IN-TOUCH

Great Hockham News Sheet

Issue No 556 January 2025



Editorial

January again; where have the last twelve months gone? It seems like only yesterday that we were wishing everyone a happy new year, for last year. It's time for new year resolutions which, with any luck, will last until February.

It's also time to thank all those people who help in getting In-Touch through our readers' letterboxes each month.

We depend on our advertisers and the kind people who donate money to keep us financially viable. Also, we have to thank the people who take the time to send in articles for us to include each month. We depend on the co-operation of the school and its staff to allow us to print our issue each month, and on the hardy delivery ladies and gentlemen who put some parcel delivery drivers to shame.

I would also like to thank my fellow committee members for their hard work throughout the year.

Finally, a special thank you to all our readers without whom we would all be redundant. We appreciate every one of you.

If anyone knows of other people who would like to have a paper copy of In-Touch each month, please tell them to contact any committee member with their name, address and telephone number and/or e-mail address. The list of committee members is at the bottom of the last page of each issue. The same applies to those who read us on the village website, but would prefer a paper copy.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

Thank You

Many thanks to Richard and Moira Stevens and to Sue and Bill Smith for their generous donations to In-Touch funds.

These are very much appreciated.

The In-Touch Team

School Birthdays



"Happy Birthday" to Alfie K, Eden, Jenson, Jack, Dexter, Zack and Alfie W.

The Wayland Group of Parishes

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

Worship in January

Sunday 5th January Second of Christmas

10.30 am United Holy Communion

Holy Cross, Caston

Sunday 5th January Epiphany

6.00 pm Carols with a Difference

St. Peter & St Paul, Griston

Sunday 12th January 1st of Epiphany

1030 am United Holy Communion

Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Sunday 19th January 2nd of Epiphany

10.30 am United Holy Communion

St Peter & St Paul, Griston

Sunday 26th January, 3rd of Epiphany

10.30 am United Holy Communion

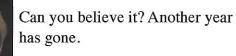
St Botolph, Stow Bedon

Sunday 2nd February, Candlemas

10.30 am United Holy Communion

St Martin, Thompson

Happy New Year.....



Many of us begin the New Year by making New Year's resolutions, don't we? For some, those resolutions will actually

produce real change – if, of course, we stick with it. That's always the hard part. For me, I've never been big on New Year resolutions, because I know that I'm not very good at sticking to them, particularly if chocolate has anything to do with it! But I do find that starting a New Year is a great opportunity to ask if there are any changes I need to make in my life and in my relationship with God, my family and my friends.

In the church calendar, the New Year begins in Advent, and the Christmas Season ends with Epiphany in January. Epiphany is the likely time when the kings (wise men) came from afar to offer gifts to Jesus, the new-born king. There is awe and wonder in the story of the wandering magi being led to Jesus from the distant East by a star. It testifies to the far reaching, indeed global and cosmic implications, of Jesus' birth. Even more, it witnesses to God's commitment to reach out to all the world with His redeeming love. This

year we shall be celebrating Epiphany at a special Carol Service at St Peter and St Paul, Griston on 5th January at 6pm, to share in the joy of the three wise men as they find the baby Jesus, the vulnerable God as a human baby, lying in a manger. You are all most welcome to attend.

But what about those gifts – gold, frankincense and myrrh? Some might think these gifts were not appropriate for a baby or a child, when actually, these gifts from the magi couldn't be more appropriate. Gold is the sign of kingship, frankincense, a costly incense, representing wisdom and priesthood and myrrh is used for anointing the dead. Each of these is symbolic of Jesus – his kingship, his priesthood and his sacrificial death for all of us –as a foretaste of his redeeming work through his death and resurrection which we celebrate at Easter.

I think Epiphany also gives us a chance to refocus on the gifts, skills and talents we already have and how we might use them to support and care for others. So, at the start of this New Year, perhaps we could take another look at our response to God for the gifts and talents He's given us, and then reconsider how we use them.

The wise men went home by another road, because they'd learned of Herod's evil plan to kill all babies aged two and under in Bethlehem and nearby areas. I believe that the magi's world view will have been changed forever by their encounter with Jesus. And I think that we too have an opportunity to walk a different road this year: a road where we can make the King of kings the living, active centre of everything we are and do as individuals and as a church, and a road where we might make a difference to others, to reach out to those in need, giving our time and talents to support the most vulnerable.

With love and prayers,

Vanessa

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

January Dates for your Diary:

1st January Open all day for drinks

> 1st January Big Fat Quiz 8pm

3rd January Fish and Chip Fryday 12-8.30pm Eat in and takeaway

> 4th January Pizza Roma Food Truck 4-8pm

> > 8th January Bingo 8pm start

15th January Quiz 8pm start

18th January Normal food serving times resumed

Opening Hours

Monday – Thursday 12-2.30pm/6-11pm Friday – Saturday 12-11pm Sunday 12-10.30pm

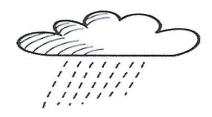
Food Available (from 18th January)

Monday: 5-8pm Takeaway Fish and Chip Fryday: 12-8.30pm (Takeaway and eat in)

Saturday: Food available 12-8.30pm Sunday: Food available 12-3pm

November Rainfall

November 2024		48.6 mm
November 2023		78.0 mm
Jan - November 2024		688.6 mm
Jan – November 2023		796.1 mm
Highest Nov since 1979	2022	106.8 mm
Lowest Nov since 1979	1994	19.9 mm



Village Hall Bookings January 2025

Reserved for

Regular Bookings

Monday

	Monuay	Neserveu for		
		Parish Council	Evening	
	Tuesday	Carpet Bowls	Evening	
	Wednesday	Yoga	6.00-7.30pm	
		Starts 8 th Jan		
	Thursday	Taekwondo	6.00-8.00pm	
January 2025				
	Sat 4 th	Sound Bath	3pm	
		Common Ground	Eve	
	Mon 6 th	Parish Council	Eve	
	Mon 13 th	Playing Field Mtg		
	Tues 14th	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm	
	Wed 15 th	Gardening Club	PM	
	Sat 18 th	Coffee, Cake, Chat		
	Tues 28th	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm	

For Yoga information ring June on 01953 498343

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.

The content of the articles in In-Touch is the responsibility of the named contributors, not the Newsletter Committee. Anonymous items will not be accepted.

Mobile Library Service

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

Date of forthcoming visits (Thursdays):

2 Jan / 30 Jan / 27 Feb / 27 March



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Email: melcookartist@icloud.com Instagram @exploringdrawing Facebook Melodie Cook Artist

Community Car Drivers Needed

Hockham has a well-used community car service that helps take residents who have no transport, to get to medical based appointments. The scheme is run from the parish council by David Sumbler who along with his other drivers do a magnificent job. However, we need more drivers so we can satisfy all the requests we get.

If you are interested and want to know more then please either email hockhampc@outlook.com or call the clerk Chris on 07770710307 or ask David who will help explain the role.



Great Hockham Gardening Club



Wednesday 15th January Jim Paine

Membership fees are £10 per annum

Indoor meetings are held in the Edinburgh

Hall Hanling Road Great Hankbarn TR24

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

Overgrown Hedges

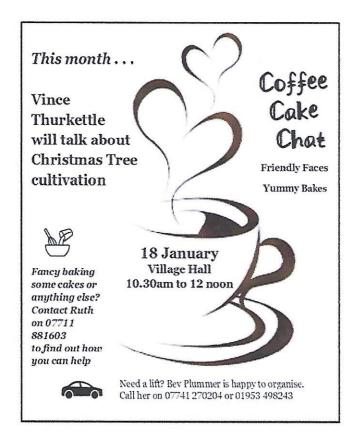
The parish councillors would like to advise that during the winter, is a good time to consider addressing any overgrown hedges that affect the village footpaths or highways.

The official bird nesting season is from 1st Feb to 31st August so January is the best time to get this sort of job done.

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.



Norfolk Wildlife Trust Breckland Local Group

Last month we had a slightly different but very interesting talk by Lynne and Tony Fry. They spent some time living and working at Hilfield Friary in Dorset, where the community manage the land and grow their own food sustainably and working with nature.

This also sounds a lovely place to stay if you need some peace.

This month we will be instructed on Conserving Norfolk's Adders - but at least they're hibernating so they won't be joining us!

2025 kicks off with NWT CEO Eliot Lyne talking about the Trust's vision for the future.

This is Wednesday 8th January at 7.30pm, The Methodist Centre. High Street, Watton. IP25 6AB.

Cost is £2 members £3 non-members.

We wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

Fiona Roat

Breckland Ward Boundary Review

Breckland Council have recently published draft recommendations for new wards, ward boundaries and ward names on their website, including a draft recommendations map.

They are inviting comments on those recommendations – closing date **24 February 2025.**

As a result of their draft recommendations for new warding patterns they propose making changes to the parish electoral arrangements for the following parish and town councils:

- Attleborough
- Griston
- Swaffham
- Thetford
- Watton

The potential boundary change is quite significant for Hockham as we become a new ward with very different boundaries. (See map attached to this newsletter).

You can take part in the consultation via the "Have your Say" button on the following website:

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/breckland

Each submission will be weighed against the legal criteria which must be followed when drawing up electoral arrangements:

- To deliver electoral equality: where each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the authority;
- That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities;
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

Any views submitted should include evidence supporting the submission.

Reflections and Olfactory Thoughts on the Season's Christmas Trees

We had a great season with the Christmas trees at Manor Farm, and I wanted to thank all of you who chose to come to us for their tree last year. Now we will quietly tidy up the plantation, replant with little seedlings and then the wildlife will have domain throughout the spring, summer and autumn.

Most artificial trees travel from a Chinese factory to a British landfill - via somebody's home. So it is good to know that the real trees of Great Hockham provide a home for 17 species of nesting birds, and mammals from the tiny 4g harvest mouse to the massive 200 kg red deer - although I wouldn't want too many of them in the field! Our trees are not quite organic, but are as close as we can reasonably get.

Something different last season, was a focus on the scent of the different tree species, and how important this is to people. I thought you might be interested in a fun summary!

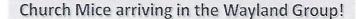
I have worked with Christmas trees for over 50 years and have created a 'scent guide' to the subtle differences between the tree species. The Norway spruce is the traditional species that most of us grew up with. For me it is the most Christmassy, with a wonderful aromatic, piney, walk-in-the-woods scent. Nordmann fir is now the most popular species and offers a light, deliciously sweet orange marmalade with soft herbal tones hints of rosemary, perhaps thyme. Omorika spruce is a new species that offers a well-rounded, smooth, rich, spicy scent - with hints of lemon, and for me it is earthy and comforting. The Colorado Blue spruce is by far the most heavily scented and perhaps the 'Marmite tree' as it is so strong that it is too much for some people. It is all about the wild and adventure, energising, bright, refreshing with a rich lemony spices and herbs tang.

This year I have researched the question of why the scent is so important, by asking people what it is exactly that a real tree's fragrance gives

that makes it such an important part of their Christmas? The answers were surprising, and split between the subtle differences between the different Christmas tree species and an unexpectedly huge, more general emotional response. For most of the people I spoke to, the scent of a real Christmas tree evoked joyful memories of childhood, warmth, comfort, excitement, belonging and cherished family time together. And this positive, stress-busting, effect might be more important now than ever.

It seems that for many people a real tree is not just a product, but a full experience - that lasts right through the festive season. That wonderful Christmassy scent is something we can appreciate and enjoy, as have all the generations before us - Happy New Year!

Vince Thurkettle



Keep these dates free and join us for a fantastic weekend of fun:



5th, 6th & 7th September 2025

Actively seeking knitters to participate in the creation

For more details, contact: loisgill@btinternet.com

Spread the word — don't keep it to yourself (perhaps keep it secret from the local cat population)

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



At the meeting on 3rd December where we welcomed two new members, the book under discussion was Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca, which had been read and thoroughly enjoyed by almost all the nine attending. In this gripping story of secrets, jealousy, lurking menace and flawed characters there was some support voiced for Maxim, Rebecca had found favour but only up to the brutal riding incident, and the unassuming Frank was named favourite character for his gentle, considerate nature. No new library book was issued for December.

The raffle was won by Leonie who took home first prize while Carol's cute Xmas crochet was won by Pammie.

Shirley announced her intention of giving up the role of Book Club administrator after three years and the gauntlet was promptly picked up by new member, Tina, who will take over ready for the next meeting on Tuesday 7th January.

The idea proposed for the next meeting is a novel one (sorry, couldn't resist): that of a book swap. Members are asked to select one (or more) of their own books to bring to the January meeting, give their reasons for recommending it, loan it out and take someone else's book to read.

Thanks go to Shirley for masterminding the setting up and running of Book Club, and a big welcome extended to Tina as she takes over the reins.

A Happy New Year to all Book Clubbers!

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HOCKHAM PARISH COUNCIL ON MONDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2024 IN HOCKHAM VILLAGE HALL

Attending, Cllrs Bennett (Chair), Lambert, Lloyd, Loft. Thomas and Leech, District Cllr Cowen, The clerk C Garrod and 7 members of the public.

- 1) Apologies for absence. None
- 2) Declarations of interest. Cllrs Bennet & Loft as allotment holders, Cllr Leech as a farmer at Little Hockham and Cllr Lambert as owner and license holder of the Eagle pub.
- 3) Requests for Dispensation. None.
- 4) Minutes for 04/11/24. These were unanimously approved.
- 5) Progress Report.
 - a) Wheelchair ramp. The clerk had asked for delivery prior to 23rd Dec. He awaited confirmation from Portaramp and would chase.
 - b) Info board. No progress.
 - c) Website. The clerk would take this up with NALC.
 - **d) Drainage.** It was agreed to take this to the next level given that the sludge gulpers had visited the village regularly and issues remained.
 - e) Councillor Co-Option. There had been one formal interested party Chris Wiltshire, who was duly elected and took his seat with the other councillors.
 - f) Bollards. The highways engineer had been advised. No reply yet but this would be chased alongside other highways matters.
- 6) Public Participation. The meeting was paused briefly for public questions.
- 7) District & County Councillors reports. Cllr Cowen discussed the Breckland Council budgeting issues, and advised the council had reached a figure despite several open issues. It was difficult to balance the books amongst variable statutory items as well as changes by the current government. There was no County Council report.
- 8) Highways. (Cllr Thomas) There were no new items to report. An issue at Little Hockham lane would be chased.
- 9) Planning. No new requests.
- 10) Finance. There was a bank balance of £18802.69 in the Parish Account, Due for approval were payments of £45.60 for Pearce & Kemp, £186.96 for the Clerks salary and the community car at £93. These were approved. A direct debit for N Power was due at £239.18. The clerk had requested a new UMS certificate, so the UMS value could be reduced.
 - The playing field account balance was £16925.32 with some cash in hand. A grant had been agreed for 50% of the ramp fee and £100 received for the community car grant.
 - It was discussed if some new Xmas lights should be bought and agreed to buy some new strings.
- 11) Allotments. (Cllr Bennett). No new works, given the season
- **12) Footpaths & Rights of Way.** Extensive work had improved the trod, but the surface needed redressing. The clerk would chase.
- **13) Playing Field (**Cllr Lloyd) Plans for 2025 were being looked at. Tony Loft was praised for his mole relocation exercise.

- **14) Breckland Car Park Consultation.** A meeting of parish councils and Breckland Councillors was taking place Wednesday at Thompson. Some of the parish council would attend.
- **15) Community Car Scheme**. There had been a very busy November, and new drivers were required to assist. An advert would be run.
- **16) Councillor Updates.** The chair sent season's greetings to one and all. There was concern on overgrown hedges and it was suggested that an In Touch article might help.
- **17) Correspondence**. The Boundary Commission had a consultation regards new ward boundary's in Hockham. An information piece would be put in In Touch.
- 18) The next meeting would be on 6th January 2025.

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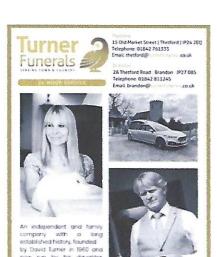
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