The Messenger



Issue 151
August
2024

Serving Gislingham, Mellis and the Thornhams

WINNER
NATIONAL
PARISH
MAGAZINE
AWARDS

THE MESSENGER TEAM



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News and features from the Messenger are added every month to the Messenger website **www.the-messenger-online.com**

Next issue: September 2024
Copy deadline: Monday 19th August

E-mailed or hand-written submissions always welcome. The editor reserves the right to edit, amend or omit submitted items at his discretion.

You can find the Messenger Facebook page at:
https://www.facebook.com/themessengergismeltho

The Messenger pages are printed on paper that is part of the Woodland Trust Carbon Capture scheme and the covers on paper that is part of the World Land Trust Carbon Offset scheme.

Disclaimer: The articles published herein do not necessarily represent the views of The Messenger. They are the opinions of individual contributors and are published with a view that free expression promotes discussion and interests.

WELCOME TO THE MESSENGER



EDITOR'S NOTES – August 2024

Welcome to the August issue!

Despite some torrential rain in the morning, July 6th July saw the return of the Gislingham Summer Fair, for the first time in 5 years! All things considered, there was great support from the community and I think it is fair to say, "fun was had by all!". In fact, it went so well, we have devoted four pages of colour photos to this event.

In addition, the Diss Express sent a photographer to cover the event and featured it in their newspaper the following week. Six of their photos can be seen online at: www.dissexpress.co.uk/news/picture-gallery-all-the-fun-of-the-village-fair-back-after-9374592/

This issue, also brings an update from the 'Six Bells Community Group' on page 10. I am delighted that Mr. Whatling (the current owner of the Six Bells) has contacted us (see page 11) to provide comprehensive details on his plans for the Six Bells going forward. As a result, we now have information from both parties. However, as a Gislingham resident, I am shocked and appalled at some of the social media vitriol I have seen that is aimed at a couple with a young child. Quite rightly, the distasteful and threatening comments, which even mention arson, have been reported to the police and, in my opinion, and regardless of people's views regarding the future of the pub, a line has been crossed.

As Editor of this magazine, I feel it is important that I remain impartial on the original issue of whether the Six Bells should remain as a public house, but I feel I can't remain silent on the issue of online abuse.

Whilst I am unable to control what people post on social media in general; I can, whilst I am the Editor, control the content of this magazine. Therefore, moving forward, I will not allow this magazine to be used as a "tit for tat" between the Six Bells Community Group and the current owner of the Six Bells. I say this in case the content on pages 10 & 11 sparks retaliatory comments by either party. I will, however, continue to consider factual updates from either party, which I obviously reserve the right to edit as I see fit.

Finally, I would like to thank Stephen Schwarz, who has just retired from his role as 'Thornham Correspondent' on the magazine. Stephen joined the Messenger committee over 10 years ago, and has always been a valuable source of knowledge and information on The Thornhams, etc. I would also like to welcome Kate Fogg to the Messenger team, who will be taking over from Stephen.

Until next month!



Jeff Norman, Editor e) themessengereditorial@gmail.com

Cover photo: Taken at Gislingham Summer Fair, 2024

DIARY & LOCAL EVENTS



Friday 2nd August: Pub Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: 5.00pm – 10.00pm

Saturday 3rd August: Book Sale
- Gislingham Village Hall: 10.00am – 12 noon

Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th August: NGS Open Gardens in Gislingham
- 11.00am – 4.30pm – see page 12 for details

Tuesday 6th August: Rural Coffee Caravan
- Mellis Memorial Hall: 10.00am – 12.00 mid-day

Friday 16th August: Pub Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: 5.00pm – 10.00pm

Saturday 10th August: Quiz Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: 7.00pm

Saturday 10th August: Musical Evening with Tyger + BBQ
- Thornhams Village Hall: 7.30pm – 11.00pm. See page 14 for details

Saturday 17th August: Flowers with Jennifer at Frogs Farm
- Frogs Farm: 2.00pm

Wednesday 21 August 2024: Gislingham WI - speaker Mary Newton: 'Blood, Sweat and Fears' - an insight into the life of a Forensic Biologist. Open Meeting
- guests £4 on the door.
- Gislingham Village Hall: 7.30pm

Friday 23rd August: Grease sing-a-long evening
- Thornhams Village Hall: 7.00pm. See page 21 for details.

Saturday 24th August: Monday 24th August: Annual Flower Festival
- St. Mary's Church, Gislingham: 10.00am – 4.00pm. See page 39 for details.

SAVE THE DATES:
- **Saturday 14th September:** Gislingham Gardening, Arts & Produce Show

Please note, any event changes after the magazine goes to print are updated on our website at:

http://www.the-messenger-online.com/diary

Events and Club meetings etc., for inclusion in future issues should be sent to: themessengereditorial@gmail.com

Our next issue is September 2024. The "What's On" Diary deadline is: Mon. 19 August

CLUBS, CLASSES & REGULAR EVENTS

parkrun: Thornham Walks
Every Saturday at 9.00am. 5k. www.parkrun.org.uk/thornhamwalks/

Baby and Tots Group for the Under 2's: Gislingham Primary School.
Every Wednesday 9.45am – 11.00am. Contact Debbie Nicholls: 07931 665 205

Carpet Bowls Club: Gislingham Village Hall. Every Monday 2.15pm to 4.15pm. £3.00 per session. All equipment provided.

Pilates Classes: Gislingham Village Hall.
Wednesdays 9.15am and 10.15am and also Thursdays 7.10pm
Becky Cruickshank: 07734 414151

Total Fitness: Gislingham Village Hall. Every Thursday 6.15pm - 7.00pm
A cardio fitness class that can be adapted to all abilities.
Becky Cruickshank: 07734 414151

Yoga Classes: Gislingham Village Hall. Tuesdays 7.00pm - 8.30pm
Contact Clare Hall on 07704 570877 or email: thornhamyoga@yahoo.com

Pilates Classes: Thornham Parish Hall
Tuesdays 10.00am - Pilates Seated & Standing (no floorwork)
Wednesdays 11.15am Every Body Pilates (general & all levels)
Contact: Michelle via email hello@yapl.co.uk

Circuit Training Fitness Class: Mellis Memorial Hall. Mondays 7.30pm – 8.30pm
Gus: 07540 473203 / anguswilkinson@btinternet.com

Thornham Bowls Club: Thornham Road, Thornham
New Members welcome. For more details contact Keith: 01379 871881

Gislingham WI: Gislingham Village Hall.
Meet the third Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm.
New members welcome.
For more details contact Margaret: 01379 783903 or Terrie: 01379 788521.

Mellis Canicross: Mellis Memorial Hall.
Meet Saturdays 7.30 am Autumn/Winter; 7.00am Spring/Sumner
Jog with your dog. Check out our Facebook page for updates.
Contact Lorraine on 07913 183534

Gislingham Silver Band: Gislingham Band Hut. Tuesdays 7.30pm - 9.30pm
Contact Iris Debock: 01379 788066 or debock.iris@gmail.com

Bellringing: Thornham Magna Church.
Mondays 7.30pm – 9.00pm. For details contact Sylvie: 01379 788130

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GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL NOTES



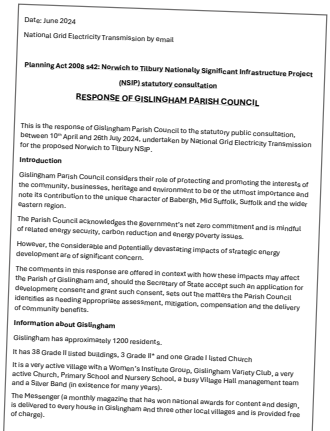
Agendas and Minutes from Parish Council Meetings can be found on the Parish Council Website. These minutes are also affixed to the Parish Council Noticeboard located outside the village shop.

The first point of contact for any matters relating to the Parish Council, is the Parish Clerk via email: **clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.com/Tel: 07833-705915.**

Councillors would encourage all residents to look on The Gislingham Parish Council website at http://gislinghamparishcouncil.com in order to keep up to date on items which are discussed at meetings by Councillors. At these meetings there is time set aside for the public to voice any concerns they may have in the village .

With regret, due to sickness, I have been forced to take a bit of a back seat for the past few weeks, and my recovery will continue until August. My colleagues on the Parish Council will continue to address matters as they arise and, together, will be looking at future possibilities/opportunities for the betterment of this village and its residents.

With regard to the proposed pylons, both I and, more recently, my Vice Chair Councillor, Jo Pitt, have been working tirelessly, in conjunction with District and County Councils and local focus groups, to try and ensure that, together, our views make the maximum impact on behalf of residents. We are confident that a positive solution is achievable that will not have the negative effects on our village and surrounding landscape/wildlife that are currently being proposed.



Date: June 2024

National Grid Electricity Transmission by email

Planning Act 2008 s42: Norwich to Tilbury Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) statutory consultation

RESPONSE OF GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

This is the response of Gislingham Parish Council to the statutory public consultation, between 10th April and 26th July 2024, undertaken by National Grid Electricity Transmission for the proposed Norwich to Tilbury NSIP.

Introduction

Gislingham Parish Council considers their role of protecting and promoting the interests of the community, businesses, heritage and environment to be of the utmost importance and note its contribution to the unique character of Babergh, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk and the wider Eastern region.

The Parish Council acknowledges the Government's net zero commitment and is mindful of related energy security, carbon reduction and energy poverty issues.

However, the considerable and potentially devastating impacts of strategic energy development are of significant concern.

The comments in this response are offered in context with how these impacts may affect the Parish of Gislingham and, should the Secretary of State accept such an application for development consent and grant such consent, sets out the matters the Parish Council identifies as needing appropriate assessment, mitigation, compensation and the delivery of community benefits.

Information about Gislingham

Gislingham has approximately 1200 residents.

It has 38 Grade II listed buildings, 3 Grade II* and one Grade I listed Church

It is a very active village with a Women's Institute Group, Gislingham Variety Club, a very active Church, Primary School and Nursery School, a busy Village Hall management team and a Silver Band (in exitence for many years).

The Messenger (a monthly magazine that has won national awards for content and design, is delivered to every house in Gislingham and three other local villages and is provided free of charge).

1

Our comprehensive response, that was submitted after taking into account all of the information available to us and taking on board all of the comments from residents, is available to view on the Parish Council website at **https://gislinghamparishcouncil.com/**

We have recently introduced additional traffic calming measures to the village, part-funded by the District Council, for which we are most grateful.

By the time that this goes to print we hope residents will have had the opportunity to enjoy the Summer Fair and will be looking forward to the Annual Gislingham Flower Festival at St Mary's church - August Bank Holiday 24th to 26th – which promises to be a 'Bloomin' good display'. This will be followed by the Gislingham Gardening, Arts and Produce Show on 14th September in the Village Hall, the results of nature, skill and enthusiasm. Patience working in harmony.

We do anticipate further potential new councillor additions at our August meeting, but may still have further vacancies available going forward, so if you feel that becoming a Parish Councillor is something that you would like to do, please contact our clerk and we can discuss options and give you a greater insight as to what is involved.

Christopher Tranter, Chair, Gislingham Parish council

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DON'T MESS ON MELLIS COMMON

We all love Mellis Common, it's a beautiful space for a stroll in the sunshine, a morning dog walk and to admire the barn owls at dusk. It's also a grazing common and the cows have enjoyed pasture for centuries in this precious corner of Suffolk.



Unfortunately, the cattle are falling prey to a new danger this year, four calves already lost to ***Neosporosis - a parasite found in dog poo***. It's easy to remedy, dog owners just need to take away their mess and to keep their pets on lead so they can ensure nothing is left behind. There are dog waste bins placed near The Mill but at present none down the other end where the cows are. Because of the loss of lives, huge cost to the farmer and distress caused to the cows they have now been moved off some of their usual pasture and are having to eat their winter feed.

How can we prevent further cattle deaths and unnecessary costs, and preserve the historic nature of Mellis Common as an unspoilt, traditionally grazed English common?

- pick up dog poo and put in a bin (updates on more bins to come) or dispose of it at home.
- please keep your dog on a lead, Suffolk Wildlife Trust welcomes dogs but 'on lead'. Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, on 'access land', dogs must be kept on a lead that's no more than two metres long at all times around livestock.
- let friends and neighbours know about the dangers that dog mess presents to livestock and to all who enjoy the common. Nothing spoils a walk like cleaning up filthy shoes afterwards.

We all love the common so let's respect all who use it by keeping it clean for everyone - the wildlife, animals and people.

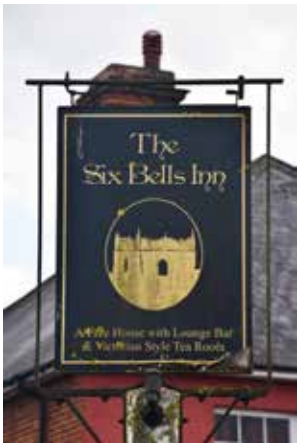
Further details can be found on **https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/melliscommon**

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents – a search on Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 brings up further details.

Angeline Braidwood



SIX BELLS COMMUNITY GROUP UPDATE





The owners of the Six Bells, Whatling Building Ltd, have launched an appeal against the Planning Enforcement Notice (PEN) issued by Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) "to cease use of any part of the building except as residential occupation ancillary to the primary use of the building as an active public house".

The appeal will go to the Secretary of State at the Planning Inspectorate (PI)) – the same organisation that dismissed the owner's appeal against the rejection of their original planning application.

The Enforcement Notice stated that there has been a breach of Planning Control in that, without planning permission, there has been a Change of Use from a public house to use as a dwelling house. The owners are appealing on the grounds that there had not been such a breach and that they had been given insufficient time to comply with the terms of the PEN; they have been given one year.

MSDC will inform us of the timetable for the appeal proceedings. They will, no doubt, robustly defend its position and third parties will be given the opportunity to submit their views. The SBCG will submit a comprehensive document supporting MSDC's position (as we did for the original appeal) and would encourage all those who objected to the original COU application and responded to the village wide survey to submit their views to the PI. We will cite virtually identical scenarios where the PI rejected the appeal (in one case stating "It is clear that the only use of the building is as residential use. The only residential use that is lawful is as ancillary to the main use as a public house as previously existed. Given the considerable length of time during which the only active use of the building has been for residential purposes (not ancillary to its use as a PH) it is clear that this is its sole and primary use.") In that case, the owner's appeal was totally rejected by the PI which endorsed the LPA's enforcement action.

The chances of the owners' appeal succeeding are very limited. In the meantime, they continue to deprive the village of its pub and, in the words of MSDC, to continue the "unacceptable harm to the community of Gislingham because of the unjustifiable loss of a community facility".

The Six Bells Community Group

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



To the community of Gislingham and surrounds,

Up to this point we did not see it necessary to be completely transparent in all the work we have been doing on the Six Bells or in regards to our long-term plans, as the Six Bells is a privately owned property and we are inherently private people. Perhaps we have done ourselves a disservice by not being more forthright with information and in light of this we would like to share the following.

Our intent has never been to turn the property into a residence. For the record, when we purchased the property, we were never guaranteed by anyone that a change of use (COU) to a vets would be granted. Knowing this risk our plan was always, if COU was rejected, to take our time renovating this beautiful but run-down Victorian building sympathetically to be sold on. Works have slowed down due to the fact we had our first child.

We have never lived in the building as a whole, this was even observed by the council but as we have not opened the pub due to continued renovations, the council considers that the residential use has been encroaching on the public house use resulting in the enforcement notice. As such, we have discussed with the council options of how we can protect and preserve the public house use going forward and still have use of the residential flat.

Despite the exterior appearance of the fence and gardens we have made extensive improvements to the property as a whole, including replacing the outbuildings roof; repairing the main building's roof; replacing the heating system; plumbing and electrical work; installing a new bathroom and kitchen in the residential accommodation; the beginning of total aesthetic renovation of the internal building and we could go on. Between labour and materials there has been over £100,000 invested into improvement of the property and this will be reflected in the price when it does eventually go on the market. The constant removal of rubbish and building debris in the front car park may be unsightly but just shows the scope of the ongoing works that are ongoing.

In our communications with the volunteers of the SBCG we have been nothing but honest. There is nothing illegal about us renovating the property on our own timescale and all we have tried to do with COU is to invest in this village with an alternative community facility, not take away or intentionally harm it. The SBCG have implied we have removed the heart of the village but if people are truly honest, we have heard from a huge number of residents that there were only six regulars that frequented the pub prior to our purchase. The village should consider this level of business would never sustain a property of this size, particularly with rising utility costs.

When the village secured an ACV on the property, this guaranteed them the opportunity to purchase it when it went on the market and this was never opposed by us as we agreed the village should have first refusal. Regardless, we continue to be treated with harassing tactics, we've been the topic of multiple disparaging and offensive discussions online and visited by the council many times on false reports that we had removed the bar or were running a "secret vet" from the property, which is ridiculous.

Finally, we would like to state in open forum that we will not have any direct contact with the SBCG aside from our real estate agent informing them when the property eventually does go on the market. Considering the group was formed to raise funds to purchase the public house when it became available, we've been shocked by the manner in which they have conducted themselves and made it their mission to try and run us out of the village.

To those who continue to express support and kindness to us we thank you. If you feel we are being treated unfairly then please be encouraged to write to the Parish Council and the Planning Inspectorate.

Owner of the Six Bells - Mr Whatling



Gardens in Mill Street & Chapel Farm Close open to support this fantastic charity

On Sat 3rd and Sun 4th August
11.00am-4.30pm

Two gardens combined admission £5.00 children free. Refreshments. Local signs on the day.

The National Garden Scheme is a registered charity that supports a number of cancer related and other organisations: Macmillan Nurses, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Help the Hospices, and others.

Your support will be greatly appreciated.
(Iris and Alan Stanley with Ross Lee)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY BOWLS?

THORNHAM MAGNA BOWLS CLUB WILL MAKE YOU WELCOME

No one is too young or too old
(Under 16's to be accompanied by an adult)

If you are interested come and give it try, we will be there every Saturday morning from 10-00am, May to September.

The address of the Bowls Club is, Gislingham Road, Thornham Magna, IP23 6HH
(Opposite the estate farm entrance)

(Just come with flat shoes, everything else will be provided)

NEWS FROM GISLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

FUTURE EVENTS

Friday 2nd August: Pub Night
Doors open at 5.00 pm. Last Orders 9.45 pm.
Again, we would like to point out that under the terms of our licence, only drinks purchased at the bar can be consumed on the premises.

Saturday 10th August: Quiz Night
Doors open at 7.00pm. £5 per ticket – available from Terry Williams on 01379 783903 or gislinghamvillagehall@gmail.com Bring your own nibbles and drinks please.

Pub Night: Friday 16th August 2024
Doors Open 5.00 pm. Last Orders 9.45 pm. Again, we would like to point out that under the terms of our licence, only drinks purchased at the bar can be consumed on the premises

Saturday 28th September: Jumble Sale. Details to follow

Saturday 19th October: Quiz Night. Details to follow

Saturday 7th December: Christmas Quiz Night. Details to follow



Follow us at www.facebook.com/GislinghamVillageHall/ PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR VILLAGE HALL

The Hall is available for hire at a cost of £10 per hour, which includes tables, chairs, lighting, heating, water etc. There are also village hall assets available for hire at an additional cost. These include, a sound system and a large screen television. Additionally, there are tables and chairs and a marquee which can be used outside of the hall.


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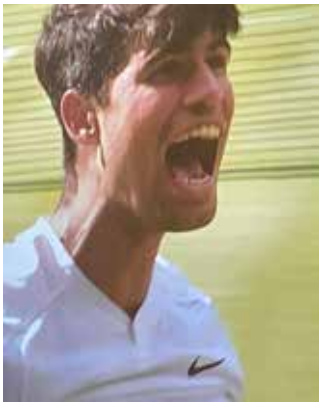
NEWS FROM THORNHAM PARISH HALL



Sunday 14th July saw our second Wimbledon afternoon tea. An amazing array of cakes, savouries and scones were prepared by our events team along with Pimm's and tea, to make what was a very special afternoon. The match was on the big screen for people to see and the event was attended by 40 people. Another successful event and a great time to socialise together. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make is such a successful afternoon.







FUTURE EVENTS:

Saturday 10th August: Musical evening with Tyger and BBQ.
7.00pm - a very popular musician in the area, this will prove to be a most enjoyable evening with a super BBQ alongside. £15 per head / Bookings: events@thornhams.org

Saturday 17th August: Flowers with Jennifer at Frog Farm.
2.00pm at Frogs Farm - Learn how to create your own natural bouquet to take home with you.

Saturday 23rd August: Grease sing-a-long with a hot-dog – bar available
7.00pm: £10 per head. Bookings: films@thornhams.org

Saturday 7th September: Pre-loved/vintage sale (12.00 noon – 3.00pm)

Friday 20th September: Film Night – 'Wicked Little Letters'
7.30pm: £5. Booking: films@thornhams.org

Sunday 6th October: Breakfast Club 10.00am: £9 / Bookings: breakfast@thornhams.org

Sunday 6th October: Thornhams Estate Walks with Jo-Jo Henniker

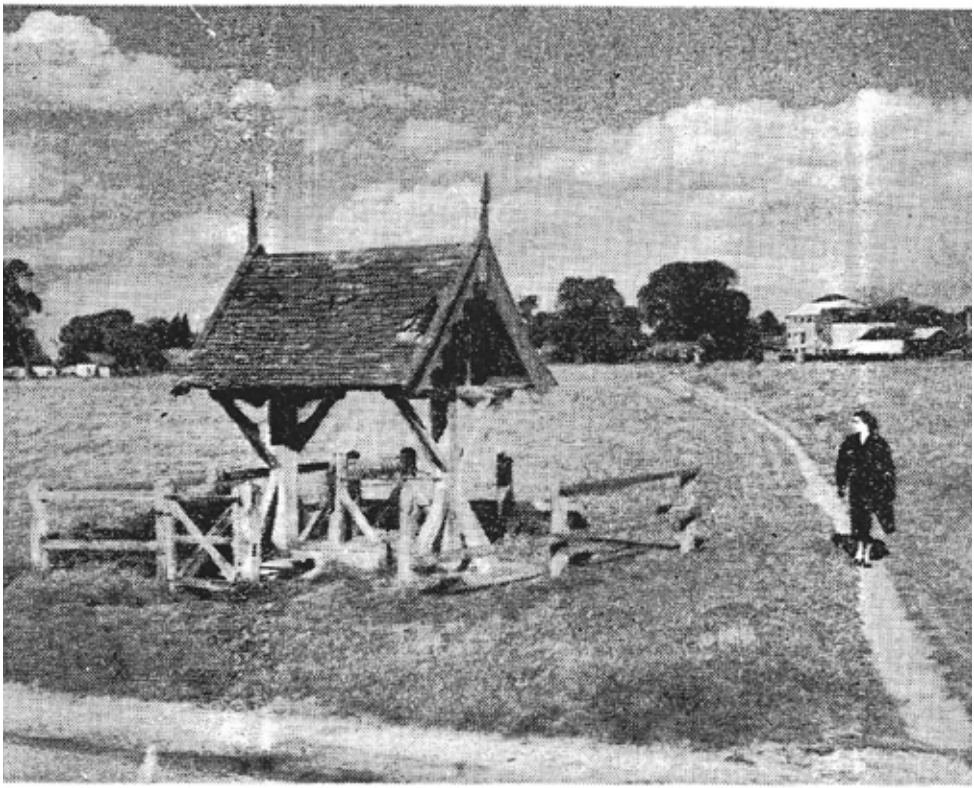
Sunday 13th October: Autumn Fair
11.00am – 3.00pm – Raffle, tombola, craft stalls, refreshments, and more…

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS:

Pilates Classes on Tuesdays 10.00am – Pilates gentle floorwork
and Wednesdays 11.15am – Pilates floor work – all levels

THE VILLAGE WELL ON MELLIS COMMON

EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1954



THE VILLAGE WELL: This ancient well on Mellis Common, used by the villagers for well over a hundred years, is soon to be replaced by piped water, which has already reached one end of the village.

The image above is from a newspaper cutting from The East Anglian Daily Times on Wednesday 27th October 1954 and it shows the old village well on Mellis common.

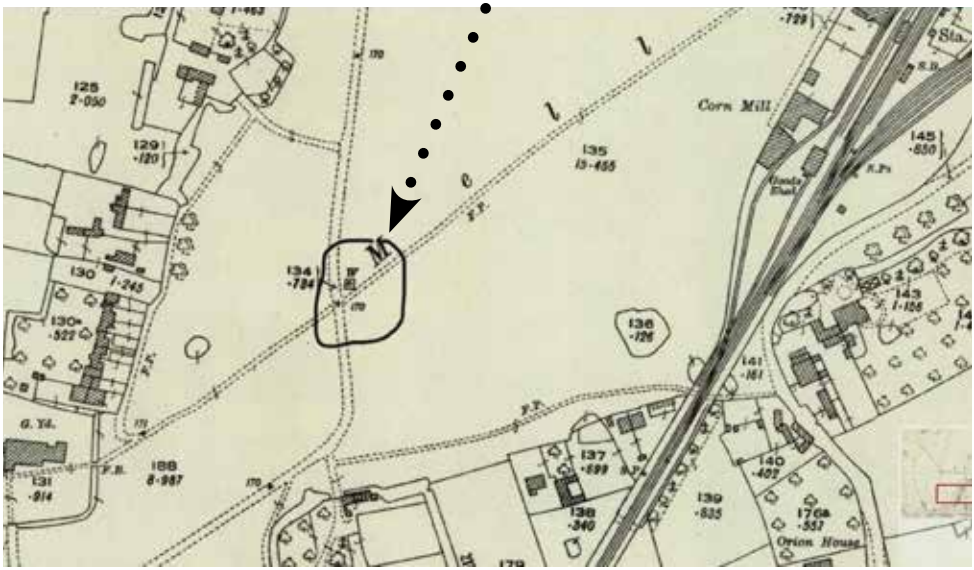
The article said: "This ancient well on Mellis Common used by villagers for well over a hundred years, is soon to be replaced by piped water, which has already reached one end of the village."

Apparently, once mains water was brought to the village, the villagers ceremoniously broke up the old well and threw the framework down the well. All that remains today is a concrete cap.

Shown on the opposite page are two old postcards of the well on the Common, with Robinson's Mill in the background. The top one is undated, but the middle image is dated 1909. The map shows the location (roughly circled) of the well on the common.


DOWN
Memory
LANE


1117
The Common, Mellis, Suffolk.


Corn Mill
125
2·050
129
·120
130
1·245
130a
·522
131
·914
188
8·987
134
·734
135
13·455
136
·126
137
·699
138
·340
139
·835
140
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GISLINGHAM JRSO UPDATE

Thank you to all the children, staff, parents, guardians, families, Gislingham residents, Suffolk Roadsafe, Suffolk Accident Rescue Service, Suffolk County Council, Gislingham speedwatch and the Messenger magazine.



We have had an amazing year doing lots of fun activities promoting road safety. We have just found out that we have achieved a GOLD award from Suffolk County Council. Here are some of our achievements:

- We named our mascot Officer Snuggles!
- Riley (class 4) won a competition to design a t-shirt for Officer Snuggles.
- We completed 2 speed watches with our amazing Gislingham Speedwatch team lead by Steve Critchley.
- Traffic observations outside school.
- New cones and posters outside school.
- Road safety assembly with DR Andy Mason from SARS.
- Walk to school week 20th to the 24th May.
- Be Bright Be Seen Day where all the kids and adults dressed up as brightly as they could to raise awareness of road safety.
- Training across the school through out the year with Holly from Suffolk Roadsafe.

From our team: Charlotte, Summer, Harriet, Noah, Reuben, Officer Snuggles and, last but not least, Mrs Hall.

Gislingham JRSOs



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IN THE GARDEN



The theme for the summer so far has been rain, a far cry from previous years where we have experienced very high temperatures. On the plus side, plants that are often looking worse for wear from the heat and dry, are looking glorious, foliage has been as much centre stage as flowers, so while weather conditions may not be ideal for drinking Pimm's on the lawn, they have been ideal for some plants.

In the walled garden we have lots of plants that enjoy the sunshine, all planted in sunny positions. Similarly, we have several shade lovers that we have planted where there is ample shade for them to enjoy. Its good practice before planting something new in your garden to check the conditions that the plant enjoys the most, and match plant to position, that way you will get the best out of the plant and are less likely to experience the plant not flowering or looking unwell.

Tomatoes and cucumbers have been rather slow to grow and fruit this year, the cooler nights causing a greater temperature difference that plants do not enjoy, however they are now fruiting, the colourful mix of varieties are now available to buy in our Apple Store shop within the walled garden along with other seasonal favourites that we are growing.

With all the rain we are enjoying not having to spend so much time watering, plants like sweet peas are also enjoying the abundant moisture, their sweet perfume is making a lovely impression on our visitors to the café that we run in the garden (open Wed/Thurs 10.30-2.00).

At this time of year dead heading is a task that we have started, to keep floral shows looking at their best and helping to promote continual flowering for the remains of the summer, and with the weather how it is currently, we are hoping that we will get warmer weather later in the year, hopefully the flowers and their perfume will last out so that September is a colourful month to enjoy.

Phill Williams, Lead Project Worker (Horticulture)
Beyond The Wall, The Walled Garden, Thornham Magna





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GISLINGHAM SUMMER (?) FAIR 2024

What a day! For once, the weather was not kind to the Gislingham Summer Fair. There was persistent rain for most of the morning and intermittently most of the afternoon. Nevertheless "the show will go on" and through stoicism and a good sense of humour, much fun was had by many; as you'll see from the 4 pages of colour photos in this issue.

The afternoon kicked off with a formal opening by Pauline Argles – a very senior resident of the village - and was immediately followed at the other end of the age scale by the Gislingham School Choir who raised spirits with a trio of great songs. Next came a couple of beautifully dressed young girls who came equal first in the Fancy Dress competition. Full marks to them for braving horrible weather in their costumes.

The day progressed with an excellent energetic display by Tribe ALL Fitness who made most spectators exhausted by watching – let alone doing the exercises. The Fun dog Show attracted a variety of breeds all of whom behaved impeccably despite being asked to "walk the plank" and" to swerve between poles as well as playing "musical sits".

The winners were:

- **Best dressed/matched pair - winner Jasper with Molly, second Poppy with Luna**
- **Basic Obedience - winner Mike with Lucy, second Daniel with Bear**
- **Agility for Beginners - winner Kate with Lola, second Daniel with Bear**
- **Dog with the Waggiest Tail - winner Lucy, second Barley, third Pippin**
- **'Best in Show' – Winner Daniel with Bear**

The WI had a thriving day, not only for their delicious and exquisite cakes but especially for the hot drinks allowing people to warm their hands on the comforting mugs. The Beer tent, always a popular watering hole, had less luck with Pimm's, so evocative of a summer's day, but did better with beer and soft drinks. Food was provided admirably by the 1st Mendlesham Scouts who did a very tasty burger (from personal experience) and excellent large hot dogs. There was live music from the "Dukes of Ukes" as well as "Natural Colour" and other music, appropriate to the arena action, provided by Chris Saunders and his essential audio equipment.

There were multitude of games, amusements and stalls for folk to try their skill at such as bowling for a pig, winning on the Tombola or petting a rabbit or a guinea pig. There was also a collection of Classic Cars for people to admire and Suffolk Police Constabulary came along with a patrol car for the children to sound the siren and set off the flashing blue lights!

The time went quickly before the final event for the arena, the "Kids" races, except that many took part of all ages. Finally, the big heave of the Tug-of-War, won by the ladies 2-1 (though they might have had some help from "hangers-on" for the last two pulls). The prize winners for the afternoon were announced and it all wrapped up by 4:30pm. The event raised £2489.

An enormous amount of effort was invested by so many people throughout the planning of this event and on the day, by the Summer Fair Committee members plus the many volunteers armed with mallets and trailers who helped erect marquees and transport furniture to and from the village hall etc.

But special recognition to Philly Read who Chaired the event and to Jeff Norman who acted as her Chief of Staff. Let's hope for much better weather for Gislingham Summer Fair 2025!

Chris Pitt

GISLINGHAM SUMMER FAIR IN PHOTOS










































SEOUL


NATURE NOTES by Darrel Charles



Hello everyone, welcome back to Nature Notes!



Greater Spotted - Male



Greater Spotted - Female



Green Woodpecker

One of the first things I began to appreciate when moving to Gislingham from Bedfordshire some 11 years ago was the abundance of wildlife - not only in the wider rural landscape but in our very own garden. This was exemplified by sightings of woodpeckers, birds that we had seldom seen before. July has usually been a particularly good month to see Greater Spotted Woodpeckers in the garden as first the parent birds begin to visit the peanut feeder, followed later by the juvenile birds. This year has been no exception and I've recently been able to take a couple of shots that show the difference between the male and female birds - the male having a smart red cap.

The other woodpecker that is a fairly regular visitor to the garden is the Green Woodpecker. These are very fond of eating ants of which there are a great many in my lawn. At this time of year, little mounds of soil appear in the grass where the ants have been excavating - a tell tale sign for the woodpeckers that hammer away at them with their strong beaks to get at the ants beneath. Having recently inadvertently trod on a large ant's nest in the garden borders and finding the little demons running up my legs, I very much welcome the appearance of the woodpeckers! Happily, the conservation status of both the Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers is officially of "least concern".

There is also a third kind of woodpecker, the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. This resembles the Great Spotted in colour and pattern but is much smaller, being the size of a sparrow. This is a rare bird in the UK, being on the Red List, and I have never seen one. Its numbers have reduced markedly since 1970, this being attributed to loss of its preferred habitat, ancient woodland, and the removal of dead material such as rotting wood from forests.

When reading about the conservation status of many wild animals a strongly recurring issue is that of habitat loss. At national level we can use our vote

wisely to try to reduce this but closer to home we can easily try some "direct action" and make our gardens more wildlife friendly. In my own case, I enjoy lots of garden bird action for the price of a bag of peanuts!

Another way to make our gardens wildlife friendly is to have a pond, which needn't be large. As I have found, this can not only be an attractive feature in itself but wildlife appears in and on it almost instantly. I planted some pond lilies in mine and have been rewarded with some beautiful flowers. Frogs and Newts also inhabit the pond and birds will take a drink or bathe in it. Here's a recent photo of a couple creatures I've seen, a Common Newt and a Common Back Swimmer. Newts live mostly on land but migrate to water to breed. Oddly, the Back Swimmer swims upside down using its powerful oar-like hind legs.

Over recent weeks we have seen a lot of clouds in the sky but I suspect that not many of us will have noticed a particularly rare kind of cloud, Noctilucent, or Night Shinning, clouds. These form at the greatest altitude of all the various kinds of clouds at around 80 km and are comprised of ice crystals. Right now we are in the Noctilucent Cloud season and they may be seen low in the northern sky as the first stars are appearing. Mike Heath in Gislingham took this photo of Noctilucent clouds from an upstairs window last month at about 10:30 pm. Mike's photo beautifully captures the silvery colour and wispy structure of these unusual clouds.

Finally, a photo of a field of barley (cue Sting) alongside Mill Street in Gislingham under a cloudy sky. Heart-warming sights like this can presently be seen all around our villages - long may this continue!









Until next time, happy wildlife watching!

See these and other photos at my Flickr site: flickr.com/photos/darrelphoto/

See Tony Clarke's monthly list of local bird sightings at The Messenger on Facebook.

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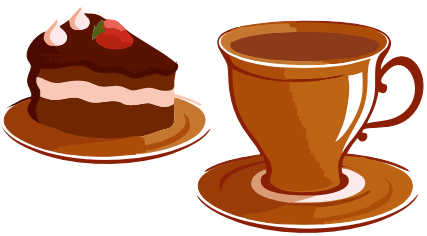
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TRIED & TESTED RECIPES by Debbie



ULTIMATE CRISPY CHICKEN PARMIGIANA
WITH SPAGHETTI, PESTO DRIZZLE AND ROCKET SALAD

Preparation Time: 40 minutes / Cooking time: 30 minutes



Ingredients for 2:

2 x British Chicken Breasts
50g Panko Breadcrumbs
180g Spaghetti
1 x Garlic Clove
390g Passata
28g Red Wine Stock Paste
40g Parmigiano Reggiano
32g Fresh Pesto
20g Wild Rocket
12ml Balsamic Glaze
1 x Egg
¼tsp Salt for the Breadcrumbs
1tsp Sugar for the Sauce
100ml x Water for the Sauce
20g Butter
20g Mixed Herbs

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 7. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil with 1/2 tsp salt for the spaghetti. Sandwich each chicken breast between two pieces of baking paper. Pop onto a board, then give it a bash with the bottom of a saucepan or a rolling pin until it's 1-2 cm thick.
   Crack the egg into a medium bowl and whisk. Put the panko breadcrumbs into another bowl, then season with the salt for the breadcrumbs and pepper.
   Season the chicken, then dip it into the egg and then the breadcrumbs, ensuring it's completely coated. Transfer to a clean plate.
2. Pop a large frying pan on high heat and add enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, carefully lay the chicken into the pan, and fry until golden-brown, 2-3 mins on each side. Adjust the heat if necessary. Transfer the chicken to a baking tray and bake on the middle shelf until cooked through, 8-10 mins. Remove from oven and set aside.
3. When your pan of water is boiling, add the spaghetti and bring back to the boil. Cook until tender, 8 mins. Once cooked, drain in a colander and pop back in the pan. Drizzle with oil and stir through to stop it sticking together. Meanwhile, peel and grate the garlic (or use a garlic press).
4. Wipe out the empty frying pan and pop on medium-high heat with a drizzle of oil. Once hot, add the garlic and fry for 30 secs. Add the chopped tomatoes, chicken stock paste, sugar and water for the sauce. Simmer until thickened, 8-10 mins.
5. Once the sauce has thickened, gently stir through half the parmesan, then remove from the heat. Spoon a third of the tomato sauce over the crispy chicken. Top with the remaining parmesan.
   Bake on the top shelf of the oven until the cheese is bubbling and golden, 4-5 mins. Once cooked, add the spaghetti to the remaining tomato sauce. Add a splash of water if it's a little thick.
6. Share the spaghetti between your bowls and top with the chicken parmigiana. Drizzle over the pesto to finish. Serve the rocket salad alongside finished with a drizzle of the balsamic glaze.

Recipe: Hello Fresh

CIRCULAR WALK VIA MELLIS & THORNHAM

O/S Map – 230 – Start on West, finish on East
Distance: (Walk 1) = 10kms/6.2miles (Walk 2) 11.5kms/7.1 miles

This walk was inspired by our next-door neighbours, Graham & Jill, who have literally been 'Walking for Health' for nearly two years and walk about 5 miles every day. One of the walks they did is similar to the walk featured this month, and this gave us the idea.



The starting point is Gislingham Village Hall. Walk towards the church and turn left on the Mellis Road. As you get to the top of the slope before the bridleway take a look back at the village and the small cul-de-sac where we live (inset). Now look across towards the railway line and the view that will be decimated if the pylons are allowed to be erected.



Continue on the road as it goes past Greens Farm, which we always find an amazing place. Walk onwards, along the road until it bears right on what is known as the Mellis Straight. You may be lucky enough to see the lovely white cows grazing on the common.



When you reach the farm, take the byway on your right, which is signposted. Take care not to take the track towards the house by mistake. Continue along the track until you reach the railway line. This is the Cow Pasture Lane crossing and it was due to be closed. However, things have changed and, instead, the crossing has been updated. There are now traffic lights, but these appeared to be out of order. Either side of the crossing are steps for horse riders to dismount and re-mount. Apparently this was the idea of the SCC PROW manager at the time.



Continue along this wide track and it will turn into a small path. Continue and cross a sleeper bridge. At the end this path turns into a gravel track. As it bears to the left, with a cottage on the right, continue straight. Ignore the first footpath sign on your left. At the next sign, which has a cross on it, you can choose to take a slight detour to Thornham Magna church, which we have mentioned in a previous edition. We continued straight on.



As you approach the outskirts of the Thornham Estate, look out for the sign for 'Beyond the Wall'. Turn right here through a 5-bar gate and follow the track as it bears left to reach the Beyond the Wall garden. This is a fascinating place which you can read about each month in the Messenger. The gardens are beautiful and are tended by a group of dedicated volunteers with special needs. There is a small shop and a cafe which has limited opening hours, so you will need to check before the travel.



Once you have had a good look around, leave the garden and turn right at the gate near the fruit trees. Continue along this path until you reach the Forge Cafe. This is open Wednesday to Sunday and serves a very good range of food and beverages so you may wish to stop for refreshments. If you do, your walk back to Gislingham (Walk 1) is to go back up the path until you reach the toilets and take the path on your left. Continue along this path, behind the farm and through the woodland adjacent to the road. You will need to turn left before the end of the path, if you don't, the path will go off to the right and around the meadow. The path ends at the road. Turn right and continue back to Gislingham along the road, being careful of fast vehicles.

Alternatively, you might wish to head for the Four Horseshoes (Walk 2). At the entrance to the Estate, cross over and follow the footpath to your left. This comes out next to the Street Forge (another lovely place to visit). Turn right and head along the road to the pub.

To make our way home, we turned right at the pub and then right again onto Clay Street and walked until we reached Star House Farm on the right. Go past the farm and, at the end of the path, turn right and follow the hedgerow until you arrive at a gap and a small bridge. Go straight across the field and through another small opening over a bridge. Head across the field towards the railway crossing and, assuming you are heading back to your starting point at the village hall, turn right towards Coldham Lane. When you reach Coldham Lane, turn left and right again at the junction with the High Street. The Village Hall will be ahead of you.

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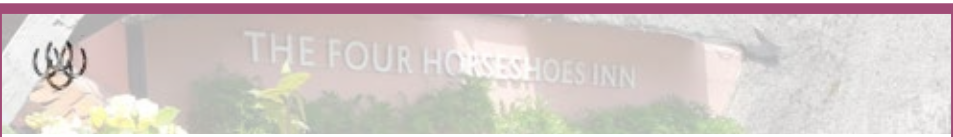
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CHARLOTTE'S BOOK BLOG



As Good As Dead by Holly Jackson ★★★★★ 5/5



Hello bookworms, Happy August! I'm back after a short break from reviewing books. Being at university did mean that finding time to read books became increasingly difficult, so my plan for the summer break is to get as much read as possible. I would like to start off by saying a huge thank you to Di Herbert for keeping the "book blog" alive in recent months when I haven't been able to. I look forward to reading more of her reviews in future issues too.

This month I'd like to round off my reviews to Holly Jackson's A Good Girl's Guide to Murder trilogy. A few months ago, I reviewed both book one and book two, and now I'm back with book three! In my opinion, it was the perfect end to the series and it certainly answered a lot of questions that I had (and also didn't know I had!) surrounding a few of the occurrences in books one and two.

Pip is left haunted and somewhat lost after the outcomes of her last two investigations and how they ended. She isn't herself and yet she's due to start university very soon. But when she starts noticing comments anonymously posted on her podcast saying "who will look for you when you're the one who disappears?" she fears she may have another case to solve, but this time she may be the victim. The threats escalate rapidly and Pip realizes that someone is watching her every move in real life. When she finds connections between her stalker and a local serial killer caught six years ago, she wonders if maybe the wrong man is behind bars.

As her stalker escalates the threats and her time to "go missing" draws nearer, Pip is on a race against time to identify the real serial killer and provide evidence to the police. With Ravi on board and her friends by her side, Pip takes on the biggest challenge she's ever faced, yet cannot ever tell anyone what's really been going on.

Holly Jackson amazed me again with the number of twists within this book. I genuinely kept thinking I'd nailed it - but nope! And in the best possible way, I didn't predict any of it coming.

A Good Girl's Guide to Murder has also recently been released as a tv series, available to watch on the BBC iPlayer. It's a 6-part series covering the events and happenings of book one. Starring Emma Myers, Matthew Baynton, Gary Beadle and Anna Maxwell Martin, I personally feel that this was a really accurate adaption of the book and certainly met my expectations. I can't wait to see if a when a second or third series is also announced.

Want to chat more about this series with others who have also read it? You can find me on Instagram @charlottes.bookblog - where I review and chat about books with the nicest community of people you could ever meet. Can't wait to see you there!

Email me at: charlotte_norman@me.com

Charlotte x

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TERRAPIN NEWS



In July the council will have voted on a proposal that provides additional financial support to our residents, to help mitigate some of the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the anticipated loss of the Government's Household Support Fund from October 2024. The paper will not provide further detail on the reduction of Housing Related Support (HRF) from April 2025, which was recently announced by Suffolk County Council. This matter is being considered separately. HRF is a non-statutory fund, reliant on government funding, and Suffolk CC is unable to continue with this support for vulnerable residents and children. It was used to fund in Suffolk: Welfare Assistance, Voluntary & Community Sector Support, Free School Meals during school holidays, Emergency Foodbank Stock, and District Housing Support.

However, it is important to note this adds further context regarding the need for a short-term solution to be proposed to support residents in financial hardship.

The funding may stop but the needs continue to grow as the cost of living outstrips many family incomes. Mid Suffolk has 2,395 children eligible for free school meals who benefitted and MSDC also received £62,500 to help vulnerable residents with housing costs and rent arrears.

MSDC is concerned about the impact on residents threatened with homelessness.

Some context: In Mid Suffolk from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 there were 586 Homeless Applications and 207 interventions to prevent homelessness.

A related item from the EADTA 16th May:
"Matthew Homes Ltd has applied to Mid Suffolk District Council to reduce the number of affordable homes from 35% of the 64 units to just 12.5%. The builder has provided a financial viability assessment to support its application, which claims the company would lose more than £100,000 from the benchmark land value if the 35% affordable homes went ahead. But this figure is calculated with the builder taking £3.6 million profit from the development."

A shortage of housing is not a Planning Issue in Mid Suffolk as some politicians would like us to think. Mid Suffolk's annual monitoring report showed that 1,257 new dwellings were built in the district in 2022/23, of which 299 were affordable. This met 144% of the Government target. There are 6,916 outstanding planning permissions (as at 01/04/23) which are either not started or under construction. Mid Suffolk has 10.88 years of housing land supply, well above the Government target of five years.

We have a slowly reducing stock of council houses. The HRA Account (Council Houses) is independent of the Council's General fund and must be self-financed. Council home rents have had to be increased by 7% and sheltered housing service charges also increased. This has been done to ensure the Council can afford the overdue repairs and maintenance that is needed. Typically, Social Rent, is 60% of market rent, Affordable Rent is 80% of market rent.

The privately rented market is not a solution. The number of homeless presentations due to a private landlord wishing to sell or relet the property has increased by 71% over the last three years.

The Right to Buy scheme has prioritised home ownership over access to secure, safe social housing. Councils have been unable to replace sold houses on a one-to-one basis. Nationally 40% of the 2 million homes sold under Right to Buy are now in the privately rented sector.

Rowland Warboys, Mid Suffolk Cllr. Gislingham Ward

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The Gislingham United Charity continues to welcome applications from residents of Gislingham who find themselves in hardship or need. We also consider requests for educational purposes, for residents of all ages, whether at school, in further or higher education, or in vocational training.

The remaining meeting dates for 2024 are 20th September, and 15th November.

All applications should be made to:
The Clerk at:
Lilac Cottage,
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Email: gislinghamunitedcharity@gmail.com

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SUNDAY 28 JULY 3PM
MELIORA COLLECTIVE *septet*
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Koechlin, Mozart, Ligeti

SUNDAY 11 AUGUST 3PM
TIM POSNER *cello*
MISHKA RUSHDIE MOMEN *piano*
Beethoven, Fauré, Saint-Saëns

SUNDAY 25 AUGUST 3PM
FITZWILLIAM QUARTET
Shostakovich, Dilnot Johnson, Mozart

SUNDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 3PM
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BEWARE OF SCAM "LOCAL HEALTH WORKER" TELEPHONE CALLS

Suffolk Trading Standards have received a number of reports from Suffolk residents who have received calls from individuals stating that they are a medical practitioner working in the area, or a local health worker. The caller advises in each case that the resident is entitled to a free medical alert device due to them being over 70 and with health issues. The caller then advises that they need financial details to register the device.

As with any telephone call that you receive out of the blue, we urge you to be vigilant and take a moment to stop and think, especially if you receive a request over the phone or e-mail to make a payment from someone claiming to be from a trusted organisation. If you are in any doubt, contact the company or organisation directly using an email or phone number from their official website.

Impersonation scams occur when the victim is persuaded to make a payment to a criminal claiming to be from a trusted organisation. This could include the police, a bank, a utility company, or a government department.

Protect yourself against health and medical fraud

With thousands of bogus health products for sale online, the best advice is to proceed with real caution when considering any new medicine or healthcare product.

Always talk to your GP or local pharmacist first. They'll be able to tell you whether the product is safe and effective. If you're managing a health condition, never stop taking a prescribed medicine, or start taking a new medicine, without speaking to your GP or pharmacist first.

Report all scam calls to us via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133



THE MESSENGER CONNECTION QUIZ

There are 10 questions. The answers to the first 9 questions form a connection of some kind.

1. Britain's 3rd largest river (runs through Staffordshire and across the North Midlands).
2. British actress best known for being the mother in the long-running series of 'OXO family' TV adverts between 1983 and 1999.
3. Mick Jagger is the lead singer of this English rock band formed in London in 1962.
4. English lyricist known for collaborations with Andrew Lloyd Webber, with whom he wrote, Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, & Evita; amongst many others.
5. The UK's longest established family removal company. Started in 1646 it now has branches throughout the UK. The family name has become synonymous with removals.
6. Born in 1962, this English stage, film and television actor won a BAFTA for Best Actor role in The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies. He's also played Gordon Shakespeare in the film series Nativity, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson in Season 3 of The Crown and Detective Sergeant Dodds in McDonald & Dodds.
7. In 1941, Orson Welles co-wrote, produced, directed, and starred in as the title character, in this film. It has been consistently ranked as one of the greatest films ever made.
8. This English motorsport commentator provided television commentary of live Formula One coverage between 1976 and 2001. He became known for his animated enthusiasm, authoritative voice and comical blunders.
9. Michael Caine played this lead character in three spy films based on novels featuring this character, written by Len Deighton.
10. What is the connection?

Answers appear on page 59.

SUDOKU CHALLENGE

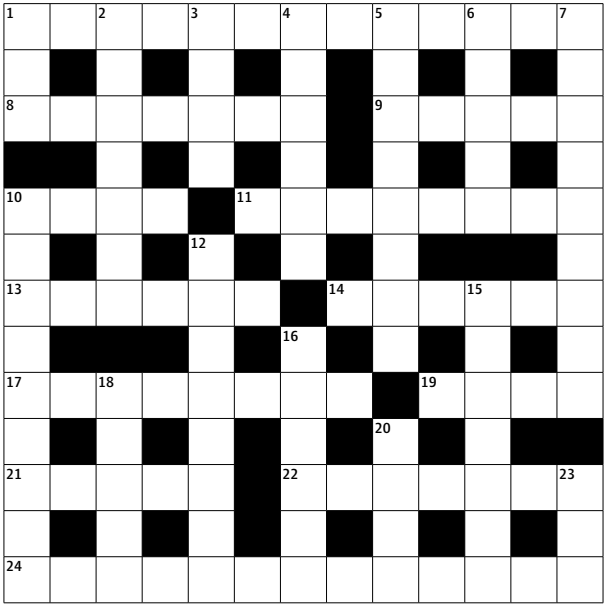
			3	1		4		
8		3						9
1	6				5			
6				9				8
	7						2	
5				2				1
			8				3	4
4						1		5
		5		7	4			

Each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9

Last issue solution

1	6	8	5	3	7	4	2	9
3	2	9	8	4	6	1	7	5
5	7	4	1	2	9	8	3	6
8	3	2	9	1	4	5	6	7
9	4	7	6	5	3	2	1	8
6	1	5	7	8	2	9	4	3
4	5	3	2	7	8	6	9	1
2	8	6	3	9	1	7	5	4
7	9	1	4	6	5	3	8	2

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE



Across

1 Stall — airport ascent (anag) (13)
8 Standard — characteristic (7)
9 Money offered as a prize (5)
10 Suggestive or sneering look (4)
11 Monitor of improper activity or waste (8)
13 Blow one of these and get very cross (6)
14 Reduce (6)
17 Nerve (8)
19 Kill intentionally (4)
21 Commotion (informal) (3-2)
22 Very last part (4,3)
24 All in the mind (13)

Down

1 Stroke gently (3)
2 Persecute (7)
3 Plentiful (4)
4 Form of salutation in Muslim countries (6)
5 Had an effect (on) (8)
6 Caustic — virulent (5)
7 Crisis that requires immediate action (9)
10 Vessel providing guidance to others (9)
12 Take to task (8)
15 Striking — key (7)
16 Position — prestige (6)
18 Temperamental (5)
20 Neeson or Gallagher? (4)
23 What's Up, ___ ? (1972 film starring Barbra Streisand and Ryan O'Neal) (3)

Last issue solution

R	E	S	I	G	N	■	J	O	C	U	N	D
A	■	A	■	O	■	M	■	P	■	P	■	R
R	E	V	E	R	I	E	■	I	S	S	U	E
E	■	O	■	I	■	T	■	U	■	U	■	A
L	O	Y	A	L	■	H	U	M	D	R	U	M
Y	■	■	■	L	■	O	■	■	■	G	■	Y
■	C	U	T	A	N	D	D	R	I	E	D	■
I	■	N	■	■	■	O	■	E	■	■	■	S
G	A	I	N	F	U	L	■	B	R	U	N	T
N	■	F	■	L	■	O	■	O	■	L	■	O
I	V	O	R	Y	■	G	L	U	T	T	O	N
T	■	R	■	N	■	Y	■	N	■	R	■	E
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NOTICES



BINGO NIGHT FOR DEMENTIA UK

Thank you to everyone who came and supported the Bingo night at Gislingham village Hall on Friday 21st June. I would also like to thank all those who donated raffle prizes. It was a great night and I hope everyone enjoyed it. We raised an amazing £548 for Dementia UK.

Sara Durrant

BOTESDALE HEALTH CENTRE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Botesdale Heath Centre have upgraded to a new telephone system. When call queues are lengthy, patients will have the option to request a call back, whilst maintaining their place in the queue. If you request a call back the Health Centre strongly advise that you stay near your phone to answer the call back, please also note this function doesn't work if you withhold your number.

Good news – the NHS App has been redesigned to make it simpler for patients to find and access services. You can find a series of step-by-step videos to show you how to navigate the NHS App and use its services at: **https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhs-app/toolkit/walk-through-videos**

If you, as a patient of Botesdale Health Centre, have any comments you would like the PPG to be aware of please contact via this email: **botesdaleppg@gmail.com**

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Answers to the Connection Quiz on page 56.

1) TRENT (Alexander-Arnold), 2) Linda (Jude) BELLINGHAM, 3) Rolling (John) STONES, 4) Sir Tim (Declan) RICE, 5) (Jordan) PICKFORD, 6) Jason (Ollie) WATKINS, 7) Citizen (Harry) KANE, 8) Murray (Kyle) WALKER, 9) Cole (Harry) PALMER, 10) They were all members of the England football squad that reached the final of the Euros.

SOUTH HARTISMERE BENEFICE



"Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." Leonard Cohen.

As I write I am fortunate enough to have been able to take some time away with my family to relax and recharge. The last 10 months have been busier than we had hoped, our plans for this summer having been taken out of our control as we have managed the post flood repairs to the house. I am pleased to say that with the repairs to the floors now complete, they form the foundation needed to allow the redecoration (and refurnishing) to commence. Deliberately making myself constantly busy with no time to stop and relax is a coping mechanism, and I guess a fault, of mine. I fill my waking hours with plans and action, not allowing any room for doubts to creep into my mind on the enormity of what we face in my vain desire to make everything as close to perfect as it can be. Every now and then however, I gain some small moments of inspiration and reflection, and one such moment struck me as we re-laid the 200-year-old brick floors that we had excavated, having spent the last 6 or 7 decades under concrete. The concrete certainly hid their defects as individually these bricks are far from perfect, they come in all shapes, sizes and colours, some showing cracks and some completely broken. However, as the craftsman did his work, he was able to put these floors together, the imperfections of the individual bricks lost as you gaze upon the completed floors. There is something of beauty to be seen even in all their imperfections.

As I walked a part of the Cornish coast path, I looked on in awe at the rock formations. As Christians we believe that nothing exists without God having fashioned it first by His own hand, and I suggest all that we see is the beauty of their creation and not their chaotic form. You will not see from this picture, but there was also a solitary person (his footprints upon the sand far too small to make any impact upon this picture) sitting on the rock looking out upon the vastness of the ocean. I reflected on where we fit into "all this". Do we exist in our own little bubble filling our thoughts and days with busyness and "stuff" so that we don't have to think too much about the enormity of the universe and our place within it, our impact on it and our influence on those around us? Perhaps sometimes we want to shut out any thought of a God that is all around (if we care to look), and deliberately make no room for Him in our waking moments. When you think about 'Church' I wonder what you think, do you think about a building which is falling apart (many have bells that are no longer safe to be rung) or do you think about the people within? Christians are not immune from the stresses and strain of life, and I suggest all are a little bit broken inside in some way. One of the first acts of our worship on a Sunday is to confess our failings as we all fall short in some way. Jesus described himself as the light of the world, and maybe sometimes, when we are at the lowest points in our lives, we need putting back together again, our imperfections healed, and a strong foundation on which to stand. Whether we acknowledge this outwardly or even hide these inwardly, maybe, just maybe, we need those small cracks as how else can we to let God's "Light" in?

Tim Rowe, Churchwarden for All Saints Thorndon and All Saints Wetheringsett

From the Parishes:

Congratulations to: Cameron Smith and Libby Frobisher on their wedding at Wetheringsett; and Stephen Battell and Rebecca Cutting on their wedding at Mellis

Sunday 4th August	Gislingham	10.30am	Holy Communion
10th Sunday after Trinity	Thorndon	10.30am	Worship for All
Sunday 11th August	Mellis	10.30am	Holy Communion
11th Sunday after Trinity	Stoke Ash	10.30am	Worship for All
Sunday 18th August	Thornham Parva	8.30am	Holy Communion BCP
12th Sunday after Trinity	Gislingham	10.30am	Worship for All
	Thorndon	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 25th August	Thornham Magna	10.30am	Worship for All
13th Sunday after Trinity	Wetheringsett	10.30am	Holy Communion
	Yaxley	10.30am	Holy Communion

Telephone Church BCP Holy Communion is on Thursdays at 11.00am



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LOCAL INFORMATION

BUS TIMETABLES

Gislingham Bus timetable

Fareline Bus (Weds only – Market Day) to Bury St. Edmunds:

Leaves Gislingham 09:46am / Arrives BSE bus station 10.48

Returns from Bury St. Edmunds leaves 13:25 / Arrives Gislingham 14.32

Mellis Bus Timetable

https://www.simonds.co.uk/local-bus-times)

110 – Eye to Diss

Eye – Diss (Monday to Friday) - leaves Mellis, opp. Railway Tavern: 10.46

Diss – Eye (Monday to Friday) – leaves Diss, adj. Bus Station: 13.30

Thornham Bus Timetable

Fairline Bus 320 (Weds only)

Thornham Magna (Four Horseshoes) 09:40am / Arrives BSE bus station 10.48

Returns from Bury St. Edmunds 13:25, arriving back at Thornham Magna 14:36



Post Van: Gislingham

Fridays at Village Hall:

12.15 – 14.15



Mobile Library: Gislingham

The 2024 dates for the Mobile Library are:-

- 14 August
- 11 September
- 9 October
- 6 November
- 4 December

Times:

Broadfields Road: 15.10 = 15.45

Mill St.: 15.50 – 16.05

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Anglian Water Emergency	0800 145145
Botesdale Health Centre	01379 898295
Church Wardens:	
Gislingham - Ann Cottee	01379 788633
Mellis - Betty Wells	01379 788155
Thornham Magna and Thornham Parva - James Fawcett	01379 788130
Citizens Advice Bureau Diss	01379 640530
Clerk (Parish) (Gislingham) clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.com	07833 705915
Clerk (Parish) (Christine Moore - Thornham Parva)	01379 783226
Connecting Communities = Suffolk Passenger Transport	01449 614271
Crime Stoppers	0800 555111
District Council - Cllr Rowland Warboys rowland.warboys@midsuffolk.gov.uk	01379 783412
Electricity Emergency	08007 838838
Essex & Suffolk Water Emergency	08457 820999
Eye Health Centre	01379 870689
Hall Bookings (Gislingham - Terry Williams -) email gislinghamvillagehall@gmail.com (Mellis - Helen Timmons - Mellis) email: bookmellishall@gmail.com (Thornham) email: hallhire@thornhams.org	01379 783903 01379 783449
Mellis Parish Council Chairperson (Lawrie Read) mellisparishcouncil@gmail.com	01379 788248
Mendlesham Health Centre	01449 767722
Member of Parliament - Jo Churchill jo.churchill.mp@parliament.uk - www.jochurchill.org.uk	01284 752311 020 7219 8487
NHS Direct	111
Suffolk Doctors On Call	03001 303066
Suffolk Fire Service & Community Fire Safety	01473 260586
Suffolk County Council -Cllr Jessica Fleming jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk	01449 711065
Suffolk Police (non urgent)	101

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