



# ELEVEN SAYS

FEBRUARY /  
MARCH 2026

ISSUE 317

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE BRAMERTON GROUP OF CHURCHES COVERING 11 PARISHES

## Man's best friend . . .

When I was first ordained some 20 years ago now, I remember some advice from an experienced priest friend who told me never to let my parishioners know my political allegiance. If you do, he said, there will be those who agree with you and those who will always be suspicious of you. I have always found it sound advice, but I also think it applies to whether you are a 'dog' person or a 'cat' person. If you are one or the other there will be those who appreciate you more and those who will think there is something wrong with you!

Sadly, it is impossible to hide the fact that I am a 'dog' person since we have always had them around us at The Rectory. Melanie and I were both brought up in doggy households, myself purely with pets but Melanie with working dogs on a farm. When we moved to Thurton, we brought two faithful companions with us - Flute and Buddy - and it was very difficult when we lost them both a few months apart in 2021: both at the age of 14.

It was when I developed my hearing condition and was away from parish ministry for a few months in 2023 that one of the medical professionals supporting me suggested that it might be a good time to get another dog as a source of companionship and as something to bring routine and purpose into my day at a time when I was feeling quite lost and uncertain of the future. So along came Dawson our big, gentle, sweet-natured lurcher.



When we took him on, we were told that he had a heart condition that would require medication for the rest of his life, funded by the animal charity we got him from who would require an annual check-up with their vet in addition to the usual health checks with our own, local vet. Imagine our surprise when at that annual check in December, we were told that there was no longer any sign of the heart condition and Dawson would no longer require medication.

The vet was a little surprised but told us that dogs who have a difficult life, as Dawson had before we adopted him (he was picked up by a dog warden having been mistreated, abandoned and was extremely underweight), sometimes develop heart conditions because of the stress they experience.

Consequently, when they are given a good home, healthy and balanced meals, exercise and feel safe and secure, the condition can heal. Essentially, his broken heart had been mended by love.

All of us who have pets, especially cats and dogs who become part of the family, know that it is a committed relationship that brings companionship and reward to both parties. Dawson came into our lives at a time when I was not in good health which made life very challenging for Melanie and myself. His affectionate, trusting presence helped me to find a new focus and eventually come to terms with my condition, find ways to cope and return to ministry in a changed but still rewarding way. The lives of all three of us were changed by our dependence on each other and the loving trust we have developed. Dawson helped to heal us and now, it appears, we have helped to heal him.

None of us should underestimate the healing power of love. 'God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them'. (1 John 4:16b).

The 18th of February this year is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent, a period of prayer and reflection for Christians as we remember the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness. Here he was tempted to use his divine power for his own benefit, but he resisted out of love for God the Father. When he emerged from the wilderness, he was tended to by angels: God returning that love and bringing him healing. From that moment Jesus' ministry began, teaching the people about God's desire to be "man's best friend", to have a loving relationship with his people and showing that love through his teaching and healing.

This Lent, I hope we can all be thankful for those we love and who we know love us, be they human, canine or feline. May we see in Christ's time in the wilderness, his ministry and his passion, the love God has for us and the love he calls us to have for him and one another. A love that found its fulfilment in the wonder and mystery of the resurrection and the hope, healing and wholeness it offers to each of us, through faith.

I wish you all a holy Lent in anticipation of the Easter joy to come.

With every blessing,

Fr Chris



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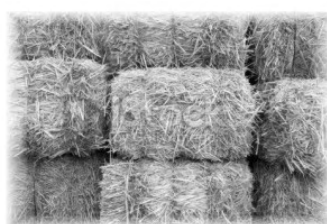
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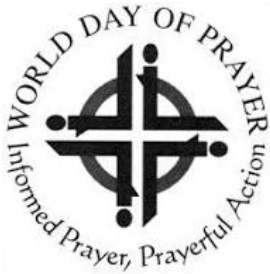
World Day of Prayer 2026

“I will give you rest, come”. Prepared by the women of Nigeria.

On Friday 6th March, local service at 2 pm at Bergh Apton Village Hall.

All welcome. Children’s corner. Refreshments will be served following the service.

‘World Day of Prayer’ is an international, women-led, ecumenical movement with the motto:- Informed Prayer; Prayerful Action: We encourage women to plan ecumenically for the World Day of Prayer, promoting prayerful living and worship for men, women and young people and helping raise awareness of the lives and concerns of others throughout the world, especially those who write the service.



**Wednesday Fellowship** is a meeting for all people in the Bramerton Group and beyond! Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month 2 - 4 pm at Alington and Yelverton Village Hall.

We have Christian and secular speakers followed by tea / coffee, cake and fellowship. All are welcome.

**February 11th - Display of Textiles.** Speaker Clare Spender  
**March 11th - “Mad Hatter’s Tea Party”**  
**April 8th - Teapots.** Speaker Jonathon Dutton

For more information please contact Pat Barter on 01508 493570.

**Worship in Stillness** is held at 9:30 am on Monday Mornings at Cherry House, Wheel Road, Alington.

Half an hour of praise, silence, meditation and prayer followed by tea and coffee for those wishing to stay.

Celtic Daily Prayer at St Mary’s Church, Surlingham

This is the lovely view seen from inside Surlingham Church porch as we sit together to pray and meditate on a Bible reading and a reflection for the day. We meet at 10 am for approx half an hour on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday mornings of the month.



Future dates: **February 10th and 24th.**  
**March 10th and 24th.**

Everyone from the Group is very welcome to join us. If you are unable to come but would like to receive the chosen material for the day, please email [mandy.ansell44@gmail.com](mailto:mandy.ansell44@gmail.com) and I will send you a copy for your own reflection time.

Revd. Mandy Ansell, 01508 538654

Gentlemen, you are cordially invited to a  
**Mid-Day Mardle**

An opportunity for men to quench their thirst for good company and conversation, share good food and, perhaps, to enjoy a glass of something.



New members are always given a warm welcome.

**Ferry House, Surlingham**

**Wednesdays: Feb. 4th, March 4th, April 15th**  
(every month, normally 1st Wednesday)

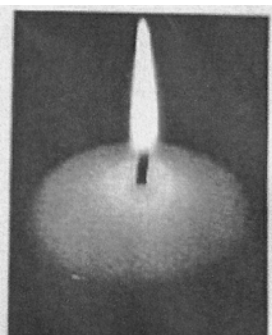
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Any questions, please contact David Fairbourn on 01508 538437 or email [surlingham.midday.mardle@gmail.com](mailto:surlingham.midday.mardle@gmail.com)

Why do churches use beeswax candles?

Churches - especially in Catholic, Orthodox, and some Anglican traditions - like to use beeswax candles for a mix of symbolic, practical and historical reasons including:

- Beeswax is considered a ‘pure and natural substance’, produced by virgin worker bees. This purity is often linked to Mary, then by extension, to Christ.
- Traditional teaching holds that a candle's three parts symbolise Christ:  
Wax = Christ's body (born of the Virgin Mary, symbolised by the bee).  
Wick = Christ's soul.  
Flame = Christ's divinity, bringing light to the world.
- Since at least the 4th century, beeswax candles have been specified in church use. Roman Catholic Canon Law (before Vatican II) required altar candles to contain a high percentage of beeswax (at least 51%).
- Orthodox practice favours pure beeswax candles, rejecting paraffin as being too artificial.
- Beeswax burns slowly, cleanly, and with little smoke compared to tallow (animal fat) or cheap paraffin.
- It gives off a natural, honey-like fragrance, adding to the sacred atmosphere.
- Bees working collectively to produce wax echo the cooperation of the faithful in the church.
- The burning candle itself is seen as a form of offering, consuming itself in giving light, just as Christ sacrificed himself.



Gareth Morgan, Master Beekeeper

Walking through Good Friday in the Thurton Benefice, 3rd April 2026

We plan to make our annual Good Friday pilgrimage around the benefice on foot, weather permitting! We will stop at each of the churches on the way for a short time to focus on the events of the first Good Friday.



You are invited to join us for as much or as little of the journey as you feel able. You may prefer to cover the ground by car and join up with the walkers at one or more of the churches. Drinks are usually offered at two of the churches, but don't forget to bring your own lunch and snacks for the journey. Toilet facilities are available at all churches except for Thurton.

The schedule is planned as follows:  
09:30 at Ashby St Mary Church  
10:30 at Thurton Church  
11:45 at Bergh Apton Church  
13:30 at Yelverton Church  
14:45 at Framingham Pigot Church

Alternative wet-weather schedule for a pilgrimage by car  
11:30 at Ashby St Mary Church  
12:15 at Thurton Church  
13:15 at Bergh Apton Church  
14:00 at Yelverton Church  
14:45 at Framingham Pigot Church

If in doubt on the morning which schedule will be used, please call Chris or Rosalind Limbach on 07531 058547





## Rockland St Mary Benefice

### What's on in Rockland Benefice in February and March

**Christingles in February!?** You bet! February 1st is Candlemas Sunday, the completion of the seasons of light that began on Advent Sunday. The Christingle candles we will carry and blow out at the end of the service bring the time of Christmas to a conclusion, but the work of the Christmas carries on, in the words of Howard Thurman's poem

To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
To make music in the heart."

On Candlemas Sunday we will support the work of the Children's Society at our 9.30 am **Communion with Christingle** at Claxton and at 11 am **Family Worship with Christingle** at Carleton.

The 40 days of Lent begin on February 18th, when we gather in The Barn for **Ash Wednesday Holy Communion and Ashing**. You are warmly invited, if you wish, to receive the sign of the cross on your forehead in ash made from last year's Palm crosses, an ancient symbol of our human frailty and need for God's forgiveness.

On March 15th **Mothering Sunday Funday**, is an all-age family friendly event, from 10.30 am to 12 noon, including refreshments and crafts in The Barn and finishing with a short celebration in Rockland St. Mary Church.

### What's on in Holy Week and Easter in Rockland Benefice, March 29th - April 5th

**Holy Week** begins on **Palm Sunday (March 29th)**. We begin our journey to the Cross as a Group with 10 am **Palm Sunday Communion** at Yelverton. At 4 pm **Still at The Barn** will reflect on the themes of Holy Week through words, music, image and silence.

On **Wednesday (April 1st)** we share an early morning **Communion** at 7.45 pm in The Barn.

On **Maundy Thursday (2nd)** at 10 am in Claxton Church **Communion** we recall the Last Supper.

**Good Friday's** 10 am **Family Worship** at Surlingham, (3rd) is an all-age opportunity to hear and respond to the story of Jesus' crucifixion.

**Still with the Cross** in the Barn at 2 pm recalls Jesus' last hour on the cross.

On **Holy Saturday (4th)** we celebrate the start of Easter with the **Lighting of the New Fire and Communion** at Rockland St. Mary at 7.30 pm. This candlelit service welcomes back the light of Christ, and in his light we renew our baptism vows.

On **Easter morning (5th)** we welcome Easter dawn at the **Sunrise Service** on Rockland Staithe at 6 am. **Communion** will be celebrated at Claxton and **Family Worship with Easter Hymns and Readings** at Bramerton at 9.30 am, 11 am **Communion** at Kirby Bedon and 3.30 pm **Easter Hymns and Readings** at Surlingham.

**News from the Barn - Warm Welcome at the Barn** will be open every Monday between now and March 23rd, from 11.30 am to 2.30 pm. There will be the usual welcome in a warm Barn, good food and company and it's free! May I thank our hardworking team of volunteers who make this possible. We're supporting this year's Diocesan **Lent Appeal** through donations at **Warm Welcome** during Lent (details to follow when the appeal is announced).

**Art Cafe in the Barn** opens its doors on Wednesday February 11th and March 11th, from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm, with fresh coffee, refreshments, friendly conversation, and opportunities to enjoy and make art!

**Art Cafe Online** brings together people across East Anglia and artworks from all over the world. We will meet on Zoom on Wednesday March 18th at 10.30 am. Please contact Nick for your Zoom invitation.

**Still at The Barn** returns with its mix of contemplation, worship, crafts and refreshments on February 8th and March 29th, 4 pm-5.30 pm.

Revd Nick Garrard



## Thurton Benefice

### Thurton Benefice Update

**Thank You:** Although Christmas will seem a distant memory by the time this is read, Melanie and I would like to say a very big thank you for all the cards, gifts and good wishes we received for the Christmas Season. They were much appreciated.

**Vestry Meetings:** the Annual Meeting of Parishioners for the election of churchwardens in each parish will take place immediately before the Sunday Services on the dates and times below. Those whose names are entered on the church electoral roll or who are resident in the parish and whose names are on the local government register of electors are legally entitled to attend and vote. Churchwardens are the Bishop's 'eyes and ears' in the parishes and work in conjunction with me as the parish priest and the Parochial Church Council to promote the worship, mission and ministry of the Church. It is a demanding role, and the annual meeting is an opportunity to thank them for all they do.

Ashby St Mary: 15th February at 3 pm

Bergh Apton: 22nd February at 9.30 am

Framingham Pigot: 1st February at 9.30 am

Thurton: 22nd February at 3 pm

Yelverton: 15th February at 9.30 am

**Lent and Easter Services:** Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 18th February, with a service of Holy Communion with Ashing at Thurton at 7 pm with a good number of services leading us to the joy of Easter Day on the 5th April. All are most welcome to join us as we journey towards and beyond the Cross once again.

***Please see the separate table on Page 5 for details of all Lent, Holy Week and Easter Day Services.***

**The Churches of our benefice** belong to all parishioners and far from being a clubhouse for members, they are available at any reasonable time for private prayer and reflection which is why they are kept open during the day. They serve as focal points for important life events and have been used for generations for baptisms, weddings and funerals as well as for community events of fundraising and celebration. I am always available for an informal conversation with anyone considering being married in church or having a child baptised. Confirmations can also be arranged either in one of our churches or at the Easter Vigil at Norwich Cathedral. ***Please contact me by phone or email if you would like to know more.***

**Midweek Communions:** usually take place on Wednesday mornings at 10.30am on a rotating basis in Ashby St Mary, Bergh Apton, Framingham Pigot and Thurton and on the first Thursday of each month at Yelverton. ***Please see the separate table on Page 5 for details of locations and dates.***

The service is from the Book of Common Prayer and lasts for 30 minutes. I am usually available after the service to meet with anyone who would welcome the opportunity to speak with me in confidence in a church setting.

**Safeguarding:** The churches of the Thurton Benefice are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our Church community. PCC members and all volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults have completed or are undertaking the appropriate safeguarding training and the PCCs are adopting formal safeguarding policies to ensure we comply with all current legislation. If you have a safeguarding concern please contact our Safeguarding Officer, Mrs Leo Smith, 01508 493695 or me on 01508 484174. Where a child or adult is at imminent risk do not delay: call 999.

**Home visits and Home Communions:** I am very keen to visit anyone who is unwell or feeling isolated or lonely, either simply for a conversation or to share Holy Communion in their home. ***If someone cannot make it to church, the church comes to them!*** Please do contact me if you, or anyone you know, would like a visit. I am particularly keen to hear if a parishioner has been admitted to hospital; I would rather be told several times than not at all!

Revd Chris Ellis: 01508 484174



## From the Registers

### BAPTISMS

### MARRIAGES

### FUNERALS, BURIALS, CREMATATIONS, INTERMENT OF ASHES

08/11/25	Diane Maud FERREY (Interment of Ashes)	St Saviour's, Surlingham
28/11/25	David John TRANTER (84)	Framingham Pigot
05/12/25	Jean Ruth NEWSON (91) (Interment of Ashes)	Thurton
09/12/25	Phyllis Margaret FLATT (92)	Bergh Apton
16/12/25	Maurice George NEWTON (85) (Interment of Ashes)	Framingham Pigot
18/12/25	Dennis Bernard MOYE (85) Martin Warman	Bergh Apton late of Rockland St Mary

### Midweek Communions

February 2026 and March 2026

All Services at 10.30am

#### February

Wednesday 4th - Ashby St Mary

Thursday 5th - Yelverton

Wednesday 11th - Bergh Apton

Wednesday 18th - Framingham Pigot

Wednesday 25th - Thurton

#### March

Wednesday 4th - Ashby St Mary

Thursday 5th - Yelverton

Wednesday 11th - No Service

Wednesday 18th - Framingham Pigot

Wednesday 25th - Thurton

All are very welcome to this said service of Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer. Services last 30 minutes.



Thurton Benefice . . .

. . . Lent, Holy Week and Easter Services

**Ash Wednesday - 18th February**

Holy Communion with Ashing at Thurton 7 pm

**Mothering Sunday - 15th March**

Parish Team Service at Bergh Apton 9.30 am

Holy Communion at Thurton at 11 am

Holy Communion at Yelverton at 4 pm

**Palm Sunday - 29th March**

Group Holy Communion at Yelverton at 10 am, starting with the Palm Sunday Procession from Alington & Bergh Apton Primary School. Meet at 9.30 am outside the school.

**Holy Week - 30th March to 4th April**

**Monday 30th** - Compline at Yelverton 7 pm

**Tuesday 31st** - Compline at Bergh Apton 7 pm

**Wednesday 1st** - BCP Communion at Ashby 10.30 am

Compline at Ashby 7 pm

**Thursday 2nd** - Communion at Yelverton 10.30 am

Mass of the Last Supper at Framingham Pigot 7 pm

**Good Friday** - Benefice Pilgrimage starting at Ashby 9.30 am.

**Holy Saturday** - Easter Vigil at Thurton 8 pm

**Easter Day**

Holy Communion at Ashby 11 am

Holy Communion at Bergh Apton 9.30 am

Holy Communion at Framingham Pigot 11 am

Holy Communion at Yelverton 9.30 am

All are very welcome to join us as we journey through Lent and rejoice in the resurrection story of Easter



## A LENTEN EXPERIENCE

Bread of Life? Bread of Heaven!

Speaker: Canon Paul Thomas OBE

An Exploration with  
music, beautiful pictures,  
poetry and no nonsense  
prose

### Five Wednesdays in Lent

**25th February**, Bergh Apton Village Hall,  
Cooke's Road, NR15 1AA

**4th and 11th March**, Rockland St Mary  
Barn NR14 7EY

**18th March**, Bergh Apton Village Hall  
NR15 1AA

**25th March**, Rockland St Mary Barn,  
NR14 7EY

**6.30 pm with a light supper**

Prior registration is not essential but it helps with catering: Please phone 07733 430681 or email: [lorielain-rogers@outlook.com](mailto:lorielain-rogers@outlook.com)

ALL ARE WELCOME to join us whatever your Christian persuasion, or none

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Over the weeks of Lent we shall be exploring together the special place of bread in the Bible and in the life of the Church.

Bread still today plays a vital role in our diets and on the tables of people world wide. So not only will we be looking back but also looking through the prism of our everyday existence through to the future.

#### Week One 25th February

##### "In the beginning"

This week we shall explore how bread in the Old Testament was used to give substance and illustration to faith in God, from the importance of Melchizedek through to the provision of manna in the desert. We use powerful pictures, inspiring music and muses from the poets to bring these thoughts to life.

#### Week Two 4th.March

##### "Daily Bread"

How important is our daily bread? Not just the crusty cob on our breakfast table but the daily seeking of a relationship with God through Jesus Christ? We look at the place of regular prayer and especially the Lord's Prayer.

#### Week Three 11th.March

##### "Famine"

Much of the world has no experience or conception of having not to worry about the provision of food. There is plenty in the world, but it doesn't always get to the right places. Famine also describes the occasions when things don't go well in our lives and enjoyment of the Bread of Life seems far away.

#### Week Four 18th.March

##### "Feast"

Feasts are signs of celebration and we have all enjoyed times when we have enjoyed hospitality and good food, including bread. What about enjoying the knowledge that the Bread of Heaven is so plentiful that it is always more abundant than our need demands. Are we secure in such knowledge?

#### Week Five 25th.March

##### "The Last Supper"

This is the only worship command given to us by Jesus, apart from the Lord's Prayer. We look behind the scenes at its background and go through a moving enactment of how bread played such a key role. Bread starts with the grain, both the death and life of the corn. Jesus comes to know both, and to bring us Life.



## News from Wheatfen Nature Reserve

### A fond goodbye to Will and a warm welcome to our new Warden Matt

The New Year is often a time for new beginnings, and for Wheatfen the start of 2026 will bring some changes. Will Fitch, pictured here on the right, has been Warden for almost nine years and has achieved a great deal on the reserve during that time. Will is now planning to explore new opportunities and left Wheatfen at the end of 2025.



On behalf of all the Trustees, I would like to thank Will for his work and commitment to Wheatfen during his time with us. He will be much missed on the reserve, as he has been incredibly popular with everyone, including visitors and volunteers. Will still plans to be with us on Saturdays for a couple of months and may make guest appearances on some guided walks.

Everyone at Wheatfen sends Will and his family our very best wishes for the year ahead and our thanks for all that he has achieved.

Following on from Will's departure, we are wishing a very warm welcome from everyone at Wheatfen to our new Warden, Matt Wilkinson. Matt joined us early January 2026 on a part time basis for the next few months.

Many of you will find Matt's face a familiar one as he has, in effect, hopped across the river from Strumpshaw where he worked with the RSPB as a warden in the Mid Yare Valley for 20 years. This means that Matt brings to us a wealth of knowledge of the ecological requirements of our key species and the land management required for special Yare valley fen habitats such as Wheatfen. Matt also has a wide range of practical skills and is experienced in working with and managing teams of volunteers.



We are very lucky indeed to have someone who is so familiar with and clearly loves fenland management.

Please remember to say hello to Matt if you see him out and about at the reserve.

**Sally-Ann Meadows, Chair Ted Ellis Trust, Wheatfen Nature Reserve**

### Yare Village Voices had a busy Christmas!

The new local choir, The Yare Village Voices, has had a busy first Christmas. They supported their musical director, tenor Benjamin Lake, at the Big C Carol Service in St Peter Mancroft Church and at 'A Christmas Serenade' in Wymondham Abbey.



In St Peter Mancroft Church

The choir also led carol singing in Rockland with The Surlingham Clangers handbell team, and at The Ferry pub, Surlingham.



At Rockland with the Surlingham Clangers

The Yare Village Voices has members from most of the Eleven Says villages and meets on Thursday afternoons. They sing a variety of music. New members are very welcome and the first session is free. No experience is required. Please contact [louise99@me.com](mailto:louise99@me.com) for more details.



At Surlingham Ferry

## South Yare Wildlife Group

The South Yare Wildlife Group headed north of the river for their recent winter walk. Despite rank and challenging conditions, an enthusiastic party enjoyed a walk at Buckenham Marshes RSPB, ably led by warden Ben Lewis. Wigeon whistled away on the marsh, waddling away from the track as we approached. A single wading bird, a Black-tailed Godwit probed the mud for food. Teal, Shoveler and Snipe were all observed.

This is big sky country, and despite the rain the evening commute went as normal. Various Gull species passed through heading in the direction of Great Yarmouth, and 19 Marsh Harriers were counted heading to roost at Strumpshaw Fen, passing like ships in the night. Indeed, as the gloom began to envelop the valley, the group headed back to the car park in the hope of watching the Corvids come to roost. On this occasion, a mere few thousand Jackdaws swirled into the carr woodland, a far cry from the roost at its peak. It was relatively mild for early December, and no doubt more birds would join as the winter progresses. But can we be certain of this?

When one visits a wild place, it is very much a moment in time. A scratch on the surface. Would there be more birds next time? What will it be like here tomorrow, next month, next year? Nature is often easy to predict, but stubborn when it comes to conforming to said prediction. There may well be more Rooks and Jackdaws now that we have received the first snow of the winter and temperatures have plummeted, but the only way to know for sure is to get out there and find out. Do dress for the weather though!



### Upcoming events

**Thursday 19th February**

**RSPB Management and History in the Mid Yare Valley**  
A talk by Ben Lewis (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)  
7.30pm • Parish Room, Rockland St. Mary

**Thursday 19th March**

**The Conservation of Breeding Swifts in Norfolk**  
A talk by Caroline Spink of the Norwich Swift Network  
7.30 pm • Ashby with Thurton Village Hall

See SYWG website for further details, and for events in 2026

[www.southyarewildlifegroup.org](http://www.southyarewildlifegroup.org)



### Loddon Flower Club

Loddon Flower Club wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year.



Our first meeting of the year will be on **Tuesday 3rd of February** when we have a talk by Rosemary Ward on 'Plants for Summer Colour', we can look forward and start planning for the months ahead.

On **Tuesday 3rd March** we have a demonstration by Janet Dye entitled 'Reuse, Recycle'. All our meetings are held in St John's Lecture Hall on George Lane in Loddon, doors open at 6.30 pm for a 7 pm start. We serve refreshments during the interval and all arrangements made on the night are raffled at the end of the evening. Everyone is welcome, you do not have to have any experience in flower arranging, it's a social evening where we all get a few ideas and tips on what to do with garden flowers or a bunch from the supermarket, for ourselves or to give as a gift.

Visitors £7.50 or join for the year for £40, which includes demonstrations, a talk, a garden visit and our annual club lunch. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month, easy to remember, put it in your diary, we would love to see you.

We have a website - [www.loddonflowerclub.co.uk](http://www.loddonflowerclub.co.uk). a Facebook page - Loddon Flower Club, and you can email us at - [loddonflowerclub@gmail.com](mailto:loddonflowerclub@gmail.com) or call Tricia on 01508480522 or Jenny on 01508520254.

We look forward to seeing friends old and new in 2026.

**Poringland Community Centre**  
Overtons Way, Poringland, Norwich, NR14 7WB

**Poringland Community Cinema**

**Friday 13th February - Downton Abbey, the Grand Finale (PG)**  
Period Drama. Stars Hugh Bonneville, Dominic Weat

**Friday 13th March - Four Mothers (Cert 15)**  
Comedy/Drama. Stars James McArdle, Fionnula Flanagan

Tickets are £5 on the door (includes tea or coffee).  
Doors open at 6.45 pm. Films start at 7.30 pm

**Buena Vista Social Club**

**Friday Film Nights: February 6th, March 6th**

**Contacts are: John on 01508 494358 or Carol on 01508 492630**



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# Village News

## Alpington & Yelverton

### Alpington Community Shop

Our new venture, **Alpington Community Shop**, was opened by TV personality David Whiteley on 30th November, as part of the Christmas Fair at the Wheel of Fortune.



The initiative was led by Barry and Naomi, the landlords at the Wheel, who were converting two store rooms at the pub into retail outlets. One became 'Heather and Lilly's' florists, and the other was offered as a Community Shop. Under Barry's guidance and leadership, we are working to establish the shop for the future. The mission of a community shop is not only to benefit the people of the village, but also, as a Community Interest Company, to ensure that any profit made goes into community projects.

Our aim is to provide a range of basic goods such as bread, milk, eggs, tinned and packet goods, a small quantity of frozen goods, household supplies etc., and to support local producers where possible. We are not aiming to compete with Tesco's or our local excellent farm shops, but we are there when you run out of something, whether it's milk or toilet rolls. We plan to be responsive to our customers, and will vary our offer depending on what people need.

We did a 'pilot run' on Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings in December, and have now extended our opening hours. These depend on the number of volunteers we have to man the shop for two-hourly sessions, so please volunteer if you can. We would like the shop to be open most of the week, so that you can rely on it. We also need customers, so please come along and browse to find out what we have, and tell your friends as people don't always read posters, or even articles in Eleven Says!

At the moment our opening hours may change month by month, so keep an eye on posters round the village and, of course, on the shop door.

**Monday:** 8.30 am - 10.30 am.  
**Thursday:** 8.30 am - 12.30 pm  
2 pm - 4 pm  
**Friday:** 8.30 am - 12.30 pm  
2 pm - 4 pm.  
**Saturday:** 8.30 pm - 12.30 pm

Mary Fewster

## Bergh Apton

**Bergh Apton & District Society**  
Bergh Apton Village Hall, Cooke's Road,  
Bergh Apton NR15 1AA

**Happy New Year one and all**

**Wednesday 11th February**

Steve Cash tells us about the history of the  
Cantley sugar beet factory

**Wednesday 11th March**

The Alkers explain the history of tea and coffee  
I wonder what we drank before the 1700's?

As usual there will be tea/coffee with biscuits, social business  
and our raffle

£4 pp at the door. 7.30 pm start

We hope to see new friends and familiar faces.

## Bramerton

### Bramerton Helping Hand

As winter tightens its grip and the temperature drops, some folk struggle to keep warm or pay their energy or food bills. Bramerton Helping Hand is a small charity set up to help those residents living in the village who need extra help in these financially challenging times.

That might be a heating boiler or a washing machine that has broken down. Or perhaps fuel bills are a real worry as energy costs climb.

Bramerton Helping Hand may be able to assist with small grants to help residents tide themselves over during times of crisis. All approaches are dealt with in strictest confidence. They can be made personally or on behalf of someone else.

If you know of anyone in Bramerton in need of help either contact Dick at [dick.meadows@outlook.com](mailto:dick.meadows@outlook.com) or ring 01508 538771.

## Carleton St Peter

### St Peter's Church News

The last year has seen more changes at Carleton St Peter with the sad passing of key supporters of the church.

Harvest Festival and Christmas services were very well attended and refreshments followed.



Happy new year to you all and thank you for your continued support.

Carleton St Peter PCC

## Claxton

### Claxton and Carleton St Peter Village Hall

Our thanks to John Heathcote, who donated the Christmas tree, which was illuminated outside the Village Hall over Christmas. Also, thanks to Tony and Marco who, not only found a suitable tree but, managed to fell and deliver it despite the appalling weather.

A recent party held in the hall showed that many local people are unaware of all the hall has to offer or that the Social Club, with a fully stocked bar, is open every Friday evening between 8 pm and 11 pm. It would be good to have more local people using this facility.

### St Andrew's Church

We had a lovely service on Christmas morning when the church was full, which was a delight. As usual we will be donating £100 to the homeless charity, 'St Martin'.

In response to requests from a couple of village families we held our Wassail in the Village Hall with the intention of singing carols around the outside Christmas tree and sharing readings and refreshments inside. Those who attended enjoyed the carols, readings, mulled wine and festive nibbles. This did not prove as popular as our candlelit offering in the church but we feel we have tried something different.



# Village News

## Claxton continued . . .

This Summer we will be again holding our Open Garden Event on Saturday 20th June. Please put the date in your diary and look out for more details nearer to the date.

**Community Café.** It was great to see so many people at our Christmas Community Café enjoying the craft stalls and refreshments. After a slow start we became incredibly busy and sold virtually every food item. We still had lots of customers even as we came to closing time. Thanks to everyone's hard work (stall holders, bakers and helpers) we made £365 for the church.

Our next cafe in February will be the last of our winter ones running from 10 am until 1 pm with a simple lunch of homemade soup offered alongside our usual bacon baps and homemade cakes.

The small team that organises the Community Café believe it is a worthwhile venture which benefits the local community. However, with members of our team moving away, or having to stand down because of other responsibilities, those of us left are now finding it increasingly challenging to run the café and would greatly appreciate help from anyone able to bake or help with the running of the café. Help of any kind would be appreciated. It may be that you are unaware of how you might be able to help. Please talk to any of the team at our next café.

## Kirby Bedon

### Kirby Bedon Carol Service



We thought this might be what the congregation saw on the way to our carol service on the 14th December.

The window depicts a bend in the River Yare and here inside the church we feel His presence . . . a magical time of the Year.

J. Cane.

The picture was taken by our daughter, Lucinda.

## Hellington with Rockland

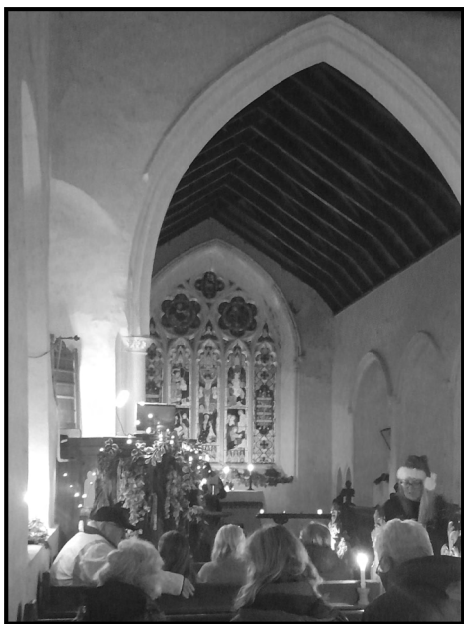
At 4.30 pm on Sunday 21st December the inside of Hellington Church came alive for the ever popular Candlelight Carol Service which, as usual, was very well attended.

Numerous candles were alight all around and the large window seen in the photo (courtesy of Bryony Jarman) was also highlighted by different coloured lighting supplied by one of the villagers.

There was a friendly atmosphere and a 'buzz' in the air before villagers from all around the area, plus friends and family, enjoyed singing carols and listening to poems and readings read by members of the congregation.

It's such a shame we don't print in colour as inside this ancient 'redundant' church the candles and lighting was a beautiful sight.

Angie Yeomans



## Rockland St Mary

### Christmas Tree Festival

Our Christmas Tree Festival was successful with several visitors who enjoyed the creative and imaginative trees, some of which are pictured below. We had trees with various themes such as Africa, Gingerbread Men, Polar, dried seed heads, needle felting etc. All were very different and they take a lot of time and thought.

Thank you very much to everyone involved with decorating and making trees, for helping throughout the weekend, and for the homemade cakes which always go down well. We raised £516.19 for the Church and our craft stall raised £106.35 for Star Throwers.

Jayne Regan



WE RAISED A MASSIVE

£580

FOR 'CHILDREN IN NEED'



THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO ALL WHO SUPPORTED US IN ANY WAY.



THANK YOU FOR TURNING OUT IN SUCH DREADFUL WEATHER. WE WERE REALLY PLEASED TO SEE YOU

I REALLY APPRECIATE ALL MY HELPERS, BAKERS, CRAFTERS WHO WORK SO HARD. THANK YOU.

Jayne



This event was very well attended considering the absolutely atrocious weather!!!

It made all the hard work worth it for those involved.

It was nice to see so many friends and neighbours enjoying themselves.



# Village News

## Rockland St Mary continued . . .

### Rockland St Mary & District Gardening Club

The Gardening Club normally meets in the Rockland Parish Room on the fourth Thursday of each month.

In the winter we have speakers whilst in the summer we have garden visits which begin in May. New members are always welcome. We have some very interesting talks during the next few months which are highlighted below.



**Thursday 26th February: Ken Abel - Pelargoniums Explained.** These popular plants are so easy to grow and are a firm favourite with gardeners everywhere.

**Thursday 26th March: Rosie Ward - Jewels in the Clouds.** A talk about mountain plants growing in the wild and in the garden.

**Thursday 23rd April: Jim Paine - The Art of Botany.** An illustrated journey through the depiction of plants in art.

Our popular garden visits will begin in May. Dates are yet to be confirmed so watch this space!! If you wish for further details or would like to join the Gardening Club please contact Ruth Everett, 01508 538231 or email [everettapplebee@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:everettapplebee@hotmail.co.uk)

**Plant sales:** All plants / shrubs, etc, sold at Applebee help to raise money for the Sanyu Babies Home in Kampala, Uganda and we would like thank you all for your continued support.

At the end of 2024 donations totalled £3,407 which was sent to Sanyu last year. Donations from sales throughout 2025 will be published very soon.

Ruth and John

### Community Carol Singing in Rockland St Mary



At 5 pm on Friday 19th December Community Carol singing began at Rockland Shop.

Then, together with the Yare Village Voices and the enthusiastic Surlingham hand bell ringers, the singers continued on to the Parish Room.



There they met with many more villagers and all enjoyed a very special and joyous occasion.

Thank you to all who turned out in the cold weather to support this special festive evening event.

Angie Yeomans

### Singing! Yare Village Voices

Friendly local singing group run by a professional singer/teacher in Rockland St Mary on Thursday afternoons.

No experience required and **all are welcome**. First session is free.

To find out more text: 07748186511  
or email: [Louise99@me.com](mailto:Louise99@me.com).

### Rockland St. Mary & District W.I.

We finished last year's meetings on a high, with our Christmas Party, in early December. We enjoyed lovely food and great entertainment with the singing group "Norwich Harmony". They were so lively and enthusiastic, we all ended up joining in!



We have an OPEN EVENING (£5: for visitors, with refreshments and a raffle) on **February 10th**, when a "Murder Mystery" is being played out by members and friends. Everyone is very welcome to come along.

On the **10th March** we look forward to a very lively evening when we welcome Stephen Amer for a "Sea Shanty Evening".

Meetings are held in the Margaret Mack Hall on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm. Further details from Ruth 538231 or Sandra 538100

### Pancake Day!

**Tuesday 17th February**  
from 12.30 - 2 pm  
at The Parish Room, The Street,  
Rockland

Everyone is welcome to come  
and enjoy a pancake (or 2!)



Inspiring Women

### Surlingham WI – Visitors Warmly Welcomed!

We warmly welcome all ladies from the local community to our very interesting & enjoyable Thursday talks.

We also welcome **ALL** the community to our **Open Evening in April** for a talk on **The Hoxne Hoard** - the largest hoard of late Roman silver and gold discovered in Britain, and the largest collection of gold and silver coins of the fourth and fifth centuries found anywhere within the former Roman Empire!

Meetings held on a Thursday in Surlingham Village Hall starting at 7.30pm for approximately one hour - £3 on the door (free on Open Eve) Coffee, Tea, Refreshments & Cakes Provided!

#### Programme 2026:

08 January	Crochet & Craft Evening	Gillian Stiff
05 February	History of Pearls	Maria Pennington
05 March	Suffragettes of Norfolk	Debbie Bradley
02 April	Open Evening The Hoxne Hoard	Tony Diamond
03 September	Moldovan Green Monologue Performance	Alexandra Evans
01 October	Is Walking a Pain more than it used to be?	Mr. Sadler

If you require any other information, please contact  
Jules Davison 07812 746 748 – [julesdavi@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:julesdavi@yahoo.co.uk)

# Village News

## Surlingham

### Church News

Christmas began with the School celebration, it was a cold wet day and they all bravely walked from school to Church. The children acted the nativity story in stages interspersed with singing. Very memorable was the school choir singing 'Walking in the Air' so beautifully.

Hard to follow that!?

But yes, we had a full church for the Carol Service which featured hand bell ringing, the Yare Village Voices singing parts to carols and the Glynns singing John's Christmas Song which took one's breath away.



Thanks to everyone who made it all so memorable, including the Partridge in the Pear Tree, the mince pie fest and all the decorations.

A last mention is of the 2/3 life size figures of Joseph and Mary with the babe in a crib and 2 sheep who became resident in the chancel just before Christmas. Unknowing of their arrival my first encounter was to see their silhouettes in the cold and dark, very real.

Now in the sun and snow we look forward to a special Lenten Experience and beyond Easter, there will be the Bramerton Group Quiz on 25th April in Claxton village hall.

Pippa

### Surlingham resident awarded British Empire Medal

Clive Evans of Surlingham, a long-standing Volunteer Ambassador for Priscilla Bacon Hospice Charity, has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the King's New Year Honours in recognition of his services to the community and to end of life care.

Clive has supported Priscilla Bacon Hospice Charity since 2018 and was previously a Volunteer Ambassador for Marie Curie. Over many years, he has been devoted to fund raising, awareness-raising and community action to help ensure local people can access high-quality end of life care. Clive is regularly seen giving talks, organising bucket collections in supermarkets, hosting golf days and even serving tea to His Majesty the King. To date, he has helped raise more than £100,000 to support the appeal to build the new Priscilla Bacon Lodge and to enhance care for patients and their loved ones at the hospice.



Alongside his charity work, Clive is widely known in Surlingham and beyond for his commitment to community life and his dedication to helping others over the last 35 years. He sits on the Parochial Church Council and leads occasional church services, writes the village newsletter and assists in running the village website. During the Covid pandemic, he also helped coordinate local volunteering to ensure vulnerable neighbours could access essential support, including shopping and the collection of prescriptions.

Clive said: "I was amazed when I was informed of the award, and I feel very humbled by the honour. I've always liked helping people, and I'm passionate about the provision of end of life care in Norfolk."

### WORD SEARCH FOR LENT

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- FORTY NIGHTS
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- HOLY
- JESUS
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- LISTEN
- MOUNTAIN
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- WILDERNESS




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The funds are split, with the ever increasing costs, towards the printing and producing costs, paper, envelopes, postage, printer cartridges, rubber stamp and the like. Plus a portion goes to helping the excellent work Gary Watson does which comes under the Youth for Christ within the Bramerton Group. Eleven Says funds occasionally, when requested, help support other items in the Bramerton Group.

Our wonderful ADVERTISERS also play a big part in keeping Eleven Says afloat.

Well done everyone from Liz and Angie

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	1st Feb Candlemas White or Gold	8th Feb 2nd before Lent Green	15th Feb Sunday next before Lent Green	22nd Feb Lent 1 Purple	1st March Lent 2 Purple	8th March Lent 3 Purple	15th March Mothering Sunday Rose	22nd March Passion Sunday Purple	29th March Palm Sunday Red	5th April Easter Sunday White or Gold
Ashby St Mary			15.00 HC		11.00 MP			11.00 PT	10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	11.00 HC
Bergh Apton	09.30 PT	10.00 Benefice HC	09.30 PT	09.30 HC VM	09.30 PT		09.30 Mothering Sunday PT	09.30 HC BCP	10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	10.00 HC
Bramerton		09.30 FW							10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	09.30 FW
Carleton St Peter	11.00 Christingle				11.00 MP				10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	11.00 MP
Claxton	09.30 HC & Christingle		09.30 FW		09.30 HC				10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	09.30 HC
Framingham Pigot	09.30 HC VM			09.30 HC		10.00 BENEFICE HC		16.00 HC	10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	11.00 HC
Kirby Bedon			11.00 HC				11.00 HC		10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	11.00 HC
Rockland St Mary		16.00 Still at the Barn		10.00 BENEFICE HC		09.30 HC	10.30 Mothering Sunday Fun Day	09.30 HC	10.00 GROUP YELVERTON 16.00 Still at the Barn	06.00 Sunrise Service
Surlingham		11.00 HC				11.00 HC		11.00 HC	10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	15.30 Easter hymns & readings
Thurton	15.00 HC			15.00 HC VM			11.00 Mothering Sunday		10.00 GROUP YELVERTON	
Yelverton	09.30 PT		09.30 HC VM	16.00 All 4	09.30 HC		16.00 HC	16.00 All 4	10.00 GROUP SERVICE HC	09.30 HC

Midweek Communions held in February and March can be found on Page 5.  
 Bramerton Benefice Easter Services are on Page 4.    Thurton Benefice Easter services are on Page 5.

CODE: HC = Holy Communion; **E Praise** = Evening Praise; FC = Family Communion; FW = Family Worship;  
 MP = Morning Prayer; EP = Evening Prayer; .PT = Parish Team; VM = Vestry Meeting

Bible Readings Sunday by Sunday: December 2025 and January 2026

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel	
01/02/26	Malachi 3.1-5	Hebrews 2.14-18	Luke 2.22-40	Candlemas
08/02/26	Genesis 1.1 - 2.3	Romans 8.18-25	Matthew 6.25-34	2nd Sunday before Lent
15/02/26	Exodus 24.12-18	2 Peter 1.16-21	Matthew 17.1-9	Sunday next before Lent
18/02/26	Joel 2.1-2,12-17	2 Corinthians 5.20b-6.10	Matthew 6.1-6,16-21	Ash Wednesday
22/02/26	Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7	Romans 5.12-19	Matthew 4.1-11	1st Sunday of Lent
01/03/26	Genesis 12.1-4a	Romans 4.1-5,13-17	John 3.1-17	2nd Sunday of Lent
08/03/26	Exodus 17.1-7	Romans 5.1-11	John 4.5-42	3rd Sunday of Lent
15/03/26	Exodus 2.1-10	2 Corinthians 1.3-7	Luke 2.33-35	Mothering Sunday
22/03/26	Ezekiel 37.1-14	Romans 8.6-11	John 11.1-45	Passiontide begins
29/03/26	Psalms 118.1-2,19-29		Matthew 21.1-11	Palm Sunday
05/04/26	Acts 10.34-43	Colossians 3.1-4	John 20.1-18	Easter Day

**Please note:** At Holy Communion, where only two readings are used, the first reading will usually be the Epistle, and the second will always be the Gospel reading. At other services where two readings are used, the first will usually be the Old Testament reading, and the second can be either the Epistle or the Gospel readings.



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