



# The Abingtons and Hildersham News

[www.theabingtons.org.uk](http://www.theabingtons.org.uk)

February 2026



*Photo: David Farrant*

**Sluice Wood on a wintry day in January**

## From the Editor

Last month, full details were provided of a proposal for a substantial new development on land to the north of the villages, between the A1307 (Cambridge Road) and the A11. In brief, the plan is for a town three times the size of Linton, involving high-density housing and the infrastructure needed to support it. On page 8, there is a report of the Q&A session organised by Greater Cambridge Planning (GCP) at the Village Institute on 14 January. This meeting attracted so many that a large number of people could not be admitted. In recognition of this, GCP has organised a second meeting at the Institute on 28 January, while the consultation period remains open until 30 January. Please read the report for details about how to comment on the proposal, should you wish to do so.

Elsewhere this month, there are tributes to much-loved and missed members of the community (pages 5 and 15). There will always be room in the News for these tributes and I would welcome announcements of new arrivals as well – new residents as well as village babies. Please contact me at [news@theabingtons.org.uk](mailto:news@theabingtons.org.uk) if you would like more information about how to submit a notice.

The concerts arranged by the Friends of Hildersham Church continue with an evening of Baroque music on 24 February, once again featuring highly talented performers from prestigious music schools (page 7). Early next month, Love Abington's Spring Event will be a Repair Café. Don't forget to book your request for a repair either via email or by filling in a booking form available at the Village Store – full details on page 17. Meanwhile, local repairers and volunteers will be very welcome on the day (see page 15).

Thank you to David Farrant for our cover photo, which captures the brief spell of snowy weather we enjoyed in January.

Sally Simmons

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All items for the March 2026 edition of *The Abingtons and Hildersham News* should be sent to the editor no later than Sunday 15 February 2026 at [news@theabingtons.org.uk](mailto:news@theabingtons.org.uk).

## From the Seven Churches

February often feels like a turning point. Winter still clings on, yet the days are unmistakably lengthening. Snowdrops push through the cold ground, if they haven't already! Lambing season begins, and there is a sense – however fragile – that spring is on its way.

In the Church, February holds that same sense of transition and invitation. Early in the month we celebrate Candlemas, marking the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple. It is a festival of light. Candles are lit to remind us that light has come into the world – quietly, vulnerably and with hope. Candlemas asks us where we see light today: in kindness offered, in community strengthened, in perseverance through difficult times. Holding on to the fact and knowing that even the smallest flame can make a difference in dark places.

Later in the month comes Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. It is a very different kind of moment, quieter, more reflective. Palm leaf ashes are used to mark the sign of the cross on foreheads, accompanied by words that remind us of our humanity and our need for God. It may sound stark but it is deeply honest. Lent, as always, invites us to pause, to reflect and to ask what really matters within our lives.

Lent can often be misunderstood, seen as a season of gloomy self-denial. In fact, it is about making space – letting go of what distracts or drains us so that something new can grow. Some people give something up; others take something on: more rest time, more prayer, more generosity, more care for neighbours and the environment. At its heart, Lent is a journey towards renewal.

Across our villages, February is a month of quiet faithfulness: schools, shops, cafés, farms, community groups, volunteers and neighbours simply getting on with caring for one another. The Church's seasons mirror this rhythm of everyday life – light offered, honesty faced and hope nurtured.

As we move through February and into Lent, may we each find moments of light, courage for reflection and signs of new life already stirring among us.

Revd Hannah Threlfall

## News from the Pews – Abington and Hildersham

**Hildersham Tea & Cake.** It is an utter joy to hold a monthly Tea & Cake gathering on the third Monday of the month, at Hildersham Village Hall. Please do join us from both villages – 3.00pm–4.30pm. It is a wonderful time to meet familiar and new faces, share homemade cakes and enjoy some relaxed conversation. Families are especially welcome, with toys and crafts available. Upcoming dates are 16 February, 16 March and 20 April 2026.

## Hildersham Church News

### Baroque Concert

Our successful series of concerts continues with students from the Royal College of Music led by Professor Ashley Solomon. See page 7.

### Future Friends Events

Lamb Sunday, 12 April

Everything You Need to Know About the Royal Ballet, an illustrated talk by Sarah Lenton. Monday 27 April

## creative church!

**Sunday 22 February 2026 9.30am at Abington Institute.**



This month we will focus on how Jesus can help to calm times that may feel unsettled and give us peace in times of uncertainty. Please do join Revd Hannah and Rosemary Mead as they lead you through the session – storytelling, song, crafts and friendship. Everyone is very welcome. We will begin with breakfast at 9.30am, ready for a 10.00am start!

## Julie Cooper

Julie Cooper passed away on 18 September at the horribly early age of 61. She had been diagnosed with aggressive brain cancer in January 2025.

Julie moved to the village in December 1999 with her family (myself and two young children, Rob and Sarah – soon joined by Anna). All three of the children went to Abington Primary School and then onto Linton Village College and Hills Road Sixth Form.

From the first months of arriving in Abington, Julie got involved in a wide range of activities in the village, first with the Pre-School, then with the Primary School where she worked as a Teaching Assistant for several years and much later with Love Abington during the pandemic. Through these activities, as well as being a parent of young children, Julie made lots of enduring friendships around the village. More recently she could often be found walking our dog Poppy – walks that occasionally took in a stop at the Three Tuns!

Julie's hallmark was her kindness to others – and her work with children needing additional support at Abington Primary and Linton Village College meant she had an impact on many young lives in the village and wider area.

The whole family were very touched by the messages we received during her illness and subsequently.

Deepest thanks from all of us.

Bill Cooper

## Mary Hall, 7 November 1934–13 December 2026



Many in our villages will remember Mary Hall as someone who lived her life with quiet contentment, deep faith and a generous heart.

Born in 1934 at Dollens Milk Farm in Higher Sydling, Mary grew up surrounded by family and firmly rooted in the land. In 1954 she married Neville, beginning a loving partnership that would shape a full and adventurous life.

Never afraid to take a leap of faith, Mary and Neville moved to Great Abington in 1959 to run their smallholding at 55 North Road, growing salad crops and building a family home, with their sons Graham and Neal, through hard work and determination! As a grandmother, Mary was loving, devoted and joyful – happiest when surrounded by her family, always interested, always encouraging, always smiling.

Mary was devoted to village life, giving her time to the Gardening Club, WI, Tuesday Club, Thursday Lunch Club, Saturday Breakfast Club and church. Known for her legendary chrysanthemums, she was even better known for her kindness, smile and genuine interest in others.

Mary passed away peacefully surrounded by her family. She will be remembered with great affection and gratitude by many.

## Abington Acorns



Abington Acorns is a fun, friendly and inclusive stay-and-play group for little explorers aged 0–5 years, running every Monday during term time.

Pop along and join the fun from 9.15am–11.00am – no need to book, just come and discover our exciting weekly theme! We'll provide a yummy light snack for the children.

Please bring a lidded cup for your own hot drink so you can sit back, relax and have a chat while the little ones play.

We invite you to make a £2 voluntary donation if you're able – this helps us keep the fun going for everyone and is always very much appreciated.

You'll find us in the Abington Annexe building – just look out for our Acorn signs. If you'd like to know more, we'd love to hear from you: tel. 01223 894246, email [abingtonannexeoffice@gmail.com](mailto:abingtonannexeoffice@gmail.com).

## Ukrainian Community in Abington

Tuesday 24 February will be the fourth anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine. Currently, one Ukrainian is living in Abington with a host family and three are living independently. Nineteen Ukrainians who lived in Abington have now returned to Ukraine or are living independently in Cambridgeshire. Many in the UK would like to settle here if possible.

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.

Anton King

## Operation Christmas Child



Thank you to all who filled a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child in 2025. They went to Ukraine, Serbia, Central Asia and Africa among many destinations. Every child who received a box has been blessed by knowing there are people miles away who are thoughtful and generous and that God loves them. Final figures will be available next month. Jane Furlow

## Thank You from Santa and His Elves for Donating to EACH



A massive thank you to everyone from Hildersham, Abington and Linton who came out to see Santa's sleigh pass through our villages on Christmas Eve.

The Elves collected donations for EACH (East Anglian Children's Hospices) and together we raised £667.53.

We have received a letter from EACH expressing their heartfelt thanks for our ongoing support. Your generosity means so much to them and the children, young people in their care and their families. Thank you.

Jeanette Long

## 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, Village Hall (note change of location) 9.40–10.20am  
Next date: **Tuesday 10 February**

West Field, Little Abington 9.40–10.20am  
The Shop, Great Abington 10.30–11.00am  
Magna Close 11.05–11.40am  
Next date: **Tuesday 24 February**

We have a great selection of good quality books for you to choose from. We stock books for all ages of children, non-fiction and all genres of fiction for adults, including a lot of large print and CD format items. We also issue free NHS hearing aid batteries and walking stick ferrules. We sell stamps and have a lot of jigsaws available.

The mobile library is part of Cambridgeshire Libraries so you can use your card on board or we can sign you up. You can return books from other libraries to us and you can return our books elsewhere. You can also reserve items to be collected from us.

Pay us a visit and see what a great resource we are.

## Balsham Singers



We enjoyed a highly successful and packed-out concert on 13 December with not a seat to spare. The raffle was well supported and resulted in £400 being sent to Royal Papworth Charities.

Our members have started tuning up for their next concert on 16 May 2026. Rehearsals are held at Balsham Sports Pavilion on Thursday evenings, 7.30pm–9.30pm. We are always happy to welcome new voices. We do not audition and it is not necessary to read music but just to be keen to sing and to learn. We are particularly hoping to encourage some new members in the lower voices, tenors and basses, so please don't be shy.

Any questions can be addressed to our MD John at [john.clenaghan@sky.com](mailto:john.clenaghan@sky.com).  
Jo Stinton

## A Concert of Baroque Music *Handel and the Italian Connection*

with

Professor Ashley Solomon and students from The Royal College of Music Historical Performance Faculty

***Handel, Scarlatti, Corelli, Castello, Vivaldi***

Holy Trinity Church, Hildersham, CB21 6BZ  
Tuesday 24 February at 7.30pm

This will be a very special evening where Ashley Solomon performs together with a group of his graduate students in a selection of baroque concertos and sonatas. Ashley is a baroque flautist and is a Fellow of both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music where he also has a Personal Chair.



Tickets £15 from eventbrite or at the door. Refreshments included.  
Contact Athene Hunt [huntcam2015@gmail.com](mailto:huntcam2015@gmail.com).  
In support of the Friends of Hildersham Church.

### ***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](http://www.theabingtons.org.uk/news) and follow the link to the pdf for the month you want.

## Grange Farm – Public Meeting Attracts a Full House

Village residents packed the Institute on the evening of 14 January to question representatives of the Greater Cambridge Planning department on their proposal for a 6,000-dwelling settlement on the Grange Farm site, just over the A1307 from Little Abington. Our local councillors John and Henry Batchelor also attended but our MP Pippa Heylings was not able to accept our invitation.

The Institute Main Hall, Terrace and Foyer were all full to permitted capacity and unfortunately some 80 residents had to be turned away. (Apologies that the PA system did not reach the Terrace and Foyer adequately.) Because so many could not be admitted, Greater Cambridge Planning booked the Village Institute for a second similar public meeting (6.30pm on 28 January) before the end of the consultation period.

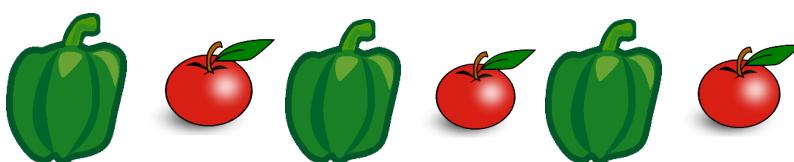
The meeting began with a presentation by Jonathan Dixon, Planning Policy Manager, on the rationale for the Grange Farm scheme, then he and Stephen Kelly, Director for Planning, responded to questions. Thanks are due to a great effort by Village Consultation, a group of residents, who had invited pre-submission of questions that they consolidated and prioritised to ensure that key questions were asked first under a series of headings. These were followed by further questions from the audience.

The Planners were left in no doubt that the audience was united in opposition to the scheme and unconvinced by the reasons given for it. There were also widespread doubts expressed regarding the proposed solutions to a range of relevant issues – preserving the landscape and environment; water, sewage and drainage; protecting the chalk aquifer and the river Granta; and transport and traffic.

All residents are urged to submit their individual comments to the consultation on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website (Reference ‘Policy S/GF: Land adjacent to A11 and A1307 at Grange Farm’), which is open until 5.00pm on 30 January. This is the best and official way to lodge a comment, but if this proves too daunting, an alternative is via [localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org).

At the close of the meeting Tony Orgee, Chair, Great Abington Parish Council, outlined the further stages of the planning process.

Richard Smith, Vice-Chair, Little Abington Parish Council



### Abington Lunch Thursday 26 February 2026

Fruit juice

Pork dish

Seasonal vegetables

Brioche bread and butter pudding

Tea or coffee

Please book your meal on 01223 891464 **before noon** on Tuesday 24

February. Leave your name and telephone number with your message.

Don't forget to tell us if you need a special diet. Doors open at **12.45pm**.

Please note that the lunch is open to **all Abington and Hildersham residents**.

**Cost £5.**

*Guests only by special arrangement and if there is space.*

**Next lunch: Thursday 26 March 2026.**

# District and County Councillors' Reports January 2026

## Local Government Reorganisation

Following the submission to central government by local authorities in Cambridgeshire of their preferred geographic splits of what new unitary authorities would look like, we now wait until the government has digested this information. We will likely be asked for further thoughts, via a consultation, once government has whittled the possibilities down to what they think are the most efficient/realistic. More to follow in the coming months.

## Kingsway Solar

Thank you to all those who engaged with the public consultation last year. It was very important to get people's comments into Kingsway, as these will all be sent to the planning inspector who will be making the decision on this proposal.

A small update on national planning policy, which is relevant to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Proposals (NSIPs), of which the Kingsway Solar Farm is one. Recently, the government has changed planning laws to make the NSIP process quicker. Whether this is a good thing or not has yet to be seen but could be interpreted as speeding up delivery at the expense of scrutiny. The main changes are:

- Accelerating infrastructure, in particular NSIPs.
- Limiting the number of attempts at legal challenge against government decisions on major infrastructure projects.
- Development corporations: will be focused on new towns and large-scale development. The key element to note is that the Act gives them transport powers.
- Strategic planning: Spatial Development Strategies (SDS) become a statutory requirement for combined authorities/mayoral strategic authorities.
- A more strategic approach to nature recovery.
- Changes to the compulsory purchase order (CPO) process and land compensation rules to enable more effective land assembly through public sector-led schemes.

## Weekly Food Waste Collection

The changes to how our food waste will be collected will be implemented this year. Every household will receive a separate food caddy for all their food waste, which will be collected by the District Council in the same way that our bins currently are.

This change has been made in response to DEFRA changing the law around how food can be disposed of, so locally we need to collect it separately from the waste in other bins, specifically the green bin. Full details at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/news/greater-cambridge-councils-set-out-arrangements-for-new-weekly-food-waste-collections>.

## Happy New Year

Happy New Year to all of you. We hope you all had a restful Christmas period and are looking forward to working with you in 2026.

## Contact details

District Council – John Batchelor – [johndbatchelor23@gmail.com](mailto:johndbatchelor23@gmail.com)

District and County Council – Henry Batchelor – [henrybatchelor89@gmail.com](mailto:henrybatchelor89@gmail.com)

## Diary for February 2026

Date		Venue: Abington Institute unless stated	Time	Page
Mon	2	<b>Abington Acorns</b> – Abington Annexe <b>Physio Pilates</b>	9.15am 9.30am	12 11
Tue	3	<b>Art Group</b> <b>Tuesday Club</b> <b>Short Tennis</b> – Linton Sports Hall <b>Evening Pilates</b>	10.00am 2.00pm 3.00pm 7.00pm	19 12 13 13
Wed	4	<b>Yoga</b> <b>Line Dancing</b>	9.30am 1.00pm	11 11
Thu	5	<b>Walking Group</b> <b>Granta Vale Harmony</b>	10.00am 7.30pm	12 11
Fri	6	<b>Pilates/Aerobics</b>	9.30am	11
Mon	9	<b>Abington Acorns</b> – Abington Annexe <b>Physio Pilates</b> <b>Abington and Hildersham WI</b>	9.15am 9.30am 7.30pm	12 11 13
Tue	10	<b>Mobile Library, Hildersham</b> <b>Art Group</b> <b>Short Tennis</b> – Linton Sports Hall <b>Evening Pilates</b> <b>Reading Group</b> – Lisa Pechey	9.40am 10.00am 3.00pm 7.00pm 7.30pm	6 19 13 11 13
Wed	11	<b>Yoga</b> <b>Line Dancing</b>	9.30am 1.00pm	11 11
Thu	12	<b>Granta Vale Harmony</b>	7.30pm	11
Fri	13	<b>Pilates/Aerobics</b>	9.30am	11
Mon	16	<b>Abington Acorns</b> – Abington Annexe <b>Tea &amp; Cake Afternoon</b> – Hildersham Village Hall	9.15am 3.00pm	12 4
Tue	17	<b>Art Group</b> <b>Tuesday Club</b> – lunch at the Three Tuns <b>Short Tennis</b> – Linton Sports Hall <b>Evening Pilates</b>	10.00am TBC 3.00pm 7.00pm	19 12 13 11
Wed	18	<b>Yoga</b> <b>The Abington Group</b>	9.30am 7.00pm	11 12
Thu	19	<b>Craft Group</b> <b>Granta Vale Harmony</b>	1.30pm 7.30pm	12 11
Fri	20	<b>Pilates/Aerobics</b>	9.30am	11
Sat	21	<b>Walking Group</b>	10.00am	12
Sun	22	<b>Creative Church</b>	9.30am	4
Mon	23	<b>Physio Pilates</b>	9.30am	11
Tue	24	<b>Mobile Library, The Abingtons</b> <b>Art Group</b> <b>Short Tennis</b> – Linton Sports Hall <b>Evening Pilates</b> <b>Scrabble Club</b> <b>Baroque Concert</b> – Holy Trinity Church, Hildersham	9.40am 10.00am 3.00pm 7.00pm 7.00pm 7.30pm	6 19 13 11 12 7
Wed	25	<b>Yoga</b> <b>Line Dancing</b>	9.30am 1.00pm	11 11
Thu	26	<b>Abington Lunch</b> <b>Granta Vale Harmony</b>	12.45pm 7.30pm	8 11
Fri	27	<b>Pilates/Aerobics</b>	9.30am	11

		<b>Film Nights</b> – doors open 7.00pm	7.30pm	13
Sat	28	<b>Film Nights Children's Matinée</b> – doors open 2.00pm	2.00pm	13
		<b>History of Weston Colville Talk</b> – St Mary's Church, Weston Colville	6.30pm	16

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](mailto:institute@theabingtons.org.uk).

**Jeremiah's Café: Opening times in February 2026**

Thursday lunchtime 12.00 noon–2.00pm (5, 12, 19, **26 – Lunch**)

Saturday mornings 10.00am–12 noon (7, 14, 21, 28)

**Contacts for Café:** [helenstchowe@btinternet.com](mailto:helenstchowe@btinternet.com) and [helen.rogers.uk@gmail.com](mailto:helen.rogers.uk@gmail.com)

**Wheelie bin dates for February 2026 (Abingtons and Hildersham)**

Wed 4	Wed 11	Wed 18	Wed 25
Blue/Green	Black	Blue	Black

**Yoga – Wednesdays, 9.30am**

Contact Joan 890 629 or email [joangraham72@gmail.com](mailto:joangraham72@gmail.com) if you would like to drop in.

**Aerobics and Pilates – Fridays (Aerobics 9.30am; Pilates 10.30am & 11.45am).**

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. Aerobics is pay as you go; Pilates please book for five weeks.

Contact Disa Bennett on 07798 754 029 or [www.zumbaandpilatescambridge.com](http://www.zumbaandpilatescambridge.com).

**Evening Pilates**

There are two classes on Tuesdays at 7.00pm and 8.15pm in the Village Institute. All equipment provided. Contact Liz Kirk on 07903 079853 to book your place (£9 per session).

**Physio-led Face to Face Pilates – Mondays 9.30am–12.40pm**

I am excited to announce my six-week Bone Health Pilates class commencing on Monday 5 January 2026 to 9 February, 11.45am to 12.45pm at the Abington Village Institute. It is specifically designed to support those with osteoporosis or osteopenia or low bone density, and anyone looking to improve their strength, balance and posture. Christiana Heinz, [cambridgepilates@outlook.com](mailto:cambridgepilates@outlook.com).

**Line Dancing – Wednesdays 1.00pm–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](mailto:lisa.lmsd@gmail.com) or tel. 07958 788 292.

**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](mailto:haverhi11@talktalk.net).

## Abington Acorns



This welcoming group runs every Monday, 9.15am–11.00am, during term time for children aged 0–5 years. We are located in the Abington Annexe building, accessible via the garden gate of the preschool, to the right of the Primary School playground. £3 per family, first visit free. No need to book. Light snack and drinks provided. Please bring a lidded cup for adult beverages. May get messy but aprons are available. Tel. 01223 894246 or email [abingtonannexeoffice@gmail.com](mailto:abingtonannexeoffice@gmail.com) for information.

## The Tuesday Club

This month's events are as follows:

3 February: a beetle drive.

17 February: celebrating the Chinese New Year with lunch at the Three Tuns.

Membership renewal (£5) will be due from January. All are welcome at our meetings and the first attendance is free. For more information please contact Jenny Milns (tel. 07753837884).

## Abington Walking Group



We've had a gentle start to 2026. The first walk of the year was on Saturday 24 January. The February dates will be Thursday 5th and Saturday 21st. The group sets off from the Abington Institute at 10.00am in shared cars. Well-behaved dogs are welcome. £1 per person.

Our WhatsApp Group provides information about the planned route a few days ahead. We would be delighted if members are able to share and guide the group on favourite routes. For more information contact Jeff, [j\\_dowling@btinternet.com](mailto:j_dowling@btinternet.com) or Genevieve, [gdalton365@gmail.com](mailto:gdalton365@gmail.com). Include your mobile number so that we can add you to Walking Group messages. We can also send you a list of 2026 planned walking dates.

## Abington Craft Group

The next Craft Group meets on Thursday 19 February. Meetings are held in the Terrace in Abington Institute, on the third Thursday of the month, 1.30pm–4.30pm. Light refreshments available. £3 per session. Looking forward into 2026, I'd like to organise a foil embossing workshop with Lizzie Aunt, Tales from the Fen. More details to follow. If you are interested, please email, voice message or text me, Glynis Brookman at [glynis.brookman@btinternet.com](mailto:glynis.brookman@btinternet.com), tel. 07970 614 194.

## The Abington Group (Ladies)

The Abington Group will meet on Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Village Institute. Amaris Victory will give a talk entitled 'Life in a 21st Century Army'. Lieutenant-Colonel Amaris Victory has been a member of the United States of American Army for the past 22 years. She is currently stationed in South Korea and will speak about her experience in the military.

Visitors pay £3 including refreshments. For more information about our programme please email [fredaorgee@gmail.com](mailto:fredaorgee@gmail.com) Freda Orgee, Coordinator

## Scrabble Club

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month and new members are very welcome. Next meeting: 24 February 2026. Sheena Fraser

## Abington & Hildersham Women's Institute

Our New Year Meeting began with a talk about a little-known charity, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, by Angela Saunders, who became deaf at the age of five, and her lovely Labrador, Dory. The charity was set up by Ben Fogle's father in 1982. Hearing loss at any age can lead to anxiety, depression and isolation, affecting every aspect of someone's life, from their independence and relationships to their sense of safety and mental health. Puppies (usually Labradors, Cocker Spaniels or Cockerpoos) are specially trained up to the age of two to recognise and alert their handlers to everyday sounds (phones, alarms, kettles, bells, machinery) by nudging them. Hearing dogs meet their potential deaf owner for a week at the training centre and if all goes well, they support each other until they retire aged 11. The dogs give their owners not only assistance but also confidence and companionship and can be recognised in the street by their burgundy jackets. Angela taught us the signing alphabet and urged us to seek help for any hearing loss – modern aids cannot cure deafness but can make life much more enjoyable.

Following refreshments, we discussed the future of our WI. After more years than I can remember, the current long-serving committee members will resign at the AGM in March. If no-one else is elected, Abington & Hildersham WI will be suspended and sadly we will cease to meet.

Next meeting: Monday 9 February 7.30pm in the Village Institute. Joan Graham will lead us in a session of chair yoga. Visitors and new members always welcome.

Marilyn Broadhurst

## Film Nights

Film Nights at the Abington Institute, Friday 27 February, 7.30pm (doors 7.00pm); Saturday 28 February, Children's Matinée, 2.00pm.

For more information, please visit <http://www.theabingtons.org.uk/> where you can subscribe to Film Nights updates.

## Reading Group

10 February	<i>The High House</i> Jessie Greengrass	Lisa Pechey
10 March	<i>Theo of Golden</i> Allen Levi	Sue Batty
14 April	<i>Guilty by Definition</i> Susie Dent	Sylvia Gilmour

We meet at 7.30pm. Please confirm attendance to the host and copy me in. Valerie Hefford

## Short Tennis

We are a small group (from Abington and Linton) who play short tennis (indoors with a soft sponge ball but otherwise like tennis) on Tuesday afternoons, 3.00pm–4.00pm at Linton Sports hall.

If this clicks with you and you think that you might give it a go, please get in touch. We are a friendly bunch having some exercise but also lots of laughs along the way. We play continuously throughout the year and have a WhatsApp group to check who is free each week. We cancel if there are not enough players – hence we are looking for new people to join. The cost is £9 per court divided by the number playing – paid on the day. All you need are soft shoes/trainers and jogging bottoms/leggings with t shirt/fleece – and a racket. Please contact Jane Furlow for more information, tel. 07745046921

# Great Abington Parish Council – An Active Council

## Potholes

Several residents have reported damage to their vehicle caused by potholes. If your vehicle has been damaged, you may be entitled to make a claim to recover the cost of repair. For more information on how to do this, follow the link:  
<https://highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>.

## 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. 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 the applications, go to:  
<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/view-or-comment-on-a-planning-application/>

## Planning applications

21/03822/CONDO – Site 1 Granta Park. Submission of details required by conditions 12 (BRE issued Design Stage Certificate) and 23 (BRE issued post Construction Certificate) of planning permission 21/03822/FUL.

24/03031/CONDB – Land ad.j 39 South Road. Submission of details required by condition 5 (Surface and Foul Water), 8 (Ecological enhancement) and 12 (water efficiency consumption) of planning permission 24/03031/FUL.

25/04658/FUL – 88 High Street. Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of a single storey dwelling.

25/04674/S73 – 55 North Road. S73 to vary condition 2 (Approved plans) of planning permission 24/03023/FUL (Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and erection of self/custom build replacement dwelling including the temporary setting of a caravan and formation of a new access) to increase the footprint of the proposed dwellinghouse.

## District Council decisions

25/03922/FUL – Land adjacent to 2 Pampisford Road. Erection of a single storey self-build/custom building dwelling. Approved.

25/03637/FUL – Abington Lodge, 63 High Street. Installation of Photovoltaic Panels, an Inverter and associated infrastructure. Approved.

25/03315/OUT – Land west of Moorefield Close off Pampisford Road. Outline Planning Application for residential development of up to 40 dwellings and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved except for access. Refused.

## Great Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Village Institute

**Tony Orgee (Chairman)** [tonyorgee@gmail.com](mailto: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 meetings:** Monday 16 March 2026, 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](mailto:harper802@btinternet.com) (892 000).

# Little Abington Parish Council

## Sheila Bolden

Sheila, Chair of the Parish Council, died on 13 January after a short illness. She joined the Parish Council in 2019, immediately taking on the role of Chair. She was quickly on first-name terms with highways, planning and grants officers, working hard on our behalf while running her own import company. Only in December she attended a planning meeting on the Grange Farm site development. We are all deeply saddened by her death, thankful for her many contributions to the village and send our condolences to her friends and family.

## Grange Farm public meeting

Apologies to all those who could not be admitted into the building on 14 January at the Institute. The fire limit allowed a maximum of 160 people, leaving about 80 unfortunately turned away. A report of the meeting is on page 8.

## New food waste caddies

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste is rolling out a new food waste collection. Households will be notified when food caddies will be delivered – one for the kitchen and the other to be placed outside each week with the bin. The new service is part of national legislation to collect food waste separately, aims to boost recycling rates and reduce the amount of food that ends up in landfill.

## Salting icy roads

When roads are icy, Parish Councillors spread salt/grit from the salt bins on potentially dangerous corners and pavements such as Church Lane and at the turn into Bourn Bridge Road. Please feel free to spread some salt yourselves (but not on your driveways).

### Little Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Institute at 7.30pm

Next Meeting: Monday 23 March 2026

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.

Our email address:

Jessica Ashbridge (Clerk): [clerk@littleabington-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@littleabington-pc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.littleabington-pc.gov.uk](http://www.littleabington-pc.gov.uk)



## Calling all repairers and volunteers to support the Repair Café

By popular demand, the Repair Café is returning to Abington on 7 March, hosted by Love Abington and supported by Cambridge Carbon Footprint (see page 17). Do you have practical skills that you love to use repairing household items? We would like to invite our local repairers to join us. You may be able to help with electrical items, computers, simple sewing repairs, changing batteries in watches or toys, sharpening garden tools or bike repairs. Perhaps you would like to volunteer to set up the Repair Café or offer refreshments to our repairers? A willingness to lend a hand on the day would be hugely appreciated. If you would like to volunteer as a repairer or a helper, please contact [loveabington1@gmail.com](mailto:loveabington1@gmail.com).

# **Hildersham Parish Council**

## **Meeting held on 13 January 2026**

The Council has made another bid for funding to improve the approach to the hazardous Back Road crossroads. David Mercer was thanked for his persistence in trying to get funding for these much-needed changes.

County and District Councillors, Henry and John Batchelor, explained that the new unitary authority was scheduled to be in place by April 2028. The government would decide on the structure of the new authority and consult on it locally with the aim of making a final decision in July 2026. Elections are currently planned to take place in May 2026 and in 2027.

The proposed Grange Farm Settlement (for 6,000 homes), located near the A11 roundabout and opposite Little Abington, has been included in the Draft Local Plan. A public meeting, attended by representatives of the Planning Department, was held on 14 January.

The Council selected a new grass contractor to cut the grass in 2026, having received a positive reference from a local parish council that has used them for years. The grass cutting for 2026 should be more satisfactory than last year.

The council has ordered a commemorative blossom tree and plaque to honour the community volunteers and remember those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. A day of national reflection will take place on Sunday 8 March. The tree is to be planted in the play area around the same time.

The Recreation Ground Trust and Field Garden Trust meetings are held after each Parish Council meeting. The land previously administered by the Parish Council, including the allotments, the Recreation Ground, North and South Holding are managed by the Trust.

If you notice a fault with the highways, such as potholes, you can report them by going to <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults>.

The next meeting of Hildersham Parish Council will be on Tuesday 10 March in Hildersham Village Hall. Information is on the Parish Council's website: <https://hildershamparishcouncil.org.uk>.

## **A Brief History of Weston Colville, Its Church and People by Tim Cockerill**

**6.30–7.30pm, Saturday, 28 February 2026  
St Mary's Church, Weston Colville**

This talk by Tim Cockerill (a longstanding resident of Weston Colville and a keen researcher into its history over many years) will be interspersed with clips from a recently recorded film of an interview with him in the church. There will also be an illustrated booklet (in return for small donations) to take away and read at your leisure. The event will otherwise be free. There will be refreshments and time for informal questions afterwards.

LOVE ABINGTON  
**SPRING EVENT**



# Repair Café



*Matching experienced repairers with people who need stuff fixed*

We will help with jewellery, clothes and fabric, electrical and electronic devices and other items.

ABINGTON VILLAGE INSTITUTE  
High Street CB21 6AE

**SATURDAY 7 MARCH 2026**

**10.00am – 1.00pm**

The cafe will be open for refreshments.

Booking is recommended to secure your timed slot. For more details and to book an item for repair, please email  
**loveabington1@gmail.com**

Booking forms will also be available in Abington Post Office stores from Saturday 24 January.



## February Church Services

(other than the Abingtons and Hildersham)

DATE	9.30am	11.00am	6.00pm
1 February		United Communion <i>Balsham</i>	Candlemas Service <i>Weston Colville</i>
8 February	Communion <i>West Wickham</i> Communion <i>West Wrating</i>	Communion <i>Balsham</i>	Taizé Service <i>Weston Colville</i>
15 February	Communion <i>West Wickham</i> Communion <i>West Wrating</i>	Morning Worship and Baptism <i>Balsham</i>	
18 February (Ash Wednesday)	Communion <i>Balsham</i>		
22 February	Morning Worship <i>West Wickham</i> Communion <i>Weston Colville</i>	Morning Worship <i>Balsham</i>	

Regular midweek services: Morning Prayer, 8.45am, every Friday, Weston Colville

## Masses at Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church

135 High Street, Sawston CB22 3HJ, [www.ololsawston.org.uk](http://www.ololsawston.org.uk)

Monday, Wednesday–Saturday Wednesday 18 February (Ash Wednesday) All Fridays in Lent, starting on 20 February, except Good Friday	9.30am Holy Mass Holy Mass 9.30am and 6.30pm 3.00pm Stations of the Cross
Tuesday	7.00pm Holy Mass
Sunday	8.45am and 11.15am Holy Mass

## A Poem for February

### Because nobody mentioned Valentine's Day

Not a lot to say for February.

A nasty little month.

Bleak. Wet. Dark (still).

Neither one thing

Nor the other

Just taking up space

Between seasons

With the usual clothing dilemmas.

But mercifully short

And in the middle

A glowing heart

For those inclined to indulge themselves and others.

# Church Services for February 2026

DATE	Gt Abington	Lt Abington	Hildersham	Readings
1 February	11.00am United Service at Balsham			Psalm 24 Luke 2.22–40
8 February	11.00am Communion			Romans 8.18–25 Matthew 6.25–end
15 February		11.00am Communion	6.00pm Taizé Service	Exodus 24.12–end Matthew 17.1–9
18 February (Ash Wednesday)			7.30pm Communion	
22 February		4.00pm Evening Prayer	11.00am Communion (BPC)	Genesis 2.15–17; 3.1–7 Matthew 4.1–11

**Regular midweek services:** Silent Space followed by Compline, 7.00pm, every Tuesday at Hildersham

**Creative Church:** 9.30am, Sunday 22 February, Abington Institute

## Church Flower Rota

	Gt Abington	Lt Abington	Hildersham
1 February	Anne Hall	Mrs Crisp and Mrs Mead	Mrs Newble
8 February	Anne Hall	Mrs Crisp and Mrs Mead	Mrs Newble
15 February	Patsy Randall	Mrs Miles and Mrs Gilmour	Mrs Newble
22 February	LENT – no flowers		

## Churchwardens

Great and Little Abington	Graham Ross	36 Brinkman Road, Linton	07852 528 693
Hildersham	Keith Day	Fourwinds, Linton Road, Hildersham	891 527

## Assistant Churchwardens

Great Abington	Patsy Randall	77 High Street, Great Abington	07765 345 714
Little Abington	Mary Miles	36 Church Lane, Little Abington	891 083

	Marilyn Broadhurst	34 West Field, Little Abington	893 214
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