

Grafham Gossip



Issue 177 Deadline: by 09.00am on 15th January



Editors' note...

Yes, Christmas is coming! Why don't we ever get used to the way it slowly creeps up on us, then suddenly it's nearly here?

In and around Grafham, we look forward to fun events, like Curry and Carols and Christmas services, see pages 1, 2 and Mike's piece on page 7; the Travelling Nativity starts on 1st, see page 5; there's a Christmas market in the village hall on 7th, see page 8; Election Hustings take place on 8th in Brampton, see the notice on page 10; Mike Dilger is talking about his travels in the Tropics on 11th, see page 12; and on 31st December, New Year Celebrations will be in full swing at the pub, see page 8!

There's lots to read in this combined December/January issue, with too many 'must reads' for them all to be mentioned here, including the mulled wine recipe on page 7, the article on spiders from Greg Belcher on page 9, the conservation award talked about on page 11... so you must take a break from your Christmas preparations to have a browse through and discover them for yourself.

Please send your news, views, photos, recipes and gossip in good time for the next deadline 9am on 15th January, 2020.

Have a lovely Christmas and New Year!

Editors, editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

General Election Hustings Brampton Church

3pm on Sunday 8th December

Doors open 2.30

Find more details on page 10

Travelling Nativity Box

Grafham's new Nativity set will be travelling round the village again this year, starting out on **Sunday 1st December**. Read all about it on page 5 to find out what's included in the box and how to host it for a day.



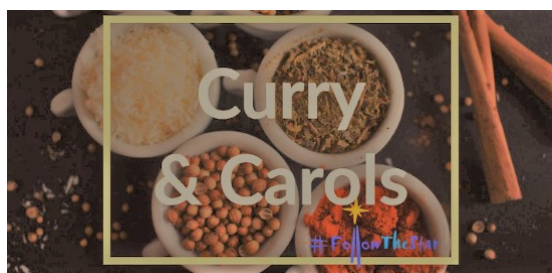
Grafham's Christmas Market

7th December 1-5pm in the village hall

New Year's Eve Celebrations in the Grafham Trout

Open 5.00pm - 12.30am, children's disco 5.30 - 7.00pm,
8.00 till late music and 2020 countdown

For more details see the Pub notices on page 8



An evening of Christmas Carols and curry
at the Cinnamon in Grafham

£15/head for a buffet meal

Between courses we'll sing some Christmas
carols together and enjoy festive cheer

Feel free to come along as a group or
on your own

Please call:

The Cinnamon 01480 811316 to book in
for Curry and Carols on
Wednesday 18th December at 7.30pm
<http://cinnamonhuntingdon.co.uk/>


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Grafham All Saints Services

Every Wednesday morning 09.00 - 09.30 Morning Prayer – a short service open to all.

Mid-week Communion services are on Thursdays at 10.00 roughly once a month. (An informal midweek service of Holy Communion with time for prayer and sharing from the Bible.) No service in December.

24th November (4th Sunday) 10.30 All Together with Holy Communion
 24th November (4th Sunday) 19.00 Taizé service with music and candles 

1st December (1st Sunday) 10.30 Family Service Lay-led - Advent Sunday
 15th December (2nd Sunday) 16.00 Carol Service - Followed by cake and mulled wine
 18th December (Wednesday) 19.30 Curry and Carols at the Cinnamon
 24th December (Tuesday) 15.00 Crib Service
 24th December (Tuesday) 23.30 Midnight Communion in Ellington led by Jonathan Young
 25th December (Wednesday) 10.30 Christmas Day Holy Communion

5th January (1st Sunday) 10.30 Family Service lay led
 16th January (Thursday) 10.00 Midweek Communion
 26th January (4th Sunday) 19.00 Taizé service with music and candles 



All Christmas Events and Services for Grafham, Ellington and Brampton can be found by visiting <https://eastleightonstone.com> and clicking on Christmas. For normal services click on Calendar.

Contacting the Clergy

Revd Jason Taylor (Rector) Rectory, 15 Church Rd, Brampton PE28 4PF revjasontaylor@gmail.com 07807 118070

Mike Bigg (Curate) mike@eastleightonstone.com 07380 809377

View from the Pew (Behind the scenes at Grafham Church)



As we look towards the end of the year and onward into 2020 it is time to reflect on what has been happening at Grafham Church. We have certainly increased the number of services held each month. As well as our first Sunday and our quarterly All Together services we now have monthly mid-week communions and monthly Taizé services. We also continue our Wednesday morning prayers led by Mike. This is not just a time to read the bible and pray but a time for meeting, talking and companionship to share troubles and joys.

Our Little Fishes group for mums and tots is held weekly in the village hall. Three kind ladies, Jane, Jean and Jill run this as an introduction for children to bible stories and the Christian faith.

The first Sunday of the month services require careful planning and we have a small team, Jill, Hazel, Heather and Rob who meet each month and who take it in turns to lead the service, give a talk or prepare the prayers. Jill has been instrumental in bringing Taizé services to Grafham and these have been well received. The serenity of this service with the subdued lighting, candles and music have been a joy to the recipients. Being a lady of many talents Jill, as you know, organises the Flower Festival and has lately completely autumn-cleaned the tower - up and down all those steps!

In fact we have many people behind the scenes who give their time to our church in many different ways and to whom we are all extremely grateful. Diana looks after our rota of keyholders who unlock and lock the church daily, enabling our many visitors to look around, write in our visitors' book and browse the bookshelves in the porch. Diana also rings the bell for us at services and takes care of money received from offertory and donations. Of interest is that one of our bells - the treble - recently needed re-

placement of the headstock (the piece of wood the bell hangs from). This was commissioned by Huntingdon Bell Preservation and fitted by one of their members - Geoff Burn from Molesworth. All of the work is done free of charge, we just paid for the headstock.

Heather organises the cleaning rota and we are indebted to those who come in to dust, vacuum and polish. Pat and Frances make delicious cakes for our first Sunday services and also provide cake and mulled wine for the Carol Service which we are soon to enjoy. Diana also provides coffee and cake for the churchyard maintenance group when they are working. Hazel and Jill both display their cake making skills at mid-week communions and All Together services.

Hazel organises the flower rota, arranging for flowers on the altar and font throughout the year. We are thankful to those ladies who donate and arrange flowers for us, making the church welcoming for us all. Hazel is available for those who wish to have the church decorated for their wedding. Hazel and Jill together make sure the church is decorated for all the Christian festivals, Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

The re-wilding of our churchyard has been a focus for recent months. As you will have read we have been busy maintaining the area for the benefit of wildlife. At the suggestion of Bishop Stephen of Ely we have applied for the Conservation Churchyard Award Scheme 'Caring for God's acre' which aims to increase the wildlife in churchyards. Debbie has taken on this task with gusto and we've just had a visit from a conservationist involved in the scheme who tells us we are in the running for a Bronze award. Debbie has it in her sights for us to upgrade ourselves to a Silver! Watch this space!

Gordon has been joined by Andy recently to look after the mowing, but some areas of grass are to be left to grow to protect and preserve insect life which overwinter at ground

Continued on page 3

PARISH NEWS November 2019

The November meeting was held on 12th November and was attended by several residents.

The group for 'Making the Change in Grafham' attended and provided information on their plans for the planting of wild flowers in Grafham. In short, it involves cultivating an area at the far end of the sports field. The intention is to support the wildlife corridor running from Brampton to Grafham Woods. The Parish Council discussed this proposal and approved it with the following caveats:

- The planted area must not intrude onto the football pitch or cricket boundary (albeit neither are currently used); there must be a 1m gap (minimum). The boundary lines are probably not currently visible. If so, the PC will get the white lines repainted.
- For grass-cutting, the boundary of the wildflower area will be defined as 1m from the marked boundary lines. Marker posts will not be allowed in case of injury.

There also a proposal for wild flower planting in Meadowground which has different issues. The first being that this land is not owned by the Parish Council and approval to plant here would be subject to approval from the District Council, the residents of Meadowground and those whose properties border the land. The Parish Council is prepared to support the proposal, again subject to certain conditions.

Some residents of Haycraft Close attended to make their concerns known about the condition of trees bordering the playing field and their properties. The Council acknowledges their responsibilities in the managing these trees and agreed to appoint an arboriculturist to advise on the removal/management of certain trees. Once this advice is received, the Council will arrange for

Grafham Parish Council You may contact your parish councillors through the parish clerk or directly.

Philip Allingham Chairman 01480 811516 P.Allingham@grafhampc.org **David Russell** D.Russell@grafhampc.org
Ian Gardener Vice Chair 01480 812821 I.Gardener@grafhampc.org **Alastair Watson** A.Watson@grafhampc.org
Roy Harold R.Harold@grafhampc.org **Jo Dunn** J.Dunn@grafhampc.org **Michael Pople** M.Pople@grafhampc.org

a tree surgeon to act on the advice given which may result in the removal of some trees and the reduction of others.



The overhanging hedges and trees along the Brampton lane are slowly coming under control. The Parish Council hopes that the District Council enforcement officer will be able to bring some influence to bear on the cutting back of areas so far untouched. The hedges on the lane alongside the pub and shop are the responsibility of the Parish Council and as such, arrangements will be put in place to keep them under control.

The Council approved the implementation of an Environment Policy and adopted updates to its other policies on Safeguarding Children, Equality of Opportunity and its Code of Conduct. All council policies are available for you to view on application, but it is expected that these policies will be available to view on the village website in due course.

The Neighbourhood Plan team has held a workshop to get an idea of the issues and opportunities for a two - village survey. The survey will go to all residents once the questions are agreed. Further updates on this are expected in December.

The Council signed and approved the grant application to Amey PLC (formerly Amey Roadstone Construction) for funds to provide double glazing, solar panels and LED lighting to the village hall.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10th December 2019. As usual, it will be at the village hall at 7.30pm. It would be great to see you there.

Margaret Life, Parish Clerk
 07780 119311 Clerk@grafhampc.org

Grafham's County Councillor



Peter Downes
 07765 833486
peter.downes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Grafham's District Councillor



Darren Tysoe 01480 388310
darren.tysoe@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
 Grove Cottage, Malting Lane, Ellington, PE28 0AA
 Follow me on Twitter [@darrentysoe](https://twitter.com/darrentysoe)
 Receive my updates on Facebook
www.facebook.com/cllrdmtysoe

View from the Pew Continued from page 2

level. These areas will then be cut on a rotational basis.

After leaf fall Gordon will venture up a ladder to clear our gutters. He also takes care of the books in the porch, keeping them looking tidy and taking any we cannot sell to the charity shops.

Last but not least we have our musicians to thank: John,

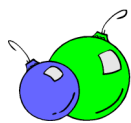
Kate, Sally, Mary and another "new" Sally who provide us with accompaniment to our hymns and make our services so joyful.

As we approach the Christmas festivities, our services are advertised at the top of page 2. Do not forget 'Curry and Carols' at the Cinnamon on 18th December at 7.30 pm.

We wish you all a very joyful Christmas and a peaceful and healthy new year!



Thank you very much to everyone who has helped us supply and distribute the Grafham Gossip to every house in the village throughout the year.



We wish you and all our readers a happy, peaceful Christmas and New Year!

Ed

Hunts Community Cancer Network (HCCN) hold a weekly support group
Ellington Holistic Drop In
 at Ellington Village Hall
 Every Tuesday 10am until 2pm



To find out more contact Annie by phone 01234 709836 or email annie@hccnthecharity.org

Good quality paperback books in clean condition

We love to receive your paperback books to stock our church bookstall. Please leave them in the church porch.

Yes ✓

- Paperback books in good condition ✓



No X

- Hardbacks x
- Manuals x
- Magazines x
- Encyclopaedias x
- Other items x

The book stall is a fantastic fund-raiser for our village church, but we've found that we can sell only good quality, clean paperbacks and find it difficult to lift,

Thank you for your continued support!

Send your news, views, photos and gossip to editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Parish of East Leightonstone

To join the mailing list and receive the regular newsletter visit

<http://www.eastleightonstone.com> and click News



Babysitters

Bryony 22 yrs **812354** experienced with newborn to 14yrs
Mya 16 yrs **819326** **Nicci** 17 yrs **811279**



Playtimes Pre-school

Ferriman Road, Spaldwick PE28 0TQ
 Tel: 01480 890077 www.playtimesplaygroup.co.uk

We offer: Breakfast club 8am - 9am
 Preschool 9am- 3pm
 Out of school club 3.30pm - 6pm



Deadline

9.00am 15th of January for the February issue.

The deadline is the same date every month, so please send us all your adverts, notices, news, views, recipes and gossip

by 9.00am on 15th of the previous month.

Thanks, Ed editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Grafham Village Hall	Activities & Classes	
Mondays	Line Dancing	7.30pm
Tuesdays	Pilates	9.30am
	Art Club	1.30pm
Wednesdays	Little Fishes (pre-school children)	10.00am
	Yoga	6.15pm
	Karate	7.30pm
Thursdays	Kick Boxing	7.00pm
Saturdays	Chinese Martial Arts	10.30am

For enquiries about classes and about booking the hall, please telephone 07711 769911

Read more about village hall activities on page 16

Huntingdonshire Music School
Saturdays at Hinchingsbrooke School

Music Lessons & Ensembles

Music for everyone all ages, all abilities

We also teach music lessons at local schools

✉ enquiries@huntsmusicsschool.org.uk
 ☎ 01480 58 48 67
 🏠 HuntsMusicSchool.org.uk



Talking Shop



We are 5 years old! We hope you were able to come along to the shop on 22nd November and join us for a drink and a cake to celebrate this wonderful achievement. We have seen lots of changes along the way and think it fair to say it's been a steep learning curve for everyone involved. Over the years we've learned what sells well and what doesn't and, as far as possible, we've tried to stock what people really want to see in their community shop. We all feel very proud of our efforts and appreciate all those in the village who use us and make it the success it is today. This time of year is always more difficult for us than the summer months as we see fewer visitors to Grafham and of course, the caravan site is now closed. However, this shop is primarily for the people of Grafham and we hope you will continue to use it. If you would like to get involved with the running of the shop and would be interested in volunteering please pop in and have a chat with one of us. You don't need to have retail experience as training will be given and you will be made to feel very welcome.

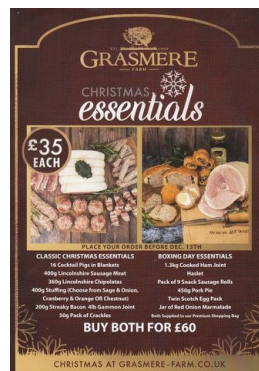
Vintage Port is now available at £16.99. Grafham honey makes a great gift. We have just a few jars left, so be quick if you'd like some as we don't know how much more we'll be able to get for a while. And of course, it's that time of year to pick up a Grafham Calendar. These are now for sale at £5 each, while stocks last. Come in and have a look.



NEWSFLASH

Order forms now in for Grasmere Christmas hampers! These were very popular last year and are priced at £35 each or 2 for £60. Order forms are in the shop and orders must be placed by Friday 13th December.

The hampers will be delivered to the shop on Monday 23rd December



Our Christmas opening hours are

Christmas Eve..normal hours	8am - 6.30pm
Christmas Day	CLOSED
Boxing Day.....	CLOSED
Friday 27 th December	9am – 2pm
Saturday 28 th December.....	9am – 2pm
Sunday 29 th December.....	9am – 2pm
Monday 30 th December.....	9am – 2pm
New Year's Eve... ..	9am – 2pm
New Year's Day.....	CLOSED

For normal opening hours see page 10

As this is the last Talking Shop before Christmas we'd like to wish all our lovely customers, volunteers and supporters a very happy and peaceful Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the shop.

Lynn and Chloe



Have you seen our Christmas Department? We feel it's a little early to go the whole way with decorations (December is plenty early enough!) but festive things are gradually hitting our shelves. We have lots of goodies already so if you need an early present, come and see what we've got. We've recently taken delivery of a selection of festive jams and chutneys from Saints & Sinners. This range is always popular and there is sure to be something unusual here. Beer is a big seller in the shop and we are now offering gift packs from our local breweries. And it wouldn't be Christmas without a bottle of Port. Warre's Late Bottled



Travelling Nativity Box

Grafham's Nativity set will be travelling round the village again this year, starting out on **Sunday 1st December**.

The Travelling Nativity box contains knitted nativity figures to play with plus books, jigsaws and games suitable for pre-school and key stage 1 children.

The box goes from house to house. This is free and available to anyone in Grafham. All you need to do is call Jill Tyack on 810157 or txt 07892 720 835 and book it for a night.

The nativity figures will end up in church on **Tuesday 24th December at 3pm** for our traditional and popular Crib Service. If you have not been before why not give it a go - it is short and 'user friendly' and you can be sure of a warm welcome!





Recycling - Blue Bin

For a recycling update and a reminder of the right recycling to put in your blue bin, go to www.recap.co.uk

For a detailed list of everything that can go in your **Blue, Green and Black/Grey bins** visit <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins-waste/what-goes-in-which-bin/> or call 01480 388640 between 8.45am and 5.00pm Mon to Thurs and 8.45am and 4.30pm on Fridays or email mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Grafham Oil Syndicate

The syndicate is FREE to join. We must continue to grow and keep a bulk order attractive enough to receive a discount, so simply email Simon: grafhamoil@gmail.com or call **07887 628528** and help keep more money in the village!



The Highway Community Car Scheme

A scheme to help provide transport for people who are not able to make essential journeys by public transport or any other means.

A team of volunteer drivers take you to appointments e.g. the doctors, hospital, dentist alongside social activities such as visiting relatives or friends and even shopping.

The scheme is aimed at helping people to get out and about.

Passengers pay the driver on the day of travel to contribute towards fuel expenses. This is at a rate of 30p per mile with a minimum charge of £3.00.

To arrange a journey or for more information please call 07786 520540

If the phone is not manned at the time of your call leave a message on the answerphone and the coordinator of the drivers will get back to you.

We are also always looking out for volunteer drivers so if you want to help your community, give us a call. We would love to hear from you.

The scheme is supported and advised by Cambridgeshire County Council and Care Network Cambridgeshire

"Has the bin man bin Mam?"



Wednesdays Blue bin (recycling) and Black bin (refuse) - alternate weeks
Every other Thursday - Green bin (garden waste)

For more advice or information about waste and recycling services, visit www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins or call 01480 388640 between 8.45am and 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.45am and 4.30pm on Fridays or email mail@huntingdonshire.gov.uk



December

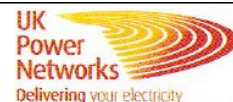
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
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2	3	Blu	G	6	7	8
9	10	Blk	12	13	14	15
16	17	Blu	G	20	21	22
23	Blk	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	Blu	G	4	5
6	7	Blk	9	10	11	12
13	14	Blu	G	17	18	19
20	21	Blk	23	24	25	26
27	28	Blu	G	31		

Power cut?

- Contact us 24 hours a day
- Text POWER and your postcode to 80876
- ukpowernetworks.co.uk/liveupdates
- Call us free on 105 or 0800 31 63 105
- For more info visit <http://www.powercut105.com/>



Useful Phone Numbers

All emergencies **999**

Non-emergencies **101**

Cambridge Constabulary HQ
01480 456111

Minicom for hard of hearing
01480 422493

Action Fraud **0300 123 2040**

Crimestoppers **0800 555111**
(anonymous)

To report anti-social behaviour in Grafham **01480 388379** or **387097** or e-mail:
Barbara.gowling@huntsdc.gov.uk or tracey.guinea@huntsdc.gov.uk

To stop unwanted phone calls
08450 700707

To stop unwanted mail
08457 034599

Power cut Call 105 or 0800 31 63 105 or text POWER and your postcode to 80876



Haphazard by Starlight

The Quaker poet U. A. Fanthorpe would write a new Christmas poem each year to send to her friends. My favourite is called BC:AD and it captures something of the moment when everything changed:

This was the moment when Before
Turned into After, and the future's
Uninvented timekeepers presented arms.

This was the moment when nothing
Happened. Only dull peace
Sprawled boringly over the earth.

This was the moment when even energetic Romans
Could find nothing better to do
Than counting heads in remote provinces.

And this was the moment
When a few farm workers
And three members of an obscure Persian sect

Walked haphazard by starlight straight
Into the kingdom of heaven.

I love the idea that this was the moment, the birth of *this* child was (though unknown at the time) the moment that future peoples would identify as the moment from which the years would be counted.

In Fanthorpe's account this was an otherwise dull moment in history. Nothing really happened; the *pax Romana* ensured a dull kind of peace, a general absence of conflict, the peace represented by an elderly relative dozing on the sofa after a Christmas dinner. And all of this takes place in a 'remote province', not in the centres of power; it's not a promising start.

The poem leads us gently through an otherwise boring time and place in history until we are hit straight between the eyes by the final lines. This was the moment when some unimportant labourers and a group of eccentric travellers (who follows a star?!) suddenly found themselves at the centre of the greatest story ever told.

Without intending it, or knowing what was happening, those shepherds and wise men found themselves wit-

nesses to the birth of a child. And yet at the same time they had walked 'haphazard by starlight straight into the kingdom of heaven.' This captures the amazing paradox of the total ordinariness of the Christmas story which is, at the same time, the birth of the kingdom of heaven on earth and the transformative idea that God was born among us.



And the wonderful thing is that people ever since have had the same experience. In encountering the baby Jesus, lying in a manger, people still find themselves unexpectedly walking straight into God's very presence.

And so, I wish you all a very happy Christmas season. Perhaps, amidst all of the joy and festivity you too might find yourself suddenly transported straight into the kingdom of heaven. It might happen at a party, sat at home in front of the TV, in a carol service, or while walking the dog. Will you notice? I wonder how you respond.

As always, you are warmly welcome to join us at an event or service over the coming weeks. Details of dozens of Christmas things across the Huntingdon area are all available at www.huntingdonchristmas.org.uk – check it out!

Mike

**All the Christmas events and services
around Huntingdon in one place**
www.huntingdonchristmas.org.uk

(Contact details for Mike can be found on page 2. Ed)



Martin's Mulled Wine Recipe of the Month



1 bottle of red wine	½ teacup lemonade
60g/2oz demerara sugar	½ teacup orange juice
1 cinnamon stick	½ lemon sliced
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg	½ orange sliced
1 bay leaf	4 cloves
	60 ml / 2 fl oz gin



Add the ingredients, except the gin, to a pan and gently warm, dissolving the sugar. Try not to boil. If needed, adjust the sweetness to taste, by adding sugar. Lastly add the gin. Fill your glasses and sit in front of the fire sipping the mulled wine and thinking of Christmas!

Please remember to drink sensibly. Ed

Village Litter Pick



One drizzly Saturday in October six of us managed to clear the verges from the village to the T- junction with the Perry Road (otherwise known as Black Finger Corner). We collected 11 bags of rubbish.

We were delighted to have the owner of Model Farm take the time to drive out and meet us to say thank you for our efforts. He says he sees huge amounts of rubbish dumped by people pulling into the laybys and then throwing the remains of their meal onto the ground.

I would like to thank David Rook and his team on the District Council for their efficient and friendly service in providing the equipment we needed and collecting the rubbish.

Jill Tyack

Grafham Trout

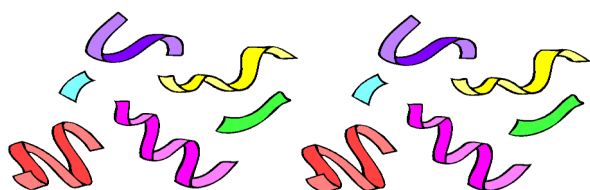


Christmas Market

7th December 1-5pm
Grafham Village Hall

Cakes, presents, mulled wine,
Christmas cards and decorations

Pub open as normal



Grafham Trout



Join us New Year's Eve!

We will be open 5.00-12.30 to help
you see in 2020 in the right way

5.30 - 7.00pm Children's disco
8.00 till late Music and
2020 countdown

Tickets not required

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme

A14 Integrated Delivery Team

Details of planned road closures, diversions and latest news can be found on the Highways England website by clicking [here](#) or type www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A14C2H into your search engine

or stay updated by following: <https://twitter.com/a14c2h> and <https://en-gb.facebook.com/A14C2H>

There's also a dedicated A14 Public Helpline
0800 270 0114

Details of planned road closures and diversions are also on Grafham village web site www.grafham.org.uk

Ed



Your advert could be here!

To advertise, email: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Community notices are free, business adverts are priced according to size, payable in advance.

They start at £4.00 for a small box.

The money pays for the printing of the newsletter and any profit is donated to

All Saints, Grafham and its Restoration Fund.

Please clean up after your dog



It is an offence not to clean up after your dog

To find out more about [Dog Fouling and the Law](#) visit www.keepbritaintidy.org/faqs/advice/dog-fouling-and-law

Can you make tea?

We are very short of volunteer tea/coffee makers for our Little Fishes Stay + Play Tots Group, which meets on Wednesday mornings in the village hall.



If you can spare an hour, now and then, we would be most grateful for your help!

Please contact Hazel 810326

or email: editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk

Spiders

It's about this time of year that spiders invade our homes, or, as they see it, take refuge in the warm dry caves so readily available nowadays. Perhaps it's this annual invasion, or the large legs, numerous eyes and way they scuttle about, or even the way they are portrayed in the media (the Harry Potter films and The Lord of the Rings spring to mind), but most people wouldn't put spiders at the top of their favourites list.



Wasp Spider

Of around 35,000 species worldwide, Britain is host to about 650 species. Ranging in size from a few millimetres up to the Cardinal spider at 140mm long, there is also a great variety in colouration, hunting technique, and general lifestyle that make these Arachnids worth a second look. Whilst having an exo-skeleton like many other Arthropods such as insects, not all the joints are operated by internal muscles. A spider's body is full of fluid and many species make use of this to 'operate' their limbs. Muscles pull the limb joint in one direction whilst this fluid, pressurised by internal organs, is used to move the limb hydraulically in the other. The body always consists of two segments with eight legs attached to the front part of the body, then, dependant on species, it may have feeding palps, fangs or other special adaptations on the front of the head. The position and indeed number of eyes can vary, with up to eight eyes arranged across the front and side of the head in various patterns. The main body can be a variety of shapes and sizes with round, oblong and even pointed abdomens varying from roughly the same size as the head/thorax to around five or six times bigger.

Whilst predominantly brown spiders can be yellow, orange, red and green or a mixture of colours, even the duller species can show incredible patterning when examined closely.

Another obvious feature of spiders is their ability to produce silk. The silk consists of a series of proteins similar in makeup to collagen and keratin, both of which are found in the human body.

When weight and density are taken into consideration spider silk is generally five times stronger than steel. Recent studies have shown how such a strength is achieved. Each strand of spider silk is 1000 times thinner than a human hair but is actually made up of thousands of 'nanostrands' 20 millionths of millimetre in diameter which are wound together like rope. This incredible substance is put to many uses; protecting eggs, wrapping up or immobilizing prey, as safety lines, as drag lines for spreading pheromones, for constructing tunnels and diving bells and even for hang gliding. But it is for the construction of myriad different web traps that silk is most well known.

Perhaps then, next time you find a spider in the bath or hanging in the corner of your bedroom you will look just a little closer and catch it to be released outside rather than applying the shower head or rolled up newspaper.



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire

Gregory Belcher
Senior Reserves Officer
Wildlife Trust BCN

Ideas on zero waste, cleaning and cooking

Cleaning items

Choose bio-degradable cloths, sponges and cleaning paper and find a reputable brand that doesn't dissolve as you're using it (Grafham Shop stocks a range of eco items or contact Paul info@products4eco.com or 0800 9995979.) Buy in bulk, use wisely, maintain quality by soaking regularly in vinegar water (a maximum of 200mls of vinegar to 1 litre of water,) use rigorously until totally exhausted. Use single-use kitchen cloth for oil spills as this is compostable.

How to clean a work surface

Using hot soapy water, clean the surface as normal, then use the cloth/sponge to soak up all the moisture, squeezing it back into the bucket from which it came, until all the moisture has gone. Finish by sanitising with vinegar water, using the same 'sponging' method. This means you use no single-use kitchen roll and fill no bin space.

There are ways to clean 'Zero Waste'

Make your own soap; for an easy to follow recipe visit <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/cleaning/a20705805/how-to-make-homemade-soap/>

Easier still is sanitiser spray – take about a pint of distilled

vinegar and leave a couple of lemons or just their peel in there for a few months to infuse. Then dilute the liquid one part vinegar to five parts water. It will work great and smell incredible.

Other savings and waste reduction tips

- Cling film: Don't use it. Instead buy lots of containers with decent lids. There's a good beeswax clingfilm that's reusable (although not airtight). Watch out for claims of a biodegradable clingfilm; it *doesn't* biodegrade so it's best to avoid such until a proper variant comes along. When you need to wrap an item, use heavy-duty, reusable, zip-seal bags.

- Foil: Don't use it. Invest instead in suitable metal lids for the items you need to cover.

- Baking parchment: Invest in lots of reusable silicon rubber mats. Treat them carefully and they'll last forever.

Kitchen roll: Buy in bulk, preferably packaging free. Only use sparingly for cooking oil spills/grease, then compost.

- Sous vide: To avoid single use packaging, don't do it. Instead, cook using low-temperature - 'a bath within a bath' - poaching. A heavy-duty zip-seal bag *can* be a substitute. Expel the air as you submerge it under the water, closing

Continued on page 11

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General Election Hustings Brampton Church 3pm on Sunday 8th December (doors open at 2:30pm)

People are saying that it could be the most important General Election for a generation. That's why Brampton Church is hosting a General Election hustings at 3pm on Sunday 8th December.

This will be a great chance from those who hope to represent you in the House of Commons. Each will have an opportunity to introduce themselves, and then candidates will take questions from the audience.

At the time of writing we have confirmed attendance from Samuel Sweek (Labour), Mark Argent (Liberal Democrat), Dan Laycock (Green Party) and Paul Bullen (standing as a pro-Brexit independent candidate, now that the Brexit Party has stood down many candidates). Our current MP, Jonathan Djanogly, has been re-selected for the Conservatives but is yet to confirm his attendance.

Please come along on Sunday 8th to hear from the candidates as you make up your own mind on how to vote! (Some parking is available at the Church Hall and on Church Road, but you are encouraged to walk, cycle or car-share if at all possible).

Grafham Trout

Opening Times

Mon to Wed - Closed

Thurs - 18:00 - 22:00

Fri - 18:00 - 23:00

Sat - 13:00 - 23:00

Sun - 13:00 - 19:00

See leaflet put through your letter-box for Christmas/New Year opening hours

Grafham Community Shop

Tel: 01480 810119

Opening Times

Mon-Fri 8.00 - 6.30

Sat 8.00 - 5.00

Sun 9.00 - 2.00

Bank Holidays 9.00 - 2.00



**Christmas Opening Hours
are listed on page 5
in 'Talking Shop'**

shop@grafhamvillageshop.co.uk
www.grafhamvillageshop.co.uk

Recycling 'Hard to Recycle' Products

After providing information on Public TerraCycle collection points in the November issue of the *Grafham Gossip*, I encountered problems when attempting to recycle various products. On contacting TerraCycle I was informed that both Houghton and Wyton Community Shop and Brampton Scouts are no longer public collection points, so apologies for that error.

At the time of going to press, all the information given in the November issue, reflected what was stated by TerraCycle on their website. In the meantime, it would appear that they have made changes and updated their website. Hopefully, by the time you read this, all should have been clarified at the meeting held in The Grafham Trout on Monday 18th November.

In order to remind everyone, and to inform those unable to attend this meeting, an updated comprehensive list of local places to recycle 'Hard to Recycle' products should be published in the next issue of the *Grafham Gossip*.

*Anne Lea
Making the Change in Grafham*

The Labour Party in Huntingdon

Our next monthly meeting is

Monday 16th December

7.30pm at The Medway Centre

More details on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/HuntingdonLabourParty/>

or via the website:

<http://www.huntingdonlabourparty.org.uk>

Come along and get involved in helping your neighbours and the community!

An award for churchyard rewilding!

Grafham will be the first Cambridgeshire churchyard to gain an award for the conservation work we have done here. Thankyou to all those who have been involved so far. Our adviser has suggested that we are well on our way to receiving at least a Bronze award for our work rewilding our lovely area.

This is endorsed by the Wildlife Trust and specifically the [Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme - Caring for God's Acre](#). Our Bishop Stephen states: 'At a time when so much of the natural world is under threat, the award helps churches to develop their churchyards as sanctuaries for insects, birds and small mammals, alongside their historic monuments and memorials. Churchyards do not need to be clipped in order to be respectful and beautiful signs of the new Creation in Christ.'

The areas of unmown grassland are key areas for overwintering insects and we are hoping that the butterfly population, in particular, will thrive as we manage the area with a greater emphasis on increasing biodiversity.

The Gatekeeper butterfly, also known as the Hedge Brown, is one that we may attract to the churchyard from late June to mid September. (*More info below*)



Gatekeeper Butterfly

Photograph by Gregory Belcher

Previously printed in Grafham Gossip June 2019

The adviser, Diana Cook, who came to see us, praised the work we have done so far and was keen to help us work towards a Gold Award status in years to come. Let's go for it!

For more details contact Debbie Russell

debs.russell@gmail.com

The Gatekeeper's eggs are laid in mid July to mid September. The caterpillars overwinter - hopefully in the unmown grassland of the churchyard - until they pupate during early June to early August.



Gatekeeper egg



Gatekeeper caterpillar



Gatekeeper pupa

Photographs © Peter Eeles / Butterfly Conservation web:butterfly-conservation.org

Ideas on zero waste, cleaning and cooking *continued from page 9*

the bag at the last minute.

- Salt: One exceptions to our bulk-buying rule. It usually comes in a big tough single-use plastic bag. There are a number of salts that can be bought in containers that are great for kitchen storage. You can also buy salt bricks. Store in an airtight container.
- Sugar: Can easily be found in 10–20 kilo compostable paper sacks. You can also find malt barley in big reusable containers.
- Nuts, seeds and spices: Very easy to buy in bulk paper bags; however, the cost of large amounts can be expensive.
- Flour: Mill your own. Suitable mills aren't hugely expensive. The taste is completely different. Wholewheat in bulk almost always comes in paper sacks.
- Milk and cream: Glass is better than Tetra-pak; bottles can

be reused time after time.

- Fish and meat: Club together and buy the whole beast; pre-processed animals are wrapped in plastic, but not when they're whole. Local farmers (such as Patrick from the village with his lamb) can supply whole animals or part carcasses.

Be aggressive against polystyrene when ordering items. There are plenty of returnable containers that will work well. If it's a one-way courier delivery, then make sure they will use the single-use mushroom alternatives to polystyrene.

There are lots more food saving ideas available from Mads Refslund's 'Scraps, Wilts and Weeds' and the game-changing 'The Whole Fish' by Josh Niland.



Change in Grafham Group



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NOVEMBER 29TH 2019 Enigma 14:
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Julian Metzger, *cello*;
Paul Turner, *piano*

JANUARY 31ST 2020 Alexandra Lomeiko, *violin*, with
Christine Zerafa, *piano*;
Richard Zhang, *solo piano*

FEBRUARY 28TH 2020 The Fitzwilliam Quartet with
Anna Tilbrook, *piano*

MARCH 27TH 2020 Marina Nadiradze and
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STUDENTS UNDER 21: £5



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire
Huntingdonshire
Local Group

An Evening with Mike Dilger

7.30pm Wed 11th December

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust invites you to an entertaining evening with Mike Dilger. Mike is a well-known face as a wildlife presenter, making regular appearances on the BBC's One Show and Inside Out. He is the author of numerous books, including Nightingales in November, Nature's Calendar and Nature's Babies. Mike has a passion for both British and tropical wildlife and tonight he will share his tales of his extensive travels in the tropics.

The meeting is at **Brampton Memorial Hall, Thrapston Road, Brampton, PE28 4TB**. We are expecting this to be a very popular talk and would ask people to book in advance to ensure that they get a seat on the night.

Bookings should be confirmed either at one of our autumn meetings or by contacting Alistair Grant alistairgrant@hotmail.com or 07775 365 507

Fascinating Fungi

An Introduction to Mycology

Peter Walker

7.30pm Wed 8th January

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust invites you to this illustrated talk. Peter has a wealth of knowledge on this subject and he will present an absorbing talk about these diverse organisms that often appear only transiently, maybe for as little as a few days, before disappearing again to spend most of their lives hidden underground. Peter will tell us about the identification, habitat, biology and uses of fungi. This should be a fascinating talk that will be of interest to many.

Meetings are held at **Brampton Memorial Hall, PE28 4TB** starting at 7.30pm. Everyone welcome, booking not necessary.

For more information contact Alistair Grant alistairgrant@hotmail.com or 07775 365 507

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

Buckden Gardeners Association

Buckden Gardeners Association meets on the third Tuesday of the month from October to April in Buckden Village Hall. Topics focus on gardening but also include related subjects such as wild flowers, bees and birds. In the summer months we organise outings to gardens and related areas.

All are welcome. For more information please visit our website www.buckdengardeners.info or just come along.
Rosemary Surridge, Secretary



There are free tickets available for the above Bösendorfer concerts, for pupils and ex-pupils (aged 9 - 21) of Hinchingbrooke and St.Peter's and any of their partner primary schools.

Grafham Hedgehogs Update

Carole Baber

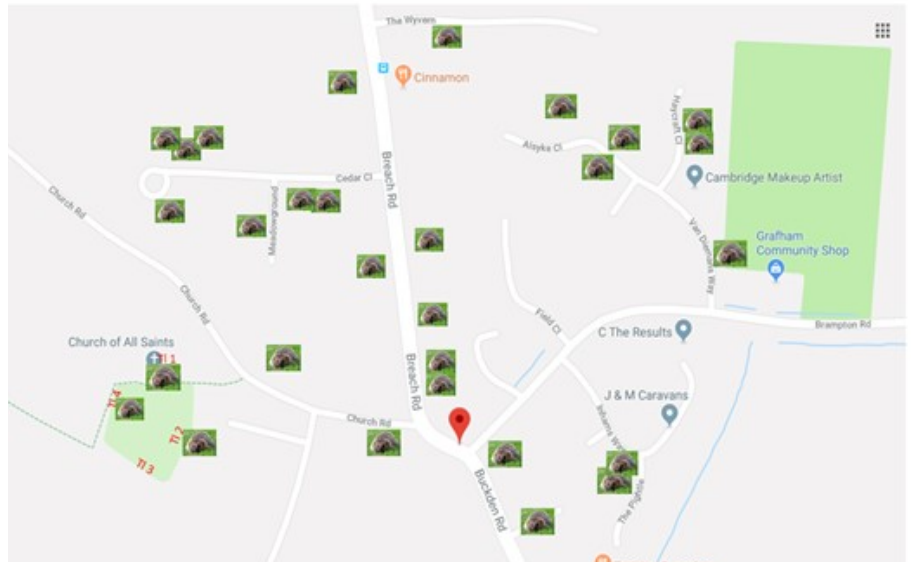
Since last month we have established a few more sightings and footprints from tunnels. Spot the difference!

Grafham Hedgehog Distribution

We are now monitoring in a few gardens where hedgehogs have been recorded, in order to see when they stop activity. We will presume that this is when they are hibernating. We are still getting reports, the latest was the night of 11th November from two locations – Breach Road and end of Cedar Close.

Now there are a few more hedgehog houses in the village, hopefully the Grafham hedgehogs will have plenty of choice for hibernacula.

As a Hedgehog Street 'Hedgehog Champion', I thought I should pass on some winter tips for hedgehog welfare.



1. Continue to put food out over winter, as long as the food is being taken. As we're experiencing increasingly milder winters the risk of hedgehogs waking from their state of torpor is on the rise. Hedgehogs expend a lot of energy in the process of waking up.

2. Food can be wet dog or cat food or kibble specially made for hedgehogs. Pet and Wild Bird Food by the Visitor Centre at Marlow car park stocks it.

3. Put out fresh water daily.

4. If you have a pond, break the ice if it freezes and make sure a hedgehog can climb out if it falls in.

5. Hedgehogs may be using natural features in your garden to hibernate including log piles, leaf piles and compost heaps. They are also partial to sneaking in or under garden sheds! Be mindful of this if you're gardening or rummaging through your shed as this could potentially disturb a hibernating hog.

6. If you spot any very small hedgehogs that are currently active, they may not survive hibernation. In this instance, or if a hedgehog appears to be obviously unwell, please do contact BHPS info@britishhedgehogs.org.uk or 01584 890 801 for advice.



You can find out more details at <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/hibernation-faqs/>



Send your news, views, photos, recipes and gossip to
editor@grafhamgossip.co.uk



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Home Again

Having just returned from a trip to Australia in the spring I would like to share a little of what we saw of the flowers and bees. We began our visit in Western Australia, The Wildflower State then on to Melbourne in Victoria and finally Brisbane in Queensland. Broadly what we saw were:

1. Native wildflowers (herbaceous) in parks, forests and on field and road margins
2. Shrubby plants with large showy flowers of the bottle brush, kangaroo paw, myrtle and proteus families
3. Shrubby plants with profusions of tiny flowers (suited to the tiny native Australian bees.)
4. Trees with flowers high in the canopy pollinated by bees (favoured by the European Honey Bees), birds and bats.
5. Then, in parks and gardens some flowers of European origin e.g. roses, various daisies and European trees, importantly including English Elms in good health.

Here are a few pictures:



A hive of European Honey Bees in a public park in Brisbane

In a little community called Ongarup (Aboriginal name means *place of the male kangaroo*), with a population of 93 at last census, we came across a wildflower display in a tin shed next to their museum (below left.) Over 100 local wildflowers, all collected on private properties, identified and labelled, including around 30 native orchids.



And my final picture (on the right) is a colony of Australian Stingless Bees living in a log in Brisbane Botanical Gardens. The little black bees are about 3mm long. You could be forgiven for thinking they are flies.



David Cudby

Coffee Morning

Grafham Social Committee invites you to Coffee Mornings at 10.30am on the third Wednesday of the month:

18th December - Frances Knight, 1 Haycraft Close
15th January - Diana Thomas, Wesley House

This is an informal social occasion for residents of the village. Please come along for a cup of coffee and a chat.



Come and join the **GRAFHAM LINE DANCERS**

Beginners are welcome
Monday evenings in the Village Hall
7.30 – 9.00pm

For more information ring
Julia 01480 811613 or
Text Penny 07986 509481



Grafham **Quiz night**
Trout **Thursday 19th December**
Christmas Quiz
Starting at 8pm



Grafham and Ellington Art Group

<http://grafhamandellingtonart.weebly.com/>

Grafham Village Hall, Every Tuesday 1.30-4pm

Calling all who want to meet and paint with like minded people on a regular basis. Beginners and those with more skills are all very welcome.

Cost: About £2 to cover hall hire/refreshments. Come along with your paints and equipment!

Please ring me for more details.
Jackie Woods 01480 890279



Grafham Church Flower Club

We are available to decorate the church for weddings and other church occasions.

Floral arrangements for: pedestal, altar, font, windowsills, pew ends, pillars.

Please contact Hazel Powell on **01480 810326** for details and quotes.

If anyone in the village has foliage in their garden that they would be willing to donate for church decoration for festivals, please let us know, we would be very grateful.



theWI Ellington and Grafham WI

meets on the first Tuesday of the month in Ellington Village Hall. Membership is £41 per annum but you are most welcome to come as a visitor. The programme is varied and interesting with speakers or events every month.

December A talk by Major Lucy Lewis, about her life in the Army.

For more information please contact:

Sue 01480 896139 normanrice@btinternet.com or
Ann 01480 891192 nigel.bentley@btinternet.com

Across the Churches Bible Study

We are a small group meeting twice a month (Tuesdays 7.30pm) for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. We come from different churches and are always happy to welcome new members.

For more information, please contact Rob or Jean Clark 01480 890033.



Library News To read or sign up for the monthly Cambridgeshire Library newsletter [Click here](#)

The Mobile Library Route H24 visits Breach Road, Grafham on the **4th Wednesday of every month from 10.40 to 11.00**. Next visit - Info not available at time of printing. Ed

For renewals or enquiries call **0345 045 5225** or click [here](#)



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