

December 2018

THE 
Cresset



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

Bottisham & District Branch of The Royal British Legion



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

This year saw the centenary of the signing of the Armistice which ended World War 1 and was commemorated by some special services across the country and indeed the world.

We in Bottisham and the surrounding villages held our own special day with a parade and service at Swaffham Bulbeck Parish Church.

It was held there for a number of reasons, but the main one was to showcase the wonderful display of thousands of crocheted poppies, made by local volunteers. Cascading down from the top of the tower and floodlit at night, it made a wonderful statement.

The Bottisham Branch would like to thank everyone who attended, particularly all those who took part in the parade. The Cadets of the Burwell detachment of the Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force, The Scouts, The Guides, The Cubs and Brownies. Great to see so many young people there. Also thanks to the Deputy Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, representing the Queen, Mrs. Penny Walkinshaw.

The Branch would like to apologise for the lack of House to House collections this year for the poppy appeal. This was due to being let down by Haig House in the supply of the required ID cards to allow the collectors to call. Normal service should be resumed next year.

If you would like to Join The Royal British Legion then visit their website, or come along to one of our meetings which are held every other month J.M.M.J.S.N., third Wednesday 8.00pm at the Bottisham Community Sports & Social Club.

What a Scorcher...Again!



A few months ago, I made comment on the past summer which had lived up to that title. I didn't think I would use it again towards the end of November. Eighteen degrees is not what you expect in November but that is what the temperature is, as I write this.

Whether this is really the effect of global warming or a blip, the effects can be very visible. The autumn colours have been beautiful everywhere but they have been going more gradually and for longer than I think is normal. But then maybe we should think "What is normal!"

My two window boxes of red geraniums are still in full bloom and showing no sign of giving up. Six feet up and against the house wall, that one slight ground frost we had did not touch them. However 10 feet away the dahlia bed was flattened.

While mentioning the dahlias, I was amused by the antics of two blackbirds. Having cut down the flowers, I covered the plants with a thick layer of leaf mould mulch to protect them from further damage. I then went in to the house for a cup of coffee and when I came back out, the two blackbirds, quick as you like, had completely demolished my neat ridge of mulch, spreading it all over the place looking for worms. Redone, I then pegged some wire mesh over it to foil any further ideas they had.

Using gardening as a link to this month's magazine is easy. This month the Gardening Club has published its programme of events for all of next year. There is a warm invite to go along and join them. A great source of information, plant and seed swaps as well as a friendly group of like minded people and a social occasion. And it is not just about plants. Have a look.

In the village last month saw the college open its doors to show off its new facilities which are pretty impressive. One of the winners in this seems to be the library which now occupies the whole of what was the main hall. Much more work still to be done, but looking good.

Another benefactor of the redevelopment is the Charity, Red 2 Green who have a new home at the front with new greenhouses and buildings. They have also started a coffee shop where you can drop in for a cuppa and cake as well as buying your fruit and veg., jams and chutneys and plants of course.

The Armistice Day service this year was at Swaffham Bulbeck where the result of much crocheting was on display as a beautiful cascade of red poppies swept down from the top of the tower. It was also encouraging to see so many young people there with an understanding of what it was all about.

December now and where has the year gone? Lots of things going on in the run up to Christmas. The 'New' Social Club has lots of events from kid's parties and quizzes to a visit again from Newmarket Town Band who get everybody singing along to the well known carols. This leading up to Christmas Eve and New Years Eve when there is always a bit of a party!

(continued on page 2.)

(continued from page 1.)

As we go towards Christmas, take time to enjoy it. I often think the best part of going on holiday is the anticipation before it. Christmas is a bit like that too. Enjoy the preparations and the excitement, especially if you have children about. It can all get a bit mad on the day!

Finally I would like to say a big thank you to everybody who has contributed to The Cresset over the year and to those who help in its production and distribution. Without you we would not have a village magazine.

All the best for the festive season and see you in the New Year.

DON'T FORGET THE NEXT COPY DEADLINE IS THE 10TH DECEMBER, NOT THE 14TH.



Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Saturday 8th December - 8.00pm start

TEAMS UP TO 8 £3 PER HEAD

PRIZES FOR THE WINNING TEAM

Book your table at the bar or ring 812063



Bottisham Community Library Association

NEW LIBRARY

We are pleased to announce that all went according to plan for the College 80th birthday celebrations on 3rd November when the Library was full of locals browsing the bookshelves.

learning the new layout. We have received excellent support from the College especially Chloe James the College Librarian. Please be aware that if you are coming to the library late afternoon or for the evening sessions please bring a torch.

We have a special event on Saturday 8th December from 10.30 when we shall have a Christmas Rhyme and Story time session for the under 5's and this will be followed by a performance by The Bottisham Handbell Ringers. We shall be pleased to see you.

We shall be closing for the Christmas period after the session on Thursday 20th December and opening on Thursday 3rd January 2019 at 3.00pm.

Please see the separate advert for the position of Library Coordinator to replace Helen Cole. I know this has appeared in recent magazine issues but we need to appoint someone soon.

Sylvia Overton

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WEA News

In our current series of lectures, Stephen Corley is reviewing important world events that occurred during the “Post War World 1945-1973”. In that time, happenings such as the Cold War, problems in Malaya, Israel, Palestine, North Africa, and the Vietnam War took place, and our lecturer has enjoyed listening to the personal experiences of one or two of our members who were involved in some of these events. History involves us all!

Music lovers, please take note. Our next course, commencing in January 2019 and presented by Peter Goodwin, is entitled “Vienna, Centre of Musical Excellence.” For almost 250 years from the middle of the 18th century, Vienna established itself as the hub of the western musical universe. During this course we will listen to, study, and discuss a selection of orchestral, choral and stage music. For more information on this course or to sign up, please go to www.wea.org.uk/eastern Alternatively you can join us at our first session which commences at 10.00am at the Bottisham Community Sports & Social Club, 31 Downing Close, Bottisham, CB25 9DD on Thursday 17th January 2019.

Gerry Cowley

Services in Holy Trinity Bottisham in December

Sunday 2nd	11am	Holy Communion
Wednesday 5th	8pm	"C by C" (Short candlelit meditative service)
Sunday 9th	10am	Benefice Communion at Quy
Sunday 16th	8am	Holy Communion (BCP)
	11am	Morning Prayer
Sunday 23rd	6.30pm	Carol Service
Monday 24th	4.30pm	Crib Service
	11.30pm	Midnight Communion
Tuesday 25th	8am	Holy Communion (BCP) at Quy
	10am	Holy Communion at Swaffham Prior
Sunday 30th	10am	Benefice Communion at Lode

Benefice services are shared by the five churches in the Anglesey Group (Bottisham, Lode, Quy, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior). Details of these services can also be found on the Anglesey website (www.angleseygroupparishes.co.uk). Any late changes in times or places of services will be given there.

The Rev. Sue Giles writes

There is something very special about the twinkle of coloured lights in the dark and wintery nights of late November and December. These winter months are marked by the bare branches of the leafless trees and the cold, wet evenings which begin earlier and earlier as the daylight hours reduce. Winter can feel a solemn season as earth's life and energy seem to flow back into the soil to sleep. Yet the hopeful, twinkling lights in homes, shops and on our high streets create new colour, they speak of warmth and celebration amidst the bleakness, they lighten the darkness with beauty. The lights call us to awaken to a new view of the world, darkness broken by small points of brightness and colour.

It is good that winter lights gather around our Christmas celebrations for Christmas is all about light. Each year we remember again that in the midst of the world's darkness, when life feels bleak, cold or hopeless the light of the world comes bringing the radiance, hope and love of God shining out as a beacon for the lost, the lonely and the weary. Jesus, the light of the world, was born into the darkness long ago and we remember that.

But Christmas is not just an event of long ago. Jesus, the light of the world is born today in the hearts of all who love him or look for him or long for hope in the midst of darkness. In a human frame and a human lifespan Jesus shone in the world. His was a life of truthfulness, godliness, goodness and love. His life was bright with wit, colour and stories which we still tell today. His life glowed with human warmth, love for the outsider, care for the fragile, forgiveness for those who wronged him, firmness of purpose and total commitment to the Father he loved and served. His life is indeed a light for the darkness of our world. If we but dared to step into his light, to welcome that light into our hearts then we too could join in bringing some warmth and love and hope to the dark places that are still present in our world, whatever the season. I pray that amidst the winter darkness you might see the Light of the World shining for you. Not a distant star or an event from long ago but a light right there beside you, within you, cradled as a small child in your arms.



COUNTDOWN...

At the time of writing there are precisely 41 shopping days left 'til Christmas, 22 days 'til we head to South Africa to celebrate Christmas with our family there for the first time, 13 days 'til my wife's birthday and 17 days 'til our 16th Wedding Anniversary.

We do a lot of 'counting down the days' in life.

Of course it is not wrong to look forward to things, especially spending time with special people, going on holiday & family celebrations; however, if we focus too much on the countdown, we can neglect to appreciate that every day is a gift (that's why it's called the present!).

We are now in the season of Advent, if we are not careful, it is easy to view this season as simply a countdown to Christmas Day (with or without the help of a daily piece of chocolate!), rather than the time of preparation for Jesus' coming that it is. A key belief of Christianity in addition to the belief that Jesus came into the world as a baby, is that Jesus will indeed come again to wrap up things as we know them on earth and usher in a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21).

The life of a Christian is best lived in moment by moment preparation for that time, looking and listening for what God might be doing and saying, and getting involved where possible.

My encouragement to you through Advent and Christmastime is, "Don't just count the days, make the days count." Every day is an opportunity to make a positive difference.

You are also, as ever, very welcome to join us at RENEW any time! I pray you'll have a special Advent and a wonderful Christmastime.

Rev. Alan Brand

RENEW Services for Advent and Christmas 2018

We have activities for children and young people at all our RENEW morning services. Everyone is welcome.

Croissants and drinks are available before Morning Worship from 10.10 am.

Sunday 2nd Dec. Morning Worship. 10.30am **With Holy Communion.**
(Bottisham Primary School)

Sunday 2nd Dec. 'Village Praise' 5.30-6.30pm (Lode Chapel)

Sunday 9th Dec. Morning Worship. 10.30am (at the School)

Followed by shared lunch

Sunday 16th Dec. Christmas All-Age Worship. 10.30am (at the School)

Sunday 16th Dec. 'Carols in the Chapel' 6.30pm (Lode Chapel)

Sunday 23rd Dec. Morning Worship. 10.30am (at the School)

Christmas Day. 10.30am (at the School)

Sunday 30th Dec. Morning Worship. 10.30am (at the School)

For more information about any of the activities of RENEW Church please contact:

Rev. Alan Brand on C.812558. Email: alan.brand@renewchurch.org.uk

Or visit our website at www.renewchurch.org.uk

Copy deadline for next issue is 10 December.

Please send material to the editor at BottishamCresset@gmail.com



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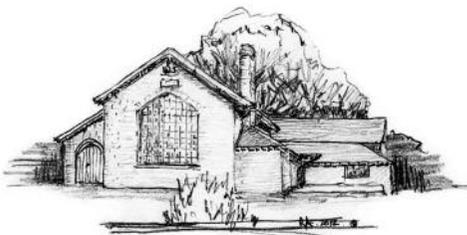
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Bottisham and District Gardening Club

Julia Green as Chairman at our recent AGM reported on the past successful year with many interesting meetings and events. We have had several social events, a lunch in April at the Newmarket Golf Club, an evening outing to a local garden and a trip to Barnsdale to the garden started by Geoff Hamilton for Gardeners World. Funds are healthy in spite of fewer participants at our annual outing but once again the Annual Show was excellent and well supported. Tricia McLaughlin was presented with an orchid in appreciation of her sterling work as Secretary for the past few years. Valerie Leake was thanked in her absence for her hard work as Treasurer. She too is leaving this position but will be our new Chairman. Julia Green will act as Secretary and Margret Coles is to become Treasurer. The evening concluded with wine and refreshments and a difficult quiz based on Gardening Television programmes.

We usually meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month in the Poppy Room at the Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club and the joining fee is £15 per person. I have included the programme for 2019 and you will see that we do have several social evenings so it is not entirely horticultural. Do give us a try.

BOTTISHAM AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB 2019 PROGRAMME

22nd Jan	Orchids – all you need to know - <i>John Benson</i> Members Competition - <i>Hyacinth Bulb</i>
26th Feb	The Mill Garden Impington. A labour of love - <i>Pippa Temple</i>
26th March	Getting the best out of our roses - <i>Ian Limmer, Beales Roses</i>
23rd April	Colour in the Garden - <i>Andrew Sankey</i>
28th May	Which Compost? - <i>David Coop, Elsom seeds</i>
25th June	Summer Social - To be advised
July	Summer Outing - To be advised
28th Aug	Evening Garden Visit - To be advised
24th Sept	Container Planting for Spring - <i>Andrew Harper-Scott</i>
22nd Oct	AGM Quiz and refreshments
26th Nov	Gardening with Grasses - <i>Tim Fuller, Plantsmans' preferences</i>
Dec	Christmas Social- To be advised

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 14th December when John and Sylvia Overton will present "More of the same and a Quiz". An enigmatic title so you will need to come as a visitor (cost £2) to find out more! We shall have mulled wine and mince pies to conclude the evening.

Sylvia Overton

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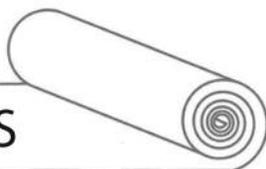


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1st Bottisham Scout Group

Well, the new windows are in! We hope you will agree they look great. We have immediately noticed how much more light we get into the hall and more importantly how much less heat we need to keep the hall warm. Once again, a massive thank you to Peter Rayment for not only overseeing the whole project but doing a lot of the remedial works. We would also like to take the opportunity to thank Fyntons windows for their professional and caring approach that made this major works task so much easier for us. We highly recommend them.

Sadly, one of our Christmas ideas mentioned in last month's Cresset has had to fall by the wayside. We were unable to generate enough interest in our Scouting families for the village advent calendar decorated doors and windows to go ahead. As a committee we still think this is a great idea so have decided to try again next Christmas (2019) but open this up to the whole village, rather than just those families currently involved in Scouting. So, if you would like to be one of 24 decorated doors or windows next Christmas 2019 (pretty sure this is the first advertisement for next Christmas!!) then do get in touch. It's open to anyone. We will start sending reminders in the Cresset in September next year, but if you are keen do feel free to contact us now and get your name down. As a village we are lucky to have so many community minded shops and services and we would really like to express our thanks to the Bottisham Village Stores, Morgan's Hairdressers, Classic Spice, Elite Kebab and Pizza, and Bottisham's High Street Pharmacy who were all willing to help with either doing a window decoration, selling programs or donating to printing costs/prizes (or a combination of these things). Thank you so much.

Happily, we will be going ahead with our Carol Singing Nativity on the evening of Monday 17th December 2018. We are currently putting the program together and these will be on sale in the village in early December (or do contact me for more details in December). Just as a reminder we will meet at a set location in the village where we will sing the first of our Carols and then some of our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts will entertain us with a simple scene from the nativity. We will then move onto our second, third and final fourth location in the village for more carols and more simple scenes, ending up with the opportunity to purchase hot dogs/burgers and drinks at the final location (to help us raise money for the group). Everyone very welcome.

Once again, we are always on the look out for help both in running the Beaver, Cub and Scout meetings (or if you have a hobby or trade that you think may be of interest to come along and talk about one evening) and helpers for our executive committee to keep the building running and help with fund raising events. NO previous experience of Scouting necessary. We'd love to hear from you (email below, telephone in the back of the Cresset) or come and visit us on our stall at the Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club Fair on 25th November.

Linda Jones - lindakinglouis@aol.com

Chair - 1st Bottisham Scout Group Executive Committee



Copy deadline for next issue is 10th December.

Please send material to the editor at BottishamCresset@gmail.com

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We welcomed a new member to Parish Council at our November meeting. Mr Peter Martin who lives in Tunbridge Lane now takes us to our full complement of 11 and we look forward to working with him. Parish Council elections are next May and at this time we will be increasing our numbers to 12 so if anyone is interested in becoming a parish councillor please bear this in mind. There will be further details on how to apply in the run up to the election.

There is quite a lot to update you on concerning issues that have been spoken about in the last few months. Firstly, with the roadworks on the A1303 now complete, the 50mph road signs are back in place and the re-surfacing of the road approaching the Quy roundabout should be finished by the time of reading. Our County Councillor Mathew Shuter advised us that many of the lamp posts that have been installed are still not working. This is a failure by UK Power Networks and the County Council have been pursuing them for some time for a connection date.

County Councillor Shuter has been in discussion with the Director of Highways regarding the bus stop on the A1303, on the opposite side of the road (heading towards Cambridge). This is an official bus stop, although it is really just a grass verge. They will consider the possibility of putting something more permanent there although this would mean negotiation with the land owner whose gate opens onto the area. Hopefully we may have something more positive to report next month.

County Councillor Shuter also reports that the County Council are ready and prepared for winter. They have done a first gritting run and are hoping that the pothole situation will not be so bad this year. Many of you will probably have heard that central government announced they will be providing funding for potholes and Cambridgeshire are hoping for a good amount towards this.

Many of you will have been wondering what is happening with the area on the corner of Tunbridge Lane and Lysander Close. The current planning consent for this site was for business/industrial use. This has now expired. We have now heard from the original owner of the site who has applied for planning consent for a new property. The owner had been waiting for Bloor Homes to hand over the official documentation for the transfer of the site back to him which has now happened. Bloor Homes have been clearing up the site, constructing a bank along Tunbridge Lane and will be putting a fence around the area until planning consent has been given.

The National War Graves Commission have been cleaning some of the graves in the cemetery and we now have an engineer who is willing to come and look at the cemetery gates which are not closing properly.

Concerning the 'future cemetery' (as it is now known) in Lode Road, Councillor Ogborn reported that we have been dipping welling for 2 years on the 3 ¼ acre site. Based upon the results, the Environment Agency are requesting that the soil level be raised by 2 metres. This is to satisfy increasingly stringent regulations to protect groundwater from contamination. Raising soil height is increasingly common and Cllr Ogborn has been speaking to Littleport Parish Council, who are undertaking a similar exercise. A local contractor is supplying them with soil free of charge for a much larger site. We are currently seeking quotations for a topographical survey and then designs on the site can begin – looking to initially utilise approximately a third of the site as

Continued on page 15

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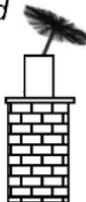
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Continued from page 13

cemetery (which will serve us for 250-300 years at current rates of interment). Once we have some draft plans we will consult with the village before seeking planning consent and purchase of the land.

The Parish Council voted to increase our precept from £45,000 to £47,500 for the next financial year. There are many projects in the pipeline, including the future cemetery and a play area and this will go some way towards funding these.

Finally Happy Christmas and wishing everyone a peaceful New Year.

Claire Fullwood - Parish Clerk

Planning Notes

18/01280/FUL, 8 Cedar Walk, Proposed single storey extension, NEW APPLICATION

18/01361/FUL, Elston Furnishings, 76/78 High Street, Change of use from part residential, part upholstery/soft furnishings business to full residential only. NEW APPLICATION

18/01354/FUL, Land rear of 11 Bell Road. Detached dwelling and garage with new access and extended bin collection area to Woodward Drive. NEW APPLICATION

18/01353/FUL, The Gables, 11 Bell Road. Erection of dwelling with 2 car parking spaces, revised access from public highway and 2 car parking spaces for existing dwelling. NEW APPLICATION

18/10456/VAR 1 Beechwood Avenue, To vary condition 1(plans) and 3(materials) of previously approved 17/01400/FUL for construction of a detached garage following demolition of existing outbuilding, extend roof over existing porch, new roof light in dining room and garage conversion. NEW APPLICATION

18/01174/FUL 85 High Street. Change of use of part ground floor to one dwelling including associated works to car park/amenity areas. APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

18/00022/FUL, Bottisham Heath Stud, London Road, Six Mile Bottom. Retrospective planning application for groom accommodation on land at Bottisham Heath Stud. APPLICATION APPROVED

18/01097/FUL, 139A High Street. Proposed single storey extension joining garage to house including new entrance porch and 6 new roof lights. APPLICATION APPROVED

18/00979/FUL. 16 Arber Close. Proposed new two storey dwelling. APPLICATION APPROVED

Copy deadline for next issue is 10th December.

Please send material to the editor at BottishamCresset@gmail.com

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Public Transport Matters

I would like to emphasize a word in the title of these articles and that is ‘matters’ – a word with a double meaning. I write about these matters because I feel that public transport is very important and matters! Many people who do not have access to a car or drive need a regular bus service to get to various appointments, do their shopping or just go out for pleasure. I have now given up on Highways as they have emailed that I should get up a village petition regarding sorting out the bus stop by the farm entrance on the A1303 and present it to the Parish Council. They don’t view it as a bus stop and query its use! I explained that if we go to Newmarket, Ely or Bury on the bus we do tend to come back!! Also I have heard that there are now 10 people, including 4 youngsters who wait at 7 a.m. for a bus to Cambridge – in the mud and with worse weather and dark early mornings on the way. It needs to have hard standing and a kerb either to the right or left of the farm entrance gate. I have emailed our excellent MP, Lucy Frazer, who helped sort out the retention of the opposite stop near to the junction of the High St. and the A1303 and its not being moved further towards Newmarket. The linings on the road now have helped avoid an accident there – I have checked this with two bus drivers. She has written to say that she is in touch with the County Council. All the money that has been spent on traffic islands, lights, cats eyes and road markings and no thought was given to improving the bus stop. Council workers must be car drivers and not bus users.

I have contacted Stagecoach customer services today as I wondered whether the fact that the 12 now has to go round the new Ely by-pass would alter the times of the 12 service. They are not changing the timetables but I think delays might be likely. I spoke to a driver but he was just about to undertake his first trip on that route and didn’t know – various Ely people at the Newmarket bus stop were offering route advice to him!

James Palmer, the mayor, has been under attack on the radio and in the Cambridge News after the payoff to a member of staff who resigned. Most of his ideas are also not popular although he says he supports public transport. I am not sure whether he uses it. The Cambourne to Cambridge route is being investigated by the engineering Group Arup. It should link with any off-road metro plan – a rubber tyred, electrically powered vehicle. It would link to a tunnel if that was seemed feasible. It would avoid the area around Coton and the West Fields. There are worries about damage to the countryside.

The Cambridge to Oxford arc has been given a boost in the recent Budget. Phillip Hammond announced support for the new East West Rail line to accelerate the delivery of the rail link between Cambridge and Bedford. A further £20 million is being provided. A million new homes are planned and Bidwells claim the arc’s economy could grow to £400 billion by 2050. Cheffins also supports the plans. There is support for home-grown industries and science and technology focussed industrial strategy. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority received £21 million which should support new transport schemes in the region. But infrastructure must be provided.

The arguments over the provision of a metro scheme and hub system linking to outer Cambridge and the rural areas continue.

Positive news for Eurostar as it is carrying unprecedented numbers of goods and people. The number of trucks boarding Le Shuttle was up by 3 p.c. and so was the number of independent freight trains. The number of passengers boarding topped 1 million in the quarter between July and September, an increase of 12 %. National Express coach company has also

continued on page 19



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continued from page 17

seen a rise of 10 % as the number of passengers grew by 6 % due to the problems on the railways. Into the West Country it was a 13 % rise.

There are still criticisms of the planned HS2 – delays to Crossrail could have a significant impact – the scheme is too expensive and it would cost more than similar schemes in other countries due to population density, the cost of land and skills shortages. It could cause the destruction of almost 900 houses, 1,000 businesses and at least 61 ancient woodlands.

There are delays to the introduction of high speed hybrid trains on the East Coast mainline due to technical flaws. They were due in December and London North Eastern Railway are now hoping for early next year.

Mark Wild, head of London Underground, has been appointed to oversee the completion of Crossrail. Crossrail stretches from Reading and Heathrow in the west to Shenfield in Essex and Abbey Wood near Woolwich in the East. It runs on existing lines to the east and west of the capital but involves massive tunnelling from west of Paddington to east of Whitechapel and in London Docklands. There have been interesting TV programmes.

Shutdowns are likely to cause rail and air chaos over Christmas we are warned! Network Rail is planning 330 engineering projects between Christmas and New Year. Paddington, Victoria, Euston and Liverpool St. stations will partly shut down. Heathrow and Gatwick will be closed to rail travellers or have reduced services for part of the holiday from December 23rd until Boxing Day. London Underground will be the only rail route. Check before you set out!

Rail info: 03457 48 49 50 Traveline: 0871 200 22 33

Happy travelling! - Paddy James



Come and join us dancing on Saturday evenings in the New Main Hall at Bottisham Village College. We will have music for Ballroom, Latin American and popular Sequence dancing.

Dates:

January 12th, February 9th (Black Tie optional),

March 9th, April 6th and May 11th (May Ball)

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The cost is £12 per couple. You are welcome to bring along your own refreshments. There is ample parking on site. For further information please contact: Frank and Sue Hancocks, 01638 741159

or check out our new website: www.letsdancecambridge.org

*Let's Dance Cambridge is a "not for profit" organisation established to provide dances for the community.



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“*Ringing Remembers*” at Bottisham

On Sunday morning of 11th November 2018, the bells of Holy Trinity, Bottisham, prior to the Act of Remembrance, rang half-muffled to remember those who had fallen during the conflict of 1914-19. “The guns fell silent” 100 years ago, when, at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month an Armistice was signed. The ringing was by members of the local ringing team. The half-muffled effect is achieved by attaching a leather pad with Velcro straps on one side of each bell’s clapper, so an “echo effect” is produced. On this fine, sunny morning, the sound was extremely poignant.

Later that day, at just before 7:00, a band of Benefice bellringers met at the three churches in Anglesey Benefice that have bells, namely, Bottisham, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior. This was to mark the lighting of the beacons across the country to celebrate peace. Some of these bellringers had been specially recruited to replace the 1400-odd bellringers over the country who lost their lives during the Great War. The “new” local ringers were taught at Swaffham Bulbeck by the Tower Captains of Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham. These ringers included two young bellringers, both under 16, who rang extremely well. On this occasion, the muffles had been removed, and the bells rang out “open” to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Armistice. Each piece of ringing added up to 100 “rows”.

The ringers were: Grace and Oliver Wordsworth-Clarke (both under 16), Nathaniel Yealand-Flint, Jennifer Clark, Hilary Charles, Freda Lloyd, Peter Sims, Christine Hammond, Liz Thompson, Derek Latchford, and Carol and Martin Kitson. This was a really challenging to ensure each church in the Benefice had enough ringers, and a huge vote of thanks to Lesley Boyle, Tower Captain at Swaffham Bulbeck, for organising this. We are delighted to say that our very own Revd Sue Giles rang at Swaffham Prior in the evening. Our curate, Revd Professor Gina Radford, would have joined us to ring as well, but was unfortunately unable to, as she is abroad lecturing at the moment. **A unique occasion!**

Sales, Wants and Swaps



IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SELL OR WANT TO BUY OR EVEN TO SWAP, THEN THIS PAGE IS YOURS TO USE. Send details of Item, price and landline Phone Number to BottishamCresset@gmail.com. Max. 5 Items. Entries by 12th of the month for next months issue.

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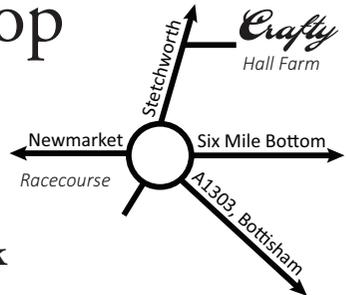


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News from Bottisham Medical Practice Patients' Group

From the Dispensary New Medication Collection Point: The Practice is working with the shop and Post Office at Stow-cum-Quy so you can pick up your medication there, as we already do at Lode, Swaffham Bulbeck and Wilbraham.

Simply complete a consent form available from the shop or the Practice. Collection will be during opening hours and delivery is on a Friday after lunch.

You can also leave your repeat prescription at the shop and Post Office for collection on a Friday; just place it in an envelope. The first delivery will be Friday 9th November. Any questions please ask at the dispensary.

Cake Stall: Held at the flu clinic on 3 November when we raised a further £206.20 thus bringing the Red Bucket total up to £1152.39 to go towards the purchase of a Pod for the surgery. Grateful thanks to all who have contributed to this.

Patients' Group Explained: All patients registered at Bottisham Medical Practice are automatically members of the Patients Group (PG) which was originally titled Patient Participation Group (PPG). This is led by a small committee of patients to represent the majority at meetings and NHS consultations. The PG was formed to give all patients a say on general matters (not personal issues) which affect them and the use of Bottisham Medical Practice.

The Group meets every two months on the fourth Thursday evening and would welcome more members joining these meetings to put forward their suggestions and ideas.

If you would like to join us or would like more information, please talk to the receptionist at the surgery.

Walks for Health: The next walk with our accredited walk leader Steve Gilson start at 11.00 am from the surgery car park on 12 December 2018. Do join Steve for a walk he would be delighted to see you. Anglesey Abbey walks continue on Thursdays at 10am from the reception area.

Next Meeting: Next meeting will be Thursday 24 January 2019 at 6.30pm at the surgery.

Bottisham Patients' Group



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50% of all fires in the home start in the kitchen and more than half of those are as a result of distraction whilst cooking !

Christmas is approaching! The time of year when we're enjoying a tipples with friends, cooking up festive feasts for the family and entertaining loved ones. With all the fun to be had it is easy to be distracted when cooking in the kitchen.

CFRS want to help ensure that your festive cheer doesn't go up in smoke this Christmas by sharing the following tips for safe cooking:-

- Never leave cooking unattended
- Do not cook when tired or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication that makes you drowsy
- Regularly clean the grill pan and oven - built up fat can easily catch fire
- Never leave anything cooking if you leave the house
- Do not leave anything flammable on or near the hob – tea towels, oven gloves and even washing baskets can catch fire
- Take care using microwaves - fires can start when food is put in for too long.
- Oven chips or temperature controlled deep fat fryers are safer than using a chip pan. If you do use a chip pan, do not fill it more than one third with oil and turn the heat down if the oil starts smoking
- Fire can break out in household appliances so you should regularly maintain dishwashers, washing machines and particularly tumble driers – frequently removing accumulated lint - and never leave them on if you go out or when you go to bed.
- Register your appliances online with the manufacturers to ensure that you are made aware of any faults or recalls
- Have a working smoke alarm on each floor of your home. Keep Testing – ideally weekly

If you do have a fire in your home - ensure that everybody gets outstay out and dial 999 - Never re-enter.

For the latest news, incidents and safety advice, or to contact us, log on to www.cambsfire.gov.uk. Sign up to email alerts and find us on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook or call 01480 444500

Copy deadline for next issue is 10th December.

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K.J.P.

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Air Ambulances across the UK continue to save lives – East Anglian Air Ambulance proving no exception, having flown over 23,200 missions to date. Again a huge thank you to all who so generously continue to support us. Please keep up the good work. In addition to regular public contributions, the charity relies heavily on the income derived from its weekly lottery. Please log-on to the web site to sign up to this important and potentially rewarding scheme.

Those of our readers who fancy doing something amazing might like to support EAAA by running in the Cambridge Half Marathon on 3rd March next year. Again, please log-on for details.

On the web site you will find details of missions flown, lives saved and grateful patient feed-back. You can also read about the launch of EAAA's first aid training programme initially aimed at training more people to recognise symptoms and to perform effective CPR. About 30 people across our six counties suffer a cardiac arrest EVERY DAY! Survival rates where early CPR and defibrillator use are applied can be improved by 40 – 70% - cardiac arrests don't affect just older people as mother of two young children, Charlotte Salmons, will attest. Read her story on the web site, and more about the CPR training being organised.

All at East Anglian Air Ambulance wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year. As in 2018, we will need your support to enable our amazing crews – pilots, critical care paramedics and trauma trained doctors – to continue their priceless work.

Contributions of your resources – funds and, increasingly importantly, your time – will be much appreciated. Time permitting, please contact EAAA to become part of our team

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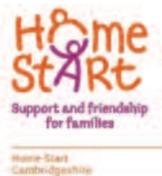
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David Taylor was our speaker in October talking about the Dam Busters Raid known as Operation Chastise. The members had all seen the film with Richard Todd as the leader of the daring raid but David explained the background to it and the careful preparation and trials necessary to make it possible. Barnes Wallis designed the Bouncing Bomb which had to be dropped precisely as near the dam wall as possible, to sink to 30ft deep and then detonate. Thirteen tons of bombs were required and Lancaster bombers needed to be altered to carry them underneath the aircraft. Trials were held on Chesil Beach, in North Wales and the Derwent Reservoir. Flying had to be very low and precise. Guy Gibson the Leader was only 24 years old, had survived over 100 operations and was chosen to form 617 Squadron based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire. The attacks breached the Mohne and Eder dams and there was great flooding of the Ruhr valley destroying coal mines and armaments factories and more than 1000 civilians died. Of the 133 pilots 50 of them never returned. 34 of the survivors received medals with Guy Gibson receiving the Victoria Cross. An interesting talk.

We filled 34 Christmas shoe boxes and have also needed to raise £5 for each gift through a beetle Drive and an evening displaying, discussing and possibly laughing at our wedding photos.

In this, our institute's centennial year we should note that as a Federation we are a group of campaigners who have changed, improved and saved lives. We helped form the Keep Britain Tidy group and were a founding member of the Fairtrade organisation. We helped put women on juries and to secure equal pay for equal work. We played a key part in establishing the breast screening programme and increased the number of midwives in training. We faced up to AIDS and sent out an SOS to Honey Bees. And we heckled Tony Blair!

Our December meeting will be our Christmas Party on Wednesday 12th December at the Primary School. This will be for members only and we shall start with a meal.

Come and join us in the new year. We don't sing Jerusalem at meetings and I for one have never made jam!

Sylvia Overton

BOTTISHAM BOWLING CLUB

Jumble Sale

SAT 19TH JANUARY 2019
at BOTTISHAM COMMUNITY SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB
DOWNING CLOSE, BOTTISHAM
Doors open 2.00pm – entry 50p

Items for sale may be brought to the Club from 10.00am (no shoes please)

Further details from Cindy King on 811220



Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH AT THE SOCIAL CLUB

As we come to the end of another year, and a very important one, which has seen us disaffiliate from the British Legion and relaunch ourselves as a community sports and social club. We would like to thank all our regular and not so regular customers for their continued support and look forward to seeing you all over the festive period and into the new year. We would also like to thank Katy, Matt and all our bar staff for their excellent level of service over the past year, the club would not run so smoothly without them, and Suzy for her great work as our secretary in what has been a very busy year. From all the committee we would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and an even better new year.

If there are any members not receiving emails from the club concerning up and coming events and general information, please can you leave your email address on your next visit and this will be remedied.

FRIDAY NIGHTS.

Members draw as of 11th Nov is now £270

Play your cards right now stands at a whopping £2109
you must be in to win, a great way to start Christmas and the new year.

DECEMBER

8th - Quiz Night

teams up to eight, start prompt 8pm.

15th - Kids Christmas Party,

Mrs Bubbles makes a welcome return,
with a special guest making an appearance.

17th - Members Christmas Draw

join in the fun with Newmarket Town Band

24th - Christmas Eve Disco

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New Years Eve

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End of Year Update from Lucy Frazer MP

As Christmas approaches and we near the end of another year, I wanted to reflect on the last 12 months which seem to have flown by once again.

Working with partners across the constituency, from local campaign groups to councillors and the Mayor and Government, I am delighted that projects which I have championed are now reaching fruition. The Ely Bypass, which I helped obtain Government funding for, has now been finalised. After regular meetings with BT and Connecting Cambridgeshire, open meetings with residents and regular phone exchanges, 95% of premises in our constituency now have access to superfast broadband, although I continue to press for full rollout in some of the outstanding 'not-spots'. Also, a free to use, Government backed teacher recruitment website which I've actively pursued for 3 years, is now being rolled out nationally, having been piloted in Cambridgeshire.

I am proud to have supported a number of successful local campaigns; ensuring the continuation of the pilot at the Local Urgent Care Centre at Ely's Princess of Wales, following regular meetings with local health authorities and the great local campaign by Emma Watson, Helen Wright and others and reinstating a pre 9am off-peak train service to Cambridge after numerous meetings with Chief Operating Officer of Govia Thameslink Rail, Nick Brown, and a well led local campaign by Lauren Thomas.

Longer term projects such as upgrading the A10, building a station in Soham, improving junction 37 on the A142/A14 are ongoing.

Also ongoing is my commitment to local schools. £6m extra funding over 3 years, owing to the 'Opportunity Areas' status I helped secure for schools in East Cambridgeshire, is now being made available in the form of grants. My parliamentary inter-school debating competition, which encourages students to develop their debating skills, is now in its fifth year. In the last 3 months I have met with all the pupils taking part including those from Bottisham Village College and this year's final is being judged by Sir Brian Leveson. I also enjoyed visiting Bottisham Primary School in June and continue to keep up to date with the heads of all our schools.

I have brought a number of Cabinet Ministers to our constituency this year to press our local causes including Education Secretary, Damian Hinds, Secretary for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove and Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling.

I always enjoy meeting constituents, whether welcoming you to Westminster or seeing you at an event, group gathering or surgery. If you would like to arrange a tour of the House of Commons for yourself or a group you belong to, please do send me an email. I am always happy to arrange this and wherever possible I will try to be around to say hello and answer any questions you have.

I am extremely grateful for your ongoing support and will continue to work hard on behalf of all my constituents in the coming year.

If you have anything you wish to raise with me personally or would like to be added to my email newsletter distribution list please email me at lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk. To keep up with everything I'm doing on a more frequent basis, you can also follow me on face-book www.facebook.com/FrazerLucy/ or visit my web page www.lucyfrazer.org.uk

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Lucy Frazer MP

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News from Bottisham Community Primary

We're delighted to welcome Mrs Lisa Perry as Interim Head Teacher, while Mrs Rachael Johnston is on maternity leave. "I'm very fortunate to have the opportunity to work in such a lovely school, and I'm enjoying getting to know all of the children as I pop into their classrooms," Mrs Perry said. "I will be in the playground every day before school to say hello, and look forward to getting to know more about the community around this happy school." Those familiar with Whittlesford may know Mrs Perry, who has joined us from William Westley Church of England Primary School where she is Deputy Head – and we're very much looking forward to having her support throughout the academic year to come.

Mrs Johnston and her husband welcomed a baby girl in October, and all are doing well. Our congratulations and warm wishes go out to them!

Earlier this term our Y6 children enjoyed a wonderfully adventurous week at Hilltop Outdoor Centre in Sheringham: mountain-biking, tackling muddy assault courses, crate-stacking and even lighting fires in the rain during their bushcraft sessions! "The Super Swing was awesome," said one Y6: "truly super stuff, and the food is all great." Our school has been travelling to Hilltop for these residential weeks for several years now, and the family-run activity centre is always hugely popular with the children. "When you do [activities], you get a really proud feeling inside – the feeling you get when you've accomplished something is really amazing," said another Y6. Our thanks go to Mrs Palmer, Mrs McGrath, Mrs Thompson and Mrs Ling for working with the children during the week away.

Our congratulations also go to Charlie Johnson, who has completed his bronze, silver and gold in Rookie Lifeguarding – and to Olly Sawalmeh, who was presented with the 'Student Of The Season' Award at Cambridge Kung Fu.

In December we're looking forward to our Carol Concert at Holy Trinity Church on the 12th, then Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day on the 14th of December. This non-uniform day is always a great success, both raising money for such a worthy cause and getting us into the festive spirit! Our final day of school for this year will be December 19th, before reopening on the 7th January.



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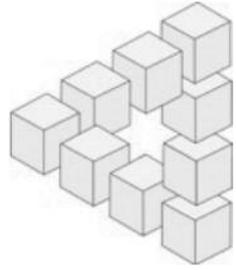
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Thoughts of a Sports Nut

I know it's a few weeks ago now, but what did everyone think of Gareth Southgate's young Lions' Nations League victory against the mighty Spain in Seville in October? I tell you, inside the Estadio Benito Villamarín it was pure theatre: racing into a 3-0 first half lead was quite surreal and, as successive goals went in, the celebrations were charged with a strange mixture of joy and disbelief. "Brave" said Southgate; "A statement win" reported Phil McNulty for the BBC; but for sheer drama, we were reminded of both the 3-2 win over Sweden in Kiev in Euro 2012 (from 1-0 up and 1-2 down) and the 3-2 friendly win over Germany in Berlin in 2016 (from 0-2 down). Marvellous stuff. And additionally satisfying to see the much-maligned Raheem Sterling end his goal-drought, and Marcus Rashford atone for his glaring misses against Croatia a few days earlier.

The Croatia goalless draw, of course, was the one we weren't allowed to attend following UEFA's order to play behind closed doors to punish them for some racist supporter behavior. Despite vehement protests from the English camp, UEFA could not be persuaded to allow access to visiting spectators only and they even erected barriers to block visibility from vantage points outside the stadium. It didn't stop about 500 of the hardest England fans making the trip, though, and some of them even got to see some of the game from a distant hill! Hats off to them, but what a pity that we had to share in Croatia's punishment. Surely the UEFA 'suits' could have dreamed up a more appropriate, equitable sanction? Grrr!

In the meantime, common sense has prevailed over the proposed sale of Wembley Stadium and Shahid Khan, having seen the way the wind was blowing, decided to avoid any further embarrassment by withdrawing his offer before the FA's Council held their vote. Now perhaps we can concentrate on maximising the revenue from this fantastic venue and develop a proper long-term plan to fund grass roots football effectively. A levy on agents' fees would be a good place to start, eh?

A cautionary tale emerged from the world of county cricket during October when, after six years of denial, Pakistani leg-spinner Danish Kaneria finally admitted that, whilst playing for Essex in 2009, he did in fact pressure Mervyn Westfield into conceding 12 runs in an over against Durham in a one-day match. Westfield, who received £6k for the deed, presumably from some shady gambling interests, served two months of a four-month prison sentence and a five-year suspension, whilst Kaneria is already banned for life. This sad story of petty, small-time greed, is a miserable indictment of the values of modern professional sport, isn't it, especially when you think that Kaneira was a top international player – the fourth highest Test wicket-taker in Pakistan's history.

Hardly more edifying for the game was the bizarre run out of Pakistan batsman Azhar Ali in the recent test victory over Australia in Abu Dhabi. Thinking the ball had reached the boundary off his cover drive, Ali stopped running and engaged in a relaxed conversation with his batting partner half way between the stumps, but the ball had stopped a few inches short and the Aussies, desperate for a wicket, returned the ball to the wicket keeper, who whipped off the bails before the poor batter realised what was happening. Poor sportsmanship from the fielders, or

(Sports Nut continued on page 49)

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(Sports Nut continued.)

unprofessional from the batsmen? Perhaps a bit of each, but it didn't help the Aussies, who sank to a massive 373 run defeat (and series loss) after Mohammad Abbas took 10 Australian wickets for 95 runs in the match! One wonders if things might have been a tad different if run-machines Steve Smith and David Warner were not serving suspensions for last season's ball tampering escapade! Who feels sorry for them? (Rhetorical!)

A more uplifting story caught my eye in November when Scotswoman Jenny Graham, broke the women's around the world cycling record. Starting and finishing in Berlin, she rode 18,413 miles through fifteen countries across four continents in a mere 124 days! That's over 148 miles per day, folks, much of it whilst sleeping rough and warding off threats from various animals, such as bears, kangaroos and snakes. This is one tough lady! And us CB25ers thought the Lands End to John O'Groats was a challenge!

By the way, the men's record is held by Graham's fellow countryman, Mark Beaumont (what is it about the Scots, Mr Editor?!) who averaged 240 miles per day last year to complete the feat in an incredible 79 days.

I'm sure a lot of us would relish the opportunity of eating 9,000 calories a day, but how about burning it all off every day for nearly three months on only 5 hours sleep per night? I guess some people are just wired to take on outlandish challenges. Beaumont said he was inspired by Jules Verne's *Around the World in 80 Days*, but I should imagine that writing his own best-sellers and documentaries provides decent motivation too. Perhaps I could write one of the cafés and pubs of Cambridgeshire..!

I'll sign off this year with congratulations to Lewis Hamilton on becoming F1 World Champion for the fifth time. He draws level with Juan Fangio in the history books and is now only two wins behind the great Michael Schumacher's total of seven. Can he do it and become possibly the GOAT? He looks so fit, hungry and intense ('driven' you might say?), I wouldn't put it past him!

May I wish all Cresset readers a happy and peaceful Christmas with your families, friends and team mates.

TTFN Gerry Daish

“Greatest of all time,” in case you're wondering!

Saplings Pre School

Here at Saplings Pre School the class of 2017/18 have all happily moved up to nursery & all our new children are settling in well. We would like to thank the village for their continued support & help fundraising at the Easter egg hunt, WI Fete & most recently our cake sale.

We would also like to say a Big Thank You to Howdens of Newmarket for their incredibly kind donation of a new kitchen & flooring.

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This does seem ridiculously early but by the time you get to read or even brush aside this article we will be into the period of the Christian Church's year known as Advent which, as some may know, is the precursor to Christmas. Several of you may even be using an Advent Calendar, possibly with goodies of one sort or another tucked behind the windows, to remind them of how many days to go before the BIG day. So, whatever your beliefs or whoever your God is have a happy Advent and hopefully a wonderful Christmas.

Now to a very topical matter concerning our wider community and, in covering this topic, I am writing purely as a resident and not as a Parish Councillor. A good many of you have or will have likely noticed, and may even be affected by, building works of one sort or another going on around you. And there may be those of you wondering how on earth some of these projects ever managed to get planning approval. Well, this self-same question was asked of the Planning Manager of East Cambs District Council at a recent Parish Forum. The Parish Forum is a meeting of representatives and parishioners of the villages that lie to the south east of the district. It is chaired by District Cllr Peter Cresswell, and attended by some - and occasionally all - of the District Cllrs that represent this part of East Cambridgeshire.

The speaker on this occasion was Rebecca Saunt, head of the East Cambs Planning department. She explained to the forum that the new East Cambridgeshire Local Plan was not yet in force and is currently undergoing scrutiny by a Government Inspector and that it is unlikely the new Local Plan will be adopted much before Easter next year. The reason for the Inspector looking at the Plan in detail is that some developers have suggested it did not offer an adequate five year supply of housing. And this is despite approval being given to developers for thousands of houses in the area that they have not yet started to build. The Inspector has inexplicably ruled that permissions already granted but not yet built cannot be included as part of the future housing supply equation. The consequence of this is that the door is now left wide open to all sorts of speculative development where the default position for the planners is to approve unless it is considered unsustainable development and or that it fails to meet the basic requirements of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). But unlike a Local Plan, the NPPF is a nonspecific document.

This (unfortunate) situation therefore goes part way to explaining why we are seeing so much building work going on, some acceptable - some not so, in the form of extensions, 'backland' builds and 'in fill'. The forum was reminded that most applications always go out to the local community for consultation. We were also reminded that whether you wish to support or object to the application, the planning officers will only consider 'material planning considerations' (MPCs) in their assessment. MPCs are a major part of the planning criteria officers must follow to judge whether an application should be approved or refused. It is a fact however that many of the responses received from people who might be adversely affected by the development are 'emotional' comments rather than MPC

(Jolley Old World continued on page 55)

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statements. Whilst the planners might be sympathetic to an argument being advocated, planning is a very precise matter and must be considered on merit in relation to the application in front of them and the applicable planning criteria - not emotive considerations or predicted future actions of a developer as indeed villages such as Cheveley have found out. Based on reputation elsewhere they predicted what a developer would do if approval was granted and yes, approval was given and yes, they were right...

We were also told that the new breed of planning officers is highly educated and knowledgeable in their profession. I should hope so! But as one attendee remarked; "this is of no use whatsoever without the knowledge and understanding of the local context." It was also remarked that without this knowledge, clever, misleading and factually incorrect applications can be taken at face value, seemingly without further scrutiny. For the layperson it is absolutely vital that the planning process is seen to be fair and non-partisan, favouring neither applicant nor consultee. But alas there are cases where the outcome of a flawed planning process can cause contention resulting in the status quo of longstanding communities being disrupted triggering angst over lost or devalued amenities.

So, what can you do to try and safeguard your rights to an established amenity and what constitutes a valid material planning consideration or MPC? Below is a list of the more commonly used MPCs that should be used as appropriate when responding to a planning consultation – but whatever you do, DO NOT use emotional statements...

- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Loss of light or overshadowing
- In Green Belt
- Outside Settlement Area
- Parking
- Highway safety
- Traffic
- Noise
- Effect on listed building and conservation area
- Over development or overbearing due to layout and density of building
- Design, appearance and materials
- Distance between habitable room windows
- Government policy (NPPF)
- Disabled persons' access
- Conditions in the Local Plan
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- Nature conservation

I would personally add to this list of MPCs; 'impartial advice'. However, issues such as loss of view, or negative effect on the value of properties are not material considerations.

JOW

**I asked my wife what she wanted for Christmas.
She replied; "NOTHING would make me happier than a
diamond necklace...!!" Anon.**



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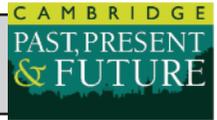
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Theatre at the Leper Chapel: A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, Friday 7, Saturday 8 December: 7.30pm-8.30pm A Christmas Carol, the way Dickens told it himself: one man, one stage. Playing over 20 characters, Martin Prest brings Charles Dickens' timeless story of redemption to life in the atmospheric Leper Chapel. As popular now as when it was first published in 1843, this captivating seasonal tale has the feel-good factor of a roast Christmas dinner with presents under the tree. The perfect start to any Christmas season! Tickets £12 (£8 under-18s and students). Dress warmly. To book visit www.thatsmycueproductions.com Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8JJ – opposite Cambridge United.

Volunteer Work Party at Coton Reserve, Tuesday 11 December: 10am-3pm Help us care for our green spaces and the wildlife that thrives in them – plus you can get active, meet new people and enjoy learning about your local environment. This December our volunteer work party will be assisting with vital woodland work at the Coton Countryside Reserve. If you can spare any time then please come along and lend a hand! Meet at the Coton Reserve car park notice board. All instruction, equipment and tools provided. Wear tough clothing and footwear, and bring a packed lunch. No need to book, just turn up. Grantchester Road, CB23 7PZ.

Christmas Holiday Bushcraft (5-12 years), Friday 21 December: 8.30am-4pm Holiday Bushcraft at Wandlebury is designed for children ages 5-12 and is run by experienced, qualified teachers from the outdoor learning experience group, Wild Thyme & Embers, who will inspire children and share their knowledge and skills of surviving in the wild. Booking essential, further information visit wildthymeandembers.co.uk. Wandlebury Country Park CB22 3AE.

A Calm, Creative Christmas at Wandlebury, Sat 22 Dec: 10 to 11am and 11.30am-12.30pm If you and your children find the Christmas run-up all a bit much then do come and join Vital Spark for some calm creativity with craft, storytelling and nature – all the magic of the season with a natural and mindful slant to the activities. We're not at all 'bah humbug', we just enjoy a little quality family time away from the more commercial side of Christmas! £6 per child over 2 years (recommended ages 3-7). Children to remain accompanied throughout. Booking essential. Email katherine@vitalsparktheatre.org Wandlebury Country Park CB22 3AE.

Midnight Communion at the Leper Chapel, Monday 24 December: 11.30pm-12.30am A simple celebration of Christmas: the Communion, by candlelight, with carols. All welcome. Donations towards the upkeep of the Chapel are always appreciated. Dress warmly.

New Year's Day Walk at Coton Countryside Reserve, Tues 1 January: 11am-1pm As a perfect antidote to the festivities, why not welcome in the New Year and blow off the cobwebs by joining us for a revitalising, sociable stroll through Coton Reserve? You'll enjoy the stunning winter landscapes at the same time as kick-starting that resolution to get more exercise in 2019! Free but donations towards the upkeep of the reserve are always welcome. Meet outside the Coton village pub, The Plough, at 11am.

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