

March 2024



THE  
*Cresset*



News, views and what's on, in and around Bottisham



# BOTTISHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

## SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

30TH APRIL 7.30pm.

Welcome. Parish Council Report Activities and Achievements over last year.	Cllr Jon Ogborn Chair Bottisham Parish Council
County Council Report	Cllr Alan Sharp
District Council Report	Cllr Charlotte Cane
Update on Project Play and New Cemetery	Cllr Jon Ogborn
Summary Introduction to Informal Session	Cllr Jon Ogborn

The social club bar will open & refreshments will be available after 8:15pm.

Take this opportunity to chat about anything you wish with your Parish, County & District Cllrs and representatives from local schools and the police.

**For more information email: [clerk@bottisham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@bottisham-pc.gov.uk) Tel. 07369 248998**



# Village Litter Picks

Fresh air, friendship and  
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*Bring your gloves and suitable clothes for the outdoors!*

Starting Location	Date	Month
Bottisham Community, Sports & Social	16 <sup>th</sup>	March
Bottisham Village College ( <i>sports centre car park end</i> )	20 <sup>th</sup>	April

First, I must make an apology to Helen Cole who organises the Bottisham Adult Learning Association which was established after the WEA finished.

Their notice of the latest talk which starts on the 5th of March, should have been included in last month's magazine. Due to an error on my part, it did not appear.

Hopefully you will have received this issue in time to go along and enjoy the talk by Stephen Poulter who presents a course entitled 'Becoming a House Detective – Researching the Story of Historic Buildings'. Further details are included in this month's BALA. Notice.

March is a month with which I have a love hate relationship. It is a month that brings delight with the emerging spring, evidenced by the burgeoning flowers in the garden and buds on the trees. All brought about by some warmer temperatures and more importantly for them, the lengthening daylight. However, in the same vein comes the explosion of weeds and thickening of the grass in the lawn. There is no gain without pain!

In the past we have had some amazing weather in March. I recall on several occasions expressing concern at the end of a warm spell of March weather and having had the Barbecue out several times, that, "Well I suppose that will have been our summer!" Let's hope this year will be one of them.

School time now. Some facts about March. Named after Mars, the Roman god of war and the third month of the year—or, if you were born before 150 B.C., the first!

According to the oldest Roman calendars, one year was ten months long, beginning in March and ending in December. You can still see traces of this old month-naming system in our modern calendar: because December was the tenth month, it was named for the number ten in Latin (decem), just like September was named for seven (septem). So, what about January and February? They were just two nameless months called "winter," proving that winter is literally so awful it doesn't even deserve a spot on the calendar.

Finally a useless bit of information for you. March always begins on the same day of the week as November and a non-leap February.

March is also mainly remembered for St Patrick's Day. He was born in Great Britain—not Ireland—to wealthy parents near the end of the fourth century. He is believed to have died on March 17, around 460 A.D.

Although his father was a Christian deacon, it has been suggested that he probably took on the role because of tax incentives and there is no evidence that Patrick came from a particularly religious family.

At the age of 16, Patrick was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who were attacking his family's estate. They transported him to Ireland where he spent six years in captivity.

During this time, he worked as a shepherd, outdoors and away from people. Lonely and afraid, he turned to his religion for solace, becoming a devout Christian.

I'm not sure, but accept, that the green connection came with of the Emerald Isle due to amount of rain they get, but nowadays St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on both sides of the



*(continued on page 2.)*

*(continued from page 1.)*

Atlantic with a homage to ‘The little people’, the colour green and inevitably that other Irish staple the black stuff.

Incidentally you will have noticed they now produce that with a non-alcoholic version. I can’t imagine the serious celebrants of St. Patrick’s Day going for that one. I might just have one myself!

Lots to read this month and information to glean so enjoy your March Cresset and more from me next month.

*Your Editor*



This month's cover picture is of a spectacular sunset from the Churchyard taken by Debbie Wilson.

*Thanks to her, and if you have some good local pictures that might suit, I'm always on the lookout.*

## ***News From Holy Trinity Church Bottisham***

The starting date of our new vicar, The Rev Malcolm Eric (Max) Osborne, who is currently Rector of Horringer Benefice in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, has not yet been announced although the latest information we have is that ‘it will be in the Spring’. Max was previously vicar of All Saints’ Church in Newmarket for nineteen years. However, the sale of the vicarage is well underway with the ‘For Sale’ sign going up in early February and I am told there have been numerous viewings so far. I understand that the purchase of the new vicarage in Beechwood Avenue is in an advanced state and progressing well.



In the meantime, our services continue to be led by local clergy. Once again, we welcome back Keith Morrison to take the Holy Communion Service on Sunday 3rd March at 10.30am, while Sarah Maxwell will lead our Morning Prayer on March 17th. Our loyal bell ringers will ring the bells prior to each service. Looking further ahead there is a change of minister for the Benefice Easter Day Holy Communion Service on 31st March which Rev Liz Caswell will now be leading.

Bulbs are coming through and now flowering in the churchyard with daffodils, snowdrops and aconites visible in numerous areas as I write.

The North Aisle is now free of pews. One or two are still available for purchase, however, at £100 each – please contact me if you are interested in buying one – telephone details at the back of the Cresset.

More work needs to be done on the roof and so we have decided to have another Easter Thanksgiving Gift Day. Envelopes and forms should be coming through your letter boxes

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from mid-March. The response last year was magnificent - please give as generously as you feel able.

Our regular Toddler Group continues to meet on a Tuesday morning in the church at 9am. Our monthly services for the residents of Oaklands and Hilton Park care homes also continue and we were kindly invited to lunch with the residents after our February Service. The regular bell ringing practice takes place at 8pm on a Friday evening. If you would like to learn bellringing then please contact the Tower Captain Martin Kitson on [martin.kitson1@btinternet.com](mailto:martin.kitson1@btinternet.com).

I am told that the flower arrangers hope to put on a magnificent display for the Easter Weekend. We are looking for more to help with the flowers, and if you are able to offer some, please telephone Carolyn Bangs on 01223 811159. Instruction would be given.

Also anyone wishing to donate towards lilies in memory of a loved one in Holy Trinity Church at Easter please pass your gift to Carolyn at 143 High Street, Bottisham.

**We hope to see you soon at one of our services.**

*Stuart Field, Churchwarden*



**Copy deadline for next issue is 14 March.**

*Please send material to the editor at [BottishamCresset@gmail.com](mailto:BottishamCresset@gmail.com)*

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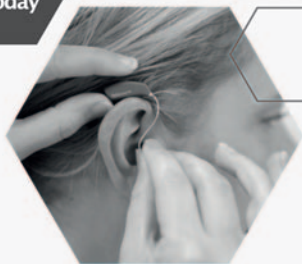
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## *Services in the Anglesey Benefice*

<b>Sun Mar 3rd</b>	<b>9am</b>	<b>Online service on Zoom</b>
	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion – Bottisham</b>
	<b>4pm</b>	<b>Village Worship - Quy Village Hall</b>
<b>Wed Mar 6th</b>	<b>8pm</b>	<b>C by C (a short contemplative service) – online via Zoom</b>
<b>Sun Mar 10th</b>	<b>9am</b>	<b>Online service on Zoom</b>
		<b>Holy Communion - Quy</b>
	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Family Worship – Swaffham Prior</b>
<b>Sun Mar 17th</b>	<b>9am</b>	<b>Online service on Zoom</b>
		<b>Morning Prayer - Quy</b>
	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion - Swaffham Bulbeck</b>
		<b>Morning Prayer – Bottisham</b>
<b>PALM SUNDAY Mar 24th</b>		
	<b>9am</b>	<b>Online service on Zoom</b>
	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion (BCP) - Swaffham Prior</b>
<b>Fri Mar 29th</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE in the Churchyard – Quy</b>
<b>EASTER SUNDAY Mar 31st</b>		
	<b>9am</b>	<b>Online service on Zoom</b>
	<b>10.30 am</b>	<b>Holy Communion – Bottisham</b>
	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Evensong – Swaffham Prior</b>
<b>Every Thursday, including Maundy Thursday</b>		
	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Holy Communion - Lode</b>

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**Please check the Church notice board for any changes or email [admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk](mailto:admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk), which is also the address to request the Zoom link. You are very welcome to attend any of these services.**

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## *Dear Editor*

Having just returned home I heard with absolute revulsion the decision by the Planning Inspector to allow the appeal in favour of a Retirement Village in Bottisham. This is the most harmful and bewildering planning decision to affect the vibrancy and sustainability of this village for some while.

If ECDC has the backbone to enforce its legally adopted Local Plan, I would contend that the Planning Inspector's inexplicable decision not to follow the evidence of past refusals should be challenged either directly with the Secretary of State or through a Judicial Review. I would therefore urge folk to contact Parish Council, ECDC and our MP to make their thoughts known as quickly as possible. Any challenge has to be submitted within six weeks.

As a matter of principle I for one will be boycotting Scotsdale's Garden Centres and I don't think we as a community can trust Rayner's Farms to provide safe guardianship of Bottisham's heritage.

Anthony Jolley

# WELCOME TO YOUR TV LICENSING HELP NEWSLETTER

You will find information below on TV Licence concessions and; the Simple Payment Plan, to help people in financial difficulty.

## **Licence fee concessions are available to the following groups:**

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- Anyone who is blind (severely sight impaired) is eligible for a 50% concession on their TV Licence. This licence will also cover anyone they live with.
- Some residential care homes; supported housing; and sheltered accommodation are eligible for a discounted TV Licence.

To assist you there is a new microsite with all the information you need about TV Licence concessions.

Here, you can check whether you are eligible for a concession. <http://tinyurl.com/tvhelp123> There is also a handy video that explains the discounts, and how to apply. **TV LICENCE CONCESSIONS MICROSITE**

## **SIMPLE PAYMENT PLAN**

The rising cost of living has resulted in many unable to afford everyday essentials. At TV Licensing, we're doing all we can to help people pay for their TV Licence, including offering payment plans to help spread the cost.

The Simple Payment Plan is available for those struggling financially and in need of extra help and support. For more information, please view our Introduction to the Simple Payment Plan video or call **0300 555 0510**.

## **BE SCAM AWARE IN 2024**

TV Licensing is working to help customers protect themselves against being scammed.

We are continuing to ask people to **STOP – CHECK – ASK** if they receive any suspicious communications that appear to be from TV Licensing.

- You can also find more information about how to avoid scams and how to report one on the TV Licensing scams page. Read our scams guide with further information.



# *Parish Council Report*

The next full council meeting will be held by on 4th March 2024, 7.30pm at the Poppy Room, Bottisham Sports and Social Club. All Parish Council meetings are open to the public. Please note that the clerk to the council does not keep regular office hours. Replies to emails and phone calls will be attended to as soon as is practicable.

## **BOTTISHAM GREENWAY**

The Parish Council hosted a well-attended information evening for all residents at the end of January 2024, to discuss the proposals from the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership (GCP) for the Bottisham Greenway. This includes a proposal to introduce a 20 mph “Quiet Street” from the build out in Lode Rd, down to the entrance to Beechwood Avenue near the brick bus shelter. To facilitate this, the 40 mph zone in Lode Rd beyond the build out will be reduced to 30 mph. The Quiet Street would then extend down Bell Rd to the back entrance of BVC – where cyclists will be directed to join a new multi-use path that will lead them along the A1303. At Quy this will be joined by the Swaffhams Greenway and thence to Riverside in Cambridge.

The Parish Council have been working tirelessly to clarify the impact the introduction of this scheme would have for both the residents of the village and those transient to the facilities the village offers. The Council has made comment on the whole extent of the Greenway. Albeit most of it down to the entrance to Bell Rd is within South Cambs (which with the City itself comprises “Greater Cambridge”). So, most attention has been given to the changes proposed within the village itself. In this Bottisham Parish Council has worked with other East Cambs Councils in seeking improved consultation between the GCP and impacted villages - seeking the best outcome for our communities.

Apart from reducing the speed to 20 mph, the GCP are proposing a new build-out in Bell Rd beside the entrance to BVC and further speed calming measures around the busy shops/Triangle area and Bell Rd T-junction. The latter has been most challenging. The GCP have presented the Parish Council with six options for this area. In consultation this has now been whittled down to three viable options, on which the Council sought the views of residents at the evening.

The three options were an asphalt table or speed cushions around the Triangle – then thirdly ending the Greenway in Bell Rd. Residents who attended the presentation evening were provided with more detailed information about the individual options and had opportunity to ask questions. If you wish to see the presentation, a copy is available on the Parish Council’s website.

“Quiet Streets” are governed by the LTN 1/20 legislation adopted in 2010. Those at the meeting will recall there was confusion created by the GCP’s rigid interpretation of the LTN 1/20 guidance for cyclists to adopt the “primary position” in the road. Subsequent discussion with the GCP has clarified that cyclists should observe the more recently adopted (2022) revisions to the Highway Code (Rule 72). This advises cyclists in ‘quiet streets’ to “ride in the centre of your lane, to make yourself as clearly visible as possible”,

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but “if a faster vehicle comes up behind you, move to the left to enable them to overtake, if you can do so safely”. Which is entirely sensible.

Residents were asked to provide written feedback on the three options, with the following first preferences indicated:

Raised Asphalt Table = 52.9%

Speed Cushions = 1.2%

Greenway Ends in Bell Rd = 45.9%

The results of the Greenways feedback were discussed at the February Parish Council meeting and, while this was not a formal village-wide survey, the narrow preference for the raised table was noted. But the Parish Council felt it needed to discuss the matter further with the GCP and a request has been made for the Transport Director, Peter Blake, to attend a meeting with the Parish Council to address concerns we have.

Residents were also asked whether they felt that the Parish Council should make an application to the Local Highways Improvement 20 mph scheme, to introduce a reduced speed limit up Lode Rd/High St, Bell Rd & Tunbridge Lane – covering effectively all roads within the village. The residents present were overwhelmingly in support of this approach, regardless of the Bottisham Greenway. Those of you present at the Community Safety Forum last autumn will recall the enthusiasm for 20 mph in the village expressed then. It was agreed at the Parish Council meeting that an application will be made to the Local Highways Improvement 20 mph scheme. However, the funding for this scheme is limited and the whole of Cambridgeshire gets an opportunity to bid. It is evaluated on a merit system, so there is no guarantee that this will happen in the immediate future.

Any reduction in speed limit (for the Greenway or 20 mph scheme) requires full public consultation, so residents will have further opportunity to comment should either scheme be confirmed. As further information is available for either of the schemes, this will be shared with residents via the website and through the Parish Council update.

## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Just a reminder that the Annual Parish Meeting is being held on 30th April 2024 at the Main Hall, Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club at 7.30pm. The Parish Council and County/District Cllrs will give a short presentation, followed by the opportunity to further mix and discuss with representatives of the Parish, District & County Councilors, local schools and the Police.

## **BUSES**

We have been notified by District Councilor Cane that, in the new funding round, a new bus route from Soham has been proposed by the Mayor – which will reconnect Bottisham with the B1102 villages. This is great news. However the exact route is unclear – with interest in potentially directing it via the Wilbrahams to Addenbrookes. The B1102 are waiting for the full review of their survey to be complete, which will assist them in their discussion with the Mayor. More details will be shared as soon as they are available via social media, our website and the noticeboard.

***Continued on page 11***



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## **STREET LIGHTING**

The Parish Council have had the Parish owned streetlights inspected, as several are experiencing problems. Balfour Beatty have carried out the inspection and made a few recommendations. This report has been studied and, while still to be approved at the next meeting, it is likely that the posts and lanterns will be replaced on two lights in Downing Close and one in Jenyns Close. The post will be replaced on the lamp on College Close as the lantern is reusable. The quotation for the works is £7647.52 exc VAT.

## **PARISH CEMETERY**

A quotation was received to tidy up the area where the spoil heap has been removed, to create a more aesthetically pleasing aspect and free up more burial space while we await the new cemetery. The laurel hedging will also be significantly trimmed to make the burial spaces more accessible. It is hoped the works will be carried out early spring.

If you need any further information relating to anything raised in this report or anything you wish to bring to the attention of the Parish Council, then please do not hesitate to contact me via email, clerk@bottisham-pc.gov.uk or via phone 07369248998.

*Sam Chambers-Turner Clerk to the Council*

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## ***Campaign Hub***

Campaign Hub campaigns on issues that effect the local Community. It is not there just to hand out leaflets but also on what people feel is an issue to them. We are outside Bottisham Co-op every fifteen weeks between 11am and 2pm.

On January the 27th we encouraged people who were visiting the co-op to purchase food to donate to Ely Foodbank. This was a considerable success and thank you to those that donated food.

While standing there we were approached by a local organisation who wanted to help with a local worthy cause. Their cause was Bottisham Community Primary School's welcome club.

This club is setup to encourage primary school children to mix so that barriers are broken down, so every child understands that everyone is different. The club is run in the morning at the first meal of the day not just during the normal school day. However, there is a problem.

Breakfast is not a curricular activity and so this organisation collects food for the school. We have been asked if we could help with campaign hub. And of course, we said yes! We are proud to help.

We are asking you to donate food for this club. We especially ask for breakfast bars. We are arranging a special Campaign hub outside **Bottisham Co-op on Saturday 23rd of March between 11am and 2pm.**

**So please help in this worthy cause.**

*Steven ODel*



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# *District Councillors' Report*

## **RETIREMENT VILLAGE APPEAL ALLOWED**

Despite significant, well-reasoned, objections from residents and relevant professionals, the Planning Appeal has been allowed for the Green Belt field behind 163-187 High Street and east of Rowan Close. The applicants have been given permission to build the Retirement Village with up to 170 extra care units and up to 51 affordable dwellings.

This is outline permission, so the developers need to submit detailed plans, including layout and design for planning permission. But the Council cannot use that process to stop the development.

The Inspector accepted many of the objections but decided on balance that the need for extra care housing and affordable housing outweighed the harms of building on that field.

The Inspector noted that although other extra care facilities were being built in the area, there would still be a shortfall against the predicted need, and he found that the need is acute. He found that delivery of extra care housing in East Cambs in the past had been “abject at best”. He went on to say “That the predicted supply of extra care housing falls significantly below the identified need, and is anticipated to do so in the future, is partly a result of a distinct lack of robust local planning policies and site allocations to support this form of housing. Furthermore, the Council’s robust housing land supply position is not predicated on the future delivery of extra care housing, which reinforces the inadequacy of the Local Plan in supporting the delivery of this type of housing for older people.”

The Inspector noted that the average completion of affordable housing in the district was 67 a year, against a need of about 200 a year. He recognised “that the Council have made progress in addressing under-delivery over the past two years in particular” but that “a notable unmet need still persists.”

The Inspector also noted the benefits of “additional planting proposed, dedicated play space for children, and the conversion of an area in excess of 3ha for use as public open space.” Together with the benefit of biodiversity net gain and employment opportunities.

There are many conditions, such as construction working hours, protection of existing trees, delivery and maintenance of the public open space. There are also requirements to make financial contributions towards the local infrastructure.

I know that many Bottisham residents will be upset by this decision. We will now need to work together to make sure that the development is well-designed and that the new residents are supported to become part of the Bottisham community.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

The Conservative majority on the Council’s Finance & Assets Committee pushed through a recommendation to the Full Council to build their crematorium and cemetery at Mepal. John and his Liberal Democrat group colleagues on the committee voted against this for several reasons. We both feel it’s a misuse of the land – which used to be an outdoor centre enjoyed by countless young people – and of £9 million of Community Infrastructure Levy funds – which could have been spent on amenities in our towns and villages.

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**Continued from page 13**

One of the stated aims of the plan for a crematorium is to have a facility in the District, and to make it more convenient for residents in East Cambridgeshire. However, Mepal is at the very edge of the District, the nearest possible location to the Council's major competitor at March, and for residents here in Bottisham it will be no more convenient than our current nearest providers.

ECSS were given a £500,000 increase to their fee for 2022/23 and 2023/24. Despite this increased fee, they are now asking for a further £200,000 for 2023/24. This will be considered by Full Council in February. Earlier this year, the Chief Executive of ECDC (who is also Managing Director of ECSS) reviewed the arrangements for ECSS and introduced various changes to address the weaknesses which he found. Charlotte proposed an external review but this was blocked by Conservative Councillors. Internal Audit have now reviewed the Governance Controls between ECDC and ECSS and found that there are gaps in the internal control framework.

The Combined Authority will be introducing a new bus service between Soham and Cambridge, via Burwell, Swaffham Prior, Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham. This will restore the connection with Bottisham, lost when the route for the No 11 changed. Charlotte has pressed the officers to consult locally on the details of this new service. She has also suggested that rather than going into Cambridge Centre they consult on if it should go via the Wilbrahams and Fulbourn to Addenbrookes, Long Road and Hills Road 6th form colleges and Cambridge rail station.

The Combined Authority has given ECDC £300,000 to distribute as grants to local businesses. The grant scheme will support local businesses who are looking to scale and grow within the District with capital and/or revenue grants. The scheme will target businesses from start up to a maximum turnover (2022) of £10million. Applications open on 1 April and funds will be allocated as eligible applications are received, so businesses would be wise to get their applications ready to submit on 1 April. Details can be seen at <https://d.docs.live.net/c51bcca2e9144a46/East%20Cambs/Parish%20Reports/19%20-%20item%2010%20UK%20Shared%20Prosperity%20Business%20Grant%20Scheme%20App%201.pdf>

Our next surgery will take place on Thursday 21 March 6.30-7.30 at Reach Village Hall. Between surgeries, residents can continue to contact us by email or phone – [charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk) 07976 607512 [john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk) 07942 685599

## *Planning Notes*

**a) New applications:**

24/00025/FUL, 28 Beechwood Avenue. Entrance porch, single storey extension, extension to the kitchen including alterations to existing and proposed windows and doors and internal alterations.

24/00123/FUL, 4 Howlett Way, Bottisham. Installation of heat pump to rear of property.

**b) Planning Applications approved by ECDC:**

24/00012/TRE. 109 High Street Bottisham. T1 Walnut - Reduce to form pollard at 8m high due to evidence of major limb failure within central crown, Broken limb still lodged in crown. Decay visible within remaining wound at centre of crown and risk of further significant failures. Adjacent to neighbouring property and public footpath.

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# *Cambridgeshire County Council Report*

## **MORE TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS**

The GCP are now looking at road classifications throughout Cambridge, which will restrict traffic even more and, in my opinion, cause more congestion.

CCC have a stated aim of getting people out of their cars and use public transport, which is admirable, but it must come with reliable services otherwise that will not happen.

A complete rethink is required, but the ruling administration refuse to listen to constructive comments. The ruling administration voted down at a County Council meeting last year, a Conservative group proposal to have a cross party working group to look at the issues and try to resolve them. Working together for all residents. They refused that.

At the February 13th Meeting of County Council, I stated that the ruling administration continued to ignore sensible proposals from our group and seem hellbent on pushing their own ideology at the financial expense of residents, as well as ruining the City, where people are going elsewhere to shop rather than put up with the congestion.

I have ideas on how we can solve traffic issues within and outside the City and will continue to put those forward and welcome any suggestions from residents.

## **BUSES**

The mayor is increasing the mayoral precept by 200% from £12 to £36 for a Band D property, which will apparently be spent on bus transport including Demand Responsive Transport, one scheme that will be in East Cambridgeshire towards the east of the district.

However, despite my lobbying, there is no proposal to change the route of the number 11 to divert into Bottisham. This is disappointing, as even diverting every other service would have helped residents from outside Bottisham with access to the GP surgery and the Village College facilities and give Bottisham residents access to Anglesey Abbey and the other villages.

There is talk of using the extra money to provide additional services, through the B1102 corridor, but whilst some outline detail has been produced, there is still a lot of detail to come.

There is a potential proposal to move to a franchising model, which will mean that the Combined Authority (CPCA) as the transport authority could dictate where and when buses run, rather than the bus operators, as at present.

Franchising costs a lot of money and there is no evidence that the money will be forthcoming from Government, which is the main source, based on previous poor bids that the CPCA have made.

There will be a public consultation on this later this year, once the Business Case has been published. I will update once more details are known.

## **CCC BUDGET**

The CCC decided at a meeting on 13th February to increase their portion of the Council tax by 4.99%, which is the maximum allowed. Our group put forward proposals to spend the money differently and put even more into repairing our roads, but that was rejected.

Swaffham Heath/A1303 Crossroads – Staggered Junction

I have some great news. After a very long wait due to legal issues purchasing land around the junction, construction is due to start on March 4th and last for 15 weeks.

*Continued on page 19*



# BOTTISHAM BOWLING CLUB RACE NIGHT

**Saturday 23rd March 2024**

**- 7.30 pm start**

**Non-members very welcome  
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Cambridge

*Continued from page 17*

This has been a long time coming, but I hope that this finally improves road safety at this important junction.

### **BOTTISHAM GREENWAYS**

I attended the meeting in Bottisham on 30th January on the Greenways proposal. As I said at that meeting, I will support the village in whatever is decided by residents, although there are some aspects of the proposals that I have concerns around, especially the governance of the whole proposal.

I am here to represent you, so if there are any issues that concern you, please contact me.

If I am not aware of an issue, I am not able to solve it.

May I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to continuing to serve you in 2024.

*Alan Sharp Cambridgeshire County Councillor – Woodditton Division*  
*Tel: 01638 507485/ 07794292941. E-Mail: Alan.sharp@cambridgeshire.gov.uk*

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## ***1st Bottisham Scout Group***

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**Now more than ever there is a real need for society to support the wellbeing and development of young people. The restrictions caused by the coronavirus pandemic have severely hampered activities for young people across the whole of the UK, and Bottisham Scouts is no different, with a need to recruit more volunteers into 1st Bottisham Scout Group to support Scouting.**

Scouting offers young people an opportunity for challenge and adventure, alongside a safe place for Members to express themselves and develop new skills for life. We believe in the values of respect, care, co-operation, belief and integrity.

1st Bottisham Scout Group has over 50 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Young Leaders and we're asking the amazing residents of Bottisham to step out of their comfort zones and harness the feelings of community spirit that the pandemic has harboured to join the Scout movement! You may feel like you have lost many opportunities over the past year and Scouting could be a fantastic outlet to share your skills and support your local community, delivering and supporting a creative and varied programme as part of a team.

If you have a particular interest, hobby or skill set, we would love to hear from you. We are looking for volunteers with all different skill sets with 1st Bottisham Scout Group. There are roles for everyone with all different skills sets, you may be a finance manager, a teacher, youth worker, IT guru or a health and safety expert – all have transferrable skills ideally suited for Scouting! You may only be able to help once a month, this is fine, Scouting offers flexible volunteering.

Scouting offers a comprehensive training package to support new volunteers into role, which can even lead to earning a nationally recognised certificate.

Supporting young people in their personal growth can offer a real sense of achievement; if you want to experience what Scouting can offer and what you can do for young people in your community visit [www.cambridgeshirescouts.org.uk/join](http://www.cambridgeshirescouts.org.uk/join) or email [gsl@1stbottishamscouts.org.uk](mailto:gsl@1stbottishamscouts.org.uk)

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## *Mark Towriss Bursary Fun. - A Letter From Ute Towriss*

**Dear Supporters of the Mark Towriss Bursary Fund,**

My grateful thanks to all of you who, over the past fourteen years, have contributed to the Bursary Fund. It has truly made a significant contribution to the founding and training of Family Medicine/ GPs in Kenya – and beyond. After fourteen years, and with a heavy heart I am now closing the fund.

Over the years this fund has raised approximately £200,000. This has supported 23 Family Doctors throughout their training and another 13 who are still part way through their four years and will still benefit from the remaining funds.

In 2008, when Mark died, there were only 3 Kenyan-trained Family Doctors with just one university, Moi, offering this new Master's degree. Now there are five universities in Kenya training Family Doctors – and over 100 Kenyan-trained GPs/ Family Doctors. It is a demanding programme and the majority of these doctors will sacrifice a comfortable life, working far from the cities in poor rural communities, where a broad set of medical and social skills will be needed.

The Mark Towriss Bursary Fund was set in motion with the proceeds from a memorial concert given for Dr Towriss in Swaffham Bulbeck church a few months after his death. I wanted to fulfil his wish to make a connection to primary health in East Africa and was glad to discover that a group of doctors in Kenya had recently set up a Family Medicine/GP training programme and were looking for scholarships. This would indeed fulfil Dr Towriss's wish. Initially we hoped to support one student, then we became more ambitious and agreed to fund three – and so it has rolled on. There have been so many gifts from residents and patients in Bottisham where Dr Towriss practiced, from Swaffham Bulbeck where he lived, and the surrounding villages, from medical friends and my family.

In 2017 I visited their four rural training hospitals and the university where our bursary scholars studied. I followed those doctors around in clinics and on the rural hospital wards, sat in on training sessions and talked to them about the fund and primary health care in the UK. The scope of their chosen work is huge, daunting. But they are dedicated to their vision – giving neglected communities access to medical care. I had good reason to be impressed, and moved by their dedication- and glad that this fund has supported such doctors in gaining much needed skills.

I recently received the following update from Dr Bruce Dahlman, a founding member of Family Medicine training in Kenya and ex-Director of Family Medicine Training at Kabarak University Kenya:

Ute, these family doctors (sponsored by the Towriss Bursary Fund) are all continuing to serve across Kenya and in Ethiopia with others intending to return in due time to their home countries of Uganda, Burundi and DR Congo. You likely are aware that Dr. Elijah Terer from the first class is now the CEO of AIC Litein Hospital; Dr David Mung'ara leads the family medicine program at Kijabe Hospital; Dr. Faith Lelei is the Clinical Services

*Continued on page 23*

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*Continued from page 21*

Director over all clinical and support staff at Kijabe; Dr. Boaz Niyinyumva leads AIC Litein residents but plans to return to his native Burundi to help start family medicine there next year; Dr. Sifora Fanta returned to her home in Soddo, Ethiopia and will assist starting family medicine at her hospital later this year. This very partial “reading out” of who the Mark Towriss Bursary has helped will continue into the future as the newer graduates also take their places of leadership and service.

The countries in which these doctors will practice have no primary health care as we know it. Most of them will work in small rural hospitals where a wide variety of medical, psychiatric and surgical skills are required. All of them will need to be teachers of the next generation of Family Doctors – for there are still so few of them. I feel positive now, after fourteen years, that Family Medicine has a strong enough foundation to survive. The greater the number of Family Doctors, the more likely it will be to become a more common career choice/possibility.

Now, after fourteen years I will close the fund. I do so with great sadness but also with a lot of gratitude. Gratitude to the donors for your generosity, gratitude for insight into the skills and dedication of the Kenyan Family Doctors – and gratitude to those who have enabled this fund to reach those who needed it.

Do watch the video: Why Kenya Needs Family Medicine <https://youtu.be/6FJKWizd-qI?feature=shared>

*Ute Towriss - Uvt.tow@gmail.com*



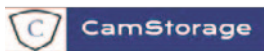
Mark Towriss Bursary scholars: above Dr Boaz Niyinyumva next to Ute right Dr Faith Lelei

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**Copy deadline for the next issue is 14 March.**

*Please send material to the editor at [BottishamCresset@gmail.com](mailto:BottishamCresset@gmail.com)*





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## *Anglesey Abbey*

Snowdrop season has been another success, with visitors arriving from far and wide to see the beautiful carpets of snowdrops and aconites in the gardens at Anglesey Abbey. We'd like to say a special thank you to our volunteers who have helped us welcome visitors during such a busy time.

And now we turn our attention to daffodils and Easter! Returning after popular demand, we are holding daffodil tours every **Sunday to Friday from 18 March – 21 April 2024**. Join one of our knowledgeable garden guides to find out more about the exciting collection of daffodils. Did you know? There are over 40 varieties to spot across the estate! This tour is the perfect opportunity to learn some history, uncover the subtle differences between the daffodils and take in some of the other seasonal highlights along the way. There's no need to book, just ask a member of the welcome team to join a tour on the day.

Spring not only brings swathes of daffodils, but bright tulips and hyacinths as well. We're excited to have another Easter adventure trail for children (and adults!) again this year. There'll be games and activities on the trail, including some welly-wanging, dressing-up, a giant bird box, an egg and spoon race and plenty of photo opportunities too. Normal admission applies plus £3 per trail, which includes a chocolate egg, or a vegan 'Free-From' chocolate egg, both made using cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms. Children can also get creative with some craft activities and face painting over the bank holiday weekend. The trail will run from Friday **29 March to Sunday 14 April** – we hope to see you there!

## *Wicken Fen*

We've enjoyed a busy February with lots of activities on for both children and adults, including the return of our popular Stick Trail. It's been a good month for wildlife too – we've been seeing lots of cranes as well as hen harriers and barn owls hunting over Sedge Fen at dusk.

We celebrated World Wetlands Day on 2 February and one of our rangers, Ajay Tegala, took part in a podcast for BBC World Service, discussing the question: are wetlands our secret weapon for fighting climate change? If you'd like to find out more about the importance of our wetlands and the work we are doing to protect them, you can listen on BBC Sounds. Search for: The Climate Question.

So, what's coming up in March?

**National Lottery Open Week is 9 – 17 March** and we will be offering free entry for lottery players during this period. Our free February half-term workshops were made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and with thanks to lottery players, so we'd like to show our appreciation by offering lottery players the chance to visit free of charge.

Boat trips along Wicken Lode will be starting up again (with a brand-new engine too!) and you can enjoy a bike ride on the wider reserve. **The Cycle Hire will be open from 9 March 2024.**

We are excited about putting on our **Easter Adventure Trail from 23 March – 14 April along the Boardwalk at Wicken Fen**. Normal admission applies, plus £3 per trail which includes a chocolate egg, or a vegan 'Free-From' chocolate egg, both made using cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms. We look forward to welcoming you!



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# ***Bottisham and District Gardening Club***

Denis (Digger) Moules told of his early days as a Fen Boy in Wisbech on a 40 acre farm who became a Cambridge detective until he retired in 1998. He had a good education but was undecided about a career until an uncle who was a Chief Inspector suggested he join the Police Cadets. He with 49 others (most of whom continued careers in the service) had a gruelling initiation as on their second day they were called to a dreadful bus crash where 6 people had died - he had never seen a dead body before. 6 weeks later he found the body of a drunken sailor.

In those days such cases and especially murders meant that the Force called in Scotland Yard to investigate and he was fortunate to work with the lead officer. This led him to train with the Met and become a detective.

He was involved with many important cases, The Thriplow Murder, Fen Ditton Post Office Robbery, a murder in Histon and Cambridge's Biggest Armed Robbery Case the final one of 13 in the local area.

He met Harold Wilson, was involved in the Garden House Riots of 1970, helped Lester Pigott avoid the press, and quickly dealt with the release of a jockey who was needed by Jenny Pitman to ride in Ireland the next day.

Not gardening related at all but very interesting and told with good humour. He has plenty of stories to tell and I am sure he will be back.

We shall be holding our Spring Lunch at Newmarket Golf Club on 5th May and our summer outing is on **19th June**. Make a note of the dates.

Our speaker on **26th March** will be **Fiona Rose** who will be "**In the garden with William Morris**" Sounds interesting

**Meetings are held in the Poppy Room at 7.30pm.**

*Sylvia Overton*

## **BOTTISHAM AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB**

**We meet in the Poppy Lounge  
at the Bottisham Community Sports & Social Club at 7.30pm**

**Come and join us if you are interested in gardening.**

**We have a wide range of speakers covering gardening, nature and country life.**

### OUR PROGRAMME for 2024

#### **Date**

26-Mar	<b>In the garden with William Morris</b> - Fiona Rose
23-Apr	<b>Hellebores</b> - Joe Sharman (Monksilver Nursery)
28-May	<b>Spring Forward, Fall Back</b> - Tim Sparks
19-Jun	<b>Summer Outing to Kelshall Hall</b>
23-Jul	<b>Summer Party</b>
24-Sep	<b>Science, Plants and Us</b> - Barry Robertson
22-Oct	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>
26-Nov	<b>Succulents &amp; Cacti</b> - Barry Gayton
10-Dec	<b>Christmas Social</b>

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## East Anglian Air Ambulance



How do you fancy a BIG LEAAAP in 2024? [events@eaaa.org.uk](mailto:events@eaaa.org.uk) will put you in touch so, if making a parachute jump is on your 'lifetime bucket list' why not support us in the process? Join our dare-devil team of skydivers and take the leap of your life from 13,000 ft. With a £50 Registration and £300 Fundraising target you will be helping to keep our helicopters and crews flying to save more lives.

Or, if you prefer to keep two feet, or rather wheels, on the ground why not sign up your team for the 2024 Lap of Anglia cycle event. Having raised over £216,000 since 2013, over £12,000 in 2023, a team of 27 cyclists covered 435 miles around five counties in support of EAAA. For more information, please go to [www.lapofanglia.co.uk/2024-sign-up](http://www.lapofanglia.co.uk/2024-sign-up)

Whilst I make no apology for appealing for support yet again, I am conscious of the fact that within an organisation such as EAAA, there is a lot going on - from attending emergencies to extensive aftercare, from high-tech helicopters to Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs), from skilled doctors and paramedics to fundraisers. We all do what we do and thoroughly enjoy doing it - we would like to do more.

On a 'training' note, each six to twelve months, we welcome new teams of doctors and critical care paramedics (CCPs) to begin their specialist pre-hospital emergency medicine (PHEM) training with EAAA. The start of this journey is an intensive one-week course to become a PHEM practitioner at the highest level.

EAAA Deputy Medical Director, Dr. Rob Major, says these trainees, although very experienced in other medical situations, learn about many of the latest procedures in out-of-hospital care to improve patient outcomes.

If you warm to the idea of being a part of our team, please contact [eaaa.org.uk](http://eaaa.org.uk) - we will send you our regular LIFTOFF magazine with LOTS more news on how EAAA is developing to meet future needs. There are many who feel reassured that, should anything untoward health-wise happen to a loved one or to themselves, a highly trained and capable team is available, 24/7. Thank you for your support over the years - together we really do save lives.

*Michael White*



## Anglesey Group Mothers' Union

During our New Year Holy Communion Service, Rev. Roger Bowen enrolled new member Iris Stannett. After the short ceremony Roger presented Iris with her membership card and badge. Mothers Union members served coffee directly after the service, followed by soup lunch, which was most welcome on a very cold and frosty day.

Our meetings usually take place on the third Thursday of each month at 2.30pm in Fassage Hall, Lode. Our March meeting will take place on Thursday 20th March, when we will be holding our Spring Social and Bring & Buy Stall. You are most welcome to join us.

*Ann Langran*



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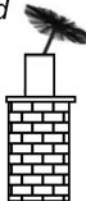
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This band will get you moving on a cold spring night.

Bring your friends just £5 for members and £10 for non-members.

### **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March - Bowling Club - Race Night**

Fancy a little flutter, join this fundraising evening.

### **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March - Open Mic Night - 8pm start**

Our regular monthly event, a great night not to be missed.

### **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March - Easter fun for the children**

Childrens disco with AJ - £2 for members children, £3 for nonmembers children.

### **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April - Bowling Club - Quiz Night**

### **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May - Eurovision Song Contest**

Dress up in your best Eurovision Song Contest outfit and enjoy the show!

### **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June - The Village Fun Day**

Starts with music and a picnic.

Then the event moves to the club for a children's entertainer,

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A fun day when the whole village comes together.

Please refer to the website. [www.bottishamsocialclub.co.uk](http://www.bottishamsocialclub.co.uk) for the latest information. If you wish to be updated with the latest news, please email [bottishamcsasc@gmail.com](mailto:bottishamcsasc@gmail.com)

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# *News from Bottisham Medical Practice Patients' Participation Group*

**Two Important Messages from the Practice:** Reception staff have been receiving an unprecedented level of verbal abuse in recent weeks. This will not be tolerated.

GPs and their staff have a right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused. To successfully provide general practice services a mutual respect between all the staff and patients has to be in place. All our staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to all patients' individual needs and circumstances.

We respectfully remind patients that very often staff could be confronted with a multitude of varying and sometimes difficult tasks and situations, all at the same time. The staff understand that ill patients do not always act in a reasonable manner and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint. However, aggressive behaviour, be it violent or abusive, will not be tolerated and may result in you being removed from the Practice list and, in extreme cases, the Police being contacted.

**Patient demand outstrips capacity:** Our contract from the NHS states we supply 90 appointments per 1000 practice population per week, that is 531 appointments per week. We supply between 700-800 appointments per week. 34% more than we are funded to do. Tuesday 6th Feb 2024 we had 142 appointments available. We received 831 phone calls. 382 of these being before 9:30am.

We have a population of 5900. 1 in 7 of those wanted an appointment yesterday alone. Last month 31 people did not attend a booked appointment. This is more than one patient a day.

The government has proposed an increase in funding of 1.9% for general practice this year. All other areas of the NHS have had 5-6% to deal with inflationary pressures so effectively general practice has had a cut in funding but is expected to provide more every day.

The doctor is explaining this so next time you are cross there are no appointments it truly isn't our fault. All our staff work flat out to provide a high standard of care. We are not sitting here doing nothing, we are often here 12-13 hours a day. We care hugely about our patients and want to provide the best possible care we can, but we must do this safely.

## **How can you help?**

Use 111 where you can. Use walk in centres where you can for minor injuries.

Go to A&E if you have an emergency like chest pain - coming to us merely delays your treatment.

Attend for check ups when you are asked. Cancel appointments you can't make

We understand your frustration when there isn't an appointment. This is not lack of appointments or lack of us working, but simply that: Demand outstrips capacity

**Closure:** The Surgery will be **closed on 27 March from 14.30-18.30** for training. Please use 111 Service during this time.

**Medication Storage:** It is important that drugs are stored according to the instructions accompanying them. This is usually related to keeping them at the right temperature.

*Continued on page 35*



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*Continued from page 33*

**The Patient Participation Group:** We are happy to have new members to join the committee, all patients of this Practice are eligible. Please contact our chairman as below to find out more information and how you can be involved

**Next Meetings:** These will be at **6.30pm Thursday 28 March 2024** and the **AGM at 6.30pm on Thursday 18 April** both in the Surgery waiting room. If you wish to join our meetings, please email our chairman [s.j.gilson@btinternet.com](mailto:s.j.gilson@btinternet.com). Or speak to reception.

*Bottisham Medical Practice Patients Participation Group*

## ***Do you Have Breathing Difficulties? Did you Know Singing can Help?***

Singing is a great way to improve the way you breathe and get the best from your lung capacity. The Cambridge Singing for Breathing group is meeting online, using Zoom, on Thursday afternoons 2.30 - 4.00pm and we're looking for new members!

Kay Barrett, founder of the group, says:

“You don't need any singing experience to take part - it's all about what it feels like, not what it sounds like. The camaraderie of the group, the guided relaxation, the breathing exercises and the singing are so much appreciated by everyone and the health benefits transfer over into daily life. Being online singers can join from the comfort of home, even when they are feeling unwell. We sing with microphones turned off, which can actually be very liberating! You simply sing along with the leader, learning uplifting songs often in call and response style. We also use multi-track recordings so we can enjoy singing rounds and harmonies.”

### **Do I have to pay?**

Those who can afford it are invited to give a £3.50 donation each week, but this is not essential - we want everyone to be able to come.

### **Do I have to come along every week?**

We know that appointments, sickness, family commitments and such can get in the way! Just come along when you can.

### **I have Long Covid, can I join?**

The gentle pace, breathing exercises and relaxation can be very beneficial, but do check with your doctor or respiratory physio, especially if your symptoms are severe.

### **How do I join?**

Simply email [singingforbreathingcambridge@gmail.com](mailto:singingforbreathingcambridge@gmail.com) or call Mary on 07972645473 for more information and to receive the Zoom link each week.

You can find out more at [www.singingforbreathing.wordpress.com](http://www.singingforbreathing.wordpress.com)

or on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/singingforlunghealthcambridge](http://www.facebook.com/singingforlunghealthcambridge)

*Mary Denn*

**Copy deadline for the next issue is 14 March.**

*Please send material to the editor at [BottishamCresset@gmail.com](mailto:BottishamCresset@gmail.com)*



Have you ever stopped of a morning to sit down to have a cup of coffee in the house on your own, and thought it would be nice to talk to somebody?  
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## ***Bottisham Community Library Association***

Seventeen of our volunteers met in late January for an evening meal at the Black Horse at Swaffham Bulbeck. It was a good social occasion as we rarely get to meet as a group as we only have 2 volunteers per session and we mostly do duties with the same one.

We are still looking for a volunteer for the rhyme and story time for the under-fives group that meets on Saturday mornings. Can you help?

**Lego Club dates are Saturdays 9th March and 13th April.**

I shall report next month on our Annual Library Quiz held on 17th February and details of the mini Triangle sale in late May in conjunction with the WI and Gardening Club.

*Sylvia Overton*



## ***Bottisham Airfield Museum Group (BAMG)***

The Museum opens **Easter Sunday 31st March and Wednesday 3rd April** and then every Wednesday 10:30 to 16:00 and Sunday 10:30 to 16:00 (Café opening hours on Sundays 09:00 to 16:00) until November. Entry is £5 for adults, children under 16 are free.

There will be Classic Car Shows on 19th May, 11th August, and 6th October. There will be gunfire and loud bangs on our D-Day themed Bottisham at War Forties weekend on the 6th/7th July. There maybe some limited gunfire on some weekdays when the museum hosts school WW2 education days. Dates will be advised when known.

Helicopter pleasure flights will resume on 10th April and take place every second Wednesday, weather and serviceability permitting. Discounted flights from Bottisham can be booked via the museum's website at [www.bottishamairfieldmuseum.org.uk/helicopter-pleasure-flights/](http://www.bottishamairfieldmuseum.org.uk/helicopter-pleasure-flights/) selecting the "Book Now" option and using discount code 10JasonW799 at checkout. We will once again do all we can to mitigate the noise by using only smaller helicopters and ensuring the helicopters do not cross the village side of the A1303.

Now a recollection of bit of history. On 6th August 1942, Pilot Officer Andrew R.K. Anderson of No168 Squadron RAF, RNZAF returning to Bottisham flying a Tomahawk (see photo) from a training mission hit a tree and crashed near Thetford. He is buried in Bottisham Cemetery, we intend to lay a wreath at his grave on 6th August.

Now a recollection of bit of history. On 6th August 1942, Pilot Officer Andrew R.K. Anderson of No168 Squadron RAF, RNZAF returning to Bottisham flying a Tomahawk (see photo) from a training mission hit a tree and crashed near Thetford. He is buried in Bottisham Cemetery, we intend to lay a wreath at his grave on 6th August.



Finally, a correction to detail in our last article which had the wrong phone number to contact. If anyone would like to join our volunteer team helping in the cafe or the museum, please do contact the museum. Our telephone number is 01223 813952. You can leave a message.

*Charles Cook, Museum Volunteer*

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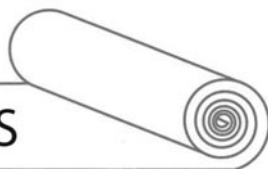


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## NAAFI Break

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On March 6th We have invited this regions Help for Heroes Team Leader so if there are any serving or veteran families within our community that need support or would like to know what support is available, then they are most welcome to come along.

Jason Middleton, our speaker on pearls has worked in the industry for many years working as an international buyer of gemstones for a respected jewellery company. He now has his own company buying pearls and semi - precious gemstones. He continues to travel widely especially to Hong Kong.

There was an excellent power point display and he passed around many bracelets, necklaces and earrings. He explained the formation of pearls in molluscs which take many years to grow and how the Chinese have now cornered the market in cultured pearls. He told us about the pearl divers, some who could hold their breath under water for 7 minutes, and what a dangerous job it is. There is a dedicated cemetery in Japan with the remains of 900 divers!

Pearls need to be wiped after wearing and restrung every 5 years. An interesting speaker.

We considered, and voted for, the resolution to be discussed at the Annual Meeting in June. Would it be?

- a. Dental Health Matters,
- b. Say No to gambling advertisements,
- c. improving conditions for women in the criminal Justice system or
- d. The impact of poor social housing.

We chose Dental Health Matters.

**Our next meeting is our AGM on Tuesday 19th March.** Subscriptions will then be due for the ensuing year of £48.

**Meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Poppy Room.**

*Sylvia Overton*

### **BOTTISHAM ADULT LEARNING ASSOCIATION (BALA)**

## **A NEW COURSE STARTING**

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*A return visit by Stephen Poulter to present a course entitled*

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The fee for the course is £20 plus £5 membership fee for new members.

**Meetings are held at Bottisham Sports and Social Club in Downing Close.**

For more information email [Bottishambala@btinternet.com](mailto:Bottishambala@btinternet.com). Information will also be on the Bottisham Community page on Facebook. We look forward to seeing you again. New members are always welcome.

**PLEASE NOTE THE LATER STARTING TIME OF 10.30**

*Helen Cole*



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## *Bottisham Bird Brain*

It was pointed out to me recently that the Finch family (Fringillidae) had not featured in the Bird Brain articles to date – other than the occasional passing mention – so I'd like to set about rectifying my apparent neglect of a wonderful, colourful, group of birds which often go unnoticed; and I wondered why this should be so. Well, most finches are sparrow-sized and will often appear only in silhouette as one looks up to the branches of a tree. The other thing is: their abundance... Chaffinches, in particular, are such a normal part of the rural and garden landscapes that they just blend in to the backdrop and form part of the everyday cacophony of birdsong.



But a closer look at *Fringilla coelebs*, the Chaffinch – well, the male anyway – will reveal one of the most colourful and characterful birds found throughout the British Isles. And, once you have an ear for the song, you will hear it everywhere, I promise!

Firstly, let us inspect the plumage. As with many Finches, the male is abundantly more colourful than the female – reflecting their ‘traditional’ courtship behaviour and parenting habits (where the male attracts the female and the female sits on the nest). He sports a pinkish-red face and breast with a blue crown and nape, and he is particularly bright in the spring and summer when his feathers are fresh after the annual moult. His back is a chestnut brown and there are greenish feathers on the rump but, often, the first thing you will see will be the double white wing-bar on the wings, which are otherwise mainly black. The white flashes, along with the white outer-tail feathers, are pretty obvious in flight, too, which makes him identifiable even if only glimpsed.

The female, in contrast, is a pretty drab, buff-coloured individual, possibly liable to confusion with a female House Sparrow except that she, too, displays the striking double white wing-bar. She often appears slimmer, more delicate and demure in character, than the male who tends to stand proud and handsome and keen to be noticed.

And, of course, the male Chaffinch sings – often repeatedly! The distinctive song is usually issued from a fairly open perch in a tree or bush, each phrase lasting three or four seconds. The volume is loud considering the bird's size but the sound is less sweet than, say, the Robin and nowhere near as fluty as the Willow Warbler. It's a slightly harsh, tweeting tune that starts high and comes down the scale, finishing with an upward flourish that seems to press home the ‘pronouncement’. The complexity of the song gives rise to variations between birds of different localities and this is sometimes described as regional dialects, but there is little scientific evidence of such distinctions, even though the length of the final flourish can vary significantly in different places. There is also a range of calls (depending on what the bird is doing) the most frequent of which are a sparrow-like ‘chrip

*(Continued on page 45)*

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*(Continued from page 43)*

chrip’ or the more metallic-sounding ‘pink pink’ alarm call that you’ll often hear in woodland (less often in gardens).

The other thing you may notice about Chaffinches – indeed all finches – is the stout, conical beak, which gives it away as a seed and nut eater, a diet which also includes fruit, insects and grubs. Upon hatching, a young bird will be fed almost entirely on arthropods – mainly caterpillars – by both its parents until it is mature enough to learn how to forage for seeds. In fact, it is the bird’s fondness for seeds that probably gave rise to its English name – originally ‘Ceaffinc’. After farmers had threshed their crops, Chaffinches would find easy pickings amongst the discarded chaff. In Old English, chaff was ‘ceaf’ and the bird was a ‘finc’. 16th Century naturalist William Turner also referred to the nickname ‘Spink’, probably derived from the alarm call. What a shame that such rustic expressions have largely disappeared from our language these days. (Perhaps nicknames could be an interesting feature in a future edition of the Cresset?)

The Chaffinches represent one of the more stable bird populations in the UK and, in terms of conservation status, they are on the ‘Green List’ – not considered to be of conservation concern. Having lost only about 15% of numbers over the last 50 years, they number around six million resident birds currently. Their numbers are maintained by the fact that they commence breeding at one year old and the female lays four to five eggs, typically. The average lifespan of a Chaffinch is only about three years, with juveniles having a 53% first year survival rate, and adults ‘enjoying’ a 59% annual survival rate; but, if a bird can avoid illness, accidents and predators like sparrowhawks and domestic cats, a 10-year life is possible (with a 15 year-old Chaffinch once recorded in Switzerland)!

Other finches frequenting our gardens and parks in Bottisham will include Goldfinches, Greenfinches, perhaps Linnets and – if you’re lucky – Bullfinches or even Bramblings. But I will cover these in future Cresset bulletins. As far as the remaining British finches are concerned – Siskins, Redpolls, Crossbills, Twites and Hawfinches – you’ll need to not only go further afield (e.g. to coniferous or coastal woodlands) but also to enjoy more than a modicum of luck!

*TTFN - Gerry Daish*

Oh, to be in England  
Now that April's there,  
And whoever wakes in England  
Sees, some morning, unaware,  
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough  
In England—now!

Home-Thoughts, from Abroad - Robert Browning

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## *Inspection of Category 2 Grave Markers in Swaffham Prior Cemetery*

The following gravestones were found to need a yearly inspection at the last check in January 2023 and are due to be re-inspected on Monday 29th April 2024. Where contact details have been provided, owners will be contacted directly. If you have information to update contact details, please email; [swaffhampriorclerk@gmail.com](mailto:swaffhampriorclerk@gmail.com)

<b>Plot/s</b>	<b>Occupant</b>	<b>Grave marker</b>
433, 434	Charles Peter Hawkes, Ethel May Hawkes	Double plot curb, containing white marble chips and marble footstone/vase 'to 'Dick, pilot officer failed to return'. Central headstone,
445	Annie Palmby Hawkes	Headstone
485	Sarah Gray	Tall headstone. Footstone next to headstone.
501	Henry and Rebecca Willis	Marble headstone and curb, concrete infill
524, 525, 526	Thomas Palmer, Sarah Ann Palmer, Theodore Palmer	Triple plot curb. Tall cross on triple layer pyramid base standing central to triple plot, inside curb at the top end.
555	Emma Adams	Headstone
571	Florence Rose Adams	Headstone
663, 644	Edwin Muir	Thin double curb. Headstone
681, 682	Alice Smith, George Smith	Headstone on double layer base.
773	Harry and Beryl Sheldrick	Wide red marble headstone with 2 vases on concrete plinth
876	Albert and Kitty Sizer	Headstone on base, concrete plinth. Small temporary markers stuck at foot of grave
874	Jeannette Fox-Teece	Headstone on base, concrete plinth.
333	Beatrice Margaret Sheldrick & George William Sheldrick	Headstone on base
332	Raymond Greenwood	Tall slate headstone
90	Eliza Butcher	Headstone and footstone

## *Community Herb Beds - News*

As a group, we will continue this year to tidy the beds and hope that if you need a herb, perhaps a sprig of Rosemary, thyme or other, then you will take a snip when passing.

Although I am soon to be moving house, I will still visit Bottisham and will help to maintain the herb beds. We have another resident also offering to help.

It has been a busy few months, so no recipe this month, I am sorry to say.

Hopefully we will continue to send in articles for you in the future.

I have loved being part of this amazing community. I wish you all well for the future.

*Sarah B*

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## Useful Information

<b>Bottisham Website:</b> .....	www.bottisham-pc.gov.uk
<b>Parish Council Chairman:</b> Jon Ogborn, jon.ogborn@bottisham-pc.gov.uk .....	07486 372780
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<b>Cambridgeshire Police:</b> (NON-URGENT MATTERS) .....	ring 101
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<b>Local East Cambs Policing info:</b> www.cambs.police.uk/Neighbourhood-Policing/East-Cambs	
<b>Neighbourhood watch co-ordinator:</b> kevin.g.evans@ntlworld.com .....	01353 614892
<b>Bottisham Pharmacy:</b> .....	812321
<b>Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club:</b> Secretary Bev Clowes, Bottishamcsasc@gmail.com .....	812063
<b>Bottisham Community Primary School:</b> .....	811235
<b>Bottisham Village College, School:</b> .....	811250
Evening Classes, Clubs and Youth Club Information .....	811372
<b>Bottisham W.I.:</b> Secretary - Jenn White • mrandjw@btinternet.com .....	811600
<b>Bottisham Scout Group:</b> Group Contact: Linda Jones .....	813040
<b>1st Bottisham Rainbows/1st Bottisham Brownies:</b> Kay Pearce .....	811055
<b>Girlguiding Bottisham District:</b> Cambs County office • www.cambseastguides.org.uk .....	01223 813917
<b>Bottisham &amp; District Gardening Club:</b> Secretary: Julia Green .....	811467
<b>Bottisham Bowling Club:</b> Peter Clowes, Secretary .....	811565
<b>Bottisham Carpet Bowls Club:</b> Nora Watson, nora@gandnwatson.uk .....	812121
<b>Bottisham Cricket Club:</b> Chairman: Will Allen, Chairman@bottlodecricket.co.uk .....	07713 007757
<b>Bottisham Youth Football Club:</b> Adam Bridgland, adambridgland@hotmail.com .....	07764 488599
<b>Bottisham Local Charities Trustees:</b> secretary - Jonathan Barrett .....	07920 425154
<b>Bottisham Pool Association:</b> Manager - Harry Bubb .....	811121
<b>Bottisham Royal British Legion Branch:</b> PoC, Peter Walker; .....	811402
www.Britishlegion.org.uk/branches/bottisham	
<b>Queen's Court Day Centre:</b> .....	811905
<b>East Cambridgeshire District Offices:</b> .....	01353 665555
<b>East Cambridgeshire District Councillors:</b>	
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John Trapp, 104 Commercial End, Swaffham Bulbeck .....	01223 812120
<b>Cambridgeshire County Councillor:</b> Alan Sharp, Alan.sharp@cambridgeshire.gov.uk .....	01638 507485/07794292941
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**VICE CHAIR** - JOHN WILSON \_\_\_\_\_ [john.wilson@bottisham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:john.wilson@bottisham-pc.gov.uk)

### **PARISH COUNCILLORS**

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STEVEN O'DELL \_\_\_\_\_ [steven.odell@bottisham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:steven.odell@bottisham-pc.gov.uk)

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REHANA SHAKER \_\_\_\_\_ [ehana.shaker@bottisham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ehana.shaker@bottisham-pc.gov.uk)

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