The Sexton's Wheel

Issue 274

The magazine for Long Stratton & Wacton



November 2026

Long Stratton Village Hall - Booking Information



The hall can be booked as follows:

Via our facebook page, search Long Stratton Village Hall
Via our website www.longstrattonvillagehall.org.uk
Email us at longstrattonvillagehall@outlook.com
Call Kirsty Dye on 07986942804 and leave a message
Hire rates from as little as £10.00 per hour.

Find us on facebook

Wacton Village Hall - Booking Information

Are you planning an event, looking for somewhere reasonably priced - Try our Village Hall - Starting prices are from £8.00/hr for meeting room and £12 per hour for the main hall, use of the kitchen is also included. To book go to **bookings@wactonvillagehall.co.uk** and fill in the form online

Church Contacts

Stratton St Mary's Rev Becki Bensusan - (01508) 813900

St Michael's Rev Becki Bensusan (01508) 813900

Tharston St Mary's Rev Becki Bensusan (01508) 813900

All Saints' Rev John Madinda (01953) 789240

Congregational Church June Braddock (01508) 470701

Church Parish Office

Due to a change in circumstances the Parish Office will no longer open.

If you know of anyone who is unwell or would benefit from a visit from a member of our ministry team, please contact Rev Becki Bensusan. (01508) 813900.

Long Stratton Town Council, The Pavilion, Manor Road, Long Stratton

Usual office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 10am and 2pm and by appointment on Wednesday.
Tel: Clerk Becky Buck 01508 530524 E-mail: clerk@longstrattoncouncil.info
For general enquiries Email: office@longstrattontowncouncil.info

The Editors reserve the right to edit or decline any material submitted for publication. While every effort is made to ensure that the contents of the magazine are accurate, no responsibility can be taken for errors and omissions. The material printed does not necessarily represent the views of the magazine committee and no recommendation of products or services is implied. While the committee take reasonable care when accepting advertisements for publication, it cannot accept responsibility for any unsatisfactory transactions. Errors and omissions excepted.



Guy Fawkes is almost on us, take care folks with fireworks and bonfires.

The Sexton's Wheel Team

2. Booking information Long Stratton & Wacton Village Halls.
Church Contacts.
LSTC opening hours.

5. Remember Remember

6. BikeActive

7. Long Stratton Town Council
Air Ambulance

8. Messy Church
Jumble Sale

9. Long Stratton Medical Partnership

10. 2nd Long Stratton Brownies
Diggers & Dibblers
Borderhoppa

11. Long Stratton & District W.I.

14. Let's Chat
Thanks

17. The Lions Club

20/21 Calendar

22. Harleston Choral Society.

23. Long Stratton High School

27. Ben Goldsborough MP

36. Local Walk

37. Tharston & District W.I.

38. Church Services

39. Contact details & information on the Sexton's Wheel

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Remember, Remember

What are you like at remembering? I admit that I am terrible at remembering names of people. I may meet someone that I have known for a long time and I just can't remember their name. I could probably tell you where they live, their dogs' name and many other things about them but not their name. I was talking to a man, who shall remain nameless, the other day and he told me that he spent half an hour trying to remember the name of an object that he wanted to use. It wasn't a technical piece of equipment or an unusual tool that he wanted to use for his job. No, it was a paperclip! He could describe it, knew what he wanted to do with it but he couldn't remember what it was called. Our memories can play tricks on us like that – well when you get a bit 'senior' they do.

As we get older our minds don't always recall what we want them to. Do you ever go into a room and forget why you're there? How often do you put something down and then forget where it is? I think we all do similar things on occasions.

November is a time of Remembering. There is the rhyme of "Remember, remember the fifth of November, the Gunpowder Treason and Plot, I know of no reason why the Gunpowder Treason should ever be forgot." Many people enjoy bonfire night and the fireworks with probably little or no thought at all as to what they are remembering. Incidentally, it was an assassination attempt on King James I.

November 11th is Remembrance Day, when we think of those who laid down their lives for their country. It is a time of year when at times I feel guilty. Not because 'it wasn't me' or any noble reason like that but simply that I do not know anyone who has died in a war or battle or any conflict like that. So, I find it difficult to 'remember them'. I have a nephew who is a Major in the army and a friend who served in the navy and I have known people who have served their country during times of war and even someone who survived a Japanese concentration camp. It is people like that that I remember.

Another person I like to remember is Jesus. Every time I take communion, I remember the time when Jesus said to his disciples, "do this and remember me". Jesus died that I, indeed all, may live.

Whatever you're doing this November, either concerning bonfire night or Remembrance Day I ask you to give a thought towards Jesus and remember what He has done for you. Have a great time.

Steve Adcock, St Mary's Church

Bike Active Norfolk

Things quieten a little for BikeActive Norfolk, as we move toward winter, with the last running of our BikeActive Norfolk Junior group on Wednesday the 28th of October 2026 ,on the multi-use games area by the Long Stratton Town Council pavilion, NR15 2XR, with rides at 1300 and 1340hrs. If you are the parent or carer of a child with any disability looking for something for them to do during the half , take a look at BikeActibveNorfolk.org and look on the Junior side of the site, there's a GALLERY showing the group in action and booking is straight forward. Hope to see you

Our adult group completes its Spring/Summer/Autumn schedule at the end of October and we revert a winter schedule with two ride sessions a month on the last Friday and Monday of the winter months . We offer only two rides at these sesssions, 1030 and 1130hrs, as we don't want to be packing away in the dark! All winter rides will be from Tivetshall village hall, NR15 2BJ. If you are an adult with any disability and you'd like to ride with us, please look at our website, BikeActive-Norfolk.org. We are confident we can get anyone out on a ride in the countryside , so if you'd like to join us please just book a ride. So far we have taken out people with a large gamut of issues to overcome, including ;-stroke recovery, dementia, limb amputation, cerebral palsy, leaning disability, autism, para-cerebellum, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, mental health recovery, multiple sclerosis, knee and hip issues, as well as agedness, to name some problems our users overcome If you want to join us, just do it!

By the time you read this we will have given out our 1000th service user ride, on the 23rd of October. It seems incredible that the group was only formed five years ago on November the 24th, as so much has been achieved, with also running a Junior group and the Long Stratton rickshaw based Taxi Service.

There has been a flurry of activity of recent on the Long Stratton BikeActive Taxi Service (LS-BATS), some of you may have seen the rickshaw or wheelchair transporter around the town, making visits to the Co-op and tours of the town. Harker House care home have become regular users of the service. We will close the service over winter from November and restart in April 2027 , by then hopefully the warm pleasant weather will have returned. Bookings before November can now be made from the BikeActiveNorfolk.org website. So if you have any disability or are struggling due to age, to get into the town, take a look and contact me if you want to try a ride

Finally, despite me announcing our fundraising event at Long Stratton Leisure Centre on Friday the 13th of November it has been CANCELLED! This is due to that being the date of BBC Children in Need ,2026. BikeActive Norfolk won't compete with what for many is a ," national institution." Lets face it , there's only room for one rickshaw on that date! But do not worry our rickshaw , side by side tandem trikes and wheelchair transporter , will be offering rides through the town at the Long Startton Christmas Event on Saturday the 12th of December 2026 from 12 midday until 5pm. We will be running from The Chip Inn car park. You can also try our newly acquired four person pedal car, for a small donation. All proceeds will go to the Long Stratton Lions. See folks there!

Jez Briggs
Email, ***BikeActiveNorfolk@gmail.com Tel 07716103072***

Long Stratton Town Council

Pavilion, Manor Road Playing Fields, Manor Road,
Long Stratton, NR15 2XR. Clerk: Mrs B Buck
Tel: 01508 530524 office@longstrattontowncouncil.gov.uk

Increase in Vandalism

We have been experiencing an increase of vandalism within the town. Damages have to be repaired at cost to the Council, and this is not fair on the rest of the community who use the facilities. If you see vandalisism please report it.

Community Christmas Event

The community are once again hosting a fabulous Christmas event, and this year will be bigger than ever! The event is planned for Saturday 12th December 2026, 12pm – 7pm. You can find them on Facebook for more information: "Long Stratton Community Christmas Event 2026".

Pavilion Bookings

If you're looking for a space to hold parties, meetings or community events, the Pavilion at Manor Road Playing Field is available! If you'd be interested in hiring the Pavilion, email or call the Long Stratton Town Council office (see below) to enquire. Upcoming Full Council meeting dates The full council meetings are held in the Pavilion community room. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings and, whilst members of the public cannot participate, a short period of time is given for members of the public to air their views on matters directly related to the Town Council.

We ask that all members of the public who attend remain respectful and only speak when invited to do so by the Chairman, to ensure the meeting runs smoothly for all. All councillors are volunteers who give up their time to be at the meetings.

The next meeting will be on Monday 9th November 2026 at 7pm.

Air Ambulance

The coin collections began in June. Since then our community has donated the wonderful amount totalling, £473.95. Air Ambulance asks me to pass on their sincere thanks, as do I. Our next collection is on the 7th of November. Thank you so much.

A reminder for the massive Christmas lights switch on. 14th of November. 5pm to 7.30pm.
32 Manor Park Gardens, Long Stratton, NR15 2TR.
Anglia TV weather presenter Chris Page here to switch on 80,000 lights.
Full details previously in the October Sexton's Wheel.

See next month's Sexton's Wheel for full details of my Christmas Winter Festival of Lights, you won't want to miss this exciting event. 12th of December at the same address. 4pm until 7pm.

Every penny raised from both events goes to East Anglian Air Ambulance Charity.
No expenses taken.



A big hello from your Messy Church team. We're well and truly back up to our usual kind of routine. So, we are pleased to continue the reports on our sessions. When the children had returned to school and settled in, we had our first session of the school year at the end of September. For our sessions in this school year, some of them will be focused on particular characters in the Bible and we kicked off with a really well-known character: Noah.

We heard the story of Noah using a book with some great pictures and we got to try out some different actions for some of the animals. Some of us especially enjoyed stretching up tall to be like giraffes and there were toy animals for us to play with together as well. Our crafts helped us spot the different parts of the story too.

A major part of Noah's story is the big boat called the Ark. We didn't have time to make an ark but we did manage to practice our origami skills and make different types of paper boats. Using white paint on black card we highlighted one key character from the story, the dove who helped show the signs of land by bringing back a leaf. We had to go out to get leaves from the churchyard rather than flying over the ocean, but it was still fun.



It was great to learn about the symbol of the rainbow and what it meant in the story. Our song, Rainbow by Hillsong Kids, highlighted the importance of the promise of God and His love. This was a great part of the story and we made a giant picture of a rainbow together and used the colours to help us with things to pray about. For example, those who are feeling blue or poorly etc. Then we celebrated birthdays as we ate our picnic tea together, complete with our ever-popular carrot scones.

Jumble and Cake Sale

Thursday 5 November
10:00 - 16:00
Outside the EACH Long Stratton Shop

Come along to grab a bargain along with a slice of homemade cake

LONG STRATTON MEDICAL PARTNERSHIP
Swan Lane Surgery, Swan Lane, Tharston, Norwich, Norfolk, NR15 2UY
Tel: 01508 530781

We were pleased to welcome Dr Lauren Fleming to the Practice on 13th October. She is working six clinical sessions each week (3 days). Dr Fleming joins us from a busy London Practice with over 20,000 patients on their books.

We also have Elaine who joins us as a full-time healthcare assistant (HCA), covering Bernie's maternity leave. When Bernie returns, Elaine will stay as a permanent additional member of the team, giving us more capacity for patient care. We are monitoring the situation with the housing developments and occupation rates closely, and strategically looking to model our care with the future population and demographic changes that this will bring.

Our autumn flu and COVID-19 vaccination campaign is well under way. We encourage patients who are eligible to take up their vaccinations when invited. Thank you to everyone who has attended so far, and to our staff for their work organising and delivering the clinics.

Since introducing total triage in May, many patients have been contacting us through SystmConnect on our website. By the end of August, the system had received more than 14,000 requests. Each request is reviewed so that we can direct patients to the most appropriate help. If you cannot use the website, please telephone or speak to reception; our team can help you submit a request.

We know the telephone can still be busy, particularly on Mondays. Our X-On Surgery Connect figures show that calls averaged 384 per working day before 11 May and 313 afterwards, a reduction of about 19%. Across January to August, the team handled nearly 59,000 calls, spending more than 4,100 hours on them. We will continue to monitor access by phone and online and listen to patients' experiences. The more we can do via our web forms, the lower the call volume will be, meaning that those patients that genuinely cannot use our website can be helped more efficiently.

We are also keen to increase the number of people who download and use the NHS App. As part of the NHS 10 year plan – the App was called "The Doctor In Your Pocket" – you can order repeat prescriptions, see test results and if you sign up for the enhanced access you can see your consultations, documents, vaccination history and much more is being developed. The Long Stratton Library have a drop-in service if you require assistance with downloading and getting started with the App.

Thank you for your continued support and patience as we develop our services. Please, if you have comments or wish to be part of our Patient Participation Group drop an email to longstrattonppg@gmail.com.

Keith Burnett Practice Business Manager

2nd Long Stratton Brownies

In October we held a 'Bring a Friend' evening to our Pack and enjoyed singing some favourite songs, including Little Green Frog (who can resist poking out your tongue and lots of hand shaking), Found a Little Bumble Bee (very Yucky verses) the Penguin Song and a Girl Guiding favourite This Little Guiding Light of Mine.

We then made a lovely Owl Bookmark and customised the sticks before a getting to know each other with a Friendship sheet. A few changes had to be made when the girls realised only one person was born in May and very few had broken a bone as they sought different names for each square. Many liked chocolate, had a pet and had travelled on a plane amongst other items!

The Brownies also described some of their 'Best Bits of being a Brownie' which completed another Take Action theme Unit Meeting Activity.

We finished the evening with games of Heads and Tails and Swamp Monster (some gruesome yells as the shoes were reunited with their owners).

Please do contact Brown Owl Josie on 01508 531100 if your daughter would like to attend a few evenings as a trial before joining Brownies or one of our other Guiding Units. Rainbows 4 ½ -7, Brownies 7-10, Guides 10-14, Rangers 14+. or register your interest at https://***www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child.***

Diggers & Dibblers Gardening Club

Tuesday 10th Novembe 7.30pm Forncett Village Hall
Hawk Honey will talk to us about wasps. Everyone welcome! Day members: £5 (includes a raffle ticket, soft drinks and snacks). Wine £1 a glass. Members: free

Borderhoppa Outings for November 2026

Mon 2nd – The Foundry Garden Centre, Tasburgh - £8
Thurs 5th – Thorndon Black Horse – Dial-a-Ride
Mon 9th – Cherry Lane Garden Centre, Pulham Market - Dial-a-Ride
Mon 16th – B&M and Beccles Town - £15
Thurs 19th – Goodies Breakfast and Farm Shop – Dial-a-Ride
Mon 23rd – Blackthorne Barns Xmas Shop and Tea Room - £15
Mon 30th – Tea & Cakes at The Pennoyer Centre, Pulham – Dial-a-Ride

To book or for more information please call 01379 854800 or visit our website www.borderhoppa.org

Long Stratton & District WI

We were very happy to welcome Wally Webb and his wife back to our September W.I. meeting. He had prepared an excellent illustrated talk about his adventures on the Norfolk Broads. As a local news reporter, he had travelled many miles in various boats he had owned and also spent holidays cruising the waterways.

He based some of his talk around bridges, and what a lot of bridges there are. There were some funny stories, as you can imagine, of people becoming stuck under a bridge. He is also a keen photographer and we enjoyed his wildlife shots.

Our local Treasure Hunt organised by Bonnie was enjoyed by members who met afterwards for lunch together in the town. At our meeting a small prize was presented to the winners Jackie, Alice and Helen.

3 of our members were part of a team entered in the Lions Quiz night at Newton Flotman. We came 4th out of ten teams and all enjoyed a pleasant evening.

Looking ahead, November is our annual general meeting and we will have a speaker on jewellery at our December Meeting. We normally meet on the third Wednesday of the month in Long Stratton Village Hall at 7.30pm. In December we make an exception so members can get their Christmas plans organised, when we meet on the second Wednesday. If you want further information, please telephone ***01508 531154 o***r leave a message and our member will call you back.

St Mary's Church



Long Stratton Village Hall

Saturday 21st November

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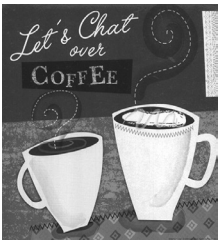
Ali 07712806019

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MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

We raised an amazing £450!

Thank you to all who donated or came to support the Macmillan coffee morning on the 26th September at the Congregational Church.



Let's Chat

Janet and her team invite you to St Mary's Church every Tuesday **10:00 to 12:00** where the home made cakes and tea and coffee and lots of chat will be on offer again.

All Welcome


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WHO ARE THE LIONS?

Long Stratton Lions are honoured and delighted that their work has been recognised by the Community Events Team by making them one of the recipients of funds raised by the Christmas Event and we thank them.

Raising funds to meet our many commitments is always on going. Our original Fund Raiser (when we had a large membership) was the Carnival, now many years in the past. Then it was Bingo, Quizzes, and taking our fund-raising to other charity events to earn our money. We still do some of these things. The Co-op allows us to hold a Christmas collection each year and last year nominated us as their special charity and their Funeral Parlour did the same and have continued for a second year. The bulk of our funds are earned parking cars at three small office car parks on Thorpe Road for Norwich City home matches. As there are two entrances it requires three members to operate and is a three-hour session for all, plus travel to and from the ground, so is quite a commitment. However, many of those who park have become good friends and appreciate our service.

Long Stratton Lions Club operates under the umbrella of Lions Clubs International, the largest service organisation in the world with about 1.5 million members worldwide, and 600 clubs in the UK with the motto "We Serve". Having this organisation behind us gives us protection, assistance with any problems and insurance for our activities.

Each club is committed to serving its own area to the best of their ability, there is always a need**.** It would be very wrong of me to disclose the names of individuals who we support or have supported and betray their anonymity. I can say we support the food banks, an annual children's party, the Church buildings, the Guides, Brownies and Scouts, local schools, Sheltered Housing, Harker House, a women's shelter, shelter for homeless, people who are less able and people experiencing difficult times.

We regularly supply the Jenny Lind Children's Ward at the Norfolk and Norwich hospital with emergency overnight washing packs for the child and parent and receive emails of appreciation from parents.

It may have been easier to just write we fill a need where we can! Our telephone number is always in the Sexton's Wheel centre pages.

While most of our earnings are spent locally, we also contribute to LCIF, the Lions International fund that offers immediate help when a disaster such as an earthquake or flooding occurs; the Lions Club in that area is responsible for ensuring the money is appropriately spent. The relief of blindness (Lions invented the white cane) and assisting in all sight matters is another aim of all Lions Clubs. Our regular used spectacles collections over a wide area is part of that. When our area has collected a vanload, we send them off to our headquarters in Birmingham to be sorted and distributed onwards.

We would be happy to have you as visitors to a meeting; you may like to join us as a Long Stratton Lion and wear your badge with pride. We also have Friends who do not commit to membership but help out from time to time; they are very much appreciated.

Roy Woodhouse
Secretary

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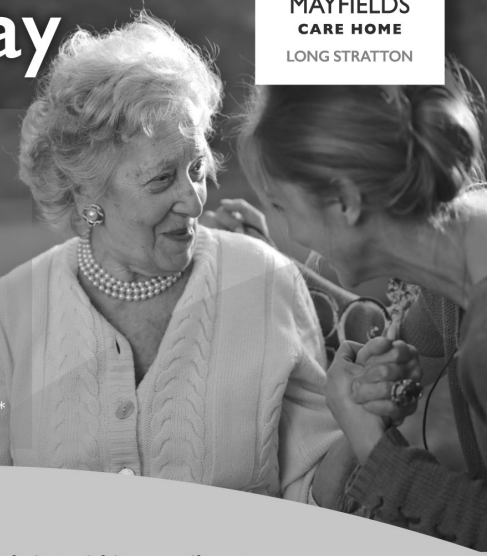
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M	T	W	T
30	31 Community Sing Wacton Village Hall 1900 Lets Chat St Mary''s Church 10:00am to 12:oopm Pilates - Hempnall Village Hall see p29		
2 Local Walk - see page 38	**3** Community Sing Wacton Village Hall 1900 Lets chat see p14 Pilates - Hempnall Village Hall see p29 Coffee Morning Wacton Village Hall 10.30am	4 Chatter& Natter Long Stratton Leisure Centre 1300-1500 Wacton Parish Council Wacton Village Hall Meeting 18:00pm	**5** Pilates - Wacto see
9 LSTC meeting Pavillion meeting room Manor Road 1900.	10 Community Sing Wacton Village Hall 1900 Lets chat see p14 Pilates - Hempnall Village Hall see p29	11 Chatter& Natter Long Stratton Leisure Centre 1300-1500 Lions Club Meeting Phone Roy Woodhouse for details on 01508 531406 Cup of Hope Pavillion community Room 08:50am - 11:30am	12 Lunch Club 12 Long S Congregation Call 0796871 Tharston& Wacton V 7:30 Pilates - Wact see
16	17 Community Sing Wacton Village Hall 1900 Lets Chat St Mary''s Church 10:00am to 12:oopm Pilates - Hempnall Village Hall see p29 Coffee Morning Wacton Village Hall 10.30am	18 Chatter& Natter Long Stratton Leisure Centre 1300-1500 Long Stratton & District W.I LS Village Hall 7:30pm	19 Pilates - Wact see
23	24 Community Sing Wacton Village Hall 1900 Lets Chat St Mary''s Church 10:00am to 12:oopm Pilates - Hempnall Village Hall see p29	25 Chatter& Natter Long Stratton Leisure Centre 1300-1500 Lions Club Meeting Phone Roy Woodhouse for details on 01508 531406 Cup of Hope Pavillion community Room 08:50am - 11:30am	26 Pilates - Wact see

T	F	S	S
			1 Hope chuch Service St Mary's Academy 10:30am.
n Village Hall p31 T	**6** Wacton Social Club open 7.00pm - 11.00pm with Bingo	7	**8**
2:00 - 2:00pm tratton al Church Hall 6698 to book District W.I. illage Hall 0pm on Village Hall p31	13 Tuck shop Long Stratton Community Centre 3:00pm - 5:00pm	14 Wacton Church Coffee Morning 1030am.	15 Community Family Breakfast 9:45am at Long Stratton Congregational Church Hall Hope chuch St Mary's Junior Academy 10:30am
on Village Hall p31	20 Wacton Social Club open 7.00pm - 11.00pm pool,darts etc	21 St Mary's BINGO Long Stratton Village Hall 7:00pm for 7:30 eyes down see p11	22
on Village Hall p31	**27**	28 Messy Church St Mary's Church 4pm to 5:30pm see p8	29

Harleston Choral Society

We are delighted to be performing Saint- Saëns Christmas Oratorio, Cecilia McDowall's Christus Natus Est, as well as many seasonal favourites for our Christmas Concert this year on Saturday 5th December at Harleston Sancroft Academy, Wilderness Lane IP20 9DD at 7.30pm. For the first time, we are selling tickets online and are offering a limited number of EARLY BIRD tickets at £12. Full price tickets will be £15. (Click the QR code at the bottom to purchase tickets online.)

We are honoured to be introducing Elizabeth Roberts as our soprano soloist this year. Elizabeth has performed at The Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, The Royal Festival Hall and featured at the opening ceremony of The London 2012 Olympics. We are so lucky to have her!

We also welcome back Harley Jones as baritone. Harley sings in Ely Cathedral Choir and impressed us all with his beautiful, rich voice when he stood in at the last minute in our summer concert.

Take a look and a listen at our website for rehearsal information, or to book online, plus other details ***www.harlestonchoralsociety.org.uk or contact Caroline@rodbourne.org.uk***

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Long Stratton High School

Could You Share a Little Time?

We know our community is packed with people who have skills, hobbies and enthusiasm to share, and we'd love to bring some of that into school.

Calling all green fingers...
Do you love gardening and have a little spare time? Our budding gardeners would really benefit from some extra helping hands with our school allotment and sensory garden. Whether you're an experienced gardener or simply happiest with your hands in the soil, we'd love you to share your know-how with our students. From planting and pruning to growing vegetables and keeping everything looking its best, your time could help our students learn practical skills and enjoy the many rewards of gardening

Have you a skill or hobby to share?
During our Enrichment Week in July, we want to give students the chance to step away from the usual curriculum and try something completely different. Not every student wants to head out on a trip, so we're hoping to offer a fantastic range of activities here in school. And that's where you come in! Could you share a hobby, skill or talent with a small group of students? Perhaps you're brilliant at crafts, cooking, photography, music, sewing, DIY, chess, languages, creative writing, dance, technology or something wonderfully unusual we haven't even thought of!

You don't need to be a professional teacher and students will be supervised by school staff at all times. Enthusiasm, patience and a willingness to share your passion are what matter most.

Save the date!
Our Christmas Market is coming, giving you the perfect excuse to get ahead with your Christmas shopping and enjoy a festive evening at the same time! Join us on ***Thursday 12th November, from 6pm to 8pm, in our school halls.***

There'll be lots of stalls, refreshments, festive treats and even a little pampering, so come along, browse, indulge and perhaps tick a few presents off that Christmas list nice and early!

And if you run a small business and would like to have a stall at our Christmas Market, we'd love to hear from you too. It's a great opportunity to showcase what you do while supporting a community event.

Whether you'd like to help in our gardens, inspire students during Enrichment Week, or book a Christmas Market stall, please get in touch with me by email on ***cdaniels@lshs.org.uk or call 01508 530418. Thank you!***

Carolyn Daniels
Community Liaison Lead

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Ben Goldsborough MP

Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting Hapton and Tharston Parish Council to meet Parish Clerk Alan Arber and parish councillors Graham Bleach and Vic Blake and discuss their ambitions for the future of Hapton, Tharston and Long Stratton.

We met at the Community Cabin, where we discussed the opportunities arising from the new Tharston Park development. As part of that development, the parish council has been gifted around five acres of land and is now exploring how it can best be used to benefit residents.

One particularly exciting proposal is to work with Long Stratton Football Club to improve the club's facilities and create a wider community space. With new homes being built in the area, this is a great opportunity to make sure that the facilities and community spaces residents need grow alongside the new development.

We also discussed a range of ideas for the future of Hapton and Tharston, including potential grants, funding schemes and partnerships that could help turn these plans into reality. I was pleased to offer my support in helping the parish council identify and explore funding opportunities and find the support it needs to move its plans forward.

It was also great to hear about some of the work the parish council is already delivering locally, including the installation of new publicly accessible defibrillators at Hapton Service Station, Willow Farm in Tharston, Victory House on Tharston Industrial Estate and the Hapton Community Area. These potentially life-saving devices will make a real difference to residents, and a big thank you goes out to the parish council, and everyone involved in getting them installed for the community.

We also discussed ongoing concerns about traffic through Hapton, an issue residents raise with me time and again. I understand how frustrating traffic and speeding can be, and I will continue working with Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Police to push for improvements. If you have experienced problems or have concerns about traffic in the area, I encourage you to get in touch with me at ben.goldsborough.mp@parliament.uk, so I can keep on raising these concerns and press for meaningful action.

Meetings like this are exactly why I believe parish councils should never be an afterthought. Parish councillors are often closest to the people they represent and understand their communities better than anyone. They should have a meaningful say in decisions affecting their area, alongside the support they need to turn their ideas into action. Too often, they are expected to do more with less, and I want to help change that by making sure their work is recognised and supported.

A big thank you once again to Hapton and Tharston Parish Council for taking the time to meet with me. I will continue to champion parish councils and the important role they play in our communities wherever I can.

Ben Goldsborough MP



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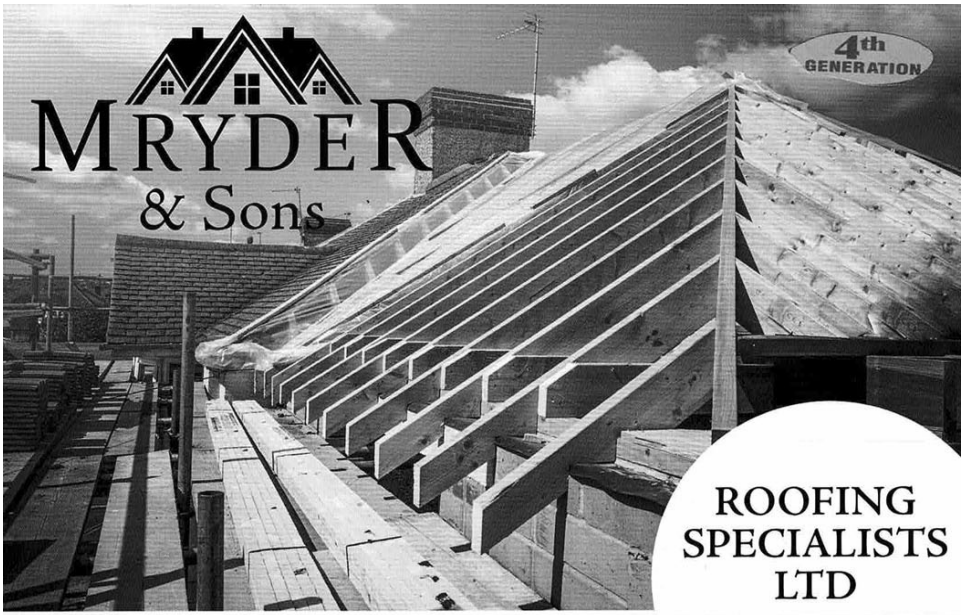
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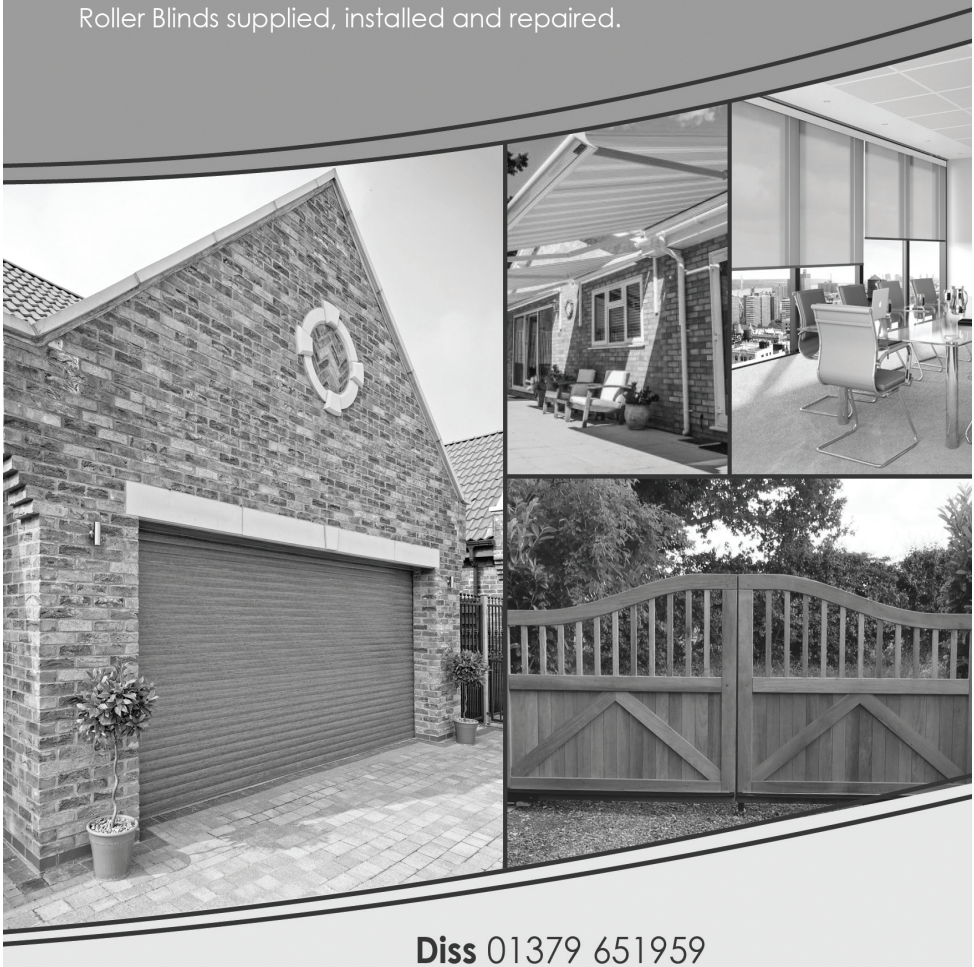
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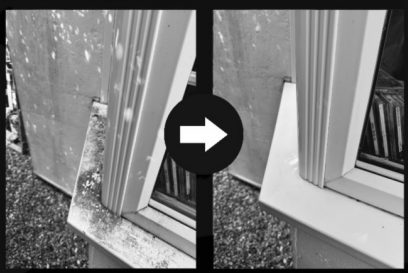


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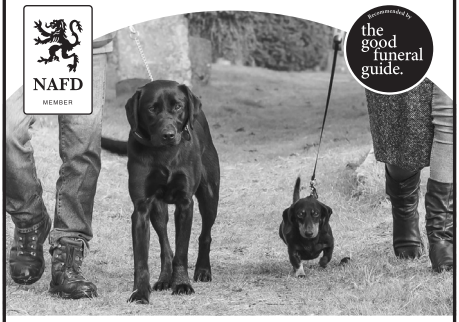
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Local Walk

Wood Green and Tyrrel's Wood

After a cloudy start the sky shone blue and we welcomed three new walkers to the group. Starting our walk from Tyrrel's Wood car park we headed left along Wood Lane. Fourteen of us strung out along the tree-lined country lane which soon buzzed with all the chatting. Driftways camp site looked interesting but we continued left at the crossroad. A robin, blue tits, buzzard and chiff chaff accompanied us on our joyful saunter. Trees along the edges of fields gave some glimmer of autumn colours and bare fields on either side of the road were dry and ready for planting. Tyrrel's Wood was in the distance to our left and on a field ahead a tractor was seed drilling and clouds of dust arose from the parched earth around him. The inevitable gulls surrounded his efforts.

After passing a lonely house a footpath went left over a field. We followed the footsteps others had worn into the harrowed earth over the large field. We had arrived at Wood Green, a large common with quaint cottages around natural grassland, ponds and trees. Here we stopped for a group photo and someone fondly recalled growing up here as a boy. The large pond was overtaken with great reedmace or bulrush and no sign of water. The three-lobed leaves of the Guelder rose shrub showed a fiery red and hung with shiny red berries. The access track led us to Parker's Lane where we could see cars on the new by-pass and the water tower near Long Stratton. Turning left we passed a large white farmhouse with bell tents in field and entered Tyrell's Wood. The path to the wood was lined with desiccated blackberries too old to pick. Some sloes were still looking good and the rose hips were ripe and colourful. Through the trees someone spotted two deer lying in a bare field, well camouflaged. Some stopped to listen for bird song and were rewarded with the sounds of a coal tit, tree creeper and a glimpse of a nuthatch going from tree to tree. Most trees still clung onto their green leaves and the golden sunlight filtered beautifully through the branches. Some work had been going on felling trees and sawing up logs near the path. We crossed a wooden bridge over a dry ditch and didn't need to use the boardwalk as the path was completely dry. We followed the Boudicca Way path through the woods and arrived back at the car park.



Thank you to Alice for leading our lovely 4 mile walk today. If anyone would like to join us for a leisurely walk of about 4 miles then please meet outside the toilet block in the car park at Long Stratton on the first Monday of the month at 10:00am.

Tharston & District WI

In September several members visited Carrow House in Norwich, once the home of the Colman family famous for Colman's Mustard, and had a guided tour of the building and vaults provided by Shoebox Experiences.

Russell Webb, author and public speaker, joined us at our October meeting and gave us a talk accompanied with photographs on his life growing up, taking part in a Youth Training Scheme, and how after working in the building trade he joined the London Fire Brigade in 1992 as a whole-time firefighter. He told us of his life experiences in the Fire Service, showed comparisons in the number of fire stations and whole-time firefighters between London and Norfolk Fire Brigades, noting that 16,358 emergency calls had been received in Norfolk alone for the period 2024/25.

He explained that the most common causes of fires in the home are electrical, candles, cooking, smoking and heating and gave advice on how to avoid them.

He then told the journey of how he became a published author after retiring from the Fire Brigade after 30 years and following the death of his wife, Sharon, from cancer. With an emotional, touching and powerful portrayal of his wife and her illness he began over two years to jot down words, which became sentences, paragraphs, chapters and eventually a book 'Love Beyond Love' published in 2022. He concluded his talk by reading extracts from the book.

Our next meeting to be held at Wacton Village Hall on Thursday November 12th at 7.30pm will be our AGM followed by a talk covering a bus pass journey from Norwich to Scotland and return.

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1st November 9:00am BCP Holy Communion - Stratton, St Michael
9:30am All Saints Day Morning Prayer - Wacton
11:00am Morning service - Stratton, St Mary
4:00pm Service of Memories - Stratton, St Mary

8th November 10:50am Remembrance Sunday service and parade - Stratton St Mary
10:55am Act of Rembrance - Wacton

11th November 10:50am Armistice Day service - Tharston St Mary
15th November 9:00am BCP Holy Communion- Stratton, St Michael
11:00am All-Age Worship - Stratton St Mary

22nd November 9:30am Holy Communion - Wacton
11:00am Holy Communion - Stratton St Mary

28th November 4:00pm Messy Church - Stratton, St Mary

29th November 11:00am United Benefice Holy Communion -Tharston, St Mary
6:30pm Stratton Churches Network Advent Carols - Stratton, St Mary

Congregational Church

1st November at 10:45am – Family Service incl. Holy Communion - Rev Malcolm Simpkin

8th November - Remembrance Sunday - United Service at St Marys Church

15th November at 9:45am – Community Family Breakfast
10:45am – Family Service - Rev Malcolm Simpkin

22nd November at 9:45am - Prayer Meeting
10:45am - Family Service - Rev Malcolm Simpkin

29th November at 10:45am - Family Service - Lee Saunders

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