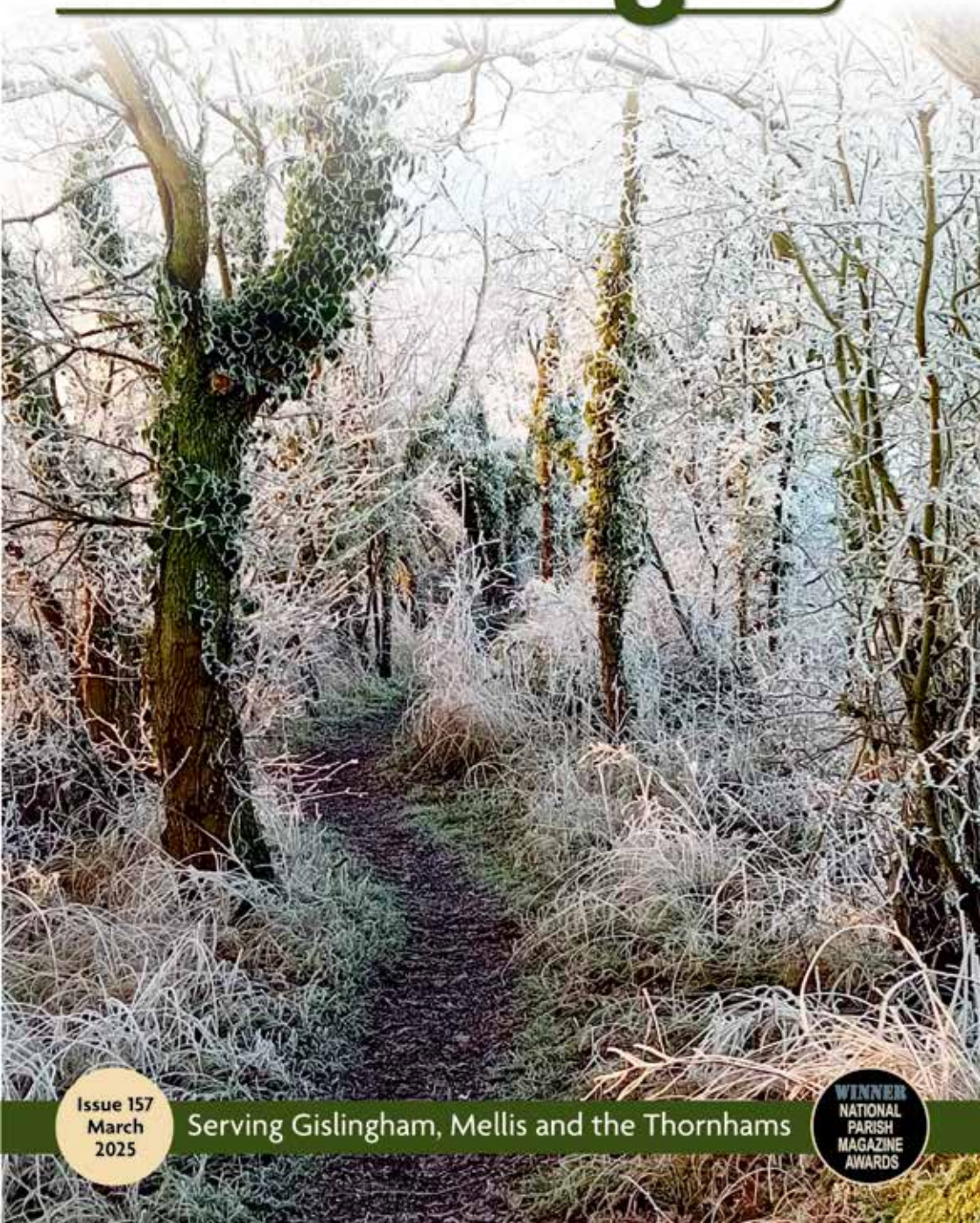
The Messenger



Issue 157
March
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:
www.facebook.com/themessengergismeltho

Next issue: April 2025
Copy deadline: Monday 17th March

E-mailed or hand-written submissions always welcome.

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

Digital copies of each issue can be downloaded from the Messenger website at:
www.the-messenger-online.com

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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 the March issue!

This month, we feature the opening of the new Thornham Walks footpath project; this pioneering project is the first of its kind in Suffolk!

Research regularly demonstrates that outdoor activities (including walking and gardening), the presence of plants and trees in outdoor and indoor public places, visits to parks and seeing natural views from a window can all lower stress hormone levels and improve adults' and children's mental health, well-being and productivity.

With March marking the start of Spring, we should be getting out to start our gardening jobs, or maybe just take a visit to Thornham Walks. We are so lucky to have this amenity on our doorsteps!

It also gives us the opportunity to do our little bit for Planet Suffolk! As individuals we may not be able to make much difference on a global scale, but we certainly can on a local level. Suffolk has, for years, had the ambition to be the 'Greenest County' in the country. Both Thornham and Gislingham have their Spring Litter Picks scheduled for Sunday 16th March at 10.00am. If you can spare an hour on this date, please pop along to lend your support. Further details on both these events appear in the magazine.

We can also all do a little bit in our own back gardens. It could be putting up bird tables, nest boxes, putting out food and water for birds and wildlife, planting wildflowers or building a hedgehog hotel. There are several organisations behind this initiative including: The Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Suffolk County Council and the RSPB. For ideas and information, go to: https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/actions

Last month, I mentioned the need for more volunteers in our villages. This month the Gislingham Speed Watch team are looking for volunteers. See page 11.

Last month, I also mentioned a "Special Offer" at the Gislingham Book Sale in February. If only I published the correct details of the offer! So, correctly this time - on Saturday 1st March, (details on page 4) all books will be on a "3 Books for £1" offer! But if you mention my name, I am sure you can get "3 books for £2." Please support his event – it is an important fundraiser for the 'Friends of St. Mary's Church'.

I hope you enjoy this issue!



Jeff Norman, Editor e) themessengereditorial@gmail.com

Cover photo: Gislingham footpath in the frost

DIARY & LOCAL EVENTS



Saturday 1st March: Book Sale
- Gislingham Village Hall: 10.00am – 12 noon. Books 50p each! (Or 3 for £1 this month!) + Tea, Coffee, Cake available!

Saturday 1st March: Musical Theatre Dance Workshop
- Gislingham Village Hall: 1.00pm – 3.00pm. See page 42 for full details.

Tuesday 4th March: Rural Coffee Caravan
- Mellis Memorial Hall: 10.00am – 12.00 mid-day.

Sunday 9th March: Breakfast Club – Talk by Robert Watson
- Thornham Parish Hall: 10.00am. See page 14 for details.

Saturday 15th March: Quiz Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: Doors open 7.00pm. Doors open at 7.00 pm. Entrance Fee £5.00. Bring your own Food, Drinks and Glasses.

Sunday 16th March: Gislingham Litter Pick
- Gislingham Village Hall: 10.00am – 11.00am. See page 12 for details.

Sunday 16th March: Thornhams Litter Pick
- Thornham Parish Hall: 10.00am.

Monday 17th March – Thursday 20th March: National Village Hall Week
- Thornham Parish Hall: 7.00pm. Continental Cinema every night from Monday to Thursday. More info at: films@thornhams.org

Wednesday 19th March: Gislingham WI: Speaker Jim Jarvie OBE
- 'Identifying, investigating and prosecuting international drug trafficking, money laundering and frontier fraud". Gislingham Village Hall 7.30pm. (Open meeting; guests £4 on the door)

Thursday 20th March: Mellis Memorial Hall AGM
- Mellis Memorial Hall: 6.30pm. See page 17 for details.

Friday 21st February 2025: Pub Night
- Gislingham Village Hall. Doors Open 5.00 pm / Last orders 9.45pm

Friday 21st March: Film Night – 'The Three Musketeers d'Artagnan'
- Thornhams Parish Hall: 7.30pm: £5. Booking: films@thornhams.org. See p.35.

Sunday 23rd March: Spring Fair
- Thornhams Parish Hall: 11.00am – 3.00pm. See page 31 for details.

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

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

Our next issue is April 2025. The "What's On" Diary deadline is: Monday 17th March

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: 07931 665 205

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

FRENCH CLASSES: Village Hall. Every Thursday 10.00am – 11.30am. Contact Karen 07952 908125 / fluent.fast@outlook.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

THORNHAM

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

Pilates Classes: Parish Hall. Tuesdays 10.00am - Pilates Seated & Standing (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

THORNHAM WALKS PIONEERING PATHS PROJECT



On January 29th, Julia Lady Henniker, wife of the late Lord Henniker, founder of Thornham Walks, cut the green ribbon to officially open the new, 'first of it's kind in Suffolk' accessible footpath at Thornham Walks that is made from 5,262 recycled tyres.

Children from Gislingham Primary School ran a fun-run along the new pathway, while the rest of the guests followed at a more leisurely pace. Also attending were Mid Suffolk District Council's Chair, Daniel Pratt, Leader, Andrew Mellen, and Cabinet Member for Environment, Culture & Wellbeing, Tim Weller.

Following the fun-run, the project partners and MSDC representatives answered questions from Gislingham Primary School's children, who are in the process of setting up a student eco-council, about the environment, climate change and pollution.

The footpath, which is about ¾ mile long and saw over 60,000 visitors in 2024, has been covered in an innovative material called Flexipave. Flexipave is made up of 50% recycled tyres and 50% aggregate and uses a non-toxic, BPA-free, environmentally friendly binder. In another up-cycling initiative, the old, damaged surface provided the foundation for the new footpath.

The new all-access surface was chosen as it will meet the needs of a wide profile of visitors to Thornham Walks, it is dementia-friendly, slip-resistant, porous, and easy on the joints, whether you walk or run. It has even been compared to a wood-sprung floor.

It is undoubtedly kinder to users, by reducing the risk of falls, enhancing physical activity, and reducing the potential for injuries, but it is also kinder too to the trees that grow along the path, as the flexible surface will move and adapt as the trees grow and spread their roots.

Scientific research estimates that climate changes have increased the amount of total rainfall by about 15%, with storm rainfall increasing 20% in intensity. The effects of this have been felt locally with recent flooding. Thornham Walks recognises the potential impacts of flooding upon future projects and is taking steps to build mitigation into project design. Flexipave is a porous surface that not only cleans the water passing through – removing significant amounts (up to 90%) of soluble phosphates and nitrates – whilst recharging surface water at speed to the soil

surface on its edges, where it enters the natural water table. This outcome makes the walking area more resilient to increases in rainfall, whilst responding to the increased frequency of rainfall associated with storms and wet winters, as predicted by the Met Office Science Manager.

It is hoped this innovative new footpath will encourage more people to visit and walk or 'Parkrun' at Thornham Walks, knowing they are doing this in a safe, accessible environment surrounded by the wonderful landscape of the Thornham Estate. Perhaps even visit for longer or walk further than before.



Time spent in nature is good for us physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Nature experiences give increased psychological wellbeing whilst walking in green space can reduce stress, anger, and anxiety, as well as enhance relaxation and restoration, all key to wellbeing.

Thornham Walks helps visitors to access nature, away from cars, and combustion. Thornham Walks is a destination everyone can walk, regardless of the weather, whatever their ability or disability. Why not come and check it out for yourselves?

In partnership with Thornham Settled Estate, Friends of Thornham Walks secured funding from Mid Suffolk District Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Community Development Fund, complemented by capital from Friends of Thornham Walks.

Josephine Maughan, Manager of Thornham Walks said: "This pioneering new footpath surface benefits visitors of all abilities and backgrounds, young and old alike. Its many qualities ensure a low maintenance surface which blends harmoniously with its surroundings. The project has been hard work for staff and volunteers alike, but the reward is worth it, securing our greatest asset for many years to come. We were incredibly grateful to receive voluntary help from Thornham Walks volunteers, volunteers from Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council; via CAS's Pro Help programme (Heyder Magalhães), and David Clarke of Hestur Ltd Consulting Engineers.

We also received a donation of nearly 40 tonnes of superb topsoil from British Sugar, (now Boughton Topsoil)."

Tim Weller, cabinet member for Environment, Culture and Wellbeing at Mid Suffolk District Council, said - "It is great to see the Pioneering Paths Project at Thornham Walks come to fruition. Providing ¾ of a mile of durable, looped footpath means this attractive woodland habitat is fully accessible for visitors to enjoy safely in all seasons for years to come. I am delighted that Mid Suffolk District Council was able to provide financial support to the Project, but I also want to thank the Friends of Thornham Walks and many additional volunteers who cleaned, cleared, dug - and provided catering and refreshments - to make this new asset possible.

For more information or an annual car park pass, please contact Josephine Maughan, Thornham Walks Manager, at: thewalks@thornhamestate.com, telephone 01379 831 242.

If you would like to join 'Friends of Thornham Walks' please email the Secretary at thewalks@thornhamestate.com

Winter opening hours are 9.00am - 4.00pm daily. On-site facilities include a tea-room, galleries, Victorian walled garden – home to Beyond the Wall charity, compost toilets, parking, including over-flow parking.



Spring

GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Get Together

For Senior Residents or anyone needing some Company

TEA, COFFEE, CAKES & MUSIC

FREE EVENT

Call 01379 788795 or email

jo@gislinghamparishcouncil.com to book a space

Gislingham Village Hall

12th April 10.00 – 12.00

GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL NOTES



The draft minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th January can be found on the Parish Council Website. These minutes are also affixed to the Parish council Noticeboard located outside the Village shop.

I would encourage all residents to view the Agendas and Minutes on the Gislingham Parish Council website at **http://gislingham.onesuffolk.net/** to keep appraised and up to date on items which are discussed at meetings by your Parish Councillors.

Time is set aside during these meetings for the public to voice any concerns that they may have in the village or comment on anything that has happened or is happening in the village.

The first point of contact for any matters relating to the Parish Council, is the Parish Clerk on **clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.com**

In January we, in association with Gislingham WI, were pleased to host a Winter Get Together, the idea being that residents, if alone, in need of company, or just wishing to socialise, could get together over free teas/coffees and cake on a regular basis. We also had singers in attendance for a jovial singsong.





This event was not only welcomed but also enjoyed by those that attended so we have agreed to hold these get togethers on a quarterly basis (see poster opposite for details of the next event on 12th April).

In addition, and Lest We Forget, we will be putting together a VE recall and celebration to be held at Gislingham Village Hall between 11 am and 4pm on Sunday 11th May. Details are not yet finalised, but hopefully this will include a sing along, mobile bar, Village Hall BBQ and Dave Harris's Hog Roast ----NOT TO BE MISSED!!

We are advised that there are still scammers around contacting individuals by phone pretending to be officials either from the Council or the Police advising that your Bank account has been hacked and they will give you details to securely put your money whilst it is investigated. THEY ARE NOT OFFICIALS as neither the Council or the Police will contact you in this way and THEY WILL NOT PUT YOUR MONEY IN A SECURE ACCOUNT AS IT IS A SCAM so, please be careful. More details can be found on page 55.

Christopher Tranter, Gislingham Parish Council Chair

Martin Roper
PHOTOGRAPHY

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GISLINGHAM SPEED WATCH: A NEIGHBOURHOOD EFFORT FOR SAFER ROADS

Gislingham Residents Unite to Protect Our Community!

Community Speed Watch (CSW) is more than just a program; it's a powerful community initiative that brings neighbours together to make our roads safer. By monitoring traffic speeds and reporting speeding vehicles, CSW volunteers are not only improving road safety but also fostering a stronger sense of community.

How Does CSW Work?

Trained volunteers use specialised equipment to measure the speed of passing vehicles. When a vehicle is detected exceeding the speed limit, its registration number is recorded. This information is then passed on to the police, who may issue warning letters or, in more serious cases, take further enforcement action.

The Benefits of CSW

- Safer Roads: Reduced speeding leads to fewer accidents and injuries.
- Improved Quality of Life: A quieter, safer neighbourhood enhances the well- being of residents.
- Community Empowerment: CSW empowers local people to take action and improve their community.
- Social Connection: Volunteers have the opportunity to connect with their neighbours and work towards a common goal.

Want to Join the Movement?

If you're passionate about road safety and want to connect with your neighbours, consider becoming a Community Speed Watch volunteer in Gislingham. It's a rewarding experience that can have a lasting impact.

To get involved, contact Steve Critchley at: s.j.critchley@btinternet.com

He will provide you with the necessary training and support.

Let's work together to build a stronger, safer community.

Steve Critchley – Gislingham Speed watch Co-ordinator







GISLINGHAM SPRING LITTER PICK SUNDAY 16th MARCH



10am start – for approx 1 hour

Please meet at the village hall

Hi-viz, grabbers and bags provided

Refreshments afterwards supplied

Once again, the Mendlesham Scout Troop will be organising the event this year. They are pleased to volunteer as it will help go towards their badges.

We are asking for your continued support on the day, as the Scouts will not be able to cover all the areas of the village to pick up the litter.

If you do require further information, please contact Martyn Bryant on 01379 788998/07900 147912.

NEWS FROM GISLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 15th March: Quiz Night
Doors open at 7.00 pm. Entrance Fee £5.00. Bring your own Food, Drinks and Glasses.

Friday 21st March: 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.

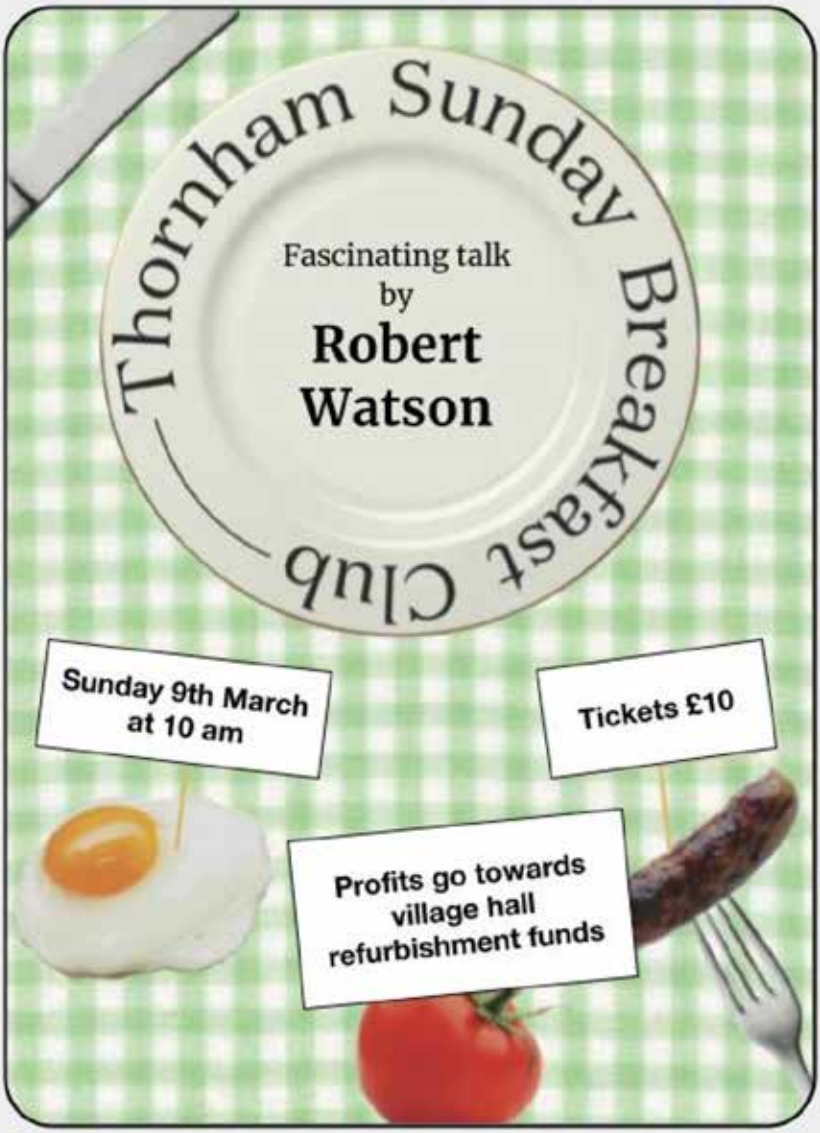
Saturday 26th April: Treasure Hunt
- Details to follow

Saturday 17th May: Quiz Night
Doors open at 7.00 pm. Entrance Fee £5.00. Bring your own Food, Drinks and Glasses.



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.



Enjoy a delicious breakfast in the friendly atmosphere of our Sunday Breakfast Club and hear more tales from Robert Watson's fascinating (and often hilarious) career training butlers all over the world.

Booking essential at breakfast@thornhams.org

NEWS FROM THORNHAM PARISH HALL



FUTURE EVENTS:

Sunday 9th March: Breakfast Club – More tales from Robert Watson's fascinating (and often hilarious) career, training butlers all over the world. 10.00am: £10 / Bookings: breakfast@thornhams.org

Sunday 16th March: Litter Pick at 10.00am

Monday 17th March to Thursday 20th March: NATIONAL VILLAGE HALL WEEK.
7.00pm: Continental Cinema every night from Monday to Thursday.
More info at: films@thornhams.org

Friday 21st March: Film Night – 'The Three Musketeers d'Artagnan' 7.30pm: £5.
Booking: films@thornhams.org

Sunday 23rd March: Spring Fair. 11.00am to 3.00pm

2nd, 3rd & 4th May: Arts and Craft Show

Friday 25th April: Film Night – tbc

Bank Holiday Monday 26th May: Special Afternoon Tea
- in aid of Ipswich Hospital Cancer Information Centre
- with fun events for children

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS:

Pilates Classes on Tuesdays 10.00am - Pilates gentle floorwork



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

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Mellis Memorial Hall Management Committee

Registered Charity No.1081393

Notice of

Annual General Meeting

6.30pm Thursday 20th March 2025

To be held at Mellis Memorial Hall

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approve minutes of AGM held 18th April 2024
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairmans report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Election of Committee for 2024/2025
7. Any other business

The AGM is an open meeting and members of the public are welcome to attend

https://www.facebook.com/MellisMemorialHall

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR VILLAGE HALL



THE BANK ARTS CENTRE... A BRIGHT NEW CHAPTER

The Bank Arts Centre is a non-for-profit community hub in Eye making the arts and digital accessible and inclusive to all. Based in a charming grade-II listed ex-Midlands Bank building, this volunteer-led creative centre offers a vibrant mix of exhibitions, live music, theatre, comedy, arts and digital workshops, all designed to engage and inspire. At the heart of their operations is a family and dog-friendly café, providing a welcoming space for community members to gather, share, and create. The Bank is dedicated to fostering positive and lasting change through creativity, community and learning.

Built in 1921, The Bank at 2 Castle Street, Eye, operated as a Midlands Bank, later becoming a HSBC. After nearly 100 years operating as a working bank, the branch permanently closed back in 2006 and remained untouched for the next 6 years. Until December 2012, when a group of 4 creatives - Rebecca Lyne, Christopher Parr, Ian and Donna Harvey - established Eyes Open CIC as a not-for-profit company driven to providing rural mid-Suffolk with inclusive access to the arts and learning. The team began leasing The Bank along with significant renovations to transform it into the Arts Centre it is today. With government funding and incredible donations from members of the community, Eyes Open CIC purchased The Bank on behalf of the community in 2015, ensuring the centre remained a safe, exciting and inspiring space for all to socialise and create. The founding Directors parted ways in 2016, leading CIC into some challenging years.

However, in 2022 The Bank started an exciting new chapter with a new leadership team of volunteer Directors – Jon Betts, Abbie Schug and Liam Hayes - coming together and committing to a vast re-development of the Centre. The team's significant contributions and fresh perspectives are already driving the Centre forward.

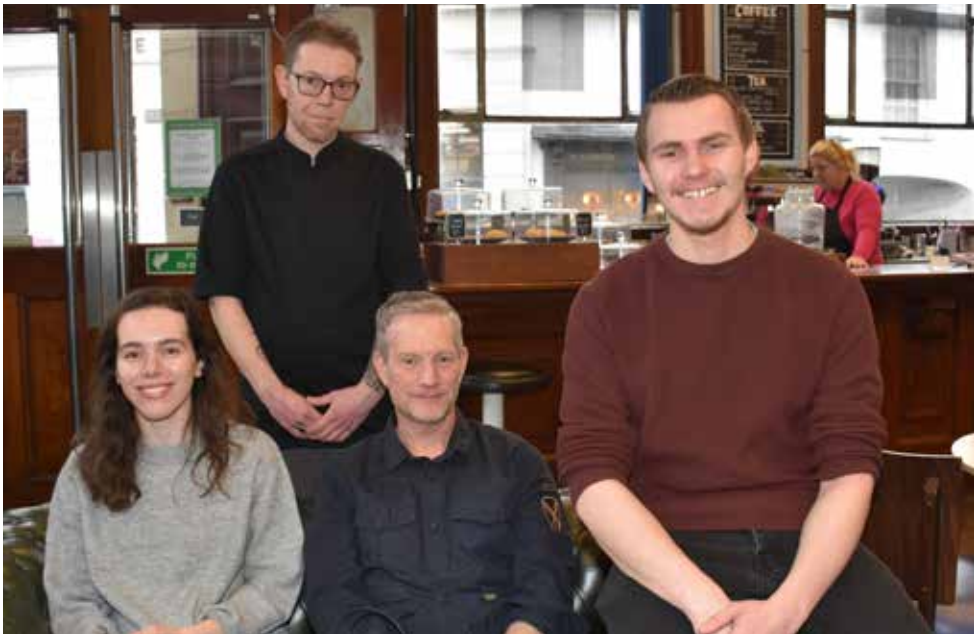
In Spring 2022, Jon Betts joined the team and established The Vault Digital Hub, an innovative project providing subsidised digital training and learning opportunities for young people aged 8-16. Collaborating with industry-standard tutors, The Vault has hosted multiple free school trips for Hartismere School and local primary schools, and offered hundreds of highly subsidised workshop places to local children. Jon was later appointed General Manager, overseeing the daily operations of the Centre and transforming all aspects of its functions.

In Summer 2022, local artist Abbie Schug joined to lead the re-development of the Centre's creative direction. A passionate advocate for the arts, Abbie has revitalised the exhibitions programme, ensuring The Bank remains a dynamic platform for local artists. She has curated a vibrant programme supporting regional artists and re-launched The Bank's annual Young Artist Award to recognise and nurture exceptional young creatives.

Gislingham resident, musician and tutor, Liam Hayes, joined the Board of Directors in December 2023. Liam is set to expand the Centre's music programme, focusing on supporting local and emerging musicians, providing uplifting experiences for the community, and attracting new audiences to The Bank.

Further exciting changes came in 2023 with Sean Sibthorpe joining the team as Volunteer Chef. Sean came to The Bank as a customer after moving to the area, and with a wealth of experience in the catering industry has now taken on role as Catering Manager. Sean works tirelessly to diversify the café's offerings, and since July 2024 has been serving an exciting new hot lunch menu 4 days per week. Advocating supporting small businesses through using locally sourced ingredients and providing high quality, healthy meals at an affordable price.

Together the team has achieved significant successes, including beginning to refresh the interior, welcoming a record number of visitors and taking tentative steps towards becoming financially



self-sustaining, running community projects with partner organisations to host community projects including Immersive town audio trail (Eastern Angles Theatre Company) and a summer exhibition for learning disabled artists (Suffolk Artlink), providing digital learning for over 500 children and young people, and being recognised at District and County level as a Cultural asset and commissioned by BMSDC to host a community open call exhibition. Finally in December 2024, celebrating The Bank's 12th anniversary.

The Bank Arts Centre thrives because of the dedication and passion of a small team of volunteers who share a love for the arts and a commitment to our rural community. Looking ahead, the new team have laid out ambitious plans for the coming years, focusing on substantial improvements to the Centre's facilities and launching innovative programmes that cater to the diverse interests of our community. However, the path to progress is not without its challenges. While the Centre is slowly becoming more self-sustaining and has secured some funding packages needed for these essential works, to maintain current offerings and work towards expanding services in the future, they are in need of much greater additional financial and volunteer support. Particularly volunteers to help with Daytime Café, evening events, exhibition installation and marketing. If you feel you have any time to spare and would like to get involved, please do get in touch.

Despite challenges, the team are committed to re-building it into the community hub Eye deserves. The Bank Arts Centre is more than just a venue; it is a community cornerstone where creativity, learning, and collaboration flourish. As they navigate this exciting new chapter, they invite you to join them in making a lasting impact. Whether through volunteering, attending events, or simply enjoying a coffee at the café, every bit of involvement helps this cultural hub to thrive. With the collective effort of volunteers and the backing of our community, The Bank is poised to continue its mission of enriching lives through the arts and learning for years to come.

Find out more at - www.thebankeye.org ***Contact us at - info@thebankeye.org***
2 Castle Street, Eye, IP23 7AN
General Opening - Wednesdays to Saturdays. 10.30am–3.30pm. Free WIFI & Dog Friendly



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THE RAILWAY TAVERN

MELLIS

Saturday 1st March 9PM ***THE KILLER TOMATOES***

Norfolk's Punk, Ska, Pop, Rock and Indie cover specialists! Always a fun night

Thursday 6th March 7.30pm ***POP MUSIC QUIZ***

A fun music quiz. 1960's to 2000's. Maximum six people per team. £2 per person.

Saturday 8th March 8.30pm ***KARAOKE DISCO***

Musical merriment with Video Disco & Karaoke

Thursday 13th March 8.30pm ***OPEN MIC NIGHT***

Calling all musicians and singers. Come along and have a go on stage.

Sunday 16th March 5pm ***MURPHEY'S LORE***

Upbeat Irish Jigs & Music for St Patricks Weekend from one of the best around.

Thursday 20th March 7.30pm ***PUB QUIZ***

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

Thursday 27th March 7.30pm ***BINGO***

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GISLINGHAM HIGH STREET

This month we feature six photographs; some were produced as postcards, taken mainly in the early 1900's. Thanks to Leigh Smith and 'The Gislingham History Hub' Facebook page for some of the information provided.



Mr Kerry the shopkeeper, walking past on the left, Walnut Tree Cottage and The Farm. This photo was taken between 1900 and 1920.

Below: Dring's Cottage, High Street in 1949

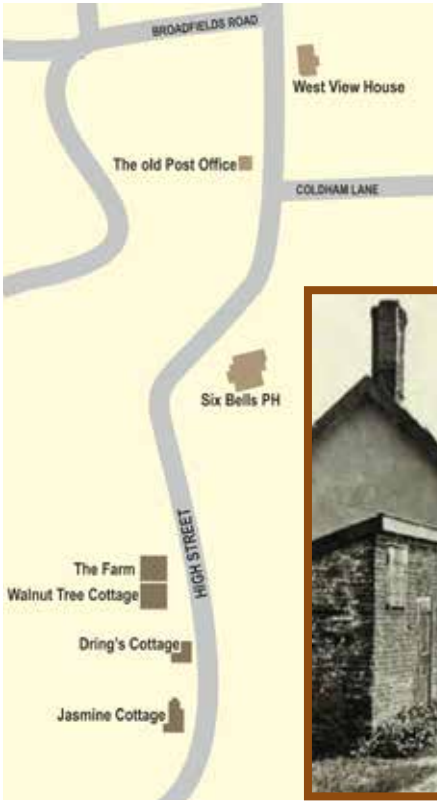


Below: Jasmine Cottage, High Street, c1900.



Right: The old Post Office (next door to the current village shop). This was taken in 1908, when John Kerry was the postmaster, grocer, and draper, selling everyday items. He also made door to door deliveries with a horse and cart.

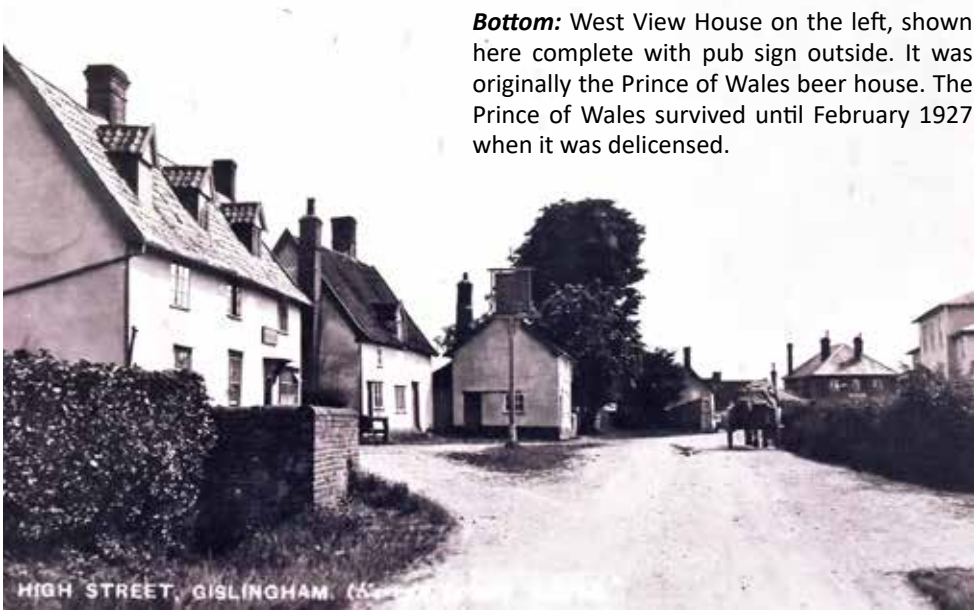




Left: Map of the locations shown on the postcards.

Below: Six Bells pub: This 1915 postcard shows the Six Bells pub at the end of the High Street. Charles Knott was the landlord at the time.





Bottom: West View House on the left, shown here complete with pub sign outside. It was originally the Prince of Wales beer house. The Prince of Wales survived until February 1927 when it was delicensed.



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GISLINGHAM GARDENING, ART & PRODUCE SHOW (GISGAPS) - SATURDAY 9TH AUGUST 2025

Following on from last year's successful Gislingham Gardening, Art & Produce Show, where we saw in excess of 100 entries, we are delighted to announce that the event will be repeated this year on Saturday 9th August at Gislingham Village Hall.



We will be reinstating the Cottage Garden Trophy this year and a few of last year's categories will be altered to keep things interesting. So please remember to get planting in readiness!

More details to follow in subsequent editions of the Messenger but if you have any questions please contact the team at GISGAPS@gmail.com. You can also follow our Facebook page for updates (search for Gislingham Gardening, Art & Produce show on Facebook).

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NATURE NOTES by Darrel Charles



Hello everyone, welcome back to Nature Notes

As we've all had to endure some rather cold and gloomy days lately, I thought I'd start this month's piece with photos of some colourful avian visitors to my garden. The cold weather has brought out many of the usual suspects to my feeders, such as Blue Tits, but I've also had some less frequently seen birds fly in, including both male and female Green Woodpeckers and a cock Pheasant. The woodpeckers are especially welcome as they seek out insects in lawns to eat. My own lawn is home to a lot of ants, and they do make a mess of it in the summer when they begin their excavations. In winter, ants go into a dormant state, a kind of suspended animation, in the deepest parts of their nests. Fortunately for me, ants are a favourite food of Green Woodpeckers - I've seen it reported that a woodie can eat up to 2,000 ants in a single day. I don't known how successful the woodies are at catching the dormant ants but they certainly give it a good try. As a by-product of their efforts, they also aerate the lawn with their long pointed beaks, so a win-win for me. The woodie pictured here is a male bird, as identified by the red moustache-like stripe on his head. The stripe on the female bird is black.







At this time of the year, Blue Tits are involved in a fight to survive. Their bodies only weigh some 10 grams and their ability to retain heat on a cold winter night depends greatly on them finding sufficient food during the day.

The Common Pheasant exhibits what is known as "sexual dimorphism", ie: the male and female birds look very different. The male, shown here, is very colourful and larger than the female that has very dull colouration. The birds are very common in the fields surrounding our villages but rather less so in our gardens. Pheasants have a loud and distinctive call that sounds like a rusty old tap being turned (really!).

In early February, I spent a couple of nights on the coast at Aldeburgh and was very lucky to enjoy some beautifully clear days and nights. This photo was taken on one of those nights, shortly after sunset, and shows the famous Scallop sculpture on the shingle beach. Overhead and to the right of the sculpture the constellation of Orion can be seen in the east.



Back home in Gislingham, we had some clear night skies at the end of January when I set up my telescope and camera. This time I was trying to photograph the Jellyfish nebula, so called because its shape resembles the head of a jellyfish with its tendrils falling away underneath. This is a very faint object indeed and required an exposure of 4 hours to bring out the details. This nebula is thought to be the result of a star exploding some 35,000 years ago. The nebula is huge - it's estimated to be 70 light years across - and lies around 5,000 light years from Earth in the constellation of Gemini.



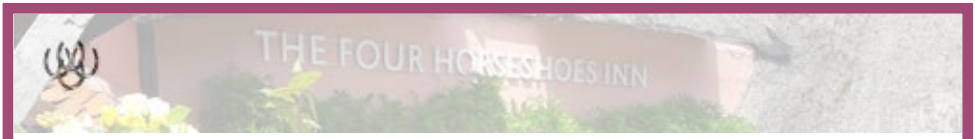
Finally, I'm sure that we've all noticed and admired the return of Snowdrops that are gracing our roadside verges, especially along Thornham Road near Thornham Walks. These beautiful harbingers of spring can also be seen in St Mary's churchyard in Gislingham, along with swathes of bright yellow Winter Aconites. And if that wasn't enough, early daffodils are making an appearance too!



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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APPLE CAKE

This month our recipe from Gislingham WI is a Mary Berry recipe.

Ingredients:

- 225g self-raising flour
- 1 level tsp baking powder
- 225g caster sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ½ tsp almond extract
- 150g butter, melted
- 250g cooking apples, peeled and cored
- 25g flaked almonds



Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3. Lightly grease a deep 20cm loose-bottomed cake tin.
- Measure the flour, baking powder, sugar, eggs, almond extract and melted butter into a bowl. Mix well until blended, then beat for a minute.
- Spread half this mixture in a 20cm loose-bottomed cake tin.
- Thickly slice the apples and lay on top of the mixture in the tin, piling mostly towards the centre.
- Using 2 dessert spoons, roughly spoon the remaining mixture over the apples.
- Sprinkle with the flaked almonds.
- Bake in the preheated oven for 1¼-1½ hours until golden and coming away from the sides of the tin.





Note: The cake can be frozen

Gislingham WI meets on the third Wednesday of every month at Gislingham Village Hall, 7.30pm. If you would like more details, please phone Margaret on: 01379 783903.

A CIRCULAR WALK FROM REDGRAVE VIA THE ANGLES WAY

O/S Map: 230 / Distance: approx. 6.5 kms/4 miles



Redgrave is twinned with the town of Tinteniac in France. There are approximately 220 homes in the village, 50 of which are listed and many are thatched. The centre of the village is marked by "The Knoll", an attractive village green with an historic oak tree and a pond which provides a home to wild ducks and other wildlife. Here you will see the book exchange in the central building.

This was our Boxing Day Walk, so we didn't want to travel too far. This is a mixed walk of some road and footpaths and also skirting the Redgrave and Lopham Fen via the Angles Way.



We parked up near the Cross Keys pub by the village green. If looking at the pub, take the road to the right signpost to Diss & Wortham and on a separate sign the Activity Centre. Head out of the village past some very old houses. Ignore the first footpath and continue until you reach the second FP sign which is between some houses and opposite the Activity Centre and Football Ground. Continue along this footpath and you will pass an old sewerage system. Keeping the hedge to your left, you will walk through a small dog's leg and still with the hedge to your left, continue along the footpath.



At the end of the field, go through a gap in the hedge and continue across the field towards the left-hand gap in another hedge. Once through, you will see an old black Nissan style hut to your left. At the end of the footpath, go over a wooden bridge and turn right onto the road and continue for about 1.5 kms going past Pond Farm and, as you approach Willow Dale, take the footpath on the left. (The sign also points to the Angles Way, but do not follow).



Cross over the metal bridge and turn left. You are now on the Angles Way, do not enter Redgrave & Lopham Fen. Continue

along this path. At the wooden bridge and sluice, check out the information board with details of inhabitants on the fen. The footpath that goes over the bridge was currently closed due to dangerous trees. The Angles Way is the footpath that is closed, so we have joined the Waveney Trail footpath. As you approach a gate, take the railway sleeper bridge and continue until you reach a metal gate and kissing gate. The sign in front of the gate is for the Waveney Trail and a disc sign for Angles Way. You may see horses in the field ahead. Take the path to your right and continue past the water works which is on your left. As you reach a sharp left-hand bend in the path, although not allowed to go straight ahead, but just past the 'Keep Out' sign is the source of the River Waveney. Continue along the path which bears left and continue past two metal gates now exiting the Redgrave & Lopham Fen. Continue to the road.

Cross the road and continue up the track passing the pink house on your left and head for a small opening straight ahead onto a footpath. Continue until you reach the road. You may be able to see an old American car which is housed in a white tent in the property next to the road. Turn right and return along the road to the Cross Keys.

The Cross Keys is still owned by the community, but now has a tenant. The Cross Keys is well known for the selection of beers. There is a good menu and it is very relaxing in the pub.



We wondered why there is no church in the village, although there is the small 'All Saints' chapel, but the actual grade 1 listed ancient church is about a mile out of the village on the road you started the walk. If you wish to visit the church, best to drive there.

St Marys has an amazing history. I was very lucky to bump into two local dog walkers who were able to give me some personal insight of St Marys. They told me the church was located outside the village as it serviced the local owner of Redgrave Hall, Sir Nicolas Bacon in the 16thc.

Redgrave Hall was used by the American and British military during the 1st world war for a hospital and POW camp. They left it in such a state that it was demolished in 1946.

Sometime ago a lady was at the alter in the church and the floor collapsed opening up the crypt. For a period of time, the local residents were allowed to visit the crypt. It is only open for about six services a year, plus funerals, weddings and community events. If you do want to look inside, then it will be necessary to contact the keyholder.

St Marys is now managed by the Church Conservation Trust. They have invested about a million pounds to renovate the church to its current condition. There is a large graveyard including War Graves and the trust are currently marking out the graves to help relatives identify where their ancestors are located.

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OUT & ABOUT WITH THE GISLINGHAM VARIETY CLUB!



At some point you may have come across the Gislingham Variety Club. Perhaps you've read about us, or come along to one of our twice-yearly shows.

But, are you aware that recently we have spread our wings and ventured out of Gislingham?



Whilst preparing for our 1940's show ("Doorsteps, Doodlebugs and D-Day") last April, we were invited to join the celebrations/promotion for the re-opening of Diss museum. So dressed up in our 1940's clobber, we were part of a parade walking along Diss's Mere Street. We were alongside other historical figures including suffragettes, flower power folk, some Russian revolutionaries, and Churchill himself! It was a beautiful sunny day and we really enjoyed ourselves.

Later in the summer we were invited to sing at a 1940's day put on by The Mid-Suffolk Light Railway, (also affectionately known as The Middy) near Wetheringsett. Again, we dressed up and sung some of the songs from our show. We had a really lovely time and a very interesting look around after our performance, making new friends and connections.

The Middy team must have liked what they heard, because we were invited back in December! This time to sing Christmas carols to the families waiting to go on the Santa express. We wore Victorian clothing, but as it was freezing cold, there were plenty of thermals being worn under those long skirts! In between each performance, we dashed to the tea bar for welcome hot drinks and pasties!

Again, we had a wonderful time. The funniest moment for us was the train blowing out a dense cloud of steam during our singing - we couldn't see the audience and they couldn't see us!!

Earlier in December, we had worn our Victorian outfits to sing carols at Eye. This was for the switching on of the town's Christmas lights, by Father Christmas! We sung a variety of traditional and more modern carols. It was another brilliant event.



More recently, we were back in Gislingham village hall at this January's get together for older residents. We joined forces with the JS singers. All the guests and performers had a good time. There were delicious cakes and hot drinks enjoyed by all. We sung a variety of songs from different decades, whilst encouraging everyone present to join in.

So, it's been a fantastic time to have been part of the GVC. Lots of friendship, fun and laughter!

If you would like to become part of the GVC, in whatever capacity - on stage, back stage, front of house, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Our email is: gislinghamvariety@gmail.com

Watch this space for our next show!!

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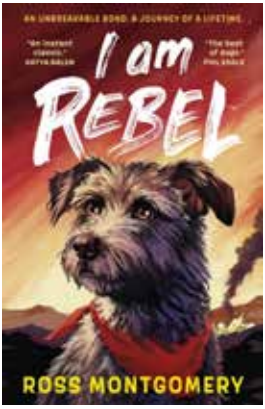
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DI'S BOOK BLOG



"I Am Rebel" by Ross Montgomery ★★★★★ 5/5

(N.B. This review has spoilers)



I was in Waterstones and noticed this book on display by the cashiers' counter. The cashier told me that it was voted Waterstones' children's book of the year 2024.

He also cheerfully informed me that he really enjoyed reading this book for himself. (And, reassured me that the hero is still alive at the end!). So, I took the plunge, bought a copy, and read it. I wasn't disappointed.

"I Am Rebel", is a wonderful, captivating tale about a dog called Rebel. Its focus is Rebel's absolute love and loyalty to his owner - Tom who is 12. It isn't too clear when it is set, but I think it's about the 17th century.

Rebel lives a peaceful, happy life with Tom and his parents on the family sheep farm. However, everything changes when Tom decides to lie about his age and join the growing rebellion against the king, so he runs away leaving Rebel safely at home. Except that Rebel has different ideas and he decides to follow Tom, to bring him home.....

What follows is an exciting account of Rebel's adventures, escapades and near misses along the way. He meets other animals, some humans, he makes friends, and enemies. (Thankfully, the story doesn't descend into a Disneyesque cuteness!) It tells of the real physical and emotional encounters and hardships, that Rebel and his companion(s) face along the way.

But what I like most about this is that it is all written from Rebel's point of view, in a totally believable way - his words, thoughts, feelings, and emotions. The author obviously know, understands and likes dogs.

Throughout the story, Rebel is always hopeful and optimistic, even at the hardest of times, that he will be reunited with Tom.

It does have a happy ending, Tom and Rebel are reunited and Rebel becomes an unexpected hero.

Despite the book being aimed at 9 - 11 years, this 58-year-old thoroughly enjoyed reading it! Hope you and your children do too!

Di Herbert



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TERRAPIN NEWS



On Tuesday 11th December Mid Suffolk District Council approved and adopted an Anti-Social Behaviour Policy that would ensure a consistent approach towards tackling such cases across the various teams: Housing, Communities, Environmental Health, Police, Neighbourhood Teams, Domestic Abuse Workers.

The District Council recognises that it plays a vital role in keeping people safe across the district and reducing A-S Behaviour in all its forms. With our tenants especially we recognise the need to demonstrate the joined-up approach that we take.

Mid Suffolk regularly reviews and revises its policies and a policy such as the A-SB Policy is only the tip of the iceberg in relation to the work that is carried out as policies are implemented.

A phrase I often hear from officers is that Mid Suffolk is a "learning council." This means it is committed to "constantly evaluating and improving its policies, procedures, and services based on feedback and new information. This approach ensures that the council remains effective and responsive to the needs of the community." This is an internationally recognised concept, one that embraces staff development, community engagement, innovation and adaption, sharing knowledge and good practice.

The week before I spent the day with an Anti-Social Behaviour Focus Group, that included tenants, their board representatives, field officers and managers. For me it was an insight into how community engagement works in practice and how it can inform better policy making and responses. There were some painful experiences recounted, some could and had been resolved, some were intractable and ongoing.

As part of its community engagement, Mid Suffolk has employed an independent researcher, Acuity to investigate our Tenancy Services. Once an A-SB case has been reported, Acuity contacts the victim/complainant to ask how satisfied they were with the service they received. No one was satisfied with the ease of reporting, everyone was satisfied with the case officer they were engaged with, but only 50% were satisfied with: how they were kept informed, how easy A-SB was to deal with, and the outcome.

This was discussed at length in the forum, key issues identified and explored, and what actions could be taken by the Housing Team to address them.

Firstly, a Tenant's Handbook available online and as a hard copy, it was acknowledged that not everyone has access to or is comfortable using digital services. This handbook would explain clearly the process and establish one point of contact. There would also be guidance on what makes a good neighbour.

Secondly training for our officers, emotional and wellbeing support is a skill. Officers need to be nonjudgemental and be able to empathise with the complainant.

Finally, Housing Officers would be allocated specific areas, about 500 homes, as their "patch." This sounds to me like quite a challenge, but I am assured this will provide a continuity of experience for our tenants. The majority of whom will not recourse to A-SB services.

Throughout the day tenants were engaged and contributed positively to developing ideas. For me the day was about how good solutions were arrived at by working with people not by imposing them from above.

Rowland Warboys MSDC Cllr. Gislingham Ward March 2025

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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 14th March, Friday 9th May, 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/

GISLINGHAM PLAYGROUP



We provide a safe, warm, friendly and caring setting for children aged 2-5 years, in a purpose built building on the same site as Gislingham CEVCP School, with whom we work closely to provide an excellent education.



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Afternoon 12.45pm to 3.45pm

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1st Mendlesham
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Cotton Village Hall	Mondays	7:20 p.m.
Gislingham Village Hall	Wednesdays	9:15 a.m.
Gislingham Village Hall	Wednesdays	10:15 a.m.
Westhorpe Village Hall	Wednesdays	12:15 p.m.
Gislingham Village Hall	Thursdays	7:10 p.m.

TOTAL FITNESS (45 mins):

Gislingham Village Hall	Thursdays	6:15 p.m.

GENTLE FITNESS (45 mins)

Westhorpe Village Hall	Fridays	10:00 a.m.

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TIP OFF, RIP OFF!



Police are urging Suffolk residents to be cautious and aware of fraudulent calls reporting suspicious activity on their bank accounts.

In January Suffolk Constabulary received at least four reports of residents in the county receiving calls, supposedly from a Suffolk police officer, reporting fraudulent activity on their bank accounts.

The victims were given officers' names and collar numbers and are asked to contact police to verify these details.

For more details about checking police officers' identities, please visit: www.suffolk.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/how-to-check-an-officers-identity

A police officer should never:

- Ask you for your bank details or PIN
- Ask you to transfer funds to another account
- Ask you to hand over cash or bank cards to a courier
- Ask you to pay a fine or a fee to them or a third party over the phone or online
- Ask you for access to your computer, passwords or log on details over the phone or online
- Ask you to register personal details in an attachment or website online
- Ask you to 'assist' in an investigation by doing any of the above
- State that you are committing a crime by not complying
- Communicate in an abusive, threatening or coercive manner.



THE MESSENGER CONNECTION QUIZ

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

1. Released in 1953, the Biblical epic “The Robe” starring Richard Burton was the first film to be made in which format?
2. Which drinks producer has been the official sponsor for the UEFA Champions League, the Rugby World Cup and in 2016 the Formula One Championship?
3. On 7th September 1776, an unsuccessful attack on a British ship in New York harbour by the American vessel Turtle was the first wartime use of which craft?
4. In 1936, J Arthur Rank collaborated with a local building tycoon to construct which film studios, later famous for the “Bond” and “Carry on” franchises?
5. Used to control mild to moderate pain, what is the world’s most commonly taken opiate?
6. Reaching No.7 in 1968, what was the title of Glen Campbell’s first UK chart hit?
7. What is the common name for dilute acetic acid?
8. Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison and Jimi Hendrix are all in the infamous 27 Club, being 27 when they died - which British singer joined the club in 2011?
9. Augusta is the capital of which US state?
10. What connects all 9 answers?

Answers appear on page 59.

SUDOKU CHALLENGE

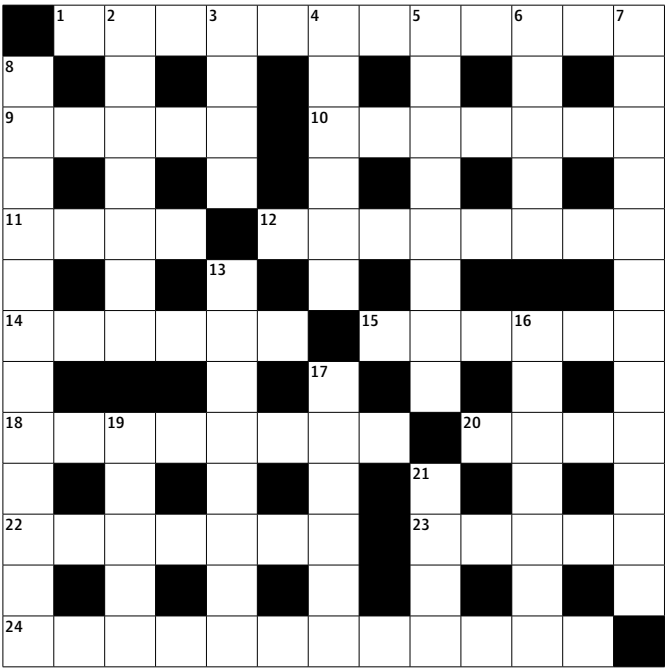
	3						4	2
9				7		3		
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5			6	4			1	
6				3				5
	7			1	5			3
		6	2					4
		4		5				8
2	5						9	

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

Last issue solution

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

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE



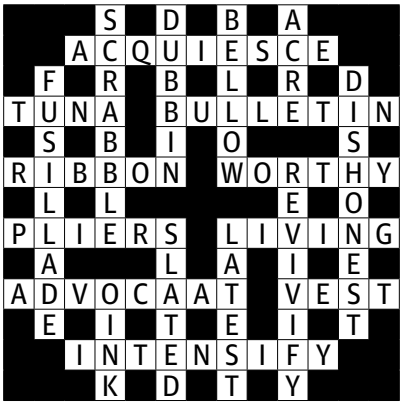
Across

1 Relaxing location to sit (7,5)
9 Posh people, in UK slang (5)
10 Deliberate (7)
11 Viable project (4)
12 Fiery curry (8)
14 Irrigates (6)
15 Disintegrate (6)
18 Festering (8)
20 Mendacious individual (4)
22 Space indicated with a 'P' (7)
23 Pause (3-2)
24 Arrest conmen (anag) – protest (12)

Down

2 Unconventional (7)
3 Judas's act of betrayal (4)
4 Table cloth? (6)
5 US-born, London-educated crime writer Raymond ___, d. 1959 (8)
6 Declare invalid (5)
7 Treatment using x-rays, gamma rays or subatomic particles (12)
8 It's meant to be overheard (5,7)
13 Half or third? (8)
16 Brainless (7)
17 Burden (6)
19 Online discussion site (5)
21 Guilty – or not? (4)

Last issue solution



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NOTICES

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the quiz night on Saturday 18th January at Gislingham Village Hall in memory of Jack and to raise money for the Teenage Cancer Trust.

We would also like to thank everyone who attended, local businesses who generously supported our raffle and Malthouse Security for kindly sponsoring the event.

We raised a fantastic £1,620 which will be used to help and support teenagers in East Anglia.

This year is the 10th anniversary of Jack's passing and since we started fundraising for TCT we have raised a total of £30,042.16 - all given in Jack's memory.



We are so grateful for everyone's generous support.

Kevin & Julie Cook *https://www.teenagecancertrust.org/*

HARTISMERE SCHOOL: CLASS OF 1985 REUNION

I am organising a school reunion this year for pupils from Hartismere High School, who left the school in 1985. This year will be 40 years since we left school and I thought it was a good time to try and get as many of us back together, so I am asking for your help. I'm asking for any pupils who left Hartismere in 1985 to contact me via email at:

houlddeb@aol.com for details of the reunion being held in May of this year (2025)

Debbie Houldey (was Debbie Lockwood at High school)

WANTED We are looking for a pianist/organist or someone who could accompany the hymns for our services once or twice a month. We currently have a service on the first and third Sunday at 10.30 in St. Mary's church, Gislingham. If you can help, please contact the churchwarden, Ann Cottee on 01379 788633.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF NIGEL FILBY (1962-2025)

We are sorry to report that Nigel Filby, who was a Gislingham resident for most of his life, passed away peacefully at his home in Diss after many years of health struggles. Nigel's funeral took place on 25th February at West Suffolk Crematorium. Donations in Nigel's memory can be made to the British Heart Foundation using this link: https://nigelfrankfilby.muchloved.com ***Jo Clifford***

Answers to the Connection Quiz on page 56.

1. CINEMASCOPE, 2. HEINEKEN, 3. SUBMARINE, 4. PINEWOOD STUDIOS, 5. CODEINE, 6. WICHITA LINEMAN, 7. VINEGAR, 8. AMY WINEHOUSE. 9. MAINE, 10. THE LETTERS "INE" IN SEQUENCE.

SOUTH HARTISMERE BENEFICE



"Then Jesus said to him, 'Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, "Come; for everything is ready now." But they all alike began to make excuses. …".

In summer 2023 I received a letter asking me if I would be available on 27th October as I was to be one of the guests to meet the king Charles III to thank me for my support for the opening of Priscilla Bacon Lodge in Norwich (not that I thought I deserved any recognition). When the time came, I sent a very feeble apology which read…. "I am sorry I cannot come, for my house has flooded and I have no shoes". It sounds a rather pathetic excuse, doesn't it? Last April 2024 I received an invite to a garden party at Windsor as a thank you for my contribution to scouting (this was more of a surprise as my scouting exploits deserve no recognition, it's just what scouts do!). Yet again I had to give my apologies … it read "I am sorry, I will be at work and will be travelling that day and therefore I will not be able to attend." Another weak excuse. I have only one more opportunity to decline after which I will not be re-invited. Now I know that His Majesty the King will not have been phased by my nonattendance, as the name of Tim Rowe will not even be known to him and, therefore, he will have felt no disappointment. The disappointment and regret are all mine, but I hold out for one more invite and one more chance to accept the invite.

In the quote from the parable above, Jesus is comparing the kingdom of Heaven to that of a man who holds a great feast where the invite is issued but the excuses follow. I guess we are all guilty of sometimes looking for excuses why we allow other things to get in the way of our Christian life, it is almost as if obstacles and temptations are deliberately placed in our way to make it harder than perhaps it should be to lead a 'godly' life. Although being a Christian is not just about going to church, I will admit that some Sunday mornings in the winter when I get up and face the prospect of a cold and drafty church, one where you see your breath as you utter forth an attempt to belt out the hymns with great gusto, the temptation to stay by the open fire, a hot coffee and the Sunday Times is never far away.

But unlike my invite to the next Windsor Garden party, the invite from Jesus is a reoccurring and life-long invitation, even if we think we are undeserving and unworthy and even if we accept the invite and then wander off in some other direction. You see Jesus knows us all and God says through Jeremiah "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you," and cares for us and will wait patiently until we accept the invitation to welcome Him into our lives. His invitation is not a once in a lifetime opportunity, it is the invitation for the opportunity of a life ever after.

Tim Rowe, Lay Elder / Church Warden

From the Parishes: In loving memory of Brent Lucraft (Thornham Magna)

Reverend Canon Susan Loxton
Rural Dean of the Hartismere & Hoxne Deanery
revloxton@gmail.com ✆ 01379 388 493

Reverend Debbie Nicholls
Assistant Curate
rev.d.nicholls@gmail.com 01379 309 953

Find us on Facebook:
South Hartismere Churches

Sunday 2nd March	Thorndon	10.00am	Together @ 10
Sunday next before Lent	Gislingham	10.30am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 5th March	Yaxley	7.00pm	Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes
Ash Wednesday			
Friday 7th March	Gislingham	10.30am	World Day of Prayer
Sunday 9th March	Stoke Ash	10.30am	Worship for All
1st Sunday of Lent	Thornham Parva	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 16th March	Mellis	10.30am	Holy Communion
2nd Sunday of Lent	Thorndon	10.30am	Holy Communion
	Gislingham	10.30am	Worship for All
	Thorndon	4.00pm	CONNECT
Sunday 23rd March	Wetheringsett	10.30am	Worship for All
3rd Sunday of Lent	Yaxley	10.30am	Worship for All
	Thornham Magna	10.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 30th March	Stoke Ash	10.30am	Benefice Holy Communion
4th Sunday of Lent			
Mothering Sunday			

Telephone Church BCP Holy Communion is on Thursdays at 11.00am

South Hartismere Electoral Rolls

This year all the parish churches in the South Hartismere Benefice (Gislingham, Mellis, Stoke Ash & Thwaite, Thorndon with Rishangles, Thornham Magna, Thornham Parva, Wetheringsett cum Brockford and Yaxley) will need to draw up new Electoral Rolls. Every person who wishes to have his or her name entered on the new Roll, whether it is entered on the present Roll or not, is requested to apply for enrolment not later than: 1st of May 2025

The new Roll will take effect on 14th May 2025.

Any lay person is entitled to have his or her name entered on the roll, if –

(a) is baptised, (b) is aged 16 or over, and (c) has made one of the following three declarations and duly applied for enrolment.

The first declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it and is resident in the parish.

The second declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it, is not resident in the parish, but has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

The third declaration is that the person is a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and is also a member of the Church of England and has attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

Application Forms for enrolment can be obtained from the church, from the Electoral Roll Officer. In order to be entitled to attend the annual parochial church meeting and to take part in its proceedings, you must return the Application Form for enrolment by the 1st of May.

Why should I request that my name is added to the Electoral Roll?

Being on the Church Electoral Roll is a way of demonstrating your willingness to help shape the future of the Church, not just locally, but nationally and even internationally. It also enables you to participate and vote in the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** (APCM)

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
26 Mar, 23 April, 21 May, 18 Jun, 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 - Ann Cottee Mellis - Vacant (TBC) Thornham Magna and Thornham Parva - James Fawcett	01379 788633 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) email: bookmellishall@gmail.com (Thornham Parish Hall - Beth Fredrikssen-Jones) 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 - 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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