



The Swaffham Crier

Volume L Number 3

March 2026



Editorial

It's Caroline's busy time of year for teaching so it has fallen to me to do this month's editorial and fortunately there's lots to talk about. There's a distinct feel of spring in the air all of a sudden and, after a wet winter, there's enough lying water to prompt optimism that we're starting from a better place than last year in terms of ground water.

The village is starting to plan events for the coming year with many of the entries in the contents list being dates for future months' diaries, some needing planning already by those who want to take part. Furthest ahead there's a copy of the Autumn Show entry form so you can plan what to grow to enter this, and for the ever popular Spuds in Buckets competition. Easter this year is early next month so orders for simnel cakes and Easter lilies need to be in this month. After Easter there's a Quiz night and then the Village Feast to look forward to. Planning for the latter includes a request this month for bric-a-brac. On the quiz front, congratulations to all the successful New Year quizzers (see p24) - there's now a **tie-breaker**.

The excellent work done by the POP Litter Pickers has been recognised by the PC who are providing them with new equipment to help their work. Also on this month's PC's environmental agenda was a presentation from the Reach Lode Catchment Area project who are seeking to improve the local watercourses and would welcome input from Swaffham Prior (see p20). And while we're on the subject of our environment generally, there are problems with parking on the High Street obstructing buses (see PC reports).

Last but not least there's another round of consultation on the plans for local government reorganisation (see p33). As usual there's very limited time to respond (why?), **deadline 26 March**, but if things continue along the currently suggested lines, we look likely to become part of North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough so please have a look.

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James Matheson

Cover Picture: *Spring, something to quack about*, watercolour and mixed media collage by **Leonie Smith**



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editors,

Obesity Isn't a Joke

I noted Keith Carter's complaint in the February Crier about the disabled space not being available to him at the village hall when Slimming World was there, and his quip about obesity, querying whether it is a disability, and if so it is the more visible kind.

A few days later I was listening to Professor Giles Yeo, who lives across the field from me, in his series on radio 4 about weight loss drugs. It was in the second episode that I heard the terms stigmatising, morality, and shame when it comes to being an obesity sufferer, and that it is known that doctors make less eye contact with patients who are obese. And I don't think he was talking about people with 'an inch or two on their tum' as Caroline referred to it in the editorial.

Perhaps it would be good for Mr Carter to get together with Professor Yeo to clarify for himself what obesity signifies for all involved. I can't speak for the members of Slimming World as I am not one, although an inch or two off my tum would be nice too. I'll work on that independently, but I wish well to all those who do put themselves forward to say yes, I need to lose some weight. And I will say also, I don't know whether our local Slimming World group has any registered disabled members and I would not be so impolite as to ask; but I do remain in contact with a student from 30 years ago who has not been able to work for a long time because of his obesity and who is registered disabled accordingly. So yes, for him obesity is a disability. And the stigma for him being what it is, I only mention it knowing he lives far from here and will not see this.

I can recommend a conversation with professor Yeo, whose talk to the WI last year at the Village Hall was one of the most entertaining as well as informative I have ever heard, and well worth the five pounds I had to pay to attend as a visitor (since on grounds of being male I am barred from being a member, being the only social and educational organisation in the UK permitted by law to discriminate against half the population of the country by gender as regards membership, but I can live with that, it's a subject to discuss another time). Mr Carter might even get to see Professor Yeo's thirty foot long knitted intestine - not a working model of course. If the WI invite him back again I will willingly pay a further £5. Professor Yeo gets to talk to some of the most elevated people in the world in industry and commerce about his specialism in the science of weight loss. I'm sure if the WI get him back he will have new things to tell. It's a fast-moving field of research.

Mark Lewinski-Grende

Eds note: Apologies to Mark and anyone else who was offended by Keith's comments in last month's Report, or ours in the Editorial - no offence was intended. We were not getting at those who are overweight but those who are not registered disabled but nevertheless park in the disabled bays in the Village Hall car park. This misuse of the disabled bays reappears in this month's Report on p4.

Dear Editors,

Arthur Rank Hospice Coffee Morning

I would like to thank all those that came to the coffee morning for the Arthur Rank Hospice and to all those that sent donations. Everyone was incredibly generous and raised a total of £778.00.

The Hospice is hugely grateful.

Margaret

Dear All,

Easter Lilies

You will see elsewhere in the Crier that there have been some changes concerning the lilies this year. I'm afraid that, as with everything else, the cost of each lily stem has gone up. They are now priced at £3.50 per stem and that is a special price for us in Swaffham Prior. If you would like to order one or more lilies please take your money and the names of your loved ones to be remembered and deliver it to Sue Rust or Hilary Grant. The details are in the Easter Lily advert in the Crier (p8). Please can you get the names and money in by Sunday 29th March so that I have time to write the names to be put in our church?

I'm sure the church will look as beautiful as ever with all the lilies in memory of special people.

Ruth Scovil

Reach Community Solar Farm—Grants

As a Community Benefit Society, Reach Community Solar Farm is able to offer small grants every year to organisations with a community focus. The beneficiaries of these grants are decided upon by our members at our AGM, which takes place in the first half of the year. We are therefore inviting organisations with a community focus to apply for one of this year's grants. There is an application form on our website (<https://reachsolarfarm.co.uk/docs/RCSF-Grant-Fund-Application-Form.docx>) and forms need to be sent to info@reachsolarfarm.co.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you,

The Board, Reach Community Solar Farm.

THIS MONTH'S COVER PICTURE

Our cover is a taken from one of a series of seasonal illustrations by the artist Leonie Smith inspired by the village of Swaffham Prior and the surrounding countryside. Leonie lives in the village and teaches Art in the Cambridge area. She regularly takes part in local exhibitions (including Open Studios during July) where her original artwork can be seen alongside prints and cards for sale.

leoniesmith837@hotmail.com 07738403690

Celia Tyler

From our Reporter at the Parish Council Meeting

The agenda suggested that this meeting would largely comprise revisiting topics covered in earlier meetings and so it proved but there was much worth revisiting.

First up before the meeting had even started was the topic Keith had started with last month: misuse of the disabled parking bay in the Village Hall Car Park by Slimming World. Last time it was two cars, this time one particularly large Chelsea Tractor festooned in Slimming World flags as if to leave no doubt about the identity of the perpetrators. During the conversation it was pointed out that they may be doing this because they have a lot of kit to unload; but that they could achieve much the same result while minimising the risk of inconveniencing disabled users of the Hall, as they had Keith last time, simply by moving their car/cars to ordinary parking spaces when they have finished unloading. Parking reappeared later in the meeting proper where it was noted that sometimes the number of cars parked on the High Street, some one side, some the other, was making it impossible for buses to get past. It was thought that the number of cars parked on street was particularly high when Slimming World meet, so the Clerk will write to them about this and the use of disabled spaces.



The only completely new piece of business, and an important one for the future, was a presentation by two Reach Residents, Nick Acklam and Steve Boreham about the Lower Cams and Lodes Catchment Group and its relevance to Swaffham Prior as parts of the village are in the water catchment area that they are keeping an eye on. The aim is to reduce pollution of the groundwater and thus improve the natural environment; it builds on work that Steve had done in Cambridge on the Hobson's Conduit catchment area. They would like formal support from the PC and practical support from individuals testing water in parts of the catchment area. The PC expressed concern that there might be a negative effect for farmers but were assured that urban run-off, pollution entering the drainage system, and industrialisation of the countryside are bigger practical problems. The Group is not a pressure group but rather provides scientific evidence identifying problems that others like Wildlife Trusts can follow up and a reason for outreach to particular landowners, Anglian Water and the Government. Among problems identified so far are oil pollution from inappropriate oil disposal and Mercury and "forever chemicals" in Reach Lode, source so far unknown. Sometimes things get better too, e.g. from the demise of the Reach sewage treatment plant and the piping of the sewage to Burwell instead. A question was asked whether the Village Heating Scheme poses a risk, to which the answer was potentially yes, both from leaks and temperature changes in the aquifer. Nothing has been detected so far but this illustrates the importance of testing to establish a baseline and then observe whether there are changes.

Solar farms reappeared in the guise of a request for the PC to join an alliance of PCs instructing solicitors to oppose Kingsway Solar Farm. West Wrattling PC, who are most seriously affected by the Kingsway proposal, will be paying for this and, on this basis and that this would continue to be the case, our PC agreed to be involved. It was however suggested that the threat may be diminishing at least for the time being.

as Burwell sub-station lacks the capacity to accommodate more solar farms attaching to the grid via it or space to construct further capacity.

Of potential relevance to both the previous two topics, the government plans a takeover of planning consent where the national interest is affected. Councils are expected to encourage diversity (whatever this means) and abolish green belt restrictions. David Greenfield had responded to the previous draft and was volunteered in his absence to respond to this one too.

PCs have only limited funds and, as the solar farm item illustrates, need to be careful to avoid open-ended and potentially expensive commitments. They can however make a real difference to local projects like the request from Janet Wilmott on behalf of Swaffham Prior litter picking for new equipment – and the PC can reclaim the VAT thus increasing the value. The finances are in good shape: this year is exactly on budget and the increase in precept already planned for next year covers the known increased costs.

Lastly a piece of AOB of interest to all too many of us: potholes. The PC are doing their best to get something done about those in and around Swaffham Prior but the County Council never seem to get beyond the stage of painting round them to mark them. Those on Station Road have been of particular interest to the PC Chair who has to navigate them on his way home and has noted the lack of any actual progress fixing them.

James Matheson

Bric-a-brac donations wanted!

Calling all Spring cleaners!

St Mary's Church, Swaffham Prior, is running a bric-a-brac stall at the Swaffham Prior Village Feast on Saturday 16th May 2026

We are currently collecting donations for the stall – small, clean, preloved items in good condition.



If you have any items to donate, please get in touch with Kate Muscroft (07752011308/ katemuscroft@gmail.com) and she will happily collect your items within the Swaffham Prior area.

QUIZ NIGHT

Swaffham Prior Village Hall

7.30 pm Saturday 18 April

Tickets £7 each. To book a table, contact



Jenny Brand
(01638) 742161

or

Lynne Rand
(01638) 741960



Jacket Potato Supper

Bring your own drinks and glasses !!

Proceeds in aid of St. Mary's Church, Swaffham Prior



Join POP
(Proud of Prior)



COMMUNITY LITTER PICK
FRIDAY TIDY

**Meet at the sheds by the play park
on the High Street**

Friday 13th March
10.00am

Adult Hi Vis Jackets provided
You participate at your own risk
Your Safety is YOUR responsibility

Please bring your own gloves
All other equipment provided

**Come and join friends and
neighbours on this tidy up**

**Look forward to seeing
the results!**



Easter Lilies

Each year we have had lilies in St Mary's Church at Easter time and, recently, many people have contributed to these in memory of a loved one.

Donations can be made anonymously or with your name and the name of your loved one. A list will then be compiled and placed in church for Easter Sunday. As a guide the Easter lilies will cost £3.50 per stem this year. All contributions will be *very* welcome and will enable us to have a beautiful display.

If you would like to make a donation please put it through Sue Rust's door at 23 Greenhead Road or Hilary Grant's door at Rose Cottage, 42 High Street, opposite the Red Lion (the letterbox is in the blue door through the arch in the hedge). Please include the name of your loved one and your own unless, of course, you wish to make your gift anonymously.



St Mary's Church Spring Clean

Saturday 21 March 10am – 12 noon

All welcome to give the church a thorough clean!

Please contact Dee for more information

admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk



Spuds in Buckets 2026!

Beat your neighbours (and the 2025 winning weight) in the great village competition

Just £5 will buy you a bucket and a spud! It is then up to you to grow the heaviest yield of potatoes in your bucket to be weighed at the Harvest Show and Dog Show on Saturday 5th September.

Call Mandy Kingsmill on 07796 091855 or contact mandy@kingsmills.uk to sign up.

In aid of St. Mary's Church

The Rules:

1. Spuds and buckets will be available for delivery or collection on 18th/19th April
2. Spuds to be grown in the buckets in whatever manner the grower chooses
3. Spuds and buckets should be delivered to the Village Hall at 2.00 pm on Saturday 5th September for the grand weigh-in
4. There will be prizes for the adult and child (under 16 at that date) with the heaviest yield of potatoes from an undisturbed bucket
5. The judge's decision will be final
6. The winners will be announced at the Harvest Show and in the Swaffham Crier



JULIE'S SPRING RECIPES

Asparagus soup

2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
400g asparagus, finely chopped
500ml hot chicken stock or vegetable stock
4 tbsp double cream
Freshly ground salt and pepper

1.Heat the olive oil in a saucepan on a medium heat. Add the onion and fry until softened.

2.Add the asparagus and cook for 2-3 minutes.

3.Add the stock and bring to a boil. Season to taste and reduce the heat to simmer for 5-7 minutes or until the asparagus has cooked through.

4.Add the cream and blend with a hand blender until smooth. Keep heated and it is ready to serve.

Serve with crusty bread

Serves 4

Easy chicken and pea risotto

2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, cut in half and coarsely grated
2 garlic cloves, grated
250g arborio risotto rice
100ml white wine
1 litre chicken stock
250g leftover chicken breast. Cut into small pieces
200g frozen peas
75g Grana Padano cheese, finely grated
25g butter
Freshly ground pepper

1.Heat the oil in a saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened and slightly brown.

2.Add the risotto rice to the pan, stir well, so the oil has coated the rice.

3.Pour in half of the wine and allow to bubble, then add all the stock and bring to a boil, stirring well. Reduce the heat and let simmer for 8-10 minutes until the rice is almost tender. Make sure you keep stirring to prevent sticking.

4. Now stir in the rest of the wine, the chicken and peas and cook for a further 5 minutes until the chicken and peas are heated through.

5.Remove from the heat. Then stir in butter and cheese. Season with pepper. Leave for 5 minutes before serving.

Serves 4

Simnel Cakes for Sale

Traditionally, Simnel Cake has been enjoyed on Easter Sunday. This year you can serve up a delicious homemade offering with no more effort other than parting with some cash and all for the benefit of St. Mary's Church.

Orders can be placed by contacting Janet on 07833 960678 or janetwillmott@icloud.com For just £15.00 your teatime guests will be in for a treat! Cakes to be collected from 23 Tothill Road in time for Easter Sunday on 5th April.



Look forward to taking your orders!

**UNLOCKING
OPPORTUNITIES
TOGETHER**



**FOR A PROSPEROUS
COMMONWEALTH**

Flag Flying Day this
Month
from the Tower of
St Cyriac – 9th March

Commonwealth
Day

Swaffham Prior Heat Network

March 2026 Update



Progress so far

We have now connected **107 properties** to the Heat Network.

What's happening next

Over the coming weeks, we'll be planning and carrying out the internal connection works for the remaining properties in the current group on Fairview Grove, High Street and Lower End. If your property is in this group, we'll be in touch directly with more detail on timings and what to expect.

Interested in connecting? Next batch planning has started

We've also started planning the next batch of connections, and as mentioned previously, this is expected to be the final round of connections under our current funding. If you are considering connecting your home, please contact the team as soon as possible so we can arrange the required surveys. Surveys, design, materials and contractor scheduling all need to be organised well in advance, so we may not be able to add new properties at short notice.

How long does the work take?

As a guide: external works typically take around 3–6 days, depending on the length of excavation required; internal works also usually take around 3–5 days, depending on the set-up inside the property.

Get in Touch

Thank you very much for your feedback and support! If you would like to know more about the Heat Network and the process, or to be considered for our next planned round of connections, or provide feedback, please contact us through our contact details below; we can meet at the Village Hall, your home, or via video call.

Siddhant Malhotra

Customer Service (General Queries) : **0345 0455210**

heatingswaffhamprior@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

24/7 Helpline for connected customers: **01782 390777**

Newmarket Cinema

Here are our film shows for April - June 2026 at The Stable, High Street, Newmarket.

April 20th - Brassed Off (15)

May 18th - Made in Dagenham (15)

June 15th - The Choral (12)

Doors open at 6.45pm with the film starting at 7.30pm. Admission is £7 which includes free refreshments. If you would like to reserve seats either send an email to richardjbowler@outlook.com or call 07582 560566

Richard Penney

SAVE THE DATE
ANNUAL VILLAGE FEAST
SWAFFHAM PRIOR VILLAGE HALL
SATURDAY 16TH MAY 2026

12.30PM - 4.00PM



ANNUAL EGG-THROWING CONTEST AT 4.00PM

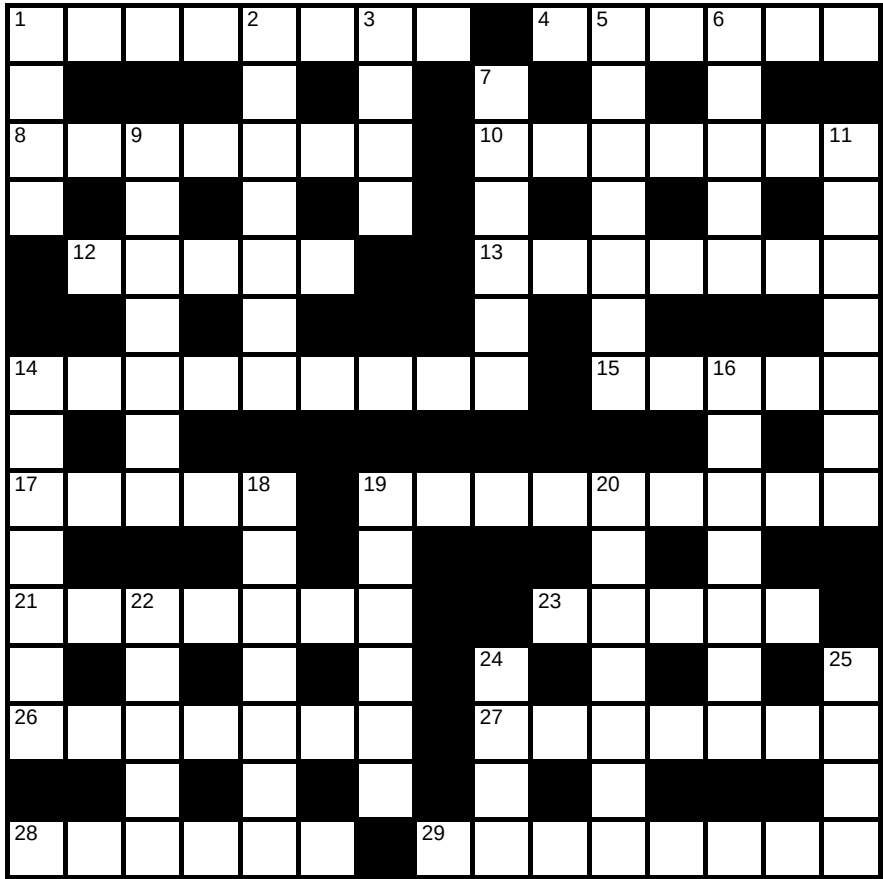
BAR & REFRESHMENTS - BARBEQUE - CREAM TEAS - ICE CREAMS
STALLS - CRAFTS - RAFFLE - CAKE STALL - TOMBOLA - BOWLING
BRIC-A-BRAC - PLANTS - CAN SHY - GURNING - LUCKY DIP
WI STALL - PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT - EMERGENCY VEHICLES
BOOKS JIGSAWS, TOYS - MAJORETTES - CROCKERY SMASHING

ALL PROCEEDS TO GO TO SWAFFHAM PRIOR VILLAGE HALL

Crossword Number 236

Compiled by OUNCE

Clues marked * are linked and there is no definition in the clue. Send your answers to the editors by 18th March 2026. The sender of the first correct solution out of the hat will win a free Sunday Lunch at The Red Lion—See the pub manager for full details. Emailed solutions are acceptable but please include “CROSSWORD” and the crossword number in the header.



Name:.....

Address:.....

.....Tel:.....

Across

- 1 * Returning shortly, 29A has nothing, right? (8)
- 4 * No glue, surprisingly (6)
- 8 Demon in copper vehicle (7)
- 10 Requires drunken gels to swallow one after old boy (7)
- 12 Feel smug when Billy, for instance, drinks lake (5)
- 13 Complain about golf peg, reportedly a Victorian remedy? (4,3)
- 14 Irritation when CEO goes off with a nanny (9)
- 15 The French day is yellow (5)
- 17 Cross? Ring-tailed giant goes berserk (5)
- 19 * Spoof errs badly (fruit missing) (9)
- 21 Unreliable pole-vaulter drops lute for cover (7)
- 23 Canoe breaks water (5)
- 26 * Equipment revolutionary named (7)
- 27 Unfortunately, endeavour (article removed) is late (7)
- 28 Wild cat inhales argon in part of throat (6)
- 29 * Verne red unusually (colour missing) (8)

Down

- 1 Control downpour we hear (4)
- 2 * Sign tracks (7)
- 3 Uncomplicated, elegant and simple, Yorkshire woman initially (4)
- 5 Fifty lie low in disguise, due to gusher? (7)
- 6 Thing disarranged after sunset (5)
- 7 Serious when wound clutches doctor (6)

9/16* Lost a lemon curd concoction (7,7)

- 11 * Harvests returning around new direction (7)
- 14 Trapped gas blocking entry to spaceship? (3,4)
- 16 See 9
- 18 Doctor doctorate for lion or another mammal? (7)
- 19 See 25
- 20 Evacuate former Greek island (7)
- 22 Fragrant compound discovered in chemist's luckiest error (5)
- 24 * Battered trophies lose this (4)
- 25/19* Applied gin cocktail (4,6)

Solution to crossword no. 235

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

We congratulate Dainin O'Dowd, the winner of last month's competition, who will receive a prize certificate from the editors. An honourable mention goes to Robert Nunn.

POEM OF THE MONTH

Emily Brontë

The wind on Crow Hill was her darling.
His fierce, high tale in her ear was her secret.
But his kiss was fatal.

Through her dark Paradise ran
The stream she loved too well
That bit her breast.

The shaggy sodden king of that kingdom
Followed through the wall
And lay on her love-sick bed.

The curlew trod in her womb.
The stone weighed under her heart.
Her death is a baby-cry on the moor.

Ted Hughes

While her masterpiece, *Wuthering Heights*, is currently being traduced at a cinema near you, here's Ted Hughes, English poetry's very own Heathcliff, to set straight our view of Emily, and, by implication, her novel.

If he'd titled it *Cathy Earnshaw* he wouldn't have needed to make the least alteration.

Andrew Grant

BON MOT NUMBER 168

"All men dream: but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible."

T.E. Lawrence 1888-1935



Celebrating?

Let the bells ring out!

Get in touch with us:

swaffhampriorbells@gmail.com

■ Landmark anniversary?

◆ Significant birthday?

◆ Special occasion?

**Let the bells in
St Cyriac
help make it one
to remember**



Red2Green

Red2Green is a registered charity celebrating over 25 years of supporting and promoting adults 16+ with autism and learning disabilities. We are based across 2 sites in Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham; 2 converted barns (Harvey's and Granary) in Park End and our Community Garden on the Bottisham Village College site. We support 90 service-users, 5 days/week, 50 weeks/year.

Coming up

We'll be hosting Coffee Mornings, Plant Sales, and Craft Sales at the Swaffham Bulbeck Pavilion and our Community Garden site in Bottisham over the next few months, and we'd love to welcome as many of you as possible. Please see the details below:

April 22nd – Swaffham Bulbeck Pavilion (10:45-11:45)

May 11th - Bottisham Community Garden (10:30-12:30)

June 17th - Swaffham Bulbeck Pavilion (10:45-11:45)

July 6th - Bottisham Community Garden (10:30-12:30)

We Are Hiring!

We are looking for Support Workers to join our Red2Green Team. We have a number of vacancies available. Please visit our website <https://red2green.org/job-vacancies/> for more information on how to apply.

Ways you can get involved:

- Volunteering opportunities
- Start a fundraiser in aid of Red2Green
- Visit our Community Garden in Bottisham & buy some plants (Mon-Fri, 9:30-4)
- One-off or monthly donations
- Sign up to our monthly newsletter

Follow our social media pages and keep up to date with all things Red2Green

For more information about the wonderful work we do at Red2Green, please visit our website red2green.org or if you want to get in touch, feel free to email us at info@red2green.org or call us on 01223811662.

Anna Butler-Finbow

A to B1102 Update February 2026

Welcome to our first update of 2026, providing you with information and updates regarding transport issues that affect our communities. Find out more about the group's work at www.a2b1102.org

T4 & T5 Bus Developments including potential additional evening services on the T5 route

We were pleased to learn from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) that they have now completed a review of bus services including the T4 and T5 routes. Whilst some routes within the county were assessed to be at risk given levels of patronage, the review concluded that both the T4 and T5 routes are doing well with better than anticipated demand.

The A to B1102 Group met with the CPCA and Suffolk County Council at the end of 2025 to make the case for funding evening services for the T5 route. We were therefore delighted to see that the CPCA bus review included the following recommendations which are now being developed **and will then go out to community consultation in the coming months before final decisions are made:**

- Extending the T4 service from Addenbrookes to Trumpington Park & Ride
- Engaging with Suffolk County Council to further improve the T4 service
- The T5 to be retained with a more resilient timetable and later journeys

As soon as we are informed of the consultation process, we will communicate the information.

T5 Passenger Feedback

The A to B1102 Group has continued to pass passenger feedback to Brian Clifford, MD of the A2B Group Ltd who run the T5 service. Brian has been grateful for the feedback engaged in a really constructive way. As a result of this feedback, changes to staffing on the service have been made resulting in significantly improved punctuality of the early morning services, the comfort of the ride and adherence to the timetable.

Meeting with Paul Bristow, Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

In January, the group met with Paul Bristow. We raised three key concerns, all of which Paul agreed to look into and work with us to progress:

- T4 & T5 Bus Routes: Improved interchange between the services and improved facilities for passengers at Addenbrookes and Drummer Street Bus Stations
- Proposed relocated Park & Ride Site – Newmarket Road: the Group's serious concerns with the proposals as set out by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) including the impact they will have on traffic flow along Newmarket Road
- Cambridge North Station: The lack of parking space for people using the station and the non-existent public transport from our areas.

We look forward to sharing more information on these key issues in the coming weeks.



Chairman
A to B1102 Group

This article is a short extract from the complete draft “Catchment Plan for Reach Lode” by Steve Boreham sent to the PC prior to discussion at its February meeting. See reports on this on p4 and p30.

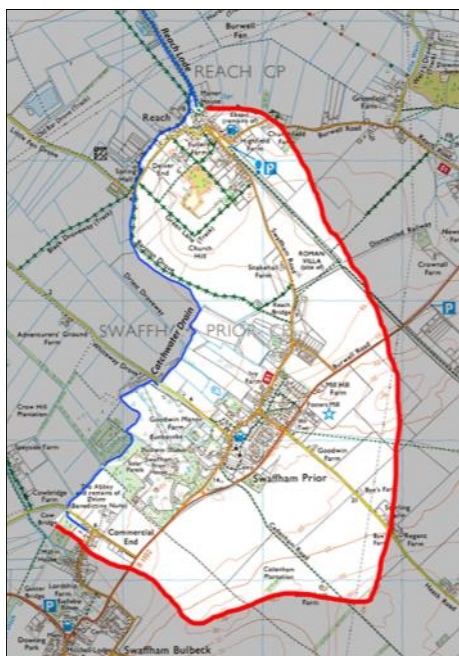
Catchment Plan for Reach Lode (Extract)

Introduction

The aim is for this catchment plan to be a living document that is constantly evolving. It draws together the historic information, the current situation and detailed plans for work to preserve and enhance Reach Lode over the next 50+ years. A plan of such broad scope clearly involves a myriad of often competing human requirements ranging from the desire for wildlife habitat restoration/creation, the challenges of the built environment and the needs of farmers. Balancing of these themes and arriving at a document that is consensual and carries broad support is the ultimate aim.

Underlying facts

The Reach Lode system is ca. 7 km long and drains a ca. 6 km² catchment (see map). Reach Lode itself is ca. 3.5km long and is fed by a Catchwater Drain of a similar length that rises near Commercial End. Reach Lode is maintained by the Environment Agency as a navigable waterway. The Catchwater Drain is maintained by Swaffham Internal Drainage Board and runs through the Parishes of Swaffham Prior and Reach. The southern part of Reach Lode is within Reach Parish. The northern part of Reach Lode is bounded by Burwell Parish and Swaffham Prior Parish.



List of Stakeholders

The co-ordinator of the Reach Lode Catchment Plan is – Steve Boreham.

If you know of an individual or organisation that is not yet involved but you think should be, let the co-ordinator of the Reach Lode catchment plan know.

- Reach Parish Council
- Great Ouse Boating Association
- Swaffham Internal Drainage Board
- East Cambridgeshire District Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council (highways and landowners)
- Burwell Parish Council

- Swaffham Prior Parish Council
- Environment Agency
- Anglian Water
- National Trust
- NGOs: community groups, conservation charities
- Businesses
- Landowners: Individuals, Farmers
- Other interested parties

Wildlife

The aim is to improve habitats throughout the Reach Lode catchment. Reach Lode supports chalk stream plants such as Water Starwort, a range of invertebrates including mayflies, damselflies and caddisflies, fish such as Three-spined Stickleback, Roach and Perch, birds including Kingfisher, Mute Swan, Heron and Little Egret, and mammals including Water Vole and Otter.

The Future

The strategies associated with managing Reach Lode over the next 50 years involve a myriad of competing human desires ranging from habitat restoration/creation and a reduction in pollution to improved access along the Catchwater Drain and Reach Lode, and to the landscape that surrounds it. These are pitched against increased development pressure for housing, farming and business, which represent challenges to the Reach Lode corridor and to water quality.

Balancing these issues and arriving at a strategy that is consensual and carries broad support is the aim of this plan. In the medium term (3 to 10 years ahead) the focus is to identify areas and issues that could be improved or mitigated to deliver a significant positive impact on the Reach Lode corridor. It is worth noting that the Environment Agency considers improvements in the ecology, hydrological regime and run-off ‘disproportionately expensive’ to mitigate in the period up to 2027. They also report that improvements in chemical water quality are ‘technically infeasible’ in the period up to 2063.

Regardless, it would be good to see initiatives to increase biodiversity, a reduction in local chalk groundwater abstraction, an increase in augmentation quantity and reliability, and the creation of balancing ponds on most of the run-off inputs to attenuate pollution and flood risk. The long- term perspective (25 to 50 years ahead) would be to maintain Reach Lode as an exemplar of a Fenland Lode, maintaining good water quality and a biodiverse green corridor leading towards the River Cam, and a fine example of an historic man-made watercourse. This would require proactive monitoring of conditions in and around Reach Lode and a presumption against development on greenspace within the catchment.

[Eds note: Those who’re interested in adding a Swaffham Prior dimension to this work, e.g. by monitoring local water, are asked to contact Steve Boreham directly: steveboreham@wildreach.co.uk.]

The Swaffhams' WI

Blind as a bat? I don't think so! In the February meeting of The Swaffhams' WI, we delved into the life and habits of bats expertly led by ecologist Katie Pollard. Did you know that bats are the only true flying mammals and that the oldest bat skeleton, found in the USA, is circa 52 million years old?

Bats are divided into two main groups: the microbats (found in the UK) and the fruit eating megabats (found in the tropics). Our beautiful microbats are small insectivores, have tiny eyes (hence blind as a bat not being true) and roost both in trees and buildings. They are very clever users of echolocation where the bats will shout out of their mouths bouncing the sound off objects allowing them to navigate when flying. There are 18 species of bats in the UK and Ireland (12 species in Cambridgeshire) and each species uses a different frequency. This is where your handy bat detector will recognise which bat you are talking to! All bats are protected in England under two pieces of legislation.



So why should we care about these harmless beautiful creatures? The megabats provide amazing ecosystem services e.g. seed dispersal through their copious fruit eating habits. Bats are an efficient means of pest control. Our pipistrelle bats can eat up to 3,000 mosquitoes each night and finally megabats are great pollinators. Sadly, bats are rare and threatened in the UK. As they often roost in loft spaces, these roosts can be threatened by human interference e.g. loft conversions. Solar panels on rooves can block their entrance and exit sites. Street lighting, intensive agriculture and road building can all disturb the bats.



What does a year in the life of a bat look like? From November until March the bats hibernate. From April to May the females will return to the maternity roosts and all being well will have one birth per year. The male bats disperse elsewhere. In June the female bats are pregnant and in July the baby bats are born. From August to September the bats leave their roosts, swarm and mate. The female bats store the sperm over winter and if conditions are right, she uses the sperm when waking up in the spring. Very clever! So, can we come to love and admire these very clever creatures? Bats have had a bad press in the media over



many years but they do not damage buildings. If you think you have a bat in your loft, one way of checking is to see if the droppings crumble in your hand. If so, then you are lucky enough to have a bat! However, you should never touch a bat and there are people you can phone if you are worried (see below). How can we help our beautiful endangered bats? Put up bat boxes in trees or even build them into your house walls. Bats love ponds, trees and insect attracting plants. So please lay on a banquet for our bats and invite them to

bed and breakfast at yours!

Bat Conservation Trust - <https://www.bats.org.uk>

Cambridgeshire Bat Group - <https://www.cambsbatgroup.org.uk>

Our next meeting is our AGM on 16th March. The following month, on 20th April, we have our Open Meeting on Coco Chanel by Carol Cooke and there will be more information about this in next month's Crier.

Kate Muscroft

katemuscroft@gmail.com

The Reading Group Reads ... George Orwell's 1984

In February, the book club discussed George Orwell's *1984*. This novel was written in the 1940's with a theme highly relevant today. *1984* gave us the notion of 'Big Brother' where the government watched citizens to ensure compliance. Throughout the book, when the government made an error or failed to meet a target, they re-wrote history, removing all documents contrary to the current message. Orwell appears ahead of his time by alluding to Artificial Intelligence (AI), in one instance, identifying words of songs composed without any human intervention. Another prediction comes in the re-writing of the dictionary to remove unwanted words, to make things more palatable. We have gone from famine to food insecurity, as just one example in the change in our language. Throughout, the need for enemies is essential for the control of the citizens. Those enemies change at the whim of the government to maintain authority through fear and creation of separation; us vs. them.

We had an active discussion whereby many similarities to current events were identified. March's book is *A Month in the Country* by J.L. Carr and April's, *I Escaped from Auschwitz* by Rudolf Vrba. New members are welcome.

Anita Lang





Mothers' Union

For our first meeting of the New Year we joined the usual Thursday morning Communion Service at Lode Church, followed by a warming lunch of homemade soup, rolls and cake, which was greatly enjoyed by 12 members and guests. Donations raised £100 for the Mothers' Union Holiday scheme AFIA (Away From It All). This scheme provides breaks for families who may be experiencing stress or difficulties in life – on average 2,500 people are helped in this way across the UK and Ireland every year.

In March we will not be having our usual meeting but instead will be joining the Lady Day Service and celebrations in Ely on 27th March as Mother's Union is celebrating 150 years this Summer.

Meeting on 19th February 2026

As we met the day after Ash Wednesday we had a Lent theme to our service, followed by a crafting activity to make a decorated Lent jar containing 40 Bible verses; these were to be taken out at random during the period of Lent to help us with our reflections. Following this activity, we had tea/coffee and biscuits and a good natter as always.

Our May meeting is on 21st May at 2.30pm at the Fassage Hall in Lode when we shall be aiming to enhance our health and wellbeing by joining Fara with some chair exercises.

Visitors are very welcome to join us.

Alison Martin (01223 88285)

New Year Quiz Results and TIE-BREAKER

Many Congratulations to

Bob Nunn

Clare Freeman

Dee Noyes

John Turner (Natalie Comins' Dad)

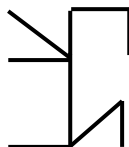
Phillip Lewis

Mike Carrington

Who all solved our Cistercian Number History Quiz! So here is the Tiebreaker:

What is the event described here? Entries for March 22. *Hint: the Cistercians may never have used this particular symbol, but they would have had no problem recognising it! Unlike today's internet...*

Dachaigh
a-rithist!



Swaffham Prior

5th September 2026

Autumn Show

NAME:

Vegetables (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
A	4 French beans	
B	4 Runner beans	
C	3 Beetroot	
D	3 Onions	
E	4 Shallots	
F	3 Carrots	
G	3 Potatoes	
H	6 Cherry tomatoes	

Class	Entry	Tick
I	4 Tomatoes	
J	3 Courgettes	
K	Squash or Marrow	
L	Cucumber	
M	Any other vegetable	
N	Odd and/or Rude vegetable	
O	Display of mixed herbs	
P	Trug of mixed fresh produce (vegetables and fruit)	

Fruit (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
Q	3 Dessert apples	
R	3 Cooking apples	
S	3 Pears	

Class	Entry	Tick
T	3 Plums	
U	6 Soft fruit (same variety)	
V	Any other fruit	

Flowers (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
W	3 roses	
X	3 Other flowers (same variety)	
Y	4 Mixed flowers	
Z	Tallest sunflower	
Z1	Largest sunflower head	

Class	Entry	Tick
AA	3 Dahlias (same or mixed)	
AB	Flower arrangement (See rule 1)	
AC	Mini arrangement (See rule 2)	
AD	Pot plant (See rule 3)	
AD1	Vase of mostly wildflowers	

Additional classes (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
AE	Jam or jelly	
AF	Pickle or chutney	
AG	Marmalade	
AH	Any other preserve or honey	
AI	Homemade wine or alcoholic drink	
AJ	4 eggs	
AJ1	Ginger cake	

Class	Entry	Tick
AK	Victoria sponge (W.I. See rule 4)	
AL	Fruit cake	
AM	Decorated and/or filled cake	
AN	Any other cake	
AN1	Shortbread	
AO	Hand-made bread	
AP	Bread-machine bread	

Children's classes (one entry per class per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
AQ	Miniature garden (See rule 5)	
AR	Vegetable or fruit animal	
AR1	4 decorated Rich Tea biscuits	

Class	Entry	Tick
AS	3 Decorated cupcakes	
AT	Junk Model (See rule 6)	

Photography (up to three entries per person)

Class	Entry	Tick
AU	"Creepy Crawlies" (aged up to 16 years)	

Class	Entry	Tick
AV	"In flight"	

Please see all detailed rules overleaf

🌟🌟 Swaffham Prior Autumn Show 🌟🌟

🌟🌟 Rules 🌟🌟

General Information and Rules

Please read this information carefully to prevent disappointment

There is no entry fee.

Only one entry per person per class is allowed, so choose your entries carefully. Extra entry and quiz forms can be downloaded at www.SwaffhamPriorVillagehall.co.uk

All entries (including quizzes) should be brought to the Village hall between **10:00 and 11:50** on the morning of the show. **Doors will be locked at 12:00** to allow judging.

Points will be awarded to decide on the winner of the overall prize as follows:

4 for 1st in Class	3 for 2nd or 100% in Quiz	2 for 3rd or 75% in Quiz	1 for Entry or Quiz entry
--------------------------------------	---	--	----------------------------------

Prizes will be awarded by **14:00**. The **Grand Auction** of produce in aid of the Village Hall will be at **15:00**. (If you don't want your entry to be sold, please remove it before the auction starts!) Presentation of Gurning Trophy.

Produce Competition

All produce must have been home-grown. There are no specific display rules, but, in addition to quality and size, entries will also be judged on regularity and neatness.

1. The flower arrangement theme is **"Enchanted Wood"**. Entries should not exceed **45 cm** (18") tall.
2. The miniature arrangement should not exceed **6 cm** (<2½") in height.
3. The Pot plant should have been owned for at least 12 months.

Baking Competitions

4. Victoria sponge W.I. recipe (<https://www.thewi.org.uk/what-we-do/recipes/baking/victoria-sandwich>). A 20 cm (8") basic Victoria sponge with a raspberry jam filling (no cream), topped with caster sugar.

Bread can be made with any combination of flours and other ingredients. Hand-made bread should not have been mixed in a bread machine.

Children's Competitions

5. The miniature garden should be no larger than an A4 sheet of paper (approx. 20 x 30 cm).
6. The junk model can be any subject, but must be made mainly from waste items (egg boxes, yogurt pots, etc.). The footprint for the model should be no larger than an A4 sheet of paper.

Photography Competition

Theme and age groups as indicated on form. (No 'adult' themed photos will be accepted). Only one entry per person allowed. Photos will not be auctioned and should be removed immediately after the end of the event.

Entries may be colour or black and white and must be **unmounted and unframed**.

Maximum size per entry is A4. Photo entries will be pinned to the noticeboard for display.

If photos are significantly edited, please explain this on your entry form.

It is the entrant's responsibility to ensure that all the necessary permissions are obtained from people featured in photographs.

Copyright remains with the photographer.

Please see overleaf for list of classes.



VILLAGE GARDENERS

At the February meeting of the Village Gardeners, having battled potholes and a puncture, Barry Gayton made it to the village hall to deliver a presentation on The Weird and Wonderful of the Plant Kingdom. Barry explained that he had been developing this talk for more than 35 years. He described how some plants have uniquely adapted their structure to make the most of their environment, such as sunflowers that turn to track the sun's path from east to west (phototropism), organ-pipe cacti with hardwood lattice stems that store water for times of drought, plants that use specific colours or strong smells to attract insects for pollination, and seeds that contain germination inhibitors so they only germinate when they get wet. Barry also showed examples of plants which have developed a grotesque appearance in reaction to attack by insects or to radiation in the environment, and have developed an unusual flattened stem or flower (fasciation), ball-like woody growths (galls), or uncontrolled, abnormal growth with no end-point (cristation). Although these changes don't tend to harm the plant, they do look quite dramatic. We might see these and other unexpected occurrences in our own gardens; Barry's photo of a Desiree potato splitting open and 'giving birth' to a baby potato instead of it growing on a stem was quite bizarre.

The next meeting of the Village Gardeners will be held in Swaffham Prior Village Hall on Tuesday 17th March at 8pm (doors 7:45pm), when Katherine Mann will be talking about 'Restoring Histon Manor Gardens: A Novice's Journey'. After moving to Histon Manor in 2018, the new owners embarked on the ambitious task of developing and reshaping its gardens. With little formal gardening experience, they found themselves on a steep learning curve. The talk will explore both the challenges and the successes of transforming the gardens. It will also delve into the history of the grounds, outlining what is known of their development through the early twentieth century and how this historical understanding has informed present-day choices. Everyone is welcome to join us; attendance is free for members (£20 for the year) or £4 for visitors.

Fiona Geraghty

A Message from Red to Green

Red2Green

End of our 25th Year...

February marks the end of our 25th year. We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who supported Red2Green this past year as we celebrated our anniversary! We hope you have enjoyed all the various celebration activities and look forward to more as we kick off our 26th year.

Here's to many more with your kind support!

Warm wishes,

Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Perinatal Infant Feeding Coaches

At the PPG's January meeting we had a great presentation from the Maxine Cooper and Gina Garrett, Perinatal Infant Feeding Coaches who support families across the Ely Primary Care Network, including those registered with Burwell Surgery. The PPG thought it would be helpful to ask the Maxine and Gina to tell us more about what they do and how families can access their service.

Why did you decide to set up this service?

Babies don't come with a manual! Feeding a baby can be overwhelming, especially in the early weeks. Many parents feel unsure that they're doing things right. Some might feel isolated or anxious. And many are reluctant to "bother" professionals, or might not know who to turn to for advice.

What services do you provide?

We are both trained Infant Feeding Coaches and NCT Counsellors. We listen to families' needs and give tailored, practical guidance. Our aim is to offer early help to prevent common feeding issues from escalating and we support families without judgement, respecting all feeding choices (breast, formula or combination). We provide emotional support, building confidence and reassurance and we also give access to practical tools and resources, including guidance on breast pumps as well as managing a free breast pump loan service.

What kind of things can you help with?

Families often come to us for feeding/parenting/relationship worries in the early weeks. Mum might have pain, latch or positioning concerns, and baby might have reflux, or be unsettled and crying. We often answer questions on milk supply, and on mixed feeding and transitions to solids. We also work alongside GPs, Health Visitors, Midwives and the community services on medical issues (e.g. Mastitis, blocked milk ducts) and with the Perinatal mental health service.

How can families access the service?

We provide face to face support at one of our three drop-ins:

SOHAM Baby Drop In: every **Wednesday 10.00am to 11.30am** at Soham Child and Family Centre (CB7 5BH)

ELY Baby Drop In: every **Monday, 1.30pm to 3pm** at Ely Child and Family Centre (CB7 4RB)

LITTLEPORT Baby Drop In: every **Tuesday, 1.30pm to 3pm** at Littleport Child and Family Centre (CB6 1JT)

Your GP can refer you directly to our service through the Surgery system. Your Midwife, Health Visitor or local children's centre may refer you in to our service by email, and you can also self-refer by emailing us at

cpicb.elypcn.perinatalhealthcoach@nhs.net.

Next PPG meeting – all welcome – why not join us online if you can't make it in person!

The next meeting of the PPG will be at 6.30pm on Tuesday 28th April at Burwell Day Centre – all welcome. If you would like to attend the PPG for the first time, or if you can't attend in person but can join via Microsoft Teams, then please contact cpicb.burwellsurgery.admin@nhs.net. And if you can't attend meetings, but want to stay informed, you can Like our new Facebook page (Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group – PPG).

Bottisham Medical Practice Patients Group

Practice Update

Non Attendance of Appointments: If you have an appointment booked and you are unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible so we can reallocate the appointment. For the last quarter of 2025 there were 204 appointments were categorised as Did Not Attend, this equates to just under 42hrs of Doctor and Nursing time lost. In January we had 48 appointments marked as DNA which equates to just under 15hrs of lost appointments. Where an appointment has inadvertently been missed, we will endeavour to reschedule as soon as possible but we ask for your consideration of our Reception Team as it is not always possible to reschedule for the same day.

Covid Vaccinations: We will be providing the Spring COVID booster vaccinations: We are in the planning process and will contact all eligible patients shortly.

How can you help us? An up-to-date mobile phone number is helpful to have on record so we can send messages regarding follow ups and chronic health reviews. This enables us to send you a link where you can book an appointment directly without the need to wait on the phone. Request an appointment via our website: <https://www.bottishammedicalpractice.nhs.uk/> where your appointment will be triaged, rapidly that day. Ensure you keep your phone with you so you can answer the phone if the GP calls you or reception contact you to book an appointment.

Minor symptoms? Not sure you need a GP? Take a look at <https://111.nhs.uk/> where your symptoms can be reviewed and the website will tell you the best course of action.

The Surgery is open between 08:00-18:30 Monday to Friday (Closure afternoons are publicised on our website and in the surgery). Our Dispensary is open between 08:30-12:00 and 14:00-18:00.

Next Meeting: To be notified. For information please contact Chairman Steve Gilson on sgilson@btinternet.com

Bottisham Medical Practice Patients Group

Notes from the Swaffham Prior Parish Council meeting of 12th February

The Parish Council meeting of the 12th February was chaired by Cllr Covill and attended by 7 parish councillors and 5 members of the public.

Catchment plan produced by the Lower Cams and Lodes Catchment Group and its relevance to Swaffham Prior.

Nick Acklam and Dr Steve Boreham reported on a catchment plan to improve water quality, biodiversity, bank vegetation etc in and around the Reach Lode. The plan involved data gathering through volunteer water-testing, establishing a baseline for the lode throughout the year and understanding of how the water system works. They asked that Swaffham Prior Parish Council write a letter of support for the plan. The discussion covered potential and actual sources of pollution.

The PC agreed to discuss providing a letter of support for the catchment plan as an item agenda at the next PC meeting (March 2026).

Adjustments to allocations of funds in the budget for 2026/7

Cllr Kent-Phillips reported. Cllr Kent-Phillips had completed the Q3, which showed that there was £1800 of the current budget left, which should adequately cover payments to the years end. After discussion, it was agreed that the budget be adjusted by increasing both the Clerk's expenses and the Insurance by £100 each, to cover increased costs.

Equipment for the litter pickers.

The PC agreed to purchase the equipment requested for the use of the litter pickers. The PC thanked Janet Wilmott for all her work with this task.

Parish Council Alliance and Richard Buxton Solicitors opposition to Kingsway Solar.

After discussion, it was agreed that the PC sign a letter agreeing to Richard Buxton Solicitors representing them and the other members of the Parish Council Alliance, but emphasised that Swaffham Prior Parish Council would not make financial commitments towards legal fees incurred.

National Planning Policy Framework.

Cllr David Greenfield was nominated respond to the consultation on the new National Planning Policy Framework on behalf of the PC.

Parish Councillors' Reports

Cllr Gynn. Parking on the High Street had been causing much difficulty for the buses, with some unable to get through at times, and a near-accident was caused by a car pulling round parked vehicles into oncoming traffic. Additionally, parking in the disabled bays of the village hall car park had prevented their proper use. It was agreed that the Clerk will write to the leader of Slimming World asking that she remind her attendees to park considerately on the High Street with a mind to buses, lorries and large farm machinery getting past and also to only use the disabled bays for parking when unloading/loading equipment at the beginning and end of their sessions.

Cllr Covill. Potholes on Station Road have been marked out for repair twice but not yet repaired, despite the report being removed from the map in the New Year, before Cllr Covill reported them again. The repairs are due to be completed within 12 weeks.

Produced from unapproved minutes and may contain errors; approved minutes can be found at <http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/minutes.html> If anyone would like any further information on any of the above items, please contact the Clerk.

The next monthly Parish Council meeting will be on Thursday, 12th March 2026 starting at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.

FREECYCLE



As a reminder, everything is offered for free and nothing is expected in return.

If you have any offers or wants, please contact me by the date of your magazine submission date by phone/text (07980 423210) or e-mail (junthompson44@gmail.com) or drop a note through the letter box (23 Longmeadow).

Please let me know if you would like anything repeating in subsequent issues.

Offers

- 2 years of Gardeners World magazine. Jan 2024 to Dec 2025. Martin Rushworth, 01223 811703
- MIELE dishwasher, probably 16 years old but in working order. 60cm wide and deep, cutlery tray at top. Collect from Burwell, by arrangement. Please **send a message** to Lindsey Shaw-Miller on 07773027155, or lindseysm8@gmail.com
- Earthworm composter. Complete, with additional trays. Includes all you will need except red worms. Suitable for keeping by kitchen door. Jacqui 01223 811190

Wants

- 2 drawer filing cabinet, to hold 40cm wide hanging files. Contact: Lucinda Collison 07531 021733
- Lift wanted/offered from Swaffham Bulbeck to Addenbrookes for work (usually Tues, Weds, Fri, to arrive at Addenbrookes 7am and leaving 8pm). Please contact Jane 07800 934585 for more information.
- Digital projector (with HDMI port) & large portable tripod projector screen (ideally 2.4m wide) needed for a course presentation by BALA at Bottisham Sports & Social Club. We would also consider a loan - the projector and screen are needed on Thursday mornings for September to December 2026 (actual dates to be confirmed). Contact Robert on 07785 110434"

June Thompson

Audit Committee 20 January

East Cambridgeshire District Council's draft statement of accounts will be amended and published without committee scrutiny.

It was approved for sign-off during a meeting at which members highlighted "multiple significant issues". The decision was taken by the committee's three Conservative members and sealed by the chair's casting vote.

It means the committee will not meet again to review a corrected version of the accounts before they are published.



Operational Services Committee 26 January

Roll out of the new Waste Collection project remains on budget and on track. Further information will be sent to all residents to prepare them for the change. It was noted that discussions on collecting waste from flats and shared bins were ongoing, and that the operating crews were being consulted on the changes which was sadly lacking when the collection rounds were last changed.

The Committee approved the RECAP Waste Strategy; a joint document produced by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership. Unfortunately, we are still locked into a contract for dealing with waste which is no longer suitable for us.

Local Government Reorganisation

There is a public consultation on this issue with a **closing date of 26 March** - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough>. This is your chance to tell Government whether you want East Cambs (ECDC) to go into a Unitary with Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire or with Peterborough, Huntingdonshire and Fenland (see opposite).

Finance and Assets Committee 29 January

The East Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Report was presented and discussed. Some members felt that it had not enough detail; reports will be submitted bi-annually in the future.

The revenue budget for the next year was presented, but there was little debate as the major discussion will be at Full Council on 24 February.

The contingency budget for the Mepal Crematorium has been fully committed since more subterranean structures were encountered despite assurances that full ground surveys had been done before the project was costed. There was some concern that this was a fixed cost agreement with the construction company, and that we should not be giving more money. With the Chair's casting vote, it was agreed that an additional £300,000 should be made available for the project to go ahead. No

other option, e.g. reducing some of the facilities, was presented to the committee.

Greater Cambridge Development Company

There is a consultation about the powers and area of responsibility for the Cambridge Growth Company. As with the GCP, this company is likely to have a significant impact on our area. This consultation closes on 1 April - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/establishing-a-development-corporation-in-greater-cambridge>

Surgery

The next surgery will be on Wednesday 25 March at the Swaffham Bulbeck Pavilion from half past six and socialising at the Black Horse in the same village an hour later.

Local Government Reorganisation - The 4 Proposals

With the exception of proposal 4, the proposals are based existing district council areas being combined to form the new unitary councils.

1) Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council proposed 2 unitary councils:

- **North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough:** Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland
- **Greater Cambridge:** Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire

2) Cambridgeshire County Council proposed 2 unitary councils:

- **North West:** Peterborough, Fenland, Huntingdonshire
- **South East:** Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire

3) Huntingdonshire District Council proposed 3 unitary councils:

- **North East:** Peterborough, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire
- **Central Huntingdonshire:** Huntingdonshire
- **South West:** Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire

4) Peterborough City Council and Fenland District Council proposed 3 unitary councils (this includes a request to split existing district council areas between the proposed new councils):

- **Greater Peterborough:** Peterborough and 9 wards from Huntingdonshire
- **Mid Cambridgeshire:** Fenland, East Cambridgeshire and 17 wards from Huntingdonshire
- **Greater Cambridge:** Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire

The consultation <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough> asks questions about each proposal to help inform the assessment of the proposals.

News from St Mary's Church

We are now in the season of Lent – if you come into church you will notice the purple-coloured hangings on the altar and pulpit, and lack of flowers. Lent is a time of reflection in the lead up to Easter when we think of Jesus's time in the wilderness.

Shrove Tuesday - or Pancake Day – is the day before Lent starts when traditionally people used up their eggs, sugar and fat, which were forbidden during the fasting period of Lent. We had a **Pancake Party** in the Village Hall with craft activities, pancake decorating, pancake eating and pancake races for all ages. Thank you to all who helped run the sticky event and families attending.... Please see photos!

We are holding **Lent Lunches** – very simple meals of soup and a roll – in support of women and families at the Rehema project in Mara. Missionary, Heather Johnstone, has suggested our donations could help fund a new microwave oven for the café project; a sewing machine for a trainee seamstress; support for a child to go to nursery school; tiles for a church floor or Easter gifts for the workers at the project. Over the years we have helped with many projects including building a bathroom, furnishing a classroom, buying equipment and much more. If you would like to donate, please be in touch on the email address below.

We are holding a **Spring Clean** in church on Saturday 21 March 10am-12noon. Everyone is welcome to come along to tackle a range of jobs. Please be in touch.

We have two creative Janets in the congregation! One is making **Simmel cakes** for Easter – please see advert elsewhere. The other is making **pew cushions** for our hard wooden pews. These can be purchased for £5 each and really make a difference to comfort and warmth. Please order via the email address.

Advance notice – October 2027 will mark 125 years since St Mary's was re-opened as the village's church. We hope to have a display of memorabilia featuring the church as part of the anniversary celebrations. If you were married, baptised or otherwise involved and have photos or orders of service you are willing to lend, please get in touch.

Dee Noyes admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk



Services in March 2026

Sunday 1 March – Second Sunday of Lent

9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Bottisham

Wednesday 4 March

8pm CbyC, a contemplative service, online
on Zoom

Sunday 8 March – Third Sunday of Lent

9am Online service on Zoom
Holy Communion, Quay
10.30am Family Worship and baptism, Swaffham Prior – with
Beavers

Sunday 15 March – Fourth Sunday of Lent/ Mothering Sunday

9am Online service on Zoom
Mothering Sunday Service, Quay
10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Bulbeck
Morning Prayer for Mothering Sunday, Bottisham

Sunday 22 March – Fifth Sunday of Lent

9am Online service on Zoom
Holy Communion BCP, Swaffham Bulbeck
10.30am Holy Communion, Swaffham Prior

Sunday 29 March – Palm Sunday

9am Online service on Zoom
10.30am Holy Communion, Lode
6pm Evensong, Swaffham Prior

Each Thursday

10.30am Holy Communion, Lode

Revd Canon Max Osborne max9@btinternet.com; 01223 481187 (Rest day: Tuesday)

Churchwardens: Bottisham: bottisham@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 604019

Lode: lode@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 811222

Quay: quy@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 812652

Swaffham Bulbeck: bulbeck@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01223 812525; 01223 811501

Swaffham Prior: prior@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk; 01638 743937

For general enquiries: admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk;

churchwardens@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/angleseychurches;

A Church Near You: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7380/benefice>

Dates for Your Diary March 2026

Wed	4	Book Club, 6pm [23]
Mon	9	Commonwealth Day flag flying [11]
Thu	12	PC Meeting, Village Hall. 7:30pm [31]
Fri	13	POP Litter Pick, Play Area, High St, 10:00 [7]
Mon	16	WI AGM, Village Hall, 7:30 [22]
Tue	17	Village Gardeners, Village Hall, 8pm [27]
Wed	18	Crossword Deadline [14]
Sat	21	St Mary's Spring Clean, St Mary's, 10:00-Noon [8]
Sun	22	Crier Copy Deadline
Wed	25	District Cllrs, Swaffham Bulbeck pavilion, 6:30 pm onwards [33]
Thu	26	Local govt consultation deadline [33]
Fri	27	Mothers' Union, Lady Day service, Ely Cathedral [24]
Sun	29	Palm Sunday evensong, St Mary's, 6pm [35]

Numbers in square brackets indicate page number of an accompanying article

Club	Contact	Tel/Email	Date	Time	Place
FOSPS	Becky Wilkes	07827 318351	2 nd Mon of Term	8pm	Village School
Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Tim Doe	gsl@1st swaffhamprior scouts.org.uk	Wed (Term) Mon	5:15-6:30pm 6:30-8.00pm 7.00-8.30pm	Scout Hut
Reading Group	Brenda Wilson	743937	1 st Wed of month	6:00pm	Variable
Village Gardeners	Fiona Geraghty	07785 971853	3 rd Tues of month	8:00pm	Village Hall
WI	Kate Muscroft Kaye Lewsinski	07752011308 kayejanelew@ gmail.com	3 rd Mon of month	7.30 pm	Village Hall
Bell Ringers*	Gareth Davies	07886 323686 swaffhamprior bells@gmail.com	Every Tuesday	7.30-9.00pm	St Cyriac's



Pancake day at the Village Hall—see inside for the report.

Online Crier: www.swaffham-crier.co.uk