

IN-TOUCH

Great Hockham News Sheet

Issue No 559
April 2025



Editorial

April's here, with a quarter of the year gone already. They say that the older you get the faster time goes, and I can certainly vouch for that. Spring is here and, with March being relatively dry and mild, the gardeners amongst us are already planting and sowing seeds ready for the Flower Show in August.

As someone who is not very keen on gardening, I read Tom Bennett's article in last month's edition of In-Touch, mainly because it was there, but then he worried me. For a short time I had this ridiculous idea that I might give gardening a go. I did quickly recover, however, and realised that was never going to happen. Well done Tom for giving me food for thought, however fleetingly. I hope the weather so far in March has met with your approval.

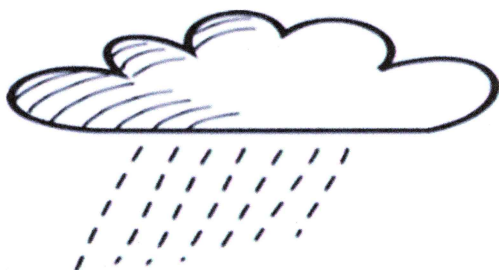
If anyone in the village has as much enthusiasm for their hobby or interests as Tom obviously has, we would love to hear from you.

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A VERY HAPPY EASTER!



February Rainfall

February 2025		22.0 mm
February 2024		126.2 mm
Jan - Feb 2025		48.4 mm
Jan - Feb 2024		186.3 mm
Highest Feb since 1979	2024	126.2 mm
Lowest Feb since 1979	1985	5.6 mm



Shropham Road Allotments

Please note for those concerned, that the Shropham Road allotment rents are due in April.

Payments to the clerk Chris Garrod please. Fees still as of 2024/25.

Parish Clerk

Mobile Library Service

CHESTNUT SQUARE	10:55 - 11:10
SCOTGATE CLOSE	11:15 - 11:35

Date of forthcoming visits (Thursdays):

24 April / 22 May / 19 June / 17 July / 14 Aug /
11 Sept / 9 Oct / 6 Nov

The Wayland Group of Parishes
Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Stow Bedon and Thompson
In the Church of England Diocese of Norwich

Worship in April 2025

Sunday 6th April - Lent 5

10.30 am United Holy Communion
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham
Archdeacon of Lynn preaching

Sunday 13th April - Palm Sunday

10.30 am United Holy Communion
St Peter & St Paul, Griston

HOLY WEEK

Monday 14th April

6.00 pm. Compline
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Tuesday 15th April

6.00 pm Compline
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Wednesday 16th April

6.00 pm. Compline
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Thursday 17th April - Maundy Thursday

6.00 pm Holy Communion
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Friday 18th - Good Friday

Procession of the Cross

10.00 am St Martin's, Thompson
11.00 am St Peter & St Paul, Griston
12.00 noon Holy Cross, Caston
Lunch
1.30 pm St Botolph, Stow Bedon
2.30 pm St Margaret's, Breckles
3.30 pm Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Sunday 20th April EASTER DAY

8.00 am United Holy Communion
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

10.30 am United Family Service,
St Botolph, Stow Bedon

Sunday 27th April - Easter 2

10.30 am United Holy Communion
St Martin's, Thompson

Sunday 4th May Easter 3

10.30 am United Holy Communion
St Margaret's, Breckles



Last week, when my husband Jonathan and I tackled our overgrown garden, I noticed how weeds and other plant materials could change from being unwanted into something very useful. Compost can be spread over newly weeded beds before the season of planting begins.

It's always good to see the fruits of our labours making a positive difference in the world, isn't it?

Have you a talent that you've not used for a while? Would you like to share it with us? We are looking for volunteers in church. Perhaps you can arrange flowers, make music, teach, cook, fix broken things, clean, knit, or perhaps you just want to come and meet others, and be more involved in our community?

The spirit of working together is a joy. Some of the Wayland villages, like Breckles, Griston, and Stow Bedon are lacking a village hall, yet the church buildings in those villages are little used during the week. This is why members of Breckles and Stow Bedon community are working together to transform Stow Bedon church into an attractive community space, and seeds are being planted to create a similar community space in Griston church too. By creating a space where we can enjoy spending time together in group activities and events, we'll help to address any issues of loneliness and isolation some feel, bringing hope and joy to many. This is one reason why we're holding our Church Mice Festival in September this year, to raise vital funds to provide community spaces for all to use.

Easter Sunday brings hope and joy too. During the ensuing weeks we revisit the events that led to Easter and the creation of a new community to which you are all welcome. Added to that is the sense of new life that comes with springtime.

I hope your path from Easter and beyond is as bright as a spring flower and as productive as good compost!

Reverend Vanessa is the rector for the Wayland benefice of Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Thompson, and Stow Bedon. You can contact her on 07984 318885 or by email at vanessadlayfield@gmail.com

THE EAGLE

Harling Rd, Great Hockham, Thetford IP24 1NP
01953 498893

April Dates for your Diary:

1st April - Book Club 7.30pm

2nd April

Bingo 7.45pm Arrival
(Call ahead to save a table)

16th April

Bingo 7.45pm Arrival
(Call ahead to save a table)

Good Friday 18th April
Fish and Chips 12-8.30pm
Takeaway and Eat In

Easter Saturday 19th April
Food Served 12-8.30pm

Easter Sunday 20th April
Food Served 12-3pm

Easter Monday 21st April
Food Served 12-3pm

30th April

Bingo 7.45pm Arrival
(Call ahead to save a table)

1st May

Patron (Paella food truck) 5-8pm

Fancy joining one of our clubs?

We hold clubs/teams throughout the week including Crib, 4 Darts Teams, 4 Pool Teams, Whist and Book Club

Opening Hours

Monday – Thursday 12-2.30pm/6-11pm

Friday – Saturday 12-11pm

Sunday 12-10.30pm

Food Available

Monday: 5-8pm Takeaway Night
(Eat in available)

Fish and Chip Fryday: 12-8.30pm
(Takeaway and eat in)

Saturday: 12-8.30pm

Sunday: 12-3pm

Pool and Darts at The Eagle

Pool

Thetford and District Charity Pool League:

Poke and Hope are 2nd in the league.

Hockham Hillbillies are 9th in the league.

South Norfolk Pool League:

Eagle B are 1st in the premier division.

Eagle Eyes are 7th in division three.

Darts

Thetford and District Darts League:

Hockham A are second in the league.

Hockham B are 10th in the league.

Barningham and District Darts League:

Hockham Eagle are top of the league.

Kirsty Smith

Do you play cards?

Would you like to?

We have a whist drive in the village. We play on the last Wednesday of each month in the Eagle pub, from 1pm till 3pm, and we are looking for new players.

If you play whist, or would like to learn how to, come along and have a go - we are not experts, but we're a friendly bunch.

Come along and join us!

Village Hall Bookings April 2025

Regular Bookings

Monday	Reserved for Parish Council	Evening
Tuesday	Carpet Bowls	Evening
Wednesday	Yoga	6.00-7.30pm
Thursday	Taekwondo	6.00-8.00pm

April 2025

Sat 5 th	Sound Bath	3pm
Sun 6 th	Private Event	PM
Tues 8 th	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm
Sat 19 th	Coffee, Cake, Chat	
Tues 22 nd	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm

May 2025

Sat 3 rd	Sound Bath	3pm
Sun 4 th	Farmers Market (Car Boot Sale on Playing Field)	

For Yoga information ring June on 07766 108075

For Taekwondo contact Dave Robb 01953 882848
or 07710 666133

For Sound Bath contact Tracey Mathison 07748
213397

For Hall bookings contact Chris Garrod 07770
710307 or e-mail chris@oaklands4.co.uk.

Exploring Drawing

From charcoal to collage

Join award winning artist
Melodie Cook for
twice monthly workshops

Great Hockham Village Hall, Harling Road, IP24 1NT

Tuesday Workshops April 8th & 22nd
10am -1pm

£18 per session. All materials supplied

Call melodie on 07531 875713

Email: melcookartist@icloud.com

Instagram @exploringdrawing

Facebook Melodie Cook Artist



Great Hockham Gardening Club



Wednesday 9th April

Visit to Martin Davey

Nurtured in Norfolk

Hillside Nursery, Dereham

Membership fees are £10 per annum

Indoor meetings are held in the Edinburgh
Hall, Harling Road, Great Hockham, IP24

1NT on the second Wednesday of the
month

Doors open 1.30 pm / Speakers start
at 2 pm

Indoor meetings free to members / £3 to
visitors

Outdoor visits are subsidised by the club
but members may have to pay a small
contribution for some visits

Secretary: Rosemary Martin 07563
505020

secretaryghgc@gmail.com

Website:

greathockhamgardeningclub.org.uk

Great Hockham Carpet Bowls

The Carpet Bowls Club meets every Tuesday
evening at 7pm - 9pm in the Village Hall either for
matches in the Spring and Autumn and / or for
practice games between ourselves.

For more information - Tel 07737 046121

Robin

Please use the village bottle bank



East Harling & Kenninghall Medical

Practice

It's been some time since the Surgery provided an update and this is the first since I took over as Practice Manager early last year.

Much hard work has been going on behind the scenes and I would like to bring you up to date with what we have achieved.

The Practice went through a period of flux, with a number of familiar faces, both clinical and non-clinical, moving to pastures new and this in turn meant we had to utilise locum clinicians to ensure we continued to provide medical services for our patients. Whilst these clinicians plugged the gap, we fully appreciate that continuity of care was lost when having to use locum staff.

I am delighted to say we are now back to full staffing levels, having secured the services of two new salaried GPs: Dr. Staliuniene, working 8 sessions/week and Dr. Kemp who is working 4 sessions/week and GP provision is further supplemented by Dr. Mehrotra, a long-term locum, who is working 6 sessions/week.

We have revived our Patient Participation Group (PPG) which are now a very pro-active and supportive group made up of volunteer patients from all corners of the Practice area and who meet on a regular 6/8-week basis. Their focus is on forging positive links with patients and the wider community, particularly the local schools, who are very much on-board with this collaboration.

Furthermore, you may be aware that we underwent our CQC Inspection back in June last year but, contrary to rumour, we have still not received our report. The Chair of our PPG emailed a complaint on behalf of the PPG, at the end of January, and an email was received with the following response:

"You may have seen articles in the media recently outlining some of the challenges CQC are facing with their technology, including issues with generating reports. There have been some recent updates that have been put in place and we are

making some progress with the assessments that have been impacted. As soon as we are at the point of preparing to send a draft to the service for factual accuracy, we will let you know".

Finally for this update, the Covid Spring Booster campaign starts on 1st April 2025 for patients aged 75 and over and those in the eligible cohorts. We have sent out messages informing patients that we will again be running clinics for patients to receive their vaccine in April, with the first date being Saturday 5th April at East Harling Surgery.

Charlie McDowell

Message from the Leader of Breckland District Council

- We are preparing a District response to the national consultation on "Local Government Reform and Devolution", where we intend to highlight some of concerns about the process and rationale.
- We are running our own more detailed consultation on "Local Government Reorganisation" and "Devolution" to help inform our position.
- We have been working with other District Councils in Norfolk and Suffolk on potential responses and solutions – IF there is a forced "reorganisation" locally. The initial findings of that work are due to be debated by Breckland Members on 20th March at a special council meeting
- Whilst our preference remains the status quo we have highlighted the significant relative strengths of a "three" unitary solution in Norfolk, particularly relative to the weaknesses of a large single unitary council. This evidence will be published with our Council papers shortly, and will be debated by Members.

We think **your voice in this context is incredibly important**. Please complete the survey at

<https://www.future-east.co.uk/>

Wretham & Hockham Railway

The Act to build a railway linking Thetford and Watton was passed in 1866 and awarded to J S Valentine as its engineer. Works began in earnest and the line was opened for freight on 28th January 1869 and from 18th October that year for passengers. The line ran from Roudham Junction with the stations Hockham & Wretham, and Stow Bedon and onto Watton.

Because it had links via other networks to the coast, it became affectionately known as the Crab and Winkle and many generations of schoolboys and girls used the stations to get to Thetford Grammar Schools.

In WW2 the Americans built a number of sidings, to cope with the transport of the large amounts of equipment and supplies for Wretham air base. Old carriages can still be seen in a few gardens.

The old station house at Wretham is obvious when you realise where it is and the A1075 was crossed at this point and again at Stow Bedon. The Pingo trail uses quite a large section of the now disused line.

When Beeching's report came out it was inevitable that the line would be closed and the last passenger train ran on 12th June 1964 followed a year later by the freight service.

You can still trace the line and many of the fences that lined the tracks are still in place today.



(1914)



Chris Garrod



The book club meeting took place on Tuesday 4th March at The Eagle. Our February book was *The Postscript Murders* by Ellie Griffiths. A murder mystery set in Brighton, that introduced us to Detective Sargent Harbinder Kaur and was centred around the death of a 90 year old woman who we later discovered, was a murder consultant.

The book wasn't to everyone's taste, but we had a great evening talking about the plot, the characters and people being horrifically murdered.

The book for March is *The Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver. This is the sixth book by the author and we will be meeting on 1st April to share our thoughts on it.

If you enjoy reading and like the idea of discussing what you have read, then why not come and join us - we meet on the first Tuesday of the month.

Leonie Jones

Defibrillator

The defibrillator is located in the telephone box by the Village Green.

Press the button to the right of the unit to connect to the emergency services who will give the code to unlock the cabinet.

A Question of Balance

What do you do if you are short of space in your garden, have a *really* favourite plant but find that its flowers don't last very long? Should you be put off using it or are there ways you might get round its shortcomings?

First off, your favourite isn't alone in being just that little bit shy. Flowers aren't everything. Certainly they're not to plants, which see them as just a means to reproduce, and a very expensive one too, so arguably they're not going to produce them just for fun. With many plants, that means no matter what you do a single flush is all you'll get each year, with the plant taking a long breather in between to recover its strength, before its next seasonal foray into the wonderful world of sex. Lots of plants do this, from spring bulbs, to climbers such as wisteria, shrubs like forsythia, and so on. You might get the odd stray blossom later on with some shrubs and climbers, but they're by no means the norm.

Then we have flowering plants which seem to have more reproductive stamina – or possibly they just enjoy it that little bit more – and either put on a longer show, or go at it two or three times a year. Lots of herbaceous plants – from geraniums to catmint and many of the annuals we can sow each year from seed fall into this category. Some of those herbaceous plants, the perennial poppies, for example, will put on a very good show in late summer, if you cut them back very hard, immediately after they've flowered in the spring.

Finally, there are plants that flower for a long time, either because they're made that way, such as one of my favourites, the yellow small-flowered Clematis *tangutica*, which naturally blooms from June to November, or because the gardener extends their season by removing all the spent flowers ('dead-heading'), as soon as they appear. That fools the plant into thinking it needs to produce some more, if it's to set any seed. If you are lazy and leave the dead flowers on, the plant will merrily set one lot of seed and turn equally

lazy about producing any more flowers. Dahlias are a typical example.

Coming right back to the question, though, to my mind a good garden is one that is of interest to the gardener for most if not all of the year and that interest needn't be exclusively satisfied by flowers: You may be intrigued by the form and colours of some grasses and bamboos, variegated foliage plants such as hostas, or the variations in form and texture of the bark of some small trees, like varieties of acer and birch.

The trick is to plan your garden with that year-round interest in mind. Read-up about your plants, and what they are capable of, plan an interlocking 'pattern' of interest in your plots, and find out if there any tricks you can play (such as dead-heading or cutting back), to get more out of what you've put in. Remember that foliage plants have a role in shaping the form and texture of your garden (as well as supporting some of their neighbours).

Finally, if you feel you have made a mistake, admit it by removing the offending plant to the compost heap and have a go with something else.

Tom Bennett

Coffee, Cake and Chat

Save the Date

Saturday, 19 April 2025

Village Hall

10.30 am to 12 noon

Tabletop Quiz

Need a lift?

Call Bev Plummer on

07741 270204 or 01953 498243

Adventures of the Church Mice.....!

Well, the cat is out of the bag! – yes - we are knitting again (36 of us actually).

Fortunately, the cat is mouse friendly. And why does that matter I hear you ask. Because we are knitting Church Mice.....

We are making ready for a weekend of fun and adventure in the Wayland Group of Churches (Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Stow Bedon and Thompson) from Thursday 4th September to Sunday 7th September, when Knitted Church Mice Characters will be incorporated into tableau in each church following a theme. One or two characters have already appeared on the Facebook page Needles and Threads.

Themes such as – Christmas, Music, Disney Films and Children’s Bible Stories, Harvest and Local Landmarks, Summer Activities, History and Dad’s Army.

Although this isn’t a flower festival, each church will be enhanced with decorations to fit the theme. Refreshments available at each venue.

To help with our fundraising, we are actively seeking sponsors for each tableau. If you would like to sponsor us, prices start at £30.00 per tableau, to include a free ticket to the preview reception evening on 4th September at Griston church where drinks and canapés will be served. Additionally, your personal name or business name will be highlighted against the tableau you sponsor, and you’ll gain free entry to each of the six church festivals throughout the weekend.

Please contact Reverend Vanessa about sponsorship at vanessadlayfield@gmail.com or 07984 318885.

For all others, tickets for the preview evening on 4th September including drinks and canapes are £15 or you can upgrade to a ticket giving you entry to all the churches over the weekend 5th, 6th, and 7th September for £20.

Ticket price to all the churches on 5th, 6th, and 7th September between 10am and 4pm will be £10, or pre-booked at £8 per person. Entrance to children aged 12 and under is free.

All profits will be divided equally between the 6 churches who are working hard to ensure churches are maintained or utilised as flexible community spaces for all.

If you think you can help with stewarding and refreshments, please be in touch with Lois Gill - loisgill@btinternet.com or 07881783953 or Reverend Vanessa at vanessadlayfield@gmail.com or 07984 318885

If you’re interested in being part of the creative team, you are invited to a get together/ crafting session in Caston Village Hall on Wednesday May 14th between 2pm and 4pm.

Finally, we look forward to welcoming all, except cats..... 😊



Vanessa and Lois

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Breckland Local Group

We have finished our season of talks and are now looking forward to getting out and about on a variety of walks. These are starting in May so look out for details next time about Cavenham Heath, Orchids and Dragonflies.

For now we hope you enjoy the joys of early Spring.

Fiona Roat



Great Hockham Primary School and Nursery

I can't believe how quickly the year is passing and that it is the end of the Spring term already. We've had a very busy time in school, the children should be proud of how hard they have worked and the progress they have made.

We celebrated World Book Day by dressing up as our favourite book characters and practised performing poetry. The children then had an opportunity to perform to the whole school – we were so impressed at the expression in their voices and their confidence - it really brought the poems alive!

We had a history enrichment day, where a historian visited us and showed us lots of artefacts he had found through archaeology and using his metal detector. These items were all genuine and some dated as far back as the Romans.

The children were really inquisitive and loved holding genuine artefacts from the past. The children focused on who might have lost this item and what would their life have been like.

Owl class even dressed up as Victorians for the day, to experience what school life would have been like when Queen Victoria was on the throne. The children were so engaged and learnt lots about being a historian.

The children from Nursery to Year 6 led a Curiosity Café, where we invited parents in to see what we had been learning about in our Science curriculum.

The children carried out experiments and explained to parents what they were learning about. They explored science through a range of activities and invited their parents to join in. It was wonderful to see the children confidently

explaining what they had learnt about and answering any questions the parents had.

Have a lovely break at Easter.

Lisa Hazard, Headteacher

School Birthdays



"Happy Birthday" to Grayson, Harrison E, Luna S, Liam, Sienna T, Riley, Harriet B and Harrison W.

Looking to spend more time outdoors? Want to meet new people? Aged 18-25?

Ancient House Museum needs You!

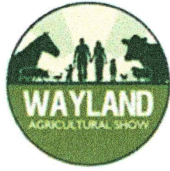
We're looking for 6 young people to attend our garden to help with planting, maintenance, and redesigning our Tudor garden.

Running **Weekly on Thursdays, 10am-1pm**

Ancient House Museum, White Hart Street, Thetford, IP24 1AA

Spaces limited so email eve.mathews@norfolk.gov.uk now to secure your spot!





Wayland Show – Sunday 3rd August 2025

Do remember to put the date of Sunday 3rd August in your diary. The Wayland Show Committee is very busy organising the event which will be held at the Showground in Brandon Road, Watton.

Please look at the website for all the details:
www.waylandshow.com

Trade stands and shopping village craft stalls are available with all the details listed on the website.

The entry forms for the Horticulture, Cookery and Craft competitions are now available on the website and include floral art, flowers, vegetables and fruit. Try your hand at baking some traditional Norfolk shortcake or a lemon drizzle cake. The Craft Section includes handicrafts as well as painting and sewing.

Children's classes are also open with prizes for all the first prize winners of the various items including a fairy garden, design and building of a bug hotel and baking as well as painting. All details and age ranges for the children's competition can be found on the website.

You are encouraged to exhibit your vintage vehicle which includes motorised vehicles, tractors, static engines and military vehicles.

Livestock competitions offer breeders a friendly and traditional day. All the schedules will be available soon – check out the website for details.

We are grateful to our Sponsors and Members whose continued support provides the funds to enable the Show to continue. All details of sponsorship and membership are listed on the website www.waylandshow.com

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday 3rd
August 2025.
Sheila Mathers



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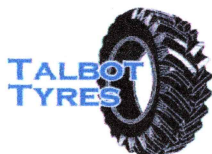
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