World War 1. It started up again for a few years before World War 2, was revived again for a few years after 1952 and has now occurred

every year since 1972. According to George Frampton who, literally, wrote the book on Plough Monday, the Balsham celebrations are one of the longest, if not the longest, continuously celebrated, Plough Monday festivities in the country. All of the Balsham Ploughmen remain extremely proud to continue the tradition of Plough Monday, to engage with all in the village (especially our newer residents) and to do some good in the process if we can.

Finally, if you have any ideas about good causes that we can support in future, or would like to host a stop in 2026, then please contact myself or any of the Ploughmen.

Terry O'Neill



GRANTA CHORALE
Musical Director Janet Wheeler Organ and piano Richard Carr

ONCE UPON A TIME

Music inspired by stories and story-telling
fairytales, folk ballads, classic literature, legend, news reports
Composers include
Ravel, Rutter, Purcell, Britten, Mäntyjärvi, Cattley
Words by Shakespeare, Conan Doyle, Lewis Carroll, Chaucer,
Tolkien, Dickens, Hardy and more

4pm Sunday March 8th 2026
St Mary Magdalene Church, Ickleton
Tickets £15 (under 25s £5) including wine and snacks
available from www.grantachorale.org.uk or on the door
Funds towards the Friends of Ickleton Church



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Henryk Pisarski



Photos: John Robinson



Photo: Lesley Bennett



All photos: Terry O'Neill

Linton Village College

At Linton Village College, student wellbeing is central to our caring ethos. We are proud to offer a broad range of support for learners with diverse needs to support all of our students to feel understood and ready to succeed.

Our **Wellbeing Mentor, Mrs Hill**, is working in partnership with **The Beacon Youth Trust** and **Romsey Mill** to deliver a range of one-to-one mentoring, group sessions and a recent initiative run by **Cambridge United Foundation** with a focus on developing positive, respectful relationships.

Mrs Hill also leads our **Wellbeing Hub**, a calm space which is open at break and lunch for students seeking a quieter environment. Activities such as “Knit and Natter” and weekly yoga sessions offer time for creativity and reflection. Mrs Hill offers mentoring support for young people alongside a YMCA counsellor who supports students with more complex emotional needs.

Our **Henry Morris Centre (HMC)** is another key provision, where a dedicated team of Learning Support Assistants supports our students with additional needs. The HMC coordinates initiatives including **The Dog Mentor** programme, with **Ralph**, our school dog, offering emotional and sensory comfort to

students who benefit from his gentle presence.

The HMC also works with **Woodventurers** to run our **Forest School programme**, helping students reconnect with learning through the calming and motivating effects of nature. Looking ahead, plans are in place to renovate the site house to provide an alternative provision space featuring sensory areas, smaller learning environments and outdoor-based opportunities.



Laura Heard

PR & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Email: lheard@lintonvc.org



Photo: Larry Davies



Photo: Larry Davies

Linton & District Historical Society

Report on February meeting 2026

After fulfilling a childhood ambition Duncan Bickley, now a retired pilot, took us on some of his Helicopter Adventures during the course of a fascinating career, albeit from ferrying guests and landing 'in style' at hotels, wedding receptions and getting celebrities to their next venue. Travelling along the River Thames, around the Isle of Wight and across to Paris and around Mount Blanc we were able to share a 'bird's eye view' of just a few locations which Duncan has enjoyed over the years, arriving safely back at Cambridge Airport.

A brief demonstration of 'how to fly a helicopter' with the aid of a long-handled dustpan and brush, plus of course, remembering to use the foot pedals, all added to a most enjoyable evening which ended with an equally entertaining question

and answer session.

Next meeting:

Tuesday, 7.30pm, 17th March 2026,
'The Walton Family'

presented by Charmian Thompson
Step into the world of the Walton Family – a saga woven with triumph and tragedy. From the battlefields of the Peninsular War to the distant outposts of the army in India, their journey spans continents and centuries. Inheritances shaped fortunes, while ties to slavery in Barbados cast shadows. At the heart of it all, stands a grand house in a quiet hamlet ... and the crack of leather on willow. Howzat!

Linton Village Hall, Coles Lane,
Refreshments and Raffle

Visitors and new members always welcome

For further details of the LDHS please
Email: ldhscamb@gmail.com

Tel: 01223 893915 or 01223 678835

West Wickham & District Gardening Club

Tim Fuller from Norfolk nursery **The Plantsman's Preference** will be coming to inspire us with a talk on New, rare and unusual plants on **Monday 16th March at 7:30pm** in **West Wickham Village Hall**.

Specialising in hardy geraniums, ornamental grasses and unusual perennials there is certain to be information about plants to suit all tastes. Free entry to members and non-members paying £2 per visit...

...and with only two months to go until our **May Plant Sale**, we are hopeful that Tim will be able to offer us valuable advice on successfully dividing our own plants too.

Membership is **£8** with new members welcome to join throughout the year. Please contact: **Sally Collins** on wwdgc@westwickham.org for further information about the Club.

Sally Collins

Balsham: A House Through Time

The House on the Green (*formerly the Green House*)

The dwelling is formerly shown on an 1874 map as a pair of semi detached cottages situated next to the old school overlooking the green, one unoccupied, the other lived in by a Susan Fuller. Owned by the Governors of Charterhouse the cottages were converted into one large property around the late 1800's including stabling, outbuildings and land.

Walter Westgate, MRCVS, established his veterinary practice at the Green House in 1896. He was also a breeder of racehorses with 20 stables in the adjoining yard. The 1901 census shows him aged 42, single, with two house servants and employing stable staff. Walter seems to have been a complex character, often appearing in court both as defendant and prosecutor. He regularly refused to pay for the yearly carriage licence maintaining that as a vet he was carrying out a public service. Walter also refused to pay for the 7/6d (35p) yearly dog licence.

He acquired the lease of the Oxcroft stud farm in the early 1900's and posted advertisements in 'The Sportsman' for his 'stud' horses. In 1909 Walter was in financial trouble and he was obliged to advertise the selling of his furniture and stock but the receiver decided to stay the sale of his horses for 14 days.

It does look as though he managed to clear his debts as the census of 1911 shows he was still in business although now living on his own and possibly in poor health. Walter died in July 1914 after falling from his bedroom window onto the cobbled yard below. At the inquest a witness said that he was found still alive but clearly confused, Walter claimed he had been 'driving along, hit a telegraph pole and fell into a ditch' when in fact he had taken to his bed on arriving home earlier with horse and carriage intact. He is buried in his family plot in Long Stratton, Norfolk.

In 1914, Twenty four Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) Auxiliary Home Hospitals were commissioned right across Cambridgeshire and the first one to be registered was the Green House in Balsham (Mrs Long had already hired the house for this purpose). There were five wards in the hospital ready to hold twenty beds, plus a resident nurse's room, medicine and store cupboard, bathroom etc., all under one roof. The grounds consisted of a croquet lawn, garden and adjoining buildings. The hospital was mobilised on April 1st 1915 and from then on until the October there were 81 patients recorded. This scheme was so successful that a further house was commandeered to provide another 20 beds at the Park House, also in



Balsham, with an overspill facility at the Church Institute. In a report by M Goodchild the Commandant stated:

'Everyone was made as happy as possible, those in the district doing all they could with invitations to tea being numerous. In the wintertime it is more difficult to amuse patients during the day, but they have concerts, various evening entertainments and the billiard table is a never-tiring source of amusement.'

It has been said that many soldiers when being considered fit enough to be sent back to the front would write 'Balsham' on their medical cards so that when they were inevitably injured, they would once again be sent to the village.

1931 saw the racehorse trainer Mr Gerald de Orellana Laurence setting up his training operation at the Green House stables. He was said to be a flamboyant and popular character and had great success with horses over the jumps. His wife Joan was known throughout the village for speeding in her fast car along the High Street. Following their divorce Mr Laurence moved to

Berkshire at the beginning of WW2 and shortly after that moved to Scotland to continue with his career as a trainer. It was at Ayr racecourse in 1961, whilst watching his horse, Gay Mairi pass the winning post, that he collapsed and died at just 60 years of age.

At the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the Green House stables were requisitioned by the Ministry of Defence for use as a prisoner of war camp, firstly for Italians, then Austrians, and finally Germans. They were housed in the range of outbuildings and loose boxes. Army guards were posted at the front gate and Church Lane Field entrance. Many of these Prisoners of War (POW) worked on local farms and made lasting friendships within the village. One German POW named Albert remained good friends with his 'farming family' at Lower Farm after his return to Germany and would frequently visit, sometimes with members of his family, until his death.

Arthur (Fiddler) Goodwill, racehorse trainer, bought the Green House Stables in 1946. His nickname of Fiddler was acquired when a previous employer discovered he was an accomplished violin player and not as some thought fiddling the odds. Incidentally he was jockey for Gerald Laurence previous to becoming a trainer. His string of horses soon became a familiar sight in the village. The Roman



Mr Arthur Goodwill

road was used as training gallops and he also had a field just off the Cambridge road for putting horses through their paces over jumps. I'm told that one of his

horses was named Raggedy Ann when a little girl named Ann visited the stables wearing a torn dress. The string of horses being ridden through the village was quite a sight, although as my mother was petrified of them I was usually dragged through the nearest gate when they came in sight. However, I did have many happy hours playing in the hayloft with friends Linda and Jane.

Arthur was a successful trainer and had several winners whilst in Balsham before moving to Sackville House, Newmarket in 1955. Linda Goodwill, his daughter and assistant trainer, was to become the first fully-fledged professional female jockey, who rode his horse Pee Mai, with four wins to her credit.

The next occupants were Louis and Frances Westley, Mr Westley was a pig farmer and occupied the house and land until 1962 when it was put up for sale through Hockey & Son. Advertised as 'A superior detached village house with an exceptionally large range of outbuildings. All in excellent order, mainly loose boxes

and eminently situated for pigs and poultry' Price Freehold £3,500. There was also the option of a 'rather larger amount of land at a commensurately higher price if required'.



Showing Mr Westley's Pig farm at back of the Green House.

It was at this time that the paddock field in Church Lane, next to the then school, was sold to build the Church Lane bungalows thus paving the way for the development of Trinity Close in 1969.

In 1982 it was again up for sale, together with the Hay barn. The ground floor part of the hay store was converted to a bungalow style building with the loft being made into an upstairs playroom. Offers were in the region of £98,500. It was at this time the name changed to 'the House on the Green'.

Today, this beautiful house sits quietly, at the top of the high street overlooking the green. Having been bought by Mr and Mrs Ford in 2015 it has since been sympathetically restored to it's former glory.

Jan Ellam

Linton Library News

Have you spotted some welcome signs of Spring yet? If you need help identifying flowers or anything in nature, we may have the book you need!

In the **National Year of Reading** (www.goallin.org.uk) we want to encourage everyone to get into reading. There's no better way to get little ones off to a flying start than with stories. Bring your children along to our free Rhythm & Rhyme, held regularly on a Tuesday morning. 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

Afternoon Films

The afternoon films in March will be shown on Fridays. This is because several people wanted to attend but had another booking—afternoon bowls in the Pavilion. So that it can be possible to run both groups it has been easy to change

the film day. The first March film on **Friday 13th** will be **Some Like It Hot**, with Marilyn Monroe: starting at **2.30pm**. The film to be shown on March 27th will be chosen by those at the 13th March showing. Hope to see you there.

Balsham Parish Council

The Parish Council Meeting took place on 16th February, 2026 in Balsham Pavilion

The next **Parish Council Meeting** will be held on **16th March, 2026** at **7.30 pm** in **Balsham Pavilion**

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND

Pump Track:

The PC discussed the location of a pump track and it was agreed that the lower recreation field would be more suitable than the allotment field. The Clerk and volunteers will work together to find whether planning permission is required and grants are available. If anyone would like to help with the project please contact the clerk.

Allotments:

There are 2 full sized plots and 1 half plot available. Please contact the PC for more details.

Planning:

Site address: 21 Princes Close, Balsham

Reference: 26/00374/HFUL

Proposal: Demolition of the existing garage and side annex. Part single storey and part two storey side and rear extensions with new front porch.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: Bramblegate, Church Lane, Balsham

Reference: 26/0121/TTCA

Proposal: G1 - Beech. Lapsed hedge - Crown lift over drive to a height of

5m. Provide 1m clearance around UKPN cables.

T1 - Laurel - Fell and remove, oversized for location.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: Long Thatch, Church Lane, Balsham

Reference: 26/0119/TTCA

Proposal: G1 - Thuja (approximately 3 stems). Low value over-grown hedge. Pollard at 2m to re-establish hedge.

G2 - Conifer (approximately 3 stems). Low value over-grown hedge. Pollard at 2m to re-establish hedge

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 18 Horseshoe Close, Balsham

Reference: 26/00260/HFUL

Proposal: Single storey rear/side extension, alterations to existing garage to include pitched roof and new door and alterations to fenestration to rear elevation.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 121 High St, Balsham

Reference: 26/0068/TTCA

Proposal: 6-7 trees (ash, field maple, birch) crown raise the trees overhanging Fox Road to 4.5-5m above ground level.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 108 High St, Balsham

Reference: 26/0022/TTCA

Proposal: Tree shown in photo 1-Remove tree to ground level as a new driveway is to be built where the gate is situated in photo 2. Cherry tree in photo 3 - Crown reduce by 1.5m to remove weight from tree and reduce overhang over driveway.

Cherry tree in photo 4 - Reduce height by 2 metres and reshape/ crown reduce tree to rebalance due to UK power removing one side of tree to clear power lines.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: 34-36 High St, Balsham

Reference: 26/00427/HFUL / 26/00428/LBC

Proposal: Single storey side and rear extensions, refurbishments, change to fenestrations and installation of stained timber cladding to the annexe building. Alterations to the garage, to include replacement of existing windows and reconfiguration of garage door.

PC Decision: No objections

Site address: Land Opposite 37 Fox Road , Balsham

Reference: 26/0153/TTPO

Proposal: TPO Fell: T7 (ash), T8 (ash), T9 (ash), T10 (elm), T11 (elm), T12 (elm), G13 (elm and ash) and G14 (elm, ash elder) and replacement of new trees.

PC Decision: No objections

Decisions:

Site address: 100 High St, Balsham

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

Proposal: Change of use from offices (Class E) to two four-bed dwelling houses (Class C3), together with the installation of two air source heat pumps, two carports with PV solar panels, new boundary treatment, alterations to fenestration, and associated alterations.

Application withdrawn

Site address: 9 Nine Chimneys Lane, Balsham

Reference: 25/04621/HFUL, 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.

Permission granted by SCDC

Highways:

The PC are contacting Highways to carry out more maintenance in School Lane.

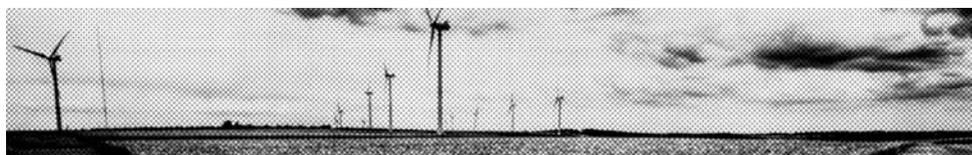
Tracy Coston

PARISH CLERK

Tel: 01223 894462 / 07929930385

Email: clerk@balsham.net

Website: www.balsham.net



District & County Councillor's Report

February 2026

Grange Farm

At the end of 2025, the District Council released their draft Local Plan – which is the development plan for the next 20 years and indicates the parcels of land in South Cambs & Cambridge City that they feel can accommodate housing and commercial development to feed the population and economic growth during this time.

They have been consulting on this, plus all of the other proposals in South Cambridgeshire, for the last few months and thank you to everyone that engaged with this. It's the most important time in the Local Plan process to have your say on what could be an enormous change in the landscape of our area. The District Council will now assess all of the feedback they have received and will come back with a final plan. More to follow.

Local Council Elections

The election for representatives to the District Council will still go ahead in May this year, as planned

Kingsway Solar

In early January Kingsway Solar announced that they were launching a 'targeted consultation' on some changes they are proposing to make to their plans, which were put into the public domain last year. These mainly

include the concentration of solar panels and battery storage into specific areas, which are away from heritage assets, such as the Roman Road and Weston Colville Church. The consultation closed on February 4th. If you are interested in looking at the changes, they can be seen on the Kingsway Solar website:

<https://kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk/consultation/>

Potholes

As I'm sure everyone is aware, pothole season is upon us. In most cases, potholes open up when the weather is wet and cold, as the water gets into the road, freezes and expands, opening up the road surface. This happens all over the country every year and is extremely annoying, especially for those that suffer damage as a result of hitting them.

The message from the County Council is to keep reporting all potholes you come across via the Highways department's website:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults>

If the hole is so large you think it's an immediate danger, then you can raise it as a Highways emergency. There is a specific phone number you can call, which is **0345 045**

5212 during office hours. <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults/report-a-highways-emergency> - the Police non-emergency number 101 can be used outside of these times.

It might not seem it to some, but the County Council are trying to tackle them the best they can and have allocated over £73 million for highways maintenance in 2025/26 and are planning an additional £20 million of investment in 2026/27. They have also upped the number

of crews they have repairing these holes from 8 to 30.

There is a good local news article on this, if anyone is interested - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/czej21gg817o>

Contact Information:

Geoff Harvey

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
geoff.harvey@gmail.com

Henry Batchelor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR
henrybatchelor89@gmail.com

Speeding Motorists

There is growing concern within the village about motorists speeding through our roads, often putting pedestrians, cyclists and other drivers at risk. While enforcement can feel beyond our control, there **is** something we can do as a community.

Balsham has an active **Community Speedwatch** team who meet once a month at various locations around the village. During these sessions, volunteers record the details of speeding vehicles, which are then passed on to Cambridgeshire Constabulary to follow up. Although Speedwatch volunteers do not issue fines, the presence of the team acts as a visible deterrent and helps raise awareness among drivers.

To ensure the scheme can continue

and become even more effective, we are looking for additional volunteers. The commitment is minimal — just one hour, two or three times per year — but the impact can be significant. With more volunteers, we can increase our presence, cover more locations, and help reinforce the message that speeding is not acceptable in our village.

If you would like to help make Balsham's roads safer and be part of a friendly, supportive team, please get in touch by emailing csw.balsham@gmail.com. Every extra pair of eyes makes a difference.

Debbie Paton

BALSHAM SPEEDWATCH COORDINATOR



Photo: Richard Pargeter

Balsham March Diary

DATE	EVENT & TIME	VENUE
Thursday 5th	Feast Future Meeting, 6pm	Black Bull
Friday 6th	World Day of Prayer, 11am	Church
Saturday 7th	Balsham Picture House The Ballad of Wallis Island 7.30pm	Institute
Tuesday 10th	WI, 7.30pm	Pavilion
Friday 13th	Afternoon Film, Some Like It Hot , 2pm	Institute
Sunday 15th	Mothering Sunday, 11am	Church
Monday 16th	Parish Council, 7.30pm	Pavilion
Tuesday 17th	Community Café, 10am-12pm	Institute
Tuesday 17th	Linton & District Historical Society, 7.30pm	Linton Village Hall
Friday 27th	Afternoon Film, film t.b.a. , 2pm	Institute

The Bell

Where's this year going already!

How is it already March? With spring approaching fast we can all live in hope that spring is just around the corner and the start of hopefully drier weather, so you can start making the most out of our beautiful beer garden.

Those of you that have been in may have observed that the slide and climbing frame have disappeared from the garden since I took over 6 months ago, this was due to them being in an unsafe condition. Rest assured though we do still have garden games available to keep the little ones (and big ones too!) entertained when the weather improves, whether its a game of skittles, giant jenga or giant Connect 4 you want to play we have you covered.

On **Monday 2nd March** we are expecting our monthly visit from **Pizzeria Gusto** who will be in our car park for you to enjoy from **5pm - 8pm**, feel free to pop in the pub and enjoy a drink while you wait or while you eat.

March also means **Mother's Day** is here, on the **15th** we will be serving roast dinners, as well as the rest of our menu from **12-6**. With it already set to be a busy one booking is highly recommended to save disappointment. You can do this by

calling us on **01223 669567** or searching 'The Bell Balsham' on Google and following the "find a table" link on our profile. All mums dining with us on the 15th will get their first drink **FREE** to sweeten the deal too!

Look forward to seeing you all soon.

Rich & the Team

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**

LINTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TUESDAY 17th MARCH 2026



THE WALTON FAMILY

**OUR SPEAKER TONIGHT WILL BE
CHARMIAN THOMPSON**

Step into the world of the Walton family — a saga woven with triumph and tragedy. From the battlefields of the Peninsular War to the distant outposts of the army in India, their journey spans continents and centuries. Inheritances shaped fortunes, while ties to slavery in Barbados cast shadows. At the heart of it all, stands a grand house in a quiet hamlet... and the crack of leather on willow. Howzat!

**LINTON VILLAGE HALL
COLES LANE - 7.30 p.m.**

Refreshments and Raffle

Visitors and new members always welcome

Unused Tools Wanted

April collection by Saffron Walden Rotary

As part of your spring cleaning, please donate unwanted tools of any kind to Saffron Walden Rotary, who are organising an April collection for **Tools With A Mission (TWAM)**, (<https://www.twam.uk>) a Christian charity that refurbishes tools into trade kits for people living in extreme poverty. These tools, combined with training, help individuals start sustainable businesses and build long-term livelihoods. Tools needed include those for: builders, carpenters, plumbers, power, electrical, mechanical, agriculture and gardening, sewing and knitting, haberdashery

Full collection details will appear in the April magazine. For more

information, contact **Tony Collett** at tony.collett3112@gmail.com or **01223 893447**.

Tony Collett



A few years ago at Balsham church we used to collect tools for TWAM which were then taken to a store base in Suffolk from where they were cleaned, repaired and made into sets before being sent to Eastern Europe.

It was a successful way of helping both those who needed tools and those who had to clear sheds etc.

Bin Collections March/April

DATE	BLACK	BLUE	GREEN
Wednesday March 4 TH			
Wednesday March 11 TH			
Wednesday March 18 TH			
Wednesday March 25 TH			
Wednesday April 1 ST			
Wednesday April 8 TH			



Balsham Weather January 2026

Temperatures (maximum & minimum) & Rainfall



10° on 18th January



0° on 5th January



0° on 13th January



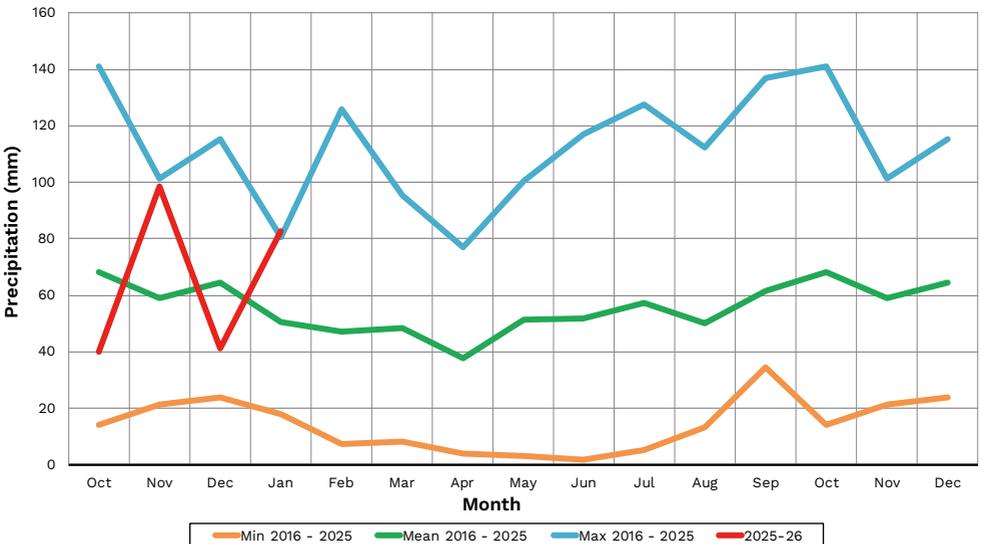
-6° on 7th January



Total rainfall: 82.55mm (3.23")



Rain fell on 22 days





Saturday March 7th

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

The Ballad of Wallis Island (12A)



Eccentric, widowed lottery winner Charles Heath (*Tim Key*) living alone on the remote Wallis island off the coast of Wales tries to make his fantasies come true by getting his favourite musicians to perform at his home. Musician, Herb McGwyer (*Tom Basden*) - half of former folk duo McGwyer Mortimer - arrives but is surprised by the arrival of Nell, the other duo member (*Carey Mulligan*) and new husband.

Charles is thrilled to have reunited the duo, but tensions flare and relations are complicated by Amanda a single mother who runs the island's only shop!

A must-see British comedy and winner of BAFTA awards.

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**