

IN-TOUCH

Great Hockham News Sheet

Issue No 558
March 2025



Editorial

In March 1979 the village of Great Hockham was expanding due to the newly-built Scotgate Close. The population must have nearly doubled in a few years and newcomers were encouraged to join village organisations and start new ones. So the In-Touch News Sheet was born and has been an important feature of village life ever since. Our thanks to Chris Garrod for his article about In-Touch history in this issue.

Well, March 2025 is upon us, the days are getting lighter and, hopefully, warmer. Don't forget to have pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, 4th March, and change the clocks to British Summer Time on 30th March, Mothering Sunday.

Incidentally, - and Chris may know the answer to this – does anyone know of any other place in the world called Hockham?

This month . . .

David Watkins
will talk about
sailing to the
Antarctic



*Fancy baking
some cakes or
anything else?
Contact Tania on
07774 842388
to find out how
you can help*



**Coffee
Cake
Chat**

Friendly Faces
Yummy Bakes

**15 March
Village Hall
10.30am to 12 noon**



Need a lift? Bev Plummer is happy to organise.
Call her on 07741 270204 or 01953 498243

HOCKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

DOG FOULING

It has become apparent that incidents of dogs fouling the playing field and other parts of the village has increased. Whereas this is a minority of dog owners not clearing up the mess, it sadly eventually has an effect on the majority, so the Parish Council has decided to advise all dog owners that if the fouling continues and owners do not collect the dog mess, that the playing field will become a **dogs on leads area only** and if it still continues we will **be forced to ban all dogs**.

This may seem a heavy-handed tactic, however we have no choice, given the size of the problem. We will also be contacting the local dog warden again and if caught, owners may get up to a £1000 fine for their dog's mess not being collected and disposed of properly.

You have been warned.

Chris Garrod (Parish clerk on behalf of Hockham Parish Council)

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

Worship Services - March 2025

Sunday 2nd March Next Before Lent

10.30 am United Holy Communion,
St. Peter & St. Paul's, Griston

Wednesday 5th March

Ash Wednesday – Imposition of Ashes
6.00pm St. Peter & St. Paul's, Griston

Sunday 9th March. Lent 1

10.30 am United Holy Communion,
St. Botolph, Stow Bedon

Sunday 16th March. Lent 2

10.30 am United Holy Communion,
St. Martin's Thompson

Sunday 23rd March. Lent 3

10.30 am United Holy Communion,
St. Margaret's, Breckles

Sunday 30th March. Lent 4 - Mothering Sunday

10.30 am Family Service, Holy Cross, Caston

Sunday 6th April. Lent 5

10.30 am United Holy Communion,
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham



***"I Love Simnel
Cake....."***

Millions of Christians around the world will be marking the start of an important period of time on 5th March. That's because it's Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent.

The 40-day period between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday is called Lent after an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. This is because the daylight hours increase as we approach Summer. For Christians, sacrificing something we love, which often includes our own time, represents Jesus' own sacrifice. You might know that Jesus went into the desert to pray and fast for 40 days before his ultimate sacrifice at his crucifixion, and his resurrection, celebrated on Easter Sunday.

The number 40 has biblical significance, Moses spent 40 days on Mount Sinai, Noah's Great Flood arose from 40 days and nights of rain, the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years, and ever since the birth of humanity a pregnancy usually lasts 40 weeks.

Mothering Sunday is always celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent and dates back to the 16th century when people returned to their "mother" church, the place where they were baptised, or where they were raised.

Mothering Sunday also evolved into a day to celebrate Jesus' mother, Mary, when people would take flowers and other offerings to the church. Later, it evolved into a celebration of mothers and other maternal figures.

In the 17th century, it became customary to give mothers gifts on Mother's Day. Many poor families worked as servants for the wealthy, but on Mothering Sunday, they'd be given a day off to spend time with their own families, often taking gifts of flowers, homemade cakes, and other small tokens of appreciation.

The traditional cake for Mothering Sunday is the Simnel cake. I've heard some weird and wonderful theories about how the cake got its name – and one of the most humorous is a 19th-century tale about an old couple called Simon and Nell.

Legend has it that they'd decided to use leftover ingredients from Christmas to make a cake for spring, but they argued over what to do with the dough. Simon wanted to boil it, and Nell wanted to bake it. They compromised by doing both, with their invention becoming known as a Sim-Nell. But true or not, the cake is traditionally eaten on Mothering Sunday. It's fruity, with layers of marzipan inside. On the top of the cake, there's another layer of marzipan topped further with eleven marzipan balls placed in a circle. These represent eleven of Jesus' twelve disciples. Judas, Jesus' betrayer, is not represented on the cake.....!

Today, Mothering Sunday has become more commercialised, but the tradition of going to church to say thank you to God for those who've played a significant maternal role in our lives continues. Many churches hold special services which often include receiving a blessing, and a gift of flowers. This year our Mothering Sunday family service is being held at Holy Cross Church in Caston at 10.30 am. And guess what? I'm offering a blessing for those who'd like one, flowers, and Simnel cake! Yummy. I love Simnel Cake.

Do come and join me! Vanessa. x

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

March Dates for your Diary:

4th March - Book Club 7.30pm

5th March

Bingo 8pm start / Arrive by 7.45pm
(Call ahead to save a table)

19th March

Bingo 8pm start / Arrive by 7.45pm
(Call ahead to save a table)

22nd March

Psychic Supper (pre-booked only)
Food 6-7pm for 7.30pm start
Ticket £20 each includes meal

30th March

Mother's Day Sunday Roast 12-4pm
(Booking essential, call to book)

Every Tuesday, except the first Tuesday of the month, we have started a Ladies Darts team practice. Everyone is welcome.

7 for 7:30pm start. 18+

Enjoy darts and pool?

Come and join one of our other teams!

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: Food available 12-8.30pm

Sunday: Food available 12-3pm

Pool and Darts at The Eagle

Pool

Thetford and District Pool League:

Hockham Hillbillies are 7th in the league.

Poke and Hope are 2nd in the league.

South Norfolk League:

Eagle B are 1st in the premier league.

Eagle Eyes are 7th in the third division.

Darts

Thetford and District Darts League:

Eagle A are top of the league.

Eagle B are 11th in the league.

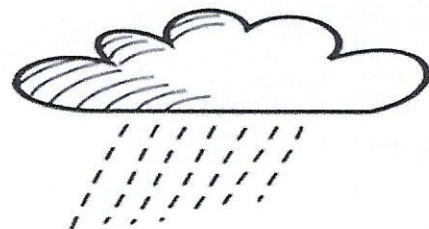
Barningham and District Darts League:

Hockham Eagle are top of the league.

Kirsty Smith

January Rainfall

January 2025		26.4 mm
January 2024		60.1 mm
Highest Jan since 1979	1988	113.5 mm
Lowest Jan since 1979	1997	8.5 mm



Mobile Library Service

CHESTNUT SQUARE 10:55 – 11:10

SCOTGATE CLOSE 11:15 – 11:35

Date of forthcoming visits (Thursdays):

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



Village Hall Bookings March 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

March 2025

Sat 1 st	Sound Bath	3pm
Mon 10 th	Parish Council	Eve
Tues 11 th	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm
Wed 12 th	Gardening Club	PM
Sat 15 th	Coffee, Cake, Chat	
Sat 22 nd	Yoga and Sound Bath	PM
Tues 25 th	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm

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 March 11th & 25th
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£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 12th March

Jane Kelly

Weave and unwind

Talk on weaving with willow

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



Church Mice arriving in the Wayland Group!

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)

The History of In-Touch

The first In-Touch appeared on March 1st 1979 with the aim of supporting the organisations which are found in the village of Great Hockham. It was in the same format as today with double sided A4 sheets, but on 4 pages only, with no advertising. It was financed by contributions from all the organisations at £2 each. It has been produced monthly ever since.

The longest serving member of the editorial team is Geoff Stuart, who has served from issue 1.

But if we take edition no 1 and the groups contributing, it tells a tale.

The groups were:

Hockham School Association

Hockham and District Playgroup

Hockham FC

Hockham Playing Field Committee

The Methodist Church

The Toddlers Club

The Parish Church

Edinburgh Hall

Cosy Corner Club

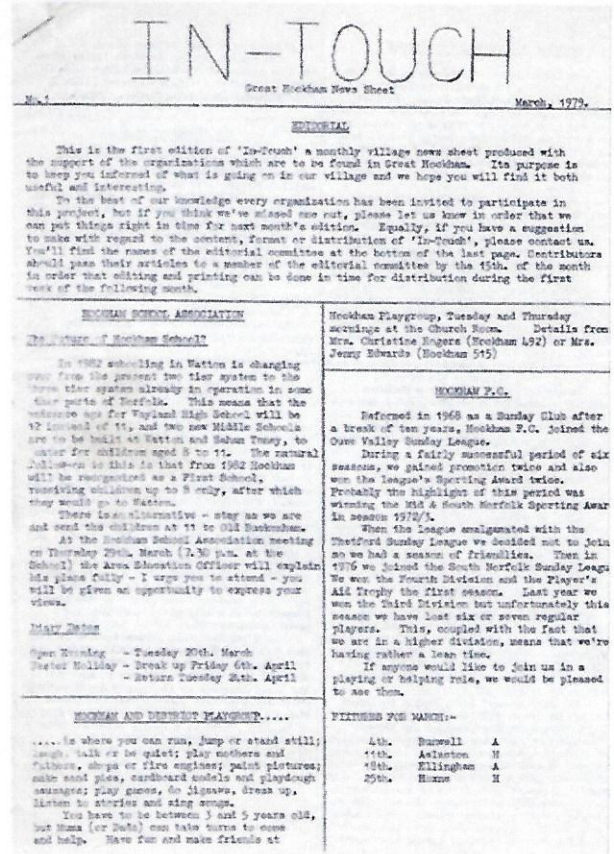
Baby Sitting Circle

Hockham WI

The Parish Council

Keep Fit

In 2025 we have less than half that number as many of these cease to exist.



Chris Garrod

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.

It costs £1 to play, and we have a raffle, also £1. We have tea/coffee at half time, kindly provided by Aaron (the Landlord).

Now the really exciting part! The winner gets most of the takings and the loser gets 50p!

Come along and join us!

In Your Garden

Spring!

Mere mention of the word quickens the pulse of all true gardeners, however much they might protest a preference for a winter's garden, when it's muffled with snow or sparkling in frost. It's a time of beginnings, of promise and renewal, and I look forward to it more as every year goes by.

For me, the days immediately after New Year are the time when the seed catalogues and plant books come out and my tours of inspection of the garden become more frequent and meaningful, to see what's surviving here and ailing there? Are any gaps opening-up in my borders, with the opportunities for new planting this might bring?

Over the years, I've learned to treat the mid-winter death of an old and much-loved plant as more a chance to make friends with something different than a mournful farewell. But therein lies a dilemma.

I'm not a garden designer, though I've known several of them very well and had endless debates about how one should go about laying-out a garden. There are two main schools of thought (well three, if you include the way-out experimentalists, but we'll leave them out of it for now). The first believe you should plan with almost architectural precision, and allow sufficient space for each plant to develop, however long this might take. You might do in the odd temporary plant, as a 'filler' on a short-term basis – 'to take away the sparseness, don't you know', but most adherents don't bother.

That's fine, if you're in your 20s and you don't mind looking at large expanses of bare earth for much of your life, as your little treasures mature, but most of us are far too impatient for that. A close friend of mine, now alas dead, called this the "Municipal Parks and Gardens" technique.

His good friend and mine, now also dead, was diametrically opposed and said you should overplant your garden with as much as takes your fancy and simply let the plants slug it out. The winners would prove their claim to the territory – by virtue of botanical 'natural selection' - and your garden would look all the better for the joust. Parks and Gardens called this type of planting: 'Scruffy'.

Whichever you choose - and the most sensible course is to adopt a middle path between the two schools - enjoy using what's left of the winter to plan your garden, and look forward with me to the spring. It's very early February as I write and the cold continues, despite the BBC saying yesterday that January 2025 was 'the warmest on record'. Really?

Much of this normally dry county is still too soggy to work on too - is it only three or four years since we were wondering when our normal rainfall might be resumed, amid suggestions that we should think, long-term, of establishing 'drought-resistant' gardens?

Going from cotton wool to elephants' tails, as someone I knew would sometimes mysteriously say, when wanting to abruptly change the subject: There's a tip I'd like to pass on about growing bamboos. They're much misunderstood and often get a bad press – 'couch grass on steroids' a friend of mine once remarked, sniffily.

Well, that might be true if you plant the highly invasive *phyllostachys* tribe, but choose a clump-former, such as *Fargesia murielae* or, if you've a yen for the unusual and have reasonably deep pockets, the Chilean solid-stemmed bamboo, *Chusquea couleou*, which has culms (stems) resembling bottle-brushes and looks like no other bamboo I know, and you've got a plant that's as well behaved as any around. With all bamboos, each spring, once they're established, you should prune out every cane that's 3 years or older, or the centre of the plant becomes congested, new canes aren't produced and the bamboo goes into decline. Do that, and give them a decent feed – manuring heavily in the autumn is as good as anything – and you'll have a friend for life: One that is cheerily evergreen, and also rustles a greeting to you in the slightest breeze, whenever you go near.

I'm looking forward to the change in the season. It may be all doom-and-gloom at the moment, with much of 'February fill-dyke' still to come, but there are signs in the garden that my favourite time of the year isn't too far away, and the increasingly frisky birds in the hedgerows think so too.

Tom Bennett

Church Fundraising Update

Your support for Holy Trinity fundraising efforts, namely the Beaujolais, Mexican, 60s/70s and Medieval evenings held at the Church, together with cake stalls and donations has raised a total of £7,104.21 to date. This figure has now been spent, paying the lion's share of the £10,718.40 cost of phase one of the building work deemed urgent by the architect and carried out before Christmas to prevent further deterioration from rainwater ingress.

The next phase is shortly to be costed by the architect whose estimate for the major roof work will take into consideration conservation of the medieval wall paintings, organ covering, bat conservation etc and which will provide a new target and the foundation for grant applications.

Grateful thanks to all those who have supported and continue to support our fundraising efforts to 'Save the Nave'. We couldn't do it without you!

Bev Plummer

Grand Second-hand Book Sale

Thompson Community Hall

Our first sale of 2025 is on March 29th 10am – 4pm. It will have a spring theme to include Easter and gardening. Hundreds of books for sale, fiction and non-fiction. Apart from some select premium books no book is more than £1. Chocolate tombola. Cake sales. Refreshments, including our famous cheese scones and home-made cakes. Gardening items and plants

For our sale on July 12th we are offering an opportunity for people to have outdoor stalls. We do not have the space inside. Stalls are £10 a pitch. You must bring your own gazebo if you require one and your own tables and chairs. The theme is recycle and repurpose so we will not be accepting bookings for items made from new materials. If you make items from recycled materials, promote repurposing and recycling or wish to hold an activity using pre-loved materials that would be ideal. No food or books to be sold. For more

information and a booking form contact info@thompsoncommunityhall.co.uk.



The book club meeting on the 4th Feb was well attended at the Eagle. The group had swapped books so reviews were mixed as we all have differing literary taste.

This month we are reading the Postscript Murders by Elly Griffiths, a thriller set in Brighton. One of the book group met Griffiths at an event at Norwich Cathedral so we are all excited to hear her report on Tuesday 4th March.

All welcome at the Eagle.

Tina Campbell

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Breckland Local Group

We were very heartened by the turn-out last month, thank you all. Eliot Lyne being CEO of NWT was obviously popular and his talk was extremely interesting and informative about the plans for the future of their conservation work and community engagement in the future. He says there are plans to encourage the local communities to visit and engage with Wayland Wood, in order to understand how special it is and help to take care of it. A subject very dear to my heart.

At the time of writing we are about to hold our AGM and will have an update from James Symonds on the Brecks team's work last year.

On Wednesday March 12th at 7.30pm we have James Symonds, NWT warden at Weeting, informing us on Lichens. These are fascinating organisms and as James is always very enthusiastic and knowledgeable, it should be a good evening,

Hope to see you at the Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton. IP25 6AB. Cost £2 members, £3 non-members.

Fiona Roat

School Birthdays



“Happy Birthday” to Harrison, Jonah, Harry and Alice.

February Quick Quiz - Solution

- 1 Daffodil
- 2 Nile
- 3 Italy (Rome)
- 4 1666
- 5 Blue, yellow, black, green and red
- 6 1930
- 7 Whitney Houston
- 8 Capricorn
- 9 Ireland
- 10 2004
- 11 Iceland
- 12 Knightsbridge
- 13 New Delhi
- 14 21
- 15 King
- 16 Pina Colada
- 17 Cherry blossom
- 18 Woody

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.



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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.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HOCKHAM PARISH COUNCIL ON
MONDAY FEB 10TH 2025 AT 7.30PM IN HOCKHAM VILLAGE HALL**

Attending; NCC Councillor Eagle, Hockham Parish Councillors Bennett (Chair), Lambert (Vice Chair), Thomas, Wiltshire, Lloyd and Loft. Clerk C Garrod and six members of the public.

- 1) **Apologies for absence.** Cllr Leech.
- 2) **Declarations of Interest.** Cllrs Bennett and Loft as allotment holders and cllr Lambert as landlord and owner of the Eagle.
- 3) **Dispensation requests.** There were no requests for dispensation.
- 4) **Minutes of the meeting of 6th Jan 25.** These were unanimously approved.
- 5) **Progress Report.**
 - a) **Info board.** Cllr Bennett agreed to progress this matter.
 - b) **Website.** This should be sorted by end Feb 25. The clerk would ask In Touch to publish the address.
 - c) **Drainage.** Good progress had been made on the drains near the Eagle corner. Further camera work was required. It was reported the Shropham Rd had a blocked drain there, following a water main burst. Verges had also been damaged. Cllr Eagle agreed to progress complaints about poor signage when repairs were being done. The clerk would liaise with Cllr Eagle over more drain works.
- 6) **Public Participation.** The meeting was briefly adjourned for public comments and questions.
- 7) **County & District Reports.** Cllr Eagle gave an extensive and passionate talk about devolution, unitary status and government reform. He also gave some ideas regards the solar panel requirements in the area. The NCC budget was being set. There was no district report.
- 8) **Highways and Road Safety.** (Cllr Thomas). Parliament Lane works had been agreed (by the road junction). The road width job was underway at Little Hockham Lane. Two road signs on the A1075 had been hit and reported.
- 9) **Planning.** The two appeals were still in progress. The application PL/2024/1207/HOU was discussed. The applicant was submitting revised drawings. Drawings would be online soon.
- 10) **Finance.** Approvals were given for the clerk's salary £186.96 and Pearce & Kemp £45.60. The clerk had paid an invoice that he needed reimbursing for which was agreed. The £588 grant for the ramp had been received. The clerk gave a resume of the N power UMS discussions. Invoices had been credited and new ones raised. The invoices showed the substantial LED saving as predicted.
- 11) **Allotments.** (Cllr Bennett) No extra work completed yet.
- 12) **Footpaths and Rights of Way.** (Cllr Loft) NCC would not pay for a trod resurfacing. The clerk would investigate road planings costs.
- 13) **Playing Field** (Cllr Lloyd). Some signs were ordered for dog fouling. Works had been approved to site the benches on slabs. It was agreed to have the benches on the playing field and green cleaned. The playing field and parish council would share the invoice.

- 14) **Dog Fouling in Public Places.** It was discussed that signs of dog fouling had increased, and the playing field and church lane were of particular concern. It was agreed to itemise this matter on the next agenda and advertise the concerns and potential consequences of non-compliance to the parishioners. It was agreed that dogs being retained on leads on the playing field would be considered, along, if necessary, with an outright dog ban.
- 15) **In Touch.** A meeting had taken place, and several proactive items progressed. A Welcome pack was being progressed.
- 16) **Community Car Scheme.** No new drivers had come forward. A grant was being progressed by the clerk. A safeguarding policy was approved.
- 17) **Hornfair Road Closure.** Approved.
- 18) **Litter Pick.** The chair would progress this.
- 19) **Councillor Updates.** It was asked to find out hedge cutting dates. Cllr Bennett would take on the full SAM 2 works and would download the data for advertising.
- 20) **Correspondence.** It was agreed to rejoin CPRE at £60.
- 21) **Date of next Meeting.** Monday 10th March 2025

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