The Messenger



Issue 175
October
2026

Serving Gislingham, Mellis, Yaxley and the Thornhams

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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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 October Issue!

Trigger warning! This editorial does feature the "C" word!

It may seem only a couple of weeks ago that we were enjoying the hottest summer since 1976, but somehow October is already upon us. And, before we know it, Christmas will be here! But before we get too carried away with thoughts of mince pies and Christmas trees, there's plenty happening in our villages this month.

The August Bank Holiday weekend once again saw excellent support for the annual Gislingham Flower Festival at St Mary's Church. It was good to see the event so well supported, and an impressive £2,424.25 was raised. A huge thank you to everyone involved in organising the festival, creating the beautiful displays, and, of course, to everyone who came along and supported it.

October also sees the launch of our annual Children's Christmas Artwork Competition. There are three age categories, with a winner in each. All three winning pictures will appear in our December issue, with one lucky winner having their artwork chosen for the front cover. Full details can be found on page 11.

And staying firmly on the Christmas theme, Gislingham Variety Club's next production is a pantomime. "Oh no it isn't!" Sorry. It had to be done! Full details of the production and ticket information can be found on page 27.

If you are looking for an opportunity to do something positive for our local communities this month, both Mellis and Gislingham Parish Councils are organising village litter picks. Details can be found on pages 19 and 29 respectively. Your help would be very much appreciated. A litter pick is a relatively small investment of your time, but collectively it can make a big difference to the appearance of our villages.

Sadly, on a less positive note, I was disappointed to read in this month's Gislingham Parish Council News about incidents of anti-social behaviour at Gislingham Play Park a few weeks ago. As reported on page 9, the Parish Council has invested a significant amount of money this year in updating and improving the play equipment. It is extremely disappointing, to put it politely, to learn that equipment intended for the benefit of our children and young people are being damaged.

The good news is that CCTV footage is available and can be used as evidence should this behaviour continue. Hopefully, the knowledge that vandalism can be identified will act as a deterrent. Facilities such as this don't simply appear by magic. They are the result of a lot of fundraising, hard work and community support some 20 years ago to establish the Play area on Charity Meadow along with significant continual investment by the PC to repair and replace equipment and they deserve to be treated with respect.

Finally, a reminder that our November issue has an early copy deadline of Saturday 10th October. If you are planning to submit something for next month's magazine, please do get in touch as early as possible. Even a quick message to pre-warn me of an intended submission would be very much appreciated!

Jeff Norman, Editor e) themessengereditorial@gmail.com

Cover photo: St. Mary's Church, Gislingham

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DIARY & LOCAL EVENTS

WHAT'S ON

OCTOBER:

Saturday 3rd October: Coffee morning & Book sale
- Gislingham Village Hall: 10.00am to 12 noon.

Sunday 4th October: Cake Sale & Pop-Up Café
- Thornhams Parish Hall: 10.30am – 12.30pm. – See page 22.

Tuesday 6th October: Rural Coffee Caravan
- Mellis Memorial Hall: 10.00am to 12.00 noon.

Saturday 10th October: Quiz Night
- Mellis Memorial Hall. 7.30pm. (£5.00 per person)
- To book: bookmellishall@gmail.com
- See page 18 for details.

Saturday 17th October: Bingo Night
- Gislingham Village Hall: 7.00pm. – See page 12.

Sunday 18th October: Mellis Litter Pick
- Mellis Memorial Hall: 10.00am

Wednesday 21st October: Gislingham WI. – 'What no cake!' – a ukulele band.
- Gislingham Village Hall: 7.30pm.

Friday 23rd October: Thornhams Film Night – 'The Devil wears Prada'
- Thornhams Parish Hall: 7.30pm. £6 at the door. To book: films@thorhams.org
- See page 49 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

SAVE THE DATES:

Sunday 1st November: Gislingham Litter Pick
- Gislingham Village Hall. 10.00am – 11.00am. See page 29 for details.

Saturday 14th November: Quiz Night
- Yaxley Village Hall. Details to follow next issue.

Thursday 26th, Friday 27th & Saturday 28th November: GVC Panto 'Cinderella'
- Gislingham Village Hall: 7.00pm. See page 27 for ticket info.

Our next issue is November 2026. The "What's On" Diary deadline is: Saturday 10 October

CLUBS, CLASSES & REGULAR EVENTS

GISLINGHAM

Chat & Craft Club: Gislingham Village Hall. 1st Wednesday of every month. 12.00-2.00pm. Contact: Elspeth Tranter on 07473 131841.

Baby and Tots Group for the Under 2's: Primary School (School Term time only)**.** 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. Contact Terry Williams on 01379 783903

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 every Tuesday. Sit to Stand Pilates – 10.00am. Pilates – Strong, Stretch, Relax – 11.30am For information please contact: Michelle 07572 500465 or 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

The Pub Book Group (Sonnets and Psalms) *starts in September 2026* Last Tuesday of each month at The Four Horseshoes at 6.00pm for dinner followed by discussion. Contact: Sheila Linder e) sheilalinder@hotmail.com

Mellis Cricket Club plays at Thornham Estate (May to Sept.) Phone: James on 07789 111165 or email: jameshkw@icloud.com

MELLIS

Circuit Training Fitness Class: Memorial Hall. Mondays 7.30pm – 8.30pm Gus: T: 01379 788506 or 07716 118235 / anguswilkinson@btinternet.com

YAXLEY

Pilates Classes: Village Hall. Every Monday at 9.30am and 10.30am For more information contact Becky Cruickshank on 07734 424151.

The Art Club Meetings on Tuesdays 10.00am to 12 noon once weekly at Yaxley Village Hall Dates: 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th October. All abilities are welcome. £4.00 per session. Come and create something artistic in your own style. Further details: Glyn Owens 07768 026065 or email: gavowens@aol.com

The Garden Club Thursday 1st October: "The Secret Life of Plants" a talk given by Jim Paine Yaxley Village Hall: 7.30pm. More details: Abby Brett: 01379 783984 or email: tony1andabby2@hotmail.com

Yaxley Needlework & Craft Group Meetings on alternate Wednesdays. 14th October (a "stash Busting" afternoon) & 28th October. From 2pm to 4pm at Yaxley Village Hall - £2.50 per session. Finish old projects or start a new one – enjoy a chat and a cuppa! Further details: Celia Armstrong 01379 788754 or email: celiaarmstrong@hotmail.co.uk

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GISLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Play Area

We have received several reports of anti social behaviour at the play park over the past few weeks. CCTV footage has been reviewed and clearly identifies the teenagers involved; this information will now be passed to the relevant authorities if this continues.

A significant amount of money has been invested in transforming the play area, and we have received many positive messages from residents about the improvements. It would be extremely disappointing if the new equipment were to be damaged by the actions of a small number of individuals.



Parish Councillor Vacancy

If you have some spare time and care deeply about the village, why not become a Parish Councillor? It's a rewarding way to support your community, influence local projects, and help make a real difference.

Please contact our Clerk: clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk



Parish Council Meetings

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday 19th October at 7.00pm in Gislingham Village Hall. Future dates are as follows:-

16th November, 21st December, 18th January 2027, 15th February 2027, 15th March 2027.

All meetings held at Gislingham Village Hall at 7.00pm.

Gislingham Parish Council

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Children's Christmas art competition 2026

It's time for the Annual Christmas Artwork Competition for children between the ages of 5 and 12 living in Gislingham, Mellis, Yaxley and the Thornhams.

The winning picture will appear on the cover of the December issue and the winners of each age category will be published inside the magazine.

The age categories are:

- **Age 5-6**
- **Age 7-8**
- **Age 9-11**



The criteria are:

1) Paper must be no bigger than A4.
2) The actual design must be 20cm high x 17cm wide.
3) **Closing date for entries: Friday 13/11/26 at 2.30pm**
4) Entries should be submitted to: Gislingham School Office, Mellis School Office or Strawberry Fields, High Street, Gislingham (next to Gislingham store).
5) Name, address and age of child **MUST** be included on the **BACK** of picture.
6) The Messenger Magazine Committee will choose the winners.
8) A small prize will be awarded to the winner of each category.
9) The artist's name and age will be credited alongside winning pictures.



NEWS FROM GISLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

URGENT APPEAL

Gislingham Village Hall is a registered charity that is run by a committee of volunteers. We have recently lost committee members and we are looking for volunteers to serve on the Committee. We hold twelve meetings per year, which you would be expected to attend. As well as assisting in the running of the hall, committee members help to organise monthly fund-raising events. If you think you could help to keep the hall functioning and want further information, please contact Terry Williams on 07929631854 or via email to: gislinghamvillagehall@gmail.com

FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 17th October: Bingo Night - Doors open at 7.00 PM. Eyes down at 7.30 PM. Free Entry. Bring your own Nibbles, Drinks and Glasses.

Saturday 7th November: Music Night - watch this space for details

Saturday 12th December: Quiz Night - Doors open at 7.00 pm. Bring your own food and drinks. £5.00 entry. Tickets available from Terry Williams at gislinghamvillagehall@gmail.com or 01379 83903



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.

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

YAXLEY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



I write to you somewhat buoyed up by the success of the Yaxley Village Hall Centenary Celebrations and offer my profound thanks and heartfelt congratulations to our Village Hall Committee for the enormous efforts and considerable imagination involved in delivering such a splendid programme of events so well. The events were well-attended and, in my view marked an encouraging revival in the community spirit of Yaxley.

Our local historian, Mr John Hawes, summed the enormous value of village community spirit in a moving speech of thanks to the Village Hall Committee on the last day of the celebrations. John called for this to be a new beginning and I am sure he inspired many with his moving words. John's speech carried a great deal of weight, since not only has he written two breathtakingly (and single-handedly) researched books on Yaxley - 'Time and Tithe' and 'Yaxley's Dearly Departed' – but he also selflessly carries out an enormous amount of unpaid work around the village with good grace and humility and has served as a parish councillor for decades. To add to this, John mounted thought-provoking displays of Yaxley documents and photographs around the Village Hall and shared highlights of his research in an amusing and profound talk on the Saturday night when I was privileged to join him on stage in a supporting role.

John stood out over this weekend but is not alone. Yaxley is very fortunate in having many people who give their time and take on great responsibility because they care about the village: PCC members, Village Hall Committee and of course parish councillors spring to mind. Some serve on more than one of these bodies. Thank you.

PARISH COUNCIL CONCERNS FOR THIS MONTH

Fly Tipping – A Plea for Vigilance

We have noticed increased incidents of fly tipping of unsuitable and bulk items near our waste bins in both laybys and the bottle banks. Yaxley Parish Council has to pay Mid Suffolk District Council to empty our bins and our volunteer from the Parish Council spends much time selflessly tidying carelessly dumped articles. Could I ask villagers to be vigilant, please, and, without putting themselves at risk, to report any vehicles seen dumping rubbish to our Clerk who will liaise with SCC's fly tipping team. If necessary, offenders will be reported to Suffolk Constabulary.

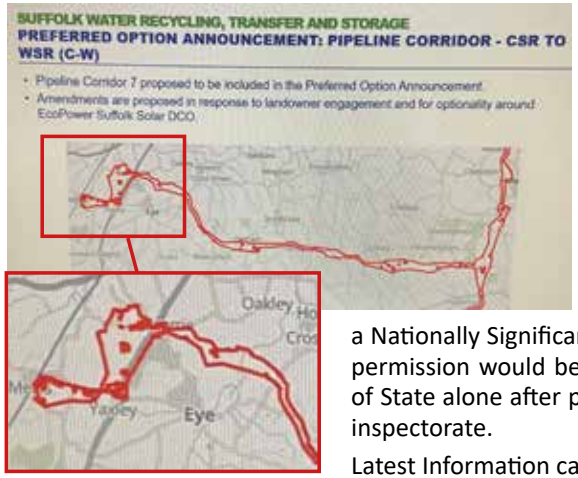
Water Main Renewal

Currently Essex and Suffolk Water are carrying out extensive works to renew the water main on the Mellis Road. Their team seems highly skilled and very courteous. Most members of the public have been very understanding but unfortunately, I have heard more than one irate motorist arguing with workers. I live in the heart of the works and access is not always easy, but the fact is that this main has to be renewed and clearly disruption is inevitable. I think that considering the scale of the project, this disruption is being kept at the bare minimum by sophisticated boring techniques. These allow many relatively small trenches to be dug rather than one continuous trench the whole length of the road as would have been the case not so long ago. The work will continue until late October so all we can really do is grin (or scowl) and bear it.

Western Service Reservoir

More worrying is the prospect of possible future disruption on the very same stretch of road albeit in several years' time. Readers may remember my mention in earlier issues of a major water recycling scheme across much of Suffolk which is designed to put purified recycled water into the mains network via Central and Western Service Reservoirs and associated feed and distribution mains. I think nobody doubts that Suffolk needs more water but, when built, the Western Service Reservoir will be yet another infrastructure project which could affect Yaxley, Mellis and Thrandeston.

The project is currently in its pre-application and consultation phase and Yaxley Parish Council will be discussing its response to the consultation at its next meeting. Currently it does look as if Essex and Suffolk water will apply to build the Western Service Reservoir on land in Brome north of Eye airfield on the east side of the A140. One POSSIBLE route for the feed and distribution pipework involves coming up the Mellis Road through Yaxley into Mellis then heading south in the area of the Earlsford Road then back east across fields to Yaxley. The slide below was shared by Essex and Suffolk water as merely one possible route among many. However, very recently, Yaxley residents on this route have received letters warning that their property may need to be accessed indicating that the possibility is firming up. Yaxley Parish Council will of course respond vigorously to any consultation or, if it comes to that, Planning Application. Having said this the project, should it go ahead, would be designated a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and as such, permission would be granted or denied by the Secretary of State alone after possible investigation by the planning inspectorate.



Latest Information can be found via:

Suffolk County Council: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects-including-nsips/nsips-in-suffolk/suffolk-water-recycling

Gov.UK/ PINS: https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/WA0210003

Essex and Suffolk Water: https://www.suffolkwaternetwork.co.uk/proposals/

These are difficult times for our area and Yaxley Parish Council will do its absolute best to keep abreast of this barrage of infrastructure schemes. I understand how worried local residents are (I'm a local resident and I'm worried) and we will do all we can to help. Please engage with us at our meetings or by contacting our clerk on philip.c.freeman@btinternet.com and we will take your views into account in our deliberations. Please be patient with us, however. We are unpaid volunteers grappling with huge, highly technical proposals. We also understand that we have responsibility as your elected representatives. All I can promise you is that we will exercise that responsibility to the best of our abilities.

Ian Luff, Chairman Yaxley Parish Council

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YAXLEY VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Our Centenary Weekend took place over the weekend of 4th to 6th September. Friday saw the weekend kick off with Patrick and his Juke Box Memories, playing music from across the ages. The bar was open and the participants had a fun evening of chat and memories, although nobody actually got up and danced.

Saturday the Hall opened at midday with a steady flow of visitors who perused the displays before the afternoon Family Magic Show got underway for an audience of parents and children. They thoroughly enjoyed the event, with each child coming away with a beautifully hand-crafted balloon animal.

Our main event in the evening was a talk given by John Hawes and Ian Luff about Yaxley, from Roman times through to present day. Together they kept the audience captivated as they revealed the historical significance of Yaxley and the families who lived there with their contribution to world events. The talk was followed by everyone enjoying cheese and wine.

On Sunday the Hall was open from midday and a steady flow of visitors arrived to view the displays. At 3pm there was a wonderful presentation from the Mellisians, a group of acappella singers who entertained the audience with their presentation of folk and modern classics.

At 4pm the raffle was drawn and our major prize winner, Larraine Seward won a hamper which was donated by the Co-op in Eye.



HIRE OF YAXLEY VILLAGE HALL
To book or enquire, please contact Celia Armstrong on 01379 788754 or email: celiaarmstrong @hotmail.co.uk

FUNDRAISER FOR MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

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MELLIS PARISH COULNCIL NEWS



Mellis PC's latest news is that the car park has now been re-done. The plastic eco-deck grid system that was in place had lifted and was slippery which made it a potential hazard, so the PC organised for it to be removed and a new surface added in early September.



As both a parish council and individuals we objected to the solar farm projects around Mellis. If you are for or against any infrastructure or indeed any proposed changes to our locality, please don't just rely on the PC responding. It is vitally important that your individual voices are heard.

The bus stop shelter near The Railway Tavern is being considered for a refurb! The Perspex sides are really badly damaged and look terrible, so alternatives are being put forward.

Councillors discussed the salt bins in Mellis. We are looking to obtain another one to locate on Earlsford Road near Earlsford House. There have been near misses reported when we have had an "ice rink" in this area. Also, when checking the salt levels, I have seen rubbish put in them. Why dump 8 empty, cleaned yoghurt pots? Bizarre behaviour!

The roadworks are moving along as scheduled. These are due to be completed in Yaxley by 16th October. This is for repair and maintenance works by Essex & Suffolk Water and you should have received the notifications in the post some weeks ago. Whilst on the subject of water, even with all the rain we have been having, please bear in mind the hosepipe ban (Temporary Use Ban) still applies at time of writing. Further information can be found at eswater.co.uk

The litter pick around Mellis is scheduled for Sunday 18th October 10am, look forward to seeing you at MMH. Thanks to all those that collect litter ad hoc from our footpaths, roadways and hedges. Our village really is looked after and having driven around a lot of the UK for work, Mellis is a beautiful place to live, thank you for keeping it looking lovely and protecting the people and wildlife that thrive here.

Finally good luck to our university starters and we wish you well with whatever you are studying, where ever that has taken you and we hope you are settling well into your new accommodation and routine, also to our children closer to home that have started in their new school. We are lucky to have Mellis Church England Primary and Hartismere School on our doorstep, providing exceptional teaching, facilities and opportunities for our young people.

If you wish to see how your Parish Council works, or if you have something you want to discuss then please join us at our next meetings on Thursday 1st October and Thursday 29th October both at Mellis Memorial Hall starting at 6.30pm.

Lorraine Farley, Councillor

REMEMBERING THE STOWMARKET GUNCOTTON FACTORY DISASTER

DOWN Memory LANE





FRIGHTFUL EXPLOSION AT STOWMARKET.

THE GUN COTTON WORKS IN RUINS.

24 LIVES LOST, 18 MEN, BOYS AND GIRLS INJURED.

FULL PARTICULARS

(Specially Reported.)

GUN COTTON—WHAT IT IS.

We question whether many of our readers have ever seen the fearfully explosive material—

This year marks the 155th anniversary of the two devastating explosions that tore through Prentice's Guncotton Factory in Stowmarket on Friday, August 11, 1871.

The tragedy claimed the lives of 28 people, including children, and left a further 70 to 75 people injured. The explosions caused widespread damage throughout Stowmarket and the surrounding villages. Such was the force of the blasts that they were reportedly heard as far away as Southwold, some 32 miles away. The youngest victims were four 12-year-olds: Alfred Bloom, Susan Wilding, Mary Mount and Alice Mutimer.



The force of the explosions was immense. At St Mary's Church in Combs Ford, most of the 15th-century stained-glass windows were shattered. Craters left at the factory site were estimated to be between nine and ten metres deep, while around 200 people in the town were reportedly left suffering from hearing problems. For those who witnessed the devastation, the sights and sounds must have been almost unimaginable.

The manufacture of guncotton

Guncotton was developed as an alternative to gunpowder and was used in firearms and mining. It was produced by treating cotton with nitric and sulphuric acids. The chemist Sir Frederick Abel developed a process to remove impurities from guncotton, making it safer to handle and manufacture. Despite these improvements, its production remained extremely hazardous.

The exact cause of the Stowmarket explosions was never established. An investigation at the time suggested that the materials may have been deliberately tampered with, while another theory was that the unusually hot weather could have contributed to the disaster. Whatever the cause, the consequences were devastating, and the effects of that terrible day were felt in Stowmarket for decades afterwards.

Remembering the victims



Today, the site of the former factory is remembered through the name Gun Cotton Way, ensuring that the connection to this important, but tragic, part of Stowmarket's history is not forgotten.

In February 2014, a memorial plaque was unveiled at Stowmarket's Old Cemetery to commemorate 23 of the victims. Many had been buried in unmarked graves. The remaining five victims were laid to rest in nearby villages across Suffolk.

The memorial plaque bears the poignant words: *"Their brightness on that morning was not to last all day. This plaque, it's hoped, will mean at least their names will always stay."*

More than a century and a half later, the tragedy of August 11, 1871 remains an important part of Stowmarket's history. The memorial serves as a reminder not only of the terrible dangers faced by those working in the guncotton industry, but also of the lives of the 28 people whose stories remain part of the town's past.

Jeff Norman *Source material: Suffolk Archives*







NEWS FROM THORNHAM PARISH HALL



FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday 4th October: Cake Sale & Pop-Up Café: 10.30am – 12.30 noon. – Come and enjoy delicious homemade cakes.

Friday 23rd October: Film Night – 'The Devil wears Prada': 7.30pm. £6.00 at the door. Bookings: films@thornhams.org

Sunday 15th November: Winter Fair: 11.00am – 3.00pm: Local crafts, gifts, cakes, bacon butties and lots more……

Friday 20th November: Quiz Night - 7.00pm. £5.00 per person. Max team of 6. Bar & ice creams available. Bring your own snacks.

Saturday 5th December: Ceilidh - call 07707 530340 to book. Tickets £15. (Children free) Bar available.

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To find out more about these events or book, just email: events@thornhams.org
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Dates for 2027 are: 8 January, 5 March, 7 May, 2 July, 3 September, 5 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
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GISLINGHAM FLOWER FESTIVAL 2026

Very many thanks to all those who supported Gislingham Flower Festival 2026. Without all the volunteers, both on the Bank Holiday weekend and beforehand, it would have been impossible to stage. Of course, the stars of the show were the exuberant, beautiful, spectacular, artistic and imaginative flower displays in the church. The sights and scents were breathtaking. Of particular note this year was the theme; "Childhood Memories". It gave great range for interpretation, from days at the seaside, to growing up on a farm, barbecues, and trips to the funfair. More than one visitor commented on how emotional they felt at the displays – perhaps bringing back their own childhood memories.

Outside, much fun was had trying to herd reluctant ping pong balls into jars that seemed to resent their space being invaded. Very frustrating! While most of us struggled to score 400 or so, Roy Taylor amassed the astonishing winning score of 2320!! In addition, there were opportunities to somehow tip marbles into a very small hole using a plastic spoon and a couple of challenging memory and logic games. The tombola had all sorts of interesting prizes that had been donated, bringing much delight to visitors. Also, of course there were many prizes available in the lottery, again with a first prize of £50.

In the Village Hall there was a full range of delicious cakes and refreshments available. There was indeed something for everyone and many visitors commented on how well it all went. Special thanks are due to Elspeth Tranter for organizing the flower displays again. And of course, to Ann Smethurst and Sandra Smith for their herculean efforts organising the refreshments, helped by the cake makers and all those who helped in the village hall on the three days.

For my own part, thanks to the humpers and dumpers for setting everything up on the Friday and returning all to its rightful place on the Monday. Martyn Bryant and his team once again demonstrated how a marquee should be put up!

So, to some of the results. All of the prizes were won locally with Jan Adams taking the first prize of £50. Interestingly she made a special trip to the church on the last day to buy tickets for herself and a friend: - the friend just lost out!

The poor weather on the Saturday morning did not deter loyal visitors and the total number who attended this year was well up on 2025. As a result, the event raised over £2400 for Friends of St. Mary's. All proceed will go to supporting the historic and grand building of St Mary's church.

Once again very many thanks to all who helped in any way. No doubt planning for Flower Festival 2027 will begin very soon.

Chris Pitt, Chairman FOSM

The Flower Festival was a great success. We had 319 visitors, visiting our beautiful St. Mary's Church Flower Festival which exceeded all expectations. I would like to thank all the volunteers for helping with games and our meet and greet. I also, thank all the flower ladies for all their beautiful arrangements and hard work. I would like to take the opportunity to mention Sandra Smith as she has resigned from Friends of St. Mary's Committee. Sandra, thank you for all your work over the years, you will be greatly missed by all, it's been a pleasure working with you. I will miss you! Finally, you will have seen the poppy arrangement organised in memory of David Braybrooke. We raised £74.56 for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Elspeth Tranter, Flower Organiser

GISLINGHAM FLOWER FESTIVAL 2026









Flower Festival photos by: Jeff Norman

GISLINGHAM FLOWER FESTIVAL 2026









GISLINGHAM FLOWER FESTIVAL 2026











NATURE NOTES by Darrel Charles



Hello everyone, welcome back to Nature Notes

As I'm sure we were all aware, last month on 12th August we had a partial eclipse of the sun by the moon, which generated a lot of excitement in the media beforehand. In the UK, up to 93% of the sun was blocked out for several minutes as the moon transitioned across the sun at around 7:00 pm. I remember the eclipse of 1999, when a chill in the air became apparent as the sun disappeared behind the moon and the birds stopped singing - quite an eerie event. Like many others, I was outside for this latest eclipse, together with my





pinhole camera, hastily made from a shoe box. I also had a colander, as suggested on TV, and my "proper camera" on a tripod. Sadly, the drama of my experience of the 1999 eclipse didn't quite happen this time. Moreover, whilst the pinhole camera did work, the image was very small. I didn't have much success with the colander either, the image being indistinct. With my proper camera I was concerned about damaging its sensor as I didn't have the necessary filters but I did manage some shots as the eclipse reached "totality", as shown here. There'll be another partial eclipse next August when I plan to be better prepared.

One of the most interesting photos I've seen of the eclipse was taken by Carola Settle in her Gislingham garden. There, Carola noticed that the light passing through gaps in the leaves of a hazel tree was behaving as though it had passed through a pinhole camera and cast multiple images of the eclipse on a nearby wall. Amazing!



Cumulonimbus Cloud Near Burgate Road



Cirrus clouds over Back Street

A feature of a pinhole camera is that, in contrast to a normal camera, its image is upside down and reversed, left to right. I seem to remember this from a distant physics lesson, many, many years ago (!) and the effect can be seen in the two photos opposite.

In the last edition of Nature Notes I was writing about the drought - since then it seems to have scarcely stopped raining! Whilst a lot of the time we've had rather dull grey skies, there have been some notable exceptions. Back in August, Mike Heath was out walking near Burgate Road when an extraordinary cloud appeared, bringing with it a heavy downpour. Happily, Mike was able to shelter, stay dry and take this spectacular photo. I believe this to be a Cumulonimbus cloud and, to my eye, this is reminiscent of photos I've seen of storms rolling across the American prairies. Extraordinary!

Staying with clouds for a moment, while walking along Mill Street in Gislingham one recent evening, I was treated to a most beautiful sky with clouds lit up by the setting sun. I believe these wispy clouds to be Cirrus clouds, formed by ice crystals at high altitude where it is very cold, and are indicative of good weather to come, which in this case turned out to be true.

All of a sudden and after successive heatwaves, it's beginning to feel like autumn. In terms of how the Met. Office see things, autumn always begins on 1st September. Another definition is based upon the Autumnal Equinox, when the day and night are of equal length, and this year this falls on 26 September. Either way, the first signs of autumn are around us, with some trees already dropping their leaves.

Glyn Simpson in Gislingham tells me that he'll have a shortage of cobnuts and walnuts because the squirrels are racing around collecting and burying them for their winter store.



At home, we have also seen squirrels in the garden, not looking for food but scurrying about with their mouths full of nesting materials like twigs, feathers and grass. It seemed rather odd to me that they should be doing this in autumn but apparently they are now engaged in repairing their nests (called dreys), or building new ones in preparation for a cold winter. The dreys appear rather scruffy affairs about the size of a football and are often located some 6 m above ground in the fork of a tree for stability,.

I expect we've all become used to seeing squirrels in our gardens and take them for granted, sometimes regarding them as pests. Recently, though, we had a visitor up from London who became very excited when he saw one taking a drink from our pond. As we told our friend, you're in the country now!

Until next time, happy wildlife watching!

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

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

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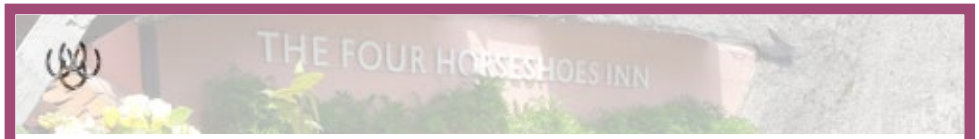
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A 2-MILE CIRCULAR WALK WITH THE OPTION OF RETAIL THERAPY, FOOD AND DRINK AND EVEN A RIVER TRIP

O/S Explorer Map: 212 Distance: approx. 2 miles What 3 words: sweat. perfect. Clogging

We decided to visit Snape Maltings which is about an hour's drive from Gislingham. There are several scenic routes you can take to arrive at Snape, so the choice is yours. Parking is free and you may well end up in the overflow car park as it gets quite busy.

Snape Maltings sits on the bank of the River Alde, surrounded by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just six miles from Aldeburgh. The beautiful heritage destination, with its converted Victorian buildings, is home to independent shops, galleries, a restaurant and dog-friendly café, and several performance venues. Snape Maltings is famous for the Snape Maltings Concert Hall, established by Benjamin Britten, and opened by HM Queen Elizabeth in 1967. If you are looking for things to do in Suffolk, this family-friendly venue has everything you need.





To start the walk, go back to the main entrance, turn right, go over the bridge, turn right and follow the path that follows the river. Looking right, you will be able to see the extent of Snape Maltings.

Continue along this path and take in another view across the river Alde. Looking across the river you will hear the gentle rustle of the reeds which is so relaxing. If you have some binoculars, you will be able see several breeds of water birds on the mud flats.





Check out the 'Belted Galloway' cows on the marshes.

You will reach a wood with a wooden seat as you enter, so a good time to have a rest. If not, turn left and continue through the woods sign posted to Snape Warren. There is a split of paths, the right is the Coastal Path that will take you to Aldeburgh, but keep to the left path which is the Sandlings Walk. You will arrive at an information board, to take the shorter walk turn left here, otherwise you may wish to have a slightly longer walk, so carry straight on. (Continue until you reach the road and turn left, you will then meet the same exit point below).

By turning left, the marshes are visible to your left and continue through an avenue of reeds. At the end of this path you arrive at a track, turn right and continue past some small allotments on the left and at the road turn left. There is no pavement, so walk on the grass verges. You will go past the Golden Key pub, which looks like it is being renovated, but is closed. Continue to the end of the road to join the main road. Cross over next to the village sign. The Crown is on your left. Continue along the pavement and cross over at the bridge and back to the Snape Maltings.



For your retail experience, there are several shops. An antique centre which is next to a musical instrument shop. There is a large home style shop with furniture, glassware, china, bedding, books, cards and much more. Outside is a small garden centre. Walk through to the delicatessen which has many local brands of sauces pickles beers and wines. A cookware section. There is a range of sweets from years ago, do you remember Black Jacks (showing my age now). There are other shops with gifts, foods and garden bits.

For refreshments there are several food outlets. An outside kiosk next to the river, a cafe selling drinks and cakes and a larger restaurant selling more main type meals. For something a bit stronger, visit the Plough & Sail which has a good range of food and drinks. It has a secluded courtyard at the side

The river trips are only available to tide times, so it is best to check and book beforehand. When we visited the tide was out and no trips were planned. https://www.suffolkrivertrips.com/

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KEITH URBAN – FLOW STATE

MUSIC NOTES



Until July this year, I have to admit, I had never heard of Keith Urban. Then I kept hearing a track on Radio 2 called "We Go Back" and, quite honestly, I was hooked.

Why? Quite simply, it features the unmistakable smooth baritone voice of **Michael McDonald** — of Steely Dan, The Doobie Brothers and chart-topping solo fame — and it sounds absolutely stunning. In fact, the first time I heard it, I thought it was a song from the 1970s that I must somehow have missed. That warm, distinctive voice seems to glide effortlessly over the music.

I found myself wanting to hear the song again and again, so I did a little research online. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that it was a brand-new song, and that the duet featured on a new album by Keith Urban. Curiosity got the better of me, and I ended up buying the CD: Flow State.

What a lovely surprise! I hadn't expected to find myself listening to an album of soft-rock favourites from the late 1970s and early 1980s, but Flow State is exactly the sort of album that is easy to settle into. It has a wonderfully relaxed feel, and there is something rather comforting about hearing familiar songs brought to life again through Urban's interpretation. His smooth vocals and accomplished guitar playing give the songs a fresh lease of life without losing the character and charm of the originals.



This is definitely an easy-going, summery collection — the sort of music that feels tailor-made for a long summer drive, preferably with the roof down, or a lazy afternoon in the garden.

The album includes classics such as "Baby Come Back", "Steal Away", "Just the Two of Us", "On and on", "Guitar Man" featuring John Mayer, and "Summer Breeze". They certainly brought back memories for me.

Urban stays fairly close to the original arrangements rather than radically reinventing the songs, but his superb guitar playing and musicianship give them a fresh, polished feel. Importantly, he wisely avoids turning every track into a guitar showcase. Instead, the emphasis remains on the melodies, the vocals and that wonderfully relaxed atmosphere.

This is an album designed to make you relax rather than challenge you — and sometimes, that's exactly what you want from music.

But for me, it will always be "We Go Back" that makes this album special. Hearing Michael McDonald alongside Urban is a real treat, and it was that one song that opened the door for me to discover a "new" artist I had somehow managed to overlook.

Sometimes music arrives in your life completely unexpectedly. You hear one song, it catches your attention, and suddenly you find yourself exploring an artist you might otherwise have missed.

So, if you're anything like me and haven't really discovered Keith Urban before, I'd say start with "We Go Back". You may find yourself doing exactly what I did — going back for more.

JAN

Author's Rating: ★★★★☆ 4/5



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TERRAPIN NEWS



A Brief History of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Suffolk and Mid Suffolk

Or how did we get here: Monday, September 7, 2026 Angela Rayner announces the pause and review of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

It began: in late 2024 when Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, entered discussions with government ministers about a new devolution settlement following the cancellation of Suffolk's previous devolution deal. He argued that any future arrangement should include significant reform of local government structures to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.

In January 2025, The Conservative led Suffolk County Council unilaterally agreed to pursue the Government's fast-track devolution programme. This opened the way for both a directly elected mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk and the replacement of Suffolk's existing two-tier council system comprising one county council and five district and borough councils.

On **5 February 2025**, the Government formally launched the LGR process in Suffolk. Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner announced that Suffolk would be part of the Devolution Priority Programme and invited councils to submit proposals for new unitary authorities. At the same time, the May 2025 County Council elections were postponed allowing the reorganisation process to proceed. Matthew Hicks welcomed the announcement as a major opportunity for Suffolk.

By March 2025, two competing visions had emerged. Suffolk County Council proposed a single county-wide authority known as **One Suffolk**, arguing that one council would provide clearer accountability, stronger leadership and greater financial resilience.

In contrast, the five district and borough councils, including Mid Suffolk District Council, submitted a joint proposal advocating multiple unitary councils. They argued that a single authority covering the whole county would be too large and distant from local communities and that smaller unitaries would better reflect Suffolk's distinct areas and identities.

Throughout spring and summer 2025, councils developed detailed business cases and conducted engagement with residents, businesses, parish councils and other stakeholders. Final proposals were submitted to Government on **26 September 2025**.

From November 2025 to January 2026, the Government carried out a formal public consultation on the competing Suffolk proposals before reaching its decision.

On **25 March 2026**, the Government announced that it had rejected the One Suffolk model and would proceed with the creation of **three new unitary councils** for Suffolk. This decision was strongly criticised by Matthew Hicks, who maintained that a single authority would have delivered better services and greater savings.

Following the decision, implementation work began across Suffolk to prepare for the planned transition in May 2028.

On **15 May 2026**, reports emerged that new council leader Michael Hadwen and the Reform UK administration intended to pursue a **judicial review** of the Government's March 2026 decision to create three unitary councils in Suffolk. Similar legal challenges were launched by Norfolk, Essex, Hampshire and Portsmouth councils

1 June 2026 - Suffolk County Council formally warned the Government that it would seek judicial review unless the three-unitary proposal was withdrawn.

It is important I think to note that Government's subsequent withdrawal of the Suffolk LGR decision on 7 September 2026 occurred before the courts had reached a final determination on the Suffolk case.

Rowland Warboys Mid Suffolk District Councillor: Gislingham Ward

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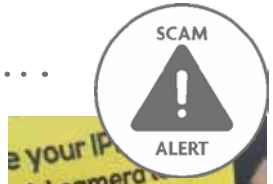


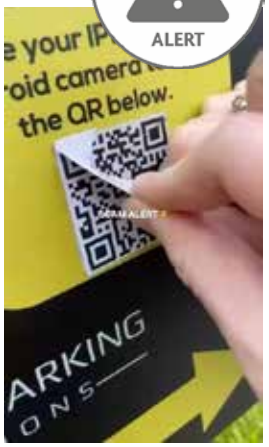






TIP OFF, RIP OFF!





Once again, Suffolk Trading are warning us of more scams – Fake QR codes and fake DVLA emails, which are both very prevalent at the moment.

Scam Alert - Be aware for fake QR codes

Quick Response (QR) codes are the black and white patterned squares which when scanned with a smartphone take you to a linked website. These provide a quick way to find a website for information or access to services but can also be used by fraudsters looking to divert you into fraudulent versions of genuine sites.

'Quishing' happens most frequently in car parks, with criminals using stickers to tamper with QR codes on parking machines. Quishing also occurred on online shopping platforms, where sellers received a QR code via email to either verify accounts or to receive payment for sold items. They also say that phishing attacks can impersonate HMRC, or other UK government schemes, targeting people with QR codes designed to steal personal and financial details.

Report Fraud offer the following advice to avoid being a victim of quishing:

- QR codes used in pubs or restaurants are usually safe to scan
- Scanning QR codes in open spaces (like stations and car parks) might pose a greater risk. Check for signs that codes may have been tampered with (usually by a sticker placed over the legitimate QR code). If in doubt, do not scan them: use a search engine to find the official website or app for the organisation you need to make a payment to
- If you receive an email with a QR code in it, and you're asked to scan it, you should be cautious due to an increase in these types of 'quishing' attacks
- Finally, you use the QR-scanner that comes with your phone, rather than using an app downloaded from an app store

If you've lost money or provided financial information as a result of any potential scam, notify your bank immediately and report it to Report Fraud via their website at: https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/ or by calling **0300 123 2040**.

Scam Alert - Fake DVLA emails

Beware of fake communications which claim to be from DVLA.

This follows recent reports of emails circulating that state your 'vehicle tax renewal has not been completed' before going on to claim that you could 'fined up to £1,000' if payment is not made on time. These emails are **not from DVLA**, anyone clicking on the 'complete now' link provided in the text will be taken to a fake version of the DVLA website which will attempt to gather personal and financial information.

If you receive an email, you are suspicious about, or think is a scam you can report it to the National Cyber Security Centre by forwarding the message to: report@phishing.gov.uk

You can also report scams received to us via our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on freephone **0808 223 1133**.

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WHAT AM I? QUIZ

Below are eight clues as to what I am this month.

1. I was founded by Danish carpenter Ole Kirk Kristiansen, who began making the company's first wooden toys in 1932
2. My name comes from the Danish for “play well”
3. I am now the biggest manufacturer of tyres (by number) in the world.
4. There are four billion of my people in the world.
5. During the Christmas season almost 28 of my sets are sold each second.
6. I’m known for my bricks, of which there are 400 billion – enough to stretch to the moon and back five times.
7. My factory moulds are so exact that they are accurate to within two-thousandth of a millimetre.
8. Bizarrely, in 2025, I’ve been condemned by anti-gay and anti-trans as I have male and female parts that “mate”.

The answer appears at the foot of page 63.

SUDOKU CHALLENGE

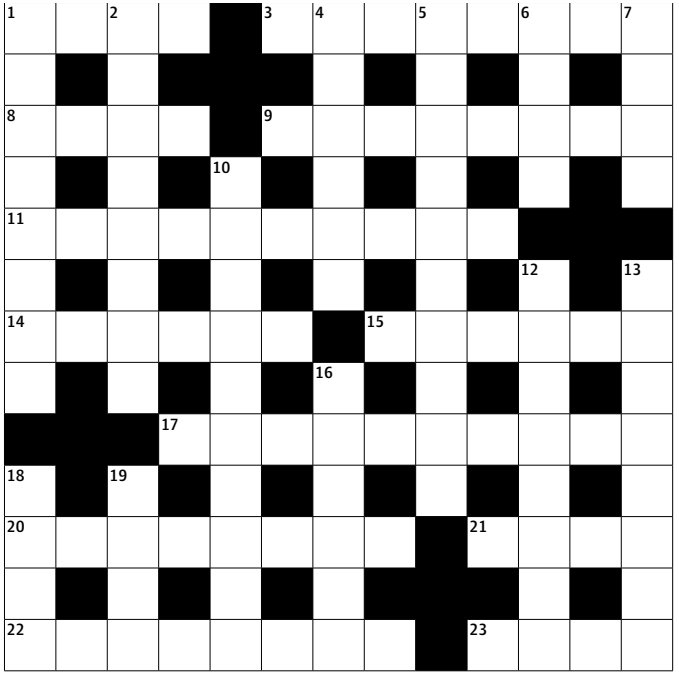
6				5		3		
	5	2			9			
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9				4			3	
			6	3	1			
	2			7				5
1								6
			7			4	5	
		4		2				9

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

Last issue solution

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

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE



Across

1 Rich taste of wine (4)
3 Not serious (8)
8 Highly positive review (4)
9 Take stock (of something) (8)
11 Not selfish (10)
14 In an intense way (6)
15 Bread with a filling (informally) (6)
17 Tasteless – do on cruise (anag) (10)
20 Drink before eating (8)
21 Farm building (4)
22 Legislative oversight some exploit (8)
23 Honeyed libation (4)

Down

1 Soldiers’ home (8)
2 Fans (8)
4 Extravagant (6)
5 Butterfly or bee, say (10)
6 Go, give or get (4)
7 Us vs. ____ (4)
10 Oddball – haunts lido (anag) (10)
12 Comment on a text (8)
13 Long-serving – added flavour (8)
16 Nailed (anag) – rejection (6)
18 Get out of jail money (4)
19 Block (a proposal) (4)

Last issue solution

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

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NOTICES



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would like to find a volunteer to take on the role of **Publicity Assistant**

The role would include ensuring events were publicised in a timely manner on social media, in The Messenger and on posters around the Village. Assistance with poster design would help too. We would also ask that you are available to attend our once-monthly meeting at the Hall too.

If you think this is something you could do, please call 01379 788754.

THE ARTS SOCIETY DISS

The Arts Society Diss

We are a friendly and welcoming society that meets at the Corn Hall Diss at 2.00pm on the third Tuesday of the month to enjoy a wide range of illustrated talks about the Arts, given by highly qualified speakers.

- **20th October - CARTOONS & CONTRAPTIONS - Barry Venning**
  - The wonderful world of Heath Robinson
- **17th November - STANLEY SPENCER - Amy Lim**
  - Cookham, a village in heaven
- **19th January - AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL ROCK ART - Paul Bahn**
  - The world's longest art tradition
- **16th February - THE BANKSY EFFECT - Mariska Beekenkamp Wladimiroff**
  - Art with attitude

For more information https://artssocdiss.org.uk or email info@artsocdiss.org.uk

U3A DISS

u3a

The monthly meeting takes place on the morning of the first Thursday of each month at the United Reformed Church in Mere Street, Diss, IP22 4AD. Forty-five minutes are allocated to refreshment, socialising and catching up on the interest groups and notices. This is followed by a talk from an interesting guest speaker.

Doors open at 9.45am and the meeting commences at 10.30am. Refreshments are available until 10:15am. Visitors/Non-Members are welcome. We ask for a £3 donation towards refreshments and the speaker.

Our speaker on the 1st October is Tracey Mackness who shares her story from a troubled start in life, to prison to farming pigs and organic sausages, the story of Giggly Pig.

For information about https://diss.u3asite.uk/

Answers to the What Am I? Quiz on page 60: Lego.

SOUTH HARTISMERE BENEFICE



I have come to think of him as 'The Toymaker of Aix'...

For a number of years (although not last year) I have been going down to Aix-en-Provence in July for their annual music festival. The Aix Festival - like the Edinburgh Festival and our own Aldeburgh Festival - was founded in the late 1940s, in the aftermath of war: an affirmation of hope and optimism, after the horrors that had gone before.

It was several years ago, on my way into the centre of Aix from where I was staying, that I first encountered the Toymaker of Aix. He sat cross-legged at the side of a busy pedestrianised street: I have never seen him stand, and maybe he can't.

Spread out before him were the things he had made out of old drinks cans. When I first met him, he was turning them into decorative objects, but more recently he has focussed on toys, like the little van pictured above.

Over the years we have talked. This year I stopped and talked, as before, and initially there was no indication that he remembered me. Why should he, after a two year gap, and when hundreds of people will have passed him every day? But suddenly he stopped. He stared at me, his eyebrows shot up, and a broad smile spread across his face. It was a moment of grace. He had recognised me, and I felt the warmth of that recognition. 'Mon ami!' I said. 'Mon ami! Mon ami!' he responded.

Recognising the humanity we share with others, especially those on the margins of society, seems to me an obligation on Christians - and not only on Christians. Whenever I go to London, I try to take with me a supply of coins to give to rough sleepers and others begging on the streets. Given current prices, coins can buy painfully little, yet the looks one receives are truly humbling: gratitude for being noticed, gratitude that someone has looked at them, and not through them. It is the example that Jesus set for all who try to follow him. The Bible has a number of stories of Jesus, surrounded by crowds, stopping for a person on the edge, and giving them his total attention. It's a challenge and a pattern for us all.

There is a coda to this story. On my last day in Aix I said goodbye to my friend, and he insisted on giving me a large model truck that he had made. The detail was extraordinary, and it must have taken hours of work. 'C'est un cadeau! C'est un cadeau! It's a gift!' he said. I had to accept it, though I couldn't see how to get it back to Suffolk in one piece. Then, on a whim, as I was settling my hotel bill, I asked the receptionist if any of her colleagues had a small child who might like it. 'My little boy is four, and he would absolutely love it', she said. So for one little boy in Aix-en-Provence there was a moment of grace also.

(Rev'd) Alan Harding

OCTOBER 2026

SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER	Thorndon	10.30am	**Harvest** Worship for All
18th Sunday after Trinity	Gislingham	10.30am	Holy Communion
SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER	Mellis	10.30am	Worship for All
19th Sunday after Trinity	Stoke Ash	3.00pm	**Harvest** Holy Communion
SUNDAY 18TH OCTOBER	Thorndon	10.30am	Holy Communion
20th Sunday after Trinity	Thornham Parva	10.30am	Holy Communion
	Gislingham	3.00pm	God and Play
SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER	Thornham Magna	10.30am	Mattins
Last Sunday after Trinity	Wetheringsett	10.30am	Welcome to Worship for All
	Yaxley	10.30am	Holy Communion
SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER	Thornham Parva	6.00pm	Mass for the Eve of All Saints
All Hallows' Eve			

Telephone Church BCP Holy Communion is on Thursdays at 11.00am (NOT on the 8th)



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LOCAL INFORMATION

BUS TIMETABLES

GISLINGHAM AND THORNHAM 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 460 (Thursday only) from Eye to Stowmarket
Leaves Thornham Magna (Four Horseshoes) 09.25 / Gislingham (Shop) 09.31 / Stowmarket (Argos) 10.02. **Returns** from Stowmarket (Argos) 12.15 / Gislingham (Shop) 12.45 / Thornham Magna (Four Horseshoes) 12.52.

Central Connect Bus 72 (Fridays only) Gislingham (via Thornham) to Diss
Leaves Gislingham Village Hall 09.30 / Thornham Magna Four Horseshoes 09.41 / Diss Bus Station 10.05. **Returns** from Diss Bus Station 13.00 / Thornham Magna Four Horseshoes 13.30 / Gislingham Village Hall 13.35.

MELLIS BUS TIMETABLE - www.central-connect.co.uk
75a – Eye to Diss
Eye – Diss (Monday to Friday) – **leaves** Mellis, opp. Railway Tavern: 09:18
Diss – Eye (Monday to Friday) – **leaves** Diss, adj. Bus Station: 13.30



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Yaxley
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Gislingham
Fridays at Village Hall:
12.15 – 14.15



Mobile Library: Gislingham
2026 visits will be on the following Wednesdays: 7 Oct, 4 Nov, 2 Dec, 30 Dec.

Times: Broadfields Rd: 15.10-15.45

Mill St.: 15.50-6.05

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Anglian Water Emergency	0800 145145
Botesdale Health Centre	01379 898295
Citizens Advice Bureau Diss	0800 8127 138
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: gislinghamvillagehall@gmail.com	01379 783903
Mellis - Helen Timmons: bookmellishall@gmail.com	01379 783449
Yaxley - Celia Armstrong: celiaarmstrong@hotmail.co.uk	01379 788754
Thornham - Beth Fredrikssen-Jones: hallhire@thornhams.org	
Mendlesham Health Centre	01449 767722
Member of Parliament - Adrian Ramsey adrian.ramsay.mp@parliament.uk	07534 933356
Mind's support line - a safe place to talk about your mental health	0300 102 1234
NHS Direct	111
Parish Councils:	
Gislingham (Clerk): clerk@gislinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	07833 705915
Mellis (Chairperson - Lawrie Read): mellisparishcouncil@gmail.com	01379 788248
Yaxley (Clerk): Philip.c.freeman@btinternet.com	01379 783203 / 07958 623897
Thornham Parva (Clerk - Christine Moore):	01379 783226
Rev'd Debbie Nicholls, Rector of South Hartismere Benefice rev.d.nicholls@gmail.com	07762 116 335
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Samaritans – for everyone:	116 123

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