

Grafham Gossip

Deadline for November issue: by 9:00am on Thursday 15th October



BINGO NIGHT
AT THE
GRAFHAM TROUT
Saturday 10th
October
Adults Cash
Prize Bingo
from 7pm

Editor's Note...

October is here and sprouts are in the supermarkets! Looks like summer weather is definitely behind us.

It's going to be a busy month in Grafham. There's Bingo Night on the 10th, Cocktail Night on 17th and a Halloween party on 31st, all in the pub. See the posters on this page. If you enjoy being outside and would like to do some worthwhile removing of saplings and clearing brambles, go along to the churchyard session on 7th. See page 4. On 23rd you can hear about 'exciting changes' which are 'imminent' for the village shop. See the notice below with more details in 'Talking Shop' on page 5. Don't forget Tea and Chat on 29th and if that's not enough to keep you busy, there are other local events too, including a Floral Demonstration on page 6, a Pudding Evening, page 7 and a Wildlife Trust talk on dragonflies, page 8, all in Brampton. Phew!

Have fun!

editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Grafham Village Shop
Annual General Meeting
Friday 23rd October at 7:00pm
see page 5 'Talking Shop' for details



See posters on page 6 *Grafham Fireworks* Saturday 7th November
Children's Christmas Party Saturday 5th December, *Christmas Market*
Sunday 6th December and more!



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



The Grafham Trout
Cocktail night
Saturday
17th October
7-10pm



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 and a QR code for books can be found in the notice on the back page.



4 th Sunday 27 th Sept	09:30 Holy Communion Grafham 11:00 Morning Worship Brampton
1 st Sunday 4 th Oct	09:30 Morning Worship Grafham 11:00 Holy Communion Brampton
Wednesday 7 th Oct	09:00 Informal Morning Prayer Grafham
2 nd Sunday 11 th Oct	09:30 Holy Communion Ellington 11:00 Morning Worship Brampton 18:30 Taizé Grafham
Wednesday 14 th Oct	09:00 Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham
3 rd Sunday 18 th Oct	09:30 Morning Worship Ellington 11:00 Holy Communion Brampton
Wednesday 21 st Oct	09:00 Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham
4 th Sunday 25 th 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
Wednesday 28 th Oct	09:00 Informal Morning Prayer Grafham
1 st Sunday 1 st Nov	09:30 Morning Worship Grafham 11:00 Holy Communion 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'

Sunday Evening Youth

meets at All Saints Church, Huntingdon

6:00 - 7:30 pm on Sundays and sometimes on Fridays
(due to bank holidays)

For more details 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'

View from the Pew

Now that we have had some precious rain it is good to see grass growing in our gardens, alongside hedgerows and in our churchyard. There is an abundance of berries on hawthorn and lovely orange rose hips. All this is a reminder that it is Harvest time.

We have celebrated Harvest in our usual fashion by a Bring and Share lunch in the Village Hall which was enjoyed by some twenty people. A varied selection of food was brought and this was accompanied by wine and prosecco. Following the lunch we celebrated with Songs of Praise in the church.

Our Flower Club had decorated the church with an array of flower arrangements. Donations of non-perishable foods were brought to the service as we gave thanks for "all good things around us" and these were taken to Godmanchester foodbank on the following day.

It is hard to believe that before long we shall be making plans for our Christmas services!



Parish News

September meeting

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



Remembrance Sunday Service

This year's Remembrance event will take place on **Sunday 8th November 2026** at the village war memorial.



The service will begin at **10:45 am** and will conclude with the national **two-minute silence at 11:00 am**. Please save the date.

New Village Hall Sign Coming Soon!

Our current wooden Village Hall sign is unfortunately starting to rot and has reached the end of its days. Keep an eye out over the next month — a brand-new sign will be installed to freshen up the entrance!

Blood Pressure Monitor Loan Scheme

Blood pressure monitors are now available to borrow from libraries across Cambridgeshire.

Around 1 in 12 adults in Cambridgeshire are estimated to have high blood pressure without experiencing any obvious signs or symptoms. That's equivalent to around 45,000 to 50,000 residents living with an undiagnosed condition. High blood pressure increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, but it can often be lowered through simple lifestyle changes. The new loan scheme helps residents to check and understand their blood pressure, while empowering them to make informed choices about their health.

The blood pressure monitors are available to loan from all 33 libraries and three mobile libraries. Any library member aged 18 or over can borrow a monitor for three weeks (or five weeks from the mobile library). It's free, and you don't need a GP referral.

To borrow a monitor, simply visit your local library and speak to a member of staff. Please bring your library card. If you are not yet a library member, you can join at the library or online.

HDC Local Government Reorganisation – Further Update

As you may be aware, the Government has announced a review of plans for Local Government Reorganisation, following updated legal advice. The review is intended to ensure the process is robust and aligns with the new government's priorities.

This means that plans for the 'tranche three' areas, which includes Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, will be reviewed and paused while this work is carried out.

Decisions on reorganisation in Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, which were announced earlier this year, have also been withdrawn in light of the new legal advice.

We will share further information as soon as it becomes available.

Cllr Ian Gardener

Grafham Parish Council Chairman

The next Parish Council meeting is on Tuesday 6th October at 7:30pm

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,
Cambs County Council, Box ALC 2650,
New Shire Hall, Alconbury PE28 4YE



Grafham's District Councillor

Stephen Cawley 07925 741 167

stephen.cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

34 North Road
Alconbury Weston, PE28 4JU

RHS Top Gardening Jobs for October

It's a beautiful time of year, with the trees changing colour. This is in response to cooler, damper conditions, which makes it an ideal time for planting and carrying out maintenance on your lawn. As the leaves fall, gathering them up to make leaf mould will provide you with free homemade mulch for next year. Check the forecast regularly for frost and bring tender plants inside for winter.



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

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



Sunday, 25th October 2:00 am Clocks go back by 1 hour to mark the end of Daylight Saving Time (British Summer Time) giving us an extra hour of sleep, but darker evenings.



Website: www.grafham.org.uk

E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

"Has the bin man bin Mam?"



*** Green 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

October						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
			G*	2	3	4
5	8	Blk+ F	8	9	10	11
12	13	Blu+ F	G*	16	17	18
19	20	Blk+ F	22	23	24	25
26	27	Blu+ F	G*	30	31	



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

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.



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

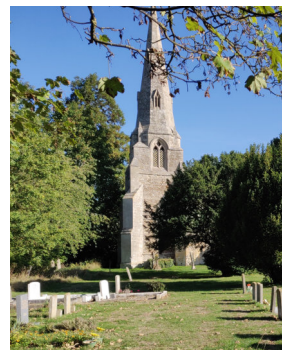
- **Dial-A-Ride**
Provides **door-to-door** shopping trips for people unable to access public transport due to age, disability, mobility or lack of local bus routes. Bus passes can be used.
- **Dial-A-Car**
You must register and pay for this service. It is pre-bookable for visits to friends, relatives, 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

Churchyard Session Wed 7th October

You are warmly invited to come and help clear brambles and remove unwanted saplings in the churchyard. It's been a long time so please bring gloves, secateurs and wheelbarrows to come and help on 7th October 10:00 - 12:00.

Join us for as long as you can - it'll be great to see you. Do contact me if you need more details.



Debbie debs.russell@gmail.com

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

As we are rushing headlong from summer to autumn and dare I say it, Christmas, for the shop and the committee behind it, it's a time of change, transformation and renewal.



Save The Date: AGM. We would love you to join us on **Friday 23rd October at 7pm in the Village Hall** for the AGM. It's a chance to reflect on the past year and to hear the exciting changes which are imminent, including the progress on the plans for the new shop – which, I'm please to say, is still on track. More details of the AGM and new shop as it happens will be published on the Grafham Village shop website on the 'News' page at <https://grafhamvillageshop.co.uk/news-2>

Changing of the Guard

The AGM will also see the changing of the guards – the current co-chairs of Patrick and Debbie will be taking a step back with yours truly, Colin Gough and David Bretherton picking up the baton. It cannot be stressed enough the value of Patrick and Debbie's sterling work, supported by the shop committee, guiding the shop which has gone from strength to strength over the last three years.

100 Club - Room for more subscribers

A quick thank you for everyone who is supporting us by joining the 100 Club which has raised over £950 since it was set up in May. The prizes have increased month on month as more have joined with last month's top prize being £120 and two further prizes of £40.

There are only a few numbers left so please join in. With a £5 per month bank standing order, you will have one number in the regular draw. If fully subscribed, this means the monthly prizes would be a first prize of £150 and two prizes of £50. Application forms are available now in the shop. If you want to join and can't get to the shop, message shop committee member, David Bretherton, and he will be happy to pop round with an application form. Text him on 07948 799683 or email: 100club@grafhamvillageshop.co.uk



Arkwright's Till Bites The Dust

In other news we are getting a new till! Exciting stuff, well actually it is. It's a new all singing, all dancing, touch screen EPOS system. It is going to make everyone's life, and I am thinking of the volunteers here, so much easier and will ensure that popular items are (almost) always in stock. The committee is beaver away behind the scenes to make sure the transition from old to new is seamless. It will be announced on the website when it goes live and I would encourage everyone to come in and spend as much as you can to test it!

Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteers are the life blood of the shop, apart from keeping it open they are the friendly, chatty and helpful face of the village. We always are on the lookout for further volunteers so whether you are interested in a couple of hours a week, month or even very occasionally, let us know. To demonstrate what a diverse breed volunteers are, we are going to run a Volunteer Spotlight for the next few months, and this month it is:-

Ros: I was born in 1944 in Yorkshire, the quiet middle child of three, with two outgoing siblings. We were brought up in Kent and Wiltshire. At 17, I went to Exeter University to study Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse, not the most obvious degree in terms of a career.

After graduating I worked for Essex Council education department as I wasn't sure what I wanted to do and was sent into a school to get teaching experience. I enjoyed it so much I stayed, spending the next thirty years teaching English and Film Studies in schools and further education colleges and managing to have two children in the holidays!

I then worked for the British Board of Film Classification in London, becoming a Senior Examiner, responsible for allocating age categories to films and DVDs and developing an education programme, my dream job.

Eleven years later I retired and immediately took a job teaching apprentices, later becoming a City and Guilds examiner, but deciding when I was 74 it was time to stop.

Why do I volunteer? Because it's a public service, and I have been in public service occupations all my life. It gets to be a habit.

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

Bacon and Red Lentil Soup

By October we are well into Autumn and the weather is beginning to get consistently colder. How about making some warm and comforting soup? This recipe serves up to 6.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp vegetable/olive oil
- 75g smoked back bacon, trim off the fat and finely chop
- 1 onion diced
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1.5 litres chicken or vegetable stock, I like to use the little stock pots
- 7oz red lentils
- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and finely chopped (sweet potato is best but an ordinary potato will do)
- 1 garlic clove
- large sprig thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- salt and freshly ground black pepper



Method

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the bacon, onion and red pepper. Cook on a low heat for 5 minutes, or until the vegetables have started to soften.
2. Boil a kettle and use this to make your stock – or if using fresh stock, bring it to the boil in a separate saucepan while the vegetables are cooking.
3. Add the potato, garlic and lentils to the bacon and vegetables. Stir for a minute, then pour over the just-boiled stock and add the herbs.
4. Season with salt and pepper. Return to the boil, then turn down to a medium heat, cover, and cook for 15–20 minutes, or until the red lentils and potatoe are tender. Carefully pick out the herbs.
5. Blend with a stick-blender – or for a chunky soup you can leave it as is.
6. Serve in bowls. Freeze any left-overs or it can be kept in the fridge for up to 3 days.

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>



Grafham Fireworks 7th November TIMBER FOR THE BONFIRE

If you have timber suitable for the bonfire, please deliver it to the far side of the 5 a-side pitch, Grafham Village Hall, at 3pm on Saturday 7th November where Steve will be in charge!

Or call **Dan 07802 645264** who will collect it on the morning of Sat 7th. Please make sure that there's nothing included that is explosive or that might give off noxious fumes.



BRAMPTON FLOWER CLUB

We welcomed Tim Meakin back to the club in September for a fabulous floral demonstration. All ways popular, his flowers were stunning and were raffled off at the end of the evening.

Our future meetings are as follows:

Wednesday 6th October

Vicki Hease - floral demonstration

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, Brampton
Doors open at 6.45pm for 7.15 start

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



Saturday 5th December

GRAFHAM SOCIAL committee Presents FROM 2-4PM

Childrens CHRISTMAS Party

Free Admission

MUSIC & GAMES | CRAFT | GIFTS |
VISIT FROM SANTA | SNACKS

GRAFHAM VILLAGE HALL

Limited numbers please book by emailing
misscgberry@yahoo.co.uk

Christmas Market

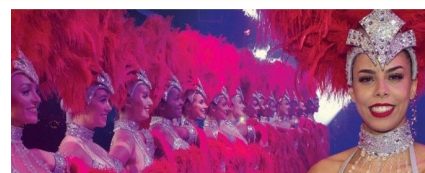
Sunday 6th December

Grafham Village Hall

Gifts - Drinks - Cakes
Christmas Cards - Decorations

OPEN 1PM-4PM FREE ENTRY

Drinks served In The Grafham Trout



Thursford Christmas Spectacular

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

Adult tickets are £82, concessions £80, children £70 (Admission included)

Save the date - tickets sell really fast

Tel. Robinson's Coaches, Kimbolton 01480 860581

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



As Creationtide draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on the Harvest Festival services held throughout the country. Traditionally a celebration of a successful agricultural crop, the festival has taken on a profound new meaning in our modern, hyper-connected world. While most people no longer work the land, its core themes of gratitude, community, and reflection are more relevant than ever as we navigate contemporary global challenges.

In today's urbanised society, the festival serves as a vital bridge between consumers and the origins of their food. In an era dominated by supermarkets and instant delivery apps, it reminds us of the complex global supply chains and the essential labour of farmers. It prompts a shift in perspective, encouraging modern consumers to choose sustainable, locally sourced options and support ethical farming practices.

This call to ethical living is deeply rooted in ancient spiritual traditions, notably reflected in Galatians 6:9, which reminds us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." In a modern context, this passage challenges us to persist in environmental stewardship and social justice, even when progress feels slow. It reassures us that our collective efforts to care for the Earth and one another will eventually yield a sustainable future for generations to come.

The modern Harvest Festival addresses the pressing crisis of food waste and insecurity. While agricultural technology yields

unprecedented abundance, millions still face hunger. Today's harvest celebrations frequently look like food bank drives and community kitchen fundraisers. It transforms traditional thanksgiving into active social responsibility, urging us to redistribute our collective bounty to those left behind by modern economic systems.

The festival also aligns closely with the contemporary environmental movement. As climate change disrupts global weather patterns, a successful harvest is no longer something to be taken for granted. The occasion offers a moment to reflect on our ecological footprint, advocate for biodiversity, and recommit to protecting the planet's finite resources.



May our Harvest Festivals renew in us a spirit of thankfulness, generosity and faithful care for the world God has entrusted to us.

*Every blessing
Duncan*

Brampton's Mothers Union Pudding Evening

Brampton Mothers' Union will be holding our popular Pudding Evening at
Brampton Church Hall on Tuesday 13th October from 7.30pm

Come along and enjoy a range of puddings, prepared, baked and organised by our members. Funds raised will be supporting a range of Mothers' Union Projects. You can find more details on: www.mothersunion.org/what-we-do/projects The Mothers' Union is a Christian charity with over four million members in 84 countries worldwide. We fundraise to help support individuals and families who need a helping hand. We help people of all faiths and none.

The Pudding Evening is open to all, we look forward to welcoming you on 13th.
Everyone is welcome.

For additional information please contact mu@eastleightonstone.com



Care Network Cambridgeshire is marking four decades of supporting people across the county with a special 40th anniversary celebration bringing together the people, stories and partnerships that have shaped the charity over the past 40 years.

Since becoming an established charity in 1986, Care Network has provided vital support to thousands of people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Whether helping someone recover following a hospital stay, access vital healthcare appointments, overcome loneliness, rebuild confidence, strengthen their independence or reconnect with their community, the charity has spent four decades helping people navigate some of life's most challenging moments.

To mark this significant milestone, Care Network is inviting local communities, volunteers, partners, supporters and anyone interested in its work to join its **40th Anniversary Celebration** this October.

Light refreshments, anniversary cake and non-alcoholic sparkling drinks will be served.

To attend, please email:
admin@care-network.org.uk
or call 01954 211919

Care Network Cambridgeshire 40th Anniversary Celebration

Tuesday 6th October 2026 1:30pm – 3:30pm

William Collyn Community Cere, Girton, Cambridge

The celebration will bring Care Network's 40-year story to life, recognising the people who have shaped the charity while celebrating the thousands of lives changed through the power of community support. Visitors will have the opportunity to journey through four decades of Care Network's history, meet staff, volunteers, partners and supporters, and hear directly from some of the people who have been part of its story. A special anniversary film will feature Care Network's history alongside interviews and stories from clients, stakeholders, staff and volunteers, reflecting on the charity's past, the difference its work makes today and its ambitions for the future.

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**Wildlife Trust for
Beds, Cambs
& Northants**
Hunts Local Group



Dragonflies

Wednesday 14th October 7:30pm

At our next joint session of Hunts Fauna and Flora and the Hunts Local Group of the Wildlife Trust, we are pleased to welcome back Henry Stanier who, as many of you will know, has been working for the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire section of the Wildlife Trust for over 25 years. Henry mainly focusses on ecology, monitoring and research. However, his interest in dragonflies goes back to his childhood. Henry has been based at the Great Fen for 10 years and in that time his projects have progressed the restoration of the Fen, diversifying the range of habitat for resident and new species to colonise.

Henry is an accomplished speaker and photographer and his talks are always most enjoyable.

Everyone is most welcome to attend and 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 contact Tim Fryer **07941 261346**

timpfryer@gmail.com

To find out more about the Wildlife Trust visit:

<https://www.wildlifebcn.org/wild-events>

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

The Pantheon

Colin Gough

Having written a couple of small articles in the past for the Grafham Gossip here is the first of what I hope will be a regular feature looking at the past, specifically classical Greece and Rome, a time that is very alien yet sometimes so familiar which I hope will inform, amaze and delight.

Firstly, a little about me. Some will know me from the shop where I volunteer and have been featured as the 'new product taster' under the pseudonym Goughmeister, although not entirely a pseudonym in the true sense of the word but I thought I would set the scene by including it as an example of the influence of ancient Greek. 'Pseudonym' comes from the ancient Greek *pseudónymon* ('false name'), a combination of *pseûdes* ('false') and *onoma* ('name').

To start we are in the Roman world and a building that would have demonstrated wealth, power and empire reach to the Romans. For this we travel to Rome. At the mention of Rome most will think of the Flavian Amphitheatre, named after the imperial dynasty that ruled Rome when it was built and better known as the Colosseum but no, not the building I have in mind. Yes, it is impressive holding an estimated 80,000 spectators but still pales against the Circus Maximus, the chariot racing track running alongside the Palatine Hill where the emperors had their villas, which held an astonishing 150,000 spectators.

The building I have in mind is equally well known – The Pantheon. It is an astounding building from several aspects but there is one feature which captures the wealth, power and reach of the empire.

The name Pantheon is from the Greek *Pan* meaning 'all' or 'every' and *Theos* meaning 'of the Gods' so it is a shrine honouring every deity. The inscription on the front of the temple is one of the most recognisable Latin inscriptions:

M·AGRIPPA·L·F·COS·TERTIVM·FECIT which stands for *M[arcus] Agrippa L[ucii] f[ilius] co[n]s[ul] tertium fecit* (Marcus Agrippa, son of Lucius. Consul for the third time made (the building)).

Marcus Vispanius Agrippa, Octavian's (later Augustus) general, defeated Mark Anthony and Cleopatra at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. (Before the Common Era.) As was common in the Roman world of the time and as thanks to the gods (plus a certain need to demonstrate wealth), he started a building programme which, along with the Baths of Agrippa and the Basilica of Neptune, included the Pantheon. However, although the facade dates from Agrippa, the building itself was restored by Domitian in 80 CE after a fire, rebuilt by Trajan after another fire in 114 CE and then converted to a Catholic Church in 609 CE.



At the back of the Portico is the first of the three impressive features of the Pantheon, the doors.

Each Bronze door weighs approximately eight and a half tons, are 24.7 feet high and 14.6 feet across and yet are so well balanced they can be open and closed by a single man. There is a current debate as to whether the doors are contemporaneous to the original building with some arguing the originals may have been looted by the Goths in the 5th century sack of Rome. Either way they are an impressive feature.

Going into the temple the second wonder is evident. It is the Rotunda, the dome that draws the eyes up as if to the heavens to an opening, the Oculus, in the centre of the roof. It is the Oculus that provides the only natural light and is open to the elements. The dimensions and details of the dome are truly staggering. The diameter of the Rotunda is 142 feet which is equal to the height of the Rotunda from the floor giving a perfectly symmetrical shape. The dome weighs an incredible 4,500 tons and tapers from a 6ft width at the base to 1.5ft at the Oculus and still holds the record for the largest unsupported concrete dome in the world. The Oculus is 27ft in diameter and designed to shine a beam of sunlight in the middle of the floor on midsummer's day 21st June. More importantly to the Romans, the beam shines on the doors, illuminating the emperor, on April 21st – the traditional date of the birth of Rome.



Continued on page 11

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The Pantheon *Continued from page 9*

The third wonder and what I believe would have demonstrated wealth, power and reach of the empire to the Romans is often overlooked by visitors. To see the doors and the interior of the temple you would have passed them. They are the 16 granite columns that are in the Portico: a mixture of grey and pink granite there are eight across the façade, four in the middle row and four in the back row.

Normally columns are constructed of a series of drums which are placed one on top of each other held firm by metal rod. These columns are different. They are monoliths, one piece of Granite 39ft tall, 5ft in diameter and weighing 60 tons each. The Grey Granite was cut, shaped and polished by hand at Mons Claudianus, a quarry in the eastern mountains of Egypt. They were then placed on wooden sleds and dragged 62 miles to the river Nile where, when the water level was high enough during the spring floods, they were floated on barges to the coast where they were transferred to boats. After crossing the Mediterranean, they were then again transferred to barges at the port of Ostia to travel up the Tiber to Rome where they were then manhandled the 600 yards to the construction site. The pink granite columns had a similar journey being quarried in Aswan, Egypt.

Whilst the Pantheon has several astounding features, it is hard to find better examples than the columns of the wealth, power and reach of the empire than the 16, 60-ton columns, quarried in Egypt and transported to Rome.



Letter to the Editor

October 2026

Thank you to the editor of the Gossip

Congratulations Editor- this is the 250th edition of this mine of valuable information together with a wide range of articles! Thanks for your dedication - month on month - and ensuring we know everything happening in Grafham, as well as cultural history and wildlife around us and so much more. Please keep going!

Grafham Resident

Thank you! It is great to know that the Grafham Gossip is appreciated. Thanks also to everyone who sends in their news, views and events to publicise as this enables me to keep going. *Ed.*

Sausages, Cider and Scarecrows

A fun day was had by all on Saturday 5th September. Here are some photos to remind you of the Sausage and Cider Festival and the Scarecrow Competition. The scarecrows were scattered around the village which encouraged participants to get some exercise. More scarecrow photos can be found on the village website or using this link: <https://grafham.org.uk/grafham-scarecrow-competition-september-2026>



Villagers relaxed in the sunshine enjoying the sausages and cider while listening to Maria on saxophone in the afternoon and the Bare Foot Doctors in the evening.

Thanks to all concerned!



The Library Presents Autumn / Winter Season

The Library Presents returns for a new Autumn season brings you music, dance, art workshops and a selection of stories for all ages.

The Library Presents has many uplifting events to keep you entertained from 16th of October until 12th of December. Tickets are now available to book. Chosen by over 500 local residents, this season has a line-up of 32 different events, including a surprise event planned and delivered by the Library Present young producers. Our season will take place across 24 towns and villages. Come along to laugh, relax, meet new people, express yourself or support your wellbeing. Please follow the link for details of the full season:

<https://www.library.live/the-library-presents>

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, news, recipes, letters and photos!

Thanks, *Ed.*





Tea & Chat?

Do join us for Tea & Chat
in Grafham Village Hall

All welcome. Refreshments are free!

Thursday 24th September 2:30 - 4:00pm

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

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

There will be no Tea and Chat in December.

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



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Mon to Wed - Closed

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Grafham

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Please remember to

send your news, views, letters, adverts,
recipes and gossip for the November
issue to: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk
as early as you like, **but definitely by**
9:00am on Thursday 15th October.

Thanks, Ed.

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