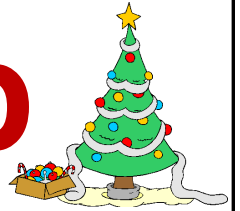


# Grafham Gossip



**Issue 188 Deadline: by 9am on Friday 15th January**

There are a few activities taking place in December. Here are some of them!

Find out about the Village Nativity Treasure Hunt on page 5 - a lovely activity to do



Join Lauren in her challenge; get out and exercise- see page 4



A few gardening jobs await you in December - read the list on page 12

Try out some festive recipes - on page 8



Share some Christmas spirit and 'Ring a bell for Santa' on Christmas Eve - find the details on page 5

## Editors' note...

December may have the shortest days of the year which means longer darker evenings, but I'm looking forward to seeing all the Christmas lights twinkling throughout the village. Perhaps we should put them up a bit earlier than usual this year?



We don't know yet whether we will be able to sing carols at church services, but if we cannot go ahead with the plans that have been made, then we'll have to put on the Christmas CD and sing along indoors! (see what's planned on pages 2 and 3 in 'Church Services' and 'View from the Pew'.)

As always, there is no January Grafham Gossip so when the next issue is out in February, we will be looking forward to Spring!

Please send in your news, views, photos, recipes and gossip in good time for the next deadline, by 9am on Friday 15th January.

A very merry Christmas to all!

Editors, [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)



## The Christmas Shoebox Appeal...

has been extended to early December due to the latest COVID restrictions, so if you have prepared shoebox or would like to make a donation it may not be too late.



Contact Moira 811577 or 07859 065 982 or visit [www.samaritans-purse.org.uk](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk)

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## Looking for stocking fillers, gifts, festive food?

Festive chutneys and preserves, Christmas gifts, Grasmere Christmas packs, as well as the usual sweets, chocolates, candles, local beer, paintings... are all available for you to choose from



- and of course - the 2021 Grafham Calendars are also in the shop now!

**Find more details in Talking Shop on page 5**

## All Saints Church, Grafham

**At the time of writing, Grafham Church is open every day for individual prayer**, but regular services and weddings are not allowed. If a funeral takes place, then the church would have to be closed for 72 hours following the service. The children's corner is not accessible at present. Of course, these guidelines may change after December 2nd or before the next issue of Grafham Gossip (February issue.)

**Covid Precautions** are to be observed please, hand sanitiser is provided for use on entry and exit, also red crosses to show where you've been sitting, a QR code to scan (or simple track and trace form to fill in, with a quarantine box for used pens.)



**Book sales continue in the porch.** We ask visitors, to use the hand sanitiser provided and to return any books handled but not bought into a 'Quarantine box.' A payment box is attached to the porch table.

### Grafham Church Services

If Covid regulations allow, the following services are planned.

Covid precautions must be observed: including wearing masks, using hand sanitiser on entry/exit and social distancing.

**Every Monday morning 10.00 - 10.30 Morning Prayer** a short service open to all. Download the Daily Prayer app from the [Church of England website](https://www.churchofengland.org) available for **iOS** and **Android** - join us in spirit from home if you wish, but preferably please come along and help Jill and Hazel read some bible passages, pray for any concerns, local or personal.

**6th December** (1st Sunday) **10.30am Family Service**

**20th December** (3rd Sun) **10.30am Holy Communion**

**24th December** **4.00pm Crib Service** - in the Churchyard - more details in the 'View' below

**25th December** **10.00am Holy Communion on Christmas Day**



**3rd January** (1st Sunday) **10.30am Family Service**

**For services especially those that are likely to be well attended, please contact Hazel in advance 07870 307388**

For more information on events and services for Grafham, Ellington and Brampton visit <https://eastleightonstone.com> and click on **Calendar**. To join the mailing list to receive upcoming church services and Parish News visit: <http://www.eastleightonstone.com> and click **News**

### Contacting the clergy

**Keith Wood** Churchwarden, Brampton **07802 368 659** The parish has no rector at present but emails to the following address will get forwarded to the relevant person. [clergy@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:clergy@eastleightonstone.com)



## View from the Pew

In these strange stay at home times when words such as lockdown, isolation and zoom frequent our vocabulary it is good to know that our church is still open daily for private prayer and provide moments of solace in our unusual lives.

We were fortunate to be able to have our first Sunday service before lockdown in November to celebrate All Saints' day and to remember that our church is dedicated to all saints, those canonised and those not, so that we may all, if we follow the teachings of Jesus, aspire to be ordinary every day saints by demonstrating Christ's message of love.

On Remembrance Sunday a number of us met in the churchyard to give thanks for those who gave their lives in our two World Wars.



Continued on page 3



### Grafham Parish Council

You may contact your parish councillors through the parish clerk or directly.

**Margaret Life**, Parish Clerk  
07780 119311 [clerk@grafhampc.org](mailto:clerk@grafhampc.org)

**Ian Gardener** Chairman 01480 812821  
[i.gardener@grafhampc.org](mailto:i.gardener@grafhampc.org)

**Alastair Watson** [a.watson@grafhampc.org](mailto:a.watson@grafhampc.org)

**David Russell** [d.russell@grafhampc.org](mailto:d.russell@grafhampc.org)

**Jo Dunn** [j.dunn@grafhampc.org](mailto:j.dunn@grafhampc.org)

**Patrick Curran** [p.curran@grafhampc.org](mailto:p.curran@grafhampc.org)



### Grafham's County Councillor

**Peter Downes**  
07765 833486  
[peter.downes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:peter.downes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)



### Grafham's District Councillor

**Darren Tysoe** 01480 388310  
[darren.tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:darren.tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)  
Grove Cottage, Malting Lane, Ellington, PE28 0AA  
Follow me on Twitter [@darrentysoe](https://twitter.com/darrentysoe)  
Receive my updates on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/clldmtysoe](http://www.facebook.com/clldmtysoe)



*Thank you very much to our advertisers - who make the printing of the Grafham Gossip possible - and to everyone who has sent in news, views, photos, letters, stories, recipes or contributions of any sort - without you there would be no Grafham Gossip - and also, to all our distributors who help deliver the paper copies to every house in the village throughout the year.*

*We wish you and all our readers a happy, peaceful Christmas and hopeful New Year !*

*Ed*



### View from the Pew *Continued from page 2*

The sound of a muffled bell heralded the start of the service. The two minutes silence was followed by the Last Post, played by Sally on her saxophone.

We very much hope to be able to resume services in time for Holy Communion on 20<sup>th</sup> December. We also plan to hold our Christmas Eve Crib Service in the churchyard, socially distanced. It will be 'standing room only' but if you wish to bring a chair, feel free. The service will follow the usual pattern with music, items to rattle, jingle and shake, in fact to make as much noise as possible. We know this service is always popular, so if you plan to come, please contact Hazel in advance (07870 307388) so that we know how many to expect for our preparations.



Children, look out for details Jill has posted for you in *Grafham Gossip* with ideas for creative art work based on the Christmas story. (See page 8.)

On Christmas Day, all being well our Rural Dean Revd Ian Brennan will lead a Holy Communion service **at 10am**. Please check our website and Facebook for updates nearer the time.

A family service will take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> January at 10.30am. We look forward to better times to come in the New Year.

## Here We Go Again - Running Challenge

Back in May during the first Lockdown, I completed the challenge of running 100 miles in one go around my garden, (inspired by Captain Tom Moore) in 22 hours raising money for The NHS Charities Together. I really loved the challenge and was helped through it by the incredible support received from family, friends and the local community, many of whom ran virtually with me and many of whom said afterwards that they had been inspired to continue running.



Lauren's 100 mile challenge in May June 2020 Grafham Gossip

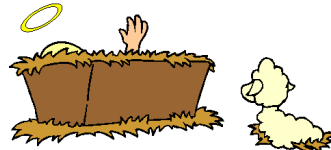
Now that the second Lockdown is here, I want to build on this and again inspire people to get out and exercise. My plan is to repeat the

experience, but this time with a difference. Over the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> December, (as a teacher I plan to wait for the weekend when we break up for the Christmas holidays,) I will attempt to run 100 miles around Grafham Water where I Live in Cambridgeshire (11 loops as opposed to the 1700 around my garden) however this time I would like to challenge others to run with me.

I will transfer 100 miles that I run into £100 and donate it to a charity of my choice and I challenge people wherever they are to run, walk or cycle the distance of their choice and transfer those miles into money and donate it to a charity of their choice.

It will be a long hard winter for some and if we can do a little to help them I believe we must all do what we can to support others. I also hope this will inspire people to continue or even start running and training when the nights are so dark and cold.

**Lauren Buffini**



## November Churchyard Re-wilding

We now have an official award showing we are making a difference for wildlife in our churchyard. Next up Silver!

We've been given a list of things to do to gain the Silver award next year so we've started already.

The spring meadows on either side of the churchyard have been cleared and all the thugs, tree saplings and invasive plants have been removed. Our next job is to keep these clear over winter and ensure wildflowers have a chance to thrive at the expense of the grasses!



Bats have been seen inside the church only a short time after sunset. The two pipistrelles seem to regularly roost there at present and evidence indicates they have been using the church for a long while.

A map showing our plans for the churchyard is shown in the church porch and the notice board. Do let us have your suggestions!

Our next re-wilding sessions will be in March but if you would like to be involved in any way it would be great to hear from you. [debs.russell@gmail.com](mailto:debs.russell@gmail.com)



## Talking Shop

We're already getting festive in the shop with the lights and decorations going up earlier than usual this year. What do you think?

We will be open right up to 6.30pm on Christmas Eve for all your last minute shopping.

Our Christmas hours are -

**Christmas Eve, normal hours..8am - 6.30pm**  
**Christmas Day .....CLOSED**  
**Boxing Day.....CLOSED**  
**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December .....CLOSED**  
**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December.....CLOSED**  
**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> - Friday 31<sup>st</sup> incl..9am - 2pm**  
**New Year's Day.....CLOSED**

For normal opening hours see below and page 16

**The shop will close from midday December 1st for about 3 hours - a new door is being fitted**

With Christmas in mind we've been filling the shop with tempting treats and gift ideas, so come in and see what we have. And did you get your advent calendar? We have a selection in the shop at £1.50 each.

**\*\*HOT NEWS\*\*** The 2021 Grafham calendar is now available in the shop priced at £5.00. It is a limited edition so get yours while you can. The photos this year are particularly beautiful and it would make a lovely gift.

We have a number of locally produced craft items which make original presents including a selection of natural beeswax candles with prices starting at £2.50, and hand-made lavender wands at £1 each or 2 for £1.50. These would all make wonderful teachers' gifts. We always have some artwork produced by the Grafham & Ellington Art Group adorning our walls but did you know it is all for sale? These paintings make very thoughtful gifts.

Beer and wine always make good presents and for a special festive feel we also have Christmas gift packs. At this time of year we stock Port and we currently have Warre's Late Bottled Vintage 2014 at £16.99. A lovely present for that special person.

Our Saints & Sinners jams, marmalades and chutneys are always very popular and we now have some festive flavours in stock including Winter Spiced Beetroot Chutney and Mince Pie Marmalade.

If you've enjoyed the products from Grasmere Farm, how about ordering a Christmas box. There are two varieties available this year priced at £31.95 and £35.00. The boxes contain a selection of 'Christmas Essentials' – see our Facebook page for details and our window posters.

Grasmere orders must be placed by  
Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December.



As well as all the above we do, of course, have a plentiful supply of chocolate, biscuits, cake and all the usual things you have come to expect.

Logs and Kindling are also sold in the shop. Logs - £6.50 and Kindling £4.95.

With the ongoing Covid restrictions, we have seen some of our volunteers choose not to work in the shop at this time. We would love to encourage more volunteers to come forward so if you have any spare time and would like to get involved in the shop, please come in and see us. One of our latest volunteers is Meri Croft. She has recently finished university and while she has time on her hands is enjoying working with us. Please come in and say 'Hello'.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> November we celebrated our 6<sup>th</sup> birthday. We are all very proud of this achievement and we'd like to thank you all for your continued support.

As this is our last 'Talking Shop' before Christmas we'd like to send all our good wishes for a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

*Lynn and Chloe*



### Grafham Community Shop

Tel: 01480 810119

**Opening Times**

Mon-Fri 8.00 - 6.30

Sat 8.00 - 5.00

Sun 9.00 - 2.00

Bank Holidays 9.00 - 2.00

[shop@grafhamvillageshop.co.uk](mailto:shop@grafhamvillageshop.co.uk)

[www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk](http://www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk)

[www.facebook.com/GrafhamCommunityShop/](https://www.facebook.com/GrafhamCommunityShop/)



**Have you heard...?**  
**'Ring a bell for Santa' at 6pm**  
**on Christmas Eve**

**To spread Christmas spirit and send off**  
**Father Christmas on his journey around the world!**



**Website:** [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk)

**E-mail:** [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)

## “Has the bin man bin Mam?”



Wednesdays Blue bin (recycling) and Black bin (refuse) - alternate weeks  
Every other Thursday - Green bin (garden waste)

For more advice or information about waste and recycling services, visit [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins) or call 01480 388640 between 8.45am and 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.45am and 4.30pm on Fridays or email [mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)



### December

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1	<b>Blu</b>	<b>G</b>	4	5	6
7	8	<b>Blk</b>	10	11	12	13
14	15	<b>Blu</b>	<b>G</b>	18	19	20
21	<b>Blk</b>	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	<b>Blu</b>			

### January

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	<b>G</b>	3
4	5	6	<b>Blk</b>	8	9	10
11	12	<b>Blu</b>	<b>G</b>	15	16	17
18	19	<b>Blk</b>	21	22	23	24
25	26	<b>Blu</b>	<b>G</b>	29	30	31

The church is now being cleaned more often than previously, so if you are able to help, please get in touch.

[editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)



## Recycling - Blue Bin



For a recycling update and a reminder of the right recycling to put in your blue bin, go to [www.recap.co.uk](http://www.recap.co.uk)

For a detailed list of everything that can go in your **Blue, Green and Black/Grey bins** visit <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/what-goes-in-which-bin/> or call 01480 388640 between 8.45am and 5.00pm Mon to Thurs and 8.45am and 4.30pm on Fridays or email [mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

## The Highway Community Car Scheme

A scheme to help provide transport for people who are not able to make essential journeys by public transport or any other means.

A team of volunteer drivers take you to appointments e.g. the doctors, hospital, dentist alongside social activities such as visiting relatives or friends and even shopping. The scheme is aimed at helping people to get out and about.

Passengers pay the driver on the day of travel to contribute towards fuel expenses at a rate of 30p per mile with a minimum charge of £3.00.

**To arrange a journey or for more information please call 07786 520540**

If the phone is not manned when you call, leave and the coordinator will get back to you.

*We are also always looking out for volunteer drivers so if you want to help your community, give us a call. We would love to hear from you.*

The scheme is supported and advised by Cambridgeshire County Council and Care Network Cambridgeshire

## Grafham Oil Syndicate

The syndicate is FREE to join. We must continue to grow and keep a bulk order attractive enough to receive a discount, so simply email Simon: [grafhamoil@gmail.com](mailto:grafhamoil@gmail.com) or call **07887 628528** and help keep more money in the village!



*Send your news, views, photos, recipes, 'Letters to Ed' and gossip to [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk) by 9am on the 15th of every month*

## Useful Phone Numbers

All emergencies **999**  
Non-emergencies **101**  
Cambridge Constabulary HQ  
**01480 456111**  
Minicom for hard of hearing  
**01480 422493**

Action Fraud **0300 123 2040**  
Crimestoppers **0800 555111** (anonymous)  
To report anti-social behaviour in Grafham **01480 388379** or **387097** or e-mail:  
[Barbara.gowling@huntsdc.gov.uk](mailto:Barbara.gowling@huntsdc.gov.uk) or [tracey.guinea@huntsdc.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.guinea@huntsdc.gov.uk)

To stop unwanted phone calls **08450 700707**  
To stop unwanted mail **08457 034599**  
**Power cut Call 105 or 0800 31 63 105 or text POWER and your postcode to 80876**  
<http://www.powercut105.com/>



# Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Plan

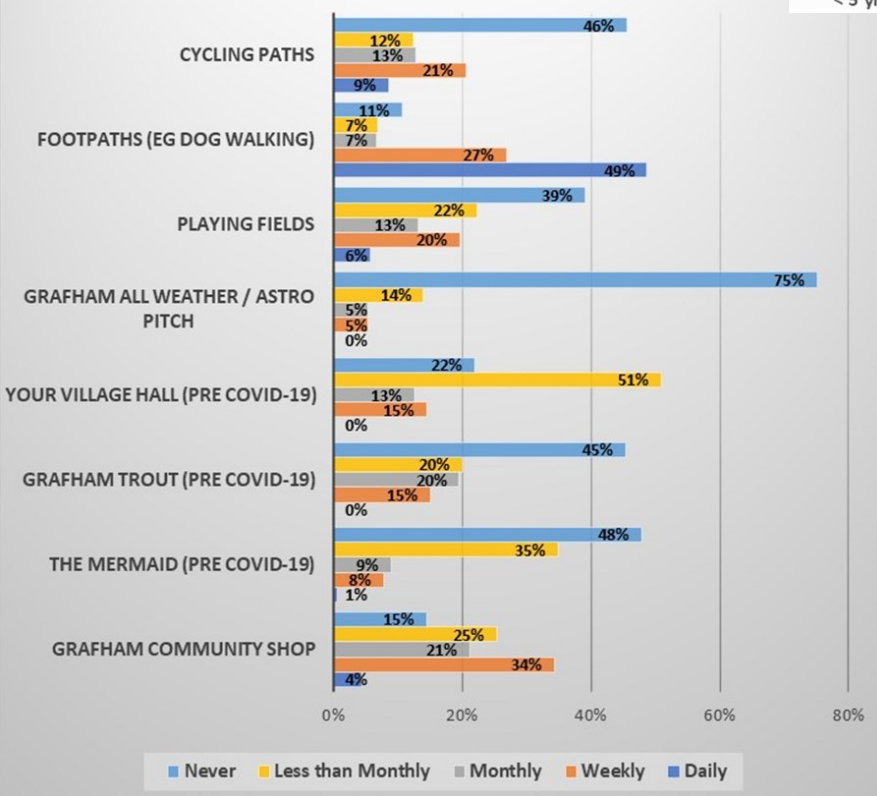


The results of the survey have provided a tremendous amount of valuable data that will determine the policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan.

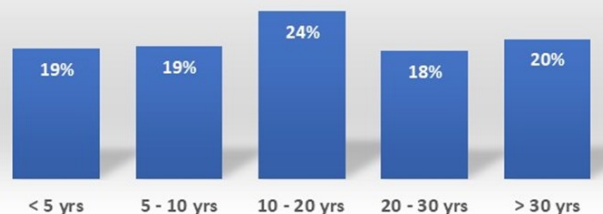
We are currently using this data to analyse what the community really wants and aim to let you see a draft of the Plan in January.

### Walking and Cycling are important to us!

How frequently do members of your household use the following services or amenities?



How many years has your household lived in the Parish?



A few summaries of written comments and charts are here to whet your appetite – the full set of results can be seen on our website, which can be accessed using this link: <https://bit.ly/3eVt4EY>

### Young people

Overwhelmingly, Grafham and Ellington youth like living here for the space and countryside and for friends within the villages; there are concerns about the lack of facilities, particularly a shop and café in Ellington, and the loneliness of having to travel to meet friends who live further away...

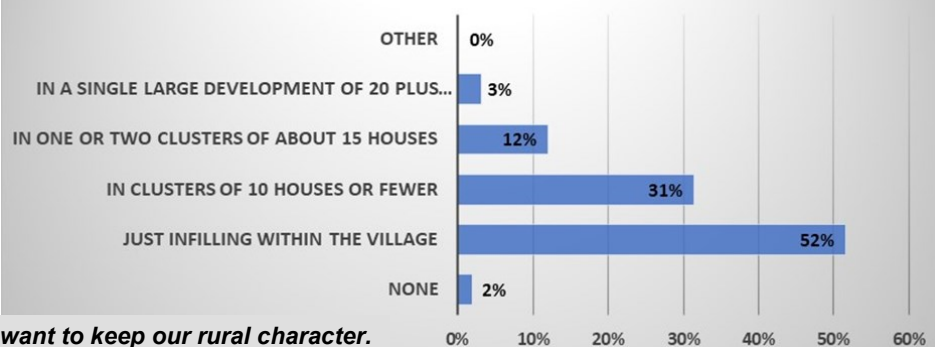
The preferred method of travel is by bicycle, and they are decided supporters of new cycle paths, particularly for the school run. This is strongly supported by residents wishing to cycle more safely in the area.

### Residents (all ages represented)

Both villages want a variety of specialised sports facilities including a skate park, swimming pool, proper gym and public toilets near the sports facilities.

Most people seem happy with our villages. Some have been here a VERY long time!

Do you think future development in your Parish should be...?

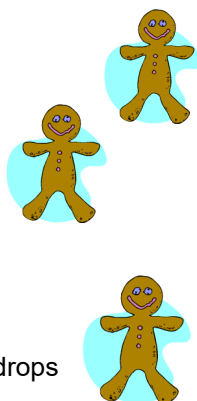


*We really want to keep our rural character.*

## Gingerbread men

### Ingredients

- 350g plain flour
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 100g butter
- 175g light muscovado sugar
- 4 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 large egg



### To decorate

- Icing writers, or piped icing
- Smarties, jelly tots, chocolate drops

### Method

- Add the flour into a large mixing bowl and rub in the butter until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- Mix in the ginger and bicarbonate of soda
- Add the golden syrup and egg.
- Mix everything together until you have a smooth dough
- Divide the dough into two halves and roll out on to a lightly floured work surface until about 5mm thick.
- Cut out your ginger bread men using a cutter or use any other shapes you have to hand
- Place them on the baking tray.
- Bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes.
- Cool slightly on a wire rack and decorate with piped icing, sweets or whatever you choose.

Please send in your favourite seasonal recipes to:  
[editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)

## Leftover Turkey Casserole

Serves 4 people



### Ingredients

- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 eating apple, cored and chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp dried sage, or 5 sage leaves, chopped
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 300ml vegetable or chicken stock
- 2 tbsp mustard
- 2 tbsp honey
- 400g-500g leftover turkey, shredded
- about 350g leftover roasted vegetables like roast potatoes, parsnips, celeriac and carrots, chunkily diced

### Method

- In a casserole or deep pan, fry the onion and apple in the oil until softened. Stir in the sage for 1 min, then stir in the flour. Gradually stir in the stock, followed by the mustard and honey. Bring to a simmer
- Stir in the turkey and roast veg. Cover and gently simmer for 15 mins until turkey is piping hot. Season and eat with mash or jacket potatoes.

## Martin's Mulled Wine

Back by popular demand



- 1 bottle of red wine
- 60g/2oz demerara sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ teacup lemonade
- ½ teacup orange juice
- ½ lemon sliced
- ½ orange sliced
- 4 cloves
- 60 ml / 2 fl oz gin

Add the ingredients, except the gin, to a pan and gently warm, dissolving the sugar. Try not to boil. If needed, adjust the sweetness to taste, by adding sugar. Lastly add the gin.

Fill your glasses and sit in front of the fire sipping the mulled wine and thinking of Christmas!

*As usual, please remember to drink sensibly. Ed*

## A Village Nativity Treasure Hunt

In Grafham we usually have a Travelling Nativity Box to tell the story of Jesus to the youngest in our community during Advent.

BUT

Let's make a village nativity treasure hunt instead this year!

We would like children (of all ages) to paint a pebble with the characters involved in the nativity story. Choose anything you like... maybe a baby, a star, donkey, sheep... it's up to you!

You can find your own pebble but do get in touch with me if you have trouble finding one.

If you have never painted a pebble before there are lots of tips online or ask me. (Jill Tyack 07892 720 835).

I intend hiding mine round the village!

How many will you find?

Alternatively you could use playdough to make a model or draw a picture and display it in your windows at home?



Have fun!





## Grafham's Non-Listed Heritage Buildings: Part 1

*Edward Biffin*

In previous articles we have covered the parts of Grafham's heritage that is either 'scheduled' or 'listed,' that is, officially recognised. The 'Lower Grafham' article ([Grafham Gossip July 2020](#)) showed that there are buildings with a history which are an important part of Grafham's visual heritage, but that are not 'officially recognised.' This article and the following one will cover the remaining buildings which are more than 150 years old, and which are an important part of Grafham's village-scape. A useful dividing point is the 1852 Estate Map of the lands of the Bernard Sparrow family of Brampton, covered in summary in the [GG April 2020](#) article. The map can be consulted in detail at the Huntingdonshire Record Office at Huntingdon Library, and it can be seen that the base 1852 map was updated around 1866 when the railway arrived, so this first article will cover buildings that seem to have existed in 1852.

The Lower Grafham article covered the following extant buildings (photos are in that article [GG July 2020](#)): Hill Farm (recently extended, the core building said to be 19<sup>th</sup> C but buildings are marked on the site in 1750), Orchard Row (two builds in the 1850s) and Ambleside, thatched, from c1780.



Nearer to Grafham, at the corner of the drive to the caravan site, Rose Cottage (right) was in existence by 1852, according to the Bernard Sparrow Estate Map. It has been extended relatively recently but the old core is still there.



The Bernard Sparrow map did not include anything that was not on their property - except that small marks at or near the road edge indicate that there was something there. That is important for the next pair of cottages (left,) now nos. 8 and 10 Church Road, which were there in 1852.

Next door to the cottages on Church Road, one non-residential property stands out, the former Village Smithy (right,) probably mid 19<sup>th</sup> C or earlier - it is difficult to be certain - but something is marked on the site on the 1835 OS map and on the 1774 enclosure map and it was certainly the smithy on the 1887 map.



Opposite this building and marked on the 1852 with the shading for existing buildings, were the stables for the village farms, now converted into a courtyard of houses, Lakeside Mews. (Below)



Lastly, on the Breach Road/Brampton Road corner are two semi-detached dwellings, recently renovated. Until 1965 this building (right) was the combined school room and schoolmistress' house. It is said to have been founded in 1815 and is mentioned on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1835. A building is marked on the 1852 Estate Map also. The Education Act 1870 required local school boards to establish 'board schools' in 'deprived areas.' There were only nine such parishes in Huntingdonshire, but Grafham was one of them. The school board took over the old buildings and with a grant of £314 from the Duke of Manchester added a substantial school room for 90 pupils.



## Coronavirus advice

Contact details for local support

Countywide Coordination Hub  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)  
 or 0345 045 521

Huntingdonshire Hub  
[www.wearehuntingdonshire.org](http://www.wearehuntingdonshire.org)

For more guidance see:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> and  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

The NHS Covid App can be down loaded from:  
<https://covid19.nhs.uk/>

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor...

### Farmers and Walkers

It is disappointing (but a sign of the times) that anyone has chosen to be critical of Mr Brotherton, owner of Redwood Lodge Farm when he has done nothing wrong. For example, there is no public right of way from The Wyvern, towards Brampton Wood. End of story... Not really...

I believe the establishment of a footpath along the edge of one of his fields, to avoid walking along the Ellington road, between the chicane and where the path linking Brampton Wood to West Wood crosses the road, is desirable. Posting derogatory cartoons on social media is surely not the way to have any hopes of achieving this.

However, there are two sides to every coin and I sincerely hope Mr Brotherton doesn't think he is the only person who has ever worked hard for fifty (plus) years, borrowed large sums of money, taken risks and experienced 'blood, sweat and tears' in their journey to success. This is unlikely, as I hear he is a very reasonable man.

To give some perspective it is also worthy of note, that according to the Office of National Statistics, in 2019, agriculture contributed around 0.61% to the United Kingdom's GDP, 17.41% came from manufacturing and 71.26% came from the Services Sector.

As I have mentioned, Mr Brotherton has done nothing wrong. It would seem there are good and bad farmers/land owners in terms of public relations. A few weeks ago, I was subjected to verbal aggression, presumably from a relative/employee of the land owner, whilst being forced to veer off the designated public footpath which goes from the south west corner of West Wood to Easton. I had to do this as the field had been ploughed. It remained impassable for well in excess of the two weeks farmers have to level and make clear the route of such pathways.

According to the 'gov.uk,' and the Farmers Weekly websites, land owners have a legal duty for: keeping hedgerows clear where paths go through, keeping paths clear of obstacles, maintaining signposting and levelling/making distinct any paths which cross ploughed fields within fourteen days of ploughing.

From the junction of paths at Grid Ref: TL 14796 69730 (just SW of West Wood) there is a fallen tree across the path, the hedgerow is completely overgrown where the path goes through, there is no signposting except for an old one lying on the ground, the path has not been levelled/made distinct across a ploughed field and there is an abundance of signs telling walkers where NOT to go, instead of where the path lies.

It must surely be fair to say that the land owner concerned is not meeting his responsibilities. It would cause less stress and resentment if we all, walkers and farmers alike, kept to the rules and laws.

*Mike Verrechia*

*Let us know your news, views, and comments. Email: [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk) Thanks, Ed*

*The Grafham Gossip aims to remain impartial and the editor publishes letters, contributions and views that are received, provided that the name and address or email address of the writer is provided. Ed*

## That's Life!

Still with the undertaker, but not for much longer!

We had been asked to provide funeral services for a Surrey gentleman who had died whilst in Addenbrookes. The funeral was to be at Guildford Crematorium. As it was a long drive, we set out very early in one of the two Rolls Royce vehicles dating from the mid 1930s. A beautiful vehicle to drive as you would expect. The engine was the famous Merlin! The origin of the Spitfire engine.

About 30 minutes into the drive, we spotted smoke coming from under the hood. We found the beginnings of a fire between the V of the 12 cylinder engine and managed to put it out with no problems, but the boss decided to call for the second Rolls Royce. (We'd nearly had a

roadside cremation! Frank, the head bearer couldn't stop laughing when I said that. It was a good job that the boss, Wilfred Singleton, didn't hear me say it.) Fortunately the rest of the journey went without incident, until we reached the crematorium! The boss told me to stop at the gate; he went to the back of the hearse, raised the access lid, fiddled about a bit, then said he would walk the rest of the way to the crematorium which was at the top of a small slope. He said to leave the hatch open and drive very slowly when called. No problem until I began to go up the small hill. Rumble, rumble, rumble, came from the rear. I saw the coffin rolling out! Wilfred had taken the clamp off! I leapt out and somehow managed to get the coffin back onto the rest, with the clamp ON.

Thankfully the funeral service itself went ahead without any problems.

*Continued on page 11*

# The Robin

Voted as the UK's first national bird in 2015, the Robin is a favourite for its bright colour, year round song and its confiding nature. There are around 7 million breeding pairs in the UK, a figure that has nearly doubled since the 1980s. Distributed all over the UK the Robin prefers to live on the edges of woodland but is equally at home in grassland and, of course, the urban environment. Indeed, Robins' nests have been recorded in some unusual places, including tins, saucepans, kettles, an unmade bed, a bedroom pelmet, underneath the wing of a car whilst the car was still in use and probably the most unusual, in the engine of an aeroplane during World War 2. The latter nest was ultimately successful despite being destroyed 6 times, as the heat from the engine kept the eggs warm whilst the plane was flying.



Photographs by Gregory Belcher

It is interesting to note that, though widespread throughout Europe, it is only in the UK that the Robin is so relatively tame. It is thought that this may be related to the fact that it is considered unlucky to kill a Robin, and therefore the birds were not hunted in the way they were on the continent. This superstition persists into recent times, during the hard winter of 1947 isolated communities were forced



to gather whatever food they could. Records show that this extended to trapping wild birds, all species were good for the pot with the exception of the Robin. Any unfortunate of the species caught in a trap was not eaten, but buried untouched in a small grave.

Of course, the most well known cultural link with the Robin is its iconic symbolism at Christmas. Many link this to the rise of the Christmas card in the Victorian era, postmen clad in red jackets delivering the mail led to cards depicting the Robin as bringing the message of good cheer. However, this may just be the 'tip of the iceberg.' Always regarded as a bird of good omen, the Robin has adorned illuminated manuscripts as far back as the thirteenth century. This may in turn come from Pagan beliefs that the Robin, like Holly and certain other species, showed that life continued through the winter and would flourish again in spring.

If you want to find out how to attract Robins or other wildlife into your garden then go to the Wildlife Trusts website [Wildlifebcn.org](http://Wildlifebcn.org) for gardening tips and other ways you can help wildlife this winter.

**Gregory Belcher**  
Senior Reserves Officer,  
Wildlife Trust BCN



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Cambridgeshire  
Northamptonshire

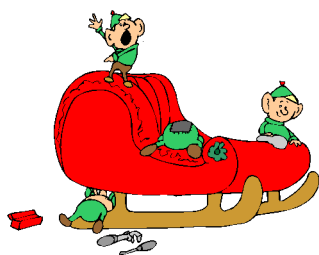
## That's Life *continued from page 10*

On the way back. Wilfred wanted to drive through London to buy some updated maps from a shop near Fleet Street. I let him out, parked in Fleet Street and stayed in the hearse, I got some very hard looks from the beat policeman and staff from one of the newspapers. Some time later, Wilfred

came back in an anxious state, saying that he couldn't find the shop. I asked him when he was last here and was flabbergasted when he said 1938! We'd had a long war since then!

We arrived home with no further incidents, but that was one funeral to which the customer really didn't want to go!

*Grafham Villager*



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### Gardening Jobs for December

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- **Check** that greenhouse heaters are working
- **Insulate** outdoor taps and prevent ponds from freezing
- **Prune** open-grown apples and pears (but not those trained against walls)
- **Prune** acers, birches and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding
- **Harvest** leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and remaining root crops
- **Deciduous trees** and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted
- **Take** hardwood cuttings
- **Keep** mice away from stored produce
- **Reduce** watering of houseplants



There's more advice from the Royal Horticultural Society website  
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/december>

Website: [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk)

E-mail: [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)

## G0 Heating – Awarded a £38,603 grant!

The G0 Heating project has just been awarded a £38,603 grant from the Rural Community Energy Fund. The project, launched over the summer, is a combined initiative of Grafham, Great Staughton and Perry Parish Councils to realise a district heating project for our villages.

The grant is supported by the UK Government to encourage rural communities currently reliant on oil (like ours), to find sustainable heating alternatives suitable for all households. This project will protect our community from the unpredictable future of oil and carbon taxes, supporting families, households, and our village's future. To find out more, come to our next public meeting!

The grant funding has enabled the appointment of an expert engineering and heat network consultancy, and community engagement consultant to work with the Parish Councils to produce a feasibility study for the project. The study will focus on three key aspects of the project, (1) the technology (2) the business case, and (3) the community benefit, to test whether a heat network is suitable for our villages. Much of the technical work will happen behind the scenes, but we also want to get a steer from you on how this project should be developed.

We plan to hold real or virtual public meetings subject to the relevant regulations, to explain more about district heating and to provide findings from the feasibility study. Alongside these meetings, we will also send out surveys, to learn more about your heating requirements and what our priorities for this community project should be.

**To make sure you hear about these meetings and receive the surveys, please join our project mailing list by emailing [info@g0grafham.co.uk](mailto:info@g0grafham.co.uk)**



## G0 Heating – The Big Questions December 2020

### What is district heating?

District heating comprises an energy centre and underground pipe network, which delivers heat to every connected home. This type of infrastructure is commonly used in Europe.

### What problem does district heating solve?

1. Oil and oil boilers aren't going to be around forever! The UK Government is supporting the move away from gas and oil to renewable alternatives, some UK boiler manufacturers have stopped making oil boilers completely!
2. Reduce our carbon footprint. District heating can use renewable energy sources, so no fossil fuels are used. Burning fossil fuels has a devastating impact on climate change, local air quality and health.
3. It has the power to make your energy supply local. Depending on the business model to be used for the project, a local renewable energy centre could support revenue of the local authority, community, residents and local companies.
4. It is accessible to everyone... If you have £10-£15,000 available, you could look at installing your own renewable heating solution. The problem is, very few people have this amount of money available. District heating looks to be financially accessible to every household.

### Why should I get involved?

This is a community project; it won't happen without you! This is an ambitious project and it will likely take a couple of years to make happen. Along the way we will need information on your heating system, your feedback and opinions on the project, to inform the design and prove to funders that we are worth investing in!

Join our mailing list: [info@g0grafham.co.uk](mailto:info@g0grafham.co.uk)

*Janet Hall from G0, Going Zero*



Please email [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)  
if you are able to deliver paper copies of Grafham Gossip  
to one side of Breach Road once a month.

*Thank you, Ed.*

## Biology A Level Tutor

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## The Hog, The Bird and The Beetle - 4 *David Cudby*

The Beetle spoke quietly from under the leaf litter. 'I am very nervous about what I'm going to ask.' Then silence. A nervous head ventured out a little and looked first to The Bird and then towards The Hog. Then more silence and complete stillness.

'What is it?' asked The Bird. 'Well like I said I feel very nervous and might be tempting fate.' Silence again.

'On second thoughts, perhaps I will leave it, it's probably a question that I should never ask.' Another pause. 'Maybe it is a question that should not be addressed to a stronger being.'

Thoughtful silences all round.



The Bird chipped in, 'I am not sure who is feeling more nervous 'B,' you or me.' The Hog offered a similar comment, 'Come on 'B' let's hear it, we won't eat you.'

With shock and a slight note of panic The Beetle responded. 'That's exactly it, why is it that you two don't eat me?' 'We have lived in and around this hedgerow for a while haven't we, and talked about our world and shared thoughts and stories. You've had ample opportunity to eat me, why haven't you?'

The Hog was first to answer. 'Well speaking for myself 'B,' I haven't felt the urge to eat you exactly because we have lived in and around this hedgerow for a while, haven't we, and talked about our world and shared thoughts and stories.'

The Bird nodded as a sign of offering the same reasoning.



Feeling a little more confident The Beetle asked, at the same time withdrawing into the leaf litter, 'So if I had arrived here this morning as a stranger, then one of you might well have eaten me?'

The Bird and The Hog nodded enthusiastically, while making teasing beak tapping and lip smacking noises.

Then another silence before The Bird spoke. 'Well yes, as an unannounced stranger your fate could well have been different.'

'But when I first met you I was a stranger, how come you didn't eat me straight away?'

The Bird continued, 'I may not have been hungry at that moment or perhaps you were already talking to The Hog when I arrived and as you had survived that meeting perhaps I thought you were interesting enough to get to know.' 'Oh and by the way, I did eat a member of your family once and it tasted awful.' After that comment they all shuffled a bit and laughed nervously.

Feeling more relaxed now The Beetle took up the subject again. 'Do you think that living close to someone and sharing thoughts with them makes it more likely that you won't feel the urge to harm them?' The others murmured their agreement.

On a philosophical roll 'B' pushed further. 'So getting to know another may lead to respect?'

'Yes' was the consensus. 'What about the wider point. Does living close to nature and learning about it increase respect for nature generally?'

'Oh if only that were true,' reflected The Bird. 'Not in my experience.'

The Hog couldn't agree with The Beetle's proposition either. 'I reckon that only very close association with nature works and then only for what is familiar. With distance and unfamiliarity the interest fades rapidly.'

'B' had the final words.

*Love what is close by  
Distance fades the caring urge  
Care at wider scale*

**Hunts Community Cancer Network (HCCN)**

The weekly support group held in Ellington Village Hall is cancelled until further notice, but there is a closed Facebook group for members and volunteers. For more details or help contact Annie by phone: **01234 709836** or email: [annie@hccnthecharity.org](mailto:annie@hccnthecharity.org)



Hunts Community Cancer Network

**Grafham Community Shop**

Tel: 01480 810119

**Opening Times**

Mon-Fri 8.00 - 6.30

Sat 8.00 - 5.00

Sun 9.00 - 2.00

Bank Holidays 9.00 - 2.00



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**Find Christmas opening hours and Shop News in Talking Shop on page 5**

**Grafham Trout**

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**Deadline - 9.00am  
 Friday 15th January  
 for the February issue**

Thanks, Ed [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)

**Thursford Christmas Spectacular**

**Next year's date  
 is Friday 12th November 2021  
 Please save the date**

**GRAFOON**  
 by zam



**A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme**



Details of planned road closures, diversions and latest news can be found on the Highways England website by clicking [here](https://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A14C2H) or type [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A14C2H](https://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A14C2H) into your search engine

or stay updated by following: <https://twitter.com/a14c2h> and <https://en-gb.facebook.com/A14C2H>

There's also a dedicated A14 Public Helpline **0800 270 0114**

Details of planned road closures and diversions are on Grafham village web site also: [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk) Ed

**GRAFOON**  
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