

# Grafham Gossip

Deadline for November issue: by 9am on Wednesday 15th October



## Editor's note...

Summer is fading fast and the temperature is dropping to the cooler, crisper atmosphere of Autumn. It's time to pull out our jumpers, enjoy long walks in the countryside while taking in the vibrant colours of the fallen leaves in the golden October sunlight.

There are several 'must reads' this month. Find out about the new 'Badgers Relishes' in 'Talking Shop' on page 5. Learn about 'Ladybirds' from Gregory Belcher on page 7. Try to solve Edward's problem of where the farmworkers of Low Grafham lived in the 1850s and 1860s on page 9. Enjoy the descriptive writing in the first part of an autumn walk in 'Out and About' on page 11. Don't forget to try this month's simple recipe on page 8 'Sausage and Potato Bake!' Of course there are lots of other interesting and informative items on every page for you to discover as you read.

Remember to send in your news, views, photos, adverts, gossip and details of upcoming events in November, by the 9am deadline on Wednesday 15th October.

Happy Hallowe'en!

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



Tea & Chat's  
annual fund raiser for



**Macmillan Cancer Support**

**Thursday 25th September**

**2.30 - 4pm**

in Grafham Village Hall

It would be wonderful if you would bring some cash and bake some cakes - if you see this in time - to support this worthy cause.

For details contact Sandra 07931 129777

Future Tea & Chat dates are on the back page.

## Grafham Fireworks 8th November TIMBER FOR THE BONFIRE



If you have timber suitable for the bonfire, please deliver it to the far side of the 5 a-side pitch, Grafham Village Hall, at 3pm on Saturday 8th November where Steve will be in charge!

**Or call Dan 07802 645264**

who will collect it on the morning of Saturday 8th.

Please make sure that there's nothing included that is explosive or that might give off noxious fumes.

## Grafham Village Fireworks 2025

**Saturday 8th November**

**Gates 5pm**

**Fireworks**

**6:30pm**

**Adults £5  
Children (5-16) £3  
Under 5s Free**

**Food & Drink Available**



<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/grafhamvillagefireworks>



## Village Shop AGM Thurs 23rd October 6.45 for 7pm



Receive cake and a cuppa for turning up at 6.45!

See Talking Shop on page 5 for details

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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	28th Sept	<b>09:30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Morning Worship <b>Brampton</b>
1st Sunday	5th Oct	<b>09:30</b>	Morning Worship <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Holy Communion with baptism <b>Brampton</b>
2nd Sunday	12th Oct	<b>09:30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Ellington</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Morning Worship <b>Brampton</b>
		<b>16:30</b>	Taizé <b>Grafham</b>
Wednesday	15th Oct	<b>09:00</b>	Morning Prayer with Duncan <b>Grafham</b>
3rd Sunday	19th Oct	<b>09:30</b>	Morning Worship <b>Ellington</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Holy Communion with baptism <b>Brampton</b>
Wednesday	22nd Oct	<b>09:00</b>	Morning Prayer with Duncan <b>Grafham</b>
4th Sunday	26th Oct	<b>09:30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Morning Worship with baptism <b>Brampton</b>
		<b>15:30</b>	Service of Thanksgiving for those we love but no longer see <b>Brampton</b>
1st Sunday	2nd Nov	<b>09:30</b>	Morning Worship <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>

### Contacting the clergy:

Duncan Goldthorpe 01480 459246 or 07907 694177  
[rev.duncan.goldthorpe@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:rev.duncan.goldthorpe@eastleightonstone.com)

### Churchwardens:

Sue Roberts 07980 889904  
[sue@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:sue@eastleightonstone.com)  
 Brian Radbone [brian@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:brian@eastleightonstone.com)  
[wardens@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:wardens@eastleightonstone.com)



For a full list of services for all three churches visit: [www.eastleightonstone.com/worship](http://www.eastleightonstone.com/worship) and click on [Calendar](#)

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](http://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](mailto:Frankie@eastleightonstone.com)  
 or [Ruth@huntingdonparish.org](mailto:Ruth@huntingdonparish.org)

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

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



## View from the Pew

So we are now truly into Autumn and seeing golden brown leaves on the ground is witness to this colourful season. Be sure to keep warm as the month turns chilly.

A sure fire Autumn warmer is the Supper Night planned by our Fellowship Impact Group. This will take place in Grafham Village Hall on Saturday 11th October at 6.30 for 7 pm.

A range of supper dishes will be on offer plus jacket potatoes and salad. A vegetarian dish will be included. Non alcoholic punch will be served but diners are invited to bring their own alcohol. Cash donations towards the cost of the food are welcome.

Sign up lists will be available in all three churches. We are hoping for a good response this time. Unfortunately we had

to postpone the Supper previously because of insufficient take up.

An 'In Memoriam' service will be held at Brampton on 26th October at 3.30 pm, remembering those we have loved and lost. Tea and cake will be available.

On 29th August a 'pop up' breakfast café took place at Brampton with a full range of breakfast items including bacon butties. In view of its popularity, it has been suggested that this should be a regular event on fifth Sundays. Watch this space!



## Buckden Repair Café Buckden Village Hall, PE19 5UY

13.30 - 16.30 Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Bring along your stuff that's too good to throw away but needs fixing, for a free repair. (Donations very welcome)

Bookings open October 1<sup>st</sup> at <https://forms.gle/3NjojicPWCLyMcVQ7>  
 or more details from [buckdenrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:buckdenrepaircafe@gmail.com)

Refreshments, including homemade cakes and scones, available.

Nothing to be mended but fancy seeing what is going on, then please join us for a cuppa.

# Parish News September 2025



## Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS)

The solar panels have finally arrived, having been ordered in May, and have now been installed. They are at two of the three most significant locations as determined by the Speed Watch surveys in 2018, where they will remain as permanent fixtures:

- By the Cinnamon (monitoring northbound traffic towards Ellington).
- By Home Close (monitoring southbound traffic towards Perry and Buckden).

The plan was to site one MVAS by Chestnut Close, rather than Home Close, but this is not feasible due to the overhanging trees, which would render the solar panel ineffective.

The displays will be changed from time to time to help maintain effectiveness, as recommended by Morelock, the manufacturer.

## Grafham to Brampton Quietway

Designs and design features for the Brampton to Grafham Quietway have now been published. New features due to be installed include:

- Two new gateway features and signs welcoming users to the Quiet Lane
- Dropped kerb to connect footway to carriageway
- New 20mph advisory speed signs
- New wooden carved posts with public footpath sign
- New coloured road surfacing at intersections with public footpaths
- New passing bay
- New artwork on the railway bridge wall
- New 'slow' road markings on approach to bridge
- New carriageway edge lining
- Cycle parking stands and bench on the verge outside Brampton Wood car park
- Removed centre lines and cats eyes
- Resurfaced section of carriageway with new edge strips
- New bench and sculptural wooden carving post
- New traffic islands and kerbs
- New section of footway at the edge of Brampton

Please be advised that the planned works have now been delayed and are not now expected to begin until November at the earliest. To see the full detailed plans, please visit the village website: <https://grafham.org.uk>

## Playing Field Update

The Parish Council is currently in discussions with a local football club regarding potential use of the playing field. This could be a great opportunity to bring more community activity to the space.

Watch this space for more details as talks progress.

**Cllr Ian Gardener**

Chairman, Grafham Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Tuesday 7th October 2025, 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

*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](mailto:clerk@grafhampc.org)

**Ian Gardener Chair** 01480 812821 [i.gardener@grafhampc.org](mailto:i.gardener@grafhampc.org) **David Russell** [d.russell@grafhampc.org](mailto:d.russell@grafhampc.org)

**Patrick Curran** [p.curran@grafhampc.org](mailto:p.curran@grafhampc.org) **Jo Dunn** [j.dunn@grafhampc.org](mailto:j.dunn@grafhampc.org) **Sunil Gogna** [s.gogna@grafhampc.org](mailto:s.gogna@grafhampc.org)

**Diana Thomas** [d.thomas@grafhampc.org](mailto:d.thomas@grafhampc.org) **Alf Lesurf** [a.lesurf@grafhampc.org](mailto:a.lesurf@grafhampc.org)



### Grafham's County Councillor

**Liam Beckett 07312 081 892**

[Liam.Beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto:stephen.cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

34 North Road  
Alconbury Weston,  
PE28 4JU

## Man jailed after cocaine found in stolen car

A man has been jailed after police discovered a stash of cocaine hidden in a stolen car in Cambridge. Officers were alerted to a black Peugeot 3008, parked in Sackville Close on 26 March, which had been reported stolen from Heathrow. Marques Barbosa De Souza, 23, was spotted walking away from the vehicle and initially claimed he had rented the car but changed his story when he was unable to provide a rental agreement. Upon searching the car, officers discovered a food bag stuffed with 49 individual bags of cocaine, with an estimated street value of up to £2,940.

At Cambridge Crown Court on Friday (12 September), Barbosa De Souza, of Little Farthing Close, St Ives, was sentenced to two years and six months in prison after pleading guilty to possession with intent to supply cocaine, driving a motor vehicle otherwise in accordance with a licence and driving without insurance.

Detective Constable Vladimir Nikolic, who investigated, said: "What started as a routine check on a stolen vehicle, led to the discovery of a significant quantity of drugs. We're pleased to see justice has been served and hope this sends a clear message that drug crime will not be tolerated in Cambridgeshire."





## "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](http://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](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

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

For 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

**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](http://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

## A Tiger Bus Experience

On Thursday 28th August the Tiger bus (free if you have a bus pass) picked me up outside the Cinnamon restaurant at 9.55am and dropped me off at Huntingdon bus station 20 mins later. I requested the return journey pickup for 12.55 and the bus pulled up at the bus station at that exact time. On both journeys I had the bus to myself. Also, both drivers were friendly, polite and helpful.

I would highly recommend this service. It is so easy to book, you just phone the day before and the phone call is answered very quickly. You request the times you wish to travel and the staff are very helpful and as accommodating as possible.

It saved me having to drive into Huntingdon Sainsbury's car park, find a space, walk to the machine to pay the fee and back to the car with the ticket to display it.

I thought the service was brilliant! I will be using the Tiger bus a lot more after such a good experience! As long as it is used the Council should continue to fund it. I cannot praise the Tiger bus service enough and wished I had used it earlier. *Tina Theodorou*



## 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](mailto: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](http://www.grafham.org.uk)

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



## Talking Shop

### Slower but Steady

With the holiday season over – well at least for the school kids – things are a bit quieter although there was an invasion of sprouts (whoops Scouts) in mid-September which ran down weekend stocks quite a bit. However, while the weather remains mild there is a steady trickle of campers and visitors.

### Halloween Treasure Hunt

Belinda is organising a Treasure Hunt between 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Oct, which fortunately is also half term week. Needless to say, the prizes will be scary and the clues spooky with the latter not too hard find. We will also be doing a raffle to coincide with this as we have kindly be given some bottles of wine (thank you Poppy) with a box of chox as parents/carers may want to soothe themselves after unravelling the clues. And finally, if we can find any suitable pumpkins, they may be a bit small /scarce this year, we'll get a few in.

### Bonfire Night - Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November

Gosh these winter events come thick and fast, and it will be Christmas soon. But first there is the ever popular, Grafham Bonfire Night – it's Belinda's favourite night as it's the only time there is a long queue at the shop. The shop will re-open 5pm to 7pm and it will be offering various sparkly twinkly things for the adults and hot drinks and ice creams for the children (or the other way round... depends on your inner child.)

### Southdown Lamb Available to Order

If you want any locally grown Southdown lamb, there is a list by the till in the shop. Please put your name down if you would like some. Batches of lamb will be ready on Fridays: order by 26<sup>th</sup> Sept ready for 3rd Oct, order by 31<sup>st</sup> Oct ready for 7th Nov and order by 28<sup>th</sup> Nov for 5th Dec. The price, unchanged from last year, is £11/kg for the uncut half lamb. Every 1/2 lamb bought through the shop earns the shop a £5.50 donation from Patrick.

### New Chilli Relishes are Hot Stuff

One of the joys of volunteering in the shop is the "privilege" of trying out a new product before it hits the shelves, all in the name of quality control of course, and the shop has introduced some new dips and marinades and a new range of jams and pickles. We asked new recruit the "Goughmeister" to try out the dips and marinades from Badgers, the same people who do the popular Chilli and Lemondrop nuts.

Having survived the challenge, Colin says:

"As you would expect there is a definite chilli heat element. The mix of flavours work well together with the Beetroot & Orange Relish being the mildest through Lemondrop & Apricot Habanero and Tomato Jelly & Black Pepper Relish to the more insane Caramelised Onion & Chocolate\* Habanero Relish. I know it is subjective, and I don't mind heat, but oh my word it took me five minutes for feeling to return to my tongue. If you like heat this is for you and, gauntlet thrown, try it and see if I am wrong.\*\* "

As a reward we are going to let Colin review the new jams and pickles next month by which time his taste buds may have recovered.

*\*There is no chocolate in this one. Chocolate habanero is a very hot pepper, with a Scoville heat rating of approximately 300,000 to 600,000 Scoville Heat Units i.e. one of the world's hottest peppers.*

*\*\*And if it is too hot for you please send it to Bertie Wooster's ferocious Aunt Agatha...*



### AGM Due Soon

The AGM will take place in the Village Hall 6.45 for 7pm on Thursday 23rd October, where we will go through the years accounts, discuss the future plans for the new shop building, and as always remind everyone that we need volunteers to help out in some way or another. To reward anyone who turns up at 6.45, we will be offering a slice of cake and a cuppa to make it worth your while.

### Accounts – A Profit at last

If you hadn't picked it up previously the shop has made profit – our accounts have been signed off and tax return submitted. The profit was £2,240 on a turnover of £85,894, this is quite a turn around from the previous year when the loss was £4,917. Making a profit however small (2.5%) is vital to the future of the shop. If there is no profit, the shop is not sustainable, and we could not justify putting in for planning permission and seeking grants to build a permanent home. Thank you everyone in the village, volunteers, Belinda and Janice and especially the campers and visitors who help keep the shop afloat. Luckily due to past losses we will not have to pay any Corporation Tax for quite a while.

[www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk](http://www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk) 01480 810119 See back page for Opening Hours



## Chewing the Cud with Rev. Duncan Goldthorpe

Rector of The Parish of East Leightonstone



I am writing this article on the first day of September. September marks the beginning of a new season – schools and parliament are back, and so is the rugby, football, and Strictly! There are new opportunities and change, which has got me thinking... we experience a lot of change, don't we? We seize new opportunities that we think will be brilliant, we set new targets that we think will solve all our problems, we resolve to change habits. And all of these endeavours are good, but also exhausting.

And then I think of October, when you may be reading this article. By the time you read this we will be well and truly in the middle of Autumn. Autumn is a time when many of us look forward to the changing colours that we see in nature. And it is with these thoughts that I am reminded that God is unchanging. Although our seasons change, He stays the same, yesterday, today and forever.

This is encouraging, because if you've made a change recently and have been disappointed, God who loved you before you set those new targets or took up a new opportunity loves you today and forever. Similarly, if you've made a change, the success of which has surpassed your wildest dreams, the God who loves you now your life has entered this new and wonderful phase, loved you exactly the same before 'life went so right'.

Likewise, if you're in a season of no change, and the lack of change is causing you to stare into the wilderness of nothing, the God who loved you when life was a wonderful whirlwind loves you the same today and will love you the same forever.

And we know that God isn't just love. God is just, holy and righteous. God is full of mercy, full of grace. God is the source of all wisdom. So, He doesn't just love you yesterday, today and forever, He offers you His justice, His holiness, His righteousness. He offers you His mercy, His grace and His wisdom. The same as He always has.

In the shifting sands and shadows of this world, our God is the same; He never changes. He calls us to call on His name in our despair, to rejoice in His love, to share the story of His grace, regardless of where we're at – good or bad.

I am so grateful that my God is the same God at noon on the first day of a new season as He was at 9:00am this morning. I am so grateful that He will be the same in all the joys and challenges of the new season. I don't enter that season alone; I enter it alongside the steadfast, unchanging favour of the God who gave His son for us, who bore all our mess and called us into new life.

Whether the seasons test you or excite you, God is the same, so put your trust in Him.

*In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.*

*They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment.*

*Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded.*

*But you remain the same, and your years will never end.*

*Psalm 102:25–27*

*Every blessing  
Duncan*

### FOR SALE GRP DAYBOAT MOORED ON THE GT OUSE, HUNTINGDON - £2250 o.n.o.

This 18ft dayboat comprises a small forward cabin with bench seating either side and a forward cubby area. The rear area comprises the helm and more bench seating to hold 4 passengers comfortably.

Power is provided by a reliable 4 stroke, 8HP Honda outboard (completely overhauled and serviced, including engine de-scale, some 18 months ago.) Two new HD marine batteries fitted 18 months ago and a 12v fused switch panel includes battery meter plus a variety of USB and cigarette-style sockets for mobile phone charging etc.



Interior woodwork has also been recently sanded and re-varnished. Includes a tonneau cover and folding canopy if required. Boat deck requires minor repair and painting, hence the reduced price, but the boat is fully functional and is ideal for pootling up and down the river.

Mooring is possible, but buyer will need to speak with boatyard to negotiate.

**Call Gianni (07902407720) for further info.**



*Help keep me stress-free! Please send in your contributions on time! Email: [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk) as early as you like, but definitely by 9am on 15th. Thanks, Ed*



## Ladybirds

Ladybirds are probably one of the best loved insects in the UK. Part of the family Coccinellidae there are some 6000 species worldwide, but only 53 in the UK and only 28 of those are brightly coloured. Whilst red and black are the most familiar colours yellow, orange, white and cream also feature, and most species are named for the number of spots they sport. Hence there are 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 22 and 24 spot ladybirds. A recent study has also shown that the brighter the colours the more toxic the species. Size varies from the minute yellow and black 16 spot ladybird at 2.5mm long to the largest UK ladybird, the eyed ladybird, an orange beetle with black spots with cream-coloured edges, at 8.5mm. Most ladybirds are voracious predators, with both the larvae and adults feeding on soft-bodied insects such as aphids, hence their popularity with gardeners. Despite their size they are prolific travellers, flying to food sources and hibernation sites they can fly distances of 120km at a speed approaching 30km/h and altitudes of 1,000m.

Whilst this year has seen good numbers of ladybirds, with a swarm even disrupting the Lords test match between England and India, nothing can compare with the 'plague' of 1976. A warm dry spring and the introduction of new strains of crops led to a boom in aphid numbers and hence the ladybird population rapidly increased. However, with the continued heat, by July aphid numbers had crashed as plants wilted. The ladybirds, with the loss of their main food source, formed larger and larger swarms and were joined by more insects who it is



thought crossed the English Channel looking for sustenance. It is estimated that, by the end of July, there were some 23.5 billion hungry ladybirds along the southern and eastern coast. Outdoor swimming pools were covered in a layer of drowned insects and reports came in of people being bitten. For a while the little beetle wasn't so popular.

But why is a beetle called a ladybird? It is thought the name came about in the Middle Ages when there

was a popular cult around the Virgin Mary. Although often depicted in blue, many artworks show her wearing red, thought to represent the blood of Christ. The same cult also incorporated seven as a mystic number; the Seven Joys and the Seven Sorrows of Mary. The most common UK species is the seven-spot ladybird, combine the number of spots with the colouration and, to the medieval mind, the little beetle became a messenger of heaven. No messenger from the 'Lady' could be a 'bug' so bird was used as a more acceptable alternative. This is reflected throughout Europe with similar names in other languages for example; German - Marienvogel - Lady's bird, French - Betes de la Vierge - Virgin's beast and Sweden - Maria Nyckelpiga - Mary's key maid, carrying the key to heaven. This is probably also why it is considered unlucky to kill or harm a ladybird.



Wildlife Trust for  
Beds, Cambs  
& Northants

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

**If your landline is your lifeline...**

By 31 January 2027\* traditional phone lines will be upgraded with digital technology. It's time to get ready, go digital and stay connected.

**Prepare for the Digital Switchover in 3 easy steps**

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

## Is your landline your lifeline?

Landlines are changing. By January 2027\*, traditional landlines will be upgraded with digital technology. This national upgrade is known as the **Digital Switchover**. It means that landline calls will be made over the internet instead of the old telephone network. Telephone providers are responsible for switching customers to the upgraded service, but everyone is encouraged to check if and how the change will affect them.

### Do you rely on a personal alarm or telecare device?

It's important to check how the Digital Switchover will affect you, especially if you rely on personal alarms or telecare devices (like fall detectors or lifelines), which may stop working.

For many, the change is simple. All you will have to do is plug your landline phone into a broadband router instead of a traditional phone socket. But if

you don't have an internet connection at home, or if you rely on your landline every day, this change might affect you more.

### 3 things you can do now to prepare for the Digital Switchover

1. **Call your phone company** – Ask if the change affects your phone line or any connected devices. Ask to speak to customer services and use the number on your most recent bill.
2. **Ask for help if you need it** – A trusted friend, family member or neighbour can help you make the call to your phone provider or speak to your provider on your behalf.
3. **Watch out for scams** – Your phone provider will **not** ask for money upfront. If something does not feel right, hang up and call the official number.

The good news is landlines are not going away, you can usually keep your existing phone and number, and it's the responsibility of your phone company to guide you through the process.

We know that for many people, the landline is more than just a phone - it's a lifeline. That's why **Connecting Cambridgeshire** is here to help make sure no one is left behind.

**Don't wait - call your phone provider today**

**Local libraries and community champions are providing information hubs for vulnerable residents**

Recognising that older and more vulnerable residents are best supported in trusted, community locations, libraries are acting as information hubs for the campaign. Every library, including community and mobile libraries have free printed information about the Digital Switchover. Vulnerable residents, for whom their landline is a lifeline, should ask for a copy of the leaflet "Prepare for the Digital Switchover in 3 easy steps". For more information, visit:

[www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/digitalswitchover](http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/digitalswitchover) or scan the QR code.

\* Deadline confirmed by Openreach at time of publication.



## Riding the Property Tide with Confidence

**Paul Kinally from Peter Lane & Partners in Kimbolton looks at how property buyers and sellers should approach a confusing market this autumn.**

What rises inevitably falls, and what falls will in time rise again. The property market is no exception. Sensible buyers and sellers should be prepared for movement in either direction because the market rarely rewards those who wait too long.

Consider the analogy of an incoming tide. On a sunny day at the beach it feels as though there is plenty of time before the water reaches you. Yet those who delay may find to their cost that the tide turns more quickly than expected. The market operates in much the same way: unforgiving of hesitation, indifference or misplaced confidence.

In falling markets, buyers who wait until prices have reached the bottom of the cycle are often disappointed. By the time conditions improve much of the most attractively priced property has already been acquired. Bargains are usually secured by those ready to act, not those who attempt to predict the precise moment of the turn. Just as with the sea, the shift from ebb to flood can be sudden and decisive.

The signs of recovery, however, are visible to those who pay attention. Stale stock begins to sell as vendors adjust prices to realistic levels. Cash-ready buyers and those with financing in place take advantage of reduced competition. First-time buyers in particular often absorb unsold new-build units left behind at the market's high-water mark. This activity marks the transition from stagnation to growth.

For opportunistic buyers the key is to move with conviction once the market has passed its nadir. Missing the very bottom is less important than securing a foothold before momentum builds. In property, as in life on the beach, it is far better to get slightly wet than to risk being swept away.



Yet timing is never perfect. Sellers who achieve strong prices may find their next purchase less favourable, while buyers who negotiate well may have to accept a weaker result on the selling side. Over the long term these short-term swings matter little. What counts is the capital growth that accrues through consistent home ownership.

The lesson is clear: stop trying to second-guess the tide. Property wealth is built not by playing the market's cycles with precision, but by holding your ground through them.

(01480) 860400 [paul.kinally@peterlane.co.uk](mailto:paul.kinally@peterlane.co.uk)

**Peter  
Lane &**  
PARTNERS  
— EST 1990 —

## Sausage and Potato Bake

As autumn sets in it is time for comfort food! How about the following recipe – quick and easy to make.

**Ingredients:** For 4 - 6 people.

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 large onions, sliced lengthways into wedges
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and diced
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 500g baby new potatoes, halved
- 12 sausages, pricked with a fork
- 200ml/7fl oz white wine
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

### Method

- Preheat the oven to 220C/200C Fan
- Place all the ingredients except the wine in a large bowl and turn the ingredients until they are fully coated in the oil.
- Tip into a large roasting tin, spreading the ingredients out into one even layer and ensuring that the sausages are not covered by any of the vegetables. Season well with salt and pepper. Roast for about 30–35 minutes until golden-brown.
- Remove from the oven, turn the sausages over and toss the vegetables in the cooking juices. Pour in the wine and return to the oven for a further 20 minutes or until browned and the sausages are cooked and the potatoes tender.



Sunday, 27th October 2:00 am Clocks go back by 1 hour  
to mark the end of Daylight Saving Time (British Summer Time)  
giving us an extra hour of sleep, but darker evenings.



## The Population of Grafham 1841 to 1911 Part 8, where did the farmworkers live?

*Edward Biffin*

Yes, I know back in August I said 'The next article will look at the agricultural labourers and how girls joined boys in the 1870s and where they lived', but often in researching where they lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Grafham, an assumption made will turn out to be a problem. In this case it was 'Low Grafham' in 1851 and 1861. So this article covers 1841 to 1861. The table below shows how the dwellings are grouped in the C19<sup>th</sup> censuses in the order they are catalogued.

Census	1841	1851	1861
	<b>East End</b> 23 dwellings	<b>Church End</b> 12 Dwellings	<b>High Street</b> 35 Dwellings
	<b>West End</b> 19 Dwellings	<b>Low Graffham</b> 11 Dwellings	<b>Buckden Rd</b> 7 Dwellings
		<b>West End 2</b> 0 Dwellings	<b>Brampton Rd</b> 3 Dwellings
		<b>Low End</b> 3 Dwellings	<b>Low Grafham</b> 8 Dwellings
		<b>Graffham</b> 4 Dwellings	<b>Day School Low Grafham</b> 1 Dwelling
		<b>Low End</b> 5 Dwellings	
		<b>West End</b> 4 Dwellings	
<b>Total Dwellings</b>	42	59	54

In the 1841 Census no dwellings are named, but the East End starts with the Puckle family in residence (at the Rectory) and travels east, with a publican at the next residence (Pied Horse?), schoolmistresses at the 7<sup>th</sup> dwelling (Schoolhouse), an Armstrong farmer and helpers at the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 'landed proprietor' Fuller family and servants at the 23<sup>rd</sup> dwelling. The Ordnance Survey maps of 1835 show no dwellings east of Grafham Lodge (now Model farm) so it has to be assumed that the Armstrongs and Fullers and the two intermediate agricultural labourer dwellings were all on the Grafham Lodge site. But that leaves 19 intermediate dwellings between the School and the Lodge. There were none on Breach Road at this period, there were two on Brampton Road (roughly opposite where the shop is now), and some, perhaps three or four adjacent to the moat further down Brampton Road. On Buckden Road the Top Farm farmhouse had one or two adjacent cottages (not the current ones by the road), and the Olivia Bernard Sparrow (OBS) cottages are usually considered to be two dwellings but could have been three. So we are at least seven dwellings short - the 1841 precursor to the Low Grafham problem. Going the other way, the West End seems more or less in the expected order to Hill and Low Farms and fitting the dwellings marked on the 1835 map.

In the 1851 Census the dwellings are split into more areas, but once again the area in the village centre (Church End) and the road out west to Hill and Low Farms (West End and the first Low End) can be related to the properties shown on the OS map, and more importantly, on the original 1852 map composed for Lady Olivia Bernard Sparrow (OBS). However the dwellings contained in the Low Grafham and plain Grafham areas exceed the known sites by seven or eight. I had thought that the hamlet down by the Brampton Road Moat would provide the balance – it was quite a settlement back in 1776 when open fields were sold off under the 'Inclosure' Act – but courtesy of the Huntingdonshire Archives I now have a copy of that part of the OBS map and there are only two cottages in 1852 (and they were demolished by 1863). This is where I first met what I call 'The Low Grafham Problem'.

For the 1861 Census the High Street entries cover all of the known dwellings on the present Church Road starting at the crossroads and going west – but possibly not necessarily in the correct order as all the 'toffs' such as the Rector, the Farmers (including Glebe Farm), the Great House residents, are collected as a group at the end. Maybe they were all having a party together when the census enumerator arrived... The Buckden Road entries cover Model Farm and the OBS cottages and Top Farm and two Model Farm Cottages. The OBS map indicates that the other Model Farm Cottages and the Top Farm Cottages were being built by 1863 but may not have been there in 1861. The Brampton Road has just the two dwellings mentioned above, plus the School House as a separate entry. Which leaves the 8 dwellings of 'Low Grafham'. Where were they? The problem!

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



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For advice on how to maximise the energy efficiency of your home, save money on energy bills and cut carbon emissions go to: <https://www.actiononenergycambs.org> or use the QR code.

### Thursford Christmas Spectacular

Robinson's Coaches are running a trip  
on Monday 15th December 2025

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

### Could you help make tea?

Little Fishes Stay + Play sessions meet on Wednesday mornings in the Village Hall during term time.

If you can spare an hour, please join our tea rota!

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



# OUT AND ABOUT

*(An occasional rumination on life in and around Grafham)*

*September 2025 No. 14 Part 1*

**By** the time you get round to reading this we will be entering the latter stages of September and, as I write, it's turning out to be a gilded autumn as the leaves change from green to brown, gold, orange, yellow and red. In the hedgerows bright hips and haws abound whilst the brambles drip with more blackberries than usual – all just sitting there waiting to be picked and turned into pies and seasonal jams – another most enjoyable aspect of this part of the year.

I am a great fan of autumn, though I know others dread the fact that it is bringing us closer to the dour, colder period that is winter. I sense, however, that whilst the days are clearly getting shorter, the sun seems to be doing its best to hang on for as long as possible, and whilst it does so, the light seems much softer and gentler than is the case in summer when it tends to be harsh and glaring.

The sunny, if cooler days of autumn, has made my walks much more enjoyable and comfortable. The daytime wind stirs gently and still carries a hint of summer's warmth; just enough to allow for strolling about in shirt sleeves and shorts – though my knobbly knees are quite likely to frighten small children and animals, so I don't break out the shorts too often.

The cooler temperatures have also made life more comfortable for our regular 'guest' who, once again, has recently spent a few days with us here in Grafham. Sadly, the poor old thing has started to slow down quite noticeably – something we share! In fairness, she is eleven years old and neither is she a fan of warm weather. Her shortened snout makes breathing something of a chore and the summer is never a great friend to her. On some days she barely managed to make two turns of the sports field before indicating quite clearly that she had had enough 'walkies' for one day.

Age and ailments aside, she remains keen to get out, so we have taken some shortish strolls together and this was the case recently when we initially took a turn around the sports field. She likes to fossick in the undergrowth and takes a lot longer to read the 'messages' left by other dogs than used to be the case, but I am happy enough to wait for her to do what she needs to do. We meet other dogs en route and it's interesting to note that she no longer reacts to the barking or excitability of other dogs as if to say: "Seen it, done it, no longer impressed."

At the end of our circuit of the sports field, I stop and look at her to see if she has had enough. She looks at me as if to say: "Come on. What are you waiting for?" so it would seem not. We venture out onto the Brampton Road and head for the T-junction by the old school. All is serene as a gentle breeze caresses us with its remaining warmth. We cross the road and head for Church Hill while the occasional cyclist and hiker passes us by.

It is the latter part of the afternoon and the sun is much lower than was the case a couple of weeks ago. Nevertheless, a little heat remains in its rays as we walk down the tarmacked lane that is Church Hill. With the barley harvested some time ago, all that's left in the fields is stubble and brown earth while birds, notably rooks, crows and pigeons, pick through the soil for any remaining grains. This is an image that definitely announces the end of summer and the start of another season; a way-point in the year.

On my right sits an enormous hedgerow, a huge pillow of green studded with a seemingly endless quantity of bright red gems made up of haws and hips. These are interspersed with innumerable bunches of blackberries all waiting to be consumed by both wildlife and human. This particular human manages to pluck a few blackberries and they are plump and sweet. I offer one to the dog who looks at me with such disdain that I feel mildly embarrassed!

We move on until she suddenly leaves the road and we find ourselves inside the plantation. Sunlight filters its way through the branches and the floor is mottled with patches of sunlight and shadow that lends an impressionistic image of the view before me. The dog, being a dog, lacks an artistic soul and seems intent on destroying every available stick and twig she comes across – despite having few remaining teeth! I still haven't worked out what possible pleasure she gets out of this particular habit.

I have to nag her to get her to move, but eventually she tires of the stick-snapping routine and we follow the beaten path down through the trees and towards the pond. The dog's pace quickens as she takes in the scent and sound of the water. She is literally about to make a big splash!

*(To be continued...)*



## RHS Top Gardening Tips for October

Although we had some warmer days over September, the autumn is now definitely here for real, and it feels colder.

It's a beautiful time of year, with trees changing colour. Sometimes it may seem pointless raking, when the wind blows even more leaves onto the lawn, but just think of all the lovely leaf mould you can make!

It's also time to start preparing for early frosts.

1. Move tender plants, including aquatic ones, into a greenhouse or conservatory
2. Cut back perennials that have died down
3. Divide herbaceous perennials
4. Divide established rhubarb crowns to create new plants
5. Plant out spring cabbages
6. Harvest apples, pears, grapes and nuts
7. Prune climbing roses
8. Finish collecting seeds from the garden to sow next year
9. Last chance to mow lawns and trim hedges in mild areas
10. Renovate old lawns or create new grass areas by laying turf

Find more advice from the [Royal Horticultural Society](https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/october/jobs) and: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/october/jobs>







## Tea & Chat?



Do join us for our monthly  
Tea & Chat In Grafham Village Hall  
on the last Thursday of each month.  
Refreshments are free! However, on

**Thursday 25th Sept 2.30 - 4.00pm**  
we will be raising funds

for **Macmillan Cancer Support** and  
any donation that you are able to make would be  
appreciated. Hope to see you there!

Future dates are

**Thursday 30th October 2.30 - 4pm**

**Thursday 27th November 2.30 - 4pm**

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



## Summer Opening Times

**Mon to Wed - Closed**

**Thurs – 18:00 - 22:00**

**Fri – 18:00 - 23:00**

**Sat – 13:00 - 23:00**

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**For Shop News see Talking Shop page 5**

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## Please remember to

send your news, views, photos, letters, adverts, recipes and gossip  
to: [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk) by

the next deadline, 09:00 am on

**Wed 15th October for November's issue**

Grafham



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