



The Abingtons and Hildersham News



www.theabingtons.org.uk

February 2024



Photo by Amaris Victory

Fun for all ages at the Winter Hub (see page 7)

From the Editor

January this year was very far from dry. Just when we thought life was returning to normal after the pleasures and excesses of Christmas and the New Year, we had to contend with rain and floods (pages 9, 16), a sudden freeze, an equally sudden thaw that brought the misery of burst pipes, two named storms, high winds and ultimately unseasonably warm temperatures that started to bring up bulbs. It looks as if spring is coming to Abington Woods, where this month the co-directors are launching a series of open weekends for anyone interested in helping to protect our local woodland. Read all about this on page 16.

Easter is early this year and rather unfortunately Valentine's Day falls on Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, traditionally a period of self-denial and reflection (page 4). Perhaps those wanting to celebrate Valentine's Day with its traditional treats will take the opportunity to indulge a day early, when Jeremiah's Café will be open for Pancake Day (page 7). Please note that booking is essential.

On page 5, the organisers of the Festival of Running – a major fundraising event for the school and a major undertaking every year – are asking for volunteers to join the committee. Can you help? The event is hosted by Granta Park, where further development is proposed. Residents are invited to a public consultation on 8 February (page 7). Granta Medical Practices have provided a comprehensive update on their appointments system (page 17) that explains all the options offered – and includes some interesting statistics.

Our cover photo was taken at Love Abington's highly successful Winter Hub, held last month (page 7), and this month, members of the Love Abington team are holding the first of a new type of service, Creative Church (page 7), to be held in the Institute.

Finally, 2024 is a Leap Year so February, a month that cannot be too short for most of us, has one extra day. Happy birthday to anyone born on 29 February who this year has the opportunity to celebrate on the day itself.

Sally Simmons

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

From the Seven Churches

“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.” This chilling reminder of death is the first part of the sentence said as the clergy smear ashes on the foreheads of those attending church services on Ash Wednesday. And no less demanding, the sentence ends, “Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.” To non-believers and believers alike, this *can* be heard as a further sobering threat: “Get your act together, my dear, or you won't get to heaven!” But I don't think that's the case.

You may already have guessed, from the bizarre sight of Easter Eggs on supermarket shelves at New Year that Easter is particularly early this year, on 31 March. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent is on 14 February. Lent marks the six weeks of preparation for the events of Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday. So, perhaps, that sentence about remembering that “you are dust” seems a bit premature, and especially mean when we've all just seen our New Year's resolutions crumble!

No, the discomfort, or even shock, of being reminded of one's mortality is pressing us to ask the sort of *meaning-of-life* question: a fundamental question in the life of any adult. The easier option is to swerve back from this thought to the multiple (and necessary) distractions in our lives, drawing us away from uncomfortable questions about our pettiness and failures, the abandoned hopes and, dare we wonder, ultimately the futility of life?

Sadly, however, many of the more serious distractions – war in Europe, the endless atrocities in the Middle East, and the perilous consequences of unchecked global warming – merely compound our sense of helplessness and fears for the future. So, in the end, what's the point? Isn't it just best to skim over the surface of life as best we can?

The demand to “Turn away from sin” doesn't seem that helpful, perhaps, especially if read primarily as something about being “good” and, even, doing your bit to fix the world.

No, essentially for Christians, Lent is firstly an invitation into the much more difficult space of being clear-eyed about yourself, and about the world, and most particularly about the dark underbelly of the suffering and failures that can't be fixed ... and the futility of it all *if*, anyway, death is its final full stop. And then, staying there as best you can. Staying there and wrestling and trusting that the path we follow to Good Friday will this year yield up another piece of the puzzle and deliver the glimpse of a deeper answer. An answer that surprisingly, shockingly gives the inspiration for New Life... the life, and selfless love, and hope and joy of Easter.

Alistair Collen, Licensed Lay Minister, Granta Vale Ministry Team

News from the Pews

It was wonderful to welcome so many people to our various Christmas services. Sadly, we are currently experiencing difficulties with huge amounts of mud in Great Abington church due to the recent flooding. Because of this you may find the church locked on occasion. We apologize in advance and appreciate your understanding. In recent months Great Abington churchwardens have received complaints from local residents about the condition of the road down to the church. The PCC wishes you to know that the road is not the responsibility of the church.

On a more joyful note, the PCC has discussed some exciting fundraising events throughout 2024. Dates will be given in the March edition of the *News*. They are:

- New! Creative Church in Abington Institute. A simple monthly service for anyone and everyone with refreshments and crafts. First service: Friday 25 February at 10.00am.
- Afternoon Tea with delicious cakes from Patsy's Pantry in Great Abington church. This will be purely an opportunity to natter with friends and indeed make new friends.
- The resurrection of the Palm Sunday Walk where we walk between the two churches accompanied by a donkey on Palm Sunday.
- Open Gardens in Little Abington. Please notify a churchwarden if you wish to take part.
- The Vicarage Garden Party.
- The Church Christmas Fayre.
- And finally the return of Advent Windows...

A Happy New Year ahead with something for us all to enjoy.

Anne Hall

Abington Festival of Running Needs Your Help!!!



The Abington Festival of Running is one of the region's biggest autumn running events, and last year it attracted over 500 runners. It's a brilliant event with super-fast courses and a wonderful atmosphere and we think there is potential for the event to be even bigger and better.

To help us grow the Festival, we are looking for volunteers who are keen to support a vibrant community event, including keen runners who want to put their expert knowledge into creating the perfect running event. Come and join the committee! If you are interested in any of the following

positions, please email abington10k@gmail.com. We are looking for:

A Race Director, who will:

- liaise with English Athletics each year to arrange race registration and obtain race licences for the event;
- oversee the Race Director's handbook, fact sheets and other information/regulations published on the English Athletics/Run Britain website, ensuring race information is up to date, including disclaimer, race day information, privacy and cancellation policy;
- agree licences with Granta Park and TWI for use the grounds to host the Festival.
- review and update the Event Management plan liaising with support from others on the committee;
- produce course certificates each year and ensure public display of race licences and course certificates at event.

Communications and marketing expertise to work with others on the committee to:

- manage the website for the Festival;
- market the event on social media, with running clubs and through direct communications;
- communicate with race participants;
- develop new ideas to reach a wider audience of runners.

Designer to help with:

- logo and event design;
- graphics;
- sponsor collateral;
- Medal design;
- sponsor logo board;
- email design.

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

There is still a need for local social and private rental accommodation for Ukrainians moving on from their host households. There is also a need for warm clothing, which can be donated at the Ukrainian Clothing Hub in the Sawston Free Church on Fridays between 4.00 and 6.00pm.

February 24 could be emotional for the Ukrainian community because it will be two years since the start of the conflict that caused many to seek safety in the UK. Anton King (tel. 891 514)

Balsham Singers

Balsham Singers enjoyed a most successful concert on the afternoon of 16 December. It was the first time we've held an afternoon performance and it proved to be very popular. We were disappointed that we were not able to sell any tickets on the door this year due to successful advanced sales and church capacity. We will be reviewing our options before our next concert in May. We were gifted two lovely hampers to raffle and the proceeds (£450) were donated to Arthur Rank Hospice Charity, presented to Yoyo Kunzwa, the charity's fundraising officer, by Sara Szabo and Valerie Hefford.

The choir welcomes new members. We rehearse 7.30–9.30pm on Thursday evening in The Pavilion near the church in Balsham. No experience is necessary. The ability to read music is helpful but not needed as rehearsal CDs are available. For more information go to our website at www.choirsites/balshamsingers or contact us at balsham_singers@hotmail.co.uk.

News from Granta Park

Happy New Year to everyone from Granta Park.

We ended 2023 on a high with our Give a Gift campaign, in partnership with Love Abington, the Children's Church Council and the local parishes. We are pleased to share that with the incredible support from you, as well as our tenants and contractors at Granta Park, we were able to donate 898 gifts to Cambridge Social Services. A huge thank you to all involved and special thanks to Amanda Palmer and Rosemary Mead for allowing us to join forces with an already established campaign.

This month we will be holding a public consultation to showcase the proposals for the comprehensive refurbishment/remodelling of the Franklin Building. The proposals seek to deliver a fit-for-purpose, sustainable new building that will meet evolving tenant needs. The exhibition will be held from 3.00–7.00pm on Thursday 8 February, in the first-floor conference suite in the McClintock Building, Granta Park. More details will also be posted on our website: www.grantapark.co.uk.



The Abington Lunch Thursday 22 February 2024



Fruit juice
Sausage dish
Seasonal vegetables
Brioche bread and butter pudding
Tea or coffee

Please book your meal on 07554 433317. Leave your name and telephone number with your message before noon on **Tuesday 20 February**. 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 28 March 2024.**

Pancake Day at Jeremiah's Café



Tuesday 13 February
2.00–4.00pm

**Two pancakes plus
a hot drink £4**

Booking essential

Call Gaynor Farrant tel. 07817 517 871 or email
gaynorfarrant198@btinternet.com

Love Abington Winter Hub

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to the Love Abington Winter hub. It was very well supported and there was a happy buzz all day. Glynis Brookman and Helen Greathead worked tirelessly on the clothing repairs that members of the village gave for their expert attention. We are very grateful to Glynis and Helen for their contribution and hope that copious supplies of tea and cake kept them going. Thank you to everyone who sorted out toy boxes and cupboards so that they could supply Carol Thexton with a collection of toys which would rival any toy shop. About 40 children had great fun playing with them before selecting some to take home.

Hannah Threlfall, her daughter Poppy, Len Mead and Colette Harnoken helped the children enjoy a range of seasonal crafts from painting winter skies, using Epsom salts, making rain clouds with shaving foam and food colouring to constructing bird feeders, snowflakes and bead icicles. It was wonderful to get the community together to enjoy tea and cake supplied by the Institute café in the morning and Love Abington in the afternoon. There will be a special Spring Hub event for everyone in the village in April. More details to follow.

Welcome Pack for new residents

Love Abington has produced a simple **Welcome Pack** for new residents in the villages. If you are new to the village or would like a pack to give to a neighbour, please contact Anton King (Little Abington) tel. 891 514 or Carol Thexton (Great Abington) tel. 89731 or email carol.thexton@gmail.com.

Rosemary Mead

Creative Church!

Come on a new adventure with Hannah Threlfall and Rosemary Mead to explore the stories of the Bible.

Storytelling, crafts, songs and food.

10.00–10.45am at Abington Institute on 25 February 2024
and subsequently on the fourth Sunday of every month.

District and County Councillors' Reports November 2023

Happy New Year

We hope that everyone had a happy and restful Christmas break. We're both looking forward to working with you all again in 2024.

Solar Farm Application – update

Contrary to what we have previously reported, the total site area applied for (rather than the overall search area) is 900 hectares. If this were to gain planning permission, it would make it one of the largest solar farms in Europe. The geographic area being looked at – some 2000 hectares – 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 of this scheme, Kingsway Solar, were due to go public with their plans on 14 December, but this was delayed until January.

Stagecoach Updated Timetable

In December 2023, Stagecoach announced some proposed changes to the 13 service that will come into force on 3 March. On further inspection the changes relate only to some of the places that the bus will stop at in Haverhill, so won't really affect us in Cambridgeshire. Full details can be seen at <https://haverhill-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Stagecoach-East-Haverhill-Network-Overview.pdf>

Budgets

February is always the time when local authorities set their budgets for the forthcoming municipal year. The County Council needs to find around £2m worth of savings while maintaining the services it provides, not an easy task. The District Council is in a much healthier financial position and won't need to make savings this coming year.

Brief A1307 Update

The cones have been removed from the Dean Road junction section of the road, with the new remodelled crossing now finished and operational. The final stages are the completion of the roundabout and associated footpaths. Bartlow Road, Linton is currently scheduled to reopen in mid-February but, as with all construction projects, this is subject to weather, etc.

Anaerobic Digestion Plant Proposals

In our area we have not one, but two planning applications submitted to the relevant local authorities for bio energy digestion plants. These are plants that breakdown agricultural materials and turn them into energy. For reference there is one on the A505 between Royston and Baldock.

1. The first application is located just over the Suffolk border outside Haverhill and off the A1307. The site runs up the Cambridgeshire border and ends at the edge of West Wickham/Weston Colville. Suffolk County Council will make the decision on this but while the time for public comments has closed, you can still look at the plans and write to the case officer dealing with the application – andrew.rutter@suffolk.gov.uk.

For plans, go to the Suffolk County Council website: <http://suffolk.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display?applicationNumber=SCC%2F0045%2F23SE&fbclid=IwAR0aj4d4JMd9Yr3cP-Etp9rxdR4kKDwvzX0wMyHkfOomG45fCq0khXRbyrE>

2. The second application is in the parish of Streetly End, West Wickham. This site is smaller than the first and as it is in Cambridgeshire will be decided by Cambridgeshire County Council. The council is taking public comments now and this can be done via the website:

<https://planning.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=S0BB1JDYKNQ00>

The period for public comments on this application closed in early December but you can always contact the planning officer directly – helen.wass@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Rural Prosperity Fund

There is a new fund, soon to be released by the District Council, with money from the government to aid economic and social activity in rural areas such as ours. There is a fairly significant amount of money available and details will follow as the Council decides how to distribute the fund. Watch this space.

LHI Bids

This year's round of Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bids is now open for parish councils to submit a proposal for funding for a small highway improvement project in our area. Full details and application forms can be seen at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/improving-the-local-highway/local-highway-improvement-funding>

Mobile food hub

A mobile food hub run by Hope CIC visits Linton Village Hall on Coles Lane every Tuesday 1.00– 2.00pm. Just turn up on the day. More information on the scheme can be found on the charity's website: <https://hopeagainst.org/hope-cic-mobile-food-hub> or 07474 725 477.

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 13 February

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 27 February



Flooding in Little Abington in January.

Photo: David Farrant

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.

Diary for February 2024

Date		Venue Abington Institute unless stated	Time	Page
Thu	1	Abington Walking Group	9.50am	13
Fri	2	Low impact Aerobics Pilates	9.30am 10.30am	11 11
Sat	3	Abington Woods Weekend		16
Mon	5	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building Abington Gardening Club	9.30am 7.30pm	12 11
Tue	6	Art Group Tuesday Club	10.00am 1.00pm	19 12
Wed	7	Yoga – course and drop-in Line Dancing	9.30am 1.00pm	11 11
Thu	8	Granta Park Consultation – McClintock Building Granta Vale Harmony	3.00pm 7.30pm	6 12
Fri	9	Low impact Aerobics Pilates	9.30am 10.30am	11 11
Mon	12	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building Abington and Hildersham WI	9.30am 7.30pm	12 13
Tue	13	Mobile Library, Hildersham Art Group Pancake Day Reading Group	9.40am 10.00am 2.00pm 7.30pm	9 19 7 12
Wed	14	Yoga – course and drop- in Line Dancing	9.30am 1.00pm	11 11
Thu	15	Craft Group Granta Vale Harmony	1.30pm 7.30pm	12 12
Fri	16	Low impact Aerobics Pilates	9.30am 10.30am	11 11
Sat	17	Abington Walking Group	9.50am	13
Mon	19	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building Social Cycling – 1 Bourn Bridge Road Physio Pilates	9.30am 10.00am 2.20pm	12 11 11
Tue	20	Art Group Tuesday Club	10.00am 2.00pm	19 11
Wed	21	Yoga – course and drop in Abington Group (TAG)	9.30am 7.30pm	11 11
Thu	22	Abington Lunch Granta Vale Harmony	1.00pm 7.30pm	11 12
Fri	23	Film Nights – doors open	7.00pm	12
Sat	24	Film Nights Kids' Matinée – doors open	2.00pm	12
Sun	25	Creative Church!	10.00am	7
Mon	26	Baby & Toddler Group – Pre-school building Physio Pilates	9.30am 1.00pm	12 11
Tues	27	Art Group Scrabble Club	10.00am 7.00pm	19 12
Wed	28	Yoga – course and drop-in Mobile Library, the Abingtons Line Dancing	9.30am 9.40am 1.00pm	11 9 11

Thu	29	Granta Vale Harmony	7.30pm	12
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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 February 2024

Thursday lunchtime	11.30am–1.30pm (1, 8, 15, Lunch 22, 29)
Friday morning	8.45am–11.00am (2, 9, 16, 23)
Saturday mornings	10.00am–12 noon (3, 10, 17, 24)

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

Wheelie bin dates for February 2024 (Abingtons and Hildersham)

Wed 7	Wed 14	Wed 21	Weds 28
Green/Blue	Black	Blue	Black

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, 1.15pm–3.20pm

Beginners 1.15pm–2.15pm; Intermediate 2.20pm–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

Last month, seven intrepid cyclists set out on a very cold but bright sunny morning covering 17 miles out to Bartlow, Steninton End, Ashdon then back to Bartlow and Linton for a well-earned hot drink and cake. One rider somewhat cheated knowing what the hill up to Steynton End is like and took a short cut through Vestys! On our next venture on 19 February we are going to offer a slightly different format. Some have expressed an interest but are dubious about the distances so we are proposing that one group will set off at 10.00am from 1 Bourn Bridge Road and a second group half an hour later at 10.30am. The latter group will meet up with the main group at a pit stop and all will return on the same route. The distance would be around five miles with a break. If you are interested please get in touch.

Gaynor Farrant 07817 517 871

The Abington Group

Wednesday 21 February, 7.30pm, Terrace, Abington Institute. A member of the team from the Arthur Rank Hospice will come to speak.

Freda Orgee

Abington Gardening Club

The next meeting is on Monday 5 February in the Institute at 7.30pm when Clare Kneen will give a talk on Winter Plants. 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 7.30pm 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) 9.30am–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

At our meeting on 6 February we will celebrate the Chinese New Year. Please note that this meeting will start an hour earlier than usual, at 1.00pm. We will once again have a Thai lunch from the Three Tuns. As the price per person has increased, we will charge £5 for the lunch, which will still be subsidised by the Tuesday Club.

The next meeting will be held on 20 February at 2pm. Sally and David Simmons will give a presentation on their lives as magistrates.

If you would like to join us you will 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

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 Lisa's to discuss *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox*. Please confirm attendance to Rachel and copy me in.

Valerie Hefford

Scrabble Club

The next meeting of the Scrabble Club will be on Tuesday 27 February 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

Film Nights at the Abington Institute, 23 February at 7.30pm (doors open 7.00 pm) and Kids' Matinée Saturday 24 February at 2.30pm (doors open 2.00 pm). For more information please visit <http://www.theabingtons.org.uk/> where you can subscribe to Film Nights updates.

Abington Craft Group

The next date for Craft Group is Thursday 15 February when we will continue with our own projects. Note the date now for our March meeting in Abington Institute main hall and terrace on Thursday 21 March, 10.00am–6.30pm, when we will meet Andy and Jo from Crafty-UK who will take us through the 'Calm Storm at Sea' quilt block. Their help and expertise will be available for novices and the more experienced.

Andy and Jo will bring a wide selection of fabric for us to buy and there will be one or two sewing machines to borrow. Otherwise bring your own fabric, sewing machine and thread. As part of the workshop, they will lend templates for the pattern, which will be available to purchase at the end of the session. Their extensive selection of templates will help you to get motivated.

Bring your own lunch or eat in Jeremiah's Café. Hot and cold drinks will be available. £15 per person, pay on the day. Places will be limited, so please book as soon as possible by contacting Glynis Brookman on glynis.brookman@btinternet.com or tel. 07970 614 194.

Abington & Hildersham Women's Institute

At our January meeting we were transported to the warm, sunny climes of Sierra Leone with Ian Harvey, science teacher at Hills Road 6th Form College. In 2016 Ian joined a team in Makeni, northern Sierra Leone, during the Ebola outbreak, providing diagnostics with Professor Ian Goodfellow. In a population of 8 million, 14,122 cases were reported and 3,955 deaths. Much superstition surrounded Ebola and survivors were stigmatised and ostracised. Teams were established to go into schools and teach about infectious diseases. Ian developed a new scheme to train teachers to deliver practical science – quite a challenge as most schools have no labs, equipment, reliable electricity, running water or gas and no culture of scientific inquiry or practical work. Ian devised activities requiring simple equipment, e.g. a ruler and stopwatch, and materials that could be sourced in the country or taken in his suitcase. In 2018 Ian helped Ramatu, a former student, to set up a Charity Foundation for Girls' and Women's Empowerment. The status of women is very low in Sierra Leone: 30% marry before the age of 18; 90% aged 15–19 undergo FGM; teenage pregnancy rates are high; domestic violence is common; 60–70% work in agriculture and women do all the cooking. Most men are idle. Ramatu's aim is to set up a school for girls in Mekani and also to engage men and boys to change their culture and improve water supply, sanitation, housing, diet and health care. Sierra Leone is rich in natural resources but 70% live below the poverty line.

Next meeting Monday 12 February, when we will hear about Egyptian and Middle Eastern music and belly dance styles. Visitors and new members always welcome.

Marilyn Broadhurst

Abington Walking Group



Our last walk was to Sawston and Whittlesford. Your February walks are on Thursday 1 and Saturday 17. 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.

We do try to walk all year. A list of all the walk dates for 2024 is now available.

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

Great Abington Parish Council – An Active Council

Faulty streetlights?

If you spot any malfunctioning streetlights, please report the lamp reference number (on the lamp post) via <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 in our debate before agreeing on the Parish Council's recommendation to SCDC. For more information on the applications, use the reference given below at: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/view-or-comment-on-a-planning-application/>.

Planning applications

23/04804/HFUL 24 South Road – single storey extension together with internal alterations.

S/1110/15/CONDD Phase 2 Granta Park – Submission of details required by condition 12 (Construction Traffic Management Plan), 18 (Earth Works), 23 (Nest Box check), 26 (Noise Management Plan), 27 (Dust Management Plan), 29 (Piling (Noise and Vibration) and 31 (Site Waste Management Plan) of planning permission S/1110/15/OL.

23/04644/FUL Cricket Pavilion Granta Park – Internal and external refurbishment including the erection of new enclosure for external condenser and furniture store with associated works.

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

District Council decisions

23/04215/CL2PD 15 Mortlock Gardens – Certificate of Lawfulness Under S192 for rear roof extension including rear dormer and rooflight window to front elevation. Granted.

23/04084/FUL 109 High Street – Removal of dropped kerb in front of former garage and reinstatement of raised kerb. Relocation of dropped kerb to better align with driveway. Approved.
23/04009/LBC 109 High Street – Listed Building Consent. Internal and external works to main house, including works to the south gable, old garage and rainwater gutters, and associated re-roofing. Approved.

23/03977/HFUL Hall Farm, The Granary – Single storey front extension, new rear gable window, replacement windows and doors. Approved.

23/03247/FUL 29 South Road – Demolition of the existing outbuilding and former piggery and the erection of a new single-story dwelling, outbuilding with vehicular access. Application withdrawn.

23/03875/FUL The Portway Granta Park – Installation of the introduction of an air handling unit to the rear of Block B. Application withdrawn.

23/03087/FUL Land on the east side of Horsehill House 49A North Road – Erection of a dwelling on former piggery site. Approved.

23/03174/HFUL 86 High Street – Enlargement of previously permitted photovoltaic array on barn roof and listed building consent. Approved.

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 18 March 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

Parking on pavements

Please note that pavements are for the use of pedestrians, wheelchair users, pushchairs and mobility scooters, not cars or bicycles. It's particularly difficult for wheelchair users to squeeze past a parked car taking up space on the pavement.

20mph limit

We are going to apply for 20mph zones for High Street, Church Lane, West Field, Bourn Bridge Road, Ivan Clark's Corner and Church Close. One of the stipulations of our bid is that residents must show their support so please email Sheila Bolden (details below) if you are for (or against) the proposal by the end of this month.

Spring litter pick

A reminder that the first of two village litter picks is on Saturday 20 April between 12 noon and 2pm. We provide the equipment and the hi-vis jacket, plus refreshments.

Warm home discount

The warm home discount scheme provides a discount of £150 off electricity bills (not paid to you direct but applied to your electricity bill). If you've not received a letter and believe you are eligible go to this website: www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme.

Little Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Institute at 7.30pm

Next meeting: 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.sbalden@littleabingtonparishcouncil.org.uk

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

Hildersham News

Another Huge Thank You

We have already thanked our generous villagers for their donation of gifts for refugees and children in care in Cambridgeshire but as mentioned when we first appealed, Granta Park was keen to be involved. After our collections at the Advent Tea Party we took at least 200 bags of gifts to the Park as it had kindly offered to deliver our gifts too. We think the generosity of our two small villages really inspired Granta Park's workforce as the total number of gifts delivered to Cambridgeshire Social Services was a massive 898, which meant that almost 400 bags were made up. We are so happy to think that the warmth of our villages and local business has been spread to those who really need it.

Church Mice!

The Children's Church Council works hard to be environmentally aware and so most of its creative decorations and cards use recycled materials. Therefore, the Christmas tree decorations were beautifully crafted pinecone elves, made of course with a pinecone body, an acorn head and a little red or green felt hat. On Christmas morning we were surprised to discover a ring of pinecones around the base of the tree and lots of little hats still hanging on the branches. We realised there must be some very chubby mice hiding in the church having feasted on the little elves' acorn heads!

Children's Church Council

The children have started planning for the year ahead (still with their environmental hats on) hoping to see visitors to their animal habitats and bird houses as the spring becomes sprightlier. We are hoping to have a drumming workshop and another Bake Off is high on the agenda. A Pilgrimage picnic will involve visiting other churches – and what about another Scootathlon? The children are also keen to be more involved in the church tea parties. Lots of exciting discussion as always.

News from Abington Woods

It is glorious here in the woodland at the moment and a joy to see patches of bulbs starting to poke their heads up through the woodland floor. These bulbs have been planted over the last few years by the groups, students and volunteers who have enjoyed and cared for these beautiful woods. Even overhead, encouraged by the sun, some of the ancient plum trees planted by those who came before us have opened their blossoms and the scent is heavenly. There are daffodils, snowdrops, bluebells and cyclamen reassuring us that winter is passing and the fresh start of spring is on the way.



These trumpets and bells herald an exciting new time for Abington Woods under the stewardship and management of Patchwork Education Village, a Community Interest Company that has at its heart the protection of Abington Woods and its role as a service provider of educational woodland space for the children and adults of the Abingtons and wider Cambridge community. We will always be grateful to the Sturdy family for pulling together and protecting this

woodland from development and looking further back will always honour the heritage and vision of Revd Woods, who wanted to safeguard this land for children from around the world to have somewhere they could be inspired by and connect to our natural British landscape. Now it is time to look forwards and ensure this woodland is safe for generations to come.

This year we will be welcoming back our regular student bodies from Great Abington Primary School, Granta Hive Sixth Form Centre and Landmark International School, as well as maintaining links with the Duke of Edinburgh Programme providers, Papworth Trust and Scouting Communities. We will also continue to keep opportunities for family camping and celebrations of life and death open. We are entering a time where these opportunities to come together in nature are crucially important. They give us a chance to reflect on our differences and celebrate our similarities. This fosters deeper connections between us and the communities we are part of – breeding understanding, tolerance and patience in a society that can too often be polarised, leaving the vulnerable isolated and lonely. No more!

On the first weekend of every month from now until the centenary of Abington Woods (yes – 100 years of offering joy to children and their families) there will be the opportunity for anyone interested in seeing the woodland and finding out how you can contribute to its survival, no matter what your age,



skill set or depth of pocket, to come and experience its peace. The weekend will be dedicated to meaningful work opportunities, dog walkers, human walkers and a chance to engage with our sustainable projects. There will be plenty of opportunities to get involved. Even coming and talking to one of our team helps raise awareness of the need for spaces like this and

spreads understanding of how people can come together to protect and create this sort of provision local to them, across Britain. We face the coming year with renewed energy drive and focus on this aim, with sincere thanks to those who have already stood by our side over the years and look forward to seeing you at the next opportunity – 3–4 February and 2–3 March. Support your local woodland!



Thank you for all the Christmas tree donations. They will provide excellent material for our hedgerow and den building for our students once stripped. With the protection of our few patches of bulbs in mind I wonder if I could ask for further donations? If you have any unwanted hanging baskets we would greatly appreciate them. Once pinned down they provide an indication to our inquisitive students of where to find spring bulbs and also protection from being trampled by our more boisterous guests!

Deborah James, Co-Director, Abington Woods
Photos by Deborah James. Top: Nicola, Co-Director, hard at work. Centre: floodwater in January. Bottom: hanging baskets protecting spring bulbs.

Granta Medical Practices

Appointments update

At Granta, we continue to offer a mixture of face-to-face, telephone and online appointments. I would like to take this opportunity to explain how our appointments system works and what is available to Granta patients.

First, please be assured that no one apart from clinicians makes clinical decisions about your care when you first contact us. Our reception teams have clear criteria, set by GPs, as to what can be put straight on to a clinician's urgent list. However, if they or you are unsure, they will take your details and discuss your concerns with the clinical team and then get back to you.

When ringing for an appointment you will be asked if there is a particular clinician you would like to see, either for continuity of your presenting problem or continuity of overall care. It may be that you don't mind who you see – you just need to speak to someone about your current medical problem.

Please do help our reception team by providing as much information as possible. All information is treated as confidential and will only be used for triage purposes. They are simply trying to make sure you are seen by the right person, in the right place, at the right time.

If you do feel that your problem is not urgent, you will be asked if a routine appointment may be more suitable, or perhaps a long-term medical condition (LTC) appointment, a palliative care appointment, or whether we can help you in any other way.

If your appointment starts with a telephone call then, together with the clinician, it can be decided whether a face-to-face appointment will be the appropriate next step.

Routine appointments are available a few weeks in advance, all pre-bookable via our reception teams and online. New routine appointments are released daily at 8.00am and at 2.00pm to allow for regular availability. If you ring and there is nothing available, our

reception team can send you a link that is valid for seven days (that you can check daily) to pre-book a face-to-face or telephone appointment, so that you do not need to ring back.

Alternatively, if you would prefer, you could use Accurx Patient Triage via our website to have an online consultation with a clinician. We do ask, however, that you only send routine queries as it can take up to 72 hours to respond.

There will always be sickness, annual leave and the perception that clinicians are not seeing patients. However, on average, Granta's doctors and nurses see around 4,000 patients face-to-face per week and consult with another 3,500 via the telephone and online. We continue to try and accommodate all our patients in a way that suits them. Please be assured that we are continuously reviewing and revising patient access.

Sandra East Head of Patient Services

February Church Services (other than the Abingtons and Hildersham)

DATE	9.30am	11.00am	6.00pm
4 February		United Service with Holy Communion <i>Balsham</i>	
11 February	Communion <i>Weston Colville</i> <i>West Wickham</i>	Morning Worship <i>Balsham</i>	Evening Prayer <i>West Wratting</i>
18 February	Communion <i>West Wratting</i> <i>West Wickham</i> Morning Worship <i>Weston Colville</i>	Communion <i>Balsham</i>	
25 February	Communion <i>West Wickham</i> <i>Weston Colville</i> (BCP)	Communion <i>Balsham</i>	

Masses at Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church

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

Monday–Friday	9.30am Holy Mass
Saturday	9.30am Holy Mass
Sunday	8.45am Holy Mass 11.15am Holy Mass
Ash Wednesday, 14 February	9.30am Holy Mass 8.00pm Holy Mass

Church Services for February 2024

<i>DATE</i>	<i>Gt. Abington</i> 	<i>Lt. Abington</i> 	<i>Hildersham</i> 	<i>Readings</i>
4 February	11.00am United Communion at Balsham			Colossians 1.15-206 John 1.1-14
11 February		11.00am Communion	11.00am Communion	2 Kings 2.1-12 Mark 9.2-9
Wednesday 14 February	10.00am Ash Wednesday service at Hildersham			
18 February	11.00am Communion		6.00pm Evening Prayer	Psalms 25.1-9 Mark 1.9-15
25 February	10.00am Creative Church Abington Institute (see page 4)	4.00pm Evening Prayer	11.00am Café Church	Genesis 17.1-7,15-16 Mark 8.31-end

Church Flower Rota

	<i>Gt. Abington</i>	<i>Lt. Abington</i>	<i>Hildersham</i>
4 February	Anne Hall	Mrs Crisp and Mrs Mead	Kirsten Newble
11 February	Anne Hall	Mrs Crisp and Mrs Mead	Kirsten Newble
18 February	No flowers (Lent)		
25 February	No flowers (Lent)		

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