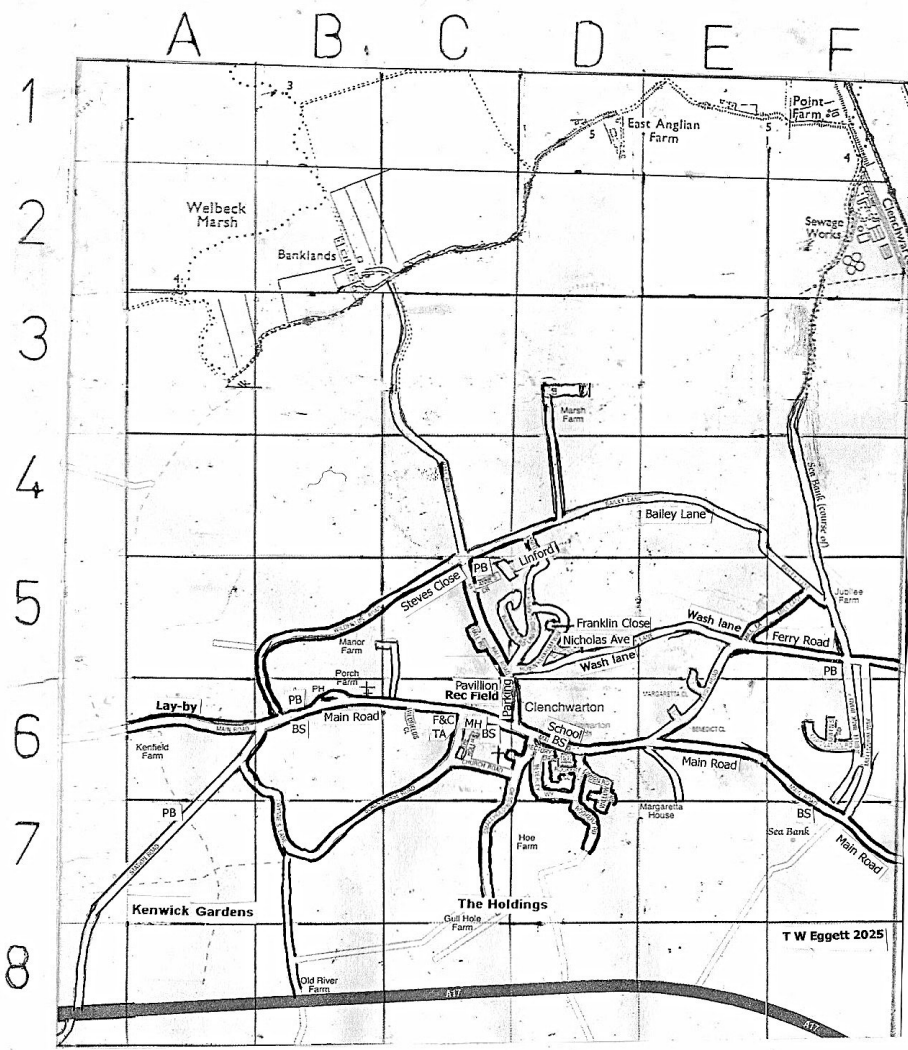


CLENCHWARTON
Your Village News
FEBRUARY 2026





Map of Clenchwarton kindly provided by Tom Eggett, our village postmaster and postman for many years in the 1970s - 2011. A list of the roads can be found on page 39. Tom says "Whilst I left the village in 1976 to marry my first wife, I continued working at the Post Office until 2008 when I sold out to a village family. I then continued in a part-time capacity until I finally left in 2011 when my dad passed away. I still return to the village every 4-6 weeks to tend to my parents' memorial stone in the churchyard. If you want to see the films of the village over a few decades, it is on the YouTube taken by my late father on 8 & 16 mm film." (Editors note - see page 39 for link)

Welcome to your Magazine

This is a monthly magazine and contains adverts from local businesses near you, village and church news and “what’s on in the village” as well as articles from our parishioners and the community. We hope it is a valuable resource for newcomers to the village as well as our long-standing residents.

St Margaret’s Church Clenchwarton (OPEN 10am – 4pm every day)

**Rector: Reverend Barbara Burton
01945 781228**

Churchwardens:

Debra McGowan – 01553 773467
warden@clenchwarton-church.org.uk
Andy Taylor – 07939 055031

Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Jan Taylor – 07725 940453

Please contact Debra McGowan for Baptisms, Marriages, etc.

**St Margaret's Parish Church, Church Road, Clenchwarton,
Kings Lynn, PE34 4EA**

<https://clenchwarton-church.org.uk>

Contact your magazine

Editor: Grahame Sampson: 01553 769819
grahamesampson@btinternet.com
or drop off at 18 Margaretta Close, Clenchwarton.

All other enquiries and advertising enquires:
Debra McGowan: 01553 773467
warden@clenchwarton-church.org.uk

The advertising and magazine subscriptions help keep the magazine in print and provides some funds towards church projects. If you can help with the magazine please let either Debra or Grahame know.

**We need your articles in by 14th FEBRUARY for the
March 2026 edition**

CLENCHWARTON
Your Village News

From the editors:

We are determined to make this magazine an inclusive voice for our entire community.

We welcome all contributions, however modest, on the understanding that we will not publish any offensive material, and may have to edit articles for reasons of space.

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors.

GS; DM; AJT; JT

Welcome to the February edition of
YOURVILLAGE NEWS

I am delighted to see that we have some interesting contributions from parishioners this month. Thank you. Keep them coming! I am loving Debra's memories - it is like reading a serial in a magazine and I can't wait for the next edition! In this edition we take you Sierra Leone in West Africa, Aden in Yemen, and California, plus of course all our local news. As always we have news about the Parish Council, Borough Council and County Council. There is news about the next FiSH Breakfast at the Methodist Chapel, and a new venture of Homemade Soup Lunches at St Margaret's Church, as part of our Warm Hub project

Jan

VALENTINES DAY - 14TH FEBRUARY

Here's some Valentine's Day facts to make the holiday more fun:

Alongside his role as a saintly lover's liaison, St. Valentine is also a patron saint of beekeepers, fainting, plague and epilepsy, amongst others.

Wales actually celebrates St. Dwynwen's Day, the country's own version of Valentine's Day, on 25th January. St. Dwynwen's Day has many of the same traditions as Valentine's Day, with the added twist that lovers often exchange wooden spoons with one another as a token of affection.

Victorians often exchanged tokens, notes, and handmade cards as an expression of affection, a tradition only bolstered by improvements in the postal system in the 19th Century.

Commercialisation did follow shortly afterwards though, with Cadbury's beginning to put chocolates in heart-shaped boxes in 1868.

Photo credits. Front cover - Top photo: **Martin Moore**; bottom photo: **Jan Taylor**



**Coffee Morning
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Every Thursday between 10-12 noon**

Do come along for a drink and a friendly chat.
Come and meet a wonderful group of Ladies and
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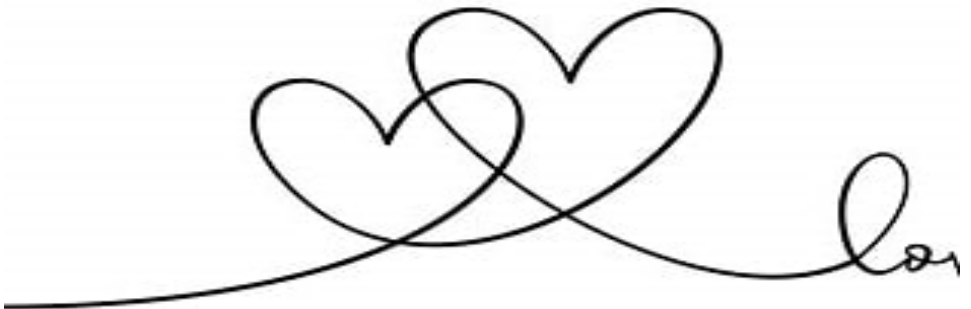
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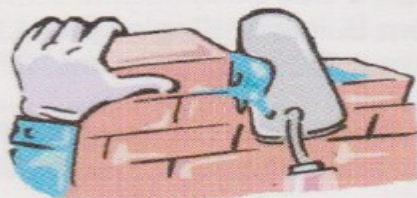


Answers on page on page 38

All the answers are capital cities.

- 1 He was in love with Helen and it caused a war.
- 2 Prime Minister and on the winning side at Waterloo.
- 3 Wears a scruffy raincoat and always seems to have a final question as he leaves the room.
- 4 There is no business like show business especially if there is a white Christmas.
- 5 Graham Greene wrote about our man here.
- 6 Paul had a complete change of heart on the road to this place.
- 7 The Prado is situated here.
- 8 Song by Ultravox and Leonard Rigby's cat.
- 9 Site of the 1964 Summer Olympics.
- 10 And this was the site of the 1968 Olympics.

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“Build with Confidence, Call Build Right”

From The Methodist Chapel

Story Cafe

Sadly these have been cancelled as not enough interest.

Free school holiday Breakfast at the Methodist Chapel (FiSH)

Due to the cost of living crisis, there will again be free breakfasts provided at a number of locations during the school half term. One of those locations is the Chapel at Clenchwarton which will be open for breakfasts between 9.30am and 11.30am on Wednesday 18th February. In addition there will be a free breakfast provided the following day at Terrington St Clement Chapel. Everyone is welcome and all eat free. However, all children must be accompanied by an adult and places must be booked by contacting Rev Jackie Goddard beforehand on 07881 952098 or emailing j.goddard@methodist.org.uk.

The Clenchwarton Talk

This month the talk will be about Oliver Cromwell. Our talks are always worth listening to and this one will be on Saturday 21st February starting at 2.30pm at the Chapel. Refreshments are provided.

World Day of Prayer

There will be an ecumenical service for the World Day of Prayer at Terrington St Clement Methodist Church on Friday 6th March at 2.00pm.

A polite request from St Margaret's Church about our Memorial garden

It is lovely that so many of the memorial stones in our Memorial Garden are tended regularly. In order to keep it looking well cared for it is important that fresh flowers are removed when they are dead; that all artificial flowers are changed regularly as they fade, discolour and in some cases start to come apart; and that only small funeral flowers are left as there is simply not room for large displays. Also please do not spread memorial flowers etc on to the grass surrounding the stones - it is very time consuming for the volunteer cutting the grass to have to remove, then replace them each time.

February Diary of Events in Clenchwarton and surrounding area.

Save
the
Date

EVERY THURSDAY 10am - 12 Noon
COFFEE MORNING at St MARGARET'S CHURCH
ALL WELCOME

- Tues 3rd 10am -12pm **Coffee Morning** Methodist Chapel
- Thurs 5th 10am -12pm **Coffee Morning** at St Margaret's Church
- Fri 6th 7pm **Quiz** Methodist Chapel hall
- Sat 7th 9.30am **Walking Group** starting from the village school
- Thurs 12th 10am -12pm **Coffee Morning** St Margaret's Church
- Thurs 17th 7.30pm **Talk** Marriotts Warehouse, King's Lynn - *see page 15*
- Wed 18th 9.30am and 11.30am **Free School Holiday Breakfasts** Methodist Chapel
- Thurs 19th 10am - 12pm **Coffee Morning** St Margaret's Church
- Fri 20th 11.30am - 1.30pm **Free Homemade Soup lunch** St Margarets Church - *see details on page 11*
- Sat 21st 2.30pm **The Clenchwarton Talk** Methodist Chapel - *see page 9*
- Thurs 26th 10am - 12pm **Coffee Morning** St Margaret's Church

St Margaret's Church - Looking Back

Although Christmas seems a long time ago, because of very early printing times we were not able to report on it. However it is still worth reflecting on our two services during Christmas week when we had a very well attended Nativity carol service, and then on Christmas eve another well attended Christingle service. Did you miss them last Christmas? Look out for them in next December's magazine!!

Sadly we had a petty theft incident at the church, all caught on our CCTV cameras. The police have taken this seriously, and the person involved was caught and has been questioned and bailed.

Continued on page 11

Looking Forward

All events will be at the church unless otherwise stated.

FRIDAY 20th FEBRUARY 11.30am - 1.30pm. FREE HOMEMADE SOUP LUNCH

Much planning has been going on in the background and our first 'event' is a Free Homemade Soup Lunch. We are extremely grateful to our County Councillor Alexandra Kemp, who given a grant to enable us to fund this project. All soups will be homemade, and accompanied by fresh rolls. This is part of our Warm Hub initiative and we hope that people will take advantage of this event - all are welcome. We hope this will become a regular event.

COULD YOU HELP, ON A ROTA BASIS? MAKING SOUP AT HOME, USING OUR NEW SOUP MAKERS and / or GIVING UP TWO HOURS ON AN OCCASIONAL FRIDAY TO SET UP / SERVE? IF SO PLEASE CONTACT DEBRA 01553 773467 OR JAN 07725 9404543.

SATURDAY APRIL 11th 2.30pm. A PERSONAL TALK ABOUT JUDAISM, ITS CUSTOMS, AND THE HOLOCAUST by Dave Cripps. This is sure to be a very interesting talk and not to be missed. Free entrance - donations welcome.

FRIDAY 15th MAY A RACE NIGHT 'LIKE NO OTHER'

Doors open 6.30pm for 7pm start.

This is our third Race Night and judging by the other two an event not to be missed! Will it be sheep, horses, or dogs racing - or another animal? Come along for an hysterically funny evening. Tickets on the door - prices tba. Each bet 50p - so bring your coins.

SATURDAY 20th JUNE SINGERS OF NOTE CONCERT

Doors open 6.30pm for 7pm start.

This fantastic group make their third visit to our church, raising the roof with their wonderful singing of an eclectic programme of songs from musical theatre, old standards, and religious songs written for choirs. Put the date in your diary and watch this space for details of tickets.



St Margaret's Church Services in February



Sunday 1st	Revd. Barbara Burton - Holy Communion Service
Sunday 8th	Morning prayer with Hymns, led by a Churchwarden
Sunday 15th	Revd. Barbara Burton - Holy Communion Service
Sunday 22nd	Morning prayer with Hymns, led by a Churchwarden

All services at 10am unless otherwise stated.

ALL VERY WELCOME at all our services, whatever your age.

Methodist Chapel Services in February

Sunday 1st	10.30am Worship Team
Sunday 8th	10.30am Angela Bishop
Sunday 15th	10.30am Revd. Jackie Goddard Holy Communion
Sunday 22nd	10.30am Cafe Service



Please join us at any of the services. You will be very welcome. Refreshments are served after the services except with the Cafe Service which is very relaxed and tea or coffee is sipped during the service.

Walking Group - Saturday February 7th

10.15am



The last walk did not take place because of the weather. This walk which was due to start in King's Lynn will now be put forward to March. The February walk starts at 9.30am from the village school on Saturday 7th February. Any newcomers welcome to join us. No cost involved.

Quiz - Friday 6th February

Methodist Chapel Hall, Main Road, Clenchwarton

Just come along and teams will be formed, or bring a team with you. Come and have fun trying to answer Grahame's questions! Refreshments are provided. There is no cost but donations are gratefully accepted.

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From the Little Yellow Smart Car

Revd. Jackie Goddard

j.goddard@methodist.org.uk (07881 952098)
(Clenchwarton & Terrington St Clement Methodist Churches)

Communication is the most important part of any community and any relationship. It is also the thing which we often find most difficult. The Oxford English Dictionary has over 500,000 words covering over 1000 years of English.

According to the lexicographer and dictionary expert Susie Dent, most of us know an average of 40,000 words and use half of them in our normal communication. I have begun to learn Makaton, and we are using a little in church, in the hope that we can make the church more accessible. Makaton combines speech, signs, and symbols, and it follows the same word order that I am familiar with. So far, I have only managed to learn about 40 words, but it is a start! In April, we will be hosting a course run by a group called Know and Grow. It is a unique workshop developed as a collaboration between the Makaton Charity and the Christian accessibility charity, Count Everyone In. It will include more of the vocabulary we use in church. If anyone is interested in finding out more, please contact me.

In the Old Testament, there is a story about a time when everyone spoke the same language, but they were full of pride and wanted to make a name for themselves. So, God confused their speech and different languages emerged. We have spent millennia trying to understand one another and, even if we speak the same language, find ways of healthy and humble communication.

The New Testament talks about the need to speak truth with love, and to give thanks in all circumstances. Where the world speaks blame and accusation, or words are aggressive and condemnation, a healthy community can model something different – a willingness to learn how to communicate with grace and gentleness. May we be that sort of community, and may our words be chosen carefully and kindly.

Every blessing
Revd Jackie Goddard

PASTORAL LETTER

Reverend Barbara Burton writes.....



Many people will enjoy pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, which falls on 17th February. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday a day later on 18th February, and ends six weeks later at Easter. The six weeks of Lent are traditionally associated with reflection, self-discipline and renewal, and offer an opportunity to pause, reassess, and make choices about how we spend our time, money and energy. Christians remember the forty days when Jesus fasted in the wilderness, and in memory of that many people use the time to give up something, like chocolate or social media. Other people decide to take on something new, which is my preferred choice, and in the past, I have undertaken various things, such as fund raising for a charity for those six weeks.

As we look towards Spring and Easter and the hope that they bring, I wonder if you might take the opportunity this Lent season to create space for reflection, time for relationships, and opportunities for generosity? In our busy lives, it's easy to fall into routines that leave little space for other things, so think about it and decide what you can do to mark Lent this year.

TALK AT MARRIOTS WAREHOUSE, SOUTH QUAY, KINGS'S LYNN

Thank you to those who attended the packed talk on the Guildhall. The monthly talks put on by the West Norfolk Archaeological Group are always fascinating with expert speakers.

The next talk is on the 17th February at 7.30pm at Marriotts Warehouse . It is about the Icenic ritual enclosure which has been found at Watlington. The Icenic were the local tribe at the time of the coming of the Romans. The most famous Icenic was one of their leaders Boudicca (or if you are a certain age Boadicea). The cost is just £5 to see a lecture, or free if you become a member. The membership fee is £18 a year.

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VIEW FROM THE GALLERY By David Hutton

Clenchswarton Parish Council Meeting Thursday 8th January

The meeting took place on a wet miserable evening, with only 11 adult residents in attendance. This is unsurprising as the agenda wasn't published on the council website, so many residents would be unaware that the meeting was taking place. The acoustics in the hall were poor, not helped by the noise of the heavy rainfall. It wasn't easy to follow some debates, but I have checked with other attendees to ensure as best as possible that this account is accurate.

The meeting began promptly. Questions from public included requests for a grant for the warm hub, enquiry about a fun day and a request to see the agenda which was then handed out by a Councillor.

Moving on to village matters, several items were covered quickly as there was no progress to report. The village dykes were discussed in some detail. The thread was not easy to follow as the discussion went in circles and veered off on tangents, with councillors abstaining, the chair having to remind Councillors the chair runs the meeting, and Cllr Lucas telling the chair to respect the Standing Orders. Summarising: The maintenance of dykes is a two-step process. Firstly, the tree line and sides need to be flailed to cut back the undergrowth, and then the dyke needs to be dredged and cleared of debris. Apparently, some of the work had previously been carried out but the rest of the work has taken so long to arrange that the council had to agree to go back to square 1. Cllr Thornalley had obtained two quotes for the work, but what emerged during the discussions is that he hadn't been informed about the two stages, and he informed the council he didn't want to be involved anymore in this project.

A Fire safety report was carried out in 2025. The council need to respond to the recommendations by February or worst-case scenario, the Pavilion could be closed.

We then moved on to the hire agreement between the PC and the football club. It was an uncomfortable watch as some councillors accused the chair of the football club that he was continually moving the goal posts. He denied this. Councillors are disappointed that the football club has taken legal advice and saw this as undermining the recent mediation with the Borough Council. The tone of this discussion was poor, with Cllr Lucas banging his hand on the table at one point and then advising the Football chair to listen because 'he was in his camp now'.

The co-option of potential councillors seems to be moving forward with a date set for late January.

Tuesday 20th January PC meeting to set the Parish Precept by David Hutton

There was one purpose to this meeting – to set the precept. In layman terms, decide how much the responsibilities of the Parish Council contributes to our council tax.

The salient points of the meeting were:

The new precept is £65,745 which is a reduction of around £9,000 from the previous year. The costing of the car park contributed to this fall.

The council has overpaid HMRC so should receive a refund of between £200-£800

Councillors shared concerns that the funding of the car park will be synchronised with their payments.

My reflections by David Hutton

Before I reflect, I remind myself of two things the council stated in the summer. “Clenchwarton Parish Council remains committed to working collaboratively We are determined to act transparently. “

I have reported several times our council’s disregard for good practice concerning minutes. It reached a new low in January as the council neglected to publish its agenda on its website. I only became aware of the agenda and thereby the date of the meeting by going out in the snow and reading it on a notice board. It is difficult to justify transparency when minutes are regularly published late. The council was recently criticised for publishing inaccurate minutes and now details of the agenda aren’t published on the website prior to a meeting. It is my view that none of this serves the best interests of the residents of Clenchwarton.

The Football club has taken legal advice. I enquired why. Apparently one clause has been inserted into the latest version of the agreement. The contentious clause is: No rights – "This Agreement constitutes permission only to use the premises and confers no tenancy or other right of occupation on you."

So even though the Football Club were instrumental (along with other clubs) in the building of the Pavilion and they have at times decorated and repaired it, the football club believe our Council wants to strip them of all rights. Who wouldn’t take legal advice?

At long last our council has begun moving forward on co-option of new councillors. In September the council recognised that interviews needed to be

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

arranged. Unfortunately, it has taken over 130 days to do so. The Co-option Policy is still not on the Council website (at time of writing) despite this having been pointed out at the December meeting.

YOUR LETTERS

From Steve Fox



I'd like to begin this letter by stating that although I am a local Councillor, these views are my own as both a Clenchwarton resident and a subscriber to this magazine; any opinions I give have not been sanctioned or agreed by the Parish Council (PC).

I feel I need to respond to the articles that are being penned by David Hutton as it has become very clear over time that he has his own agenda with regard to the PC which the editorial team of the magazine have published with little or no push back as to the underlying adverse point he is really trying to make.

When the administration of the PC changed in May 2023, I put my money where my mouth is and stood to become a local Councillor (something I had been challenged to do several times previously). It turned out that the Parish Council was in a state of chaos; after 4 Clerks the record keeping was in a total mess, the finances were in free fall, invoices and correspondence were in carrier bags or boxes, there were no keys to the filing system, and to top it all the bank accounts had been locked - which took a subsequent 6 months to resolve - where nothing could be paid out and hirers couldn't be billed either.

Since then it has been a long and very difficult road to try and get everything back on an even keel, and while some of the points that David repetitively makes are valid, much that he says is framed in such a way to make out that the Council is operating in a disreputable way and doesn't have the interests of the local taxpayer at its very core - something that is utterly untrue. A good example of this is that David's last article quickly glossed over the fact that the PC has reclaimed £42k in VAT from HMRC. If he had dug further into the back story on this, he could have easily reported that the Clerk spent months in putting the last five years of invoices into a new accounting system and then spent a great deal of time haggling with three different tax inspectors to get everything over the line. Much of this was done while she was a locum which meant that she did this off her own back completely unpaid, despite several attempts to convince her otherwise.

Continued on page 22

Continued from page 21

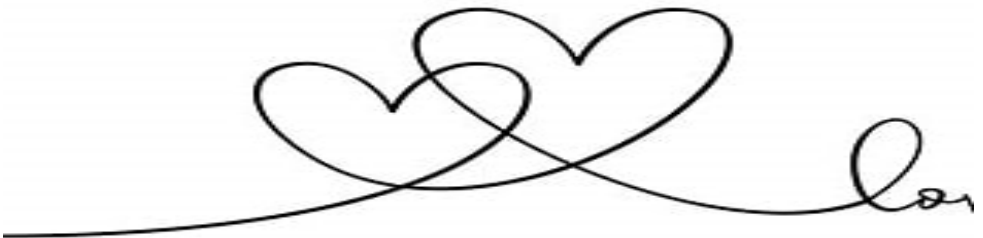
As a previous correspondent to this magazine myself, I've spent several years analysing why so many people are at odds with each other and my opinion is that if you pick at this scab, you will find the same bunch of people underneath every single time. The other issue is that I believe by enabling this corrosive narrative, the Parish News Magazine has lost its core focus of being a fundraising vehicle for the Church and now finds itself entrenched as a mouthpiece for several unverified opinions that are presented as fact.

I would also like to point out that although Clenchwarton has some 1800 adults living in the parish, it always seems to be the same handful of people who go over and above to make this village a nicer place to live, be it through fundraising, providing new facilities, even just litter picking, sweeping up or scrubbing human waste off the play area after some unwelcome visitors dropped by last summer, only to be ridiculed and attacked on social media. On several occasions the call has gone out for volunteers to come forward and help and yet, no one else chips in - putting up the Christmas tree being the latest prime example.

Some parishioners may grumble about the PC (including me in the past) but someone has to keep the books balanced, street lights on, the bins emptied and the grass cut too - weather permitting! People may not like some of the Councillors but they're getting on with the job nonetheless and they don't get paid to do so either. SF

From Jane Thomason re Christmas Tree

I would just like to say a big THANK YOU to those individuals who dealt with setting up the Christmas Tree in the village. It looked so festive at night with all the coloured lights. JT



BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT by Steve Bearshaw

The Digital switchover and care alarms.

BT's infrastructure company, Openreach, are switching all UK landlines on its PSTN network from analogue to digital calling by 31st January 2027. Lines are being switched NOW, and you'll usually get 2 weeks' notice. For most households, this change means plugging the landline phone into an internet router instead of the BT master socket from the day your line is switched. Once switched, your calls will be made through the internet.

This change is necessary because the equipment in BT's telephone exchanges is old and no longer reliable. Digital lines offer clearer calls, fewer faults and fewer scam calls, but there are also risks to users of care alarms. Follow our 4 step guide to stay safe.

What should I do?

Telecoms providers are supporting their customers in various ways, but we recommend that these 4 steps should be taken by all care alarm users:

1. If you have an analogue alarm i.e. one that plugs into your phone line, call us on 01553 616200 or complete our enquiry form to request an upgrade to a digital alarm. Visits for upgrades are free of charge. Digital alarms don't require a phone line and have a backup battery inside, so will still work if your digital landline fails (in a power cut, for example). They will also connect to the digital network more reliably than an analogue alarm. <https://www.careline-cs.org.uk/enquire/>
2. Speak to your telecoms provider (BT, Talktalk etc). Tell them you have a care alarm and ask how they will be supporting you during the digital switchover. The best way to do this is to contact customer services. This can take some time so be prepared to be put on hold. It's worth the time investment to help keep you safe.
3. Test your care alarm by pressing the pendant button at least once a month to make sure the calls are going through first time. This is standard advice for all our alarms, but it is even more important during the switchover.
4. Register with a Priority Services Register for your energy and water. These will entitle you to extra support when there's an interruption to our services.

Continued on page 24

Stay safe this winter.

In an attempt to help residents stay informed, safe, and prepared throughout the winter months we've launched our West Norfolk Winter Campaign. The campaign brings together essential advice and updates on council services, festive arrangements, and community support. The campaign will run across the council's social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor and X. For further details, visit west-norfolk.gov.uk/westnorfolkwinter or follow the Borough Council on social media.

Custom House

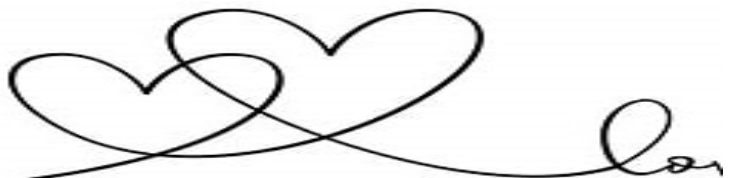
Whilst I was Chair of the Regeneration and Development Panel, we looked at how we could better use the Custom House. I'm pleased to report that plans have been approved to sensitively breathe new life into one of King's Lynn's most beloved landmarks for the benefit of residents and visitors. This is part of wider ambitions to make more of the historic riverfront.

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk has secured Listed Building Consent to bring the grade I listed Custom House back into sustainable use as a flexible, accessible space, as a key part of the Town Deal regeneration programme.

Further project development work can now proceed and once a specialist contractor has been appointed and a start date confirmed, conservation works are expected to take around a year.

Through sensitively revitalising one of King's Lynn's truly iconic historic landmarks, this will bring so many benefits for our community alongside supporting tourism and hopefully further investment along the riverfront.

CLlr Steven Bearshaw
Ward Cllr Clenchwarton Ward,
Deputy Mayor, King's Lynn & West Norfolk.
07540 422111





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COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT by Alexandra Kemp

Broadband in Clenchwarton

I am pressing the County Council's Broadband Connectivity Officer and Project Manager for universal access to full fibre broadband in the village; the inclusion of all Clenchwarton into the County Council's Project Gigabyte, which is split into multiple contracts. Clenchwarton is part of the Cambridgeshire County Council contract which is in the "planning phase".

Sampling by the Project Manager showed the areas in Clenchwarton that don't have access to full fibre broadband. I have made it plain that this is not acceptable. Large parts use direct in-ground cabling (i.e. it is not installed in ducts but is buried directly in the ground) and this is extremely expensive to upgrade.

Areas without access to full fibre broadband appear to be around the middle of the village and outskirts.

The CCC Project Gigabit contract is managed completely independently of the Norfolk Project Gigabit contract. However, NCC are provided with updates via regular calls with BDUK.

West Lynn Ferry Landing Stage

The Council consultants are due to report shortly on their preferred option for replacing the West Lynn Ferry Landing Stage to a safe, modern, accessible structure. The Borough consultants have reviewed all the reports since the 2023 report. County is the Technical Approval Authority. The replacement landing stage must be installed as soon as possible.

Social Care

Norfolk County Council has been "testing the market" - asking the private sector if it wants to take over the Council Care Homes run by Norse. This is completely unacceptable and could lead to a lowering of standards.

Alexandra

County Councillor Alexandra Kemp

County Division: Clenchwarton and King's Lynn South, Norfolk County Council, including South Lynn, West Lynn, Clenchwarton, West Winch, Setchey

Landline: 01553 630329 / Mobile: 07920 286636

MEMORIES Part 8 by Debra McGowan

By the time I had returned from Canada, Dad wasn't home; he had been made redundant from the brewery (for the second time), and had been working full time as a painter and decorator. Along with two of his friends from the brewery, Jack and Cyril, who had also been made redundant, he was doing some work for a gentleman called Roger Nathan who owned a number of properties, one being a jewellers shop. When Dad had called into the shop one morning to see Roger, Roger was weighing some gold granules that an African gentleman had brought in contained in a cigar case.

After Roger had paid the gentleman for the gold and he had left, Dad asked Roger if he knew where the gold had come from. At that time, back in the 1980's if you had been in London, you would have seen some very colourful African men and women visiting the city. As Roger explained to Dad the gold granules that they were bringing over they were mining themselves in West Africa. So Dad suggested to Roger "Why don't we have a go?", so Roger hired a mining engineer by the name of Derek Norton and took Dad as his minder. The three of them flew off to Sierra Leone in West Africa in Roger's private plane. I am not sure what the plane was that they flew in, but I remember it was an ex-RAF training plane.

They flew to Paris to begin their journey. Dad told me that Roger was hungry so he suggested that they stop there for lunch. From there they flew to Casablanca for a stopover before flying on to Sierra Leone. While they were in Casablanca they went into a bar for some food and drink, and Dad asked the waiter if Sam was in that evening, to which the waiter replied that it was Sam's night off. Roger then said (much to the amusement of the waiter), "I didn't know you knew someone in Casablanca"!

They took magnum pump rifles with them for protection. Although there were no wars in the country at that time there was still a need for caution. To begin with they bought the gold from the Paramount Chiefs; in Sierra Leone this was the highest level of chieftdom. These chiefs are responsible for local leadership and have been evolving their roles to include modern government and political representation. They also hired workers and panned the rivers themselves to find the gold. The local people collected the gold themselves and would sell it to the Lebanese for very little return, but enough for their needs. The Lebanese would then sell the gold on for a higher profit. However, sometimes the Paramount Chiefs would collect the gold from the people and either use the

Continued on page 30

MEMORIES continued from page 29

gold themselves such as when they came to London, or sell it on for a higher profit.

After a while Roger decided that they needed to buy a dredging machine to use on the Bankasoka river in order to extract more gold. So they travelled to California and bought one from there. Unfortunately, it worked well on the beautiful clear water of California, but it was a different story on the muddy waters of Sierra Leone. The dredger could not cope with the mud. The main mistake that they were making was the Sierra Leone was famous for its diamonds, but by using the dredger they were doing it the wrong way round. They were throwing away diamonds looking for gold, when as Derek had tried to tell Roger, they should have been mining the diamonds and then finding the gold!

They had many adventures in Africa and my Dad had many stories to tell when he eventually came home. I cannot remember how long Dad was away but it was at least a year. When he came home circumstances had changed so he was unable to go back, but Roger returned with Derek to continue their adven-

A NAVAL CAREER AND MORE By Mike Smith

I am 86 years old and I joined the Royal Navy when I was fourteen years and eleven months and went to HMS Ganges, a boys training establishment at Shotley near Ipswich for one years training.

After that I got my first ship which was HMS Diamond classified as a Dearing class Destroyer and sailed to the Mediterranean for a year. I also received my first medal out there when we were involved in the Suez Crisis and my second medal when we were sent to Cyprus to stop the rebels coming down to take Famagusta.

I met the late Queen when she visited HMS Delight. Altogether I served on five ships and one submarine - HMS Tiptoe, after coming off HMS Tiptoe I was sent to HMS Sheba in Aden, which was not a very nice place to be in. We were told 'when we go ashore not to go into the town' but like all sailors we thought we knew best and three of us went to see what it was like. I found out when I got back to the ship when I discovered I no longer had a watch on my arm!

After I had served ten years I came out of the Navy and went to work at Cranes in Dereham for 18 months and learnt how to do welding and sheet metal

Continued on page 31

A NAVAL CAREER AND MORE continued from previous page

work. I then started my own firm and in its heyday we had fifty men working for us all over the UK. It was during this time that I made a barbeque for the Queen at Sandringham and a few other items for her.

I also joined the Police Special Constabulary and spent many a Saturday night going out with them around town and got on very well; so well that I received a commendation from the Chief Constable. Now at 86 I have to take things easy but I still have my Navy tot of rum at 11.50 every day, and watch Norwich City football when I can. As I cannot drive any more I have to get my wife to drive me around; however, I still love to go to Downham for my ham, eggs and chips.

Finally, let me go back to my working days and I was on the team at Lotus with Graham Hill and Jochen Rindt. Graham used to take a three-wheeled car and drive it on two wheels. They were happy days. Graham would also make us all go to the canteen and get the teas in. Jochen Rindt went on to win the Formula One World Drivers Championship in 1970 posthumously.

VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day, celebrated annually on February 14th, is a global festival of love and romance, marked by exchanging cards, flowers, chocolates, and gifts to express affection, with roots in the stories of Saint Valentine and ancient Roman traditions like Lupercalia, evolving through medieval poets like Chaucer into the modern holiday of romantic tokens and expressions of love.

Who was Saint Valentine?

St. Valentine of Terni a third-century Roman saint was known as the patron saint of lovers. He had the reputation of healing the sick and is said to have restored the sight of Julia, the daughter of Asterius, his jailer. Valentine had been imprisoned for secretly marrying couples disobeying the edict of Roman Emperor Claudius II. The edict forbade Roman soldiers to marry for it was thought marriage would diminish their efficiency in the battlefield. Asterius converted to Christianity after his daughter was healed. Valentine and Asterius were beheaded by order of Emperor Claudius II. Before his execution on February 14, 271 AD. Valentine wrote a love letter to Julia signed "from your Valentine" giving rise to the celebration of St. Valentine's Day.

CLASSICAL MUSIC ROCKS (CMR)

Need for Trustee and Treasurer

CMR is a very successful music charity for children, bringing top class musicians direct to primary schools. The children love the classical music played for them, which mostly they have never heard before.

Over a period of 9 years we have reached 60,000 children mostly in West Norfolk.

Clenchwarton and West Lynn primary schools are amongst the most visited schools since 2017

We have also reached Walpole Cross Keys, Anthony Curtin, Tilney All Saints, Snettisham, and many others.

We receive modest funding from the Norfolk Music Hub, but otherwise raise money from external charities.

As a Charity, we have relied hugely on volunteer help, but from January 26 we will have a paid Project Manager, Julie Atkins, who will shortly be returning to live in Snettisham, her place of birth.

Right now, it is a major priority to find a new Trustee prepared to act as Treasurer. This volunteer role requires about 2 hours per week and attendance at 4 x 1 hour Trustee meetings per annum. This rewarding role is available from April and will include opportunities to observe some of our musician's visits to local schools.

If you enjoy music and would like to make a difference for children, please contact Julie at: cmrwestnorfolk@gmail.com

For more information, check out our website: cmrschoolswestnorfolk.com

NATURE WATCH *by Debra McGowan*

At some point over the Christmas holiday my husband Ian watched Rick Stein, the well known Chef and Restaurateur, cooking razor clams on TV. Rick said "that the clams were delicious and very simple to cook". So Ian looked on the internet to see how you collect razor clams and it seems very straightforward.

To collect razor clams, find their keyhole-shaped holes in the wet sand at low tide, pour salt onto the hole to make them squirt and emerge, then

Continued on next page

gently grab them as they pop up to avoid snapping their fragile shells.

So Christmas Day he decided that we would head to Hunstanton Beach and collect some razor clams, which he would cook. I'm sure that you may recall how cold it was that day and the wind on the beach at Hunstanton was ferocious! Still we were well prepared in our layers of clothing, waterproof trousers and jackets as well as hats, gloves and scarves, or so we thought! It was freezing and the wind was blowing the sand across the beach like the sand storms you see in the desert films!

There were millions of razor clam shells everywhere we walked; I don't think that I have ever seen so many. Ian walked around with his tub of salt, expertly putting it down, but to no avail! Not one single razor clam popped up, I think by the number of empty shells all over the beach, the harsh weather had already exposed the clams for the countless gulls and other sea birds hunting for food along the beach. Eventually Ian gave up and after a long walk we headed back to the warmth of the car and home.

A friend had told me about the starling murmuration that could be seen down at the Marsh in Clenchwarton. So a few days later Ian and I drove down there to have a look, there were quite a few people down there already when we arrived. The number of starlings flying in seemed never ending, but due to the cold, although we saw some of the birds murmuring, a lot of the starlings flew straight into the reed bed. Although the sound that they made was quite something.

I had read that the sight of the starlings leaving their roost in the morning is widely considered an extraordinary and worthwhile experience to watch. Known as a "blast-off", this daily exit is often a dramatic and spectacular natural phenomenon, contrasting with the evening's famous murmuration. So I decided I would get up before dawn in the morning and head back down the marsh.

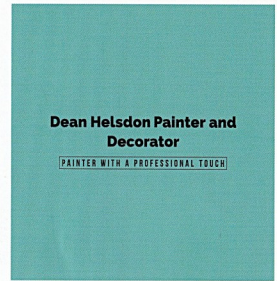
When I did wake up the ground was covered in a blanket of thick snow, but I decided that I was going to go anyway! I got down the marsh just before day-break and waited for the spectacle to begin. As I sat waiting I watched two foxes playing in the snow and the number of Roe deer was quite surprising. However I sat there until at least 8am and disappointingly no starlings! When I got home I asked Ian if because of all the sudden snow and cold weather would the starlings have moved to another roost during the night. He said "No, starlings don't move from their roost once settled".

Continued on page 35

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If you're affected, please remember that you are not alone and support is available 24/7 to help you take that first step to safety. There are lots of different ways you can discreetly reach out for help:

- In an emergency, always call 999
- If you don't want to speak to the police, contact the Leeway charity on 0300 561 0077 www.leeway-support.org or NIDAS on 0300 561 0555 <https://nidasnorfolk.co.uk>
- The National Domestic Abuse Helpline is free and open 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- Speak to your Parish Safeguarding Officer, Jan Taylor, on 07725 940453. She has details of many other organisations that may be able help.

DROUGHT POTENTIAL *By Steve Bearshaw*

The question everyone is asking is 'will there be a drought next year'? The answer is yes, unless there is at least average rainfall through the winter. Where and how bad the drought could be will reflect how much rain we receive through the winter.

With 100% of long-term average (LTA) rainfall we expect that most irrigation reservoirs will refill with abstractions authorised by licences which allow abstraction during the winter months.

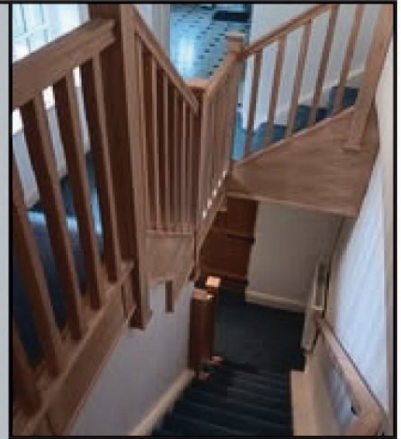
If 80% of LTA rainfall is received this winter, it is expected that similar conditions are likely this year, with drought at the spring stretching through the country. The Environment Agency expects that hands-off flow restrictions on abstraction licences will remain in force through to March 2026. Therefore, reservoir refill prospects are moderate across most of England. Under this scenario there is also an increased risk that Section 57 restrictions may be required in the spring across some areas of England, especially if groundwater and river flows are significantly lower than average.

A 60% rainfall scenario this winter would mean there is a significant risk to water resources across the country with widespread hands-off flow restriction, as a result of significantly below average river flows and groundwater. As a result, reservoir refill prospects are expected to be poor and likely to cause significant resilience issues for next year's irrigation season.

It is expected that above 100% of Long-Term Average (LTA) rainfall is needed across England for rivers to return to normal levels in spring 2026, and above 120% of LTA rainfall is needed for groundwater levels in chalk aquifers to return to normal levels in most sites.

NATURE WATCH *continued from page 33*

So, puzzled by this I did some research and he was right, if the weather does deteriorate the birds will stay put longer before heading off in search of food and come back to the roost later that evening. However they may find a completely different place to roost in the evening if their present area is no longer suitable. Hopefully I will have better luck next time.



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St Margaret's Church has a box, near the font, for donations to the food bank in Kings Lynn. They currently need: Strong carrier bags (to take food home in); Tinned Meat; Puddings; Tinned Fruit; Coffee; Tinned Fish; Pasta Sauce; Deodorant; Washing Powder. If you feel you can donate any of the above items, please leave them in the marked box.

The Food bank staff and recipients are always extremely grateful. There is a thank you card on the notice board in the porch. Thank you.



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Oct 16, Nov 13, Dec 11

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Rectory Drive 10.40-10.50

St Annes Crescent 10.55-11.10

Linford Estate (1) 11.15-11.30

Hall Road opp. no 28 11.35-11.50

Black Horse Road 13.00-13.20

Wildfields Close 13.25-13.45

36 Station Road 13.50-14.10

St Peters Road (1) West Lynn 14.25-14.45

St Peters Close/Cedar Way 14.50-15.10

19 Ferry Road West Lynn 15.15-15.35



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5 Havana

9 Tokyo

4 Berlin

8 Vienna

3 Colombo

7 Madrid

2 Wellington

6 Damascus

1 Paris

INDEX OF ROADS FOR THE MAP ON PAGE 2

AW Treatment works	F2	Nicholas Avenue	D5
Bailey lane	C4DE4F5	Old River Farm	B8
Banklands	B2	Queens Road	F6
Benedict Close	E6	Rectory Drive	D6
Beverley Way	D6	Robin Kerkham Way	D5
Blackhorse Road	C6B7	Rookery Close	D6
Church Road	C6	Rookery Road	D6
Clapper lane	D5	St. Annes Crescent	C5
Clockcase Road	F1/2/3/4/5	Steves Close	C5
Coronation Road	F6	Smallholdings Road	D6/C7
Ferry Road	E56F5	St. Margarets Meadow	C6
Franklin Close	D5	Station Road	A6/7
Kenwick Gardens	A7	The Holdings	C7
Hall Road	D6C3/4/5	Smallholdings Road)	
Jubilee Bank Road	F6	Warrens Road	CD6
Linden Road	D6	Wash Lane	DE5
Linford Estate	D4/5	Wildfields Close	C6
Margaretta Close	E6	Wildfields Road	B5/6/C5
Main Road	A-F/6	Willow Drive	D6
Mill Lane	E/F/5	Wynnes lane	A6/B6/7
Millennium Way	F6		
Post Office & Shop	D6	MH Memorial Hall	C6
F&C.TA. Fish & Chips	C6	PB - Post Box	
BS - Bus Stops			



How the new library building will look, next to The Majestic Cinema, once the hoardings are gone. Opening this month.

Image description: an artistic rendering of the new library building.

Image credit: Hudson Architects.

(Taken from King's Lynn and Dersingham Libraries Facebook page)

Type the following into your search engine: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLY0TkeMG8iXiQNyxclDEA9RjfAGFVbQNX>. This should take you to several films made by Gordan Eggett about our village in the 60s - 80s. I particularly liked the ones of the unveiling of our village sign by the pond, and the visit of the fire engine to the school. How many people will recognise themselves I wonder?

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