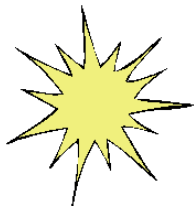


Grafham Gossip

Deadline for September issue: by 9am on Friday 15th August

Editor's note...

As I write this the weather has cooled down. Let's hope that over August, with families on holiday, the weather remains fine (perhaps with some rain at night for the gardens).



After the excitement of July's dog show and beer festival - see page 7 for photos - and also the church flower festival and bioblitz, August seems quieter. Even the Parish Council does not have a meeting in August, see page 3. There is however, a performance of Twelfth Night at Marlow car park (by Grafham Water Visitor Centre) on Friday 15th August at 6.30pm see page 6 for details.

I hope you have a good summer and maybe a trip somewhere over the Bank Holiday Monday 25th August.

Remember to send in all your contributions including details of upcoming events in September, in good time for the deadline of 9:00am on Friday 15th August.

Keep Gossiping

editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Family Fun Day at Pepys House

"Samuel Pepys, Pride of Brampton"

Discover more about the famous diarist who wrote about the Great Fire of London and saved the Royal Navy...



Design a 17th century ship



Make a 17th century recipe



Turn yourself into a portrait



Dig for Brampton's lost gold...!

£5 per guest aged 3-12 – includes a drink

19 August – Drop in anytime
from 11am to 4pm

or visit BuyTickets.at/PepysHouse
to prebook and enjoy free facepainting too!

In aid of the Pepys House Charity

Get Ready, Go Digital, Stay Connected

Is your landline ready? For more information, visit:
www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/digitalswitchover

**Get ready...
GO DIGITAL
Stay connected.**

Is your landline ready?

The Digital Switchover is coming – by 31 January 2027* traditional phone lines will be upgraded with digital technology.

* Deadline confirmed by Openreach at time of publication

*Find dates and details of
more events and activities on
pages 6, 10 and 12*

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All Saints Church, Grafham

Paperback book sales continue in the porch. Thank you for your donations. They provide a valuable source of income for our church. Donations can be made by cash into the blue tin attached to the bookshelf or by card or phone using our contactless device (in the church, if not in the porch.) More details can be found in the notice on the back page.



| | | | |
|------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| 4th Sunday | 27th July | 09:30 | Holy Communion Grafham |
| | | 11:00 | Morning Worship Brampton |
| 1st Sunday | 3rd August | 09:30 | Morning Worship Grafham |
| | | 11:00 | Holy Communion Brampton |
| 2nd Sunday | 10th August | 09:30 | Holy Communion Ellington |
| | | 11:00 | Morning Worship Brampton |
| | | 16:30 | Taizé Grafham |
| Wednesday | 13th August | 09:00 | Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham |
| 3rd Sunday | 17th August | 09:30 | Morning Worship Ellington |
| | | 11:00 | Holy Communion Brampton |
| Wednesday | 20th August | 09:00 | Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham |
| 4th Sunday | 24th August | 09:30 | Holy Communion Grafham |
| | | 11:00 | Morning Worship Brampton |
| 5th Sunday | 31st August | 11:00 | All Together Holy Communion Brampton |
| 1st Sunday | 7th Sept | 09:30 | Morning Worship Grafham |
| | | 11:00 | Holy Communion Brampton |

For a full list of services for all three churches visit: www.eastleightonstone.com/worship

Listed on the left, you will find:

- Grafham Services (On Wednesdays not listed, there is an informal Morning Prayer at Grafham 09.00 - 09.30. Open to all.)
- Sunday services for Brampton and Ellington
- Some extra services at times e.g. Christmas, Easter, festivals

The Brampton 11.00 Sunday service is live-streamed every week and can be accessed via www.eastleightonstone.com

Sunday Evening Youth

meets at All Saints Church, Huntingdon
6 - 7.30pm on Sundays and sometimes on Fridays
(due to bank holidays)

For more details contact: Frankie@eastleightonstone.com
or Ruth@huntingdonparish.org

To join the mailing list for the East Leightonstone Parish Newsletter, visit: www.eastleightonstone.com and click [News](#)

For Church Donations at any time
please scan the QR Code.
Thank you



Contacting the clergy:

Duncan Goldthorpe 01480 459246 or 07907 694177
rev.duncan.goldthorpe@eastleightonstone.com

Churchwardens:

Sue Roberts 07980 889904
Brian Radbone
wardens@eastleightonstone.com



Pork and Vegetable Stir-fry

This recipe is for 4 people. It uses pork belly, one of the cheapest pork cuts. As a marinade, the recipe uses some of those spices from the back of the cupboard. The stir-fry is made with French beans which are in season, but rather than Chinese cabbage I'd use other vegetables from the fridge. At the moment I have loads of courgettes.

Ingredients: For the pork belly

- 150g pork belly
- 1 star anise
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp fennel seeds
- 2 cloves
- ½ tbsp light soy sauce

- 1 tsp sesame oil
- ½ tsp sugar
- 1 tsp corn flour
- 1 tbsp oil



For the stir-fry

- 80g French beans, trimmed
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly chopped
- ½ spring onion, roughly chopped
- ½ onion, finely sliced
- 50g sweet red peppers, thinly sliced
- 50g Chinese cabbage, thinly sliced
- 2 spring onions, finely sliced, to serve

For the stir-fry sauce

- 1 tsp chilli oil
- 1 tsp hoisin sauce
- ½ tbsp light soy sauce
- 1 tsp Shaoxing rice wine
- ½ tsp dark soy sauce
- 100ml fresh chicken

To make the pork belly

- Put the meat into a saucepan with the star anise, cinnamon stick, bay leaves, fennel seeds and cloves with 500ml - 1litre boiling water. Simmer on a low-medium heat for 45 minutes. Drain through a sieve and place in a cold bowl. Cover with cling film and refrigerate overnight or for at least 1 hour.
- Slice the pork into 2 - 3mm thick slices and place in a small mixing bowl. Add soy sauce, sesame oil, sugar and corn flour and massage into the pork using your hands.
- Heat the oil in a wok/frying pan placed over a high heat. Add the pork and sear well on both sides for 1 minute. Remove the pork and set aside, leaving the pork juices in the pan.

To make the stir-fry

- Blanch the beans in boiling water for 2 minutes. Refresh in cold water and set aside.
- Add a little more oil to the hot pan and add the garlic, spring onion and onion then stir-fry for 30 seconds or until the onions are lightly browned. Add the red peppers, Chinese leaf and beans at 30 second intervals.
- Mix together the stir-fry sauce ingredients.
- Return the pork to the pan with the stir-fry sauce and boil for 30-60 seconds stirring well. Tip onto a large plate or between 4 bowls, garnish with spring onions and serve.

Parish News July 2025



New weekly food waste collections to start next year 2026

After 31st March 2026 local councils will begin to offer weekly food waste collections to households.

Provisional dates for District Council collections in Cambridgeshire are:

- Fenland and Huntingdonshire District Council to start in March 2026

The government has given councils money to spend on:

- new collection vehicles • new waste containers, (kerbside and indoor caddies) • information detailing the changes for householders

Over ten million tonnes of food is wasted every year in the UK so separate collections of food waste will be sent to specialist facilities and not to landfill. Taking food waste to these facilities will generate energy to power homes and businesses and cut down the more than 18 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

How will the new policy work?

- Households will be given separate containers for food waste, and (in some areas) separate bins for paper and cardboard will also be introduced. Councils across Cambridgeshire will continue to collect dry recycling together in one bin.
- This will cut the amount of food waste going to landfill and will ensure smelly waste doesn't sit in bins for weeks.

As part of this drive to educate residents about the new service we're running a project with volunteers from across the five district councils, (East Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Huntingdonshire) which will start in June 2025.

Sign up to become a food waste volunteer!

By 31st March 2026, food waste will be collected from most households every week, instead of once every two weeks. Food waste will then be collected separately from garden waste. As well as helping everyone think about the amount of food they purchase, we want food waste to be recycled effectively. We're looking for volunteers to go out anytime, to talk to householders on their doorsteps and let them know about the new services. We'll provide full training, as well as examples of the items that will be delivered by the district councils, to householders.

<https://www.recap.co.uk/news/food-waste-volunteers-needed-introducing-simpler-recycling>

Village Hall EV Charge Point Installation – Update

Residents may have noticed the new electric vehicle charge point recently installed in the Village Hall car park. While the unit is now in place, it is not yet operational.

Installation Schedule:

- The next steps are for UK Power Network to address the incoming site power supply. They are scheduled for works in the area from 14th July until 23rd July (some on, some off site). Please note this may be subject to change.
- After this, Blink (EV supplier) will be back on site for 7 days to make the electrical connections, undertake the electrical inspection certification and commission the units

The Parish Council appreciates your patience as the new amenity is bought online.

The Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) are located as they will be when we receive the solar panels:

- By the Cinnamon (monitoring traffic towards Ellington).
- Opposite Chestnut Close (monitoring traffic from Buckden/Perry).

(Morelock have had supply issues and have not yet been able to provide the Parish Council with the solar panels).

Bus Fare Changes From 1st July 2025 Across Cambridgeshire

As of Tuesday 1st July 2025, bus fares across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have changed.

After the Government increased the national fare cap to £3 from 1st January 2025, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority chose to keep fares capped at £2 through to the end of June.

From 1st July, single fares for bus journeys within the county have increased to £2.50.

There will be no full PC meeting in August so the next normal PC meeting is on 2nd September, 7.30pm in the village hall. We hope to see you there.

Cllr Ian Gardener

Chairman, Grafham Parish Council

For more information about your Parish Council see the village website:

<https://grafham.org.uk/index.php/parish-council> or contact a member of the parish council or the parish clerk, details below.

Contact details for Grafham's Parish, District and County Councillors

Grafham Parish Council Parish Clerk, **Lisa Hazel** clerk@grafhampc.org

Ian Gardener Chair 01480 812821 i.gardener@grafhampc.org **David Russell** d.russell@grafhampc.org

Patrick Curran p.curran@grafhampc.org **Jo Dunn** j.dunn@grafhampc.org **Sunil Gogna** s.gogna@grafhampc.org

Diana Thomas d.thomas@grafhampc.org **Alf Lesurf** a.lesurf@grafhampc.org



Grafham's County Councillor

Liam Beckett 07312 081 892

Liam.Beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

C/O Members Services,
Cambs County Council, Box ALC 2650,
New Shire Hall, Alconbury PE28 4YE



Grafham's District Councillor

Stephen Cawley 07925 741 167

stephen.cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

34 North Road
Alconbury Weston,
PE28 4JU

"Has the bin man bin Mam?"

Alternate Wednesdays

Blue Bin - Recycling and Black Bin - Refuse

Every other Thursday Green Bin - Garden Waste



★ Green bins collected only if you have subscribed to the Garden Waste Collection service.

For details see the [Garden Waste section](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste) of www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste

Changes to Disposal of Food Waste Find out more on the [Food Waste page](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) of www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

| August | | | | | | | September | | | | | | |
|--------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | Blu | G* | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | 5 | Blu | G* | 8 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 9 | Blk | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 11 | 12 | Blk | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 15 | 16 | Blu | G* | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 18 | 19 | Blu | G* | 22 | 23 | 24 | 22 | 23 | Blk | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 25 | 26 | Blk | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 29 | 30 | | | | | |

For waste and recycling services, visit: www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins or call 01480 388640 between 8:45am and 5:00pm

Using TIGER on Demand you can book a journey to and from anywhere within the TIGER on Demand travel zones using any of the virtual bus stops.

When can I travel? Monday to Saturday from 06:30 – 19:00. There is no service on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

How do I book? The quickest way to book is by downloading the Tiger on Demand app, available on Google Play and App Store. Booking can be made up to 48 hours in advance of the journey.

Alternatively you can book by visiting

www.tigerondemand.co.uk

Or, you can call **01480 595440**. Mon to Sat 06:00 – 19:30.

How much does it cost?

- Adults £2.50 per journey - Choose 'Adult' fare option on booking
- Under 5s travel for FREE - Choose 'Infant' fare option

- Children 5-16yrs £1 per journey - Choose 'Youth' fare option

- Concessionary Bus Pass Holders and Disability Bus Pass Holders

travel for FREE - 'Senior' or 'Person with disability' option on booking. Show your pass to the driver when you board.

- Tiger Pass Holders £1 per journey, ask for the 'Reduced' fare option when booking. Show your pass to the driver when you board. (May have gone up on 1st July, but not confirmed before printing. Ed)

How do I pay? Use a debit or credit card to book over the phone. Drivers are not able to accept cash or card payments.

For more details see

<https://transport.cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/buses/tiger-on-demand>



TIGER
On Demand

RHS Top Gardening Jobs for August

August is usually one of the hottest months of the year - making watering essential. Try to use grey water wherever possible, especially as water butts may be running low if it has been a dry summer. August is traditionally holiday time, so you might need to enlist the help of friends and family to look after the garden while you are away. When you are at home, take the time to prune *Wisteria* and summer-flowering shrubs such as lavender once they've finished flowering.

1. Prune *Wisteria*
2. Summer prune trained apples and pears
3. Deadhead flowering plants regularly
4. Water containers and new plants, preferably with grey recycled water or stored rainwater
5. Collect seed from garden plants
6. Harvest sweetcorn and other vegetables as they become ready
7. Cut out old fruited canes on raspberries
8. Lift and pot up rooted strawberry runners
9. Keep ponds and water features topped up
10. Improve the soil with green manures



There are more details on the [Royal Horticultural Society website](https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/august): <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/august>

Useful Phone Numbers

All emergencies **999**

Police non-emergencies **101**

NHS - help for your symptoms **111**

Hard of hearing textphone service **1800 1101** or for emergencies **Text 999**

Huntingdon Police Station **01480 456111**

Anti-terrorism Hotline **0800 789321**

Action Fraud **03001 232040**

Crimestoppers **0800 555111** (anonymous)

To report anti-social behaviour in Grafham **01480 388388** or email: crm_cpe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

To stop unwanted phone calls

Telephone Preference Service TPS **03450 700707**

To stop unwanted mail (Royal Mail) **03457 740740**

Power cut Call **105** or **08003 163105** or text **POWER** and your postcode to **80876**

<http://www.powercut105.com>



Website: www.grafham.org.uk

E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Talking Shop

Hot Weather, Beer and Happy Campers

The shop has been doing good business with barbecue food and ice creams selling like the proverbial hot cakes. Perhaps it's because the shop is possibly the coolest place in the village with its air conditioning, speaking of which I think we sell hair conditioner if you need it. The weather seems to have really encouraged visitors to the campsite who seem very happy to browse the shop, buying essentials and treats for themselves. We stayed open a bit later over the beer festival and did good business (thank you Ian) selling sausage rolls and pies.

Fresh Fruit and Veg, Seasonal Stuff and Strawberry Woes

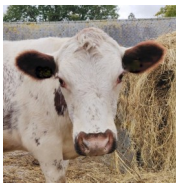
We have tweaked our fresh fruit and veg order to match seasonal demands: more salad things and summer fruits when available. We rely on a local wholesaler for our stock so have to go with what he supplies so we can't always guarantee UK produce which is a shame. Belgian strawberries were tasty but will probably never be as good as the ones grown at home freshly picked after a day of hot sun and full

of sweetness. Apparently during Wimbledon decent strawberries were hard to come by as all deliveries seem to be going to SW London. Meanwhile indecent strawberries were being locked up...

Farewell Saints and Sinners and more price rises

The owners of Saints and Sinners are gradually winding down their business as they prepare to retire so they will be very soon be unable to supply us. Putting a rustic cloth on a jam pot is marvellous marketing gimmick and certainly makes the jams and chutneys look pretty making a lovely gift... never mind what's inside! If anyone knows of some similar supplier of jams and chutneys please let Belinda know. We have had another supplier warn us of price rises as they pass on costs down the supply chain, sadly we have to do the same. One glimmer of hope on the horizon is that we may be able to offer some very local honey again, and Southdown Lamb will soon be available to order from the shop. No price rises expected on the latter and, as the honey can't be Manuka it won't cost you an arm and two legs!

www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk 01480 810119
See back page for Opening Hours



Chewing the Cud with Revd Duncan Goldthorpe Rector of The Parish of East Leightonstone

As we move through July and approach August with the promise of continued fine summer weather, for many of us it is a time for a change of tempo. It is a time to slow down from the usual rush. A moment to forget those deadlines, targets, and the usual timetable.



A moment to put it all aside for at least a short while and as we take some time off for a holiday - either going away to somewhere different or maybe just staying at home and catching up on some much-needed sleep. It is a moment to rest.

Certainly, our work fixated, success focused, demand driven culture denies to many the sleep that they need. Research has shown that too many people nowadays do not sleep long enough or well enough so as to be at their best. I know for myself that as I get older I seem to need my sleep and that without it I quickly become irritable and impatient.



That need for proper rest is built into us, made as we all are in the image of God. In three days, says the Book of Genesis, God had formed the world. Then, in three parallel days he wonderfully filled it with the light of the sun and moon and stars and with the trees and plants and creatures of the deep, with the birds of the sky and all the animals that roamed across the earth. The apex of his work was the creation of humankind and: *God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!*

But then, having finished his work of creation, he rested. On the seventh day he rested from all his work. That rest would not have included sleep. As the psalmist says when speaking of God's great care for us: *the one who watches over you will not slumber. Indeed, he who watches over Israel never slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121: 3 – 4)*, which is a reminder that God not only made the hills, the heavens, and the earth but he also watches over us, never diverted nor distracted. We can never outgrow

our need for God's untiring watch over our lives. But that 'watch,' that care and provision of us, includes God's recognition of our need for rest. So, our need to take a moment of rest, a day of rest in biblical terms, became a commandment.

Jesus himself demonstrated our need for rest and our need for sleep. In Mark's Gospel we are told how he took his disciples away to rest after they had completed the work he had given them to do (*Mark 6: 31*). And in Luke's Gospel we read how Jesus slept even as a storm raged around the boat on which he and his disciples were travelling (*Luke 8: 23ff*). It calls to my mind some other words that we read in the psalms: *God gives sleep to his loved ones (Psalm 127: 2)*.

So, rest and sleep are God given gifts. But they are more. They are moments to let go and to remind ourselves that God is in control.

I hope and pray that you will all know something of that rest (and chance to catch up on some quality sleep!) over the Summer and that whatever you are doing, it will be a time of real blessing, peace, and relaxation. But don't leave it at just that few days or couple of weeks. Remember that our need to rest 'a day each week' is built into us and indeed that not only can we rest on one day of the week, but we are invited to rest in Jesus every day, at any time: *Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11: 28)*.

Every blessing, Duncan

Twelfth Night

Friday 15th August

Shipwrecked and separated from her twin brother, Viola disguises herself as a man and becomes entwined in a hilarious love triangle. Serving Duke Orsino, who secretly loves Countess Olivia, Viola finds herself in a twist when Olivia falls for her in disguise! Amidst the comedic chaos of mistaken identities, meet the drunken Sir Toby Belch, the pompous Malvolio, and enjoy a lively atmosphere filled with fun and

Location: Grafham Water, Marlow Car Park, Huntingdon, PE28 0BH

Prices:

£14 Adult

£12 Child (under 16)

£45 Family 1 (2 adults + 2 children)

£35 Family 2 (1 adult + 2 children)

Under 12 months free of charge

All children must be accompanied by a paying adult.

Standard car parking charges apply

live music.

Bursting with romance and laughter, "Twelfth Night" is a whirlwind of mistaken identities and joyful endings!

Suitable For: *suitable for all*

Timings: Performance starts at 6:30pm (arrivals from 5:30pm)

Run time approx. 2 hours 15 minutes including an interval

Tickets on sale now No refunds. No exchanges. See: anglianwaterparks.co.uk/events

If an Event is cancelled by the Event Organiser (i.e. a cancellation due to circumstances beyond the Event Organiser's control), Anglian Water will refund the purchase price of your tickets. If an Event is moved from its advertised venue and / or the date is changed, tickets already purchased may remain valid should you wish to attend the revised Event. If not, Anglian Water will refund the purchase price of your tickets.



Inside UK Parliament free guided tours

UK residents can book a free 'Inside UK Parliament' guided tour up to three months in advance by contacting your local Member of Parliament (MP). Early booking is recommended.

You do not have to know your MP personally or support them politically to book this tour. <https://www.parliament.uk/free-guided-tours>

If you are interested please email Ben Obese, MP for Huntingdon: ben.obese@parliament.co.uk and a member of his staff, will contact you to arrange it.

Terry did a tour of the House of Commons in June and were met by Mary Stamp, Ben's chief of staff at 10am in Portcullis House which is located on the Embankment. Tina recounts that "After security checks, Mary was there to greet us. She kindly did a full tour of two and a half hours and her knowledge and experience on the history of the building and people: MPs, prime ministers and kings was fascinating and amazing.

Mary enlightened us with so much information and knowledge it made the tour really exciting and very interesting for us both. Her enthusiasm for the building and the history were totally infectious and extremely entertaining."

Tina says "I would highly recommend the visit to the House and this tour. Definitely worth doing and its free!"

Pepys House Open Days

Part of **Huntingdonshire History Festival**

Enjoy a tour of Brampton's
Brampton little house
of huge heritage!

Learn more about
your local area's connection
to one of history's most significant figures.

Tours free, with donations to
the Pepys House Charity welcomed.

2 August and 7 September

Drop in from 11am to 4pm

or **pre-book to guarantee your space**
and receive a **free guide book!**

Visit BuyTickets.at/PepysHouse for more info

Combine's been and gone - Grafham 16th July - very early
for Winter Wheat. Spot the balloon in the online version!



Grafham Dog Show Delights at the Beer Festival!

A huge thank you to everyone who came out to support the Grafham Dog Show, part of this year's ever-popular Beer Festival! The sun was shining, spirits were high, and the field was filled with tail wags and happy barks.

We saw a brilliant turnout with a whole host of fantastic dogs entering the competition - from cheeky terriers to graceful greyhounds, every pooch brought personality and charm. It was tough for the judges to choose, but we're thrilled to announce that Best in Show was proudly claimed by Grafham's very own Sonny, with his gleaming wax coat and impeccable manners winning hearts all around.

Thank you again to all the dog owners, volunteers, and spectators who made this event so special. Here's to paws, pints and plenty more local celebrations ahead!



Sonny from Grafham
'Best in Show'

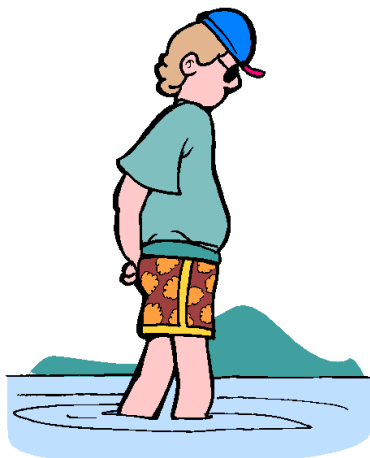
The winner of the 'Scruffiest Dog' is on the left.

The winner of the special rosette for 'Paw Behaviour' is Gerald, seen on the far left with Maria.



If you'd like to write a 'one-off' article for the Grafham Gossip, it will be gratefully received!

Please send it by email to: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



15th July: Our first sunflower in the churchyard





**Grafham,
Cambridgeshire
PE28 0BB**

Guide Price £1,250,000

**Peter
Lane &**
PARTNERS
—EST 1990—

At a Glance:

- Superbly extended, remodelled and upgraded detached residence in delightfully secluded village location.
- Standing in around half an acre of fine formal gardens with heated pool and far-reaching countryside views.
- Exceptional living space in excess of 3,500 square feet with annexe potential, ideal for the extended family, entertaining and homeworking.
- Five reception rooms, six bedrooms and three bath/shower rooms.
- Well-crafted kitchen/breakfast room with comprehensive range of quality cabinets and appliances and central island.
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- Double garage and extensive parking/turning space.
- All approached via a private drive providing access to just three individual properties.

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The Population of Grafham 1841 to 1911 Part 7, The Farms and their Lands

Edward Biffin

Apart from recording the people in the dwellings of Grafham, the censuses from 1851 to 1881 also recorded additional data such as the size of farms and the number of employees. The data has to be treated with caution, particularly in 1851 where the addresses are generic – such as ‘West End’ and ‘Low End’ and most of the farms are only identifiable because the occupant is a ‘farmer’.

The area of Grafham occupied by fields can be found using the 1887 Ordnance Survey 25” maps: north of the Diddington Brook there were 1460 acres, with a further 358 acres within the old Grafham parish boundaries on the Perry side of the Brook. A further 9 acres was occupied by woodland, and 31 acres by plots of land with buildings on them, including farmhouses.

In the 1851, 1861 and 1881 Censuses Grafham farms were said to occupy around 2100 acres, which is 250 acres more than the area of the parish. At least one farm, Redhill Farm in Midloe parish, farmed 40 to 60 acres of the East Perry part of Grafham so Grafham farms used around 300 acres of other parishes land – almost certainly including the western edge of Buckden where the 1813 map shows Lady Olivia Bernard Sparrow owning 108 acres next to the Lord Bishop of Lincoln’s Estate. The rest of the discrepancy must be accounted by a few close uphill bits of Ellington, also Bernard Sparrow/Duke of Manchester owned, and a large chunk of Great Staughton parish north of Perry and now under water but then close to Hill, Low and Glebe Farms.

As an aside – I mentioned Midloe Parish above: you will never have seen Midloe Church or come across the parish vicar because they never existed. The parish consisted of four farms – Redhill, Highfield, Midloe and Midloe Grange, and it is the latter which is key to its existence as it was a Grange of Warden Abbey in Bedfordshire and the ‘abbey estate’ somehow maintained its independence until it was combined with Southoe as a ‘civil parish’ in 1935.

From 1891 the census data no longer includes farm area or farm labourers on a particular farm, but this table shows the 1851 to 1881 data, including the area in acres, and the family name of the farmers, most of whom – except for the Armstrongs at Hill Farm - were tenants of the Duke of Manchester and manipulated by his policies in this period. Also shown are the number of agricultural labourers employed (lbs). The current status of the buildings that were then farms is noted in the first column – three were flooded/demolished to make way for Grafham Water.

| Census › | 1851 | 1861 | 1871 | 1881 |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Low Farm (flooded) | 248 acres, W White, 6 labrs | 270 acres, S Brawn, 9 labrs | 316 acres, F Brown, 11 labrs | 316 acres, F Brown, 4 labrs |
| Hill Farm (now house) | 400 acres, P Armstrong, 16 labrs | 400 acres, P Armstrong, 16 labrs | 160 acres, P Armstrong, 5 labrs | 260 acres, C Armstrong, 6 labrs |
| Smallholding (abandoned) | 7 acres, G Bittin | 7 acres, G Bittin | | |
| Great House (now Caravan Site) | no acreage given, G Holah | 140 acres, G Holah, 7 labrs | | |
| Village Farm (now house) | | 123 acres, J Browning, 5 labrs | 145 acres, J Browning, 4 labrs | [run by Ladds; see note below] |
| Glebe Farm (flooded) | 336 acres, J White, 12 labrs | 220 acres, J White, 7 labrs | 300 acres, E Brown, 12 labrs | 300 acres, E Brown, 15 labrs |
| Top Farm (demolished) | 248 acres, J Browning, 7 labrs | Occupied by J Strattor, bailiff | | |
| Model Farm (now house) | 367 acres, W Armstrong, 12 lbs | 760 acres, G Armstrong, 31 labrs | 733 acres, G Armstrong, 32 labrs | 937 acres, G Armstrong, 62 labrs |
| Grafham Farm , Perry (demolished) | 200 acres, J Browning 4 labrs | 200 acres, J Browning, 6 labrs | 60 acres, W Watts, 2 labrs | 87 acres, W Marriott, 2 labrs |

In 1881 the Brownings had moved from Village Farm and before the new farmer moved in, it was being run from the Ladds farm in Ellington, supervised by Charles Fox, ‘bailiff manager for his Grace the Duke of Manchester’ who occupied part of Model Farm and was responsible for ‘1200 acres and employing 41 men and 9 boys’. Those with a quick mental arithmetic ability will note that even putting the Village Farm acres in the Model Farm total doesn’t produce 1200 acres, and there are problems with the number of labourers employed as well. Another small problem concerns Hill Farm, where the 1871 area is about 100 acres below the probable total, but that is what the original manuscript census says!

The next article will look at the agricultural labourers and how girls joined boys in the 1870s and where they lived.



Help keep me stress-free! Please send in your contributions on time!

*Email: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk as early as you like, but definitely by 9am on 15th.
Thanks, Ed.*

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Thursford Christmas Spectacular

Robinson's Coaches are running a trip
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for the 2pm matinee show at Thursford in Norfolk.

Adult tickets are £79, OAPs are £77 and children are £65.

Leaving Buckden Towers at 9:38am.

If anyone is interested please call Tim at Robinson's Coaches, Kimbolton direct on 01480 860581 to reserve your seat and to pay for your ticket to this very special, Christmas Spectacular

Tina

Please get in touch if you can spare an hour or so to help clean the church, even if only now and then.



We are desperately short of helpers.

Contact: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Little Fishes from September

There are no Little Fishes Stay + Play sessions during August, but from September, if you can spare an hour on Wednesday mornings,

please join our tea rota!



Email: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Ragwort

One of the most reviled 'weeds' in the UK, Ragwort belongs to one of the biggest genera of flowering plants in the world, with some 1400 species worldwide. There are, however, only four species native to the UK, the ubiquitous Common Ragwort and its similar cousin Hoary Ragwort. The two others are specialists of waterlogged ground, Fen Ragwort and Marsh Ragwort which are much rarer. Indeed, the Fen Ragwort was thought extinct but was rediscovered in a ditch near Ely in the 1970s and is now found on several fen nature reserves. Another 15 species have been introduced or escaped from collections, perhaps the most famous of which is Oxford Ragwort. This enterprising plant was first kept in botanic gardens in Oxford in the 1770s immediately escaping into the city. By the mid-1800s it had established itself at the train station from where it travelled the country following the tracks, the dry, stony railbed mimicking its natural Mediterranean habitat.

But why is the plant so disliked? It's ability to colonise any grassland brings it into conflict with landowners small and large because of its defence mechanism. It contains Pyrrolizidine alkaloids which attack the liver causing death through cirrhosis. Mainly affecting horses, the chemical is a cumulative poison, but the average horse would have to eat around 35kg of Ragwort for it to be a fatal dose. Most grazing animals will actively avoid eating the plant as it has both an unpleasant odour and taste. It is only when cut and dried that it becomes palatable, and most cases, poisoning can be traced to contaminated hay.



Common Ragwort



Narrow-leaved Ragwort

On the flip side this plant has an important ecological role to play in the countryside. Over 200 species of insect have been recorded feeding on the plant. It provides an important and long-lasting source of nectar for butterflies, bees, flies, beetles and other pollinating insects. 27 species require the plant for survival, perhaps the most famous of which is the Cinnabar Moth. This black and red day-flying moth lays its eggs on Ragwort and the yellow and black banded caterpillars feast on the plant taking in the toxins to make themselves unpalatable to predators. So voracious are the caterpillars that they have been used as a biological control in countries where the introduced Common Ragwort is an invasive problem.

Ragwort was also considered aesthetically pleasing. In 1831 John Clare wrote a poem to the plant, favourably comparing its golden yellow blooms, scattered across the verdant green of a meadow, with the sun itself. And stock farmers have even solved their Ragwort problem by cutting the flowers and selling them as posies to unsuspecting urbanites. So, if it pops up in your garden don't weed it all out leave some of this bright, native plant to bring a little more diversity.

Photographs: Gregory Belcher

Gregory Belcher
Senior Reserves Officer,
Wildlife Trust BCN



Wildlife Trust for
**Beds, Cambs
& Northants**

Arthur Rank Hospice Sunflower Memories

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity's annual Sunflower Memories celebration returns in August. You can dedicate a Sunflower marker, inscribed with a loved one's name, to be displayed in the hospice gardens in Cambridge. There will also be a special commemoration event on Saturday 9th August 2025.

Please visit arhc.org.uk/sunflower or telephone 01223 675888 to find out more.



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The next Tea & Chat will be on
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you're all very welcome!

There is **no Tea & Chat in August**, so...
the next date will be
Thurs 25th Sept,
when we will be raising funds for Macmillan.
Hope to see you there!"

For more details contact: **Sandra 07931 129772**



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