

Grafham Gossip



Deadline for May issue: by 9:00am on Wednesday 15th April

ALL SAINTS GRAFHAM



Easter Day, 5th April

Open Church

2:30pm - 4:00pm

Easter flowers, Easter garden,
music, tea and cake

Read more in View from the Pew, page 2

Editor's note ...

Welcome to the April issue of Grafham Gossip. As the winter chill finally gives way to the hum of lawnmowers and the vibrant yellow of roadside daffodils, there is an undeniable sense of renewal sweeping through the village. April is a month of transitions, and this year, it feels as though Grafham is truly taking on fresh starts and community spirit.



Looking ahead, our Village Shop has some exciting plans blooming for the coming months. Mark your calendars for May, which sees the official launch of the 100 Club. This is a fantastic way to support the shop's longevity while giving yourself a chance to win a little something back. Application forms are available in the shop now. Following that, get ready to find your inner jockey for the Race Night in June. See page 5, Talking Shop for more details.

For those who enjoy the natural beauty surrounding us, the Hunts Local Wildlife Group is embarking on a new partnership starting this month. They are collaborating with the Hunts Flora and Fauna Society to provide joint programmes of events and talks. This promises to bring a wealth of expert knowledge to our doorstep, helping us better understand and protect the diverse ecosystems of our rural landscape. See page 4.

On a more domestic note, every household in the village will be receiving a new kitchen food caddy and waste bin. It's a small change to our daily routines, but a significant step forward in our collective efforts to manage waste more sustainably. See page 3 Parish News and the bin info on page 4 for more details.

If the April showers keep you indoors, why not try our Slow Cooker Sausage Casserole. It's the ultimate "set it and forget it" comfort meal - perfect for those chilly spring evenings when you'd rather be curled up with a book than hovering over a stove.

Whether you are looking forward to a quiet Easter or a bustling family gathering, I wish you a peaceful weekend with perhaps a bit too much chocolate on Easter Day. Activities include a Messy Easter session for families on Good Friday and Open Church at Grafham on Easter Sunday. See this page and page 2 for details.

Enjoy the blossoms, embrace the new bins and let's make this April, one to remember!

Happy Easter!
editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



Messy Easter
Good Friday 3rd April
10:30 - 12:30
Grafham Village Hall



Messy Church worship is for everyone especially family groups. There are various crafts, worship songs, Bible story and a talk, followed by a simple buffet meal.



We look forward to meeting you.



The Messy Church® name and logo are registered trade marks of Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF), a charity (233280) and company limited by guarantee (301324), registered in England and Wales

Don't forget, before the end of March...

28th - Help bring colour to Grafham.

See below

29th - Clocks spring forward at 01:00am

29th - Model Railway

Exhibition. See page 8



Help bring colour to Grafham!

Join us as we plant around 40 wildflowers in the summer meadow at the south end of the churchyard. Thanks to the parish council for donating the plants.

The area has already been prepared with a weed-suppressing membrane to give the flowers the best chance to establish and brighten the space for everyone. Now we're ready to get them in the ground — and we'd love your help.



10:00am 28th March



Bring a trowel (and a spade if you have one) and meet us at 10.00am on 28th March.

Refreshments will be available.

Do get in touch beforehand, you can reach me at debs.russell@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you!



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.



Palm Sunday	29th March	11:00	Three Villages Communion Brampton
Easter Day	5th April	11:00	Three Villages Communion Brampton
Wednesday	8th April	14.30 to 16.00	Open Church Grafham see front page
Wednesday	8th April	09:00 to 09:30	Informal Morning Prayer Grafham
2nd Sunday	12th April	09:30	Holy Communion Ellington
		11:00	Morning Worship Brampton
		18:30	Taizé Grafham
Wednesday	15th April	09:00 to 09:30	Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham
3rd Sunday	19th April	10.00	*APCM meeting
		11:00	Three Villages Communion Brampton
Wednesday	22nd April	09:00 to 09:30	Morning Prayer with Duncan Grafham
4th Sunday	26th April	09:30	Holy Communion Grafham
		11:00	Morning Worship Brampton
Wednesday	29th April	09:00 to 09:30	Informal Morning Prayer Grafham

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

*APCM means Annual Parochial Church Meeting

For a full list of services for all three churches visit:

www.eastleightonstone.com/worship and click on [Calendar](#)

Easter services and activities

Monday	30 th March	19:00	Compline Ellington
Tuesday	31 st March	19:00	Compline Grafham
Wednesday	1 st April	19:00	Compline Brampton
Maundy Thursday	2 nd April	19:30	Holy Communion Brampton
Good Friday	3 rd April	10:30 - 12:30	Messy Easter Grafham Village Hall
		14:00	The Last Hour Brampton
Easter Sunday	5 th April	10:00	Three Villages Communion Brampton
		14:30 - 16:00	Open Church Grafham

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



Sunday Evening Youth

meets at All Saints Church, Huntingdon
6 - 7:30pm on Sundays and sometimes on Fridays
(due to bank holidays)

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

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

View from the Pew



It's a joy to see dancing daffodils when we're out and about in the Spring sunshine, even if they are tossed by the wind.

Easter is almost upon us but not before we have our Palm Sunday service on 29th March at Brampton. This will be a Holy Communion service with the distribution of palm crosses and some familiar Palm Sunday hymns to sing.

During the following week our Flower arrangers will be going out to buy supplies for our floral displays. We plan to meet in church on Thursday 2nd April from 10.00am to do the arrangements. If anyone who loves flowers and is interested in coming into church to watch or even participate in the arranging you would be very welcome.

Although there is no Easter Day service at Grafham (there will be a Holy Communion service at Brampton that day at 10:00am,) all are welcome to Open Church between 2:30 and 4:00pm.

Please come and see the flower arrangements and Easter garden, enjoy tea and cake and listen to our musical group playing some traditional tunes. We welcome donations of cakes for our table. Sponge cakes and fruit cakes are favourites. This is a very popular event and an enjoyable way to spend the afternoon. We look forward to seeing you.



An Easter 2024 arrangement



Parish News March 2026

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

Food waste collection is set out in national legislation and not just a local decision. Under the Environment Act 2021, Councils across England will be legally required to collect food waste separately from all households and businesses. The aim is to make recycling easier, more consistent, and available to everyone, no matter where they live.

The government has provided funding to local councils so that every household and communal property (such as blocks of flats) will have access to weekly food waste collections, free of charge. This funding helps cover the cost of new bins, vehicles and recycling facilities, so the service can be introduced without adding to Council Tax bills.

By the end of March 2026, all households will receive a 7-litre grey indoor caddy and an external 23-litre grey food waste bin for free with weekly collections starting from 30th March 2026. You will receive your caddies by 28th March.

From the week commencing 30th March 2026 your food waste will be collected every week on the same day as your normal waste and recycling collections.

You can look up your collection day at <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/refuse-calendar>

Separate vehicles will collect the food waste caddy - this may take place at different times to other collections.

May Meetings

In May the Parish Council will hold two important meetings, and they serve very different purposes. Here's a simple guide to what they are and why they matter.

1. The Annual Parish Meeting

This is a meeting of the parish community, not a council meeting. Everyone who lives in the parish is welcome to attend.

It's an opportunity to hear updates on local issues, raise ideas or concern, learn about the work of village groups and organisations and celebrate community achievements

It's an open, informal forum designed to give residents a voice in parish affairs.

2. The Annual Parish Council Meeting

This is the first formal Parish Council meeting of the new Council year and deals with the Council's internal business. At this meeting councillors:

- Elect the Chair (and Vice-Chair) for the year, review policies and procedures, appoint representatives to committees and outside bodies and set priorities for the coming year
- Members of the public may attend, but it is a formal council meeting with a structured agenda.

Why these meetings matter

Together, these meetings help ensure the Parish is run openly, transparently, and with input from the community. The Annual Parish Meeting gives residents a platform, while the Annual Parish Council Meeting sets the direction for the Parish Council's work over the next year.

Cllr Ian Gardener

Chairman, Grafham Parish Council

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

“Has the bin man bin Mam?”

Alternate Wednesdays

Blue Bin - Recycling and Black Bin - Refuse

Every other Thursday Green Bin - Garden Waste



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

For details see the [Garden Waste section](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste) of www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste

Changes to Disposal of Food Waste Find out more on the [Food Waste page](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) of www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

April						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
		Blu+ F	G *	3	4	5
6	7	Blk+ F	9	10	11	12
13	14	Blu+ F	G *	17	18	19
20	21	Blk+ F	23	24	25	26
27	28	Blu+ F	G *			

May						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	Blk+ F	7	8	9	10
11	12	Blu+ F	G *	15	16	17
18	19	Blk+ F	21	22	23	24
25	26	Blu+ F	G *	29	30	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>

Huntingdonshire District Council New weekly food waste collections are starting April 2026, making it easier for you to recycle more and waste less. In 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 kerbside collection

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>



Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs & Northants
Hunts Local Group



The Hunts Local Group of the Wildlife Trust and The Hunts Fauna and Flora Society are collaborating and offering joint programmes starting in April.

Brampton Wood Sunday 26th April 2:30pm

This walk will be led by Tim Fryer, who will take us to the less visited areas of the wood, weather permitting. We hope to see the spring flowers in bloom, such as bluebells, wood anemone and celandine and also listen for birdsong from warblers and song thrush, among many others. This is a notoriously wet ancient woodland, so please wear appropriate footwear.

Details of meeting points, bookings and payment should be available on the Wildlife Trust website in April, for booking online: <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/wild-events> (£5 members, £6 non-members)

Contact Tim Fryer **07941 261346**, timpfryer@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>





Talking Shop

HOT NEWS

A New Fund Raising 100 Club – Starting This May

As one way to raise much needed funds for the new building, the shop is launching a 100 Club. This gives participants the chance of winning one of three, monthly cash prizes whilst contributing to the shop's fund

-raising efforts. You can join the 100 Club with a £5 per month bank standing order and you will be allocated a regular number in the draw. There will be three cash prizes per month with 50% of monthly income making up the prize fund. The more members there are the more there is in the prize pot. Once fully subscribed, this means the monthly prizes would be a first prize of £150 and two prizes of £50. It's even better than the National Lottery and funds raised go to a very local cause!

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. **Don't delay, the first draw is in May!**

Steady as she goes

By the time you are reading this spring should definitely be here, whether it's started with a lamb or a lion it doesn't matter; the days are getting longer, it is getting warmer and the campsites will have re-opened. Jan, Feb and early March are always a bit grim – inside* and outside the shop (*apart from the smiley faces of Belinda, Janice and the volunteers). This year's first quarter looks promising, in that the shop may even have made a profit over the three months, which is a bit of a miracle. Overall, the last year has been very similar to the preceding year with another modest profit on the cards. This is all good news... and thank you to everyone for your continued support.

Save the Date – Race Night - Saturday 13th June

As another element of our fund-raising efforts for the new building, the Shop Committee is pleased to announce the return of the very popular and highly successful Race Night. More details will follow in due course, however the Race Stewards have insisted on new horses – as the old ones are looking a bit knackered. Please Save the Date.

Fruit, Veg, Milk and Yoghurt – A Cunning Plan

The shop would like to supply more fresh fruit and veg. The headache is that one of our milk local suppliers who can do fruit and veg has a minimum order requirement but does not supply milk in all three of our most popular sizes or our preferred yoghurts. The other milk supplier does the three sizes and the yoghurts but has sporadically been erratic in their deliveries (Fifty 4-pint bottles greeted Belinda one morning!) and does not do the fruit and veg. Belinda has a cunning plan: with the campsites re-opening, we can justify ordering fruit and veg and some milk from one supplier while getting milk and yoghurts in the right sizes from the other. Let's hope this works out...

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

Slow cooker sausage casserole

In April we begin to see new potatoes in the shops. How about this slow cooker recipe? Good Grasmere sausages are available from the village shop. Serve with some green veg if you like; frozen peas would work well. This recipe serves four.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 12 chipolata sausages (or 8 regular sausages)
- 3 - 4 medium carrots, around 300g, peeled and cut into 2cm chunks
- 600g new potatoes, washed, (no need to peel if you use new potatoes)
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 200ml hot chicken or vegetable stock, made with a stock cube or concentrated little stock pots
- 3 tbsp tomato purée
- 1 tsp dried mixed herbs
- salt and freshly ground black pepper



Method

- Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large non-stick frying pan and fry the onion over a high heat for 3 - 4 minutes, until lightly browned, stirring often. Tip into the slow cooker.
- Add the remaining oil to the frying pan and fry the sausages over a medium-high heat for 4 - 5 minutes, or until browned on all sides.
- While the sausages are frying, add the carrots, potatoes and chopped tomatoes to the slow cooker.
- Mix the hot stock with the tomato purée and herbs. Pour into the slow cooker and season with salt and pepper; stir well. Place the sausages on the tomato and vegetable mixture without stirring in. This will help to retain their colour and texture.
- Cover the slow cooker with its lid and cook on high for 5 - 6 hours, or low for 7- 9 hours.

*If you'd like to write a 'one-off' article for the Grafham Gossip, it will be gratefully received!
Please send it by email to: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk*



Grafham Flower Festival

13th and 14th June
 Saturday 10.00 - 5.00
 Sunday 10.00 - 4.30
 Theme - Numbers



Free Entry Live music
 Refreshments available in the afternoons
 Like to take part? Contact Jill 07892 720835
 Help is provided so no experience is needed!

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

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



Christians Together
 in Brampton, Grafham and Ellington

christian aid 2026
 May 10th - 16th

Help fund aid today and fuel hope for tomorrow
 Have you counted your blessings through Lent ?

Support those seeking refuge and peace from conflict and unimaginable trauma.

You can make a difference

Support the growth of hope where hardship means hunger

ENJOY

the FREE concert at St.Mary Magdalene Church, Brampton on Sunday May 10th



at 3pm and DONATE.



+ cake

Donations also received gratefully by Nicola at London House, 28 High Street Brampton or in St.Mary Magdalene Church.

Cash or cheques payable to Christian Aid welcome

or donate at

caid.org.uk/compassion



COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS



'Fill a bag' Sale!

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity is holding their first "Fill a bag" shopping event. For just £5.00 you can fill a bag of pre-loved women's, men's and children's clothes!



The shopping event will be in the Education and Conference Centre at the Hospice in Shelford Bottom, CB22 3FB on the following dates:

Friday 24th April 3 - 6pm

Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th 10am - 2pm

and will remain open while stocks last. Shoppers are advised to keep an eye on our social media channels for updates on stock levels.

For more information about the event, please visit: <https://www.arhc.org.uk/retail-sale> or call 01223 675888

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity supports people in Cambridgeshire living with an advanced serious illness or other life-limiting condition and those who need end-of-life care. Our 'Outstanding' services support over 3,800 patients and their families annually helping people to make every moment count.

Find more about this Hospice Charity on page 9



Chewing the Cud with Rev. Duncan Goldthorpe Rector of The Parish of East Leightonstone and Rural Dean for Huntingdon



The Gardener Who Calls Your Name



"Woman, why are you weeping?"

In the garden, early on that first Easter morning, Mary Magdalene is surrounded by the rubble of her hopes. She is at the tomb, alone in the darkness of grief, having seen her Lord cruelly executed. She has come for a final act of love, only to find the tomb empty and her heart broken. It is a scene of profound despair.

Mary speaks with angels but can only focus on her loss. When she turns to see Jesus, she mistakes him for the gardener - a subtle irony, as Jesus is indeed bringing a new creation to life. Yet, in her weeping, she cannot see him.

The transformation occurs not through a sight, but a sound: "Mary!" Just as a child knows their parent's voice, Mary knew instantly who was speaking her name.

In that single, intimate word, Jesus speaks her name, and her blindness turns to recognition. She answers, "Rabboni!" - Teacher. The gardener is the Risen Lord. She came looking for a dead body to anoint and found a living Saviour.

This encounter in John 20:11-18 is a message of profound hope. It reminds us that Jesus meets us in our deepest grief, not always as we expect, but precisely when we need him. He is the tender gardener who tends to the broken, withered places in our lives, cultivating hope where we only see barrenness.

Furthermore, Jesus entrusts Mary - a woman whose testimony was not legally recognised in that time - to carry the most crucial news in history: "I have seen the Lord". She becomes the "Apostle to the Apostles."

This Easter, we are invited to trust that Jesus, our Risen Lord still speaks our names. Even if we cannot see him through the tears of our own lives, he is here, inviting us to stop holding on to despair and to start sharing in the message of the resurrection that Jesus came that we might live our lives in all their fullness.

Christ is Risen Indeed!

*Every blessing
Duncan*

RHS Top Gardening Jobs for April - Sunshine and Showers

Spring is finally in evidence with tulips and flowering cherries in bloom. Expect the inevitable April showers this month but with sunny days too, when you can turn your attention to the veg plot. It's an exciting month as you start to sow outdoors. Just watch out for frosts and keep any tender plants indoors for now.

- Sow hardy annuals, herbs and wild flower seed outdoors
- Protect fruit blossom from late frosts
- Keep weeds under control. Remove weeds that will smother seedlings and small plants, by hoeing or digging out
- Start to feed citrus plants
- Increase the water given to houseplants
- Plant new pond plants and divide waterlilies
- Sow new lawns or repair bare patches
- Prune fig trees
- Divide bamboos
- Last chance to prune climbing and rambling roses.



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

Luxury modern shepherding with the help of a lambing camera. Ewes expecting twins are on the right; those with singles are on the left.



Happy Easter!





Peter Lane & Partners are your Trusted Local Property Experts.

Good estate agency is about understanding your local market and providing an exceptional service, time and time again.

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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kimbolton@peterlane.co.uk

The Second Annual Grafham Charity Model Railway Exhibition



Presented by Beds & Bucks NGRM in aid of **Dementia UK and Muscular Dystrophy UK**

Grafham Village Hall
PE28 0GB

Sunday 29th March 10.00am - 4.00pm
Entry by voluntary contribution. (Cash only please)
ALL proceeds donated to charity

A full range of refreshments will be available in the Community Shop, Pub and Hall plus Janet's wood-fired pizzas



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
Contact Robinson's Coaches, Kimbolton 01480 860581

For sale **£40**
Prestige pressure cooker never used



Instant Pot brand new pressure cooker never used, with instructions **£50**

If interested please call Tina on **07711 012957**.

Brampton Flower Club

1st April Barbara Collins *The Joy of Flowers*

Teas/Coffee & Biscuits, Floral Sales Table & Raffle for the Arrangements

Do come along and enjoy a super evening.
Visitor fee £8. Annual Membership is just £45
Doors open at 6.45pm for a 7.15pm start

The Lady Olivia Hall
85 Central Avenue, Brampton

Movement Made Comfortable: Chair Pilates

So What is Chair Pilates?

Chair Pilates is a gentle and supportive way to enjoy the benefits of Pilates while using a chair for comfort and stability. The exercises focus on slow, controlled movements that help improve strength, flexibility, posture and balance. (All the important stuff!)

Because you're seated or supported by the chair, it takes away the pressure of getting up and down from the floor, making the movements more relaxed and allowing people to focus on moving in a way that feels comfortable and enjoyable.

It's an amazing way to stretch and strengthen the muscles that support the spine and joints. Over time, this can help improve everyday activities and build confidence in the body, helping people feel stronger and more independent.

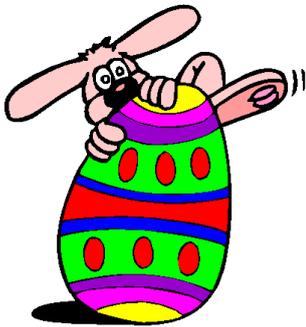
Who is Chair Pilates for?

If you struggle with limited mobility in some way and perhaps find the idea of exercise intimidating, then Chair Pilates could be a wonderful option for you. The exercises can be easily adapted, so they can also be tailored to suit different abilities and comfort levels. Classes can also be a great way to meet new people and hopefully... to have a little fun!

Above all, Chair Pilates is about making exercise feel welcoming, supportive and accessible, helping people reconnect with their bodies and experience the great benefits of regular movement.

Classes start soon at Grafham Village Hall, Mondays 3:30pm.

Contact: hollystandbrookpilates@gmail.com or 07894 436 140 for more information.



Grafham Churchyard

In the churchyard at Grafham Church there are designated areas of grass that are cut by a small team of volunteers.

We are looking for four more people to help. You would be working in a team of two. It takes about two hours, three or four times from March to the end of September. You can choose when you want to do it within a set week. One member of the team strims and mows using a small mower with a collection box and the other member of the team speeds around on the F1 look-alike sit-on mower.

Full training and safety instructions will be given.

If you could help, please contact Brian Homewood on brianhomewood@outlook.com



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

Protect Hospice Care

The Cambridge-based charity launched its 'Protect Our Care' campaign in October last year, following news that Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) planned to terminate the contract to fund beds, which runs until March.

Thanks to our amazing community, the nine beds at Arthur Rank Hospice's Inpatient Unit, which were under-threat from closure on 31st March 2026, can remain open for another 12 months for patients. The Charity would like to say thank you to everyone who has supported their 'Protect Our Care' campaign.

CEO, Sharon Allen, OBE shared: "The removal of the funding has been a significant worry. We continue to be grateful to those who have rallied around us and committed to financial support for the next 12 months, whilst we seek stable funding options. Local people deserve the outstanding care our colleagues can offer and we are grateful that, for now, we are in a position where beds are not reduced. We must find long-term, sustainable funding for hospice care on a national basis. We do not want to be in this same position in a year's



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

making every moment count

time. The future is still uncertain, and the ending of this service would, without doubt, have huge implications for our local community and must be protected at all costs. This is a welcome but temporary reprieve until March 2027, so our work doesn't stop here. Over the coming months we will continue to explore new sustainable funding opportunities and plan for increased fundraising needs. Our next step is to look at different service models and how these could be funded, accepting that unfortunately there are no guarantees this will be possible. Our thanks, as always, go to our supporters and our outstanding team of staff and volunteers who continue to care and support each family who come through our doors. Offering dignity and personalised care to each patient is what makes every moment count."

Please visit arhc.org.uk/POC for more information.



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

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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



The Population of Grafham from the later 19th Century to the 1920s – Changing occupations and the exit of the Duke of Manchester

Edward Biffin

Yes, farmworkers were still the principal residents of Grafham, but things are changing, with 'model' farming' being introduced by the larger landowners, the railway and the brickworks arriving in the 1860s and the spread of mechanisation. There is still the problem that the census data is not specific to a particular cottage for the ordinary dwellings, just the road or area. Like much of the local area, the first Ordnance Survey maps with detail that identifies each cottage is the 1887 survey at a scale of 1 to 2,500 (25 inch to the mile) published in 1888. But earlier in the 19th century much of the Grafham/Ellington/Brampton area was owned by the Bernard Sparrow family of Brampton Park and the Estate Map, produced for Lady Olivia in 1852 (see my article in the [July 2025 Grafham Gossip](#)), together with the manual overwrite of around 1864, is of sufficient detail to identify individual cottages and whether they had been built between 1852 and 1864. As in my previous article, both can be compared with the 1774 'Inclosure' map. The map below, based on the first edition of the OS 6" map, shows the number of cottages occupied by workers in the 1860s and 1870s.

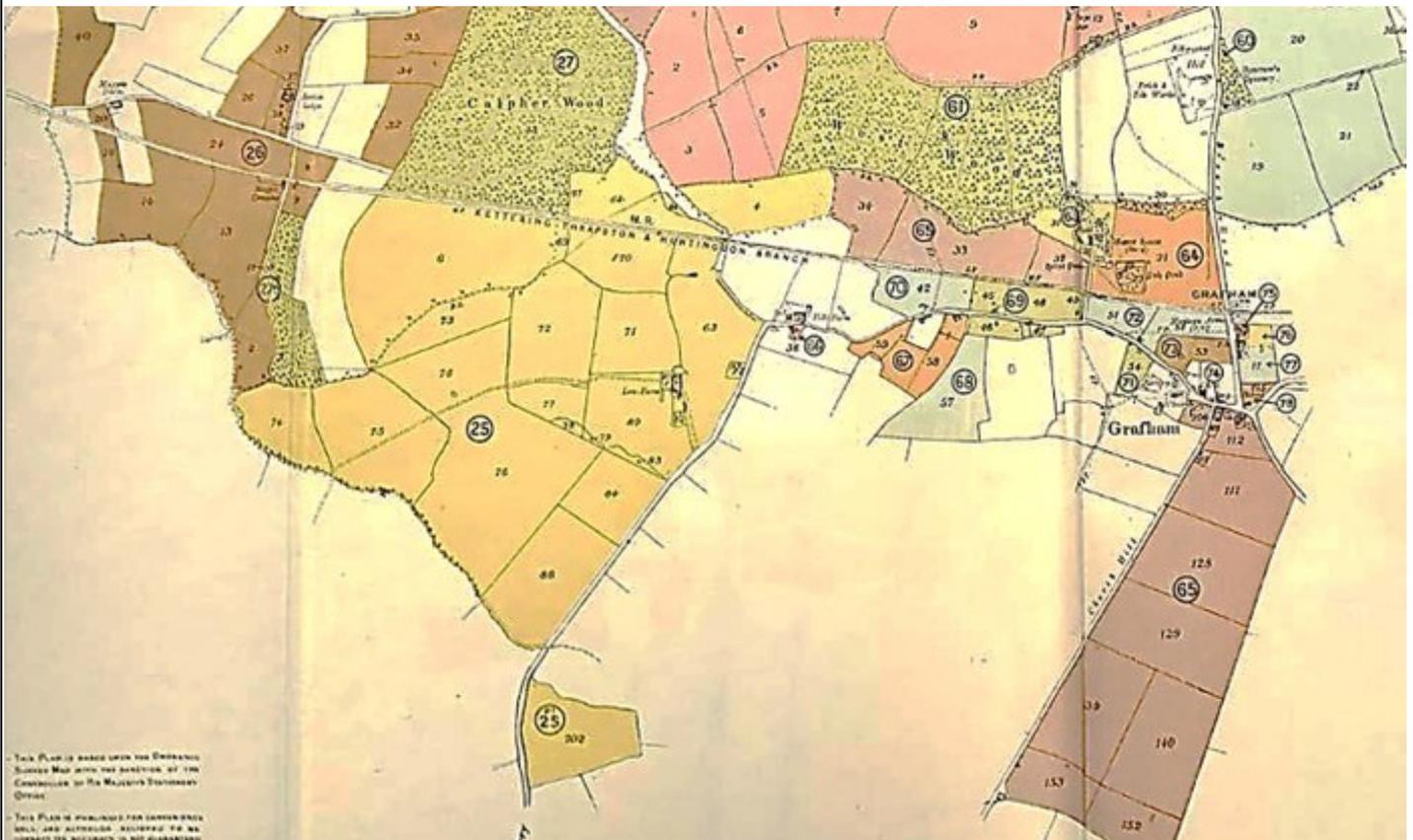
Between the Censuses in 1891 and 1911 the number of farm workers reduced from 52 to 30 while the number of other tradesmen remained constant at about 30. Much of the land in Grafham was owned by the Duke of Manchester, largely inherited from Lady Olivia Bernard Sparrow's daughter (see Gossip issue 237 July 2025), However a Great Depression in British agriculture occurred between 1870 and 1900 caused by a dramatic drop in grain prices following the opening up of American prairies to cultivation, the introduction of bulk steamship transport, and the elimination of the Corn Laws tariffs on imported wheat. As a result the rents that the Duke was able to charge the tenants of his land collapsed by 70% and they had to change their approach to farming – less grain, more animals, and fewer workers; this also applied to the independently owned Armstrong and Rectory land of course, and the population of the current village area had fallen from 245 to 198 over the 20 years.

Among the other tradesmen were railwaymen, carters, coal merchants and road repairers, all influenced by the arrival of the railway in the mid 1860s. Another arrival in the early 20th century was the Grafham Rifle Range, and in the 1911 Census Breach Road becomes the home to a Riflerange Warden.

As a result of the agricultural decline, the number of occupied workers dwellings, around 60 in the mid 1860s, had fallen to around 48 in 1900. A further three were lost by the end of World War 1, offset by the construction of four new Council dwellings on Breach Road in the 1920s (now numbers 1,3,5,7).

This squeeze on land rentals was doubly shattering for the Duke of Manchester, as we saw in part 6 of this series, (Gossip Issue 237 July 2025) William, the 9th Duke, who was a spendthrift, was in 1918 forced to sell much of his Huntingdonshire properties outside Kimbolton. The sale, by Messrs John D Wood & Co, took place on 19th-20th July at The George Hotel in Huntingdon. Perusal of the Archives in the Huntingdon Library not only provided a list of the fields and properties in Grafham which were up for sale, but also provides a delightful map (coloured version viewable on the online Gossip) which shows just how much of Grafham (and Ellington) had been acquired by the Manchesters from the Bernard Sparrows. At this stage they kept control of Model Farm but everything else went to new owners. The blank areas between those marked 25 and 65 on the map were owned by two independent bodies – the Armstrong family at Hill Farm (who also ran Model Farm for the Manchesters) and the Church (Rectory or Glebe Farm lands). Area 25 was Low Farm and area 65 was Village Farm.

Next month - a look at the residents as World War 2 looms will round off this series on the Population of Grafham.



Past episodes of Edward's can be read on www.grafham.org.uk Click on Grafham Gossip to find pdf copies of back issues. Ed



Tea & Chat?



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

Thursday 26th March 2:30 - 4pm
Thursday 30th April 2:30 - 4pm
Thursday 28th May 2:30 - 4pm

All are welcome. Refreshments are free!

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

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For Shop News see Talking Shop page 5

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