

Grafham Gossip



Deadline for March issue: by 9:00 am on Sunday 15th February



BINGO NIGHT AT THE GRAFHAM TROUT

Saturday 21st February

Childrens
Bingo 5-6pm

Adults Cash
Prize Bingo
from 7pm

Dry January... done?
(Or didn't quite happen?)
Let's get moving this February!
See page 8...

Lent Lunches

This year the Lent Lunches will be held in Grafham Village Hall starting on Monday 23rd February 12:00 - 2:00 pm.
For more details see View from the Pew, page 2.



Spring is in sight!

Find RHS Top Gardening Jobs
for February on page 7

Editor's note...

As I write this, it is grey and drizzly outside. However there are signs of Spring; the garden bulbs are beginning to emerge and the snow drops are out. I bought my first bunches of supermarket daffodils yesterday!

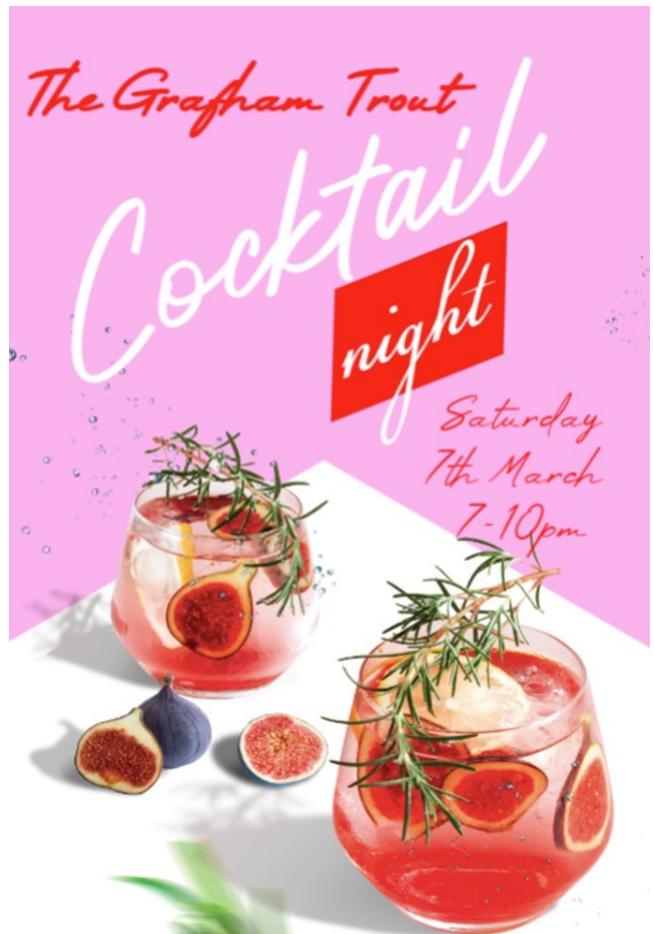


Easter is early this year, 5th April, so Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday) which marks the start of Lent, is on Tuesday 17th February. Before this we have Valentine's Day on 14th and later, on 21st, there's more fun in store as it's bingo night at the pub! So after January's gloom we have much to look forward to in the four 'perfect' weeks of February 2026.

Why perfect? February begins on Sunday 1st and ends on Saturday 28th resulting in a perfectly symmetrical calendar month! (But it also means that the 13th will be a Friday.)

Remember to send in your news, views, photos, adverts, gossip and details of upcoming events in March by the 9:00 am deadline on Sunday 15th February.

Keep gossiping!
editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk





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

4th Sunday	25th	09:30 Holy Communion Grafham 11:00 Morning Worship Brampton
1st Sunday	1st February	09:30 Morning Worship Grafham 11:00 Holy Communion Brampton
2nd Sunday	8th February	09:30 Holy Communion Ellington 11:00 Morning Worship Brampton 18:30 Taizé Grafham
Wednesday	11th February	09:00 <i>Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham</i>
3rd Sunday	15th February	09:30 Morning Worship Ellington 11:00 Holy Communion Brampton
Ash Wednesday	18th February	10:00 <i>Communion with imposition of ashes</i> Brampton
4th Sunday	22nd February	09:30 Holy Communion Grafham 11:00 Morning Worship Brampton
1st Sunday	1st March	09:30 Morning Worship Grafham 11:00 Holy Communion Brampton

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



Lent activities

Ash Wednesday	18th February	10:00 <i>Communion with imposition of ashes</i> Brampton
Mondays	23rd February, 2/9/16/23 March	12:00 - 14:00 <i>Bible study and simple lunch</i> Grafham Village Hall
Thursdays	26th February, 5/12/19/26 March	19:30 - 21:00 <i>Lent Course. The Prodigal Son</i> Church Hall Brampton

Sunday Evening Youth

meets at All Saints Church, Huntingdon

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

For more details contact: frankie@eastleightonstone.com or sarah@huntingdonparish.org

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

Contacting the clergy:

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



18th February. Once again our Lent lunches will be held in our village hall. These consist of bible readings and a period of reflection followed by a simple meal of soup and bread. The range of homemade soups is always enjoyable and cash donations are sent to Christian Aid. The lunches are held each Monday starting on 23rd February from 12 noon to 2:00 pm until the week before Easter. All are welcome to attend.

Don't forget our Taizé services at 6:30 pm on the second Sunday of each month. A service of gentle chanting, accompanied on keyboard is lit by nightlights and candles. So relaxing and calming. Give it a try, you'll be assured of a warm welcome.

View from the Pew

Looking back a few weeks, our Christmas services were all well attended not forgetting Curry and Carols which was as popular as ever. It was good to have two Christmas trees this year, ably decorated by our volunteers and one youngster. These made such a statement of welcome to visitors, together with the Christmas flowers in red, green and gold. We do our best to keep our attendees at services warm on these chilly days with the pew heaters, comfy blankets and hand warmers.

Our choir excelled themselves at our Carol Service giving us some glorious musical moments. The mulled wine and Christmas cake were much appreciated after lustily singing carols. The Crib Service as ever filled the church almost to bursting and it was a joy to see three generations in the congregation. The fun story of a grumpy owl, together with animal noises 'woo woo,' was received well. On Christmas day Christmas gifts were the subject of our sermon as some lucky congregants had been opening them at home before the service.

The generous donations of Christmas goodies on 7th December were accepted with many thanks by Godmanchester Foodbank.

We now look forward to a new Christian year. With Epiphany past we'll focus on the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday

Parish News January 2026



Minutes of the 2nd December meeting can be found on the village website: <https://graffham.org.uk/parish-council>

Happy New Year from the Parish Council!

As we step into 2026, the Parish Council would like to extend their wishes to all residents for a healthy and prosperous New Year. We look forward to working together to make our parish an even better place to live.

The Parish Council would like to express their thanks to Cllr Joanna Dunn who has resigned from the council. The Parish Council are sorry to see Cllr Dunn leave and wish her all the best for the future. This has now created a vacancy on the Parish Council which will be filled by co-option at the March meeting of the council. Please contact the clerk for further details if you are interested in joining the Parish Council: clerk@graffhampc.org

2026 / 2027 Local Highway Improvement Initiative Bid

The Parish Council would like to confirm that we have submitted a bid for the 2026 / 2027 funding round, asking for the speed limit for Church Road / Church Hill be reduced to a more sensible speed, making the roads safer for all users.

Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 Graffham 1: Adjacent to 24 Cedar Close.

Graffham Parish Council noted the provisions made by HDC in its "Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046". However, the Parish Council has added some further observations and requirements to ensure the successful implementation of a development on this site. A copy of the full submission can be found attached to the December minutes; copies of which can be found on the website:

<https://graffham.org.uk/parish-council>

Spring Litter Pick

The Parish Council is pleased to announce the date for this year's Spring Litter Pick. Let's come together to keep our village looking its best – fresh, tidy and welcoming for all.

Spring Litter Pick

Saturday 16th May

Meet at Graffham Village Hall at 10:00 am

We warmly invite all residents to join us for this community effort. Tea and cake will be provided afterwards as a thank-you for your time and energy.

Children's Play Area Brampton Road – Hedge Replacement Update

The Parish Council would like to inform residents about recent works carried on the children's play area boundary hedge (left hand side). The previous hedge had become difficult to maintain, increasingly costly to maintain and heavily overgrown with brambles that extended over the footpath, creating a problem of scratches and snagging for pedestrians.

To improve safety and ensure a more manageable long-term solution, the hedge has now been removed. It will be replaced with a new English cherry laurel hedge, chosen for its year-round greenery, resilience, and ease of maintenance.

In the meantime, a safety fence has been installed to secure the area while planting and establishment works take place.

The council appreciates resident's patience while this improvement is completed and looks forward to providing a safer, tidier, and more attractive hedge for the village.

Cllr Ian Gardener

Chairman, Graffham Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council is to be held on Tuesday 3rd February 2026, 7:30 pm in the village hall.

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

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

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

Graffham Parish Council Parish Clerk, **Lisa Hazel** clerk@graffhampc.org

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

Patrick Curran p.curran@graffhampc.org **Sunil Gogna** s.gogna@graffhampc.org

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

Graffham'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 Weston,
PE28 4YE



Graffham's District Councillor

Stephen Cawley 07925 741 167

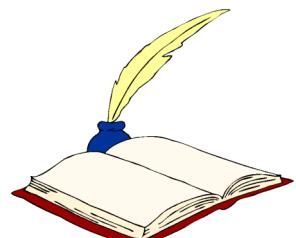
stephen.cawley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

34 North Road
Alconbury Weston,
PE28 4JU

If you'd like to write a 'one-off' article or a regular feature for the

Graffham Gossip, send it by email to

editor@graffhamgossip.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 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

February							March						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
						1							1
2	3	Blu	G*	6	7	8	2	3	Blu	G*	6	7	8
9	10	Blk	12	13	14	15	9	10	Blk	12	13	14	15
16	17	Blu	G*	20	21	22	16	17	Blu	G*	20	21	22
23	24	Blk	26	27	28		23	24	Blk	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

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

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

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

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

Alternatively you can book 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' 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>

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

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>





Talking Shop

Gentle Start to 2026

After all the hoo-ha of getting ready for Christmas and New Year the shop has been quietly busy in January. As always Jan and Feb are pretty quiet months with visitor numbers fluctuating depending on the weather. Figures for December look similar to last year and now Christmas decorations are all away and the January sale is ticking on.

Diamond Hampers Celebrate New Year's Honour

You might not have noticed it but on the bottom right hand-side of the counter - under the beers - there is a laundry basket of various dried goods. These are donations made by kind villagers to support Diamond Hamper's Pantry, a sort of food bank where those short of food can fill-a-basket for just £5. The founder/organiser of Diamond Hampers, Lianne Simpson is rightly rather pleased to have been awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours. Well Done Lianne and thank you Chris B for being the delivery man.

And by a Happy Coincidence – The Community Chest Raffle

The shop's February promotion planned before the award above was to encourage support for Diamond Hampers by running a weekly lottery during February. Villagers are asked to buy or donate to our 'laundry basket' from their larder any surplus/unwanted dry goods. These must be sealed and in date. (Items like soap and toothpaste are welcome too). In exchange for each item (please make them worth at least one pound) you will get a raffle ticket. A weekly winner will be randomly selected and be offered a £10 voucher to spend in the shop. It's a wonderful opportunity to clear out unwanted Christmas biscuits before the mice get them!

Bread and Milk

Poor Belinda has been battling away to establish a reliable arrangement for milk supplies. One supplier – who took over from Blunhams sometimes fails to turn up, another supplier can't supply milk in the variety of sizes we need and a third supplier can't provide our preferred extras Langley Cream and Timms yoghurts. Any way with great perseverance and toys just about still in the pram, we hope she has cracked it. On the bread front the committee have been sampling some new sourdough from an alternate local supplier to

See back page for Winter Opening Hours

Finding Light in Winter

We are at that time of year that many people find difficult. February is often considered one of the toughest months: the days are short, the weather is cold, and the Christmas cheer has faded. You are not alone if this isn't the time of year you most look forward to.

However, there are glimmers of hope. Birdsong becomes more noticeable, evenings slowly lengthen, and weather permitting, gardens and churchyards host events to show off snowdrop collections. Getting outdoors and noticing these small changes reminds us that spring isn't far away, even if we still need to wrap up warm for now.

And just as nature offers these glimpses of hope, so can we. A smile, a chat in the shop, a kind word, or supporting local

Eunice our Polish bakers. No decision has been made but the advantage of this supplier is that it is delivered, bagged and there is no significant minimum order.

Badgers Nuts Relishes and now Sauces

The shop has replenished its stocks of St Neots based Badgers nuts, relishes and now sauces. The new sauces include Reaper Original Blend, Reaper's Revenge, Sweet Chilli, Hoot Sweet Chilli and Sweet Chilli. Apparently, Badger was the owner/creators nick name at school.



Fund Raising for the New Shop Building

While we hope to get the largest part of the costs of the new building covered by various grants etc. it will be necessary for the shop to undertake some fundraising of our own to show we can pay our way. We have number of ideas, but it would be great if we could have some volunteers with fund raising experience to help out. We would love to hear some ideas of what we could - politely - do to raise funds. One daft idea was to run a Full Monty event although, our thinking is that we might raise more money by NOT doing a Full Monty! Ideas on the table/being planned so far, include a Race Night, a new share offer, a Ladies Night... If you have any ideas or want to help out, please email:

admin@grafhamvillageshop.co.uk

or speak to Belinda or one of the committee members.

www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk 01480 810119



activities - these small acts all help to share light and warmth. They remind us that we are part of a community, and that what we do matters more than we might realise.

At our carol services we shared these words: *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it"* (John 1:5). Whether or not you consider yourself a Christian, the image is a powerful one: hope is stronger than despair, and love is stronger than loneliness.

So let's look for the light — and, where we can, be the light for someone else. Together, we can make these winter days a little brighter.

Rev Jen Forester



Saving Ratty: Should Water Vole Conservation Involve More Than Just Mink Control

Wednesday 11th February at 7:30 pm at Brampton Memorial Hall

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust is pleased to welcome back Alistair Grant.

Once a familiar sight along Britain's watercourses, the water vole is now listed as endangered after one of the steepest declines of any mammal since 1990. In some areas the population fell 90% between 1989 and 1998 alone! Although eradicating the non-native American mink has been vital, recent data shows that water voles do not always recover following this.

Drawing on extensive practical experience as a specialist riparian ecologist working closely with water voles, Alistair will explore the ecological challenges and conservation strategies needed to secure a future for this much loved species.

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.**

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

BRAMPTON FLOWER CLUB

We are a small friendly club made up of a range of ages all with a common interest in floral creativity. We welcome visitors each month at a fee of £8 and membership is open to all at £45 per year.

Programme:
4th February Rachael Borenkova Lets go to the Flower Shop
4th March Lesley Beeton Plan B
21st March Floral Workshop
1st April Barbara Collins The Joy of Flowers

If you are interested please do come along to one of our monthly meetings, you will be made very welcome.
Doors open 6.45pm, demo 7.15pm.
For more details please contact margaret.horne@me.com

**The Lady Olivia Hall,
85 Central Avenue,
Brampton. PE28 4QL**

Volunteers needed!



- Are you interested in Primary & Secondary School Education?
- Do you have excellent listening skills?
- Are you able to make balanced decisions?

Parents/carers have the right to appeal if their child is not offered a place in their preferred school. We coordinate an Independent Panel to review a school's decision to refuse a school place and determine whether one should be offered, or not.

We **urgently** need volunteers to be part of this professional panel.
Please Apply Today! Full training will be given.

Please contact me if you would like to join our team of volunteers.

Clare.Cronk@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



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



Divers

The divers are a small family of birds found around the northern reaches of the world. Of the five species worldwide two breed in the UK with a third being a reasonably regular winter visitor. It is thought there were another 15 - 20 species, but these became extinct between two and ten million years ago. The UK breeding species are the red-throated diver and the black-throated diver, the red-throated being far more common with around 1300 pairs breeding in northwestern Scotland. The great northern diver is only a winter visitor with one record of breeding in the UK in the last 50 years. However, news has recently been released of a great northern diver pairing with black-throated diver and successfully raising a chick both in 2024 and 2025 at an undisclosed location in Scotland.



Great Northern Diver

Divers are very much water birds, spending most of their time afloat. With a stocky body, the powerful webbed feet set back and a long, streamlined neck, they are supremely adapted to hunting underwater and will chase small fish, staying submerged for up to three minutes at a time. They rarely venture onto land, where their build makes them rather ungainly, even building their nests close to the water's edge.

In America, where the great northern is more common and the other species, the yellow-billed and the Pacific breed they are known as loons. The name is thought to originate from the old Norse word 'lomr' meaning 'moaning bird'. The call of the great northern has been compared to uncontrolled idiotic laughter; reference the lyrics of the jazz standard 'Old Devil Moon' – Wanna cry, wanna croon/wanna laugh like a loon. However, both the black-throated and great northern have eerily beautiful calls which have been used widely as scene setting sound effects in film and television, irrespective as to whether the bird would be present in the location or not. The great northern call has even been sampled and used in electronic music, notably 808 State's track 'Pacific State'. Loon also appears in place names with 'Looma Chun' being present both in mainland Scotland and the Western isles and the similar 'Loomi Shun' used in the Shetlands. Both mean 'Lochan of the Divers'.

There is a long association with the ancient tribes that inhabited the various species ranges. Remains of divers have been found in neolithic middens in the Orkneys and other areas, the birds having a thick layer of fat and therefore high calorific value. But the relationship goes beyond being a source of food. Divers appear in many creation myths and are said to guide shaman on their journeys to the spirit world. The red-throated is known as the 'rain goose' being a herald of bad weather and the great northern is known in the Hebrides as 'Bun a Bhuachaille', a phrase that translates to 'the herdsman of the tide races', a perfect description of a diver's life.

But why all this information about birds that live in the wild, rough north? For about ten years or so a great northern diver has overwintered at Grafham Water and as I write there has been reports of six birds this year. A sight of these fantastic birds is not as far-fetched as you may think.

Gregory Belcher
Senior Reserves Officer, Wildlife Trust BCN



Thank you Gregory

Sadly, the article above on 'Divers' will be the last from Gregory Belcher. A very big thank you goes to Gregory for all his support over the years. As a Senior Reserves Officer for the Wildlife Trust, he has written interesting and knowledgeable articles for the *Grafham Gossip* since 2018, often including his own fascinating photographs. His articles will be very much missed.

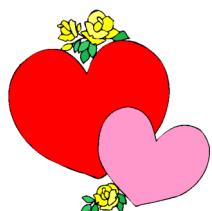
Anglian Water plans to manage the Grafham Water Nature Reserve themselves which means the Wildlife Trust will no longer be needed to carry out the conservation management there.

We wish Gregory every success and happiness for the future. *Ed*

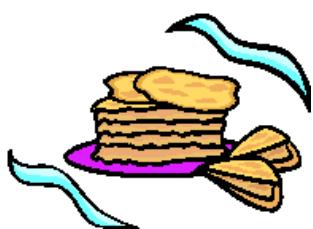
Remember Valentine's day on 14th February

and Pancake Day

(Shrove Tuesday)



on 17th February!





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kimbolton@peterlane.co.uk

HIIT Resistance Tribe

Dry January... done? (Or didn't quite happen?)
Let's get moving this February!

Join my **local fitness sessions** in Grafham and kick-start the year feeling stronger, fitter and more energised.

- ✓ Exercise classes for **all fitness levels**
- ✓ Friendly, supportive atmosphere
- ✓ No pressure – beginners very welcome
- ✓ **FREE taster classes available**

Whether you're getting back into exercise or starting fresh, February is the perfect time to move more and feel better.

Come along, try a class for free, and see what works for you

For details & bookings: hrtribe25@gmail.com

Tracie

Your advert could be here!

To advertise email: 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



Buckden Repair Café

Buckden Village Hall
13.30 - 16.30

Saturday 7th February

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

Bookings: <https://forms.gle/3NjojicPWCLyMcVQ7>
or more details from
buckdenrepaircafe@gmail.com

Refreshments, including homemade cakes and scones available

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

Letter to the Editor

Sticky Squash and Sweet Potato Traybake

Dear Editor

The recipe printed in your November issue went down a treat and translated beautifully across the pond for our traditional harvest feast of Thanksgiving.

As former Grafham residents (2005-2008, Hartham Close), we thoroughly enjoy catching up with the news of a village that holds such warm memories for us. Our former neighbors, Steve and Carolyn Booth generously share their email subscription to ensure we remain in the loop.



Best of luck and keep up the excellent work!

Nancy Kelly and David Cornelius

Thank you for your email and kind words, Nancy and David. I am glad that the Grafham Gossip helps you to keep in touch with your previous home village of Grafham. If you come across any recipes that you think we might like to try, please send them for publishing.

All the best, Ed

Slow Cooked Chorizo and Bean Stew

February is the month for warming stews this recipe is perhaps best made in a slow cooker but you could put a pan on the lowest heat on your hob

Ingredients for 4 people

- 70g chorizo
- 1–2 onions, thinly sliced
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 400g tins of cannellini or kidney beans
- 150–200g of sliced greens - kale, spring greens or even sprouts.
- 2 tsp paprika (preferably smoked)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp dried mixed herbs



Method

- Slice the chorizo into small pieces. Tip the tomatoes into the slow cooker. Fill the tomato tin with water and pour into the slow cooker pot. Half fill the can again and add this too (this should make 600ml water in total).
- Add the chorizo, beans, paprika, dried herbs, onion and garlic to the pot. Season generously with salt and pepper. Cover with the lid and cook on low for 3-5 hours until the flavours have combined.
- Turn off the slow cooker and stir in the greens. Cover with the lid again and leave for 10 minutes for the greens to wilt. Season with salt and pepper and then serve topped with extra chorizo, if you like.
- Serve with some boiled potatoes or mash.

What entertainment would you like to see performed at your local library this year?

For over eight years, thanks to generous support from Arts Council England, The Library Presents has delivered high-quality live entertainment in libraries across the region. The choosing process gives local people a direct say in the events that come to their communities.

Taking part in the process is simple. From Thursday 15th January to Monday 16 February, the choosing menu, containing over 50 events, is available online and in your local library libraries. People are invited to browse the menu and select up to six performances they would like to see at their local library.

The menu includes a lively mix of music, poetry, theatre, dance, digital, comedy and magic.

Have your say by visiting one of the county's libraries or taking part online between 15th January and 16th February.

For more information, visit [Library Live | The Library Presents](https://www.library.live/the-library-presents) (www.library.live/the-library-presents)

Community groups and clubs can also arrange a visit from The Library Presents team to gather views in person. To find out more, contact thelibrarypresents@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



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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

Website: www.grafham.org.uk

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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

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



E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

RHS Top Gardening Jobs for February - Spring is in sight

This month there are signs of the approaching spring, with bulbs appearing and wildlife waking up as day length and temperatures increase. There's plenty to do indoors this month to prepare for the season ahead. Outdoors, as the garden comes to life again, it's time to prune shrubs and climbers, such as *Wisteria* as well as evergreen hedges.



- Prepare vegetable seed beds and sow some vegetables under cover
- Chit potato tubers
- Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines and peaches
- Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off
- Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering
- Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'

- Prune *Wisteria*
- Renovate overgrown hedges with pruning
- Prune conservatory climbers such as bougainvillea
- At the end of the month, start cutting back deciduous ornamental grasses to allow new growth to come through

For more advice see the Royal Horticultural Society website
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/february>

Weekly Food Waste Collections

The government's new Consistent Recycling Reforms will make recycling simpler and more effective across England. From March 2026, all councils will collect the same core materials - paper and card, plastics, metals, glass and food waste - helping to reduce landfill and support the UK's net-zero ambitions.

What This Means for You

We're introducing weekly food waste collections starting April 2026, making it easier for you to recycle more and waste less.

By March 2026, every household will receive - free of charge:

- A 7 - litre grey kitchen caddy for food waste storage indoors
- A 23 - litre external grey food waste bin for weekly kerbside collection

You can put all food waste into your kitchen caddy, including:

- Cooked and raw meat and bones, fish gristle
- Dairy products, cheese and eggs
- Eggshells
- Tea bags and coffee grounds
- Rice, pasta and beans
- Baked goods (such as bread, cakes and pastries)
- Fruit and vegetables raw and cooked and peelings
- Pet food

Simply transfer the contents from your kitchen caddy to your external bin for your weekly collection.

For Residents with Communal Waste Collections

Each household will receive a 7-litre kitchen caddy, and you'll have access to a shared communal food waste bin.



We're working with property managers and housing providers to ensure every site has the right facilities and collection arrangements in place.

Why It Matters

This new service forms part of our ongoing commitment to support the national recycling reforms, reduce the amount of food waste sent to landfill, and promote greener, more sustainable communities for everyone.

Food waste collected from households is recycled through a process called Anaerobic Digestion (AD), which breaks down the waste without oxygen. This process generates biogas used to produce electricity, heat, or fuel, and a nutrient-rich digestate for fertiliser. Recycling food waste in this way helps create renewable energy, reduces landfill use, improves soil health and cuts greenhouse gas emissions.

And remember - the best way to manage waste is to avoid creating it!

Find free resources, tips, and guides on reducing food waste through the [Love Food Hate Waste](https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com) campaign. (www.lovefoodhatewaste.com)

Please do not put any of the following materials in your food waste caddy:

- ✗ Liquids such as milk, oil or fat
- ✗ Plastic film or packaging
- ✗ Garden waste
- ✗ Pet waste (bedding, litter, faeces)
- ✗ Any material that is not food waste

Find more details here:
www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/food-waste



*Send your news, views, photos, recipes and gossip to
editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk by 9:00am on the 15th
of every month except December*





Tea & Chat?



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

Thursday 29th January 2:30 - 4 pm
Thursday 26th February 2:30 - 4 pm
Thursday 26th March 2:30 - 4 pm

All are welcome. Refreshments are free!

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

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.

Choose 'Book Donations' on the screen.
(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



Website: www.grafham.org.uk

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

LINE DANCING

Mondays 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Fancy joining us?



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Grafham Village Shop

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For Shop News see Talking Shop page 5

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Contact Jane Rowley **01480 890986**
littlefishes@eastleightonstone.com

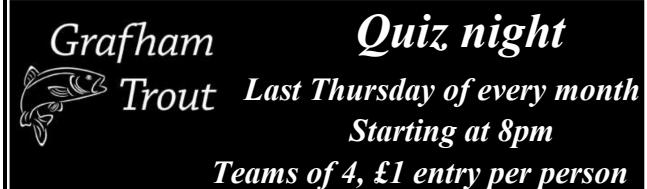


Grafham Village Hall and Astro Court



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>



Send your news, views, letters, adverts, recipes and gossip for the March issue to: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk by 9:00am on Sunday 15th February

E-mail: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk