The Messenger



Issue 161
July
2025

Serving Gislingham, Mellis and the Thornhams

WINNER
NATIONAL
PARISH
MAGAZINE
AWARDS

THE MESSENGER TEAM



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News, features and advertised events in the Messenger magazine are added daily to the Messenger Facebook page at:
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E-mailed or hand-written submissions always welcome.

The editor reserves the right to edit, amend or omit submitted items at his discretion.

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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



Welcome to our July issue!

We are finally enjoying some glorious weather and that was the case on Saturday 14th June for GisFest. A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and evening and a great turnout. Chris Saunders, who has been organising this event for the past 10 years, deserves a huge amount of credit. Unfortunately, it may be the last ever GisFest! We publish Chris' summary of the event plus 2 pages of photos (page 37-39) and information regarding the future of this hugely popular event. Spoiler alert, someone needs to pick up the gauntlet going forward!

Whilst on the subject of music, on page 45, I have introduced a new feature 'Music Notes' – I hope you like it! A different CD will be featured every month. Some will be new, some old but highly recommended, there will be different music genres, occasional concert reviews, and features on local artists!

Looking ahead, Gislingham Summer Fair s on Saturday 12th July. The committee have produced a guide to the fair on pages 22/23 to answer any questions you might have about the programme or logistics. Last year, after a 5-year absence, the fair was a success despite the rain. Hopefully, this year, with better weather, it will be even better supported! The Summer Fair programme is a four-page pull-out in the centre of this issue (thanks to sponsorship by MA Heating). A great deal of time and effort goes into planning and organising of this event, by a handful of individuals who give up their spare time for the enjoyment of others and so that residents and their families (it is not exclusive to Gislingham residents!) can come together for an afternoon of fun!

The organisers do need some "extra hands" helping to set-up the night before and helping to pack up and tidy up at the end of the day. On page 23, we give some pointers as to how you can help, before and after the event. Any support you can give would be greatly appreciated.

On Sunday 20th July, 'Beyond the Wall' at The Walled Garden will be holding their own Summer Fayre & 40th Anniversary celebration. (See page 21 for details).

Gislingham Parish Council have announced the winners, for 2024, of The Watson Bowl (Chris Pitt) and 'Volunteer of the Year' ('The Gislingham Flower Ladies'). Both worthy winners of the awards. (Page 7)

Please note the early deadline of Monday 14th July for contributions to the August issue. Obviously the sooner the better to ensure inclusion. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue and hopefully see you at the Summer Fair! Stay Cool!



Jeff Norman, Editor e) themessengereditorial@gmail.com

Cover photo: Taken on Mellis Road, Mellis

DIARY & LOCAL EVENTS



Tuesday 1st July: Rural Coffee Caravan
- Mellis Memorial Hall: 10.00am – 12.00 mid-day.

Friday 4th July: Pub Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: Doors Open 5.00 pm. Last Orders 9.45 pm.

Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th July: Mellis Flower Festival
- Mellis Church: 11.00am – 4.00pm on both days. See page 10 for details.

Saturday 5th July: Book Sale
- Gislingham Village Hall: 10.00am – 12 noon

Saturday 12th July: Gislingham Summer Fair
- Gislingham School: 12.00 – 4.30pm. See centre pages for Programme of Events.

Sunday 13th July: 2.00pm - Wimbledon Men's Tennis Final
- Thornhams Parish Hall: 2.00pm: See page 14 for details.

Wednesday 16th July: Gislingham WI Strawberry Tea
- Gislingham Village Hall: 2.30pm.

Saturday 19th July: Quiz Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: 7.00 pm

Sunday 20th July: Beyond the Wall - Summer Fayre
- The Walled Garden, Thornham Walks: 12.00 – 3.00pm. See page 21 for details.

Wednesday 23th July: Gislingham WI summer trip 'Sandringham in Bloom'

WHAT ARE THE NEIGHBOUR'S DOING?
Saturday 12th July: Yaxley Village Hall – BINGO! 7.30pm
- £1 per games card. Everyone is welcome! - Just come along

SAVE THE DATES:
- **Saturday 9th August:** Gislingham Gardening, Arts & Produce Show
- **Saturday 23rd - Monday 25th August:** Gislingham Flower Festival at St. Mary's Church.
- **Sunday 14th September:** Bulb Planting: Mellis Garden 10.00am.
- **Sunday 12th October:** Mellis Litter Pick 11.00am

Please note, any event changes after the magazine goes to print are updated on our Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/themessengergismeltho

Our next issue is August 2025. The "What's On" Diary deadline is: Monday 14th July

CLUBS, CLASSES & REGULAR EVENTS

GISLINGHAM

Baby and Tots Group for the Under 2's: Primary School**.** Every Wednesday 9.45am – 11.00am. Contact Debbie Nicholls: 07762 116 335

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

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

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

Gislingham WI: 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.

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

Yoga Classes: Gislingham Village Hall. Tuesdays 7.00pm - 8.30pm
And via zoom on Thursdays 7.00pm – 8.00pm. Both term time only
Contact Clare Hall on 07704 570877 or email: thornhamyoga@yahoo.com

Gislingham Variety Club: A local multi-talented group who perform twice a year in the Village Hall. If you are interested to join us, please contact by email: gislinghamvariety@gmail.com

THORNHAM

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

Pilates Classes: Parish Hall. Tuesdays 10.00am. No floorwork.
Contact: Michelle via email hello@yapl.co.uk

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

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

MELLIS

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

Mellis Canicross: 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

Pilates Classes: Memorial Hall. Mondays 9.30am.
Becky Cruickshank: 07734 414151

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Tel: 01379 851253

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GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL NOTES



VE Day 80 celebration:
The event at the Village Hall attracted over 100 people and the Hog Roast, Bar and Music were well enjoyed by all who attended. Special thanks go to Mr David Braybrooke for the raising of the flag in what was a very moving ceremony. I am pleased to advise that the sales of soft drinks, teas and coffees produced a profit of £78 which the Parish Council will be donating to The Royal British Legion.

Councillors:
I am pleased to announce that I was re-elected as Parish Council Chair for the forthcoming year and I am also pleased to announce the election of 2 new Councillors - Councillor Chris Saunders and Councillor Christopher 'CJ' Fell.

It is with regret that I also have to advise that 2 of our Councillors, Jo Pitt and Sophie Alexander, have decided to stand down this year. The Parish Council thanks them both for their service as Councillors.

We still have two vacancies for councillors so, if you are interested, please feel free to contact me at Christopher.tranter@gislinghamparishcouncil.com or our clerk at RFO@gislinghamparishcouncil.com



Volunteer of the Year:
Awarded to the Gislingham Flower Ladies for their continued excellence in brightening up the Church for its annual festival.

Watson Bowl:
Mr Chris Pitt has been awarded the Watson Bowl for 2024 for, amongst other things, his service to Friends of St Mary's Church, the Six Bells Community Group, the Gislingham Summer Fair Committee, The Messenger Magazine, and the St. Mary's Church Bell Ringers. An award well deserved and a long time coming.



Bus Service Improvements:
Improvements to the current bus service are at an advanced discussion stage and we should be able to make an announcement in the very near future.

Proposed Pylons and Solar Farms
We have been corresponding with Parliamentarians and others regarding both the proposed pylons and the solar farm. An update will follow as soon as we have responses.

If you wish to discuss any of the above or want more information about your Parish Council then please contact us on either of the above noted email addresses.

Christopher Tranter, Chair, Gislingham Parish Council

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13th August from £59pp - **Paddington Bear Experience**
13th August £35pp - **Windsor Travel Only**
15th August from £15pp - **Great Yarmouth Day Out**
6th September £99pp - **Starlight Express**
11th September from £92pp - **Hercules the Musical**
27th September or 13th December £125pp - **Bruges by Eurotunnel**
2nd October from £89pp - **SIX The Musical**
13th October from £110pp - **Oliver! at the Gielgud Theatre**
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CAN YOU HELP TO FILL IN THE 'MISSING PIECES' OF GISLINGHAM'S LISTED BUILDINGS?





Do you live in or near a listed structure? Gislingham has lots! The Church and war memorial, a former school and Guildhall, 11 houses, 6 cottages, 11 farmhouses, 7 barns and farm buildings are all on the National Heritage List for England.

Only a few of these remarkable buildings have photos or comments about them on the Historic England website.

They are keen for local communities to add the 'Missing Pieces' by sharing their knowledge, stories and images of these important places.

You can find your nearest listed building by doing a postcode search on the Historic England website: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search/

Do you have any old photos or stories about these buildings? What is your favourite listed building in the village and why? Do you know who used to live there or what it was used for? Could you take a photograph or do a drawing of all or part of one?

Your views add important new pieces to the picture.

If you would like to take part, email information and images (including permission to share on social media e.g. Gislingham History Hub) to Helen at: gislinghamheritage@gmail.com or drop in to the monthly book sale at the Village Hall between 10.00 -12.00 on Saturday 5th July to find out more.



5TH & 6TH OF JULY 2025

11AM-4PM EACH DAY

MELLIS FLOWER FESIVAL 2025

FREE ENTRY

CAKE STALL | REFRESHMENTS | RAFFLE | TOMBOLA | PLANT STALL | KIDS GAMES AND ACTIVITIES |

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GISLINGHAM SPEEDWATCH REPORT: FEB-MAY 2025

The Gislingham Speedwatch team recommenced monitoring the speed of vehicles in February this year, through the village on Mill Street and on Thornham Road, carrying out on average, 8 sessions a month.

The results for the period covering Feb - May 2025 are as follows: -

- **February: 7 vehicles recorded - highest recorded speed 42mph.**
- **March: 9 vehicles recorded - highest recorded speed 41mph.**
- **April: 15 vehicles recorded – highest recorded speed 41mph.**
- **May: 12 vehicles recorded - highest recorded speed 44mph by 2 vehicles.**

Those vehicles recorded travelling at 35MPH or more will have received first or final warning letters from Suffolk Constabulary, dependant on repeated incidences of speeding.

A receipt of a second warning will inform drivers that any further recorded speeding will result in further action by the local police.

As we progress through the year, we have been working with Suffolk Police to identify other sites in the village where issues have been raised by residents. We shall be varying our locations in due course.

At the time of writing, we have just conducted a Speedwatch session with the Gislingham Primary School Junior Road Safety Officers along Thornham Road. It is pleasing that they take such interest in our work and we will continue our sessions in the future.

If anyone can spare a couple of hours a month it would enable us to carry out more sessions and help protect our young people travelling to school as well as other road users, it would be greatly appreciated. If you feel you can help, please give me a call on 783825 or email: s.j.critchley@btinternet.com and I can give you more information.

Finally, once again, I would like to express my thanks to all the Speedwatch volunteers and for the support of the village community.

Steve Critchley – Gislingham Speedwatch Co-ordinator







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NEWS FROM GISLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL



Gisfest 2025 took place on Saturday 14 th June. Another resounding success with upwards of 100 people in attendance. The BBQ sold out and there wasn't much left behind the Bar at the end of the evening. The Trustees would yet again like to thank Chris Saunders for organising the music for the event. Without him we don't think that Gisfest would have been the success it has been over the years.

Gislingham Summer Fair takes place on Saturday 12 th July 2025. Assistance is needed to transport marquees, tables and chairs from the Village Hall up to the school. If you can help, please meet at the Village Hall at 7.00 pm on Friday 11 th July 2025.

FUTURE EVENTS

Friday 4th July: Pub Night
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 19th July: Quiz Night - This will be a themed quiz "Through the Decades".
Doors open at 7.00 pm. Entrance Fee £5.00. Bring your own Food, Drinks and Glasses.

Saturday 27th September: Bingo Night – Watch this space for details

Saturday 18th October: Quiz Night
Doors open at 7.00 pm. Entrance Fee £5.00. Bring your own Food, Drinks and Glasses.

Saturday 13th December: Quiz Night
Doors open at 7.00 pm. Entrance Fee £5.00. Bring your own Food, Drinks and Glasses.



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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.

WATCH

THE WIMBLEDON FINAL

LIVE



Served with a delicious Ploughmans, Eton Mess
and a glass of Pimms
Sunday 13th July starting 2pm at Thornham Village hall.
£15 per person payable on the day.
Email events@thornhams.org to book

NEWS FROM THORNHAM PARISH HALL





FUTURE EVENTS:

Sunday 13th July: 2.00pm - Wimbledon Men's Tennis Final: Enjoy Ploughman's lunch & Eton Mess and a glass of Pimms
2.00pm: £15. To book: events@thornhams.org

Sunday 5th September: Bingo

Sunday 12th October: Autumn Fair

1st/2nd & 3rd November: Art & Craft Winter Show
Artists to contact: events@thornhams.org

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS:

Pilates Classes on Tuesdays 10.00am - Pilates gentle with no floorwork



To book please contact Beth Fredrikssen-Jones, the Booking Clerk, using hallhire@thornhams.org

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(Bank Holiday Weekend)
10am – 4pm daily







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Take part in our games and activities
Join us for refreshments in the Village Hall

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Above: Oak house in the early 1900's.

OAK HOUSE, MILL STREET, GISLINGHAM

We are very fortunate in this area to have a number of historical and interesting homes, some dating back many centuries.

One of the oldest is the Grade 2 listed Oak House in Mill Street; an 8-bedroom detached house spread over 2022 square feet.

This L-shaped building is thought originally to have been two 15th century medieval halls with the traditional central open fires and the smoke hopefully escaping through the rafters. In Tudor times, the very grand main chimneys were built which must have done much to improve the internal air quality allowing the creation of the beautifully carved ceilings.

For much of its life, the Suffolk-pink house has been the home to numerous generations of farmers and has a veritable maze of rooms, staircases and paved floors reflecting the full character and idiosyncratic charm of the various additions and alterations undertaken over the centuries.

The house was restored externally by Chapman and Pleasance of Wetheringsett in 2009 utilising much of the original daub finish after being purchased by Tom & Kathy Brooke. They were keen to adopt William Morris' principles of honest repair of ancient buildings and have treated bulging, bowing, sagging and leaning as signs of age that deserve respect.

David and Laura who purchased the house in 2021 have continued the restoration in the same spirit.

Oak House has been home to a number of interesting occupiers over its long history, not

least two resident ghostly ladies, Ruby & Rebecca (believed to be from c. 1817) and John Turner, a renowned churchwarden at St. Mary's Church, Gislingham from 1839.

DOWN Memory LANE



Left: The house in 1923.

Below: Missionary Edmund Broadbent lived in Oak House in the 1930s.



In the 1930's Edmund Broadbent, a famous author and missionary of the Plymouth Brethren movement whose work took him to many countries not normally accessible to outsiders, His ability to speak fluent, French, German, and passable Russian has led to suggestions he was possibly involved in more than spreading the gospel. Broadbent was described by one of his peers as a "tidy-looking English gentleman with a bookish side who discovered ways of slipping into and out of countries that others just assumed were 'closed doors.' He was not a big man, and his pleasant, easygoing manner would not have conjured in your mind the picture of the fearless missionary.





Above: More recent pictures of the house and garden.

Following the Second World War, Herbert Woodward, well known to many in the area, took up residence and continued to live at Oak House until 2007. His family still live close by and his portrait and that of his wife still grace the house.

Parts of the original grounds were, up until about 2007, the original home of Gislingham Bowls Club.

The back garden boasts a sizeable pond and several fruit trees have been planted to the front and an oak tree in the back garden to provide a living symbol of the quirky but very attractive historic house.

Jeff Norman

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beyond the wall
Summer Fayre & 40th anniversary!
Sunday 20th July
12pm-3pm
GAMES, CELEBRATIONS, CASTLETON BRASS BAND, SAMBOOMBA SAMBA BAND, SUPPORT STALLS SUCH AS FAMILIES TOGETHER SUFFOLK & THORNHAM WALKS, DRINKS & CAKE, RAFFLE, PLANTS & PRODUCE AND MUCH MORE...
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GUIDE: **GISLINGHAM SUMMER FAIR** 2025



The Gislingham Summer Fair is back again this year – Saturday 12th July, from 12.00 mid-day until approx. 4.30 / 4.45pm.

As organisers, the Gislingham Summer Fair is all about bringing the community together and making a fun family afternoon for the village. (Better still, you don't even have to be a Gislingham resident to join in the fun!)

We hope you will find the following information useful to help answer any questions you might have, in case you have never attended the Summer Fair previously. And if you have been before, there are some minor changes this year.

We also have a Facebook Events page to share updates from now until the Fair: *https://www.facebook.com/events/586231307715994* or search *"Gislingham Summer Fair"*

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

Firstly, the fair is free to get in! And we are planning a fun-filled day for all the family, even your dog! And you are even allowed to bring your Parents!

Entrance

Entrance to the Summer Fair will be via the school car park entrance.

Car Parking

There is no car parking at the school, as the school playground and car park will be in use on the day. We kindly request that no one double parks in Broadfields Road or on or around the Green on Broadfields Road, due to Tractors needing access for the vintage tractor parade! But the Village Hall car park can be used.

Toilet facilities

Although the school will be shut, there will be toilet facilities on site.

Food and Refreshments

There will be a BBQ serving Burgers, Sausages (+ veggie burgers), the WI will be serving teas, coffees and cake and there will be a licensed bar and soft drinks and an Ice Cream Van!

Children's Fancy Dress

There will be a fancy dress competition for children at 12.05 and the theme this year is 'Super Heroes'. There will be some prizes for the winners. So hopefully lots of boys and girls will come in fancy dress.

Entertainment

As well as entertainment in the main arena, there will also be some live music during the day. There will be a bouncy castle, a football target shooting competition, kids games stall and more! There will also be a Vintage Tractor Parade on the school playground.

Stalls

We have some trade stands selling sweets, children's books, arts & crafts and homemade produce. We even have a local author selling and signing her books!

Dog Show

There will be a fun dog show held with four different categories: - Basic handling, Dog with waggiest tail, Basic agility test, Best Dressed/Matched pair.

You can bring your dog and enter in as few or as many categories as you like. (50p entry per category for children / £1.00 for adults). The winner in each category will receive a certificate

and a prize.

Please note, the welfare of the dogs has been considered very carefully for the Summer Fair. Therefore, we will review the situation if temperatures are forecast as being high and the possible effects of heat on dogs. However, ultimately, it's the owner's responsibility to decide if they think it's too hot for their dog(s).



Kids races

Towards the end of the day, we promise to wear the children out! Our 'Games Team' will be organising Sac races, Egg and Spoon races etc (and traditionally there is always a race involving 'water' – guaranteed to cool everyone down on a hot day! Or in the case of last year, make them even wetter than the rain did!) We may even find time to include an adult race, which proved very popular last year! And we can confirm there will once again be an all-out tug of war for everyone to join in at the end of the day!

Money raised on the day

The profit made from this event is split equally between the village organisations involved in helping to organise the event: Gislingham Primary School, Gislingham Playgroup, Gislingham Village Hall, Friends of St. Mary's Church, Gislingham WI and 1st Mendlesham Scouts.

Programme of Events

The official programme can be found inserted in the centre of this magazine confirming times of the entertainment etc.

How can you help?

Bunting around the village: It would be lovely if as many people as possible in the village could display some bunting on their walls, hedges, houses etc. all around the village. Let's celebrate!
Prizes wanted: The Summer Fair Committee would be grateful of any donations of Tombola items and alcohol for the barrow of booze. So, if you would like to donate a prize, please contact us.
Help: As you can imagine, this event takes a lot of organising as well as setting-up and packing away. We need help the night before on Friday 11 th July to help erect marquees and transport tables and chairs from the village hall to the school playground. Also, on the day; if you can spare 30 minutes in the morning, to help us set-up and/or at the end of the day to help us clear up and pack away, it would be very much appreciated. ***If you have any questions or queries, or can offer to help in some way, please contact us via:***
gislinghamsummerfair@gmail.com / Gislingham Summer Fair Committee

Photography

Please note, Jeff from The Messenger will be taking photos to be published in the centre-ages of the August issue!
So, if you want to be in the next issue of the magazine, just remember, look happy, and have fun and you never know you might just appear in the next issue!
However, if you don't want your child to appear in any photos, please make yourself known when he is taking photos of the children. (He won't bite!) There will also be a photographer from the Diss Express Newspaper at the event taking photos as well, so similar applies.

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Thursday 3rd July 7.30pm ***PUB QUIZ***

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Saturday 5th July 8.30PM ***RED HEART***

A fantastic night of Pop Rock classics, guaranteed to get you dancing.

Thursday 10th July 8.00pm ***OPEN MIC NIGHT***

Calling all musicians and singers. Come along and have a go, hosted by Mike & Gemma.

Saturday 12th July 8.30pm ***KARAOKE DISCO***

Musical merriment with Video Disco & Karaoke.

Thursday 17th July 7.30pm ***PUB QUIZ***

A fun general knowledge quiz. Maximum six people per team. £2 per person.

Sunday 20th July 5pm ***THE ANYONES***

The incredible ANYONES, playing party bangers from the 60's & 70's.

Thursday 24th July 7.30pm ***BINGO***

£1 a card for cash prizes and Final game £2 per card for CASH JACKPOT.

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Saturday 26th July 2pm FROMAGE, 5pm FEVER DREAM.

HARRIS HOG ROAST from 2pm

Sunday 27th July 2.00pm PENNYBLOOD PETE,

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- Flowers & Plants
- Fruit & Vegetables
- Baking
- Preserves
- Handicrafts
- Art
- Childrens' categories

For more information or to request ar entry form please go to our Facebook page (search for Gislingham Gardening, Art & Produce Show) or contact GISGAPS@gmail.com

Entry forms will also be available to collect/hand in at the monthly book sale.





Gislingham United Charity

Registered charity: No. 208340 • Trustees are Volunteers

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

All applications are treated in the strictest confidence and in accordance with GDPR Data Protection Regulations.

GUC Trustees meeting dates for 2025 are as follows: Friday 11th July, Friday 12th September, Friday 14th November

Applications, together with the necessary supporting documentation, should be received **seven working days before the meetings** to allow Trustees time to consider applications and request additional information if required. In the event of emergency applications, Trustees will consider an application when received and, if necessary, will call a special meeting to review the application.

Application forms can be obtained from: The Clerk, Lilac Cottage, Mill Street, Gislingham, IP23 8JR
Tel: 01379 783380, Email: gislinghamunitedcharity@gmail.com
Or can be downloaded from the "Organisations" page on the Parish Council Website:
https://gislinghamparishcouncil.com/organisations/gislingham-united-charity/

NATURE NOTES by Darrel Charles



Hello everyone and welcome back to Nature Notes

The past few weeks have seen some extraordinary sights in our hedgerows where ghostly silken webs have been appearing. These are the work of many tiny caterpillars of the Ermine moth. Those small moths are so called because they are a white-ish colour with black dots. The webbing behaviour of the caterpillars is an act of self preservation. To avoid predators, they adopt the safety in numbers approach and try to hide themselves in and around the webs that can sometimes cover whole trees. Having spun their protective webs the caterpillars can then indulge their voracious appetites, sometimes stripping an entire hedge or tree of its leaves. Examples of these webs can be seen now in local hedgerows and in parts of St Mary's churchyard, Gislingham.



Do you have trouble identifying birds when out and about? Perhaps it's a new birdsong you've heard or maybe you've seen or photographed an unfamiliar bird. Well, Glyn Simpson recently came across an app for his phone that could be just what you need. The app is called Merlin and it was developed by Cornell University in the USA. It has three ways of identifying birds, is available for Mac OS and Android phones and it's free.



Glyn has tried out the Sound function when the app returned entirely credible results for twilight when 6 birds were identified. On another occasion, Glyn had the app analyse 5 minutes worth of the dawn chorus when Greenfinch, House Sparrow, Collared Dove, Wood Pigeon, Pheasant, Robin, Wren, Blackbird, Goldfinch, Song Thrush, Chaffinch and Blackcap were recognised. As Glyn says, "These are all birds we see in the garden but obviously the Blue Tits and Starlings were not yet awake!" The Step-by-Step function invites the user to specify details of a sighting such as place, date, size of bird, colour and situation after which it will offer up a number of ID suggestions. I've tried out the app's Photo function, i.e. to identify birds from photos and it passed with flying colours. Another handy feature is to play the song of any particular bird. Well worth a look and perhaps something that budding young ornithologists might enjoy using as well.

With so many wildflowers about just now in fields and hedgerows, I thought it might be fun to have a little quiz. How many of these flowers do you recognise? Answers below.



A: Poppy, B: Crown Daisy, C: Ox-Eye Daisy, D: Guelder Rose, E: Brome, F: Dog Rose

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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GISFEST 2025 – ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER SUCCESS!

I am going to start, as usual, with a thank you, but this time to whoever is responsible for the weather… we could not have asked for better; and I believe this makes a big difference to the success of the event. The amazing weather, and support of the village, helped raise just shy of £950 for the village hall.

As always, a big thank you to the members of the Village Hall Committee for organising and working shifts on the bar and barbecue, and to Scott Faulkner for, yet again, donating beer, and providing extra barrels … all of which sold out!

Running order of music was as follows:-

FOG + guests, Reg Siger, The Gislettes with Gislingham Variety Club, Reg Siger and Leanne Faulkner, Alex Mackenzie, Black Shuck, Dan & Matt Rowland… with their nephew on bass... and The Zillionaires.

FOG is a new venture for myself and Rob (from the Zillionaires); our first gig after only a few weeks together. We were joined by Leanne for a couple of numbers, and then Richard Adams belted-out a couple of classic-rock numbers … my ears are still ringing! Thank you to both.

Reg played harmonica to his self-created backing tracks, and sounded like a whole band … as usual!

Due to the wonderful weather, The Gislettes and GVC performed outside on the green … a lovely relaxed and musical rendition of some classic hits from the past.

Reg and Leanne played and sang some blues and jazz numbers… with Reg's astonishing live playing this time complementing Leanne's equally amazing singing.

Alex Mackenzie once again stunned us with his mastery not only of guitar and vocals, alongside the technology enabling him to perform solo whilst sounding like a full band, backing singers and all, but also his penchant for dressing up and putting-on a show.

Black Shuck consisted of guitars, banjos and cajon, and they played a mixture of blues, bluegrass and folk music; showcasing Norman's excellent slide playing and Ollie's wonderful singing and banjo playing.

Dan and Matt once again played and sang some great songs… not the usual stuff you hear performed acoustically. They were joined by their nephew on bass for a couple of numbers… great to see youngsters joining-in.

As may have been derived from the posters, this was The Zillionaires farewell gig. After ten years playing together, we have decided it is time to do something new and so have been branching out into other projects. It has been a pleasure playing with you all over the years, and I thank you again for supporting GisFest, and playing a great set which kept people dancing.

Thanks to all of the above and everyone who came for supporting the event.

So finally, to the prickly subject, comments and questions to which I was fending off before, during and after the event, of it being "the last GisFest". The reason is that old cliché of passing-on the mantle to someone new/younger... I am always fearful of it becoming stale, and I believe that some fresh blood will be a good thing. Anyone interested should contact the Village Hall Committee or myself.

If it does continue, I still hope to be involved in some way or another, whether with sound or performing ... and anyway, to quote Mr. Dickens… "never say never"… and I'll finish with my heartfelt thanks to everyone and "watch this space".

Chris Saunders

GISFEST 2025 IN PHOTOS






























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TIFFIN

Go all out and treat yourself to these chocolate tiffin slices, full of milk and dark chocolate, raisins and biscuit. This is a nice easy recipe for Tiffin. It must have about 1000 calories a slice, but it's great for parties or occasional treat!



Rumour has it (aka Wikipedia) that the Chocolate Tiffin recipe originated in Troon in Scotland in the 1900s. You might sometimes see it called "fridge cake", as this simple recipe requires no actual baking. Instead, you mix all the ingredients together before allowing it to chill in the fridge.

Ingredients:

- 100g butter / hard margarine (not low-fat, as it won't set).
- 25g soft brown sugar
- 3 tbsp cocoa
- 4 tbsp golden syrup



Put these in a bowl or pan and microwave or heat on a hob for a couple of minutes, to melt.

Then add:

- 225g crushed digestive biscuits
- 150g raisins (or other dried fruit)

Mix well.



- Melt 225g milk / plain chocolate, pour on top and smooth over mixture (optional)

Mark into squares and chill in a fridge for an hour or so before cutting.

Variations

Use chopped dried fruits such as apricots, glace cherries, cranberries, coconut, nuts etc; instead of raisins if preferred. A mixture of a couple of these are particularly yummy!

Debbie

CIRCULAR WALK FROM OCCOLD



We had a really enjoyable walk with some surprising features, namely the houses, glorious gardens and seeing 6 deer cross the track right in front of us, truly amazing.

O/S Map: 230 Distance: approx. 7.75kms/4.8 miles

We parked the car in the Village Hall car park, which is on the right just past the Beaconsfield Arms. Walk back to the road and turn right and after a very short distance, you will see on the opposite side of the road some metal barriers. There is a short footpath which will take you to a road opposite No. 2 Pear Tree Cottages. Turn right and continue along as it turns into a wide track which is a Quiet Lane. Go past the sign that directs you to Holly Grove Lodge, Barley Fields and Grove Farm. As you reach the first house, check out the beautiful garden on your right. Continue until you reach Grove Farm, where you will see a footpath post directing you left to go around the barn conversions. You will see a fence and a wooden 5 bar gate, head for the gap in the hedge on the left-hand side and then turn right.



In the hedge on the right, we observed the nests of the moth caterpillar. They spun a white web across the bushes like floss on a Christmas tree. The caterpillars eat the leaves and hatch into moths. Apparently, there are so much of this around due to the dry weather. At the end of the hedge, go along the footpath which is on your left. At the end of the field go across the footbridge and continue until you reach the road.



Turn left and follow the road until you reach Bedingfield. As you reach the T- junction, turn left, visit St Mary's church which is on your left.

A beautiful church with an amazing stained-glass window above the alter. It is Grade 1

listed, built in the 13c, it has two medieval doors and the has a 15c bell. There are 8 double hammer beams and some windows date to the 15c. The clock on the tower was given to the parish as a memorial of those villagers fallen in the 1914-1918 war.



Leave the church, turn left and go past the Village Hall which will be on your right. Check out the sign on the gate of the Old Rectory on your left. This road is a bit busier, so please be careful. After a short distance at the crossroads, turn left and as the road bends to the right, continue straight onto the footpath. There is no sign here. You will now be walking on Hundred Lane, which is continues through an avenue of trees for a couple of kilometres.

As you leave the Hundred Lane, there are some barn conversions and another Grove Farm, so continue along this rough track until it bends to the left. There is a footpath post in the hedge on the left and on the right is a large gap next to a new telegraph pole with a red 'Circular Walk' disc on it. Go through the gap and bear left and follow the bridleway. As the bridleway finishes the track goes through some farm buildings. At the crossroads, the entrance to Benningham Hall is to your right, but you will need to turn left along the footpath. Continue across the field, there was wheat and barley growing at the time. Cross a small ditch and a little way after the footpath bears NW across the field. You may be able to see the FP post in the distance. This is not a well-defined path, so if you do miss it, you can go around the edge of the field. When you reach the road, turn left and continue back to Occold.



At the road turn right and then left down the small footpath you started at. Cross the road to the Village Hall. Leave your car in the car park and go through the gap in the hedge that leads to the pub.

Time for some refreshments. The Beaconsfield Arms has a good range of beers, lagers and ciders and a good menu with specials. I have recently eaten there and it was really good.

Leaving the pub, we turned left and walked a short distance along the road to St Michaels and All Saints church. You will immediately see the difference in the light inside the church as opposed to St Mary's which was fairly dark. It was originally built in the 13c, however was rebuilt in the 15-c including the font. There are two churchyards, the other is just opposite the church. To ensure the churchyards are kept trimmed they have a band of volunteers who are known as 'The Lawn Rangers'. Head back to your car.

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ELTON JOHN & BRANDI CARLISLE: 'WHO BELIEVES IN ANGELS'

MUSIC NOTES



As a teenager growing up in the 1970's, it was hard not to be an Elton John fan! From 1970 to 1985, he and co-writer Bernie Taupin wrote hit after hit. But by 1985, I think it is fair to say, he struggled not only with his own personal demons, but also unable to recapture the quality of his prolific song-writing. It was all starting to sound a bit "samie" and my own music tastes were taking me down a different path! So, apart from enjoying his back catalogue, I stopped buying any new Elton John releases.

Until 2006 that is, which saw Elton back to his best with the excellent 'The Captain & the Kid' and then 'The Union' a collaboration with Leon Russell in 2010. A duets album, which is a pleasant mix of blues, country and rock with guest appearances from Booker T., Brian Wilson and Neil Young, to name just three.

Moving swiftly forward to 2023, and I was keen to watch on TV, Elton headline Glastonbury; an unforgettable 2-hour trip down memory lane, as he performed 21 songs, hit after hit after hit. It certainly took me on a journey down the 'Yellow Brick Road' and proved to everyone he'd still "got it". But I guess when you're coming off the back of a 5-year, 330 date "farewell tour", you should know what you're doing!

So, what next? Retire quietly? Apparently, the idea filled the 77-year-old with horror. Instead, he and Brandi Carlile (No, I had never heard of her either!) made one of his best albums in decades.

Between Glastonbury and entering the studio with Carlile in Los Angeles, John had hit his head, was recovering from a second hip replacement and needed a new knee. But he didn't want to cancel and let anyone down. "I was very grumpy, I was tired, I didn't feel well and I was extremely nervous," said Elton. But he only had a 10-week "window" in his diary to go to the studio with Carlile, Taupin and Producer, Andrew Watt to write and record an album. According to producer Watt, it was an album that was recorded quickly and in a way that none of them had ever worked before. The four all worked together writing the songs and it is a real collaboration, Carlile even wrote lyrics with Bernie Taupin. This is not a "Elton John featuring Brandi Carlile album". And I guess that is what the secret to it is! He moved out of his comfort zone.

I was pleasantly surprised by this album. And I mean REALLY pleasantly surprised. I can't remember the last time I bought a CD and thought it was great after just one play. Although the album seems shorter with its 10 songs (44 minutes) compared to most modern albums, I can't complain, as it is genuinely musical perfection.

This collaboration with Carlile was the perfect way to spice up his career, showing that age does not stop him from doing anything. If I have a minor criticism, it is probably over-produced, but then it is a "pop" record…

If you like Elton John, you'll love this one; if you don't move on…

"Who Believes in Angels?" by Elton John and Brandi Carlile is streaming on all major music platforms, or if you're like me, buy the CD!

JAN ***Author's Rating:*** ★★★★★ 5/5

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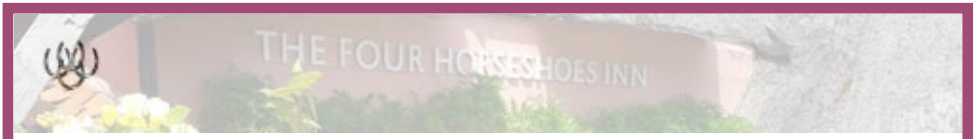
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TERRAPIN NEWS



On 11th June I was part of a MSDC briefing on the consequences of more than one unitary authority for Suffolk, specifically where the divisions might come for two or three unitary authorities delivering services for Suffolk Residents. This was part of an ongoing consultation process the District and Borough Councils are conducting between Council Officers and Councillors and the public.

Mid Suffolk District Council has an online consultation: https://midsuffolk.govocal.com/en-GB/projects/have-your-say-suffolk that will run until July 27th.

Suffolk County Council has its own online survey: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution that will run until 4th August.

That there are separate surveys going on is quite significant and is representative of how the County Council has pressed ahead with its vision of a single authority and claims how straight forward it will be to create one unitary authority for all and make huge savings whilst also tailoring services to reflect local needs.

SCC's plan would reduce the number of District and County Councillors from 308 to about 120 unitary councillors, tripling their responsibilities, and as the current council chamber has only desks for 90 councillors a new council chamber will have to be found, cost unknown.

However, the Five district and borough councils (Babergh, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk, and West Suffolk), that are already responsible in their areas for delivering services like bin collections, street cleaning, parking, leisure services, local planning, council housing, and helping homeless people are working together to present a plan for smaller unitary authorities that still have the scale to deliver additional services and still be locally accountable.

Data shows councils with smaller populations obtain more Care Quality Commission 'outstanding' rating for children's services and achieve higher council tenant satisfaction ratings. The last Ofsted Inspection of the Suffolk Local Area Partnership led by Suffolk CC reported: "Children and young people face a system that has not worked well for a long time. They and their families have not seen the improvements they should from the area's leadership."

I think the approach by Mid Suffolk District Council recognises the challenge of LGR as an opportunity to completely rewire the way we deliver services, using local connections and co-designing solutions, truly meeting local needs - rather than continuing to deliver things the same way. The last opportunity to do this was 50 years ago – so we must be ambitious and deliver exciting change, rather than simply bolting county and district services together and putting a new logo on county headquarters.

We will also as a unitary council have the challenge of working with a Mayoral Strategic Authority that will develop a Local Growth Plan for Suffolk and Norfolk that provide an overarching framework for public and private investment and action to drive economic growth and productivity. Suffolk has a range of very unique and challenging economic and social environments, coastal, urban and rural. One size will not fit all.

Rowland Warboys MSDC Cllr. for Gislingham Ward

Disclaimer: Please note, these are the views and opinions of your district councillor

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A HUGE Thank You to all who have made it possible, by way of donations, to finally purchase our new bus. In particular, thanks to our three parish councils, Botesdale, Rickinghall and Wattisfield, who so generously made it possible.

Thanks also to so many local people: Irene who sells bric-a-brac collected on our bus, Lucy from Hopton who fund raises via a Christmas Light display at her home, and to numerous personal donations by way of monthly voluntary contributions added to their fares, and, of course, R W Lister & Son of Rickinghall for their excellent service and sponsorship. The list is endless.

Many thanks also to our volunteer drivers who give their time for this worthy cause every week, (currently some 3000+ personal journeys per annum).

In conclusion, the bus is available to all, irrespective of whether your Parish Council donates to this cause; it is available to hire, as was the previous bus, for hospital, dentist and doctors' appointments, shopping etc. The service has been running for 25 years

For bookings phone Gordon on 01379 897109 (24/7 answer phone).

Gordon Lawrence, Community Transport Co-ordinator



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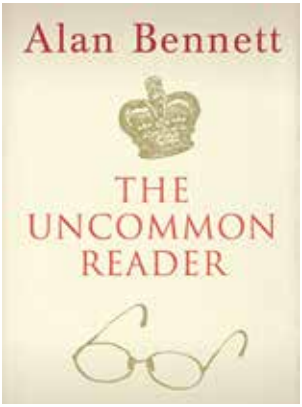
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DI'S BOOK BLOG



"The Uncommon Reader" by Alan Bennett (2007)

I have never read any of Alan Bennett's writing before or seen much of his work. The only piece being "The lady in the Van", which I think most readers will have heard of.



When I was offered this book to read, I wasn't sure what I would make of it.

The author's subject is our late Queen, Elizabeth II.

By an unexpected chain of events involving a mobile library and a palace kitchen porter called Norman, the Queen discovers a world of books very different from those on display in the palace libraries.

The Queen's interest in reading "normal" books starts to evolve. She is frequently found with her nose in a book.

And does she enjoy them? Yes, she does!

But slowly this new found hobby begins to affect other aspects of her royal life. Our monarch stops following expected protocols, as she is keen to return to whichever page - turner she is reading.

Naturally the palace advisors and courtiers are firstly puzzled and then very concerned with this change in their boss - action is needed, with consequences.

There are some very funny moments.



For example, the Queen even hides a book in the gold coach during her own Jubilee celebrations. Then she perfects the art of waving with one hand and discreetly holding her book in the other hand, to continue reading - much to Prince Phillip's disgust!!

There are other more poignant effects on her life. She can't always get hold of fresh books so asks her grandchildren to buy them for her - consequently she becomes a lot closer to that royal generation.

Also, she reflects back on the times when she entertained some of the great authors, and now wishes she'd been able to discuss their works in detail with them at those times.

I found it very enjoyable, funny, and a fascinating read.

It gives an interesting idea of the possible workings behind the scenes of the palace. And you begin to understand the probable immense pressure on the monarch to "do what is expected of one". Also, she has a lot less freedom than you'd expect.

An absorbing, well written and delightful read - easily completed in a couple days.

Di Herbert

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Gislingham Village Hall	Wednesdays	10:15am
Westhorpe Village Hall	Wednesdays	12:15pm
Gislingham Village Hall	Thursdays	7:10pm

TOTAL FITNESS (45 mins):

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GENTLE FITNESS (45 mins)

Westhorpe Village Hall	Fridays	10:00am

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TIP OFF, RIP OFF!



This month there are two scams that Trading Standards are warning us of: -

Scam Alert - Fake parcel delivery text messages

Trading Standards are warning residents about text messages claiming to be from parcel delivery companies stating they are unable to deliver an item.

Recent examples have included messages claiming to be from 'EVRI Team' stating that 'the courier (ref:8805) is delivering your parcel but is temporarily unable to complete the delivery as the EVRI system does not recognise your address details'.

The message goes on to say that 'in order to re-deliver your parcel as soon as possible' you need to update your details via a link in the message or by replying 'Y' to the text message. These messages are sent by criminals who have created websites which are used to gather personal and financial information or take payments.

If you receive one of these messages **do not** click on any links or respond in any way.

Suspicious or scam text messages can be reported by forwarding the message to **7726** .

Scam Alert – Doorstep callers

There have been reports locally of a trader offering to clean driveways, claiming to have leftover products from a neighbour's driveway. Trader stated it would be £2, however upon completion the trader advised that it was £2 per square foot and demanded over £1600.

While it might be tempting to agree to low prices being offered on the doorstep, think twice.

Never agree to have any work done as a result of a cold call, and don't be pressurised into having the job done immediately if you think work needs doing to your home, get quotes from 2 or 3 traders.

Ask friends and family for recommendations of traders who have carried out work for them. You can also check Suffolk Trusted Trader for traders that have been vetted and approved by Suffolk Trading Standards: https://trustedtrader.team/Suffolk/

Their advice is:

- **Never** deal with cold callers looking to undertake work on or around your property
- **Never** agree to have work done by somebody who is 'just passing' or take their word that it needs to be done at all
- **Never** allow a cold caller access to your home, roof or garden even if they are offering to do tasks for a small fee or free
- **Never** pay for work before it is completed and don't pay cash
- Ask for the full name & address from a trader before considering dealing with them, and never rely solely on a mobile phone number
- Ask for a written quotation detailing all the proposed work and a final price for the job BEFORE the work is started.

Report all doorstep callers to Suffolk Trading Standards via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

THE MESSENGER NINE LETTERS QUIZ

The first letter of each answer will spell out an anagram. What is it?

1. Who wrote “Orpheus of the Underworld”?
2. What has the chemical symbol Au?
3. Who had a hit with “Sunday Bloody Sunday”?
4. Who had a hit with “Smells like Teen Spirit”?
5. Who is the Norse God of Thunder?
6. Lincoln is the state capital of which US state?
7. Who is the Greek goddess of love?
8. What nut is used to make marzipan?
9. Which group had an album entitled “OK Computer”?
10. The answers are...?

Answers appear on page 55.

SUDOKU CHALLENGE

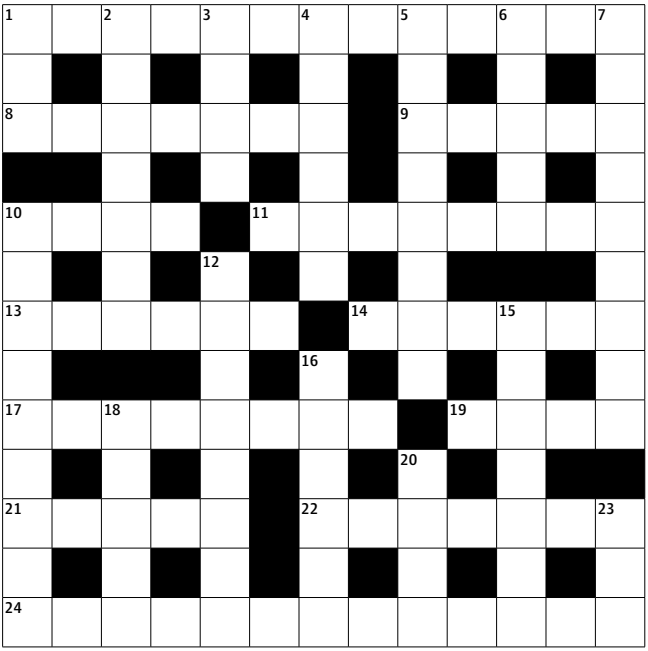
4	1		2					9
		9		1		3		
		6	4					
5		7		6				
	3			7			5	
				4		2		7
					4	8		
		3		2		1		
6					5		9	2

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

Last issue solution

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

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE



Across

1 Attempt to kill James I (9,4)
8 Carpenter's bits (7)
9 Rubber liquid (5)
10 Dutch South African (4)
11 Route around town (4,4)
13 Round white/cream root vegetable (6)
14 Pig (6)
17 In clandestine manner (2,3,3)
19 Pallid (4)
21 Brazilian dance (5)
22 Row (7)
24 Stuff (13)

Down

1 Carbon dioxide, e.g. (3)
2 Time after Hogmanay (3,4)
3 Egg (4)
4 Dilate (anag.) (6)
5 Faith (8)
6 Raffle (5)
7 Prep and mounting of dead animals for show (9)
10 Your health! (7,2)
12 Discontinuity and shift in fourth dimension – line dance (4,4)
15 Small falcon (7)
16 Cabal (6)
18 Mitre (anag.) (5)
20 Start (4)
23 Meadow (3)

Last issue solution

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

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NOTICES



CAKE SALE FOR BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION

We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who kindly donated cake and money to our "Homemade Bake Sale" in aid of the British Heart Foundation on Saturday 31st May. We made a staggering £552.72! We are very grateful for everyone's support and are continuing to raise money ahead of our "Thames Bridges Trek" in September. If you were unable to make it to the bake sale but would like to make a donation to this very worthy charity, please take a look at our JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/page/rebecca-emily-amy

Rebecca, Emily & Amy's Thames Bridges Trek

BARBECUE AND PIMM'S



As many of you may know Wortham is twinned with Hédé in Brittany. Members of the Association are not limited to the village of Wortham and live in surrounding villages and have enjoyed many an occasion with our French friends here and in France. We are now also twinned with Badbergen in Lower Saxony and have just had a lovely long weekend with the Germans hosted by the French, since the latter have been twinned with Badbergen for some years.

Our twinning association holds enjoyable fund-raising events from time to time and on July 13th at 2.00pm there is to be a Barbecue with Pimm's at Battleys Cottage on Wortham Ling.

If you are interested in joining the Twinning or would just like to come along for an enjoyable afternoon the tickets are £12.50 for an adult and £25.00 for a family of two adults and their children. There are 50 tickets in all and if you are interested, please email: Worthamandburgatetwinning@gmail.com

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Answers to the Connection Quiz on page 52.

1. OFFENBACH, 2. GOLD, 3. U2, 4. NIRVANA, 5. THOR, 6. NEBRASKA, 7. APHRODITE, 8. ALMOND, 9. RADIOHEAD. The anagram spells out ORANGUTAN

SOUTH HARTISMERE BENEFICE



Four years ago, on the 7th July I moved from my home in Bedford to Suffolk. A lot has happened since then. I arrived to be a curate and finished my training while we were in vacancy. My personal journey over those four years involved several moves, surgery, a son marrying, another moving out of home for the first time. When seeking my next steps, God clearly called me to stay here and I now stand alongside you all as Rector, at the beginning of a new chapter for the benefice.



In early June I prayer-walked, and at times prayer-cycled the benefice. I visited each church, praying at noon, the Lord's prayer. As I did this, God reminded me of a bible character -Nehemiah. Nehemiah was called by God to return to Jerusalem from his place of exile in Babylon, and to rebuild the city. When he first arrived, he walked the city walls, noting what work needed to be done. A very practical beginning, mapping the ground.

I felt that I too was mapping the ground, travelling the lanes, several I had not explored before. We have a beautiful and large benefice, with villages, farms, and small pockets of just a few cottages. Each person within its boundaries is known and loved by God and the church is called to show God's love and share this good news.

Nehemiah called the people of the city to start to rebuild. To work together, sharing the load. They lived in dangerous times and worked with hammers in one hand and sword in the other.

As God's people we want to see the kingdom of God built not with bricks and mortar but with love, joy, peace, generosity, kindness and goodness.

Like the people in Nehemiah's times, we need to work together. However, our tools are different from theirs. I wonder what the equivalent of their hammers would be today, and what of the sword. I wonder if our swords are the spiritual tools of studying God's word and prayer. These help us to discern the will of God for our lives and for the wider church. Our prayers cry out to God for the world in crisis, when we do not know humanly what can be done.

We gather on Sundays to worship and listen to God's word. Over the next months there will be new opportunities to meet to pray and to study God's word. Look out for details in our newsletters and in the local magazines.

Like the people in Nehemiah time, the early church stood together. We are told they met together often, shared everything, devoted themselves to prayer and the teachings of Jesus, and many were added to their number, daily.

As we gather, may we too see God's kingdom grow, both in our lives and the lives of others.

Lord, let your kingdom come, let your will be done.

Rev. Debbie

JULY 2025

Sunday 6th July	Thorndon	10.00am	Together @ 10
3rd Sunday after Trinity	Gislingham	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 13th July	Stoke Ash	10.30am	Worship for All
4th Sunday after Trinity	Thornham Parva	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 20th July	Mellis	10.30am	Holy Communion
5th Sunday after Trinity	Thorndon	10.30am	Holy Communion
	Gislingham	10.30am	Worship for All
	Thorndon	4.00pm	CONNECT
Sunday 27th July	Wetheringsett	10.30am	Worship for All
6th Sunday after Trinity	Yaxley	10.30am	Worship for All
	Thornham Magna	10.30am	Holy Communion

AUGUST 2025

Sunday 3rd August	Thorndon	10.30am	Worship for All
7th Sunday after Trinity	Gislingham	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 10th August	Stoke Ash	10.30am	Worship for All
8th Sunday after Trinity	Thornham Parva	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 17th August	Mellis	10.30am	Worship for All
9th Sunday after Trinity	Thorndon	10.30am	Holy Communion
	Gislingham	10.30am	Worship for All **(to include commemoration of the 80th anniversary of VJ Day)**
Sunday 24th August	Yaxley	10.30am	Benefice Holy Communion
10th Sunday after Trinity			
Sunday 31st August	Wetheringsett	10.30am	Benefice Holy Communion
11th Sunday after Trinity			

Telephone Church BCP Holy Communion is on Thursdays at 11.00am

Reverend Debbie Nicholls – Rector
rev.d.nicholls@gmail.com ✆ 07762 116 335

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LOCAL INFORMATION

BUS TIMETABLES

Gislingham Bus timetable

Route No. VC0001: Gislingham to Stowmarket (Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays)
Leaves Gislingham 09.45 / Arrives Stowmarket, Bury Street 10.26
Returns from Stowmarket, Bury Street 13.00 / Arrives Gislingham 13.41

Fareline Bus (Wednesdays 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 (Wednesdays 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
16 Jul, 13 Aug, 10 Sep, 8 Oct,
5 Nov, 3 Dec, 31 Dec.

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 - vacant Mellis - Vacant (TBC) 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	01379 783903
(Mellis - Helen Timmons) email: bookmellishall@gmail.com	01379 783449
(Thornham Parish Hall - Beth Fredrikssen-Jones) email: hallhire@thornhams.org	
Mellis Parish Council Chairperson (Lawrie Read) mellisparishcouncil@gmail.com	01379 788248
Mendlesham Health Centre	01449 767722
Member of Parliament - Adrian Ramsey adrian.ramsay.mp@parliament.uk	07534 933356
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

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