

February 2026

THE *Cresset*



News, views and what's on, in and around Bottisham

Have you heard or visited us at **BURWELL MUSEUM?** We are a local museum charity, run by an entirely volunteer team, which endeavours to tell the story of a bustling fen-edge village with a working windmill.

We are open to visitors between Easter and the end of October on a Saturday and Sunday - 10am to 4pm (last entry at 3pm).

We have a large site with several buildings which includes a Mill, Forge, and Tea Room - serving drinks and snacks when we are open for you to enjoy.



Visit our website www.burwellmuseum.org.uk or follow us on facebook, to see our full list of events for this season, but to save you a look, we have the following planned so far for 2026:

Easter Sunday -

Mills Weekend -

Vintage Fair -

1940's Burwell -

Classic Car Show -

Heritage Open Weekend -

Halloween -

Christmas Grotto -

5th April

9th/10th May

28th June

12th July

16th August

12th/13th September

24th October

5th/6th Dec



Our big winter project is the extension of our tea room with the relocation of our kitchen. This has been made possible by a generous donation. We are looking for any plumbers or electricians who would be willing to offer reduced rates or their time FOC to help with this project. The extra building is on order and expected in February, but there are lots of things to do before this. Please do get in touch if you think you can help us.

If your New Year's resolution included becoming a volunteer, perhaps you would consider giving some of your time to us, as much or as little you can give, we would appreciate it!

If that's not your thing, buy a membership for 2026 (Families £40, Joint £30 and Single £20) or just turn up to one of our events, I think you will be surprised what you find!

We look forward to welcoming you to our Museum soon.



February, and the winter blues blow in with the chill wind



The last few days at the time of writing have been thoroughly miserable with near freezing temperatures and cold North/East winds. After the distractions of the festive period, all one can do in Jan and Feb is look forward to spring.

However I cheered myself up with the arrival of our new car.

May I say, I do like a bit of technology and did expect my car to be more up to date than my last one. However, I did not expect to be faced with the avalanche of electronic wizardry which will take me years to understand. I think my grandson would have no problem explaining all the 'Apps' and gizmos. But there is nothing like learning yourself.

Having said that, I had to laugh, when the salesman explained one of the 'apps' to me. He said: "Of course you'll be used to that with your last car", I then had to confess that after having that car for 5 years, I didn't even know it was fitted! I'll use and get used to what I need and ignore the rest.

To your magazine now and notice of what is planned. We are going to do a bit of a survey of the good people of Bottisham as to who reads The Cresset and whether they use it as a reference for services or just like a good read. Also, what they would like to see in the magazine which is not currently there.

To do this in the magazine would be pointless as it would exclude those who don't read it at all and bin it unread. (I am sure there will be some. I hope not too many!)

So when the weather is slightly warmer, don't be surprised if you see me outside the shops with my clipboard asking these very questions. Plus a vital one which is the age demographic of our readers (decades will be close enough!). This information will then be very helpful in developing the direction The Cresset needs to go in the future.

As to this month's edition, it has all the usual info and articles, including Birdman's second part of explaining the variety of Gulls we have round our shores. A great read.

I have to thank Gerry for his regular articles and I can't believe that this is the 35th one he has produced on varieties of birds and that, after the long run of his "Sports Nut" articles. A dedicated bit of work, with more to come! Great support.

There are the reports from the various clubs and notices of what is going on in the village, with updates on Neighbourhood Watch and details from the Parish Council.

Our cover picture this month is suitably seasonal with the frost setting off the view of the Bendyshe moat play area. This is an unusual view not often seen. A picture kindly sent to me by Neil Winkcup.

I will leave you to read through and I'll be back with more next month.

News From Holy Trinity Church Bottisham

We were delighted to see very large congregations at our popular candlelit service of Lessons and Carols as well as at our Holy Communion Service on Christmas Eve.

Over the Christmas period I spoke to several former medical colleagues in Canterbury. When I relayed to one of them, a non-churchgoer, that in the modern era the responsibilities of a churchwarden were quite onerous, he was very surprised, as he had no idea about our responsibilities. So, I thought I would summarise these for you. Churchwardens in the Church of England are key lay officers, acting as the Bishop's representatives in a parish, responsible for church life, governance, buildings, and worship, working alongside the vicar to ensure the parish runs smoothly. They are responsible for ensuring maintenance of the church fabric, managing finances, and supporting the congregation. There are specific listed duties including looking after the church property, overseeing finances with the treasurer, ensuring order, and liaising with the Archdeacon on annual reports and concerns. Other key responsibilities include: care for the churchyard, furnishings, and movable goods, ensuring repairs and maintenance, and managing faculties for alterations. Working with the vicar and the Parochial Church Council (PCC), of which we are members and chair, we oversee administration and finance, safeguarding, and health & safety, as well as representing the laity. We support services, manage collections, and help with the pastoral care of the congregation. We act as the Bishop's eyes and ears, reporting concerns and returning annual reports to the Archdeacon. We are also responsible for welcoming new people and listening to the community's needs. We have to take on extra leadership during a vacancy (when the vicar leaves) to keep ministry going and help appoint a new vicar. We must be sworn in annually by the Archdeacon, hold the title to the church's movable goods and are responsible for its fabric. In essence, we are spiritual leaders and practical managers, bridging the gap between the clergy, the congregation, and the wider church hierarchy. We are also responsible for managing weddings and funerals. It is a voluntary position and we do not receive remuneration.



The Venerable Dr Alex Hughes, Archdeacon of Cambridge, has restarted his Visitations (now called Church visits) to check on how we are managing with the numerous rules and regulations by which we are now governed – I have produced around 35 of these in the past few months. These have expanded greatly in the last few years particularly emphasising the Safeguarding requirements of members of Parochial Church Councils, for which the churchwarden is responsible, as well as ramifications of the Equality Act 2010 and Fire Safety Order of 2005. The Archdeacon will visit us at the end of January.

Our service pattern for February includes Holy Communion at 10.30am on Sunday 1st February, led by our vicar Max, and Morning Prayer on 15th February led by Sarah Maxwell. Sarah will also lead the online C by C service at 8pm on the first Wednesday of the month.

You are very welcome to attend our services or those elsewhere in the Benefice, which are listed elsewhere in the Cresset.

Stuart Field, Churchwarden

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Sales, Wants and Swaps



IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SELL OR WANT TO BUY OR EVEN TO SWAP, THEN THIS PAGE IS YOURS TO USE. Send details of Item, price and Phone Number to BottishamCresset@gmail.com. Max. 5 Items. Entries by 12th of the month for next months issue.

DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TEL
Modern Pedestal High Chair - Excellent condition, very little used.£40 ono		812158
MacLaren Triumph Push Chair	£15	812158
7 "vegetable" trays of paperbacks, mainly SciFi. 60+ books each.	£5/tray, 10p/book	07754 104469
2x 12V Heated car seat covers. VGC, no longer required.	£12 ea.	07754 104469
Titan "wet" 600W mains powered ceramic tile cutter. (boxed).	£15	07754 104469
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Services in the Anglesey Benefice

Sun 1st Feb	9am	Online service on Zoom
	10.30am	Holy Communion , Bottisham
Wed 4th Feb	8pm	C by C, a contemplative service, on Zoom
Sun 8th Feb	9am	Online service on Zoom
		Holy Communion , Quy
	10.30am	Holy Communion BCP , Swaffham Prior
Sun 15th Feb	9am	Online service on Zoom
		Morning Prayer , Quy
	10.30am	Holy Communion , Swaffham Bulbeck
		Morning Prayer , Bottisham
Ash Wed 18th	12 noon	Holy Communion , Swaffham Bulbeck
Sun 22nd Feb	9am	Online service on Zoom
		Holy Communion BCP , Swaffham Bulbeck
	10.30am	Holy Communion , Swaffham Prior
Every Thurs	10.30am	Holy Communion , Lode

Please check the Church notice board for any changes to these details; or email admin@angleseygroupparishes.co.uk, which is also the address to request the Zoom link.

You are very welcome to attend any of these services.

Vicar: Revd Canon Max Osborne - max9@btinternet.com; 01223 481187 (Rest day: Tuesday)

Bottisham and District Gardening Club

PROGRAMME 2026

27th January	The Gardens of Tresco Abbey, Isles of Scilly
24th February	Climate Change, Gardening and Us
24th March	How Fresh Produce Arrives on our Supermarket Shelves
28th April	A Year in the Garden at Horseshoe Farm
26th May	Evening Visit to a Local Garden (Details to be advised)
June	Summer Outing (Date to be advised)
28th July	Summer Party - Don Bedford Rose Competition
August	No meeting
22nd Sept	The Dry Border and Chapel Meadow at King's College
27th October	A.G.M.
24th November	Holly Wreath Making
December	Christmas Social (Date to be advised)

Please see monthly reports for meeting times and dates

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Parish Council Report

The next full council meeting will be held by on Monday 2nd February 2026, 7.30pm at the Poppy Room, Bottisham Sports and Social Club. All Parish Council meetings are open to the public. Please note that the clerk to the council does not keep regular office hours. Replies to emails and phone calls will be attended to as soon as is practicable. Details of upcoming meetings and Councillor Details are available from the Parish Council Noticeboard and from the website bottisham-pc.gov.uk.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

The Parish Council have submitted a Local Highways Improvement application to try and improve the safety and movement of vehicles travelling along the High Street. Although the closing date for applications was January 2026, it is unlikely that we will hear whether the application has been successful until October 2026.

At this time of year, significant problems with the road network become particularly apparent. It is well known that Bottisham has numerous potholes and that the road surfaces are well worn. Residents are reminded that highways defects can be reported via the County Council website:

<https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/en-gb> or by telephone on **0345 045 5212** during office hours. Further information about this service can be found on the County Council's website.

If a defect is deemed to require immediate attention, it should be reported by telephone or to the Police on 101 outside of office hours.

Please be as accurate as possible when reporting problems, as this enables officers to respond appropriately. If it is safe to do so, please include a photograph of the defect and an approximate size, as this helps officers assess the severity of the issue and take appropriate action.

NEW CEMETERY

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Parish Council had to cancel the in-person New Cemetery event scheduled for January 2026. We apologise for the short notice. Although the tender process has been completed, the Parish Council is required to carry out further investigations before any additional information can be released.

BUS SHELTER ARTWORK

The Parish Council has been informed that the bus shelter artwork is in its final stages. There has been some delay due to a change of supplier for the materials. It is hoped that the new artwork will be installed in early February, although a specific date has not yet been confirmed.

If you need any further information relating to anything raised in this report or anything you wish to bring to the attention of the Parish Council, then please do not hesitate to contact me via email, clerk@bottisham-pc.gov.uk or via phone 07369248998.

Sam Chambers-Turner, Clerk to the Council

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District Councillors' Report

SAFE DISPOSAL OF BATTERIES

East Cambridgeshire District Council is launching a campaign to remind the public not to discard batteries in recycling or black bags, after a bin lorry caught fire. While it is not known exactly what caused the blaze the crews suspect a discarded battery is to blame.

Every year over 1,200 fires are caused nationally by hidden and loose batteries being thrown in with general rubbish and recycling. As well as loose batteries, many are hidden inside everyday electricals, like children's toys, alarm clocks, vapes and electric toothbrushes.

If disposed of in this way, batteries can get crushed or punctured in the bin lorries. This releases chemicals which come into contact with the air and can start a serious fire. Battery fires are particularly dangerous as the lithium in them releases its own oxygen. This intensifies the fire and makes it more difficult to extinguish.

Sadly, nearly half of UK adults are unaware this can lead to fires. As well as endangering lives, the fires can cause air pollution spikes, disrupt bin collection rounds and cause damage to lorries which can be expensive to repair.

Anything with a plug, battery or cable can be reused or recycled - including the plugs, batteries and cables themselves. If possible, remove batteries from electricals and recycle them separately. If this is not possible, recycle the whole electrical at your nearest electrical recycling point.

Search Recycle Your Electricals to find all your local electrical and battery drop off points www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk. For us it's the Burwell Coop

Or use their postcode locator to find your local battery and electrical recycling point <https://bit.ly/3JIdTQ4>

SURGERIES - Wednesday 25 February 2026 from half past six to half past seven o'clock at Bottisham Sports and Social Club, Downing Court followed by socialising at the Bell in the same village.

Cllrs Charlotte Cane MP (charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk) and John Trapp (john.trapp@eastcambs.gov.uk)



Anglesey Group Mothers' Union

Members enjoyed the last meeting of 2025 on 11th December making tree decorations to take home, together with singing some festive carols in our short service.

Usual refreshments of tea and coffee were joined by homemade seasonally shaped shortbread, and good companionship. We all enjoyed some time together before the busy rush of Christmas!

Our next meeting is on Thursday 19th February at 2.30pm at the Fassage Hall, Lode, **where we will be exploring the theme of Lent.**

You are warmly welcome to join us.

Alison Martin



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quoting ref: The Cresset

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Charlotte Cane MP Reports

In early 2025 I set up a new network bringing together publicans and people working across our local hospitality sector. Ever since, I've been raising concerns about the pressures they face – and listening closely to what's really happening on the ground.

Pubs, cafés, restaurants and small venues aren't just businesses. In villages and market towns, they are community hubs: places where people meet, celebrate, and look out for one another. When a rural pub closes, something far bigger than a balance sheet is lost. Yet many are now operating on wafer-thin margins, hit by rising energy costs, staff shortages, falling footfall and a cost-of-living crisis that has priced too many people out of life's small joys.

That's why I've been calling for urgent action to support hospitality and high streets. Together with colleagues, I've urged the Chancellor to cut VAT for pubs, restaurants, accommodation and attractions from 20% to 15%, helping businesses survive. We're also calling for the main levy on household energy bills to be removed and funded through a windfall tax on big banks. Together, this £12bn package would put around £270 back into families' pockets to spend locally.

While the Chancellor ignored these calls at the Budget, there are signs the Government may be preparing a climbdown on planned business rates rises specifically for pubs. From the unsustainable jobs tax to spiralling energy bills, too many local publicans hold shared their concerns that they could be facing closure if relief does not come soon.

Alongside this national campaigning, I'm proud of the enterprise and community-led initiatives in our constituency. It was a pleasure to attend the grand opening of the Wilburton Community Shop – a brilliant example of residents creating a vital local service. I've also enjoyed visiting Toppings Booksellers in Ely and hosting locally based Xampla in Parliament.

Do you run a local business – in hospitality or otherwise? I want to hear from you. Email me at charlotte.cane.mp@parliament.uk

Backing local businesses means tackling the cost of living, supporting innovation, and standing up for the places that hold our communities together.

Warm wishes - Charlotte

P.S. This is just a snippet – to keep up with everything I'm doing, sign up to my newsletter at bit.ly/newsfromcharlotte

Charlotte Cane, MP for Ely & East Cambridgeshire
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New applications:

25/01317/FUL, Application Received: Wed 03 Dec 2025. Western Site Of Lakepress Court Newmarket Road Bottisham Cambridgeshire. (Ed. Note: Locally known as 'muckdungle corner'). Erection of a flexible industrial or storage/distribution unit, hard standing and landscaping.

Planning Applications approved by ECDC:

25/01204/FUL (PP-14454942), Application Received: Tue, 4th November 2025. 1 Tunbridge Lane Bottisham Cambridge CB25 9DU. Single storey side extension. - Approved.

Planning Application refused by ECDC:

25/01207/FUL (PP-14462187), Application Received: Wed, 5th November 2025. Unit 2 56 High Street Bottisham Cambridge CB25 9DA. Installation of two 600 x 600mm ventilation louvres to the rear elevation, replacement of existing entrance doors with aluminium-framed double glazed doors, and a new back-of-house security/fire door, along with new signage, LED lighting, MVHR units in existing screened enclosure, and a communal way finding sign at the front of the site to assist with legibility and visitor access - Refused

25/01208/ADI (PP-14462187), Application Received: Wed, 5th November 2025. Unit 2 56 High Street Bottisham Cambridge CB25 9DA. New 2 No. illuminated signage and a communal way finding sign at the front of the site - Refused

Village Litter Picks 2026

We need your help!



We have a wonderful small group of volunteers who regularly help out, but we need more volunteers to get around more of the village every month, so if you can spare an hour and a half on a Saturday, please do come along.

*Fresh air, friendship and looking after our wildlife
Bring your gloves and join us for refreshments afterwards*

Starting Location	Date	Month
Bottisham Community, Sports & Social	28	February
Bottisham Community, Sports & Social	14	March
Bottisham Village College (sports centre car park end)	18	April
Bottisham Community, Sports & Social	16	May
Bottisham Community, Sports & Social	20	June

All events, once a month on a Saturday, starting at 10:00am (except December)

Ways to keep in touch with updates:

- ✓ Join the [Bottisham Village Litter Pick WhatsApp Group](#)
- ✓ Visit either the [Bottisham Events Facebook Page](#)
- ✓ Visit the [Bottisham Community Group Facebook Page](#)

FASSAGE HALL, LODGE (CB25 9HB) AVAILABLE TO HIRE FOR YOUR SOCIAL, BUSINESS OR SPORTING EVENT

Fassage Hall is a community facility located on the edge of the recreation ground next to the children's play area in the village of Lode.

It has a 12m x 6m main hall, lobby, well equipped kitchen, patio area, toilets.

The recreation ground is also available to hire and there are sports changing facilities in a separate wing of the building and accessed through a separate entrance.

See website for further details— <https://fassage.lemonbooking.com>

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If you use the bus stops in Bottisham, Lode or Swaffham Bulbeck you will probably have noticed that there are now new Stagecoach bus timetables for the T4 posted at most bus stops. BUT the original CPCa timetables originally posted for the T4 are also still there and they're not exactly the same for all journeys. It looks like whoever posted the Stagecoach timetables never thought to take down the old ones!!

Which should you use? Well, use the Stagecoach one as this has the correct times for all journeys (the other CPCa one has one journey where the times are wrong).

Also, as many readers will have known, there have been strikes on Stagecoach buses on some days over the Christmas and New Year period and this has meant that on strike days the T4 bus has not been running at all (other buses in our villages are unaffected).

At the time of writing no industrial action dates have been confirmed beyond Saturday 24th January. However, neither has the period of industrial action been called off, so it is POSSIBLE that there could be further strikes in February. Readers should confirm the latest position by looking at the Stagecoach Bus website at <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/> (setting the location as Cambridge, so that the website then shows Cambridge area news).

A GENERAL NOTE ABOUT CONFIRMING THAT THE BUS SERVICES FOR OUR VILLAGES ARE RUNNING: Use your phone or internet-connected computer to check the following apps (dependent on which of the bus routes you want):

Bus 12: Use the **SoE app**. From Home page: click Service Updates. If 12 is not shown under 'Active Alerts' there then all buses are running. To see where your bus is click 'Travel Updates' to bring up the map, press the arrow near the top of the screen to centre the map where you are and use a two-finger 'pinch action' to enlarge or reduce the scale so that you can see on the map where your bus is now.

Bus T4: Use the Stagecoach app. This usually brings up its map first, and this works in a similar way to the map on the SoE app above. To jump to 'News' click the three line symbol near the top left of the screen. Press that and then press 'Track your bus' to get news on your particular T4 bus.

Bus T5: There is no app but **there is a website to use** (www.bustimes.org). Go to this and press Map. Press the circle near the top right of the screen to centre the map at where you are. Use in a way similar to the maps on the apps above to find the location of your T5 bus.

Happy travelling

National Traveline Enquiries (bus services) - www.traveline.info or 08712 00 22 33 (Premium-rate service)

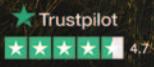
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News from Bottisham Medical Practice Patients' Participation Group

Nursing update: a warm welcome to our new practice nurse Rebecca. She takes over from Michelle and comes with some advanced knowledge in wound care having previously been a tissue viability nurse.

“DNA” Did not attend: If you have an appointment booked and you are unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible so we can reallocate the appointment. Between 1st and 29th December 51 appointments were categorised as Did Not Attend, this equates to just over 12hrs of Doctor and Nursing time lost. Where an appointment has inadvertently been missed, we will endeavour to reschedule as soon as possible but we ask for your consideration of our Reception Team as it is not always possible to reschedule for the same day.

Minor symptoms? Not sure you need a GP? Take a look at <https://111.nhs.uk/> where your symptoms can be reviewed and the website will tell you the best course of action.

Vaccinations: We will be contacting patients who are eligible for shingles, RSV and pneumovax vaccinations. Some of these vaccinations are a once only vaccination but it is important eligible patients receive these to protect them from these illnesses, all of which can affect vulnerable patients badly.

Spring COVID booster vaccinations: We do not know yet if we will be allocated this vaccination programme and will publicise if we are and contact eligible patients.

HOW CAN YOU HELP US?

An up-to-date mobile phone number is helpful to have on record so we can send messages regarding follow ups and chronic health reviews. This enables us to send you a link where you can book an appointment directly without the need to wait on the phone.

Request an appointment via our website: <https://www.bottishammedicalpractice.nhs.uk/> where your appointment will be triaged, rapidly that day. Ensure you keep your phone with you so you can answer the phone if the GP calls you or reception contact you to book an appointment.

Thank you

As you may be aware we have had a number of IT issues following upgrades by the Integrated Care Board. These continue to be worked through and we would like to thank you all for your patience, both to date, and whilst we resolve the outstanding issues.

Next Meeting: To be notified. For information contact Chairman Steve Gilson on sgilson@btinternet.com.

Bottisham Medical Practice Patient Group

Copy deadline for the next issue is 14 February.

Please send material to the editor at BottishamCresset@gmail.com



NAAFI Break

First Wednesday of every month from 10am to 11am,
in the cafe at Anglesey Abbey
Quy Road, Lode, Cambridge,
Cambridgeshire, CB25 9EJ



Come along, for a good old chin wag, meet new faces and feel connected within your local community.
Gary looks forward to welcoming you.
He will be wearing a Help for Heroes T Shirt.



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BOTTISHAM ADULT LEARNING ASSOCIATION (BALA)

A NEW COURSE BEGINNING ON THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY

“THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FENS: 400,000 YEARS AGO TO THE PRESENT DAY”

A 5-week course presented by Keith Grimwade,
retired Geography teacher and past president of the Geographical Association.

The course will cover geology, geography, history and the drainage of the Fens.
It will also consider the impact of climate change, environmental issues
and government policy on the future of this unique environment.

**The course starts on Thursday 26th February at 10.30am.
last session on Thursday 26th March.**

BALA courses are held in the main hall at Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club in Downing Close CB25 9DD. We provide biscuits but ask you to bring your own drink.

The cost of the course is £25 with an extra £5 for non-members.

New members are always welcome.

Any enquiries to Bottishambala@btinternet.com.

Helen Cole

We would love to see you at Bottisham Community Sports & Social Club



OPENING HOURS

Monday to Thursday	5pm to 11pm
Friday	4.00 pm – 11pm
Saturday	12 noon to 11pm
Sunday	12 noon to 9pm

Happy hour or hours! Every Friday from 4:00pm until 7pm

£1 off every alcoholic drink.

Everyone is welcome, table tennis and other games available for the children too.

The Friday Meat Draw follows Happy Hour at 7:30pm

£100 worth of prizes each week.

Every Saturday Morning from 10am until midday is Sausage Saturday

Pop along to the Poppy Room for a bacon or sausage bap with refillable tea/coffee for only £2.50 - non-members are very welcome.

Last Friday of each month is 'Open Mic' night.

Your chance to entertain or just listen to the local talent - Entrance is free to all.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Saturday 14th February - Valentines Dance

A romantic evening dancing the night away to the sounds of 'The Compressors'

A glass of Prosecco as you enter and no entry fee.

Saturday 6th June - Our Big Summer Fun Day

Singer, Bands, Children entertainer, Morris Dancers, Face Painting, BBQ and much more
SAVE THE DATE

Other events planned throughout the year

Northern Soul Disco

Comedy Night

Emma & The Dinosaurs

Murder Mystery Night

Roy Orbison

Halloween Disco

Beat the Intro Quiz

Newmarket Town Band & Big Draw

NYE with the return of the fantastic 'The Jjarrs'

WATCH OUT FOR DETAILS

Please refer to the website, www.bottishamsocialclub.co.uk for the latest information. If you wish to be updated with the latest news, please email bottishamsasc@gmail.com
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Last month we looked at the two smaller gulls likely to be seen in and around the Bottisham, Lode and Burwell Fen areas. I trust readers have noted the general character of the birds which enable you to identify them as 'Gulls' pretty quickly: buoyant flight on longish pointed wings with a noticeable 'elbow'; mainly light coloured especially when viewed from below; gregarious and often noisy scavengers.

Moving on from the smaller species – Black Headed and the (not so accurately named) Common Gulls, let us turn our attention to the next size up! Measuring up to c.26 inches in length with a wingspan of up to c.60 inches, the Herring Gull and Lesser Black-Backed Gull might often be seen in mixed groups and their considerable size would distinguish them immediately from the smaller gulls (providing you have a point of reference against which to make this judgement!). And you will easily determine which is which by their respective colouring.

HERRING GULL (LARUS ARGENTATUS) - The taxonomy is simple enough. 'Larus' is a seabird and 'argentatus' means decorated with silver. Its wings and back are a silvery grey on top whilst the entire underside is white, although the white might appear a little 'dirty' in winter. There is no white leading edge to the wings (as in the Black Headed Gull), the bill is yellow, and the Herring Gull's legs are noticeably pink. Herring has a voracious appetite for whatever is to hand – fish and crustaceans preferred but diet also includes some plants, seeds, carrion, other birds' eggs (& even chicks), and food discarded or stolen from humans. This is a powerfully-built bird, using its size and strength to establish its place in the species' pecking order, and its society is somewhat patriarchal with males being up to 10% larger than females. Intelligent, with senses of sight and hearing superior to humans, Herring Gulls are well-equipped not only to survive, but to thrive alongside humans despite persistent attempts to discourage them where they are perceived to have become a nuisance.

The Herring Gull is officially 'red-listed' as being of serious conservation concern given that current breeding birds' numbers are over 70% down on those of the 1960s. Assessing the population has proved challenging, though, due to a tendency for the coastal populations to decline, whilst urban numbers increase. This is a striking development... nearly three-quarters of the UK & Ireland population of Herring Gulls now resides in cities!

There is a close relative that was, until recently, thought to be a sub-species of the Herring Gull, but is now considered a different species. That is the rare-ish Yellow-Legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*), which is only realistically distinguishable by its leg colour. I have only ever seen one, and that was at Minsmere, so I am confident that this bird is not very likely to cross your path locally.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (LARUS FUSCUS) - The literal meaning of the Latin name 'fuscus' refers to a black or brown colour. However, with five sub-species recognised across Europe and Asia, the majority of Lesser Black-Backs seen in the UK will be of the *L.f. graellsii* variety which sports a distinctly dark grey upper body and wings

(Continued on page 23)



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Newmarket Community Cinema

The Stable, High Street, Newmarket.



Monday - Feb. 16th - **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid** (PG)

Monday - March 16th - **The Ballad of Wallis Island** (12)

Doors open at 6.45pm with the film starting at 7.30pm. Admission is £7 which includes free refreshments. If you would like to reserve seats, please email richardjbowler@outlook.com or phone 01638 666810.

(Continued from page 21)

(much darker than the marginally smaller Herring Gull but noticeably not black), yellow bill and obvious yellow legs. Like most other gulls, this species is omnivorous, with a diet comprising fish, insects, crustaceans, worms, starfish, molluscs, seeds, berries, small mammals, eggs, small birds, chicks, scraps, offal, and carrion.

The UK population of Lesser Black-Backs is estimated to be similar to that of Herring Gulls – around 100,000 breeding pairs with that number at least doubling in the winter as migrants appear from northern climes to enjoy our relatively warmer feeding grounds. The species is currently ‘amber-listed’ as being of moderate concern; their decline is not as dramatic as Herring but the UK is home to 40 per cent of the European population and more than half of these are found at fewer than ten breeding sites.

The only other UK bird with wings and mantle as dark as the ‘Lesser’ is the Great Black-Backed Gull, which is much, much larger, and blacker, and has pink legs. I doubt you’ll see them locally; you would normally only find the ‘Great’ in coastal areas and they are fearsome creatures, particularly to other birds. I once saw a pair strut arrogantly into a colony of nesting Sandwich Terns and devour several chicks, at will, before striding off for a rest... not one tern challenged them!

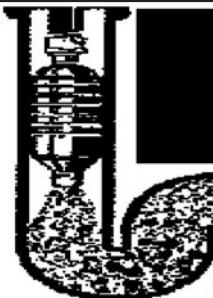
One feature of the large gulls you may notice (even on a black & white illustration) is a spot near the end of the lower mandible of the bill. It is in fact bright red and is a visual prompt for chicks to feed. The chicks, from hatching, have an innate drive to peck at this spot and it stimulates the parent to regurgitate food that is already partially broken down for the young to digest. Dutch biologist Niko Tinbergen demonstrated the innateness of this behaviour in his experiments using dummies with red spots, and this research contributed to his 1973 Nobel Prize.

STOP PRESS - Lots of vagrant and rarer birds turn up at this time of the year, but the star of the show for East Anglia was undoubtedly the mega-rare Black Winged Kite at Ludham Bridge in Norfolk. This is a breathtakingly beautiful creature – a grey & white bird of prey with black shoulder patches & wing tips and piercing red, forward-facing eyes. It was seen, on and off, in the same area over the Christmas & New Year period – alas, not by me I’m afraid! Maybe next time...

TTFN - Gerry Daish

Over the rim of the sunset is blown
Sea-dusk of purple and gold,
Speed now the wanderers back to their own,
Wings the most tireless must fold.
Homeward together at twilight they flock,
Sated with joys of the deep
Drowsily huddled on headland and rock
'Tis night, for the gulls are asleep.
From 'The Gulls' by Lucy Maud Montgomery





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Bottisham Community Library Association

2026 NATIONAL YEAR OF READING

FEBRUARY – The National Year of Reading has begun and February is the month for **storytelling**. We have a comprehensive collection of picture books in the book boxes in the Library, perfect for story reading. You can choose old favourites like **The Tiger Who Came To Tea** and the **Mog** books by Judith Kerr, **Dogger** and the **Alfie** books by Shirley Hughes, ever popular books like the **Gruffalo** books of Julia Donaldson and stories by Michael Rosen and John Burningham or try something new like **Café at the Edge of the Woods** by Mikey Please or **A Totally Big Umbrella** by Sarah Crossan or **I Follow the Fox** by Rob Biddulph. If you still are stuck for ideas ask the people behind the library counter!

And who are the people behind the counter who manage your library? We are all volunteers from different walks of life but all with a love of books and reading. We have a committee to organise us and decide on rotas, fundraising, book buying and finances etc and then over twenty people who give up their time to be in the library issuing and processing books and keeping the shelves tidy. We have volunteers who manage the puzzles, run the story-telling and Lego sessions – and all give up their time for this.

We do appreciate all the jigsaw donations but unfortunately, at present, we do not have enough space on lending shelves or in storage. Perhaps you could donate jigsaws to charity shops until we have more space. Thank you.

Our Fundraising Event – Quiz Night - will be Saturday February 21st.

Lego Club and StoryTime will be on Saturday February 7th at 10.30. Younger children will enjoy our collection of Duplo.

The date for the Mobile Library visit to Downing Close, Bottisham is Thursday February 26th. And the visit to Lode will be Wednesday February 11th.

Keep Reading!



Bottisham Airfield Museum Group (BAMG)

Despite the bad weather work has continued on preparing the museum for opening on **Sunday 5th April**. Our P51 Mustang is undergoing some much needed restoration, having been on display in the open for much of the 2025 season.

The main event dates for 2026 announced so far are:

Classic Car shows on Sunday 10th May, Sunday 23rd August and Sunday 4th October.

Bottisham At War 1940s weekend will be Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th of June.

More event dates to be announced in the March Newsletter.

Helicopter pleasure flights from the museum operated by Adventure 001 will restart in the Spring. For details and booking visit their website at www.adventure001.com.

Once again I will ask if anyone has spare time and would like to meet like-minded people to join us on a history adventure at the museum, or serve visitors in the Flying Tractor Cafe or museum shop on Wednesdays and Sundays between April and November to contact the museum via Bottishamairfieldmuseum.org.uk.

Charles Cook, Museum Volunteer.

M&P

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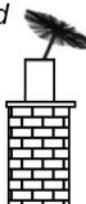
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Neighbourhood Plan Update

Many residents will be aware that a working group has been collaborating with the Parish Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for our village.

A number of you attended the public consultation held in the Poppy Room at the Social Club in March last year. At that event we outlined key issues the Plan will address and asked for your feedback. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to share their views, which have helped inform the document as it stands.

The aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to help shape future development in our area by setting local policies on land use, housing, and design. Once completed, and following independent examination and a public referendum, the Plan will form part of the official development framework and sit alongside the East Cambs. District Council (ECDC) local plan.

Work on the Plan has continued, and we are now at the stage where further refinement is needed before it can be submitted for independent examination and a public referendum. Progress has been slower than we all hoped, partly due to the loss of Central Government funding which has affected Parish Councils across the UK.

However, we are pleased to report that ECDC have offered a matched funding grant to local Parish Councils for the 2026/2027 financial year. We are currently applying for this grant and hopeful in being successful. The Parish Council has also formally agreed to match the funding if the application is successful. Subject to securing this funding, we expect to move the project forward this spring, with the intention of completing the process within the following 12 months, if not sooner.

The working group remains fully committed to progressing this important project, and residents will be invited to take part in the referendum at the appropriate time.

As a reminder, the Neighbourhood Plan in its current draft form is available on the Bottisham Parish Council website at www.bottisham-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan The Parish Council website is a valuable source of local information, and this provides an opportunity for anyone new to the Plan to familiarise themselves with the work done so far.

There is also an article on the website explaining recent local government reforms and how these have affected the Neighbourhood Plan, for those who would like further background information www.bottisham-pc.gov.uk/Contents/ContentItems/42r4qv0fz9p1rr9pa2tgmxy3wf

Cllr Keith Morrison. Neighbourhood Planning Working Group - Lead.

Copy deadline for the next issue is 14 February.

Please send material to the editor at BottishamCresset@gmail.com

Have you thought of advertising your business in ***The Cresset***?

Email the Editor for details: BottishamCresset@gmail.com



Wednesdays

At Bottisham Sports & Social Club!

7:30pm

Relaxed social gatherings!

Book Club

Every 1st Wednesday of the Month

Baking Club

Every 2nd Wednesday of the month

Wool & Wine

Every 3rd Wednesday of the month

Board Games

Every 4th Wednesday of the month

All events, start at 7:30pm, at the Club, Members and Non-Members welcome, late-comers welcome, discover new hobbies and join your neighbours in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

Ways to stay connected with updates:

- ✓ Visit the Bottisham Events Facebook Page
- ✓ Visit the Bottisham Community Group Facebook Page



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We ensure that our crews provide the emergency care and treatment needed by every person they are called to help as soon as possible before being transferred to the most appropriate or specialist hospital - whether a major trauma centre, specialist cardiac centre or burns unit - for ongoing treatment and care.

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Your ongoing support is vital - a real team effort- thank you for being on our side.

In 2024/25 we treated an average of 5 people every day – Treated 156 children

An average of 8 taskings daily over 6 counties including 1304 critical care cars operating taskings

A total of 1483 helicopter taskings over the year

A total of 1812 daytime and 975 night-time taskings

Our Aftercare team have supported 665 families - a VERY busy year.

For further information about East Anglian Air Ambulance -

E. info@eaaa.org.uk T. 03450 Web. eaaa.org.uk

Copy deadline for the next issue is 14 February.

Please send material to the editor at BottishamCresset@gmail.com





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It's what we do

Red2Green is a registered charity celebrating 25 years of supporting and promoting adults 16+ with autism and learning disabilities. We are based across 2 sites in Swaffham Bulbeck and Bottisham; 2 converted barns (Harvey's and Granary) in Park End and our Community Garden on the Bottisham Village College site. We support 90 service-users, 5 days/week, 50 weeks/year.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

On New Years Day, one of our amazing Learners received a Community Champion certificate on behalf of Red2Green on the Cambridge United Football Club pitch ahead of their win against Walsall! We are delighted to have been recognised as Community Champions – a big thank you to the Cambridge United Foundation.

WE ARE HIRING!

We are looking for Support Workers to join our Red2Green Team. We have a number of vacancies available. Please visit our website <https://red2green.org/job-vacancies/> for more information on how to apply.

WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED:

There are lots of ways you can help support Red2Green:

- Volunteering opportunities
- Start a fundraiser in aid of Red2Green
- Visit our Community Garden in Bottisham and buy some plants (Mon-Fri, 9:30-4)
- One-off or monthly donations
- Sign up to our monthly newsletter
- Follow our social media pages and keep up to date with all things Red2Green

For more information about the wonderful work we do at Red2Green, please visit our website red2green.org or if you want to get in touch, feel free to email us at info@red2green.org or call us on 01223811662.

Bottisham WI

Over the next few months, we shall have a wide range of talks at our monthly meetings, our AGM in March and a branch birthday celebration.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 17th February when Lucy Lewis, the University Marshall will be speaking to us about her work. We're looking forward to a most interesting talk. Do come and join us if you'd like to know more. All welcome!

In addition to the regular monthly meetings there's an active craft group which meets separately and optional Cambridge Federation meetings, trips and activities. These activities offer the opportunity to meet others with similar interests, learn new skills and visit places of interest.

We meet monthly – in the Poppy Room at The Bottisham Sports and Social Club starting at 7.30pm.

Jennifer Clark



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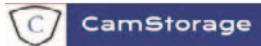
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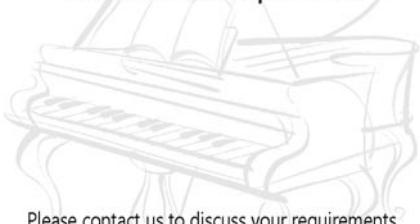
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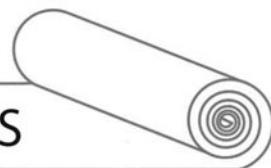


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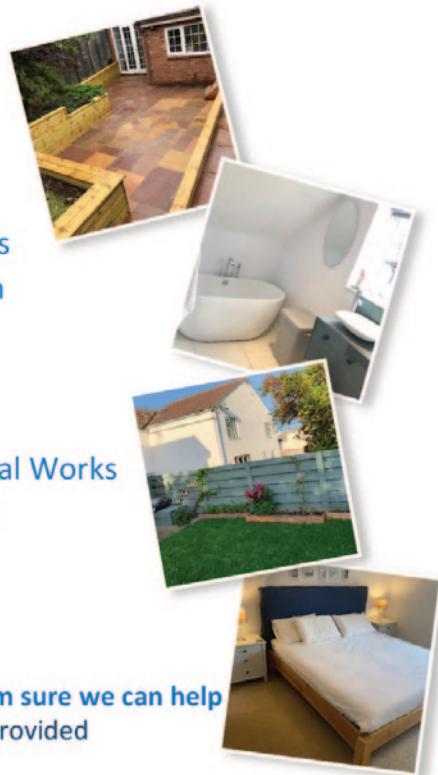
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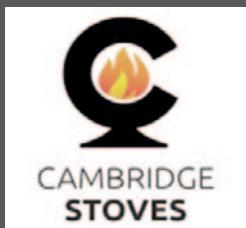
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Parish Website: www.bottisham-pc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Jonny Edge: jonny.edge@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

District Councillors: Charlotte Cane: charlotte.cane@eastcambs.gov.uk
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Useful Information

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