

# Grafham Gossip



*Deadline for February issue: by 9am on Thursday 15th January*

## Editor's note...

A merry Christmas and a happy new year to all our readers!

At the end of the year a special thanks must go to our brilliant team of deliverers who make sure that everyone in Grafham gets a copy of Grafham Gossip each month. Thank you to our regular advertisers and to the Parish Council for their contribution towards the publishing and printing costs. Also a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the variety of articles published over the past year. Without you there would be no Grafham Gossip!

There's lots going on over the next month or so; be sure to make note of all the events publicised throughout this 16 page issue, mostly on pages 1, 2, 8, 10, 16. Don't miss the date for commenting on the 'Draft Local Plan to 2046'. See pages 3 and 4.

As usual this issue covers December and January with a deadline of Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January for the February issue.

Keep Gossiping!

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



New Year Party  
Full poster on  
page 8

The  
Grafham Trout  
Christmas  
opening times are  
also on page 8

Monday 15th  
December  
7pm  
See page 8  
for details



Drinks served in The Grafham Trout

## Christmas Giving

7th December 9.30 am  
All Saints Grafham

A special service  
to celebrate Giving

Donations of Christmas goodies welcomed  
to be distributed to Godmanchester Foodbank  
More info in View from the Pew on page 5



**Children - come and help**  
decorate the church Christmas trees on  
Saturday 6th December at 10am.  
Debbie and Jill will be there to help you.  
All decorations will be provided.  
(See View from the Pew page 5)

## Travelling Nativity 2025

From **Monday 1st December**, Grafham's Nativity set will be travelling round the village again. The Travelling Nativity box contains knitted nativity figures to play with plus books, jigsaws and games suitable for preschool and Key Stage 1 children. The box goes from house to house. This is available free to anyone in Grafham. All you need to do is call or text Jill Tyack on 07892 720 835 and book it for a night.

The nativity figures will end up in church on **Wednesday 24th December at 3pm** for our traditional and popular Crib Service. If you have not been before why not give it a go - it is short and 'user-friendly' and you can be sure of a very warm welcome!





## 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.



5th Sunday	30th Nov	<b>11:00</b>	All Together Holy Communion Advent Sunday <b>Brampton</b>
1st Sunday	7th Dec	<b>09:30</b>	Morning Worship for Christmas Giving, (See View from Pew p.5) <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>
2nd Sunday	14th Dec	<b>09:30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Ellington</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Morning Worship <b>Brampton</b>
		<b>18:30</b>	Taizé <b>Grafham</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>15th Dec</b>	<b>19.00</b>	<b>Curry and Carols Cinnamon</b> See page 8
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>17th Dec</b>	<b>09:00</b>	Morning Prayer with Duncan <b>Grafham</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>20th Dec</b>	<b>16.00</b>	Carol Service <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>17.45</b>	Carol Service <b>Ellington</b>
3rd Sunday	21st Dec	<b>09:30</b>	Morning Worship <b>Ellington</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>24th Dec</b>	<b>15.00</b>	Crib Service <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>17.30</b>	Candlelit Carols <b>Brampton</b>
		<b>23.00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Ellington</b>
<b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>25th Dec</b>	<b>09.30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11.00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>
4th Sunday	28th Dec	<b>11:00</b>	Said Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>

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 and below, 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)

### January 2026 Services

The services below follow the usual pattern but there may be changes between now and next year.

1st Sunday	4th Jan	<b>09:30</b>	Morning Worship <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>
2nd Sunday	11th Jan	<b>09:30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Ellington</b>
		<b>11:00</b>	Morning Worship <b>Brampton</b>
		<b>18:30</b>	Taizé <b>Grafham</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>14th Jan</b>	<b>09:00</b>	Morning Prayer with Duncan <b>Grafham</b>
3rd Sunday	18th Jan	<b>09.30</b>	Morning Worship <b>Ellington</b>
		<b>11.00</b>	Holy Communion <b>Brampton</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>21st Jan</b>	<b>09:00</b>	Morning Prayer with Duncan <b>Grafham</b>
4th Sunday	25th Jan	<b>09.30</b>	Holy Communion <b>Grafham</b>
		<b>11.00</b>	Morning Worship <b>Brampton</b>

### 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 [sarah@huntingdonparish.org](mailto:sarah@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

### Contacting the clergy:

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

### Churchwardens:

Sue Roberts 07916 431086 [sue@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:sue@eastleightonstone.com)  
Brian Radbone 07916 431091 [brian@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:brian@eastleightonstone.com)



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

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 above.

**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,  
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*Season's Greetings*



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



## Parish News November 2025



### Playing Field Football Club Update

The Parish Council would like to confirm the "Agreement" has now been signed and preparations are in place for the installation of equipment ready for football matches to take place. A new shipping container has recently been delivered for the Football Club to provide much-needed storage.

Due to the wet winter season and soft ground conditions, the container has been placed in a *temporary* location for the time being. It will be moved to its intended site next year once the weather improves and the ground is firmer.

### 2025 / 2026 Local Highway Improvement Initiative Bid

The Parish Council are pleased to announce we were successful in our bid to get Gateways installed at the entrance and exit points to the village. The Gateways are designed to highlight the entrance to the Parish and / or change of speed limit. The Parish Council are now in consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council to discuss next steps. Please note this is not a quick process and it can take up to 18 months for installation!



The Parish Council at the December meeting will be meeting to confirm their bid for the 2026/27 funding round. One suggestion put forward is to reduce the speed limit for Church Road / Hill. We would be grateful for residents' views on this suggestion either in person at the December meeting or by emailing the clerk at: [clerk@grafhampc.org](mailto:clerk@grafhampc.org)

### Remembrance Day – Thank You

The Parish Council would like to thank everyone who attended the recent Remembrance Day event. We were joined by representatives from the Royal British Legion and our local MP Ben Obese-Jecty, who also attended to honour this occasion. Everyone's presence helped make the event a fitting tribute to those who have served and sacrificed.



### Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046

Following the Call for Sites Grafham Parish Council has received the email below from Huntingdonshire District Council with a link to the 'Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046' which the District Council have now formally published for consultation: -

Within the Draft Local Plan document, you will see that one site only in Grafham has been allocated for inclusion in the Local Plan, namely Grafham 1, adjacent to 24 Cedar Close. This is allocated for residential development of up to 20 houses.

Details of the site for your reference can be found at:

<https://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/kse/event/38440>

If you follow the link, you can view the whole document, on which you have the opportunity to make comments, which must be submitted by 17th December 2025. To access the relevant documents for Grafham, please click on the heading titled "Proposal" and then on the left-hand column click on "13 - Villages" and then select Grafham.

If you wish to submit any comments to the Parish Council as well as the District Council, please do so as soon as possible, to enable us to consider them in our response to the District Council. To make your comments to the District Council, you will have to register if you haven't already done so. Guidance on how to register and make comments is provided within the link.

### Autumn Litter Pick

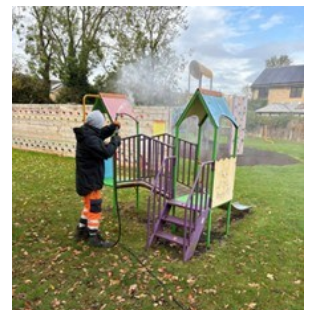
The Parish Council would like to say a big thank you to Parish Council members, Ben Obese-Jecty MP and the single resident who helped out with the recent village litter pick. Although volunteer numbers were lower than the last litter pick, a good amount of litter was collected creating a nice environment for all to enjoy.

### Keeping Our Pavements Clear and Safe

We would like to kindly remind residents to check their properties for any overgrown hedge or vegetation. If plants are growing out onto the pavement, please trim them back so that people can walk safely and comfortably around the village. Clear pavements make life easier for everyone – whether walking with children, pushing prams, using mobility aids, or simply enjoying a stroll. Let's all do our bit to keep our pathways safe and welcoming.

### Children's Play Area Brampton Road

The Parish Council would like to thank Cambridgeshire Garden & Property Maintenance for pressure washing and sanitising the Grafham play park, making it a nicer environment for everyone.



### Christmas Tree

The Parish Council are pleased to announce a temporary Christmas tree will be erected in the village for everyone to enjoy. The tree will be subject to space, installed in a central location for everyone to enjoy, at the Breach Road / Church Road junction. We hope this brings you a bit of joy in the dark winter months.

**Cllr Ian Gardener**

Chairman, Grafham Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Tuesday 2nd December 2025, 7.30pm in the village hall.

## Local Plan Engagement 2025

Our vision for sustainable Growth to 2046 sets out how we will deliver land for new homes, jobs, and infrastructure, protect our natural environment, address climate change and provide policies for assessing planning applications.

Comment by 17th December at [Huntingdonshire.gov.uk/preferredoptions](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/preferredoptions)

One site in Grafham has been allocated for inclusion in this Local Plan. More information about it is included in Parish News - Grafham Parish Council's article - on page 3, under 'Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046'

## Drop in Exhibitions

Visit one of our in person exhibitions between 2pm to 8pm to view the documents, speak to our team and learn more about the local plan engagement 2025.

Sawtry 3rd December - Village Hall

Huntingdon 4th December - Commemoration Hall



**County Councillor Surgery**  
10:30am on Saturday 6th December  
Grafham Village Hall

See Liam Beckett - County Councillor Update on the next page

## Crafty Advent

**Saturday 29th November 3pm - 5pm**  
**Brampton Church Hall**

Find out about the very first Christmas, through fun crafts, table top games and a story. Tea provided.

For details email: [children@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:children@eastleightonstone.com)



## Waste and recycling collection days

will change over the Christmas and New Year period. Details of the revised schedule are listed below, along with information on Household Recycling Centre opening times and Christmas tree recycling options.

(For more information visit [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk) Scroll down to Christmas Tree/ Bin Collection and click on Bins Ed)

### Revised Waste Collection Days

During the Christmas and New Year period waste collection days will change (table on right). Residents can also download a collection calendar from [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins) (or see page 6 in this issue.)

### Household Recycling Centres

The household recycling centres will close at 1pm on Christmas Eve and will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk) for more information.

**St Neots Waste Recycling Centre** tel. 0345 045 5207

Opening times Monday to Sunday - 8am to 6pm. Booking is not required.

Entrance gates shut 10 minutes before closing time.

Christmas Eve - closes at 1pm

Christmas Day - closed

Boxing Day - closed

New Year's Eve - closes at 4pm

New Year's Day - closed

### Give Your Christmas Tree a Second Life!

Once the festivities are over, don't let your Christmas tree go to waste, recycle it and help it become something wonderful! There are plenty of easy, eco-friendly ways to make sure your tree gives back to nature and your community.

- Kerbside Collection: Simply place your real Christmas tree next to your garden waste bin on collection day. If your tree is taller than your bin, please cut it in half so it can be collected easily.
- Household Recycling Centres: You can also take your tree to your local centre for recycling.

### Support a Heartwarming Cause!

This year, we're proud to support East Anglia's Children's Hospices Christmas Tree Recycling.

Trees will be collected on 8th and 9th January 2026 and all donations will go directly towards caring for babies, children, and young people with life-limiting conditions, as well as supporting their families.

Register from 14th November 2025 to have your tree collected and make a difference this Christmas:

<https://just-helping.org.uk/register-tree>

(Also there's a poster for the Charity Tree Recycling: [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk) Click on Christmas Tree Recycling on the front page.)

Scheduled Day	Revised Day
Monday 22 December	Saturday 20 December
Tuesday 23 December	Monday 22 December
Wednesday 24 December	Tuesday 23 December
Thursday 25 December	Wednesday 24 December
Friday 26 December	Monday 29 December
Monday 29 December	Tuesday 30 December
Tuesday 30 December	Wednesday 31 December
Wednesday 31 December	Friday 2 January
Thursday 1 January	Saturday 3 January
Friday 2 January	Monday 5 January
Monday 5 January	Tuesday 6 January
Tuesday 6 January	Wednesday 7 January
Wednesday 7 January	Thursday 8 January
Thursday 8 January	Friday 9 January
Friday 9 January	Saturday 10 January

[www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/refuse-calendar](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/refuse-calendar)



## Liam Beckett - County Councillor Update



I was elected six months ago as county councillor for Grafham, and it has already been a hugely rewarding journey. The role has been a steep learning curve, but one I've thoroughly enjoyed, with plenty of important work to get stuck into.

Over these past months, I've been setting up systems to track casework so that residents' concerns are properly followed through, and I've established regular meetings with county officers and parish councils to bring everyone together and strengthen collaboration across our communities. I've attended a wide range of training sessions to get fully up to speed, ensuring I can represent you effectively and knowledgeably. I've started with what I see as the basics, and I am keen to now start regularly updating you on our work together as things progress.

Alongside these starting points, I serve on several committees: the Children and Young People Committee, the Environment and Green Investment Committee, Huntingdon Business Improvement District and the Great Ouse Anglian Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. It's a busy scheme of work, but one which I believe can directly help put our communities at the forefront of what's happening at county level, making sure local priorities are heard and acted upon.

Above all however, I see community outreach as the most vital part of my responsibilities; I'm pleased to be holding my first councillor surgery at 10:30am in the village hall on 6th December. I look forward to meeting residents there, listening to your concerns, and working together to make a positive difference.

*Cllr Liam Beckett*

## Grafham Fireworks

The Grafham Social Committee would like to express its thanks once again to everyone that came and those that helped at the fireworks this year!

Thank you as well, to the whole village! We have a big following, and it clogs up the village for a few hours every year and your help and patience is appreciated very much.



All the profits from this year will go towards making sure that we can put on a display next year and helping with projects around the village.

## Grafham Trout Raffle Success – £258 Raised!

The Grafham Trout are pleased to announce - if not a little belatedly - that an impressive £258 was raised from the raffle held at the Sausage and Cider Event.

All proceeds have been donated to the Brain and Spine Foundation, a charity that does vital work to support those affected by neurological conditions.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who took part and contributed. Please see the thank you message from the Foundation below.

*Thank you for your kind donation. Our helpline, peer support groups and information resources are a lifeline for people affected by any neurological condition, anywhere in the UK. Your gift helps to continue our work with the neuro community, and for that we are enormously grateful.*

**Brain & Spine  
Foundation**  
brainandspine.org.uk

## View from the Pew

Whilst Christmas is still six weeks away, as I write our thoughts at church are very much full of anticipation for the festival to come. Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November and being the fifth Sunday in the month an All Together service will be held at 11am at Brampton.

However there will be a Morning Worship for Christmas Giving at Grafham at 9.30am on 7th December when the first and second candles on our Advent wreath will be lit. Also at this service we invite donations of Christmas goodies to be given to Godmanchester Foodbank. These donations are very welcome at the foodbank, helping families who are struggling to provide special Christmassy delicacies to children and adults alike. Donations of such goods must be well within their use by dates after the Christmas period. If anyone would like to donate but cannot get to the service, please give Hazel a ring on 07870 307388 to arrange collection or delivery.

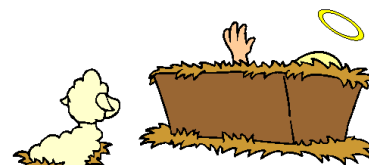
In preparation for our Christmas services this year we now have two trees to decorate. We would be delighted if some children would like to come and help with this. Debbie and Jill will be available to assist the children in making both trees look lovely. Please come to the church at 10am on Saturday 6th December if your children would like to take part. Our flower arrangers will be preparing the church with seasonal displays on the afternoon of 18th December.

Our Carol Service is at 4pm on Saturday 20th December when there will be bible readings telling the Christmas story and lovely singing by our choir. The service will be followed by mulled wine and Christmas cake.

Our ever popular Crib service is at 3pm on Christmas Eve. All are welcome to this jolly service and we are always delighted to see the church packed with families at this special time.

Holy Communion will be held on Christmas Day at 9.30am when the final candle on our Advent wreath will be lit.

We wish all our readers a happy and peaceful Christmas and a bright and healthy new year.



The next deadline is  
9.00am Thursday 15th January  
for the February issue

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

**To advertise email:** [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)

Community notices are free.

Business adverts are priced according to size.

They start at £6.00 for a small box, payable in advance.

This money goes towards the cost of printing the newsletter.

**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?"

### 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)

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

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 on: [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 £3.00 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 - choose 'Senior' or 'Person with disability' option on booking. Show your pass to the driver when you board.

• Tiger Pass Holders (Under 25 yrs - you need to apply for a FREE pass, see website below) £1 per journey, ask for the 'Reduced' fare option when booking. Show your pass to the driver when you board.

**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

## Make sure you're protected this winter

NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough urging anyone eligible for their COVID-19, flu, RSV or pneumococcal vaccines to make sure they've had them this winter. Each vaccine has a slightly different eligibility criteria:

- RSV vaccine – for anyone who is pregnant, aged 75-79, or anyone who turned 80 years old from 1st September 2024.
- Pneumococcal vaccine – for anyone 65 or over (only one dose is needed).
- Flu vaccine – for anyone aged 65 or over (including those who will be 65 by 31st March 2025); have certain long-term health conditions; are pregnant; live in a care home; are the main carer for an older or disabled person, or receive a carer's allowance; or live with someone who has a weakened immune system.
- COVID-19 vaccine – for anyone aged 75+; those aged between six months and 74 years and have a weakened immune system because of a health condition or treatment; and people who live in a care home for older adults.

For some people who have got used to have their COVID-19 and flu vaccine together in winter, this might mean a change for them as the COVID-19 vaccine age criteria has changed from people over 65 to people over 75.

To find out more about these vaccines, and how to book them, or find a walk-in clinic, please visit The Vaccinators website <https://www.cpics.org.uk/the-vaccinators>



**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**



## 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



### Bonfire Night was a Burn

Belinda and Colin did a roaring trade on Bonfire night with well over a hundred customers visiting the shop to buy glow sticks and gallons of hot chocolate. That was a very useful extra £500 (every extra penny will be needed towards our new building.) Apparently, Colin did not even have time to speak to his children.



### Raffles Galore

The Halloween Raffle was won by stalwart shop volunteers Ian and Gill. No, it was not a stitch up. They bought several tickets, and the draw was entirely random. There are more raffles coming up as we will also be doing a Christmas Raffle using a lovely presentation basket provided by Brit, and there will be a raffle also at the Christmas Fayre.

### 12 Days of Christmas Countdown, and the GFB

From the 12<sup>th</sup> of December to the 24<sup>th</sup>. There will be a daily 10% off offer on selected shop items. There will be different items discounted each day, and these will be announced on Facebook and with a sign in the shop. As well as the countdown, the Goughmeister spotted Belinda putting stars on certain shelves. Intrigued, he asked what it meant – Belinda explained that if he spent £30 on the starred items, he would get 20% off and a free bag (the Grafham Festive Bag). Of course, he did need not telling twice to snaffle a bargain, especially with what was included: all the lovely jams and chutneys, honey, cakes, biscuits, all the new specialty cheeses, fruit juices and even Buckden beer. He tried to convince himself that the Grafham labelled items would be good for Christmas presents but, in all honesty, they probably won't last

until Christmas, and he reckons he got the equivalent of a 'free' bottle of wine with what he saved.

### Posh Cheeses and a Honey Treat

The Cambridgeshire cheeses have returned for Christmas with quite a selection of new flavours, we have mostly stuck with tried and trusted favourites, but were given a sample of a "Nan" flavoured cheese to try... I wonder whose grandmother that was, she must have enjoyed a curry or two. And Belinda has also prettied up some Grafham honey pots with a lovely bee cloth top and a wooden honey wodger (no idea what they are really called!)



### Supplier Shuffle

Belinda has been investigating alternate suppliers for fruit and veg as we know eating fruit and veg is important for our health and is something the customer survey highlighted that was lacking. Our previous veg supplier has now teamed up with Collins who are a Northampton based fresh produce supplier who also provide other useful goodies including some dairy products. We have also been told that Blunham Dairies who supply our milk and dairy products have been sold to a semi-national dairy company, so we are reviewing who supplies what as we are keen to retain some of the popular products we got from Blunham's and also want to source some dairy products from Collins. And of course, both companies have minimum order requirements... anyway please bear with us while we make the changes.

### An Aladdin's Cave of not quite Last-Minute Christmas Essentials

The John Lewis ad is out so it's time acknowledge the festive season is upon us so, amongst other things, time to plan the Christmas baking. With this in mind the Goughmeister sauntered across to the village shop for ingredients and what an Aladdin's cave it is. Along with all the basics: flours, sugars, baking powder and eggs there's raisins (to be cheerful?!), sultanas, dried fruit, spices, treacle, condensed milk, flavourings, decorations, mincemeat and more – the whole nine yards. Rumour has it, soon there will be sausage meat and frozen shortcrust and puff pastry (ideal for people who like to cut corners!) for sausage rolls and mince pies, heaven.

### Christmas Hours

23rd Dec Tuesday 8am - 4pm  
24th Dec Wednesday 10am - 2pm  
25th Dec Christmas Day CLOSED  
26th Dec Boxing Day CLOSED  
27th Dec Saturday 10am - 2pm  
28th Dec Sunday 10am - 2pm  
29th Dec Monday 10am - 2pm  
30th Dec Tuesday 10am - 2pm  
31st Dec Wednesday 10am - 2pm



1st Jan New Years Day CLOSED

2nd Jan Friday 8am - 4pm – i.e. back to normal

### Winter Hours for Jan, Feb and March

8am - 4pm on weekdays and Saturdays  
Sundays and Bank Holidays 10am - 2pm

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





### Monday 15th December 7pm

A fun evening of Christmas carols and curry!  
The Cinnamon will be putting on a three course buffet for £25 which includes a £5 optional donation to the church.

Between courses we'll sing some Christmas carols together and enjoy festive cheer.

Feel free to come along as a group or on your own.

To book please call:

**Shamim at the Cinnamon**  
**01480 812211/811316**

**The Grafham Trout PRESENTS**

# New Year PARTY

LET'S EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

**31st December**

Children's Disco 5-7pm  
Adults party 7:30 til late  
Start 2026 in your local!

**FREE ENTRY**

**Brampton Road, Grafham**

### Babysitting Services

Valarie, a friendly and trustworthy 14 year old in the village, offers babysitting for local families.

Experienced with young children, reliable and caring  
Evening, weekends and school holidays

Call, WhatsApp or text Valarie on **07946 032290**

## The Grafham Trout Christmas Hours

Christmas Eve - 5-9pm  
Christmas Day - 12-3pm  
Boxing Day - 12-3pm  
27th & 28th Dec - Normal opening  
29th & 30th Dec - closed  
New Years Eve - 4:30pm-late (childrens disco from 5pm)  
New Years Day - 2-7pm  
2nd Jan - Normal opening

Christmas Quiz 18th December 8pm

## FAMILY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2025. 4.30pm**  
**Hinchingsbrooke Performing Arts Centre**  
Huntingdonshire Philharmonic Orchestra & Choir  
Dan Watson, Conductor

With guests: Stagecoach Huntingdon (Children's performing arts school)

Children's tour of the orchestra  
Tchaikovsky, Sleeping Beauty Suite (narrated)  
Corelli, Christmas Cantata  
...and a selection of Christmas favourites and traditional carols

Scan the QR code or visit [huntsphil.org.uk](http://huntsphil.org.uk)

£18 adult | £2 child

QR code:

Registered Charity 280451



## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

*Grafham Fireworks and Act of Remembrance*

A massive thank you to all the volunteers, the Grafham Village Fireworks Committee, the Grafham Trout and the Village Shop who all helped make the Fireworks this year such a great event once again. No wonder it was a sell out and needs little publicity! A huge amount of planning is done to make this such a successful event year on year!



Thank you also to the Grafham Parish Council who once again gave us our own village Act of Remembrance at our own special war

memorial. The poppies looked amazing (can they look any better one asks?) The poignant service and the refreshments were much appreciated.

Grafham Resident



## Mulled Wine

- 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 let it boil.

If needed, adjust the sweetness to taste, by adding sugar. Last of all, add the gin.

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

As usual, please remember to drink sensibly. Ed



## Leftover turkey and potato pie

The best thing about Christmas food is the left overs

**Ingredients** for 8 people

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 680g/1lb 8oz leftover turkey, diced
- 6 tomatoes, seeds removed, diced
- 150ml/¼ pint chicken stock
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 225g/8oz diced leftover vegetables (carrots, parsnips and sprouts)
- 115g/4oz frozen peas
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 450g/1lb roast (or pre cooked) potatoes
- 25g/1oz melted butter

**Method**

- Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onion and chopped garlic. Cook until softened but not coloured.
- Add the chopped turkey meat and cook until lightly coloured. Add the diced tomatoes, pour in the stock and Worcestershire sauce and bring to the boil.
- Simmer until it starts to thicken, then add the diced vegetables and peas and return to the boil. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and pour into a large pie dish. Allow to cool.
- Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
- Slice the roast potatoes and lay carefully on top of the turkey mixture. Brush with melted butter and bake until hot in the middle and the potatoes are coloured, about 30 minutes.





Brampton Flower Club welcomes

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presenting

**Christmas Glitz**



With over 30 years in the floristry industry as a teacher & demonstrator, David has represented the UK in many national and international competitions through NAFAS. He has had the privilege of creating floral designs for the Royal Palaces of London on various occasions. We look forward to a stage filled with his beautiful creations.

*All arrangements will be raffled at the end of the show*

Doors open  
**6.45pm**  
Show starts  
**7.30pm**

**Tickets £15**  
to include a glass of wine & mince pie  
(Members £12)

**Wednesday  
December 3rd**

**THE LADY OLIVIA HALL  
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Brampton PE28 4QL**

**Ticket Sales  
margaret.horne@me.com**

**Christmas JOY**  
in East Leightonstone

**Monday Dec.15th 7.00pm**  
Curry and carols at The Cinnamon Grafham  
*book early!*

**Tuesday Dec.16th 7.00pm**  
Carol singing at The Mermaid Ellington

**Monday Dec.22nd 6.30pm**  
Carol singing at The Black Bull Brampton

**Sat. 20th** | Carol Service 4.00pm Grafham  
Carol Service 5.45pm Ellington

**Weds 24th** | Crib Service 3.00pm Grafham  
Candlelit Carols 5.30pm Brampton  
Holy Communion 11.00pm Ellington

**Thurs. 25th** | Holy Communion 9.30am Grafham  
Holy Communion 11.00am Brampton



[www.eastleightonstone.com](http://www.eastleightonstone.com)



### Thursford Christmas Spectacular

Robinson's Coaches are running a trip on Monday 15th Dec 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. *Tina*  
Call Tim at Robinson's Coaches, Kimbolton 01480 860581

## Wildlife Trust

## Women in Nature – Untold Stories

## Huntingdonshire Local Group

**Wednesday 10th December 7.30pm at Brampton Memorial Hall**

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust is pleased to welcome Dr. Hilary Allison on Wednesday 10th December at 7.30pm at Brampton Memorial Hall.

Hilary is Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants and she has kindly agreed to join us for our pre-Christmas event. Hilary is currently working as an environmental consultant and is also researching the history of women's roles in conservation management and her chosen subject for us is Pioneering Women in Nature.

We will have our Christmas Raffle and will offer wine and mince pies in addition to the usual tea and biscuits.

**Wildlife of Panama – from Canal to Cloud Forest**  
**Wednesday 14th January at 7.30pm at Brampton Memorial Hall**

 Wildlife Trust for  
**Beds, Cambs  
& Northants**  
[www.wildlifebcn.org](http://www.wildlifebcn.org)

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust is pleased to welcome back Jo Thomas on Wednesday 14th January at 7.30pm at Brampton Memorial Hall.

Many of you will know Jo, who worked for the Wildlife Trust for many years and was a previous Chair of the local group and warden at Grafham Water. Since then Jo has worked for WWT at Welney, alongside running Wild About Travel for over 20 years. Jo says she appreciates all things wild both at home and abroad. Today's talk will focus on Panama, where Jo has seen an amazing number of birds, including the Harpy Eagle and the Resplendent Quetzal. This promises to be an exciting presentation and will provide a change from our more usual UK based talks!

Everyone is most welcome to attend these events. Booking is not necessary. The charge is £5.00 (£4.00 for Wildlife Trust members; under 18s free). Payment is by cash or card. We meet at Brampton Memorial Hall, Thrapston Road, Brampton, PE28 4TB. **For more information please contact Tim – 07941 261346 or [timpfryer@googlemail.com](mailto:timpfryer@googlemail.com)**.

Part of the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. Registered Charity No: 1000412

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

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



## Mistletoe

This Christmas favourite is the only member of its family to be found in the UK but has the largest range of the 1500 species worldwide. Technically known as the European White Berried Mistletoe (*Viscum album*), it is a hemi-parasite of trees and is the only native plant to have white berries. Whilst plants can be found on any species of deciduous tree, nearly 50% of the UK population grow on cultivated apple trees. Mistletoe prefers open grown trees that receive lots of light, hence it's love of orchards and gardens. Despite Cambridgeshire being a fruit producing area mistletoe is not a common plant locally. Climate rather than habitat availability dictates the plants range. Its stronghold in the UK being the fruit growing counties of the Southwest where a warmer, damper climate provides ideal conditions for the plant. Indeed, the mistletoe is the county flower of Herefordshire.



Mistletoe has an unusual life cycle. Whilst the leaves will photosynthesize, it relies on its host to provide the water and minerals it needs. The seeds need to stick to a suitable twig or small branch where it grows one or more stems called hypocotyls, these specialist structures grow down and attach themselves to the bark of the host. There are then no more outward signs of growth for 12 months, but the hypocotyl works its way through the bark and attaches itself to the underlying cambial cells causing a lump to grow which is made up of tissue from both the host and the mistletoe. Once this connection is established the mistletoe commences to grow into its normal form. Birds are relied upon as the only means of seed distribution, with various species, including the well-named Mistle Thrush, feeding on the berries. Most birds swallow the berries whole and therefore when the seed reappears it is very hit and miss as to whether the seed will land on a suitable branch. However, increasing numbers of overwintering Blackcaps are changing that. Rather than swallowing whole, blackcaps tend to pick the berry apart and the seed sticks to their bill (the scientific name for Mistletoe can be translated as white goo) which they wipe off on a convenient branch. A much more satisfactory outcome for the mistletoe.

But the Christmas link, and the kiss? In medieval times a plant that grew without roots and stayed green throughout the year was considered magical. Amongst its attributed properties were the ability to cure fits, regression of tumours, finding treasure, deterring witches, as an aphrodisiac and an aid to fertility. The latter of these continued into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in the areas where the plant is abundant. Up until the first world war mistletoe and hawthorn were harvested near new year, made into decorations and burnt to purify the land and ensure fertility for the next years' crop. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century academics began to research the ancient Druidic and Celtic religions and rites and mistletoe became a popular decoration. Although, to begin with, it was banned from churches, its popularity continued to rise. The more extreme practices associated with it, involving golden sickles, white cattle and virgins, were toned down, culminating in the chaste Victorian kiss under the mistletoe that is part of our traditional Christmas to this day.

**Gregory Belcher**

Senior Reserves Officer, Wildlife Trust BCN



Wildlife Trust for  
Beds, Cambs  
& Northants

## RHS Top Gardening Jobs for December

As we approach the shortest day of the year in December you will need work to keep you warm outside, such as digging and tree pruning. Hopefully there are not too many jobs left to do this year so you will have time for some fireside garden planning.

- Check your winter protection structures are still securely in place
- 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
- Trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted
- Take hardwood cuttings
- Keep mice away from stored produce
- Reduce watering of houseplants



Find more details on the Royal Horticultural Society website <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/december>

## RHS Top Gardening Jobs for January

January might be the middle of winter but as the days lengthen the garden starts to grow. Now is a great time to plan for the coming year and order seeds and plants. Enjoy the fresh air on and check your winter protection, stakes, ties and supports are still working after any severe weather. Put out food for birds, leave some garden areas uncut, a little longer, to provide shelter for wildlife.

- Prune apple and pear trees
- Clean pots and greenhouses ready for spring
- Keep an eye on watering houseplants
- Plant now to boost the winter fragrance in your garden
- Inspect stored tubers of Dahlia, Begonia and Canna for rots or drying out
- Keep an eye on fig and olive and guard against frost by covering with sacking or old fleece in frost
- Start forcing rhubarb
- Plan your vegetable crop rotations for the coming season
- Keep putting out food and water for hungry birds
- Cut off hellebore leaves at the base to discourage black spot disease and show of the flowers.

More details can be found on <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/january>



*Happy New Year!*



## HIIT Resistance Tribe

### Get Fitter, Feel Stronger – New Fitness Classes in the Village!

Before the world turned upside down with COVID, you may remember dragging yourself (or being dragged!) to one of my exercise classes – from fast-paced HIIT to resistance training and circuit sessions. I always loved seeing people push themselves, improve their fitness, and – dare I say it – even enjoy it... at least afterwards!

The enthusiasm from those days never quite disappeared, and thanks to a bit of gentle persuasion (or persistent cajoling!), I've now taken the plunge, qualified as a fitness instructor, and set up a new local fitness business. Whether you're looking to ease back into exercise or push your limits, there's something for everyone.



### What's On Offer?

I'll be running a range of classes to suit all fitness levels, including:

- **Women-only classes** – A friendly, supportive environment to build strength and confidence
- **Resistance training** – Focus on toning, strength, and endurance
- **High Intensity Interval Training** – Boost cardio, burn calories efficiently, build muscle and improve metabolic health
- **Group circuit training** – For those who want to sweat, push themselves, and feel the burn!

### Not Sure What's Right for You? Try a Free Taster!

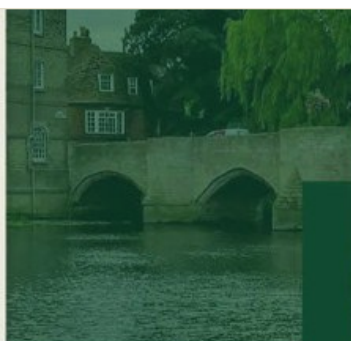
To help you find the perfect fit, I'll be offering **free taster sessions** until 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026. These are a great way to meet me, try out a class, and see what works for you – no pressure, no commitment.

**To book your taster session contact me [htribe25@gmail.com](mailto:htribe25@gmail.com)**

Whether you're new to exercise or a returning regular, I'd love to see you there. Let's get moving, get stronger, and maybe even enjoy it... just a little bit.

**See you in class! Tracie x**

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## The Population of Grafham 1841 to 1911 Part 10, where did the farmworkers live in 1841 and how were the farms beginning to change? *Edward Biffin*

I can at last set out on the first part what I know about where the farmworkers of Grafham lived from 1841 to 1911 – with the caveat that those who lived in 'Low Grafham' up to 1861 are still a bit of a mystery (see the preceding articles). In 1841 the Census only split the parish into 'East End' and 'West End', with the Rectory as the dividing point. At this time 'Village' and 'Rectory'/'Glebe' farms did not exist, but the 'Great House' (now the Caravan Site) was the base for a substantial farm, as was Top Farm (site behind the current Top Farm Cottages, which did not then exist). And the stables and farm buildings which are now Lakeside Mews were the centre for quite a few agricultural jobs. Then, down the Brampton Road, the 1835 Ordnance Survey map shows a dwelling on the moated site with three or four more in a hamlet beyond – very little change from the 1750 'Estate'/1774 'Inclosure' maps.

The 1841 Census 'East End' notes six agricultural labourers in dwellings in the village centre, convenient for the 'stables'. There were a further three, plus a youngster, on the Brampton Road Moat site plus five in former cottages associated with Top Farm or with the Olivia Bernard Sparrow charity accommodation. Then down the Buckden Road, Graffham Lodge, which had been rebuilt in 1835 but still had the remnants of the previous 'Empys' estate house on site (with its 'landed proprietor' in situ) also had four old agricultural labourer cottages, and seven agricultural labourers plus a boy were in residence. If the workers listed 'before' Graffham Lodge in the Census were actually accommodated on the Lodge site, this would explain some of the dwelling 'shortage' noted in my October article. For examining the site we have the 1774, 1887 OS, and, crucially, the 1852 OBS Estate map which not only reflects the position in 1852 but also has overwritten changes by the mid 1860s. From this we can see that the 1835 Graffham Lodge and the older Empys and some other buildings (dwellings?) existed together in 1852 and it was Empys that was demolished and the 1854 barn courtyard built over it, after which it became Model Farm.



Empys in 1774 with old Buckden Road 300 yards SW



Graffham Lodge 1852 with Buckden Road as now.

The plan shows Empys in dark colour, Graffham Lodge in red, and the barn courtyard as an overwritten rectangle.

(See village website for colour version [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk) Ed)



Model Farm 1887

The 'West End' starts with the White family as farmers at the Great House – it had kept that name although the mansion had been demolished and replaced by the current 16<sup>th</sup> C building – together with a servant and two labourers. A further 13 agricultural labourers – and a carpenter and a boy – were available from cottages on both sides of Church Road between Rose Cottage and Ambleside. However some of these were smallholders – three small fields including Malt Acre still survive – and would have made some income from their own activities. The small hamlet beyond what is now Orchard Row had seven or eight dwellings in 1774 but only one was occupied in 1841 – a small farmer named George Bitten. Twenty years later his holding is recorded as seven acres. Finally we come to Hill Farm (run by the Armstrongs and independent of the Bernard Sparrow-Duke of Manchester families) and Low Farm (site now under Grafham Water). Hill Farm Cottages and a number of dwellings on the Low farm site housed 13 agricultural labourers including three boys.

Past episodes of Edward's can be read on [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk) Click on Grafham Gossip to find pdf copies of back issues.

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**Profit making events:** a donation towards printing costs please, to reflect the size of the advert

For more details, email: [editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk](mailto:editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk)



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.



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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. 15

I thought that this was going to be just the usual bog-standard tale of my most recent stroll around the local area, but, unfortunately, these walks have had to come to a halt; for the time being at least. Sadly, I have to report that my four-legged companion who normally accompanies me on these strolls died quite suddenly a few days ago and, quite simply put, this has left me and the missus utterly bereft.

I always referred to her as 'the dog', but if you are interested in knowing, she was called 'Laika' (like the Russian space dog of the 1960s); some of you know her well. Despite being a pedigree 'Boxer', she was quite a messed-up, mash-up of a dog physically, and had one of those faces only a mother could love.

Her ailments were many and varied, including a life-time kidney problem, missing teeth, a dodgy eye, crusty nose, appallingly bad breath, walking problems and lord knows what else, but despite this, she just got on with the business of living and never allowed these difficulties to get in the way of doing what she liked doing best; namely, long walks, chewing up sticks and paddling around in water. It's fashionable these days to talk about resilience, but this small, inconsequential hound – she was also undersized for the breed – was an exemplar of the first order! In many ways an inspiration and just so much unbridled fun.

And now, quite suddenly, she's gone and I never imagined it possible to feel the loss so keenly. She wasn't even my dog, just an occasional visitor, but by heaven did she manage to get under the skin and inveigle her way into the heart. This was a dog that gave us so much in the way of joy and laughter and yet asked for little in return. She was, in short, quite a remarkable character and wholly irreplaceable, and we miss and mourn her loss dreadfully.

I do realise, of course, that there are many people who simply don't have pets of any kind, never mind dogs, so I apologise if this particular 'homily' seems rather self-indulgent. In my defence, I wouldn't call myself a 'dog person' particularly, and I'm certainly not keen on attempts to anthropomorphise animals generally – the use of the term 'fur-baby' being one cringeworthy example! Nevertheless, these creatures that

live easily alongside us (dogs especially) seem to have developed a very successful method of attaching themselves to us to the point where we see them as being more than mere 'animals'. It's quite clever really and, quite brutally, simply a survival tactic developed over many thousands of years to ensure that they get food and shelter – it most definitely works! You do find yourself wondering who really is the more intelligent of the two species?

Beyond this, their characteristics often put our own species to shame as well. How many times have we been let down by the failings of other human beings? Our dogs give themselves unconditionally and their behaviours often manifest themselves in the form of qualities we perceive as loyalty, devotion, steadfastness, reliability and companionship. No wonder some of us prefer them to human company.

As for dear old Laika, I think it will take some time to simply come to terms with her passing. She has left quite a hole that will be very difficult to fill. I have tried to 'hold it together', but occasionally I catch a glimpse of the now redundant lead or a silent squeaky toy and then the bottom lip starts to wobble and the eye becomes moist. The reminders are many, far too many.

We do take some comfort in knowing that despite the loss that we feel, she at least had a pretty good old life on the whole, and that every time we walk along one of her favourite routes, we will always have that overriding sense that she is with us and won't be forgotten.

Anyway, that's enough from me other than to add my thanks for your condolences, your patience, your indulgence, and not least of all, your keen interest in mine and Laika's walks over the past couple of years or so. I wish you all a long and happy walk, with or without a dog!

G

Past episodes of 'Out and About' can be read on [www.grafham.org.uk](http://www.grafham.org.uk)

Click on Grafham Gossip to find pdf copies of back issues.



## Christmas Magic 2025 at Peterborough Cathedral... Christmas starts here!

Experience the joy of *Christmas Magic* at Peterborough Cathedral as over 70 live musicians and singers bring all your festive favourites to life in this atmospheric historical setting, decorated for the season, complete with warm candlelight and a magnificent lightshow – unforgettable!

Guaranteed to put you in the festive spirit, *Christmas Magic* returns to Peterborough Cathedral on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December with a family-friendly matinee at 2.30pm and an evening performance at 7.30pm, so bring all your friends and family to join this magical musical celebration and make memories that last a lifetime!

Stuffed with musical treats, *Christmas Magic* is the perfect festive fix, featuring a gleaming brass ensemble and massed choirs performing a mix of traditional and modern favourites like *Carol Of The Bells*, *When A Child is Born*, *White Christmas*, *Winter Wonderland*, *The Christmas Song*, *It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas*, *Little Saint Nick*, *Joy To The World*, *Away In A Manger*, *Silent Night* and many more... it's the ultimate way to celebrate the season!

Immerse yourself and your loved ones in the spirit of Christmas like never before as we take you on a magical musical sleigh ride celebrating the most wonderful time of the year!

Book today, and be part of Peterborough's favourite festive celebration... it wouldn't be the same without you!

*Christmas Magic* is at Peterborough Cathedral at 2.30pm and 7.30pm on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December, tickets at [www.peterboroughsings.org.uk](http://www.peterboroughsings.org.uk) or by phone on 0333 666 3366 (fees apply) BOOK NOW!





## Tea & Chat?

Do join us for Tea & Chat  
in Grafham Village Hall on



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

Refreshments are free!

There's no Tea & Chat in December,  
so we wish you all a very Happy Christmas  
and look forward to seeing you in the New Year on

**Thursday 29th January 2026 2.30- 4pm**  
in the village hall.

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



## Winter Opening Times

*Mon to Wed - Closed*

*Thurs -- 18:00 - 22:00*

*Fri -- 18:00 - 22:00*

*Sat -- 14:00 - 22:00*

*Sun -- 14:00 - 19:00*

*Open longer for special events*

*Bank Holidays -- 14.00 - 19.00*

## LINE DANCING

Mondays 6:00pm

Fancy joining us?

Just come along to Grafham Village Hall

First session free (£2.50 weekly)



## Grafham Village Shop

01480 810119 [www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk](http://www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk)

### Opening Hours

Mon to Sat 8:00am - 4:00 pm

Sundays/Bank holidays 10:00am - 4:00 pm

### Winter Hours for Jan, Feb and March

8.00am - 4.00pm on weekdays and Saturdays

Sundays and Bank Holidays 10.00 am - 2.00 pm

**For Christmas Hours and Shop News**  
**see Talking Shop page 5**



East Leightonstone Parish - Brampton, Ellington, Grafham

## Little Fishes

Stay + Play for 0 - 4 years

Grafham Village Hall

Wednesdays 10:00 to 11:30

Term time only

Just turn up on the day

Free play time followed by a short Bible story,  
action songs and simple craft.

Contact Jane Rowley **01480 890986**

[littlefishes@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:littlefishes@eastleightonstone.com)



## Short of something to read?



Grafham Church porch has a  
good selection of paperbacks

Please leave a donation by cash in the blue tin  
attached to the bookshelf or pay by card or phone  
using our contactless device, which may be in the  
church if not in the porch.

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(Suggested donation £1 per book)

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Donations of books welcome too,  
but paperbacks only,  
no hardbacks or text books please.



## The Mobile Library

Route H24 visits **Breach Road,**  
**Grafham from 10:10 to 10:35**

on the **4th Wednesday of every month.**

For renewals and information call: **03450 455225**

or email: [yourlibrary@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:yourlibrary@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)



Cambridgeshire  
County Council

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)



## Grafham Village Hall and Astro Court



For all reservations please use the online booking  
platform on the village website:

<https://grafham.org.uk/village-hall-astro-pitch-booking/>

or: <https://bit.ly/3EJTTxn>

## There is no January issue

*so send your news, views, photos, letters, adverts,  
recipes and gossip for the February issue*

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

**9am on Thursday 15th January**



Grafham



Trout

**Quiz night**

*Last Thursday of every month*

*Starting at 8pm*

*Teams of 4, £1 entry per person*

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

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

*Opinions expressed in the Grafham Gossip, including past issues, are those of the writer and not the editors.*