



EastBergholt

parish magazine

December 2025

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, EAST BERGHOLT

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Visiting St Mary's church: St Mary's is usually open during daylight hours. The church is open every day and you are most welcome to come in and have a quiet moment in the Lady Chapel or leave a prayer request. If you need a listening ear, please contact Rev Chris. We are here to serve you. Please let us know how we can do this better. Details of services can be found on the magazine's centrefold.

THE TIME MACHINE

When I was a child, the wait for Christmas seemed to last almost forever. Time seemed so much slower in those days. The days and weeks crept by. Now I am an adult, every week seems like just a couple of days; every month, just a couple of weeks. Does time speed up as we get older? Obviously, the answer is no, but it certainly feels that way.

I remember also the joy of opening the Advent calendar each day, and the temptation to open a second window...but then it will be two days before I can open the next. And hoping for a huge chocolate in the big number 24 window!

Now I am older, though, I find I am willing the days to slow down and the hours to pause, so I can get all the things done that I need to. That's getting to the root of the matter. In our busy, busy world, it seems that time feels slower when we have more space in the day and week. It seems terribly fast when our days, as often they are, become packed with deadlines and demands.

Looking back again to my childhood, I absolutely loved the film *The Time Machine* with its sumptuous colour. Programmed to move through time, the machine would stay still, but its surroundings would change dramatically. I think that if I could choose one superpower, time travel would be it. Perhaps then I could buy some more time? But alas, no such superpower for me.

Yet, in that wish, there is perhaps something more profound. It's a wish to still be able to savour the moment. To step out of the rush of life, to find again that childhood wonder of expectation and awe.

Each Advent, and Christmas, I think many of us seek to reconnect with that childhood sense of wonder. The newness to a child's mind of Christmas tree lights, the sound of carol singers, the smell of a spiced wine (only for the adults, of course...). Advent can be a time which can rush by, filled with busyness. It is easy, now I am older, to be too busy in the moment, so busy that wonder, joy and a sense of expectation can pass me by.

I think I was inspired to write this article by preparing for Advent at St Mary's. And reminded of the journey we are each invited to participate in. Each Sunday with a new focus, starting with Hope, then Peace, then Joy and Love, and finally, on Christmas Day, the Christ Child.

I hope, like me, you will take a moment to pause; to once again, with childlike eyes, be expectant, and savour the days; to press the pause button on the rush, and this Advent, seek that very hope, peace, joy and love that can only come from the Child, who is God with us. - Rev Chris, rector, St Mary's, East Bergholt

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CHRISTMAS SERVICES

at St Mary's Church East Bergholt

Sunday 14th December - Carol service at 18:00

Sunday 21st December - Mothers Union Blue Christmas service at 14:00

Wednesday 24th December - (identical) Children's services
at 15:00 and 17:00

Wednesday 24th December - Communion service at 21:30

Sunday 25th December - Said Communion at 9:00

Sunday 28th December - Benefice Communion at 10:00



CONSTABLE CHURCHES MOTHERS' UNION



This month we have a time of fellowship as we relax and enjoy our festive celebration on 11th December at 2.00pm in St Mary's Church. This has been another busy year supporting Highpoint prison, the women's refuge, the seafarers' mission, the Moses project, Ipswich Hospital and a care home in Hadleigh, as well as groups in our parish. We have also campaigned to raise awareness of the issues of domestic abuse and gender-based violence.

Our MU Blue Christmas service is on 21st December at 2.00pm. This is a quiet service for those who are struggling at this time of year. Whether you are away from family, missing someone special or dealing with illness or personal difficulties, you are very welcome.

During the service there will be opportunities to express the grief, fears, anxieties, anger or confusion that are a normal part of living and loving. In our worship together we ask God for healing and comfort. There will be refreshments after the service. - *Mothers' Union committee: Janet Ball, Jenny Chapman, Chris Jacobs, Grace Wallis and Wendy Withers*



FAMILY@CHURCH



Family@church in November met on Remembrance Sunday. We decorated poppy seed and lemon biscuits with red and black icing to represent poppies, and played the memory game, trying to remember things on a tray which reminded us about God's love, family members no longer with us and those that sacrificed their lives for us so that we might be free - both soldiers fighting in wars and Jesus at the crucifixion. We also sang songs, read a

story, prayed and sang our *Sorry Song*, finishing as always with a lovely tea provided by our fabulous team of helpers.

Everyone is very welcome to come along and join in all the fun! We meet on the second Sunday of each month at 4.00pm in the meeting room at the back of the church (the same room as used by the toddler group - use the door opposite the war memorial). If you are new to the village, or have lived here for years but never been to one of our services before, you will be most welcome to come and see what all the fuss is about.

It's very informal. We have fun, sing songs, and learn about our Christian faith through activities and stories. You can be any age, with or without a family. We always end with food and a drink, and it's a perfect way to finish the weekend.

For any queries or comments about family@church, please contact Liz Digby (liz.digby@btopenworld.com) or Fiona Trott (fiona.trott13@gmail.com). - *Fiona Trott*

St Mary's Christmas

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St Mary's Christmas "Towering Trees" Festival

St Mary the Virgin Church, The Street, East Bergholt CO7 6TG

This Christmas Tree festival marks the finale of our Tower 500 celebrations. It is a fitting close to the year with towering trees filling the church with light and creativity. Entry is free and open to individuals, families, community groups and local businesses. You are warmly invited to provide and decorate a tree for display in St Mary the Virgin Church East Bergholt.

Entries close on **Thursday 4 December** — do not miss out

Trees can be any size or shape, fresh or artificial. The only limit is your imagination and after the festival your tree goes home with you for Christmas. You are welcome to decorate your tree on site or bring it ready decorated.

Please note mains power is not available so any lights must be battery operated.

Tree drop off and setup times

Friday, 5 December 2 to 6 pm

Saturday 6 December 9 am to 12 noon

Festival display times

Saturday 6 December 1 to 5 pm

Sunday 7 December 11 am to 4 pm

Tree collection times

Sunday 7 December 4 to 6 pm

Monday 8 December after 3 pm

For more information, please contact Jackie Reeves via
stmarysebevents@gmail.com

Towering Trees Festival entry form

1. Name

2. Email

3. Phone Number

4. Title of Tree for our festival programme:

.....

5. Entered by (individual/organisation name)

6. Lead contact name (organisations only)

7. Tree size (Height)

☐ Up to 2ft (60 cm) ☐ 2ft - 4ft (60cm to 120cm) ☐ 4ft to 6ft (120cm to 180cm)

8. Delivering & setting up your tree - Please indicate what day and time you plan to bring your tree to St Mary's:

☐ Friday 5 December 2 to 6 pm
☐ Saturday 6 December 9 am to 12 noon

9. Tree collection - Please indicate what day and time you plan to collect your tree from St Mary's

☐ Sunday 7 December 4 to 6 pm
☐ Monday 8 December after 3 pm

Return completed forms to the back of church or email to stmarysevents@gmail.com before **4TH DECEMBER 2025**

ST MARY'S CHURCH LOTTERY-FUNDED PROJECT UPDATE



Thank you to everyone who took part in the project consultation in September. Your views and opinions have been used to shape decisions and inform the heritage activities that will be planned to enhance visitor experiences.

The project is in two parts: the building project, which largely involves repairing the roof to make it watertight and reordering internally to declutter and make the church accessible for all; and a second part concerning the heritage of our beautiful building, ensuring we celebrate the significance of its history in the best way we can. Plans are now being refined to look specifically at the different options for re-roofing, seating and flooring.

We are very lucky to have consultants who have specialist experience in Grade I listed church buildings and are aware of what is acceptable, preferable and cost-effective in terms of running costs in the future. We are very blessed to have a team of experienced professionals who are helping us get through to the next vital phase of applying to The National Lottery Heritage Fund next May for the delivery grant of £1.4m.

We are constantly looking at funding opportunities, as we are required to match-fund. If anyone knows of grants, however small, that would be applicable to the church as a charity; if anyone works at a company with a charity support scheme; or if anyone would like to make any personal donation, we would be very pleased to hear about it.

We are also exploring whether there is anyone with expertise in grant applications who would be able to join our team. We have identified the potential donors and their priorities but need help with applying.

We are grateful to everyone who attended the Griff Rhys Jones event at the Royal Hospital School in October. It raised just over £3,000 for the building project - thank you one and all, and thank you Griff! - *Fiona Trott and Jackie Reeves*

CALLING ALL KNITTERS

If you would like an easy and simple knitting project to while away the dark evenings, we are knitting owls for the Christmas Eve children's services. There are copies of the pattern at the back of the church or you can download it for free from www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/stuffy-owl. The owls can be any colour, so they're perfect for finishing off those small leftover balls of wool. - *Fiona Trott*



St Mary's, East Bergholt



St Michael's, Brantham



St Mary's, Bentley



St Mary's, Tattingsstone

December 2025

ST MARY'S, EAST BERGHOLT

Wednesday 3rd

9.30am BCP Service

Sunday 7th

8.00am BCP Service

10.30am [Connect Service \(this month at Bentley\)](#)

Sunday 14th

4.00pm family@church

6.00pm Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 21st

8.00am BCP Service

10.00am Morning Worship with Communion

2.00pm Mothers' Union Blue Christmas Service

Christmas Eve

3.00pm Family Christmas Service

5.00pm Family Christmas Service

9.30pm Carols with Communion

Christmas Day

9.00am BCP Service

Sunday 28th

10.00am Morning Worship

ST MICHAEL'S, BRANTHAM

Sunday 7th

10.30am [Connect Service \(this month at Bentley\)](#)

Sunday 14th

10.30am Morning Worship with Communion

6.30pm Carol Service

Sunday 21st

10.30am Carols and Communion

Christmas Eve

2.00pm Family Christmas Service

11.30pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day

10.30am Christmas Celebration

ST MARY'S, BENTLEY

Sunday 7th

10.30am [Connect Service at Bentley](#)

(Four Parishes together)

Friday 12th

7.00pm Carols and Mulled Wine (Village Hall)

Sunday 14th

10.00am Christingle Service

Sunday 21st

10.00am Morning Worship

Christmas Eve

3.00pm Crib Service

Christmas Day

10.00am Christmas Morning Communion

ST MARY'S, TATTINGSTONE

Sunday 7th

10.30am [Connect Service \(this month at Bentley\)](#)

Sunday 21st

6.00pm Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve

4.00pm Crib Service

Owing to building work there is disruption to the regular services at St Mary's, Tattingsstone during December.

East Bergholt's
CHRISTMAS
MARKET

Saturday 6th December, 1-5pm

The village car park (behind The Red Lion)

Craft market and street food



LOCAL CHURCHES



BRANTHAM METHODIST CHURCH

Rev Steve Mann (minister)

8 Roundridge Road, Capel St Mary IP9 2UG

Tel: 01473 311178

Email: irmaminister@methodistic.org.uk

Christmas and the dodo

Before moving to this area, I lived a few minutes' drive from the Hertfordshire town of Tring. At the time our younger son was still at school and mad keen on animals. Imagine my delight to discover that the Natural History Museum at Tring had a stuffed dodo. A visit was planned because, of course, if you can't see a real-life dodo (they're extinct) then seeing a real-life stuffed one is the next best thing.

Only it didn't quite work out like that. I watched a video on YouTube that told me what they have at Tring is not a dodo: it was cobbled together from bits of other animals way back when, a best guess at what a dodo ought to look like, based upon sailors' reports.

Christmas is approaching and I wonder what it will look like for you. At the real heart of Christmas is the birth of a baby - Jesus. The birth almost certainly didn't take place at the end of December, yet it has been the centrepiece of the Christmas holiday for nearly 2,000 years. But then we make it so many other things as well. Presents; food and drink; decorations; lights, lights and more lights; carols and candles; and much, much more.

All of those things are part of what we think Christmas ought to look like. There's nothing wrong with that and they give us lots of pleasure, but we mustn't lose sight of the real-life Jesus at the heart of Christmas, particularly as, unlike the dodo, his presence is still felt today.

We wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year. - *Steve Mann*

Sunday services (at 11.00am unless otherwise stated)

7th December, 2.30pm	Songs of Praise
14th December	Paul Walker
21st December	Luke Rokobuli
28th December	at Capel St Mary

Coffee morning

Saturday 20th December, 10.30am-12.00 noon.

ST MARK'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

St Mark's, Hawthorn Drive, Ipswich IP2 0QQ
Holy Family Church, Ipswich Road, Brantham CO11 1TB
Parish priest: Rev Fr Luke Goymour
The Presbytery, 180 Hawthorn Drive, Ipswich IP2 0QQ
Tel: 01473 684963 Email: revgoymour@gmail.com
website: stmarksparish.org.uk

Father Luke's Sunday sermons are available at anchor.fm/fr-luke-goymour

Everything we have is a gift from God

As Christmas approaches and we buy gifts for friends and loved ones, it's important to pause and reflect: all the gifts in our lives - our talents, possessions, children, and grandchildren - are blessings from God. Among these, God's greatest gifts are the gift of love and the gift of His Son, Jesus.

In the midst of our busy preparations, let's remember these precious gifts. As John's Gospel reminds us: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." *Lord, during this Christmas season, help us to meditate on the wonderful gift of your Son, Jesus.*

Weekday and Sunday masses and devotions

Please also consult noticeboards and the parish website in case of weekday mass changes.

Saturday	St Mark's	5.30pm vigil mass with confessions from 5.00pm
Sunday	<i>new mass times</i>	
	Holy Family	8.00am mass
	St Mark's	11.15am mass
Tuesday	Holy Family	10.00am mass, Eucharistic Adoration at 9.20am
Wednesday	St Mark's	9.30am mass
Friday	St Mark's	12.15pm mass, Eucharistic Adoration from 11.40am

Nativity Festival at St Mark's: Saturday 13th December, 10.00am-1.00pm.

Carol concert: Sunday 21st December, 4.00pm-8.00pm.

The sick and housebound

Please let Father Luke know of anyone who is ill at home, housebound or in hospital, so that they may receive appropriate pastoral care; he can be contacted on 01473 684963. If you or a family member are in hospital you can also contact the Catholic lay chaplain to Ipswich Hospital at hospitalchaplain@stmarksparish.org.uk. - Kathy Pollard

CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

EAST BERGHOLT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY (founded 1895)

eastbergholthorticulturalsociety.onesuffolk.net
ebhs.horti@gmail.com • find us on Facebook and Instagram



By the time you read this article the East Bergholt Horticultural Society will have held its AGM, Gardeners' Question Time and Christmas wreath-making event. The AGM was an opportunity to look back on what has proved a most successful year, with old stalwarts such as the quiz and the plant sale proving as successful as ever, likewise our Annual Show. Though this summer provided very dry growing conditions, our members produced an excellent display of exhibits in all classes.

Activities for last year included three garden trips, with our members visiting the gardens of East Bergholt Place, Tessa's dahlia borders and the RHS Hyde Hall gardens during one of their show days.

2025 has proved a good year for our society. Our finances remain in good order, membership continues to grow and our activities continue to expand and succeed. We look forward to another successful year in 2026, supporting our members and welcoming more.

Broad beans: why wait until spring?

With the dry springs and summers and the mild winters we often enjoy in East Bergholt, sowing broad beans in autumn is often preferable to spring. Bonfire Night is perfect for sowing, but any time from mid-October to the end of November is good, with types such as Aquadulce and Bunyards Exhibition being bred for over-wintering.

Rather than planting directly into the soil (where a good number of seeds will be lost to mice), I raise seedlings in trays and plant out when they are a few inches high (but remember you still need to protect the young shoots from birds).

The ground should have been prepared prior to transplanting, with garden compost - at least two buckets per square yard - dug into the soil. This will assist with water retention, while the nutrients (supplemented by a spring feed of fish, blood and bone) will address one of the few problems broad beans suffer from, chocolate spot.

Beans should be planted in two rows nine inches apart; each pair of rows should be separated by 20 inches from the next pair. The plants will need supporting with canes and string cages in spring, and also netting, otherwise jackdaws will eat the young pods.

By planting in autumn, you can expect to crop in May and June, avoiding the worst of the scourge of beans, black fly. If you do suffer an attack, simply picking off the growing tips - where you will find the early colonies - is enough to stop them spreading. Fortunately the cropping will have finished before the black fly season starts in earnest.
- *Steve Feeney, Chairman*

Gardening tips for December

Hints for December are few - but we can start planning any changes in our gardens for next year between preparations for Christmas.

Frost, winds and rainfall are increasingly common and daylight hours are short. But on brighter drier days it's good to get outside and do a few jobs. As I said last month, wrap up warm and you will feel better for it. There will still be leaves to rake/sweep, gutters and stakes to check, and bird feeders and baths to refill.

Heathers can be planted now; there are so many varieties to brighten up your gardens. Insulate outdoor taps and hoses. If you have hyacinths germinating in a dark place remember to water them. Plant amaryllis, which make such a lovely show indoors.

There's not much going on in the veg patch. Hopefully those hungry pigeons aren't able to get at your brassicas and sprouts. You could think about buying seeds for next year.

Another year of ups and downs. I wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and Happy and Healthy 2026. - *Janet Alcoe*

EAST BERGHOLT WI

November brought our annual meeting, and after the conclusion of business we enjoyed cheese and wine and a quiz.

We are looking forward to getting into the festive spirit with some events this month. We will be taking part in the Christmas tree display at St Mary's Church and also helping with the serving of refreshments.

A few days later we will be joining up with other local WIs at our Christmas Group meeting at Bentley, where the entertainment will include the comic magician Andy Leach, bingo and a mystery raffle. Our members have been kept busy preparing for a competition at this event, filling Christmas stockings with ten miniature gifts. Then the following day we will enjoy our Christmas lunch at Fields Kitchen.

Our next meeting is on 3rd December at 7.30pm at the Constable Hall, where we will enjoy some festive music from a local choir followed by refreshments. For further information about the WI please contact our president Tina Hurley on 01206 298223 or Gill Ratray on 01206 298380, visit our website at eastbergholtwi.wordpress.com or check out our Facebook page. - *Gill Ratray*

MANNINGTREE & DISTRICT PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Last month club members took part in a PDI competition - Open Colour - and had an interesting talk by club member Ian Parker about his photography trip to Tanzania. We have a wealth of experience within the club, and while we love getting external speakers in to share their experiences, we also like to make use of the knowledge held by members.

In December we are looking forward to a field trip to London and our Christmas dinner.

Our club website has information about membership and activities together with competition results, photo albums and further club information. Our 2025-2026 programme is also on the website. Our public Manningtree Photographic Club Facebook page also features club news and activities.



This month's featured image by Ian Parker was the winning image from our recent Close Up and Macro competition.

We are a small group of photography enthusiasts with a wide range of photographic experience and knowledge. The club aims to provide a friendly environment for its members to enjoy the development of their photographic skills through a variety of activities in the company of like-minded individuals.

If you have an interest in photography, at whatever level, you would be most welcome at M&DPS. We meet at Mistley Village Hall on the 2nd, 4th and 5th Thursdays of the month between September and May at 7.30pm.

For further information please contact our secretary Pat Ainger on 01206 231242, visit our website at e-voice.org.uk/manningtreeanddistrictphotographicsociety or email madps@post.com. - Katharine Showell

**ST. MARY'S CHURCH
PRESERVATION SOCIETY
EAST BERGHOLT**

Registered Charity No: 1063444

Members' Evening



Thursday 11 December 2025

Carols and Mince pies

6.30-8.00pm

By kind invitation of Ed and Camilla Keeble

Woodgates Farm, Woodgates Road, East Bergholt CO7 6RE

£15 per person to include mulled wine, mince pies and festive eats.

This is a members' event, but if you are interested in becoming a prospective new member you are welcome to join us but please ring either Sara (01206 299224) or Debbie (07821141473) to book in.

Thursday 11 December
Carols and Mince pies at Woodgates Farm, Woodgates Road,
East Bergholt CO7 6RE

Name and Address

.....
.....

Telephone and email address

£15 per person

Cheques to - St Marys Church East Bergholt Preservation Society
Or BACS Sort code: 20-22-67 Account: 50657352

I would like to bring a prospective new member/guest @ £15 each

Name of prospective new member/guest.....

.....

I would like a lift I can offer a lift

Parking available at Woodgates Farm but uneven pathway. There are a few steps within the property.

All enquiries to Sara Eley, East Bergholt Place, East Bergholt, CO7 6UP
Tel: 01206 299224 sara@placeforplants.co.uk or Debbie Tuppen 07821141473
ebchurchpres@gmail.com



Registered Charity No: 1063444

EAST BERGHOLT CINEMA

at the Constable Hall, Gandish Road, East Bergholt
Films start at 8.00pm, doors and ticket desk open at 7.30pm



Friday 5th December

The Naked Gun (15, 1 hr 25 mins)

Only one man has the particular set of skills to lead Police Squad and save the world! Lt Frank Drebin Jr (Liam Neeson) follows in his father's footsteps in The Naked Gun.

Friday 2nd January

The Ballad of Wallis Island (12A, 1 hr 39 mins)

Tickets to all films are available in advance from Grier & Partners in East Bergholt or Noelleen on 01206 299774. We highly recommend that you buy a ticket in advance as seating capacity is limited. There is a bar, tea and coffee and ice creams. - *The EB Cinema Team*

EAST BERGHOLT THEATRE GROUP

Are you new to the village? Do you have a love of the theatre? We are a non-profit-making group who arrange a few trips every year from the village to see a production, be it a drama, a murder mystery or a musical.

We take a coach load, with a maximum of 53, to places like Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, Southwold and Aldeburgh. Our membership is open to all and Kings Coaches take the strain of travelling to and fro. If you are interested in joining us please call Alma on 07531 015423. - *Alma, Tessa, Roy and Cathy*

BATS PRESENTS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

A PANTOMIME

BASED ON THE CLASSIC FAIRY TALE

February 17th to 21st 2026 7.30pm
+ 2.30pm Matinee on the 21st

BRANTHAM VILLAGE HALL

Tickets available from www.batsonline.co.uk
and Guys & Dolls in Brantham

NETG
North Essex Theatre Group

NODA
North Essex Drama

TOM WHALLEY PANTOMIMES
Producing the pantomime

EAST BERGHOLT UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB



The last month: Things are taking shape now, with all three teams settling in nicely. The First Team started October with a disappointing reverse at Leiston but recovered well with two League victories. However, they did lose on penalties at Henley in the Suffolk Senior Cup.

The Reserves were unbeaten in the month, while the A Team won three from four, scoring 17 goals in the process.

Fixtures for December

First Team, SIL Premier Division

6th, Saxmundham Sports, A

13th, Whitton Utd, H

20th, Trimley Red Devils, A

Reserves, SIL Division Two

6th, Trimley Red Devils Res, H, Cup

13th, Sporting 87 Res, A

20th, Henley Athletic Res, H

A Team, SIL Division Five

20th, Brooks Hall Rovers Res, A

League fixtures are available at fulltime.thefa.com. Select *Suffolk & Ipswich League*. Fixtures are subject to change.

Events: Keep a lookout in January for news of a darts event.

Sponsorship: We would like to thank our sponsors and player sponsors.

If you would like to sponsor the club in some capacity we would be delighted to hear from you. Club strips, dugouts, banners and boards on matchdays all offer potential exposure for your business while supporting a local organisation.

Juniors: If you are interested in participating please contact Lee Partridge (bunter.partridge@googlemail.com).

Joining us: We are always on the lookout for people who can help the club as a committee member, whether it be on the playing side or just in the background.

We are also looking for new players. EBUFC is a community club with very strong village traditions. The majority of the players either live in, or have links to, the village.

For anyone over 16 who is interested in playing, we train on Wednesday evenings at the High School.

The teams cover a range of abilities, so if you want to play again just come along and give it a go. - *Steve Butcher, secretary, stevebutcher55@btinternet.com*

EAST BERGHOLT TENNIS CLUB



After a lot of work, we now have the structure of our new club facility in place and only have the finishing touches to finalise ahead of a more formal opening (to be arranged).



Club volunteers met to design the internal clubroom requirements, which are now being worked on, and we've also had a great response to our request for donations of furniture and kitchen equipment. The toilets are now in use, and thanks to a number of volunteers we have a cleaning rota in place to keep the facilities well-maintained.

The next step is to replant the hedge behind the facility and replace the bird and bat boxes to encourage wildlife back to the site. Thank you to everyone involved for bringing all this to life and the significant difference it will make to players, members and visitors.

We had a great Halloween social tennis session and a quiz night which raised more than £500 for the club - a huge shout-out to everyone involved in organising this, and to everyone who came along to test out their knowledge.

Matthew Watson, our head coach, had a successful week of children's tennis during the October half-term break, and our two ladies', two men's and three mixed doubles teams have all got off to a great start in the winter season with tough but successful matches against Kesgrave, Wortham, Roundwood and Felixstowe, among others.

For further information about the club please visit our website at eastbergholttennis.co.uk - East Bergholt Tennis Club

EAST BERGHOLT BOWLS CLUB

As I write, a few of us are recovering after spending an evening hosting the Beavers at our carpet bowls club night. During one of our open days in the summer we had been approached by the Beaver leader asking if we could try to teach the Beavers bowls.



As you can imagine, the concentration of 6-to-8-year-olds was a little hard to hold, given that the 15 little boys and one little girl were presented with a huge open hall and six people trying to tell them to bowl woods from one end of a mat to the other. I'm not sure if we have found any budding bowlers but they all had a good time.

Our club members seem to appreciate the new venue, as numbers are continuing to rise on Monday club nights. Our fish-and-chip night was a great success and our coffee mornings are helping to bring people together during the winter when there's not so much bowling.

On the way back from Sudbury one day my husband and I went to look for Polstead Bowls Club, who we will be playing in the league shortly. It was a very rural location and we were glad we managed to find it in the daylight, but what a delight the village is.

On a different tack, several of the bowlers sing with the Constable Singers choir. We meet on a Thursday night in the Congregational Church from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. Due to natural wastage we are down on numbers at the moment, so if you don't fancy bowls how about singing in a choir? We sing popular songs from the charts and musicals, and at present we are singing carols. You don't need to read music, usually words are provided, and everything is done in a light-hearted manner, just singing for fun.

Keep a lookout for the board outside the Lambe School for our coffee mornings. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year. - *Terri Catchpole, terricatchpole@me.com*

EAST BERGHOLT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Pensioners' Christmas Lunch

The EBCC Pensioners' Christmas Lunch will be on Sunday 7th December at 12.30pm for 1.00pm, at the Constable Hall. To book your place please call Sandra Rowson on 01206 299109. - *Judith Adolphus*

MAGAZINE DEADLINES

Thank you to everyone who met the early deadline for the January magazine. This will allow our printers and fantastic delivery volunteers some well-earned time off over the Christmas and New Year period!

The deadline for the February magazine will be 5th January.

LOCAL ISSUES & OPINIONS

UPDATE FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCIL



Councillor Sallie Davies

High School rebuild: I recently visited East Bergholt High School to learn about the plans for its complete rebuild and transformation, funded by the Department for Education.

The main building housing the hall and canteen was built in 1957 and designed for 300 pupils. Other buildings went up gradually in the following decades. One double classroom used for exams was inexplicably built over a sewage drain, which then exploded.

Block C was completely refurbished but has never been used because it was declared unfit when RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) was found in its structure. As a result, the school is currently using portable buildings for classrooms and has lost the use of its tennis and netball courts.

The senior leadership, teaching and support staff have continued to do a difficult job amid constant upheaval, gaining an Ofsted assessment as Good two years ago. Respect must also go to the children who have weathered this turmoil and who study in buildings that are well past their sell-by date or are temporary.

The Department for Education has assessed East Bergholt High as suitable for the School Rebuilding Programme and has brought together a project team to design a fit-for-purpose new building for 900 pupils. The ambitious plans are well underway and are not only environmentally outstanding, but will make the buildings and the space support the work of the school in every way.

Penrose Trust, which runs the school, intends to present the plans to the Parish Council in January 2026 before consultation with the whole village. Following this a planning application will be submitted.

Call for Sites and Assessment of Call for Sites 2024: Babergh District Council periodically asks landowners to offer sites for housing and commercial development. This is known as a Call for Sites.

There was a Call for Sites in 2024 and the results of this were released last month. There are just two sites in East Bergholt, one of which is the Heath Road site used by Hills Building Group. This has been rejected as unsuitable by Babergh because it already has a planning permission. The other, land north of Wheelers Yard, Putticks Lane (near the High School), is potentially suitable.

This does not mean this site will necessarily be developed. It is outside the built-up boundary of the village and is too far from the primary school. You can find the Call for Sites document on the Babergh District Council website in the Joint Local Plan section.

There is now a further Call for Sites as a result of the increased housing targets issued by the current government. If we are forced to build more housing, the district will need more sites to build on. The current Call for Sites is also on the Babergh website and is open until 9th January.

Noise nuisance: A Shotley resident has been fined more than £1,000 after repeatedly allowing his dog to cause a serious noise disturbance, despite multiple warnings and formal enforcement action. An investigation by environmental protection officers using noise-monitoring equipment confirmed excessive barking and howling throughout the day. Residents reported being regularly woken as early as 6.00am, with some recordings capturing up to 200 barks in a single episode. - *Sallie Davies, Babergh District Council councillor for East Bergholt, Sallie.davies@Babergh.gov.uk*

UPDATE FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

St James Place development: The Parish Council considered the revised proposals to build 25 extra houses in phase 2 of the St James Place (Heath Road) development, on top of the 34 already approved for that area, significantly increasing the density of housing proposed. The Parish Council decided to recommend refusal to the planners for two core reasons.

First, there is **no proven need** for the proposed new houses. The two new large estates have already provided some 80+ affordable homes in East Bergholt, when all local housing needs surveys commissioned over the past five years identify that only 25 are required. There is a need for low-cost housing specifically for local people, but this proposal does not offer that. Also, the design would push all the low-cost housing into a small densely-packed area with an urban density not suitable for a rural village.

Second, the extra new houses would obliterate the community benefit of public open space that the permitted development provides in the form of public playing fields. The revised application suggests a swimming pool and a preschool facility will be built, but elsewhere it is suggested that there is no market interest in buying/leasing these facilities.

There were also a number of other objections to the proposal, arising from suggestions made by councillors and residents, and you will be able to read the full set of recommendations on the Parish Council website.

Constable anniversary: The Parish Council is helping local organisations to coordinate and publicise events throughout 2026 to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of John Constable. The National Trust, the East Bergholt Society, St Mary's Church, Constable

Hall, and other village organisations have combined to bring together a plan for a number of events throughout the year. We are also keeping in touch with our local museums, who have been actively planning events. You will be able to see all local events planned on a dedicated page of the Parish Council website in 2026.

Speed limit dustbin stickers: We now have 100 dustbin stickers, indicating to drivers a maximum speed of 30mph, available for residents to collect from our office (maximum two per household, East Bergholt residents only). Pop in Monday-Thursday, 10.00am-3.00pm, to Unit 4CD, The Gattinetts, Hadleigh Road CO7 6QT.

Community service events: Throughout 2026 these will continue to bring a range of support directly into the village. Services vary each time, but can include health checks, wellbeing advice, Citizens Advice, Fire and Rescue Service advice, and slipper swaps. The next event is on Thursday 8th January. - Nicki Reed

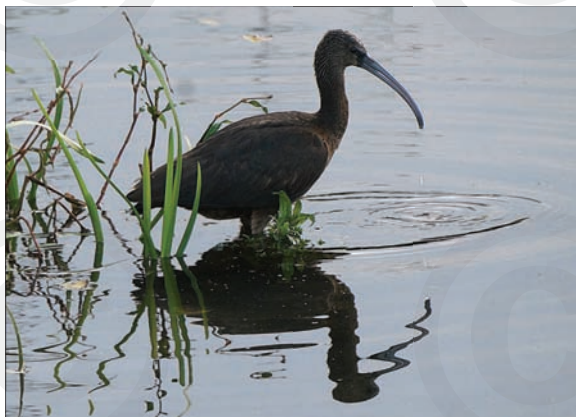
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A RARE VISITOR FROM SOUTHERN EUROPE

Having walked from Fen Bridge on my way towards Flatford one early morning in October, I was just following a bend in the Stour when right in front of me, barely ten yards away, was the beautiful Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) - a great rarity, more often found near the Mediterranean.

I couldn't quite believe my eyes, but there it was, moving about in the emergent vegetation, foraging. Earlier in September a flock of some 30 had been reported by the Suffolk Bird Group flying up the coast near Bawdsey. Apparently, the flock has since dispersed, with the odd bird turning up around the county.

Due to climate warming, sightings of the Glossy Ibis have increased in recent years in the UK, and the first pair bred in Cambridgeshire in 2022. - Rasik Bhadresa



CONSTABLE MEDICAL PRACTICE

Our team would like to express their gratitude to you, our wonderful patients, for your continued trust and support throughout the year. We're proud to be a part of your community and look forward to continuing to care for you in the year ahead.

We understand that Christmas can be a busy and sometimes challenging time, and we're here for you if you need us.

The practice is only closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Otherwise, we are open Monday-Friday 8.00am-6.30pm throughout the Christmas and New Year period.

If you have an urgent medical need outside of our opening hours, please contact the out-of-hours service via NHS 111 for advice.

Please ensure all repeat prescriptions are submitted as early as possible in December, as this helps our community pharmacies manage supplies of medication appropriately.

From all at CMP, we wish you a peaceful and joyous Christmas, and look forward to serving you in the New Year. - *Melanie Hodgkins*



RURAL REPORT

A regular round-up of countryside and farming news

Avian influenza was confirmed in commercial poultry near Lakenheath on 26th October. A 3 km protection zone and 10 km surveillance zone were declared around the premises.

Doctors in Suffolk have launched a pioneering virtual reality project to tackle growing mental health issues in farming communities. The Rural Minds Project uses VR storytelling to place users inside the pressures of farm life, from financial strain and weather dependency to isolation and family expectations, reports *FarmingUK*.

"I don't think anyone is suggesting wiping out the little black and red clusters of harlequins gathering in our houses any time soon," said Jayna Connelly, science communicator for the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, referring to the non-native species of ladybird from Asia. "For winter at least, they are here to stay. With the push towards reducing insecticide use, maybe the ladybirds' efficient predatory habits are what we need and supporting our native species is the best way forward, through native plants and well-placed pockets of semi-natural habitat - creating networks across our farmland and gardens." The UK is home to around 47 native ladybird species.

An extensive analysis of more than 1,000 wheat crops grown across the UK between 2013 and 2022 has revealed that high-yielding crops of over 14 tonnes per hectare can be consistently achieved across diverse soil types and cropping systems. High-yielding crops had comparable input costs to lower-yielding crops and produced significantly higher gross margins, according to ADAS.

"The ability of pigs to forage has given them a reputation for being destructive, but in the right context, that ability can be put to good use by having them do some of the heavy lifting in land regeneration systems. Pigs roaming in woodland can recreate the effect the wild boar once had on our native forests. They can improve the biodiversity of woodland or help eradicate invasive species," says the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

The Suffolk Tractor Light Parade will return once again this Christmas, starting and finishing at **Clarke & Simpson Auctions** in Campsea Ashe. Each year this event brings thousands of spectators onto the streets of villages and towns in Suffolk to see tractors decorated in an array of lights. The parade goes through Wickham Market, Ufford, Woodbridge, Eyke, Rendlesham and Tunstall. This year's parade, beginning at 4.30pm on Sunday 14th December, will support Suffolk Accident Rescue Service, The Rural Coffee Caravan and The Nest, with a fundraising goal of more than £13,000, reports the *East Anglian Daily Times*.

- Brian Chester, brianrobertchester@gmail.com, 01572 757600

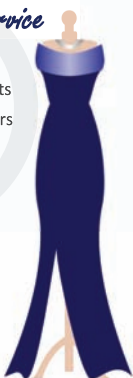
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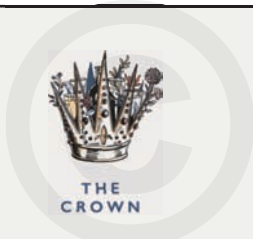
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COVER PHOTO

We are always looking for photos of seasonal events, interesting scenes, or flora and fauna of East Bergholt for the cover of our magazine. We are keen on receiving pictures of the village's architecture and heritage, as well as nature scenes. If you have taken a suitable photo, please send it to barnaby.page@gmail.com for consideration. It should be in .jpg format, at the highest resolution possible, accompanied by a brief description and the photographer's name. This month's cover image is by Richard Kevern.

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