



BALSHAM *Review*

ISSUE No. 679

SICUT CANIS CUM OSSIS

APRIL 2026

Spring has sprung!



Originated by BEN8&C9 01223 890839 & printed by E&E Plumridge 01223 891407

Photo: Lesley Bennett



Ely Cathedral from Fox Road (Icknield Way) in direction of yellow arrow.

Map taken from Kingsway targeted consultation booklet, showing planned areas of solar panels in green and pale blue.



Photo: Larry Davies



Photo: Gill Watters

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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:

TUESDAY APRIL 21ST

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



Did I think summer was on its way, with the change in the clocks due, and some warm sunny weather? Well, I was wrong, after all it was only March, and winter hadn't finished, let alone spring! So here we are in April, and spring really should get going. Sleet yesterday, freezing wind today, but promises of warmer weather in prospect, so keep hoping. I don't want to have to buy more heating oil in the near future.

Having read the County Councillor's piece on page 26 about Cambridge Growth, I looked up the website and had a shock. The map shows that our area is included in the area for development and they are wanting to build 100,000 new houses. Please look as soon as possible, and even if we miss the first consultation date, there will be other opportunities to follow the plans and developments. They could well say no to houses but yes to solar, or find some other way to spoil our beautiful village and countryside.

One way to make our voices known is to be on our Parish Council. This year is an election year, and there will be a vote on Thursday, May 7th. There is a link to contact if you would like to stand, as part of the Parish Council report on page 24, but be quick as nominations close on Thursday 9th April at 4pm. As a councillor you are able to help the village by putting forward ideas, by deciding how to help villagers, or where money needs to be spent (or saved), and in general looking towards the future of the village. And of course, we need to attend the election on May 7th - remember to take photo identification.

Easter is almost here, and our gardens are full of spring flowers and blossoms. Hopefully we will have a settling of the world's troubles soon, and be able to enjoy the next months in peace around our beautiful countryside.

Gill Parry Brown

EDITOR, BALSHAM REVIEW

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/Lintoncornerstone

METHODIST: Haverhill Methodist Church, Camps Road

From the Church



Spring is a time when we can enjoy seeing new life appearing all around us. This Spring, however, has also seen conflict in the Middle East, amid scenes of destruction which have had a ripple effect around the globe, from political instability, fluctuating oil prices and the challenge of bringing home people stranded in places such as Dubai. As we witness these events, we are called to respond in our prayers for peace but perhaps also in committing ourselves anew to the vital work of being peace-makers where we can; in our families, neighbourhoods and places of work.

Spring is also a time when we prepare for and celebrate Easter. Our preparations include Palm Sunday, this year celebrated at a united service in Balsham in late March and featuring two local donkeys! At this service we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. Some had expected the Messiah to lead military resistance against the Romans. Jesus, however, proclaims the peaceable kingdom.

He enters Jerusalem on a donkey, a symbol of peace, and meets the violence of those who plot against him with his sacrifice on the cross.

We will celebrate Easter Day in each of our six churches, including lighting the Easter Fire at Weston Colville church at the beginning of the service there. Easter proclaims the power of God's saving love in the resurrection of Jesus. Easter also reminds us that the resurrection of the Lord is a beginning, not an end, an event which completely changes the landscape in which we live. The resurrection sets free the Holy Spirit who empowers us to forgive, to build communities of mutual trust and service, and to enter into a deeper relationship with God.

As we carry forward a vision of both suffering and hope, death and risen life, let us be encouraged to speak up for the peaceable Kingdom proclaimed by Jesus. We can put into practice both love for our neighbour and also, however difficult, love for our enemies. This is not an optional extra if we are to live in a world where peace prevails in our lives. In doing so, we may also experience something of the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, and share the good news of new life in Christ.

Revd Iain McColl

April Services	9:30am	11:00am	PM Services
5th <i>Easter Day</i>	Easter Day Holy Communion West Wratting <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> West Wickham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Weston Colville <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	Easter Day Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i> Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i> Little Abington <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>	
12th	Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion West Wratting <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i>	Morning Worship Balsham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion Great Abington <i>Revd Kathy Bishop</i> Café Church Hildersham <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	6.00pm Taizé service Weston Colville <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>
19th	Holy Communion West Wickham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall/</i> <i>Alastair France</i> Holy Communion West Wratting <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall/</i> <i>Alastair France</i> Holy Communion Little Abington <i>Revd Iain McColl</i>	6.00pm Taizé service Hildersham <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>
26th	Morning Worship West Wickham <i>Alistair Collen</i> Holy Communion Weston Colville <i>Revd Iain McColl/</i> <i>Steven Wheeler</i> Creative Church Abington Hub <i>Revd Hannah Threlfall</i>	Holy Communion Balsham <i>Revd Iain McColl/</i> <i>Steven Wheeler</i> 11.15am Holy Communion (BCP) Hildersham <i>Revd Michael Wilcockson</i>	6.00pm Evening Prayer Great Abington <i>Alistair Collen</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 Wrating.....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 Wrating.....2.00pm
	Last Hour, Little Abington.....2.00pm

Guided Walk of Balsham Wood

Robin Vestey has once again kindly offered a short guided walk (*about 1½ hours*) of **Balsham Wood** for Balsham villagers on **Tuesday 28th April at 2 pm**. Bear in mind that the ground is very rough, and is likely to be quite sticky, dependent on weather. Send an email to **pargeterlegal@gmail.com**, and I'll add you to the list and pass on details when I know them. However, there will be a limit of about 25 people, so first come first served. Dogs welcome, but must be on a lead.

There are lots of bluebells and oxlips in the wood, and other rare and interesting plants. We expect to have the **County Plant Recorder** with us, should you be really interested in this.

As mentioned last year, and explained on the walk, **Ash Dieback** is affecting Balsham Wood

particularly badly. With the approval of Natural England and the Forestry Commission, timber operations at Balsham Wood were undertaken during Summer 2025. Although the disease affects the entire woodland, two compartments were felled, with further felling planned in other areas of the woodland once these areas have successfully re-established. Ash was the dominant species in the felled areas, and most trees were found to be either declining or dead, limiting timber use largely to firewood or fuel wood.

A small number of individual oak trees were also felled to ensure good woodland management, while groups of oak were retained to preserve woodland structure. The woodland understorey was coppiced to allow regeneration in future years.

Richard Pargeter

Kingsway Solar Community Action



A well attended Community Walk in Weston Colville on 21st March

Thank you to everyone who came along to the Walk event in Weston Colville on **21 March**. This has helped the Parish Council Alliance (PCA) raise funds for the legal campaign. During the talk, the KSCA and PCA panel answered questions from the community about what lies ahead and where matters currently stand with the Kingsway Solar proposal. We had originally been led to believe by Kingsway Solar that the Development Consent Order (DCO) application would be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by the end of March, but this may now be delayed.

At the talk, residents were urged to register with the Planning Inspectorate to receive updates. This is the most important thing to do right now. Everyone who registers will be

notified once the application is submitted. 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, as this is the first opportunity for residents to communicate directly with the Planning Inspectorate. Parish councils, community groups and individuals then need to register as Interested Parties and tell the Planning Inspectorate what they think (‘submit relevant representations’). We will provide clear guidance on how to do this when the time comes, including workshops and templates. This should be less onerous than writing a full letter during the statutory

consultation, but there will only be 30 days to do it. We will be aiming to encourage over 1,000 people to register as Interested Parties.

To receive updates from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), register here: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010165>

We also 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 here: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/>

kingswaysolarcommunitylegalaction/

Stickers Now 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 here: <https://forms.gle/CwbTEc4UdStuKKx58>. We are reprinting these so please indicate your design preference.

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.

Join KSCA at:

<https://kingswaysolarcommunityaction.co.uk/how-to-join-us/>

Kathy Day

Balsham Good Neighbour Scheme

The next **BGNS Community Café** will be in the **Balsham Church Institute** on **Tuesday 14th April** from **10:00 to 12:00**.

Kate Rosevear from the **Alzheimer's Society** will join us from **11:00** and will be available to talk about issues relating to any kind of memory loss, whether it affects you directly or if you care for someone else who is affected by it. Everyone is welcome to come along for free cake and drinks.

If you are interested in taking advantage of a minibus trip to Haverhill to do some shopping at Sainsbury's, Tesco or Aldi, put your

name on the list in the Post Office. The trip costs **£5** each, leaving the Post Office at **11:00** on a **Wednesday** and you will be returned to your house with your shopping.

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

This month saw three members giving a presentation on the very different collections they have.

Firstly, we had a collection of World War 1 memorabilia including photos of village families, a nurse's skirt with a tiny waist and a brass button cleaning tool amongst other things.

The second collection was of Westerwald Stoneware Pottery which is named after the area in the Rhineland Palatinate in Germany where it was made. This pottery is a greyish colour with cobalt blue

decoration and shiny glaze and is used to make many household items. It has been produced from the 15th century to modern times. This collector

reported that she had to stop acquiring items due to space limitations, but preparing the talk had piqued her interest into acquiring more!

The final collection was Kimonos. We saw some different styles and were told that they had large sleeves for young girls whereas married women had shorter sleeves. Kimonos are worn by both sexes of all ages. We saw several

child size garments, including some propaganda kimonos from the wartime era, with the finale being a heavily decorated Wedding Kimono embroidered in silver and gold which was modelled by a member. This was followed by our annual meeting.

Save the Date

Balsham WI Autumn Fair, Saturday 3 October, 2026. 10am – 2pm at Balsham Church Institute. If you are interested in a stall at this event, please contact **Juliet Bevan** on g7rvs@hotmail.co.uk



Our next meeting will be on **14th April, 2026** when our Speaker will be from **Cambridgeshire Police** with a talk on **Fraud Prevention**.

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

Granta Medical Practices

Easter Bank Holiday Opening Hours

ALL PRACTICES

CLOSED ON

Friday 3rd April 2026

Monday 6th April 2026

Enhanced Access pre-bookable appointments will be available at:

Royston Health Centre

Saturday 4th April

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Prescription Ordering & Collection

Order on **Wednesday 1st April** →

Collect on **Tuesday 7th April**

Order on **Thursday 2nd April** →

Collect on **Wednesday 8th April**

While we are closed, contact

NHS 111 for urgent medical advice

For life-threatening emergencies, call **999**

Thank you and we wish you a lovely spring weekend.

Arthur Rank Hospice

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity is holding their first "**Fill a bag**" shopping event in April. Shoppers will have the opportunity to fill a pre-provided recyclable bag with pre-loved women's, men's and children's clothes for just £5.

The shopping event, taking place at the Hospice in **Shelford Bottom, CB22 3FB** will be open on the following dates and times:

Friday 24 April 3pm-6pm, Saturday 25 and Sunday 26, 10am-2pm, and will remain open while stocks last. Shoppers are advised to keep an eye on our social media channels for updates on stock levels.

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity supports people in Cambridgeshire living with an advanced serious illness or other life-limiting condition and those who need end-of-life care.

Our 'Outstanding' services support over 3,800 patients and their families annually helping people to make every moment count.

For more information about the event, please visit:

<https://www.arhc.org.uk/retail-sale>

Arthur Rank Fund Raising -

Have fun whilst supporting others:

Mission Mud, in Waterbeach on **Saturday 9 May**, is all about taking on messy obstacles together, cheering each other on and heading home with big smiles and stories to tell. Whether you're a seasoned mud runner or giving it a go for the first time, Mission Mud is open to everyone aged 7 years and over. Support patients and families at Arthur Rank Hospice Charity and sign up at **[arhc.org.uk/missionmud](https://www.arhc.org.uk/missionmud)**

Linton & District Historical Society

Join us for another popular evening on **Tuesday 21st April 7.30pm** at **Linton Village Hall, Coles Lane.**

Refreshments and Raffle on arrival

Our speaker will be **Phillip Stott** on what promises to be an interesting evening all about: ***The Darwin Family & Cambridge***

Report on March Meeting:

The Waltons of Haverhill

In 1865 grateful parishioners made a presentation to the Rev Roberts to mark 50 years serving the Haverhill community. Among the local dignitaries was Ellys Walton, his wife Mary and their two sons Bendyshe and Robert. **Charmian Thompson** from the **Haverhill History Group** had not come across

this prominent family before, and so began some interesting research, which she shared with our society. Using census records, newspaper articles and family portraits, it was apparent they were very much a military family. Their history of 'triumph and tragedy' could be traced to early settlements in America, Barbados and across to India. 'If walls could talk', no doubt the family home on the outskirts of Haverhill could reveal more. An interesting evening explaining how records can build up a family history.

For further details of the LDHS please Email: **ldhscamb@gmail.com**
Tel: **01223 893915** or **01223 678835**

Unwanted Tools for a Good Cause

April 25th collection by Saffron Walden Rotary

Unwanted tools of any kind are being collected on **April 25th** from **9.00 – 12.30pm** at Abington School by Saffron Walden Rotary and then delivered to the Ipswich charity **Tools With A Mission (TWAM)**– **<https://www.twam.uk>** The tools are refurbished and made into trade kits for people living in extreme poverty, mainly in African countries. The tools, combined with training, help individuals start sustainable businesses and build long-term livelihoods for themselves and their

families. Tools needed are agricultural, gardening, builders, carpenters, electrical, mechanical, plumbers, power, sewing and knitting and haberdashery.

In addition to helping individuals to completely transform their lives and communities the charity prevents over 200 tonnes of tools going to landfills annually. I hope we receive a similar level of wonderful support as we do for our collections for Ukraine.

The Meadow Primary School

It has been a busy and exciting time at The Meadow Primary School, with pupils enjoying a range of memorable learning experiences both in and out of the classroom.

Wonderful Women Workshop

Reception and Key Stage 1 children recently took part in a Wonderful Women workshop as part of their history learning. Throughout the term, children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have been exploring inspiring women from the past and learning about how their achievements helped shape the world. During the workshop, the children learned all about Mary Anning, the famous fossil hunter and palaeontologist. Through drama, storytelling and movement, the children discovered how Mary's passion for fossils led to important discoveries along the Jurassic Coast. It was a fantastic way for the children to bring history to life while learning about determination and curiosity.

A Lesson with Steve Backshall

In the same week, the children were also treated to a very special live lesson with wildlife presenter Steve Backshall. Linked to their topic work, he explored the polar regions, the animals that live there and the unique climate of these environments. The children loved hearing from the presenter of *Deadly 60*, asking questions and learning fascinating facts about some of the most extreme places on Earth. It was a

brilliant opportunity that sparked lots of curiosity and discussion

Platform Project 26

The Meadow Primary School also took part in the **Anglian Learning Platform Project 26**, where children from across the trust showcased their work at a special event. This year's theme was Belonging, and our pupils rose to the challenge, producing some beautiful and thoughtful pieces of artwork. It was wonderful to see their creativity on display alongside work from other schools.

Joining the Journey with Parents

Parents were invited into school to **'Join the Journey'** through a No Outsiders assembly and classroom workshop. Families experienced an assembly just as the children do, before spending time in class sharing a story from the scheme and completing activities together.

World Book Day

We also celebrated World Book Day with a creative twist this year, as children came to school dressed as a word. We had everything from fierce to dainty and athletic, and it was wonderful to see such imaginative interpretations. Pupils enjoyed sharing stories throughout the day and took part in whole-school activities based on the book ***Dave the Not-So-Brave*** by **Alex Latimer** and **Philip Cullen**.

Faye Facer

ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



Photo: Lesley Bennett



Photo: Lesley Bennett



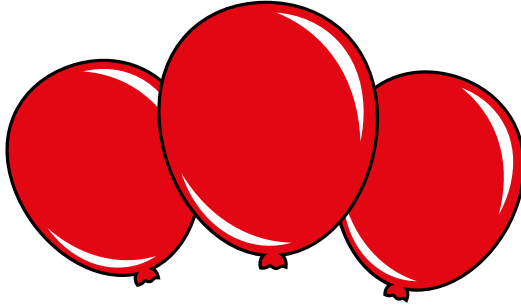
Photo: Richard Pargeter



Photo: Lesley Bennett

Big Balsham Sale

Sunday 17th May 2025, 9.00am – 2.00pm



Time for a good clear out and sell all those unwanted items, promote your business or raise funds for your local club

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

It only costs **£5** which includes advertising and a village map showing

the location of all participants so visitors and traders will know where to spend!!! You will also receive red balloons to fly so pinpointing your pitch to the buyers.

Full information with a booking form will be in the May issue of the Balsham Review.

Glynis Hanlon

Tel: 01223 890 219

Email: bigbalshamsale@gmail.com

Facebook: bigbalshamsale



Photo: Lesley Bennett

Linton Village College

Linton Village College celebrates prestigious Platinum Artsmark Award

Linton Village College is delighted to announce that we have been awarded the Platinum Artsmark Award, the highest recognition from Arts Council England. This national accolade celebrates schools that embed exceptional arts, cultural and creative learning across their curriculum, and we are proud to share this achievement with our local community.

Over the past two years, staff and students have worked together to develop an ambitious and enriching arts offer. Supported by Goldsmiths, University of London through an immersive professional development programme, we have strengthened creative teaching across the College and expanded opportunities for students to lead and participate in the arts.

Artsmark Assessors commended LVC's "strong, long term commitment to the transformative power of the

arts," noting the impact our work is having not only within the school but across the wider area. Highlights included our thriving student leadership programmes, growing cross curricular projects, and our successful arts and science partnership with the University of Cambridge. Cultural experiences such as the Drama and History visit to Audley End were also praised as examples of our rich offer.

We're extremely proud to have achieved the Artsmark Platinum Award. This recognition reflects the passion and creativity of our staff and the inclusive, enriching opportunities our students enjoy at LVC. The arts are central to our culture and educational experience.

We extend our congratulations to our students, whose enthusiasm and creativity have been instrumental in achieving this award.

Laura Heard

PR & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Email: lheard@lintonvc.org



Notices



BUTTERCUPS PRESCHOOL

EASTER EGG HUNT

FRIDAY 3RD APRIL
10:00-12:00

BALSHAM CHURCH INSTITUTE

Café, activities and scavenger hunt
Prize for every entry
KSI children and under

£5 per child



BALSHAM WI

Autumn Fair

Saturday 3rd October
10am - 2pm

- Craft Stalls • Homemade Cakes
- Preserves • Raffle

Refreshments & More!

Balsham Church Institute,
Church Lane, Balsham
CB21 4DS

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE ROYAL BALLET IN 75 MINUTES

An illustrated lecture by ballet and opera specialist Sarah Lenton



Holy Trinity Church, Hildersham, CB21 6BZ

Monday 27th April at 7.30pm

Tickets £12, including refreshments, from
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-royal-ballet-in-75-minutes-tickets-1983388271712?aff=oddtcreator>
or at the door
Contact: huncam2015@gmail.com



In support of the Friends of Holy Trinity, Hildersham
The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Trinity, Hildersham Registered Charity - 1153435



BALSHAM
Ride • Learn • Play
PUMP TRACK

BALSHAM VILLAGE PUMP TRACK

A new outdoor cycling space for the whole community

What is a Pump Track?	Why Balsham Needs One
A looping track with humps and turns for bikes, scooters, skateboards & balance bikes. Riders "pump" through the course —fun for all ages!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A safe place for children & teens to ride • Outdoor activity for all ages • A fun space for bikes, scooters & skateboards • A community asset for the whole village

WE'RE RAISING FUNDS TO BUILD IT!

- Donate to the project
- Attend village fundraising events
- Local businesses can sponsor
- Volunteer to help us succeed

Help us build something amazing for Balsham!

Donate to - <https://gofund.me/8ebb4f07>

For more information contact: clerk@balsham.net



Supported by: Balsham Parish Council • Local Volunteers • Community Fundraising

Balsham: A House Through Time



Park House, standing at the top of **Woodhall Lane**, first appears on an 1852 map as the property of Thomas Prince. It was originally a single storied 17th century building consisting of 2 rooms which are now known as the hall and dining room. The footprint of the house was substantially increased when a 2nd storey and extensions were added around 1850. The outbuildings were originally stables for six horses, a bothy and loose box. This property also included several acres of land known as the Park (*now the site of May's Avenue*).

John Prince (the elder) was a surgeon, this was also the profession of choice for sons John, Thomas, Frederick and grandson Charles who all became members of the Royal College of Surgeons. The Prince family was somewhat complicated as following the death of John Prince (the elder's) first wife Jane in 1809 he married Catherine Hagggar. Records show that he was involved with Catherine whilst his first wife was alive having fathered two illegitimate children, Thomas and Frederick. Understandably this led to animosity between John (the

younger) and his stepbrothers. It didn't help that they both lived within the large area of parkland, one at each end. Rumour has it that John commissioned the building of high red brick wall around the grounds so that he did not have to '*look upon the family as they went about their business*'.

In the 1861 census Thomas Prince is recorded as living at Park house with wife Ann and their six children. His occupation 'Registrar of Births and Deaths, Surgeon MRCS, Farmer of 60 acres, employing 3 men and 1 boy. The Registrar's office was situated in one of the outbuildings backing onto Woodhall Lane. By 1881, Thomas Prince, age 71 and a widower had retired to Dorking, Sussex

The Prince family were affluent and prominent landowners in Balsham, as can be evidenced by the naming of Princes Close, Dolls Close (*after Christian Tyler Doll, Trustee of the Prince family*) and of course the Prince Memorial. Built in 1932 it was commissioned by Anne Ellen Prince as a memorial to her brother William Alfred Prince. Anne stated it was to be used as a resting place for the aged. William and his sister are the children of Thomas Prince and of the last generation, neither of whom married

In 1881 Doctor Robert Turner Head, Registrar of Births and Deaths, Physician and Surgeon MRCP, originally from East Grinstead, Surrey was established at Park House with

wife Emma, eight children and six servants. Mrs Head was said to have been a regular sight driving her pony and tub around the village. She was also described as a starchy old lady and difficult to please. This is according to Rose Lingham, a then 14 year old servant who was dismissed, without reference, for the crime of talking to a young stable lad. Unfortunately, during their time in Balsham, the Head's lost two sons to hostile action in war. Sergeant Brian Morrison Head, third son of Robert and Emma, volunteered for service in the Kitchener's Horse during the second Anglo Boer War and was killed in action on 13th December 1900. He is buried at Krugersdorp. Their youngest son, Captain Raymond Evelyn Head died in November 1918 after being wounded on three previous occasions. He was awarded the Military Cross and bar for *'conspicuous gallantry and leadership'*. Both men have a memorial brass plaque in the Holy Trinity Church.

Park House Hospital - The VAD detachment was registered on June 25th 1913 with Park House as a second section. The first having been established in the Green House. The hospital opened for patients December 3rd 1915 with 20 beds. Mrs Goodchild from Woodhall Farm was Commandant in charge with 17 nurses and 12 helpers. A lean-to dining room was built on to the rear of the house. For entertainment the Rector, H J Burrell, kindly lent a piano and billiard table.

The Deanery magazine reported at the time *'Balsham air and the nursing of the VAD are doing wonders for the soldiers in our hospital. The patients seem very happy and enter with great zest into all available amusements. They were even able to raise a cricket team and, with a little assistance, played a very creditable drawn game with West Wrattling Park'*

In 1921 Thomas Ernest Saunt, his second wife Alice May and son Thomas were the new occupants of Park House. Previously a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corp in WW1. The 1921 census records Thomas as 'Head of house, age 61, occupation given as *'Gentleman, retired from Medical profession and retired Barrister'*. Captain Saunt was part of the village War Memorial Committee and was also instrumental in forming the Balsham branch of the British Legion. He died in 1937 after which wife Alice and son left the village.

Raymont Patrick Thomas Ffrench, and his wife Dorothy arrived at Park House in 1938. Born in Bangalore, India. Raymont married Dorothy in Alexandria in 1920. Both were well travelled before settling in Balsham for the duration of the second world war. According to the village War Register 1939 Raymont's previous occupation was recorded as *'Lieutenant Colonel, Officer, Indian Army'*. He spent WW2 as Assistant Commander RAF VR before moving away in 1945.

In 1946 Dr Stanley Collin Aston, Dean of St Catherine's College and wife

Rosalind acquired Park House.

Whilst living in Balsham Dr Aston was also chairman of Cambridge Army Cadet Force whose Balsham Platoon Headquarters were housed in a large shed in the Park House garden. It's remembered that Dr Aston arranged some enjoyable cricket matches between St Catherine's and Balsham

In the early 1950's Edward Parkes and his wife Marjory bought Park House for the sum of £3500.

In a 2009 edition of the *Balsham Review* the now Sir Edwards Parkes tells us that the Agents description of the house boasted that it was 'within easy reach of three hunting packs, stabling for the three horses, loosebox and groom's room. It didn't get round to mentioning the actual property until page 3.

The Parkes arrived in Balsham around the same time as electricity. He writes about having rats in the garden, bats in the roof and drunken cows in the adjoining field after imbibing rotten apples. He also refers to the Ploughmen visiting on Plough Monday (*some things don't change*). Their two children were born whilst at Park House.

In the early 1960's the parkland, although no longer owned by Park House, was sold for the development of Mays Avenue. This involved the demolition of Doctors Row (a row of small cottages), filling in the ponds and removal of trees, including a mature Tulip tree. It also meant the high brick wall had to go although

there are still two original spans either side of Park Cottage. However, the removal of the wall did make Balsham high street a much safer place for vehicles. It was at this time the orchard on the opposite side of the lane was sold for the sum of £500 as a building site (now 1 and 3 Woodhall Lane). Later, during 1970's, more land along Woodhall Lane was released for the building of Balsham House.

However, the beautiful Park House and surrounding gardens were left untouched by any development.

Richard & Sara Himsworth, together with their three children moved from Scotland to Balsham in 1993 following Richard's appointment as Professor of Health Research and Development. They involved themselves in village life and worked hard to maintain the traditional English garden around Park House. This garden was opened for various fundraising events, especially Sara's pet charity: the MacMillan Nurses. Richard died in 2020, with Sara moving away not long afterwards.

Many of the owners of Park House have been medical or Cambridge academics, as is the case today. Adam and Fionnuala Stearns, the latest owners, together with their two young sons, continue the surgical tradition. Like John Prince both are Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Jan Ellam

Allotment & Community Orchard News

Dog walkers may have noticed recent activity on the **Community Orchard**, where members of the Allotment Working Group have been clearing around the remaining trees and applying fertiliser and mulch. **Mark Chennells** has kindly offered to keep the grass around the trees mown to reduce competition and the contractor has been asked to mow the whole area three times a year. It is hoped that this will enable the remaining trees to prosper.

At a recent meeting of the Allotment Working Group it was decided to ask allotment holders to donate spare plants for a **Plant Sale on 2nd May**. Money raised from sales will be used to replace some of the missing trees next winter. If any Balsham Review readers have spare plants they are willing to donate please email **balshamallotments@balsham.net** for details of when and where to deliver your donations and remember to come and stock up on **2nd May**.

Now that the weather has improved a working party will be progressing work on Wally's Triangle, the area at the east end of the Hawthorns allotments that Wally Scotland used

to maintain. It is planned to make this into a community amenity area with wild flower borders and a picnic table. Work has already been done to trim the trees and a dead hedge has been constructed with the cuttings, providing shelter for wildlife. Any volunteers would be most welcome, and can get in touch via:

balshamallotments@balsham.net

A grant has been received towards providing 2 water taps at the Princes Close allotment site. We hope to have these in place soon.

Sadly we have a number of vacant allotments at the moment. It is the ideal time now to make a start on growing your own, get some exercise and fresh air. Our allotment holders have lots of experience that they are willing to share with new growers. We plan to try to keep the vacant allotments tidy over the summer but it would be much better if they were producing fruit and veg.

If you are interested please email the above address to arrange a viewing.

Finally a **Picnic** for allotment holders is planned for **6th September** so please save the date.

Linton Library News

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter. We will be doing some **Easter Crafts** for children on **Saturday 4th, 10.30 - 11.30 am**.

We will be closed on Friday 3rd April

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 17th**, 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

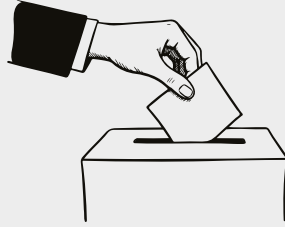
(regular office hours): **0345 045 5225**
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

Balsham April/May Diary

DATE	EVENT & TIME	VENUE
Saturday 4th	Balsham Picture House The Choral 7.30pm	Institute
Friday 10th	Bowls Club Bingo Night, 7pm	Pavilion
Tuesday 14th	Community Café, + Memory Loss talk 10-12	Institute
Tuesday 14th	WI, 7.30pm	Pavilion
Monday 20th	Parish Council, 7.30pm	Pavilion
Tuesday 21st	Linton & District Historical Society, 7.30pm	Linton Village Hall
Saturday 25th	Unwanted Tools collection 9am -12.30pm	Abington
Tuesday 28th	Balsham Wood Walk, 2pm	Balsham Wood
MAY		
Saturday 2nd	Allotment plant sale	Allotments
Thursday 7th	Parish Council Election	Institute
Saturday 16th	Balsham Singers' concert, 7,30pm	Church

Balsham Parish Council

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



Parish Council Elections – 7th May

Elections for Balsham PC take place on 7th May.

If anyone would like to stand for the PC please contact me for a form or follow this link:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-parish-council-elections-england/nominations/completing-your-nomination-papers/nomination-form>.

The next **Parish Council Meeting** will be held on **20th April, 2026** at **7.30 pm** in **Balsham Pavilion**

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND

Highways/Speed Watch:

There have been lots of complaints about speeding vehicles in Balsham. If you would like to make a difference please consider joining the **Balsham Speedwatch Team**. They only go out once a month due to the lack of volunteers. Please contact Debbie Paton at **debbie@paton-clan.net**.

Highways:

The PC discussed some traffic calming measures with the members of the public and agreed to speak to Henry Batchelor and Highways to assess what measures would be suitable in Balsham and what

funding is available through the Local Highways Improvement (LHI) Scheme.

Allotments:

There are 3 full sized plots and 7 half plots available. Please contact the PC for more details.

Housing Needs Survey:

The PC agreed to organise a Housing Needs Survey for all residents. A representative from Cambridgeshire Acre will hopefully attend the next meeting to discuss with the PC.

Planning:

Site address: Holy Trinity Church, Balsham

Reference: 26/0213/TTCA

Proposal: Ash Tree - Fell and base ground out.

Reason – dying/decayed ash tree stump (height 7ft, girth 5ft) 3 ft

from public footpath

PC Comments: Approve

Site address: 11A West Wrattling Rd,
Balsham

Reference: 26/0149/TTCA

Proposal: Birch Tree x 4 - Crown
reduction up to 3m, and thinning out
of crossing branches

PC Comments: Approve

Decisions:

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.

Application withdrawn

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.

Approval given by SCDC

Site address: 108 High St, Balsham

Reference: 26/0022/TTCA

Proposal: Remove tree to ground
level as a new driveway is to be built
where gate is situated .

Approval given by SCDC

Site address: 3 Anvil Close, Balsham

Reference: 25/04952/HFUL

Proposal: Single storey rear extension.

Approval given by SCDC

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.

Approval given by SCDC

Site address: 1 School Lane, Balsham

Reference: 25/05058/

Proposal: Retrospective change of
use of existing Highways verge to
residential curtilage.

Approval given by SCDC

Tracy Coston

PARISH CLERK

Tel: 01223 894462 / 07929930385

Email: clerk@balsham.net

Website: www.balsham.net

Balsham Singers

Balsham Singers **Spring Concert**
featuring music by Wood, Parry, The
Beatles and The Carpenters,
amongst others will be held on
Saturday 16th May at 7.30pm in
Holy Trinity Church, Balsham.

Tickets are £12 (£1 under 16's) and
will be available from 1st April from
Balsham Post Office, choir members

and online at

**www.ticketsource.co.uk/
balshamsingers**

We always so happy to welcome
such a lovely audience, hope we'll
see you there again.

Jo Stinton

District & County Councillor's Report

March 2026

Cambridge Growth Company

You may recall from previous reports that the government have identified Cambridge as an area they see prime for growth, due to the boom of the science and tech sector in the Greater Cambridge area. The numbers of additional houses that the government think would be sufficient to support this economic growth is still uncertain, with numbers around the 100,000 mark being mooted, although still unconfirmed.

To manage this growth, and to identify areas to build these new houses, the government have set up a development corporation (DevCo) called the Cambridge Growth Company. A lot of the detail of how this will be set up is still unclear, but from correspondence with the relevant government minister, it would seem that this DevCo would ultimately take planning powers away from the local authorities for the larger 'strategic sites'. The point has been made that to disrupt one of the highest achieving planning services in the country could be hugely damaging to the local landscape. This point may have fallen on deaf ears, but we will see.

This does leave some uncertainty over where new developments could be located, as the additional housing would be on top of what the District Council is already

planning, such as Grange Farm in Abington for example.

There is currently a live public consultation on the Development Corporation, and specifically the size of development that would constitute a 'strategic site'. Our opinion is the higher the better, so as much control over planning decisions remains with the local councils. You can see the consultation here, please do engage with it!

– <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/establishing-a-development-corporation-in-greater-cambridge> - it closes on **April 1st** (*April Fool's Day...*)

Council Budgets

Both the District and County councils held their budget meetings in February where they set their budgets for the forthcoming financial year.

Both authorities opted to increase the council tax by the maximum allowed – 4.99% at the County Council and 2.99% per year at the District Council. In real terms, this equates to the following increase per week on a band D property:

County Council - £1.63 per week

District Council - 10p per week

There are other bodies which demand council tax too, such as the Combined Authority, Police & Crime Commissioner etc, and these will also have increased and should be seen on our itemised council tax bills.

Local Government Reorganisation

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

Forest City

We have previously reported on the 'Forest City' idea that is being banded around the media by the proponents. For those that aren't aware, 2 'entrepreneurs' are promoting an idea of building a new eco-city between Haverhill and Newmarket which could take 1 million people. It's very much in its infancy and doesn't carry any kind of planning merit at this stage. The government aren't looking at it at all and the proposers of this scheme have no

background in development or sustainability. They are currently trying to get enough high-level support from MPs and business leaders to warrant putting the scheme to central government for consideration, but currently it is simply an idea.

Contact Information:

Geoff Harvey

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
geoff.harvey@gmail.com

Henry Batchelor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR
henrybatchelor89@gmail.com

Balsham Bowls Club

The new season is getting nearer and will start in late April and typically run through to late August.

We have teams in the Cambridge and District League, and in the Steeple Bumpstead Triples A and B and Pairs A and B. Weather permitting, each Monday from early May will be for roll-up practice from 6pm.

Open Day

If you are interested in the chance to join the Club, we have planned an **Open Day** on **Saturday May 9th 2026** from **1pm to 5pm** with refreshments. Equipment will be provided and all you need to bring are flat soled shoes. We welcome all ages from 10-90+. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Membership Information

Membership is renewed annually

from April 1st. Members pay an annual subscription according to the class of membership they hold. You can join as a Paying Member to participate fully in the Club or as an Associate Member at reduced rates. If you want more information or help, nearer the day, please contact our website:

balshambowlsclub.co.uk or
Phil Elliott on **07709 660 902**.

We have another **Bingo social event** planned for **Friday April 10th**.

Tickets and information will soon be available at the Café and Post Office, plus posters to be distributed in the village for more information as well. Doors will be open at **6.45pm**.

Bob Stigwood

The Bell

Hi all! Spring has sprung, the weather is trying to pretend it's summer at times, which means it's beer garden weather! But bring a coat because when the sun goes down you might get frostbite. Hopefully the early Easter weekend doesn't mean a colder than usual one and we can all enjoy being outside a lot more again. For us the long weekend means business as usual, we'll be open until 11pm every night with the chef cooking until 9pm Tuesday-Saturday and until 6 on Sunday.

This month we are introducing a couple of changes to the norm. Firstly, rather than just hosting a monthly lunch club as we have been welcoming, we'll now be offering an **over 65's discount Tuesdays-Fridays 12-3pm** where we will be offering **20% off everything from our Classics and Burger section** of the menu, this will be starting **Tuesday 7th April**. We will continue to have a special lunch club menu for Easter and Christmas, generously funded by the Ploughmen, but now you can enjoy the benefits of a

discounted lunch more than just once a month. So we look forward to seeing you for it - would definitely recommend booking though as we only have a small dining area.

The second thing we are introducing this month from **Friday 17th April** we will offering everyone **Chippy Classics** with a Fry-Day night takeaway. With beer-battered cod, scampi and fishcake on the menu, as well as offering sides of mushy peas and battered sausage, we hope we can offer the village a Friday night takeaway option that doesn't come with all the extra delivery cost and service charges. Simply either come in to order and have a drink while you wait or call us on **01223 669567** and we'll give you a rough collection time so you won't have to hang about. This service will be available **4pm-9pm** (*last orders will be taken by 8:45*) every Friday from the **17th April**.

As always look forward to seeing you all in the pub, and the garden (weather permitting) soon.

Rich & the Team



The Black Bull



Happy April to Balsham all from The Black Bull!

Thank you to those who joined us last month – whether for **Mothers' Day**, our second **Friendly Friday Happy Hour**, a **Half-price Fish & Chips Wednesday**, a **Thursday Coffee Morning**, or just some other random visit.

Events Ahead:

Our Next Friendly Friday Happy Hour – Friday 10th April 6-7pm

We had another great turn out for our first Friendly Friday in March.

These are now set for every second Friday of the month.

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, 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**.

We have Rob's next **Five Spring Moments Tasting Menu** dates lined up – he will be running his special

menu on **Thursday 16, Friday 17** and **Saturday 18 April** (alongside his new Spring menus). Please book ahead and we do ask that the whole table go for the same menu – Tasting or Spring.

We will have an optional paired flight of wines for those who would like the full experience.

Easter Bank Holiday Weekend is also upon us – **Friday 3rd** through to **Monday 6th April**. We will be open for the whole weekend except Sunday night and Monday night. Please book ahead as it will get busy.

Half Price Fish & Chips Wednesdays

Every Wednesday we are offering half price fish & chips @ **£9.50** when booked in advance. Just ring us up or book a table through the website mentioning this local offer.

Earlier Food Offering @ 5:30pm

We are now serving food from 5:30pm Thursday to Saturday (*still from 6pm Tuesday, Wednesday*).

Do Catch us on Facebook (**blackbullbalsham**) or Instagram (**blackbullbalsham**) Becky has been capturing Rob's magic on reels – they really do justice to his talent. You will also always be up to date with latest events and offers.

Best wishes from all of us

Alex, Rob, Liz, Luke & the teams

info@blackbull-balsham.co.uk

West Wickham & District Gardening Club

Welcoming the Spring

With preparations for our **Spring Plant Sale** on **Saturday 16th May** by our supportive members and friends, our photography team are on hand to offer a welcome distraction...

The early spring has given some lovely opportunities for photos and it feels like a good time for a reminder of the Club's **Annual Photo**

Competition. It's open to everyone living in the area and their families, with a closing date of **1st**

September. All entries will be displayed at our **Summer Gardening Fair** on **Saturday 12th September**.

We're aiming to be inclusive – a phone and an eye for the opportunity are all it needs.

This year's categories are **Along the Path, Lovely Leaves** and **Sky's the Limit**, all open to interpretation when you're out and about, on holiday or in your garden.

Photos must have been taken after 1st October 2025, up to two entries per category, and 50p per entry.

The email address for entries and questions is:

photo@westwickham.org.

And finally, this month's talk is one we are sure you won't want to miss!

Monday 20th April at 7:30pm, Hawk Honey, a fascinating returning speaker, will be telling us all about wasps and their role in our gardens.










Membership is **£8** with new members welcome to join throughout the year.

For further information about the club please contact Sally Collins at **wwdgc@westwickham.org**.

For information about our **Plant Heritage** and **RHS membership** benefits please contact Janet Morris **jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com**.

Sally Collins

Bin Collections April/May

DATE	BLACK	BLUE	GREEN
Wednesday April 1 ST			
Wednesday April 8 TH			
Wednesday April 15 TH			
Wednesday April 22 ND			
Wednesday April 29 TH			
Wednesday May 6 TH			

Balsham Weather February 2026



Photo: Gill Watters

Temperatures (maximum & minimum) & Rainfall



12° on 11th February



6° on 15th February



10° on 22nd February



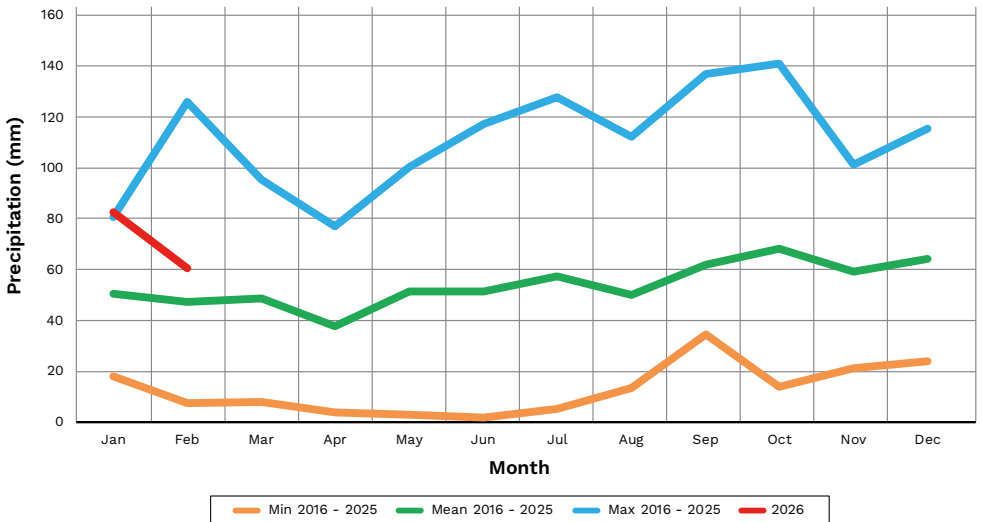
3° on 4th February

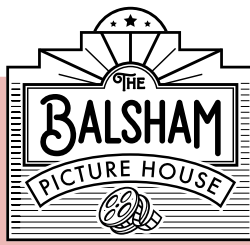


Total rainfall: 60.5mm (2.68")



Rain fell on 20 days





Saturday April 4th

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

The Choral (12A)



Written by Alan Bennett this is a moving story set in a small Lancashire town in WW1 starring Ralph Fiennes as the charismatic choirmaster, Dr Guthrie.

A choral society's male members enlist in World War I, leaving the demanding Dr. Guthrie to recruit teenagers. Together, they experience the joy of singing while the young boys grapple with their impending conscription into the army.

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***