



The Abingtons and Hildersham News



www.theabingtons.org.uk

January 2024



Photo by Emma Morris

**Elves hard at work at the Primary School's Elfridges event
(see page 3)**

From the Editor

Our cover stars this month are Emma Morris and Grace McDonald, both PTFA trustees, who were jolly and efficient Elves at the Primary School's Elfridges event before Christmas. For those (like me) who may not have heard of Elfridges, it is a special shop to which people donate gifts that children can buy for friends and family. This year was more popular than ever, with the highest number of tickets sold, and the Elves had to do some extra shopping.

Following the holidays, clubs and groups are resuming their usual activities. On page 6, Ian Richardson gives notice of the next community oil order – don't miss the 11 January deadline. Love Abington is holding the second of its all-day community hubs on 13 January (page 14). The Winter Hub will feature a clothing repair café, a toy exchange and crafts for children. The school is planning a Winter Disco on 19 January (details on page 6) and the Partridges are back for a limited period (page 9). There is news of an improvement project for the River Granta run by Cambridge City Council. The stretch of river that runs through our villages is one of the study sites chosen. Naturewatch is hosting an information session about this on 27 January (page 7).

Finally, some of us know him as Father Christmas, some as Santa Claus but most of us know him as Great Abington's remarkable George Woodley who, now in his nineties, continues to entertain at the annual Christmas Fayre. On page 18, George writes about his second career, revealing the secret of his splendid (and definitely real) Christmas beard and proving he has a genuine magic touch.

My thanks to all the regular contributors who met the early deadline for this month's *Village News*, the proofreaders and the distributors who make sure the magazine is delivered to every house in the Abingtons and Hildersham.

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year.

Sally Simmons

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All items for the February 2024 edition of *The Abingtons and Hildersham News* should be sent to the editor no later than Monday 15 January 2024 at news@theabingtons.org.uk.

From the Seven Churches

Let me introduce myself to your village communities. I am Dr Rhona McEune; I am training to be an ordained minister and I am on attachment with the Granta Vale Churches until next May. It is a privilege to be working in your churches and getting to know you. My husband, Patrick McEune, is the Rector of the Raddesley group of churches. We moved here from Lincolnshire.

After the celebrations of Christmas and a little rest after a lot of enjoyable events, I am already looking ahead to another special celebration. On 2 February, close to the middle of winter, we celebrate Candlemas, when the story of the presentation of Christ in the Temple is recalled. It's a story showing great trust in God because Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the Temple to give thanks for his birth. There we meet the elderly priest, Simeon, who has been told by God he will not die before seeing the Messiah, and Anna the widow, who has spent her life waiting for God to reveal himself to her, which he does in Jesus the small baby.

All through life we seem to be waiting – children to be teenagers, young adults to find partners and settle down, older people for retirement to do all the things that they promised themselves they would do while still working, and then some people long for their life to come to an end. Simeon proclaimed Jesus was “A light for revelation to the Gentiles” (Luke 2:32) and through him all people and nations would see the Messiah and learn God’s work for the world through following his Son.

The celebration of Candlemas, then, touches on both waiting and thanksgiving, and encourages a deep faith and trust in God. Candles are blessed and lit as a sign of hope as we give thanks to God for giving his Son to be our Saviour. It’s also a wonderful reminder that we can proclaim hope in the world around us at all times and seasons of our lives. I look forward to this wonderful celebration and to meeting people both here and around our villages over the coming months.

Rhona

News from the Pews

January is always a time of “thank yous” following all the December church activities.

Our first and foremost thank you goes to the hardy people who unlock and lock our churches daily, not a pleasant task in the winter especially for those on duty at Great Abington Church. Great Abington Church is opened by Chris, Sheena, Glyn and Eddie and Little Abington by Graham, Mary, Lesley, Marilyn and Rosemary. Thanks to each and every one of you. Our sincere thanks to all the flower arrangers/cleaners who do amazing work enhancing the beauty of our churches. Thanks also to everyone who supports our churches



both financially and helping at fundraising events – the churches would close without you. In November we were delighted to invite Year 6 children to Great Abington Church. Our new Community Minister, Hannah Threlfall, organised an interesting visit when the children were invited to discover any part of the church followed by questions led by Hannah who was delighted by the

interesting response. The children's knowledge was extremely encouraging. Thank you, Year 6, for a happy, refreshing morning. The Christmas Fayre was yet again hugely successful – a really enjoyable community afternoon. Thanks to all our loyal stallholders, those who supported the event and to everyone who submitted adverts in the programme. Thanks also to our amazing choirs (Christmas Church Choir and GLAMS) who led the Carol Service, both conducted by our community musical leader Glenis Todd – a wonderful musician. Looking ahead, there are many plans for fundraising throughout 2024. One in which you may like to take part is Open Gardens, when some Little Abington gardens will be open to view. We note this event in advance to enable you to prepare! Thank you.

Funerals

Peter Charles Turner In 1983 Peter and his wife Annie moved to Little Abington where they lived and took part in village life until 2003 when they moved to Grenada. In 2006 they moved back to Abington, the place they both loved to be and built a house in Great Abington High Street. Peter was renowned for his outstanding work as a Heraldic Hand Engraver on silver and gold, which he began at the age of 14. He was on occasion commissioned to engrave personal pieces for the Royal Family. Each Valentine's Day he engraved a piece for his beloved wife Annie who has sadly suffered from MS for many years. Peter's funeral took place in Little Abington Church on 22 November. Our thoughts and prayers are with Annie and the extended family.

Joseph Borley Joe (as he was affectionately known) was born in Cambridge in November 1935 and sadly passed away in November this year. He moved to Abington as a youngster where he accumulated many friends, mainly through his love of sport, playing cricket, football, golf, squash and also enjoying a spot of sea fishing. Joe started his career at Marshalls Airport where he learnt upholstery, followed by a time as manager at the Project Office Company. Finally, he decided to work for himself. This proved to be a good move as he was sought after by households and companies alike. Joe moved back to Abington in the late 60s, a place where he and his beloved wife Dorothy enjoyed their time among friends. A wonderful wake was held for Joe in the Village Institute where many friends gathered to share memories of his life. Members of Abington Cricket Club prepared a delicious afternoon tea. What wonderful community spirit. Our thoughts and prayers are with Dorothy at this sad and difficult time.

Raymond Francis Hood *Memories written by his daughter Patsy.* Ray moved to the village in 1956 living first above the Village Post Office with Daphne, his wife, while having a bungalow built in Church Lane. He worked at BWRA, now known as TWI, as a draughtsman until he retired. He enjoyed playing football for them and Abington Village, too, until he was 50 – something he was proud of and which he always informed people when football cropped up in conversation! He was an active governor at the local Primary School for a while, which he enjoyed immensely. Ray was always a very sociable person but when Daphne passed away it left him brokenhearted, choosing not to socialise very much. Such a pity as he was such a gentle, happy, likeable gentleman with a great sense of humour. He died at the grand age of 95 years – a wonderful age.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Patsy, Tony and the extended family. Anne Hall

A Huge Thank You

Seventy residents of Abington enjoyed a delicious festive meal and a jolly occasion at the Apiary, Granta Park, on 15 December. We were overwhelmed by the response to the kind invitation from BioMed Realty and sadly some people were disappointed that they were on a waiting list. However, good news! BioMed would like to run a similar event next year for the community in Abington and those who were on a reserve list will have priority. Thank you very much to Becca Keefe for the invitation from Granta Park and for organising such a wonderful occasion.

Ukrainian Community in Abington

There are now nine Ukrainians living with hosts in Abington.

However, there is still a great need for hosts to support new requests from Ukraine and anyone interested in hosting should contact South Cambs Homes for Ukraine: text ROOM to 88802. Further information is available from HFULiasion@cambs.gov.uk, tel. 01954 713411 and South Cambs District Council (scambs.gov.uk – search Spare Rooms for People from Ukraine). Anyone in the Abingtons and Hildersham who is interested in hosting or would like further information can contact the following local hosts for an informal conversation:

Nick and Julia Rumble, 07732-647752 and njcambs@gmail.com

Marilyn Broadhurst, 07855-182726 and broadhurstmarilyn@gmail.com

Jane Furlow, 07745-046921 and jane.furlow@gmail.com

I hope 2024 will provide peace for all Ukrainians, in their homeland and wherever they are displaced in the world. Making Ukrainian friendships has been an enriching experience for me.

Anton King (tel. 891 514)

PTFA

School Winter Disco

On Friday 19 January the PTFA will be holding a disco for all the children. For first time reception children we require a parent chaperone to help ensure the youngest members of our community enjoy their first disco. If you would like to volunteer to help out on the evening we are always grateful for any support that can be provided. The evening includes the availability of a quiet space and we have a sweet stall and other general areas that will require adult supervision to ensure the evening runs smoothly. If you could spare an hour or two to help, please contact us via our email, ptfa@greatabington.school

School Bingo

We are looking to arrange a fun evening of bingo. The date for consideration is Friday 16 February. Further details will be provided in the February *Village News*.

Joanna Chapman

The Annexe

Walking past the Annexe building in the school ground I was reminded of the recent changes to this organisation. The preschool and after school charities recently combined into a single entity called Abington Annexe Community Childcare (AACC). This streamlining is more in keeping with its current role and future plans. I was also reminded of the impressive services the Annexe provides to the children of the village. My son was always sad to leave, even at 6.00 pm. As an only child the Annexe activities developed his core skills, experiencing sharing, playing and his interactive social behaviours. Learning through play has been shown to be really effective. It's difficult to put a financial value on these life experiences as they form a solid foundation for children moving forward. At a time when more and more youngsters are struggling with our modern world I am very thankful for the work that the Annexe did on my behalf.

The actual Annexe building will need replacing at some point in the future and we need to start the planning of the process soon.

Alan Cooke

Community Oil Order

Ian Richardson will take orders for domestic heating oil up to the end of Thursday 11th January. The order will be placed on Friday 12th January, with expected delivery by the end of the month. Please provide Ian with the quantity of oil you require, your name, address, postcode and telephone number. Please email abingtonoil@icloud.com or phone 07592 731 591.

River Granta Improvement Project

Chalk streams are a rare and important habitat globally and we are lucky to have one such river, the Granta, running through the heart of our village. However, chalk streams, and the special wildlife that is found in and around them, are increasingly under threat.

In response to this, the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project has been set up, led by Cambridge City Council. The project will work at a number of sites around Cambridge to demonstrate how chalk streams can be improved at a local level. One of these sites covers the stretch of the Granta that runs through Abington. The project will work with local partners to restore the River Granta to benefit both wildlife and the local community.

Project planners are really keen to hear ideas from the village community about how the river and the areas around it could be improved and which of the possible options would work best. There will be a meeting **in the Village Institute on Saturday 27 January, 10.30am–noon** for anyone interested to hear more about the project and present suggestions. The session is open to everyone in the village, so please drop in to learn more and make the most of this opportunity to feed into the project and improve our local environment. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy on nancyockendon@hotmail.com.

News from Granta Park

It was a busy final month of 2023 at Granta Park, with multiple events and activities across the Park for a fantastic end to 2023.

In December, we hosted a Christmas Market full of local traders and our annual Festive Fun Run, raising funds for The East Anglian Air Ambulance, which saw 120 people take part and £1,200 raised. We were thrilled to welcome 70 local residents to the Park for a festive lunch provided by BioMed Realty and we were blown away by the generous donations for our joint campaign with the local parishes, Give a Gift. In total, we received over 600 items from the local community, tenants and contractors of Granta Park. These items were made into over 300 Christmas gifts for children and young adults, which were donated to Cambridgeshire Social Services for delivery, ensuring as many as possible had something to open on Christmas morning.

We have some fantastic plans ahead for 2024 and we can't wait to share these plans with you all in the coming months.



The Abington Lunch Thursday 25 January 2024



Fruit juice
Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding
Seasonal vegetables
Black Forest trifle
Tea or coffee

Please book your meal on 07554 433317. Leave your name and telephone number with your message before noon on **Tuesday 23 January**. Don't forget to tell us if you need a special diet. Doors open at **12.45pm**. Note that the lunch is open to **ALL Abington and Hildersham residents**. **Cost £5**. Guests only by special arrangement. **Next lunch: Thursday 22 February 2024**.

The Abingtons and Hildersham News on the website

To see the News before a printed copy is available, and to see the photographs in colour, go to www.theabingtons.org.uk/news and follow the link to the pdf for the month you want.

District and County Councillors' Reports November 2023

Solar Farm Application

We have previously reported on a potential planning application coming forward in our area for a solar farm. The size of the area being considered is fairly significant, some 900 hectares. This is the total area being looked at for planning merit; it is likely that a much smaller area will come forward as part of a formal planning application. The geographic area being looked at is from the north of Linton/Abington up to Balsham and west, roughly following the route of the Roman Road, across the A11 to the edge of Fulbourn. The promoters, Kingsway Solar, presented their plans on 14 December, so please take a look when possible.

Autumn Statement

Michael Gove has plans to turn Cambridge into a British version of Silicon Valley. His vision includes building around 200,000 houses in the area. To put that into perspective, Cambridge City currently has 60,000 houses. This idea doesn't seem to be going away. In his Autumn Statement, the Chancellor announced that £3 million will be put into a Cambridge Delivery Group to drive this forward. It was also announced that £2 million will be made available to address the water scarcity issue in the county. In our view, this is nowhere near enough.

Uttlesford Local Plan

A few years ago Uttlesford District Council (our neighbours in north Essex) was proposing to build a new town of circa 5,000 houses at Great Chesterford. They were told by a government planning inspector that this wasn't sustainable and to think again. They have recently published a new proposal that doesn't include any large-scale developments near to the Cambridgeshire border.

Street Light Switchover

The County Council is about to embark on a project to replace all the bulbs in streetlights with LED lanterns. The work is due to begin in early 2024. It will take roughly two years to replace the 47,500 streetlights in Cambridgeshire. Information on when our area can expect this change will be published on the County Council's and Balfour Beatty's websites in due course.

Older Adults Social Inclusion Grant

The County Council has a grant available for funding services, clubs and activities for older adults (65 plus) with emerging care or support needs. Full info can be found at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/care-together/older-adults-social-inclusion-grants>

Shire Hall

The previous home of the County Council, Shire Hall, is being remarketed because the buyer of the site, Brookgate, pulled out. So if you know anyone in the market for a historic building, there's a great one up for grabs.

Cambridgeshire Holidays & Food Programme

This is another County Council-run programme that provides holiday activities and food for children who are in receipt of benefit-related free school meals. This isn't the only eligibility criterion but all families in receipt of free school meals have been sent a voucher directly. Full information at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/support-with-the-cost-of-living/holiday-activities-and-food-programme>

Contact details

District Council – John Batchelor – johndbatchelor23@gmail.com

District and County Council – Henry Batchelor – henrybatchelor89@gmail.com

Mobile Library

The mobile library comes to Hildersham on the second Tuesday and to the Abingtons on the fourth Tuesday of every month and stops at the following places:

Hildersham, High Street 9.40–10.20 Next date: Tuesday 9 January	West Field, Little Abington 9.40–10.20 The Shop, Great Abington 10.30–11.00 Magna Close, Great Abington 11.05–11.30 Next date: Tuesday 23 January
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Partridge Group 2024 Programme

The Partridge Group has organised four thought-provoking meetings for January 2024 in the Terrace room of the Abington Village Institute. As usual, we will gather in the Three Tuns from 7.30pm with the sessions starting in the Institute at 8.00pm. The first meeting will be on Tuesday 9 January. See Diary (page 10)

for further regular Wednesday meetings. Topics will cover:

- The case for “dark matter”
- Is money ruining sport?
- What do existential risks mean to us?
- Powering Life: using structural biology to study molecules and proteins that form living matter

Programme details will be sent out closer to each session. Please let Barry Brooks (bmb@brooks51.co.uk) know if you have any new neighbours or friends who would like to be added to the circulation.

Christmas Gifts for Refugee and Foster Children

On behalf of Love Abington, the Children’s Church Council, the churches in Abington and Hildersham and Becca Keefe from BioMed Realty, we want to thank you for making such a difference to so many children’s lives in Cambridgeshire this Christmas. Our appeal for Christmas gifts for refugee, vulnerable children and children in emergency foster care in Cambridgeshire produced a huge response, greater than anything we anticipated, especially in this time of hardship and the cost of living crisis. This was the first year we have joined forces with Granta Park and it proved a tremendous success. We are very grateful to BioMed



Realty for their help with the collection and distribution of gifts but our foremost gratitude goes to the caring, generous communities of Abington and Hildersham who once more rose to the challenge. On a cold, winter’s afternoon in December, people arrived at St Mary’s Little Abington and Holy Trinity Hildersham for the Advent Tea with beautiful, thoughtful gifts that filled the large spaces around the Christmas trees in the two churches. For the second year running, social workers were able to give age-appropriate gifts to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them a Christmas present, as well as the unaccompanied refugee children and children in foster care and children’s homes. These children will never meet you but they will now know that there was someone out there who really cared and wanted them to feel loved at Christmas. Your gifts will always be treasured and they will have given a glimmer of hope in the dark experiences of their lives.

A special thank you to all the young people and children who helped with teas, crafts and the collection of presents, the members of the Love Abington steering committee, Revd Ben Brady and everyone who supplied cakes and food for the Advent Teas.

Amanda Palmer and Rosemary Mead

Diary for January 2024

Date		Venue: Abington Institute unless stated	Time	Page
Tue	2	Art Group	10.00am	19
Wed	3	Yoga – course and drop-in	9.30am	11
Thu	4	Walking Group	9.50am	13
Fri	5	Low-impact Aerobics	9.30am	11
		Pilates	10.30am	11
Mon	8	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building	9.30am	12
		Physio Pilates	1.15pm	11
		Abington and Hildersham WI	7.30pm	13
Tue	9	Mobile Library, Hildersham	9.40am	8
		Art Group	10.00am	19
		Tuesday Club	2.00pm	12
		Reading Group – see page 12 for venue	7.30pm	12
		Partridge Group	8.00pm	9
Wed	10	Yoga – course and drop-in	9.30am	11
		Line Dancing	1.00pm	11
Thu	11	Community Oil Order – deadline		6
		Granta Vale Harmony	7.30pm	12
Fri	12	Low-impact Aerobics	9.30am	11
		Pilates	10.30am	11
Sat	13	Love Abington Winter Hub	10.00am	14
Mon	15	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building	9.30am	12
		Social Cycling – meet at 1 Bourn Bridge Road	10.00am	11
		Physio Pilates	1.15pm	11
		Great Abington Parish Council	7.15pm	15
Tue	16	Art Group	10.00am	19
Wed	17	Yoga course and drop-in	9.30am	11
		Line Dancing	1.00pm	11
		Abington Group	7.30pm	13
		Partridge Group	8.00pm	9
Thu	18	Craft Group	1.30pm	13
		Granta Vale Harmony	7.30pm	12
Fri	19	Low-impact Aerobics	9.30am	11
		Pilates	10.30am	11
		School Winter Disco	Time TBC	6
Sat	20	Walking Group	9.50am	13
Mon	22	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building	9.30am	12
		Physio Pilates	1.15pm	11
		Little Abington Parish Council	7.30pm	16
Tue	23	Mobile Library, the Abingtons	9.40am	8
		Art Group	10.00am	19
		Tuesday Club	2.00pm	12
		Scrabble Club	7.00pm	12
Wed	24	Yoga – course and drop-in	9.30am	11
		Line Dancing	1.00pm	11
		Partridge Group	8.00pm	9
Thu	25	Abington Lunch (doors open)	12.45pm	7
		Granta Vale Harmony	7.30pm	12

Fri	26	Low-impact Aerobics	9.30am	11
		Pilates	10.30am	11
		Film Nights – doors open	7.00pm	12
Sat	27	River Granta Improvement Project (Naturewatch)	10.30am	7
Mon	29	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building	9.30am	12
		Physio Pilates	1.15pm	11
Tue	30	Art Group	10.00am	19
Wed	31	Yoga – course and drop-in	9.30am	11
		Line Dancing	1.00pm	11
		Partridge Group	8.00pm	9

For details of contacts for all the clubs and events listed in the Diary, please see the inside back cover of the *News*, or the pages on which the relevant articles appear.

Institute bookings: contact by email: institute@theabingtons.org.uk.

Jeremiah's Café: Opening times in January 2024

Thursday lunchtime 11.30am–1.30pm (4, 11, 18, Lunch 25)

Friday morning 8.45am–11.00am (5, 12, 19, 26)

Saturday mornings 10.00am–12 noon (6, 13, 20, 27)

Contacts for Café: helenstchowe@btinternet.com and helen.rogers.uk@gmail.com

Wheelie bin dates for January 2024 (Abingtons and Hildersham)

Wed 3	Wed 10	Wed 17	Weds 24
Black	Green/Blue	Black	Blue

Yoga – Wednesdays, 9.30am

Contact Joan 890 629 or email joangraham72@gmail.com if you would like to drop in.

Low Impact Aerobics and Pilates – Fridays, 9.30am and 10.30am

Aerobics, toning and stretching, exercises to raise your heart rate and tone your body, fun and friendly. Pilates will help to alleviate back pain, improve core strength, posture and flexibility. Please book for five weeks for Low Impact Aerobics and Pilates. Contact Disa Bennett on 07798 754 029 or www.zumbaandpilatescambridge.co.uk.

Physio-led Face to Face Pilates – Mondays, 1.15–3.20pm

Beginners 1.15–2.15pm; Intermediate 2.20–3.20pm. For more information, please contact Christiana Heinz (cambridgepilates@outlook.com).

Line Dancing – Wednesdays, 1pm–2.30pm (term time)

Qualified line dance instructor, Lisa Mason, now runs drop-in classes suitable for all ages and welcomes beginners to intermediate level. Bring a drink and suitable shoes. Contact lisa.lmsd@gmail.com or tel. 07958 788 292.

Social Cycling

Five cyclists had a great ride for 20 miles through rolling countryside around Ickleton and Elmdon on 18 December, with a well-earned stop at the Riverside Café in Ickleton for an all-day breakfast. Come and join us on 15 January for our first ride in 2024. We will set off from 1 Bourn Bridge Road at 10.00 am.

Gaynor Farrant

Abington Gardening Club

Happy New Year to everybody. Members are reminded there is no meeting in January. The next meeting is on Monday 5 February when Clare Kneen will give a talk on Winter Plants. All welcome. Please call me for more information. Kay Harman, Secretary, tel. 891 730; email: robandkayharman@gmail.com

Granta Vale Harmony

Granta Vale Harmony is a mixed *a capella* singing group. We meet on Thursday evenings from 7.30 to 9.30pm at the Abington Institute, and anyone is welcome to join in. Contact Peter Lester, tel. 07884 932 215 or email haverhi11@talktalk.net.

Abington Pre-School Baby and Toddler Group

This Group is open **every Monday** morning (term time only) 9.30–11.30am, in the Abington Annexe building at the bottom of the Primary School playground. No need to book in advance. £2 per family, light snack and drinks provided. Please bring a water bottle for your child, a cup with a lid for parent beverages and a child between 0–4 years old. Tel. 894 246 or email abingtonannexeooffice@gmail.com for more information. See page 6.

The Tuesday Club (formerly the Forget-Me-Not Club)

We welcome our members and friends again in the New Year on Tuesday 9 January. We will celebrate the New Year with sherry, cheese and biscuits and a word game. On Tuesday 23 January we will have a talk from a retired Police Inspector from the Met about some of his memories from that time, which should be very interesting. If you would like to join us you would be made very welcome. We welcome new members as well as old friends. The first introductory visit is free; membership is then £5 per year and £2 a session. We look forward to meeting you.

Jenny Milns (tel. 890 252)

Reading Group

9 January	<i>Small Pleasures</i> Clare Chambers	Rachel Haining
13 February	<i>The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox</i> Maggie O'Farrell	Lisa Pechey
12 March	<i>Divisadero</i> Michael Ondaatje	Mary Conochie

We will meet at 7.30pm at Rachel's to discuss *Small Pleasures*. Please confirm attendance to Rachel and copy me in.

Valerie Hefford

Scrabble Club

The next meeting of the Scrabble Club will be on Tuesday 23 January at 7.00pm in the Institute. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month and new members are very welcome.

Sheena Fraser

Film Nights

The first Film Night in the New Year is on 26 January, 7.30pm (doors open 7.00pm). For more information, please visit <http://www.theabingtons.org.uk/> where you can subscribe to Film Night updates. Alternatively email johnrivers@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list.

Abington Craft Group

The first meeting of the Craft Group in 2024 will be on Thursday 18 January, 1.30-4.30pm. Please bring your own projects. We have arranged a Patchwork Workshop with Crafty-uk Thursday 21 March, 10.00am–4.30pm in the Terrace at the Institute. More details in the February *Village News*. Please register your interest by email or phone (see below). Finally, a Happy New Year to one and all. And a huge thanks for support at the Christmas Fayre. For more information, please contact Glynis.brookman@btinternet.com, tel. 07970 614 194.

The Abington Group

On Wednesday 17 January Marni Munns will speak on “It shouldn't happen to a pilot!” at 7.30pm in the Village Institute.
Freda Orgee

Abington & Hildersham Women's Institute

Our December meeting was more of a Christmas celebration. It began with Philippa leading us in a craft activity to make a Christmas decoration. This involved co-operation from a partner, string, cellophane, ribbon, greenery and Ferrero Rocher chocolates to produce an attractive wreath that you could eat later! Festive refreshments followed, then a giant Pass the Parcel with gold coins and forfeits that caused some head scratching and much hilarity. Marion McIntyre kindly played the keyboard for our musical session with Christmas songs and carols.

The proposals for the 2024 WI Resolution are: 1. Dental Health Matters; 2. Impacts of poor housing conditions; 3. Say “No” to gambling advertising; 4. Improving outcomes for women in the Criminal Justice system. Over the Christmas holiday, members should read their *WI Life* magazine to inform themselves prior to voting at the meeting on 8 January, when our guest speaker is Ian Harvey, who will talk about “The challenges of living in Sierra Leone, the eighth poorest country in the world”. Visitors and new members always welcome. We wish all our members a very happy and healthy New Year. Marilyn Broadhurst

Abington Walking Group



The December walks were to Wendens Ambo and Arkesden and Little Walden Airfield and Ashdon. Your January walks are on Thursday 4 and Saturday 20. If you would like to know in advance where we shall be walking, please join our WhatsApp group. The walks start from the Institute at 10.00am by shared transport to the walk venue. A list of the walks for 2024 is now available. We wish all our walkers a healthy and happy 2024.

Look forward to seeing you. For further information please contact: Robin Harman robandkayharman@gmail.com; Genevieve Dalton gdalton365@gmail.com.

UK Power Networks Priority Services Register

In the event of loss of electricity or water supply there are benefits from being on the Priority Services Register.

- A priority telephone number that can be accessed 24 hours a day.
- A team that will contact you and keep you updated during a power cut.
- Tailored support if a home visit is required, and if hot meals are required
- Provision of electrical generators for extreme hardship and medical needs.
- Can contact relatives on your behalf.

In extreme scenarios hotel accommodation may be offered. If you are vulnerable due to health, social or personal problems please contact me for an application form.

Anton King tel. 891 514

Love Abington Winter Hub



Clothing Repair Café, Toy Exchange, Winter Crafts for Children, Tea and Chat

Saturday 13 January 2024 at the Village Institute, 10.00am–3.00pm



Repair Café

Do you have a favourite jumper that needs darning? Do you want to sew a decorative patch on the elbows? Do you need to mend tears in jeans or school trousers? Do you have a zip that needs replacing? A hem that needs mending or altering? Glynis Brookman and the crafting team will be happy to help. Please contact Glynis **in advance** with any requests or queries so that she can book you a slot on 13 January. Call

Glynis on 07970 614 194 and leave a message. Glynis will return your call. Or email Glynis.brookman@btinternet.com



Toy exchange

Are you sorting out the toy box and have unwanted toys in very good condition? Please bring them along. Ring Rosemary Mead on 891718 and leave a message or email leonardavmead@hotmail.com for details and if you have a query.



Winter crafts

The Terrace will be open throughout the day for a variety of winter crafts for children.

The café will be open in the morning and Love Abington will be providing tea and cake to **EVERYONE** in the afternoon. So come along for a warm welcome whether you have a repair, want to do a craft or just want a cup of tea.

Great Abington Parish Council – An Active Council

Happy New Year to all our residents.

The Parish Council thanks all those members of our community who, quietly and often unseen, give their time to support the many clubs and organisations that make our villages such great places to live.

Love Abington

For the past two years, Love Abington has provided some support at Christmas time for residents of Great and Little Abington in the form of food hampers for families in great need and a small present for people living on their own who may experience loneliness and a sense of being forgotten over the Christmas holiday. The Council was pleased to donate £100 towards the cost of this scheme.

Faulty streetlamps?

If you spot a malfunctioning streetlamp, note the reference number on the lamppost and report it on <http://www.lightingcambridgeshire.com/contact-us/report-fault.htm>.

Planning

Please attend a planning meeting if you would like to make a comment that we can consider before agreeing on the Parish Council's recommendation to SCDC. If you have views on a planning application, you should also make your comment on the South Cambs website (link below) as this will ensure that the planners take your views into consideration in their decision-making. For more information on planning applications, see <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/view-or-comment-on-a-planning-application/>

Planning applications

23/03875/FUL – Portway – installation of air handling unit at the rear of Block B.

23/04084/FUL – 109 High Street – removal of raised kerb and reinstate in location in line with the drive.

23/03977/HFUL – The Granary, Hall Farm – single storey front extension, new gable end, replace windows and doors.

23/04009/LBC – 109 High Street – internal and external work to main house.

District Council decisions

23/00329/LBC – TWI – creation of a 4m opening to the curtilage listed wall to enable the creation of an east-west shared access which forms part of the outline application 22/05549/OUT.

23/00329/HFUL – 44 North Road – part single storey, part two-storey rear extension.

Appeals

Appeal Ref SCD-EN-0019-22 34A South Road – appeal against enforcement notice to demolish dwelling SCDC believes was erected without planning permission.

Great Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Village Institute

Tony Orgee (Chairman) tonyorgee@gmail.com

Planning Committees: These are arranged as required when applications are received. See Parish Council notice board for dates or contact the Parish Clerk.

Next Parish Council meeting: Monday 15 January 2024 at 7.15pm There will be opportunities at the start and close of the meeting for members of the public to speak to the council about matters of concern. Notices, agendas and minutes are posted on the Parish Council notice board located at the entrance to Magna Close and on the Parish Council's website.

<http://greatabingtonparishcouncil.org> or available from the Parish Clerk.

Paula Harper (Clerk): harper802@btinternet.com (892 000)

Little Abington Parish Council

Happy New Year!

And do get in touch with us at any point in the year (contact details below) if you have any issues we can help with – planning, trees, bus stops, grass verges, pavements, highways, street lighting, parking, speeding, salt bins.

Linton Greenway

There has been a delay to the building of the cycleway along Newmarket Road from Granta Park roundabout to the cycle path to Babraham. When the work starts (February or March), Newmarket Road will be closed but there will be local access.

Spring litter pick

The first of two village litter picks this year will be held on Saturday 20 April between 12 noon and 2pm. Just turn up: we will provide equipment, hi-vis jackets and refreshments.

Reporting potholes

If you wish to report a pothole use the Cambridgeshire County Council online Highways Reporting Tool: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults. Details of how to make a claim for damage to a vehicle or personal injury caused by defects on the highway are also set out.

Meeting held on 27 November

Deborah James of Abington Woods advised us that she's in the process of purchasing the site as a community interest company, a limited company called Patchwork Education Village, where all the profits are required to be put back into the business. She has already started to apply for grants to improve the site.

LAPC is going to apply through a Local Highways Improvement bid for 20mph zones for the whole of the High Street, Church Lane, West Field, Bourn Bridge Road, Ivan Clark's Corner and Church Close.

Little Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Institute at 7.30pm

Next meetings: Monday 22 January, Monday 25 March 2024

If you would like to participate in a meeting please contact the clerk. The meeting agendas and papers are on the noticeboard on Church Lane and published on the website: www.littleabingtonparishcouncil.org.uk/.

Sheila Bolden (Chair) 07754659929/Cllr.sbolden@littleabingtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Jessica Ashbridge (Clerk) Clerk@littleabingtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Hildersham Church News

The Advent Tea Party

A number of hardy villagers braved the chilly church to be rewarded with copious amounts of warming tea and a huge selection of delicious homemade cakes at the Advent Tea Party on 9 December. It was a lovely opportunity for everyone to sit and chat with friends and to buy some beautiful Christmas decorations made by the Children's Church Council. The village jam stall, which raises money for the East Anglian Children's Hospice (EACH) sold a considerable number of jars of mincemeat and jams and jellies. But the most rewarding part of the afternoon was the number of gifts that arrived for refugees and children in care. We ran out of room under the Christmas tree and could only just squeeze them into our car (see page 9). We added our gifts to those in Little Abington, filled four cars and took them to Granta Park, which joined our Give a Gift initiative for the first time this year. They were quite taken aback by the number of gifts. Gifts will be delivered to Social Services who will distribute them to many happy children and young people for Christmas.

An absolutely enormous **THANK YOU** to the many generous villagers who donated gifts. Your generosity in these difficult times will bring happiness to many young people for whom Christmas can sometimes be a time of struggle.

The Children's Church Council

After their very industrious Creative Church Day, when the children made many beautiful wire angels and Christmas trees and almost one hundred Christmas cards for the village, it was great to see them displayed so beautifully at the Advent Tea Party. The children then



acted as post people and delivered their cards to every home in the village. The children continue to pursue the need to be environmentally friendly and their cards were made from cardboard (of which there is a great deal coming through our letter boxes at the moment) and carol pages from very old hymn books.

Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Once in Royal David's City began this traditional service on Sunday 17 December (see left). The golden light of hundreds of candles illuminated our church in the most magical way and the joy of singing carols and hearing the story of the birth and life of Jesus read so beautifully certainly affirms the true meaning of Christmas. The Children's Church Council performed Michael Morpurgo's story "The Best Christmas Present in the World" and reminded us of the need for World Peace. Mulled wine and mince pies warmed us all and gave everyone an opportunity to wish each other a Very Happy Christmas.

January Church Services (other than the Abingtons and Hildersham)

DATE	9.30am	11.00am	pm
7 January		United Service with Holy Communion <i>Balsham</i>	
14 January	Communion <i>Weston Colville</i> <i>West Wickham</i>	Communion <i>Balsham</i>	Evening Prayer <i>West Wrating</i>
21 January	Communion <i>West Wrating</i> <i>West Wickham</i> Morning Worship <i>Weston Colville</i>	Communion <i>Balsham</i>	
28 January	Communion <i>West Wickham</i> <i>Weston Colville</i>	Morning Worship for Candlemas <i>Balsham</i>	

Masses at Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church

135 High Street, Sawston CB22 3HJ, www.ololsawston.org.uk

Monday–Friday	9.30 am Holy Mass	
Saturday	9.30 am Holy Mass	
Sunday	8.45 am Holy Mass 11.15 am Holy Mass	

Being Father Christmas

Churches benefit from early Christmas sale



It all began in 2001 (the year I lost my wife Marjorie to cancer).

I was walking home from the hairdresser, having just had my hair and beard trimmed, when I was asked by a lady who said she was the Vicar's wife would I be prepared to take over the roles of the villages' Father Christmas as the man who had been doing it for years had moved to Devon and I said I would.

The case with all the items needed for the post was delivered (I added a few more items to complete the appearance I felt was necessary). My first appearance was when the Institute had a corridor down the left-hand side that ended as a storage room for cleaning gear. It was turned into a grotto for Father Christmas and his two helpers dressed as elves, one having presents for girls and the other with presents for boys. I had to wear the false beard, which kept falling down. Therefore I

decided that in future I would leave my real beard to grow from July until Christmas. I started getting requests to make appearances for the After School Club and the Pre-School Club, then the Ragged Rascals on three consecutive days and the Leys School Christmas Party and for private people when their grandchildren visited from overseas.

One year I was asked to present the Christmas presents to the two September intake classes at the Primary School and after giving the presents I asked the children what would make a really happy Christmas and they all said "Snow!" So I said, "What you all have to do is cross your fingers (I showed them how) and wave your hands about while saying 'We want snow, we want snow!'" The next day I had to visit the Pre-School in the building at the end of the playground and believe it or not, I was walking through snow that had fallen in the night.

I just hope that I can continue acting the part as I love seeing the happy faces and hearing the questions about where my reindeer are...




Father Christmas

George Woodley first making news as Father Christmas in 2001 (top) and at the Christmas Fayre in December 2023 (right). Photo: Amaris Victory.



Village Organisations

Church Services for January 2024

<i>DATE</i>	<i>Gt. Abington</i> 	<i>Lt. Abington</i> 	<i>Hildersham</i> 	<i>Readings</i>
7 January	11.00am United Communion at Balsham			Isaiah 60.1-6 Matthew 2.1-12
14 January	11.00am Communion		11.00am Communion	1 Samuel 3.1-10 John 1.43-end
21 January	11.00am Communion		6.00pm Evening Prayer	Genesis 14.17-20 John 2.1-11
28 January		4.00pm Evening Prayer	11.00am Café Church	Psalms 24 Luke 2.22-40

Church Flower Rota

	<i>Gt. Abington</i>	<i>Lt. Abington</i>	<i>Hildersham</i>
7 January	Patsy Randall	Mrs Miles and Mrs Gilmour	Kirsten Newbie
14 January	Patsy Randall	Mrs Miles and Mrs Gilmour	Kirsten Newbie
21 January	Patsy Randall	Mrs Orgee	Kirsten Newbie
28 January	Patsy Randall	Mrs Orgee	Kirsten Newbie

Churchwardens

<i>Abington</i>	Graham Ross	41 Church Lane, Little Abington	891564
<i>Hildersham</i>	Keith Day	Fourwinds, Linton Road, Hildersham	891527

Assistant Churchwardens

<i>Great Abington</i>	Anne Hall	12 Magna Close, Great Abington	892275
	Patsy Randall	77 High Street, Great Abington	07765 345 714
<i>Little Abington</i>	Mary Miles	36 Church Lane, Little Abington	891083
	Marilyn Broadhurst	34 West Field, Little Abington	893214