

Grafham Gossip



Deadline for December/January issue: by 9:00am on Sunday 15th November

Editor's Note...

The November issue is packed! Make sure you read Parish News on page 3, as it's time to have your say on the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046 and its impact on Grafham. Talking Shop on page 5, is another must-read detailing some plans to replace the ageing Portakabin with a new community shop. Key events include Grafham Fireworks on 7th, Act of Remembrance on 8th - see below and left - and Messy Advent on page 10. Also you'll find lots of other diary dates and much more across every page.

Keep gossiping! editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Act of Remembrance



Sunday 8th November
at 10:45



Grafham War Memorial

The ceremony will include two minutes' silence at 11:00am. Tea, coffee and cake will be available in the Grafham Trout afterwards.

**Grafham Village
Fireworks 2026**

Saturday 7th November

Gates 5pm
Fireworks 6:30pm

Online
Adults £6
Children (5-16) £4
Under 5's Free
Food & Drink available

On the night
Adults £7
Children (5-16) £4
Under 5's Free

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

For more diary dates, see posters on page 6 as well as notices and articles throughout this issue!

**Deadline - 9.00am Sunday 15th November
for the December/January issue**

There is no separate issue for January 2027 so please send all December and January notices, adverts, news, views, recipes, letters and gossip by first thing - 9am - on Sunday 15th November.

Thanks, Ed. editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Please Join us for a **Free Entry**

Halloween PARTY

OCTOBER 31ST
6-8PM

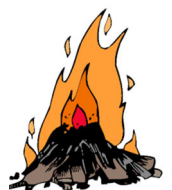
Join us after trick or treating

Crafts, snacks and music
The Grafham Trout Village Pub

TIMBER FOR THE BONFIRE Grafham Fireworks 7th November

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 7th November where Steve will be in charge! Or call **Dan 07802 645264** who will collect it on the morning of Saturday 7th.

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





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.)



4th Sunday 25th Oct

09:30 Holy Communion **Grafham**
11:00 Morning Worship **Brampton**
15:00 Service of prayer and
 thanksgiving for those we love
 but no longer see **Brampton**

Listed on the left and below, you will find:

- Grafham Services
- Sunday services for Brampton and Ellington
- Some extra services at times e.g. Christmas, Easter

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

For a full list of services for all three churches visit:
www.eastleightonstone.com and click on: 'See the Calendar for more'

Wednesday 4th Nov

09:00 Informal Morning Prayer
Grafham

1st Sunday 1st Nov

09:30 Morning Worship **Grafham**
11:00 Holy Communion **Brampton**

Wednesday 11th Nov

09:00 Informal Morning Prayer
Grafham

2nd Sunday 8th Nov
 Remembrance Sunday

09:30 Holy Communion **Ellington**
10:45 Act of Remembrance **Grafham**
10:45 Act of Remembrance **Ellington**
10:45 Service of Remembrance
18:30 Taizé **Grafham** **Brampton**



Wednesday 18th Nov

09:00 Morning Prayer with Duncan
Grafham

3rd Sunday 15th Nov

09:30 Morning Worship **Ellington**
11:00 Holy Communion **Brampton**

Wednesday 18th Nov

09:00 Morning Prayer with Duncan
Grafham

4th Sunday 22nd Nov

09:30 Holy Communion **Grafham**
11:00 Morning Worship **Brampton**

Wednesday 25th Nov

09:00 Informal Morning Prayer
Grafham

5th Sunday 29th Nov

11:00 Three Village Communion
Brampton

Wednesday 2nd Dec

09:00 Morning Prayer with Duncan
Grafham

1st Sunday 6th Dec

09:30 Morning Worship **Grafham**
11:00 Holy Communion **Brampton**

Children's Church

There is a children's corner in each of the three churches with books, toys, crayons and paper for the children to use. Parents are welcome to use these areas during church services.

Also, Children's Church takes place every Sunday during term time at the 11:00am service in St. Mary Magdalene, Brampton. Children start off in church, then go to the church hall with adult leaders. The 3 - 8 year olds meet downstairs and the 9 - 14 year olds meet in the upper room. They return to the church before the end of the service.

For more information contact: children@eastleightonstone.com

Contacting the clergy:

Rev. Duncan Goldthorpe 01480 459246
 or 07907 694177

rev.duncan.goldthorpe@eastleightonstone.com

Churchwardens:

Sue Roberts 07916 431086 sue@eastleightonstone.com

Brian Radbone 07916 431091 brian@eastleightonstone.com



For Grafham Church Donations at
 any time, please scan the QR code.
 Thank you

To join the mailing list for the Parish Newsletter, visit: www.eastleightonstone.com and click on 'Get in touch'

Two Presentations at Grafham Church

On Sunday 3rd October presentations were made to two people who, over the years, have given up their time in service to our church and the whole village. These presentations were funded by the Firework and Social Committee.



The first of these was to Heather Joyner for all her hard work editing *Grafham Gossip* which has just produced the 250th edition. Heather does a tremendous job professionally and efficiently, planning the layout and proofreading, creating an excellent record of all that goes on in Grafham. It is always a pleasure to sit down and read it each month as it pops through our letterbox. We thank Heather for her commitment to this task with gratitude and appreciation from the whole village.

Secondly to Pat Watson who for 40 years has served coffee and beautiful homemade cake for our family service every month. She has also provided mulled wine for our Carol Service each year and on Firework night. For many years she provided coffee for the retirees at monthly coffee mornings. Pat's baking reputation has stretched far and wide and she has been the go-to person whenever cake is required for an event. Thank you Pat from all of us.

Heather and Pat were each presented with a beautiful bouquet of flowers.



To advertise in the *Grafham Gossip* email: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Parish News

October meeting

Minutes of parish council meetings can be found on the village website: <https://grafham.org.uk/parish-council>



Have Your Say: Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2046

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has launched its final consultation on the Local Plan to 2046, which sets the strategy for future housing, infrastructure, and development across the district. The six-week public consultation is open now and closes at 11:59pm on Wednesday 28th October 2026.

Specific Sites Identified for Grafham

This final version of the plan is highly important for our village, as it explicitly includes two specific development sites identified for Grafham:

- Grafham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close
- Grafham 2: South of Village Farm

Once adopted, this document will legally guide all future planning decisions and development on these parcels of land and across the district.

How to Comment

HDC is seeking formal feedback before submitting the plan to the national Planning Inspectorate by 31st December 2026. At this final stage, comments must specifically address whether the plan is legally compliant and "sound." All representations will be passed directly to the Planning Inspector. Please visit the Huntingdonshire District Council website to review the full details and submit your feedback before the 28th October deadline. <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-update>

Repair Café

We are sorry to announce that our proposed upcoming Repair Café has been cancelled. Unfortunately, only one repairer came forward to volunteer their time and skills to assist with the event. It seems this is just an incredibly busy time of year for everyone — who knew!

Traffic Success: Church Road and Church Hill Speed Limit Reduced to 30mph!

We are thrilled to announce that our Cambridgeshire County Council's Local Highway Improvement bid (LHI) was successful!

As a result of this successful bid, the speed limit on Church Road and Church Hill will be reduced down to 30mph. This is fantastic news for our village, making both roads significantly safer for all pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

The Parish Council would also like to express their thanks to Cllr Sunil Gogna for his excellent presentation which helped the Council to achieve success.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Tuesday 3rd November at 7:30pm

Cllr Ian Gardener
Grafham Parish Council Chairman

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.

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

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

Patrick Curran p.curran@grafhampc.org **Sunil Gogna** s.gogna@grafhampc.org **Diana Thomas** d.thomas@grafhampc.org

Alf Lesurf a.lesurf@grafhampc.org **Nicholas Blackburn** n.blackburn@grafhampc.org



Grafham's County Councillor

Liam Beckett 07312 081 892

Liam.Beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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



Grafham's District Councillor

Stephen Cawley 07925 741 167

stephen.cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

34 North Road
Alconbury Weston, PE28 4JU

RHS Top Gardening Jobs for November

As the final golden leaves fall from the trees, the ground more frequently becomes a glittering carpet of frost. Tender plants will need protecting from the cold and winter weather. Move plants into the greenhouse or into a sheltered spot, but if you can't, it is worth wrapping plants or pots. Remember winter can be a tough time for birds, so keep water and food well topped up.



1. Clear up fallen leaves - especially from lawns, pond and beds
2. Raise containers onto pot feet to prevent waterlogging
3. Plant tulip bulbs for a spring display next year
4. Don't burn your woody waste - compost it or recycle into dead hedges or log piles
5. Start winter rose pruning to prevent wind-rock
6. Sow some sweet peas indoors, putting them in a cold frost-free place as soon as they germinate
7. Cover brassicas with re-used netting if pigeons are a problem
8. Insulate outdoor containers from frost - hessian sacking or reused bubble wrap works well
9. Put out bird food to encourage winter birds into the garden
10. Add winter bedding plants such as heathers and pansies to brighten up pots and containers

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

"Has the bin man bin Mam?"

Alternate Wednesdays

Blue Bin - Recycling and Black Bin - Refuse

Every other Thursday Green Bin - Garden Waste



* **Garden bins collected only if you have subscribed to the Garden Waste Collection Service.**

For details see the Garden Waste section of:

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste

Changes to Disposal of Food Waste Find out more on the Food Waste page of www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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

For waste and recycling services, visit:

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins or call 01480 388640 between 8:45am and 5:00pm

F = New Food Caddy

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/food-waste>

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.



TIGER
On Demand

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 to download the Tiger on Demand app, from Google Play or App Store. Booking can be made up to 48 hours in advance of the journey.

Alternatively you can book on: 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' 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 on boarding.
- 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 and to keep up to date, see

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

FACT Community Transport

• Dial-A-Ride

Provides **door-to-door** shopping trips for people unable to access public transport due to age, disability, mobility or lack of local bus routes. Bus passes can be used.

• Dial-A-Car

You must register and pay for this service. It is pre-bookable for visits to friends, relatives, medical appointments or anywhere that you cannot get to using the Dial-A-Ride service.

More info: www.fact-cambs.co.uk Tel: 01354 661234

Email Info@Cotransport.org

Macmillan Tea & Chat

Thank you very much to everyone who supported, attended and baked for our Macmillan fundraising at Tea & Chat in September.



Between us, we raised **£250** this year!

That's our best total so far from Tea & Chat. 😊

Your support & help was much appreciated.

Find dates and times of the next Tea & Chat meetings, on the back page.

All are welcome!

Useful Phone Numbers

All emergencies **999**

Police non-emergencies **101**

NHS - help for your symptoms **111**

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

Huntingdon Police Station **01480 456111**

Anti-terrorism Hotline **0800 789321**

Action Fraud **03001 232040**

Crimestoppers **0800 555111** (anonymous)

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

To stop unwanted phone calls

Telephone Preference Service TPS **03450 700707**

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

Power cut Call 105 or 08003 163105 or text

POWER and your postcode to 80876

<http://www.powercut105.com>



Website: www.grafham.org.uk

E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Talking Shop

Change is Gathering Pace

Following the successful award of grants, plans are well underway to build a new shop to replace our ageing Portakabin, which only has temporary planning permission. The picture is a representation of what the new shop will look like. The new shop will provide Grafham with an upgraded convenience store plus a coffee bar, more storage and toilet. The shop as you all know, is essential in welding our village community together, providing a meeting place and an opportunity to volunteer.



We are planning to construct the new shop during January and February. During this period until the new shop is opened at the end of February, we propose to run a temporary "pop up" shop in one of the former changing rooms in the village hall. A leaflet with full details will be delivered to every house in Grafham later in the month.

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of a grant from Huntingdon District Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Levy is made on new developments and local planning authorities to raise funds to be used to fund district-wide and local infrastructure projects that benefit local communities.



We also gratefully acknowledge the grant we have received from the Thalia WB Com-



munity Fund (part of the Landfill Communities Fund) which has contributed towards the cost of this project. The Thalia WB Community Fund awards grants to support community, environmental and heritage projects run by non-profit organisations based in Cambridgeshire, within 10 miles of a landfill site. The fund is managed by Cambridgeshire Community Foundation and is part of a voluntary environmental tax credit scheme called the Landfill Communities Fund. (For more information, please visit: <https://www.entrust.org.uk> or <https://www.cambscf.org.uk/thalia-community-fund-2>)



Keep Them Flying

A big thank you to all our customers who put their loose change in the Malpas Air Ambulance collection tin. We have contributed towards a total of £2,327.29. Every penny makes a difference to saving lives.

Winter's Coming

Now the nights are drawing in we are at that time of year when we move to winter opening times. This means that our weekdays opening times of 8am to 4pm stay exactly the same but our Sunday opening is 10am to 2pm. One exception is Saturday 7th November – Bonfire Night when, as usual we will be open. It's the place to come for Glow Sticks (and other Bonfire Night essentials). If you can't make it to the shop, then keep your eyes peeled for Ian and his mobile trolley.

Delicious New Offerings

A new local supplier of Sourdough bread has been introduced and the feedback has been positive. Delivered, while still warm, three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays ensures it's always fresh. I leave it in the bag which keeps the crust soft (although in our household it doesn't last long enough to go stale) and it toasts well.



But it is more than bread with a selection of bread pudding, cakes, granola and other goodies. Personally, my favourite is the Bread Pudding – moist, flavourful and full of fruit.

New in this month is lovely, luscious, local honey supplied by Pete's Local Honey in Spaldwick. Two sizes and three types: runny, not so runny and set. I have tried them and, although

there are subtle differences in taste, I could not pick a favourite – they are all delicious. So, if you are salad dressing, cooking or just spreading pop in and grab one.



Spotlight on Volunteering

The shop could not operate without the unsung heroes – the volunteers. This month's spotlight is on Kevin:

Hi, I'm Kevin and for those that don't know me, I'm not a local villager. I actually live in Huntingdon. I am originally from Camden Town in London NW1 from an Irish background. After a slightly inauspicious early start in my career, I progressed to 30 years working in the IT industry and travelled all over the world: USA, China, South Africa and Scandinavia etc. and retired in 2022. I am the eldest of three boys and have two sons, a daughter and four grandchildren of my own

I work two hours a day in the shop Monday to Friday and love every minute. The people (and dogs) are so friendly that it's a joy to be part of the community. I try to smile every day and wear lairy shirts to hopefully brighten things up. Thankyou

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

Website: www.grafham.org.uk

E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



**Tuesday 15th
December 7pm**

A fun evening of Christmas
carols and curry!

The **Cinnamon** will be putting on a three course buffet for **£23**.
Donations to the church would be gratefully received.
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

BRAMPTON FLOWER CLUB



We welcomed Tim Meakin back to the club in September for a fabulous floral demonstration.

Our future meetings are as follows:

Wednesday 4th November

AGM followed by a talk from Amanda Sutherland

Wednesday 2nd December
Lynne Sharpe - floral demonstration

Membership available Visitors are always welcome
The Lady Olivia Hall, Central Avenue, Brompton
Doors open at 6.4pm for 7.15 start

Please contact margaret.horne@me.com or
check out our web page for more information



Drinks served in The Grafham Trout

East Leightonstone Church

GLOW PARTY!

**Sweets, Games,
Crafts and Food!!!**

Join us on:

31st October
4 - 6pm

St Mary's Church Hall

children@eastleightonstone.com



FRIDAY
NIGHT
YOUTH

Friday 18th September
Friday 2nd October
Friday 16th October

(Half term activity tbc)

Friday 6th November
Friday 20th November
Friday 4th December
Friday 18th December

This activity is delivered in partnership with Huntingdonshire Community Church (HCC)

Fridays 6.45pm - 8.15pm
HCC, 83a High Street
PE29 3DP

Join us every other Friday to meet new people, to grow in faith together, for games and activities, and to have fun!

Contact Ruth Hunt for more info
ruth@huntingdonparish.org



Bramble slaying party hits the churchyard!



A small group of us met up to remove large area of brambles and unwanted saplings from the churchyard. We were so relieved when those magic words 'Coffee's ready' after an hour or so! We have hopefully made it easier to walk down the churchyard pathway to the fields and removing large roots mean that many brambles won't return ... we will see. A good work out - we felt we'd done some exercise and had a good chat - when we left!

We would love to increase the number of volunteers so if you'd like to try out a session that would be amazing!

Alternatively, if you are not free when we are, do contact me and we can discuss how you can help in your own time.



Next session

November 4th from 10am to midday
(or however long you are free)

Do contact me debs.russell@gmail.com



The mowers have been busy in the churchyard too! Ed.

Travelling Nativity 2025

Grafham's Nativity set will be travelling round the village again, from **Sunday 6th December**. 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 07892 720835 to book it for a night.

The nativity figures will end up in church on **Christmas Eve 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!



Knit and Natter

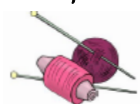
Do you like to knit, crochet or enjoy any other wool based craft?

Would you like to learn and don't know where to start?

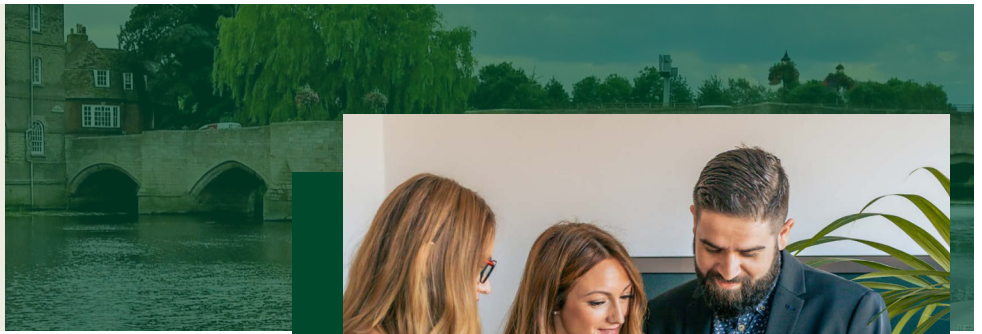


Grafham Knit and Natter meet once a month in the village hall. We are always looking for new members to join our jolly group.

Come for chats, knitting, helping with group projects such as the village poppy display or the church flower festival. One day we may even do a post box topper.



Contact Jenny 07788 545 197 for more information.



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Looking for an estate agent who truly understands the property market? At Peter Lane & Partners, we've been serving the local community since 1990. Our passion for property and dedication to our clients has made us a leading estate agent in Huntingdon, Kimbolton, St Ives, St Neots and the surrounding villages.

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Thursford Christmas Spectacular

Robinson's Coaches are running a trip on 16th December 2026

Tickets with admission included cost:

adult £82, concessions £80, children £70

Tel. Robinson's Coaches, Kimbolton 01480 860581

Community Notices

No charge if no profit is made:

Community Info, Free to good home, Help wanted.

Items For Sale: a donation towards printing costs, to reflect the size of advert/money made, if/when items are sold

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

For more details, email: 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>

Chewing the Cud with Rev. Duncan Goldthorpe, Rector of The Parish of East Leightonstone



We Will Remember Them

November every year brings **Remembrance Sunday**. We pause our busy lives. We honour those who gave their lives in times of war. We stand in silence. Remembering can bring sadness, but it is an important act of love and respect.

The Bible also tells us to look forward to a day of ultimate restoration.

In **Isaiah 2, verse 4**, the prophet shares a powerful vision of God's future kingdom:

Isaiah 2:4

"He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."

Why We Remember

Honouring the past: We name the sacrifice of others so their stories are never lost.

Facing our grief: We acknowledge pain honestly, bringing our heavy hearts to God.

Building for peace: Remembering the horror of war inspires us to work for peace today.

Memory is a bridge between yesterday and tomorrow. When we look back with sorrow, God meets us with His promise of a healed world. He is the ultimate peacemaker, and He invites us to participate in His renewing work.

As we bow our heads on Remembrance Sunday this year, let us do more than look backward. Let us lift our eyes to the God who holds all history. Let us commit ourselves afresh to living as makers of peace in our communities and our broken world.

Join Our Service

I warmly invite everyone in our community to come together in remembrance of those who are no longer with us.

Our Remembrance Sunday Service will take place on:

8th November at 10.45 am

St Mary Magdalene, Brampton

Please join us as we pray and reflect together.

*Every blessing
Duncan*



For all church services including Acts of Remembrance in Grafham and Ellington, see page 2 and the notice on page 1. Ed.

Brampton's Mothers Union

Hinchingbrooke Hospital Chapel
2:30pm
Tuesday 10th November

In November Brampton Mothers' Union will meet at Hinchingbrooke Hospital Chapel for a service and to meet the chaplaincy team. We will give our donated and craft items for the hospital to hospital staff.

Craft, Chat and Charity Cafe
7:30pm Brampton Church Hall
Tuesday 10th November

This is an informal meeting of fellowship
Help yourself refreshments available

Everyone is welcome

For additional information please contact
mu@eastleightonstone.com

Mothers' Union 'Away from it All' Holiday Scheme

Brampton Mothers' Union fundraise for the Mothers' Union 'Away from it All Holiday Scheme'. At their recent pudding evening they managed to raise just over £400 which is amazing.



The scheme helps people who wouldn't otherwise be able to have a holiday. Each year the Mothers' Union pay for the cost of a holiday, transport fees and pocket money for the children. Our local scheme offers a short holiday break in a caravan in Norfolk by the beach and recently the scheme paid for a whole group to have a day away to a local attraction. Each family is recommended to the scheme by either clergy, social services or schools and there is a procedure to follow.

The scheme is a worthy cause for families and individuals facing difficulties. The feedback we get is full of gratitude and appreciation and especially the enjoyment experienced by children that these holidays give.

If you would like to know more or can contribute in any way please have a look at the Mothers' Union website: www.mothersunion.org or contact Julie, Brampton Mothers' Union at: mu@eastleightonstone.com

*To advertise email: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk Community notices are free.
Business adverts are priced according to size. They start at £6.50 for a small box, payable in advance. This money goes towards the printing costs.*

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Please get in touch if you can spare
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We are desperately short of helpers.
Contact: 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



East Leightonstone Parish

Messy Advent

Free Christmas Fun and Crafts!

St Marys Church Hall
Church Lane

Brampton PE28 4PF
3pm - 5pm
Saturday 28th
November

Contact: children@eastleightonstone.com



Democracy and History

Colin Gough

Here we are coming up to some important elections held in a febrile atmosphere, not in this country but in the global world, which will have an impact on our lives. With this in mind it is worth reflecting on the origins of modern democracy, how different yet similar it feels and how it nearly failed but survived for the most bizarre reason. For this we must travel back in time to late 6th century BCE Athens. Whilst other city states such as Corinth, Thebes, Sparta and Argos had forms of democracy, Athens was the first, most stable and most radical form.

In 510 BCE Spartan Hoplites (soldiers) helped Athenians overthrow the tyrant Hippias to install a pro-Spartan Oligarchy. Just two quick clarifications. Tyrant in ancient times did not carry the negative meaning as today, the Greek *tyrannos* simply meant a sole ruler who took power outside of traditional succession – some were just and popular and some were not. Oligarchy from the Ancient Greek word *oligarkhía* translates to 'rule of the few' rather than the wealthy business elites who have close ties with governments. The Oligarchy of Ancient Athens was made up of the aristocracy.

In 508 BCE, with the help of the middle class, the Athenian lawmaker and referred to as the 'Father of Democracy', Cleisthenes, reformed the constitution to give citizens equal rights and introduced ostracism. The word democracy is derived from his reforms. Cleisthenes arranged the *polis*, the word for 'city state' and 'community' and the root of our word political, into neighbourhoods where they lived rather than ancestry or wealth which was their *deme* or *demos* so democracy originates from the Ancient Greek word *dēmokratía* – *Dēmos* 'the district' and *Kratos* 'rule' or 'power'. Cleisthenes reformed the council which decided on laws for the benefit of Athens so that it had 500 members, 50 from each tribe, the law courts were reorganised and had from 201–5001 jurors selected each day, up to 500 from each tribe.

To guard against any citizen who threatened democracy, although it was extended to anyone who appeared to be getting too powerful, Ostracism was introduced whereby a vote by at least 6,000 citizens would exile a citizen for ten years. *Ostracism*, the origin of our word ostracise, comes from the ancient Greek word *Ostraka* which are broken shards of pottery which were used as the voting token with the person's name scratched on who was to be ostracised.

However, a recent discovery of 190 *ostraka* in a well with the same name but written by only 14 people suggests a degree of voter fraud may have existed (where have we heard that before!) Ironically, a later ancient author records that Cleisthenes himself was the first person to be ostracised.

The fledgling democracy was under threat in the early years and ultimately not challenged by a bizarre interpretation of omens. Having been deposed, Hippias was not going to take this laying down so approached the superpower in the area for help to reclaim his throne – the Persians who, in turn, wanted to punish the Athenians. On the full moon they sent a fleet and, the night before departure, we are told by Herodotus, the father of history and a contemporary of the time, Hippias had a dream in which he slept with his mother. He supposed from the dream that he would return from exile to Athens, recover his rule, and end his days an old man in his own country. Landing on the beach he sneezed and coughed more violently than usual. Since he was an elderly man, most of his teeth were loose, he lost one of them by the force of his cough.



Ostraka. Photo by Giovanni Dall'Orto, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)



It fell into the sand, and he expended much effort in looking for it, but the tooth could not be found. He groaned aloud and said to those standing by him: "This land is not ours and we will not be able to subdue it. My tooth holds whatever share of it was mine." So he called off the expedition.

Pure speculation I know but, what if his tooth had not fallen out and he re-imposed tyranny and squashed the fledgling democracy? As a friend of Persia would that mean the battles of Marathon, Plataea and Salamis would not have taken place, the exceptionalism and hegemony of Athens would not have prompted Sparta to engage in the Peloponnesian War against Athens which were ultimately defeated ending the Athenian Golden Age, Athens would not have been the centre of democracy we know and would Athens not have had the attraction for playwrights and philosophers? It did not happen of course but, if it had not been for a loose tooth, Athenian and because of influences out history could have been very different.

If you'd like to write a 'one-off' article or a regular feature for the Grafham Gossip, send it by email to: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Send us your stories, events, recipes letters, photos and news. Thanks! Ed.



Tea & Chat?

Do join us for Tea & Chat
in Grafham Village Hall

All welcome. Refreshments are free!

Thursday 29th October 2:30 - 4:00pm

Thursday 26th November 2:30 - 4:00pm

There will be no Tea and Chat in December.

See the notice on page 4 for details of last month's Macmillan Tea & Chat.

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



Grafham Trout

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

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

 **Cambridgeshire County Council** www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk





Grafham Trout

Quiz night

Last Thursday of every month
Starting at 8pm
Teams of 4, £1 entry per person

Deadline - 9.00am Sun15th November
for the December/January issue

There is no separate issue for January 2027 so please send all December and January notices, adverts, news, views, recipes, letters and gossip by first thing - 9am - on Sunday 15th November.

Thanks, Ed. editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Grafham Village Shop

01480 810119

Opening Hours

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

Sundays/Bank holidays 10:00am - 2:00pm

For Shop News see Talking Shop page 5

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East Leightonstone Parish - Brampton. Ellington. Grafham

Little Fishes

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Grafham Village Hall

Wednesdays 10:00 to 11:30

Term time only

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

Contact Jane Rowley **01480 890986**

littlefishes@eastleightonstone.com



Grafham Village Hall and Astro Court



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<https://grafham.org.uk/village-hall-astro-pitch-booking/>
or: <https://bit.ly/3EJTTxn>

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

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Friday Night Youth

If you are in secondary school or college, we would love to invite you to Friday Night Youth!

Join us for pool, table tennis, games, crafts, and refreshments, as well as the opportunity to meet young people from other churches and to explore the Bible together through fun activities

This group is delivered in partnership between Huntingdon Parish, East Leightonstone Parish and Huntingdonshire Community Church

We meet on alternating Fridays 6.45 – 8.15 at HCC, 83a High Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3DP

See the poster on page 6 for the dates

Please click [here](#) to complete the registration form.

Email Ruth Hunt for more information: ruth@huntingdonparish.org

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Website: www.grafham.org.uk

E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

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