



# **East Bergholt**

parish magazine

**February 2026**

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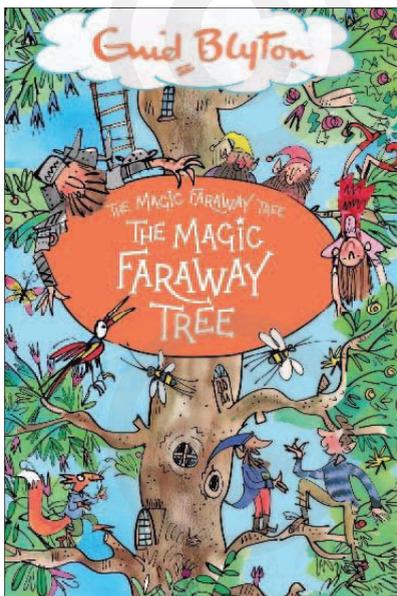
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*Visiting St Mary's church: St Mary's is usually open during daylight hours. The church is open every day and you are most welcome to come in and have a quiet moment in the Lady Chapel or leave a prayer request. If you need a listening ear, please 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.*

## IS THIS THE REAL LIFE? IS THIS JUST FANTASY?



I went to the cinema recently and had a wonderful surprise. I saw a poster advertising a film due out at the end of March. The film is called *The Magic Faraway Tree* and it's based upon a series of children's books by Enid Blyton. The reason I looked at the poster with delight is that these were among my favourite books as a child. Not so well known - today at any rate - as her books about Noddy, the Famous Five or the Secret Seven, the *Faraway Tree* books tell the story of an enchanted tree with curious individuals living in it and magical lands that appear at its top.

Three children discover the tree and embark on a series of adventures. I was reminded of characters and scenes from the stories: of Silky and Moonface and Saucepan Man; of toffee shock sweets that grow and grow in your mouth; of the slide that ran inside the tree from top to bottom; and of the constant need as you climbed the tree to watch out for Dame Washalot's dirty water crashing down towards you.

Forgive me my reveries, but I wonder what your favourite books were as you were growing up. What fragments of memories would come to your mind were I to name them?

And that led me on to thinking about the books contained within the Bible. What characters or stories do you remember from its pages? Or perhaps you've never opened it to take a look? Books like *The Magic Faraway Tree* create impossibly different fantastical worlds for children of all ages to enjoy. The Bible might have felt like that, too, if you last encountered it as a child - yet millions of Christians the world over would testify to their belief that it isn't fantasy, but real-world stuff that can be life-transforming.

If they're right, maybe now is the time for you to get more familiar with its characters and stories, particularly if you've never read it or haven't picked it up in years. Start with the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke or John - known as the Gospels, telling the life story of Jesus - and see where it takes you. You might be wonderfully surprised!

- Steve Mann, *Brantham Methodist Church*.

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Steve Phillips  
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Debbie Lawrence  
RHAD FSHAA

Toni Healy  
RHAD



## STORAGE AVAILABLE

If you are thinking of decluttering, moving house or just need extra storage, please give us a call.

We have the following available:

40ft ISO Containers

20ft ISO Containers

6m x 12m Storage Units

All at our friendly, accessible and secure location.

Towns Green Farm, Park Lane, East Bergholt, Suffolk CO7 6XS

**Email:** [pete@townsgreenfarm.com](mailto:pete@townsgreenfarm.com) **Tel:** 07825 290673

# ST MARY'S CHURCH, EAST BERGHOLT

The Street, East Bergholt, Suffolk CO7 6TA

Rector: Rev Chris Willis [revchris@constablebenefice.org](mailto:revchris@constablebenefice.org)

Benefice website: [www.ConstableCountryChurches.co.uk](http://www.ConstableCountryChurches.co.uk)

Facebook: stmaryseastbergholt

YouTube: Constable Country Churches

## ST MARY'S CHURCH UPDATE

2026 is going to be a significant year in the life of St Mary's and our big building project. Later in the year we will find out whether we have been successful with our **Lottery Heritage Fund grant bid**. We are currently busy preparing for an important meeting with our investment manager from the Heritage Fund and our consultant team. By the time you read this, we should have a better idea of how positively they are considering our plans.

One piece of very good news - **the boiler** has been mended! So it lives to fight another day and the church is warmer, especially in the pews, where there are floor-level pipes. Choose your seats carefully! - Jackie Reeves and Fiona Trott

### Dates for your diary in 2026

*(Look out for more details in due course.)*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>5<sup>th</sup> March</b>                       | Thursday free Lent soup lunches begin - 5 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> March. Book via <a href="mailto:stmarysevents@gmail.com">stmarysevents@gmail.com</a> . Please note that on 12 <sup>th</sup> March, Mothers' Union will be providing lunch, so tickets are required for this date and can be obtained from a committee member. |
| <b>7<sup>th</sup> March</b>                       | Men's breakfast at 9.00am - book your place via <a href="mailto:stmarysevents@gmail.com">stmarysevents@gmail.com</a>   |
| <b>9<sup>th</sup> May</b>                         | Constable Quiz at the Constable Hall - part of the Constable 250 celebrations  |
| <b>17<sup>th</sup> May</b>                        | Brass & Ivories concert in the church  |
| <b>21<sup>st</sup> June</b>                       | Concert in the church by Tim Pells, featuring music from John Constable's period - part of Constable 250   |
| <b>18<sup>th</sup> July</b>                       | Blues jazz concert   |
| <b>26<sup>th</sup> July-5<sup>th</sup> August</b> | Knitted Bible exhibition   |



## FAMILY@CHURCH



At our meeting just after Epiphany, family@church's theme in January was the story of the three kings: a familiar story of the guiding star, the long journey, gifts for the baby Jesus and the demonstration of worship and obedience. We journeyed around the church singing the favourite carol *We Three Kings* while following a star, made story spinners, enjoyed story time, and finished with tasty sandwiches and cake.

Family@church meets on the second Sunday of the month at 4.00pm in the meeting room at the back of the church (the same room used by the toddler group - enter via the door opposite the war memorial). If you are new to the village, or if you 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. It's also a great way to make new friends! For any queries or comments regarding family@church please contact Liz Digby ([liz.digby@btopenworld.com](mailto:liz.digby@btopenworld.com)) or Fiona Trott ([fiona.trott13@gmail.com](mailto:fiona.trott13@gmail.com)). - Fiona Trott

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

*Men's Breakfast*

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

**at 09:00**

Book via [stmarysevents@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysevents@gmail.com)

to ensure there are enough bacon butties.

Admission is free with a retiring collection

In the West End meeting room at St Mary's  
(door opposite the war memorial)

## CONSTABLE CHURCHES MOTHERS' UNION



Thank you to everyone who has recycled their 2025 Christmas cards for our 2026 Mothers' Union project making Christmas cards for the inmates at the three prisons in our diocese.

This is one of many projects that we are part of as a branch. If you enjoy knitting, we also have projects supporting the seafarers' mission and local care homes, so come to our knit-and-natter group on the first Wednesday of the month after the 9.30am communion service at St Mary's Church in East Bergholt.

This month at our meeting on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 2.00pm, Rob and Myra Shackleton will be coming to share how they use music as part of the care they give to the babies they foster. All our meetings are at St Mary's Church in the West End room.

On 12<sup>th</sup> March you are welcome to join our Lent Lunch, which is raising funds for the Mothers' Union Mother's Day appeal. Tickets will be on sale on 12<sup>th</sup> February at £5. - *Mothers' Union committee: Janet Ball, Jenny Chapman, Chris Jacobs, Grace Wallis and Wendy Withers*

An advertisement for 'SOUP LUNCHES'. The central image is a white bowl filled with bright orange soup, garnished with a sprig of green herbs. The text 'SOUP LUNCHES' is written in large, bold, black, hand-drawn letters across the top of the bowl. Below the bowl, the text 'on Thursdays at 12:30 during March\*' is written in a similar hand-drawn style. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is a white box containing the text: '\* March 12<sup>th</sup> will be a Mothers Union lunch and require a ticket' on the left, and 'Please book by emailing stmarysebevents@gmail.com' on the right. Below this box, the text 'in the West End room at St Mary's church' is written in bold black font. At the very bottom, a blue box contains the text 'It is a great opportunity to be together with friends or to meet new people. Everyone is welcome!' in white font.

You are warmly invited to join our

**SOUP LUNCHES**

**on Thursdays at 12:30**  
**during March\***

\* March 12<sup>th</sup> will be a Mothers Union lunch and require a ticket

Please book by emailing [stmarysebevents@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysebevents@gmail.com)

**in the West End room at St Mary's church**

**It is a great opportunity to be together with friends or to meet new people. Everyone is welcome!**



## St Mary's Baby & Toddler Group

Every Friday during term-time:  
9:30am to 11:30am

We're a relaxed and fun play group that meets in the West End meeting room of St Mary's Church, East Bergholt (door opposite the war memorial) for informal play, tasty snack time, coffee, tea and chat.

For more information, please contact either  
Liz Digby (07557 569192 - [liz.digby@btopenworld.com](mailto:liz.digby@btopenworld.com))  
or Gill Rattray ([gillrattray@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gillrattray@yahoo.co.uk))

### January

9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>

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### February

6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>

(No toddler group on 20<sup>th</sup> as half term)

---

### March

6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>



# IN MEMORIAM

**PETER J SUTTON**

**31<sup>st</sup> May 1932 - 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

Peter Sutton, a much-loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather and a cherished member of the East Bergholt community, passed away peacefully on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at the age of 93, after a courageous battle with cancer.



Born in Wisbech in May 1932, Peter grew up with a quiet determination and a deep sense of service that would shape his life. As a young man he joined the Royal Naval Medical Corps, a role that took him to many remarkable corners of the world. Among his most treasured memories was his time aboard the naval survey ship HMS Owen, sailing to Antarctica and South Georgia on an expedition which retraced parts of Darwin's voyage on HMS Beagle, and which left a lasting imprint on his life.

In 1958 Peter married Wendy Penny in Ipswich, before moving in the 1960s to Wiltshire, where he began a long and fulfilling career with several major pharmaceutical companies. They moved to East Bergholt in 1968, where they made their home, not only in the village but at the heart of St Mary's Church. Peter served for 12 years as churchwarden, supporting the church through seasons of growth and helping modernise facilities that are still appreciated today - including installing a kitchen with dishwasher. Sadly, Wendy passed away in 2009.

After retiring, Peter embraced organic gardening. He became a passionate beekeeper as well, producing honey that he happily shared with family, friends, and neighbours. Travel remained an important part of his retirement, and although he deeply missed Wendy, he continued to explore the world, making memorable trips to Australia, America, and beyond. Peter loved being around people and continued to host dinner parties and small soirées for many years after losing Wendy.

Peter will be remembered for his kindness and sense of fun. His life touched many, and his legacy lives on in his family, his church, and the countless people he met along the way.

He will be greatly missed. - *Annette and Laura, Peter's daughters*



St Mary's, East Bergholt



St Michael's, Brantham



St Mary's, Bentley



St Mary's, Tattlingstone

## February 2026

### ST MARY'S, EAST BERGHOLT

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	8.00am	BCP Communion Service
	10.30am	<a href="#">Connect Service (this month at Brantham)</a>
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	BCP Service
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Morning Worship with Communion
	4.00pm	family@church
	6.30pm	The Gathering
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	8.00am	BCP Communion Service
	10.00am	Morning Worship with Communion
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.00am	Morning Worship
	6.30pm	The Gathering

### ST MICHAEL'S, BRANTHAM

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.30am	<a href="#">Connect Service (Four Parishes together)</a>
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship with Communion
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	11.00am	Morning Worship with Communion
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30am	Morning Worship
	4.00pm	Family at Church

### ST MARY'S, TATTINGSTONE

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.30am	<a href="#">Connect Service (this month at Brantham)</a>
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	6.00pm	Evensong
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Morning Worship with Communion
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.00am	Morning Worship with Communion

### ST MARY'S, BENTLEY

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.30am	<a href="#">Connect Service (this month at Brantham)</a>
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Morning Worship with Communion
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Morning Worship
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.00am	Morning Worship with Communion

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](http://www.batsonline.co.uk)  
and Guys & Dolls in Brantham

**NETG**  
North Essex Theatre Guild  
**NODA**  
For every stage

 **TOM WHALLEY PANTOMIMES**  
@TOM WHALLEY PANTOMIMES



# LOCAL CHURCHES

## 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](mailto:revgoymour@gmail.com)

website: [stmarksparish.org.uk](http://stmarksparish.org.uk)

Father Luke's Sunday sermons are available at [anchor.fm/fr-luke-goymour](http://anchor.fm/fr-luke-goymour)

### Waiting for an answer to prayers

It can be hard to know why prayers aren't answered immediately or in the way in which we've asked. Sometimes, looking back on our lives, we may understand why God has not answered prayer in the way we expected. We can't limit God or put Him in a box of our own imagination. The basis of all prayer should be trust - and that can be very hard at times, especially when we are in the depths of grief after losing a loved one.

When life seems very difficult, the Surrender Prayer can be a very powerful way of handing over our problems to God: "Jesus, I surrender myself to you. Take care of everything." Repeat it ten times - or more, if necessary! It's especially helpful when you're worrying about something, or someone, during the night. You can also find online the Surrender Novena, which you can pray over nine days. *Jesus I trust in You.*

### Weekday and Sunday masses and devotions

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

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

### 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](mailto:hospitalchaplain@stmarksparish.org.uk). - Kathy Pollard

# CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

## EAST BERGHOLT WI

At our January meeting we relived our activities of 2024 and 2025 with a slide show of photos taken over the past two years. We also had the opportunity to vote for our choice of the 2026 resolution to be discussed at our Federation's annual meeting in June, and members received a copy of our 2026 programme, detailing the speakers who have been booked for the coming year.

Our next meeting will be on 4<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm at the Constable Hall, where Adrian Knowles will be talking to us about the variety of bees and wasps in Suffolk. Do come and see if our group is right for you - an opportunity to make new friends and take part in new activities. We would be pleased to welcome you.

For further information about the WI please contact either our president Tina Hurley on 01206 298223 or Gill Rattray on 01206 298380, visit our website at [eastbergholtwi.wordpress.com](http://eastbergholtwi.wordpress.com) or check out our Facebook page. - Gill Rattray

## EAST BERGHOLT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY (founded 1895)

[eastbergholthorticulturalsociety.onesuffolk.net](http://eastbergholthorticulturalsociety.onesuffolk.net)

[ebhs.horti@gmail.com](mailto:ebhs.horti@gmail.com) • find us on Facebook and Instagram



The Society ran a full programme in 2025, and we intend to keep this up in 2025, with the dates below already pencilled in:

<b>Quiz and Fish and Chip Supper</b>	Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> April, Constable Hall
<b>Plant Sale</b>	Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> May, Lambe School
<b>Visit to RHS Hyde Hall Garden</b>	Date to be confirmed (members only)
<b>Annual Show</b>	Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> September, Constable Hall
<b>AGM</b>	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> November, Lambe School
<b>Christmas Wreath Making</b>	Sat. 28 <sup>th</sup> November, Lambe School (members only)

Further details of each event will be published nearer the time.

We are finalising dates when we can visit gardens in East Bergholt. We are planning to have two different formats this year: an evening tour followed by wine and nibbles, and open mornings where members will be able to informally visit a village garden, specifically when that garden is at its best.

Please don't forget the Society Store; this will be opening every Sunday between 9.30am and 10.30am, starting on 15<sup>th</sup> February. I look forward to seeing you there.

May I thank all the members who attended the Gardening Question Time and Christmas Wreath Making workshop in November, and all the committee members (Naomi in particular) whose hard work made it possible. May we also extend our thanks to Rob Dunger of Suffolk Sounds, who not only hosted the Gardening Question Time event but also arranged for it to be broadcast.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to thank all our members for their continued support, and to wish everyone a prosperous and productive New Year. - *Steve Feeney, chairman*

### **Gardening tips for February**

Sometimes February can be colder than January. The cold snap at the beginning of the year could be repeated. But the days are getting longer. Some snowdrops are out, narcissi are pushing through and crocuses should be looking good. Continue to make sure your less hardy plants are protected. There's still a very real risk of frost - perhaps snow. There's always a bit of tidying-up to do as well, especially after strong winds. Check ties on all climbing plants. Wrap up warm and get out there!

It is the last chance to plant bare root roses and other shrubs. If the weather is kind, toward the end of the month rose pruning can begin; don't be too timid about it. Most shrubs appreciate a slow-release fertiliser such as bonemeal. Sweet peas can be sown in the greenhouse, in a cold frame or in pots on an indoor windowsill. Prune winter-flowering jasmine after flowers have faded.

Broad beans can be sown in the same way as sweet peas. Hopefully, early potatoes are (or have been) chitting. Prune autumn-fruiting raspberries right back to the ground. Vacant veg beds can be covered in polythene to warm up the soil. Does your lawnmower need servicing? Please remember those hungry, thirsty birds... and next month gardening should begin in earnest.- *Janet Alcoe*



## MANNINGTREE & DISTRICT PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Last month club members enjoyed two competitions (Built Environment and Open Mono), a field trip to Colchester Zoo, and a talk by Scott Hurd on living and working as a photographer in Namibia. Our programme for February is as follows:

- Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February** field trip - Flatford sunrise
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February** talk by Kevin Pigney on seascapes, landscapes and long-exposure photography
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February** Harwich and Manningtree Interclub Competition
- Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February** Open Colour Print Competition

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

This month's featured image by Alan Moran was the winning image from our recent Open Colour PDI Competition.



We are a small group of photography enthusiasts with a wide range of photographic experience and knowledge.

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 second, fourth and fifth Thursdays of the month between September and May at 7.30pm.

For further information please contact our secretary Pat Ainger on 01206 231242, email [madps@post.com](mailto:madps@post.com) or visit [e-voice.org.uk/manningtreeanddistrictphotographicsociety](http://e-voice.org.uk/manningtreeanddistrictphotographicsociety). - Katharine Showell

## SVAM

### Stour Valley Arts & Music

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February** 4.00pm at the Constable Hall, East Bergholt  
**YOUNG MUSICIANS' CONCERT.** Our popular event which showcases talented young musicians from local schools. Performers are aged 7-17 and will play a variety of instruments.

Tickets are £8, including afternoon tea. Please book early to secure your place; see contact details below. Please note that tickets are not available from Grier & Partners or on the door, as this is a catered event.



**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** 4.00pm at St Mary's Church, East Bergholt

**TRIO ARCHAI.** (*A change from the previously announced programme.*) Ayla Sahin, violin; Finn Mannion, cello; and Mar Valor, piano.

**Beethoven: Piano Trio in E flat major, Op. 1 No. 1**  
**Fauré: Piano Trio in D minor**  
**Brahms: Piano Trio in B major**

We are delighted to welcome this outstanding young international piano trio. Based in Switzerland, they have already won several major awards and competitions.

They will be on a tour of the UK and will be spending two weeks at Snape Maltings, where they have been selected as Britten Pears Residency Artists from 24<sup>th</sup> February.

More information and tickets online at [www.svam.org.uk](http://www.svam.org.uk) or via [svamtickets@btinternet.co.uk](mailto:svamtickets@btinternet.co.uk). Concert tickets are also available from Grier & Partners, from Doreen Weatherall on 01206 298426, or on the door - Birte Kelly.

**Brantham Scout and Guide Group**

**QUIZ NIGHT**

Profits going to 1st Brantham Scout and Guide Group Charity  
Numbers: 1072555 & 1072556

 Saturday  
14th March  
6pm - 10pm

**£10 per person,**  
**Teams up to 6**

 Brantham Village Hall

Ploughman's Supper.  
(Dietary requirements catered for)

Raffle and Bar available on Donation Basis

To book contact us: 01206 395101 & 07547667708 or 1stbranthamsandg.fundraising@gmail.com



## ALLOTMENTS AVAILABLE



There are a few allotments available on the Chaplin Road Allotments.

£25 per year for a full plot or

£12.50 for a half plot.

Please contact Julie and Derek Nash

Tel: 01206 298603

derekandjulienash@gmail.com

## 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 6<sup>th</sup> February**

**Vermiglio** (15, 1 hr 59 mins)

1944, Vermiglio, a remote mountain village in Italy. The arrival of Pietro, a deserter, into the family of the local teacher, and his love for the teacher's eldest daughter, will change the course of everyone's life. Winner of the Grand Jury prize at the Venice Film Festival 2024.

"A richly compassionate, emotional and detailed drama of family secrets in the wartime Italian countryside." - *The Guardian*

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*

## STOUR VALLEY U3A

*Learn, laugh, live*

Make the most of life once you're no longer in full-time work and come and explore new ideas, interests and skills with University of the Third Age. Across the country U3A members are meeting new people, learning, staying active, and having fun later in life. It's local, social, friendly, low-cost and open to all.

We have more than 40 interest groups including walking (from strollers to 5+ milers), theatre trips, garden visits, art appreciation, curry club, international dining, science group, languages, keep fit, pickleball, overseas travel, bridge, Sunday Singles lunch... there's something for everyone. If we don't have a group you are interested in, you are welcome to start one up. Membership costs only £15 a year.

Monthly coffee mornings are held on the first Friday of the month 10.00am-12.00 noon at the Lambe School, Gaston Street, East Bergholt. Come along, meet some members, hear more about us and decide whether you'd like to join.

Monthly lectures are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.15pm in the Constable Hall, Gandish Road, East Bergholt CO7 6TP. Guests are welcome for a charge of £4. On 11<sup>th</sup> February Marion Pettet, retired chairman of Chelmsford Ballet Company, will share her love of dance and theatre, and on 11<sup>th</sup> March Andrew Baker, acclaimed cruise ship lecturer, will return to talk on The Anatomy of the NHS.

Please take a look at our website [stourvalley.u3asite.uk](http://stourvalley.u3asite.uk) for more information and contact details. - *Pat Chandler*

## BATS



Winter's cheer, never fear, the panto is here! Or nearly...at half-term Brantham Amateur Theatrical Society (BATS) is putting on *Beauty and the Beast* at Brantham Village Hall from Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February. Performances are at 7.30pm; some nights are already selling out. Tickets available at [batsonline.co.uk](http://batsonline.co.uk) or in person from GuysandDolls2 hair salon in Brantham (near the Co-op). - *Rachel Bach*

## EAST BERGHOLT PALESTINE SUPPORT GROUP

East Bergholt Palestine Support Group meets once a month to organise fundraising events for Medical Aid for Palestinians, and network with other local groups campaigning for Palestinian rights and freedom. We meet on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm. Please email [eastbergholtglobal@gmail.com](mailto:eastbergholtglobal@gmail.com) for further information. - *Ele Lamb*

## EAST BERGHOLT UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB



**The last month:** There were good results across the club throughout December. The First Team maintained their solid form with two victories and one defeat. The Reserves only had two games, losing a League game but advancing to the next round of the League Cup in the other, albeit on penalties. The A Team again had a 100% record, including a Cup victory, and they remain on top of the League's Division Five.

### Fixtures for February

#### First Team, SIL Premier Division

14<sup>th</sup>, Debenham LC, A

21<sup>st</sup>, Saxmundham Sports, H

28<sup>th</sup>, Old Newton Utd, H

#### Reserves, SIL Division Two

14<sup>th</sup>, Sporting 87 Res, H

#### A Team, SIL Division Five

7<sup>th</sup>, Redgrave Rangers Res, H

League fixtures are available at [fulltime.thefa.com](http://fulltime.thefa.com). Select *Suffolk & Ipswich League*. Fixtures are subject to change.

**Training:** Wednesdays.

**Events:** The EBUFC Darts Night, for the Peter East Trophy, was held Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:stevebutcher55@btinternet.com)*

## EAST BERGHOLT TENNIS CLUB



Our club facilities are now almost complete, and all members and players are benefiting massively from the comfort, convenience and warmth they provide. We have completed most of the ecological requirements, including erecting bat and bird boxes, a living roof for the structures and a new hedge planted behind the club facilities. We are grateful to the Parish Council for providing a new gate to ensure security for the whole area.

We would particularly like to thank Paul at Armour Engineering in the village, who stepped in to make new fittings for our net adjusters: a small, fiddly but very important piece of kit which we couldn't easily source. Paul's work means we can now adjust our net heights easily and correctly. Thank you.

Despite the recent freezing weather conditions, both our competitive and social tennis have started energetically, with the Floodlight leagues continuing for adults (doubles) and a win for our Green team (children's tennis) against Bramford, as well as internal club competitions for both adults and children, social tennis twice a week and two kids' camps run by Matt, our coach, during the school holidays. For those wishing to get fit, or continue developing their fitness, Matt is also back running several cardio tennis sessions each week. Visit [eastbergholttennis.co.uk/coaching](http://eastbergholttennis.co.uk/coaching) for more information.

We held our regular quiz night at the end of January, which helped raise much-needed funds for the continuing upkeep of the club and its facilities while members enjoyed a great social get-together. Our social events are advertised on our website and via email to members, so keep an eye open for future events. Our AGM will be held in March, date to be confirmed. The committee actively encourages members to attend as there will be topics discussed and agreed on for the coming year which will impact funding and how the club is run.

*Here's a little throwback to Christmas...*



...and a snowy Tennis Club in early January.



For further information about the club please visit our website at [eastbergholttennis.co.uk](http://eastbergholttennis.co.uk) - *East Bergholt Tennis Club*

### **THE EAST BERGHOLT SOCIETY**

*East Bergholt at Tate Britain....and more*

If you haven't seen it yet, we really do encourage residents of the village to visit Tate Britain to see the excellent Turner & Constable exhibition. There are so many paintings and drawings, large and small, based on views of East Bergholt. Many of these John Constable works feature landscapes which haven't changed in 200 years.

It is a big show, and it's astonishing to see that the vast majority of the Constable works on display depict our village and its Stour Valley neighbourhood. It's well worth the trek to Millbank in London.

The exhibition finishes on 12<sup>th</sup> April.

The important contribution by the East Bergholt Society's president, Emma Roodhouse, should be mentioned; she has also written a chapter entitled *Early Impressions of Constable Country* in the exhibition's accompanying book.

Emma has instigated and brought to life the Constable 250 celebrations which are happening nationally before and after the artist's birthday in June this year. Locally, in and around the village, there will be a number of celebration events under the banner of In Our View...keep an eye out for these.

As we are very much part of this along with the church, the National Trust at Flatford and other societies in the village, the East Bergholt Society is organising a series of talks and other Constable-related initiatives. These will include talks by:

- **Adrian James on the enclosures and how they affected the landscape of East Bergholt.**
- **Brian Lott on his ancestor Willy Lott, his friendship with the Constables and his cottage at Flatford.**
- **Emma Roodhouse on the process of curating a Constable exhibition.**

We are also working with the East Bergholt Horticultural Society and the Suffolk Tree Warden Network to encourage residents and landowners in East Bergholt to plant many black poplar saplings this year. The black poplar was John Constable's favourite tree and has become fairly scarce in Suffolk.

Working with the National Trust at Flatford, we are also preparing to re-erect the inscribed stone dedicated to Thomas Parkington, the benefactor who saved Flatford Mill and Willy Lott's Cottage in the early 20th century before they were passed to the Trust. There will be a celebration event to mark the work of this forgotten hero.

Residents both old and new can keep abreast of what we are doing and the history of the village via our attractive website [www.ebsoc.org.uk](http://www.ebsoc.org.uk). - *John Lyall, chair*



*John Constable: View of Dedham from Flatford Lane, 1809-1810*

## HEARTWATCH

*Can you save a life?*

Several people have asked us to put on an informal session to learn or practise life-saving skills, including how to use a defibrillator. **Come and learn** with a free session on 7<sup>th</sup> March at 2.30pm in the Constable Hall, Gandish Road, East Bergholt.

This session is open to everyone, including teenage children, and will last for about 90 minutes. It would be really helpful if you could let us know that you plan to come so that we can ensure that we have enough equipment for everyone, but please also feel free to just turn up.

Meanwhile, a big “thank you” to everyone who has been part of East Bergholt Heartwatch Community First Responders over the last year and to our wider family of supporters who make it all possible. For more information please contact Carol Moss on [ecarol.moss@gmail.com](mailto:ecarol.moss@gmail.com). - *Carol Moss, team leader, East Bergholt Heartwatch Community First Responders*

### GREEN, BEAUTIFUL AND GRATIFYING

When it is cloudy, they say, ‘it is a bit gloomy?’  
When it is drizzling, they say, ‘it’s not so nice’  
When it is windy, they say, ‘wish it was calmer’  
When it is misty, they say, ‘it’s a bit murky’  
When it is sunny, they say, ‘it’s a bit too hot’  
When it is raining, they say ‘isn’t it appalling?’  
When it is cold, they say ‘isn’t it perishing?’  
When it is icy, they say, ‘isn’t it atrocious?’

But these are just reactions, personal perspectives,  
And definitely not descriptions or explanations  
And as nature has it, there is beauty in everything  
Even in all the wonderful and varied weather conditions  
That days change daily, prompting the birth of seasons  
The ones we look forward to and ponder over incessantly  
And just look around you and tell me what you see  
A green landscape beautiful and gratifying

*Rasik Bhadresa*

# LOCAL ISSUES & OPINIONS

## UPDATE FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCIL



*Councillor Sallie Davies*

I do not have a great deal to report this month, as Christmas and New Year are inevitably quiet.

**Car park charges:** By the time you read this, Babergh District Council's cabinet will have considered increasing car park charges in Sudbury, Hadleigh and Lavenham, and to begin charging at Pin Mill. The council commissioned the University of Suffolk to produce a study on the impact of imposing charges last year on footfall, spend and length of visit in our market towns. To sum up, the impact is negligible and, even where figures appear to go down slightly, there is no way of linking this to car park charges.

The increases in charges are not large and the charges remain some of the cheapest in our area. The increases will assist the council to cover all the costs of the car parks rather than subsidising them. However, this is a controversial topic in the affected towns.

**Budget:** A minor piece of positive news on Babergh's budget. The budget for 2026-2027 had presumed no money from central government. However, just before Christmas the government funding settlement for Babergh was announced, and this means that the council will be in the black by £385,000. The council has identified £2.535m in cost savings and has increased its projected income through rises in fees and licences.

The government funding does not help the council much in the medium term - by 2029-2030 Babergh is projected to have a large revenue gap and not enough financial reserves available to fund this gap. However, in theory Babergh will not exist any longer by that time, and there will be a unitary council in place instead.

It is worth repeating that only 9p in every £1 of council tax goes to Babergh District Council. We are not alone in this financial predicament. Councils all over the country are experiencing the same challenges.

**Planning:** Just before Christmas the Planning and Infrastructure Bill was given Royal Assent. This new law is intended to improve the working of planning committees by outlining a national scheme of delegation (the decision on whether applications should go to a planning officer or the planning committee made up of elected councillors), with only major applications going to committee. This will apparently speed up housebuilding.

Except it won't. In Babergh, for example, it is not the planning system that is holding up housebuilding, it is the 3,000 extant planning permissions which have been obtained but not used to actually build. And the skills shortage. And the fact that new housing is reliant on the market, not central government's announcements. Babergh's planning committee does not delay decisions; the members receive regular training and it is not a large committee. So I do not believe the new law will make much difference to the way we work in Babergh.

There is also a current consultation on yet more changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Babergh will be responding to the plans, which include exemptions for smaller sites from Biodiversity Net Gain, and members of the public can respond too (search for *NPPF proposed reforms*).

Meanwhile, Babergh's planning team is trying to make it easier for the owners of listed buildings to make their homes more energy-efficient and to install renewable energy. We are exploring, with Historic England, the idea of allowing some things to be installed on listed buildings without going through an application process.

I would like to know what sort of energy-related changes the owners of listed buildings would like to make: installing solar panels or solar tiles, for example, or air source heat pumps? A key point is that any changes must not "harm" the listed building or its setting. Please contact me on the email below if you want to make changes but are deterred by the bureaucracy and/or cost involved. - *Sallie Davies, Babergh District Council councillor for East Bergholt, Sallie.davies@Babergh.gov.uk*

## UPDATE FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

**2026-2027 budget:** At its meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January, the Parish Council agreed its budget for the 2026-2027 financial year, following detailed consideration by all committees. After three years of the parish council absorbing increased costs, we have approved a small increase in this year's precept (the money collected from residents via Council Tax), meaning the total budget for the coming year has increased. The additional money will be spent on projects such as sports development, road safety measures, youth provision, and community safety initiatives, as well as paying for costs that have increased through inflation.

The precept is the main way local services and facilities are funded. We have kept the increase in our precept down to 4.47%, an increase of £5.59 per annum for Band B

properties. We are able to keep your Council Tax increase **low** by using Parish Council reserves to fill the gap between the budgeted expenditure and the precept income.

**Communication with residents:** We are currently reviewing how we communicate with residents to ensure information about Parish Council business is clear, timely, engaging and accessible to everyone in the village. We already use a range of platforms, including our website, this magazine, notices, social media and direct conversations with councillors and staff.

Our aim is to make the best possible use of these existing channels rather than continually adding new ones. We are focusing on making our website easier to use and understand, ensuring regular and consistent updates in this magazine, and sharing clear key messages after meetings. Just as importantly, we want communication to be two-way; we encourage feedback, questions and ideas from residents. If you have any thoughts on how you prefer to receive information, or suggestions for improving how the Parish Council communicates, please do get in touch with the clerk at [parish.clerk@eastbergholtpc.co.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@eastbergholtpc.co.uk).

**Circles Woodland School meetings:** The Parish Council is convening meetings between Circles Woodland School, our district councillor, community representatives and Parish Council representatives. This was one of the planning conditions for developing the site.

**Next meetings:** The Parish Council meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Lambe School - starting at 7.30pm with an open public session. The next meetings are on **12<sup>th</sup> February** and **12<sup>th</sup> March**. Committee meetings are also open to everyone. You are very welcome to come and raise questions or share concerns. All meeting dates are on our [eastbergholt.org](http://eastbergholt.org) website in the Events section. - *Nicki Reed*

#### NEWSPAPER NOTICE OF APPLICATION (Notice to be published)

##### Application for a New Premises Licence

Name of Applicant: Jacques Catering Limited

Name of Premises: Gala

Postal Address of Premises (or description of premises):  
The Street, East Bergholt, Colchester, CO7 6TB

This application may be viewed at:  
[www.babergh.gov.uk](http://www.babergh.gov.uk)

Proposed Application: Village Café Bistro with Sale and Supply of Alcohol ON the premises

Date until which representations may be made to the Licensing Authority (28 days from day after application given to Authority):

Closing Date: **19 February 2026**

Representations must be made in writing to the attention of the Licensing Team, Babergh District Council (as the Licensing Authority) Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX, or by e-mail to

[licensingteam@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:licensingteam@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk)

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is unlimited.

**Note:** This must be published in a local newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the premises, on at least one occasion, not more than 10 working days starting on the day after you give the application to the Licensing Authority. It may be prudent to verify circulation prior to placing your advertisement.

## UPDATE FROM PC KATIE



I want to highlight the **Police and Parish Forum**, held four times a year at different locations. Years ago, local bobbies regularly attended parish council meetings. Over time, as numbers of officers in smaller communities declined, these quarterly forums were introduced so that the local inspector could provide updates on what's happening in the area and share force priorities.

These meetings are a great opportunity for residents to raise concerns and help shape how we police the community. Unfortunately, attendance has been dropping, so we'd love to see more of you there. Come along, meet your local policing team, and find out what we're working on. The next meeting is at Hadleigh Town Hall, on 11<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm.

**Stay connected with Suffolk Connected:** Suffolk Connected has replaced Suffolk Connect. By signing up (it's free), you'll receive regular updates about local crime trends and community engagement. If there's a crime pattern in your area, you'll get relevant alerts straight to your inbox. Sign up today at [www.suffolkconnected.org.uk](http://www.suffolkconnected.org.uk).

**A word on scams:** Sadly, there are people out there looking for any opportunity to take your money - whether in person or via social media, text messages, or other means. Life is busy, and it's easy to click a link in a message claiming you've missed a delivery, for example. But that quick click could cost you. Before acting, pause and think: did I order anything? Where are the official tracking details?

Don't let haste make you a victim. Stay alert and protect yourself. - *PC Katie Jarrett, community police officer for Claydon, Copdock and the Peninsula*



## RURAL REPORT

*A regular round-up of countryside and farming news*

**The government has launched an Animal Welfare Strategy** which aims to protect pets and wildlife across the country. It will end the practice of puppy farming and build on new laws to stop puppy smuggling. Farm animals will have new protection from dog attacks, with tougher penalties and greater police powers. The aim is to ease the stress these attacks can place on farming communities.

**A survey by NFU Mutual has revealed the risk of driving on country roads.** In 2024, 72% more fatalities were recorded on rural than on urban roads - and ten times more than

on motorways. In the East of England there were 133 rural fatalities and 29 urban. NFU Mutual's chief executive Nick Turner said: "Put simply, rural roads are persistently and disproportionately dangerous. It's not acceptable that Britain continues to lose around 1,000 people each year to rural road fatalities. More must be done to prevent this needless loss of life."

**The government's decision to change its farm inheritance tax plan** will bring "huge relief to many", according to National Farmers' Union president Tom Bradshaw - who farms near Colchester. "While there is still tax to pay, this will greatly reduce that tax burden for many family farms, those working people of the countryside," he said.

The threshold for payment has been increased from £1 million to £2.5 million. The allowance is transferable between spouses or civil partners, meaning farming couples can pass on up to £5 million in qualifying agricultural or business assets before inheritance tax is applied.

**A meals-on-wheels service across Suffolk** has delivered its one millionth meal, marking a major achievement since it was saved from closure six years ago. The service is run by Aspect Living Foundation, which stepped in when national funding cuts caused the Royal Voluntary Service to end the scheme.

**British Sugar's factory at Bury St Edmunds is celebrating its 100th year of production.** A multi-million-pound investment will include reducing site emissions by around 20,000 tonnes of carbon a year. British Sugar is the UK's only home-grown sugar producer, fulfilling around half of UK demand for sugar.

**"Agriculture is entering a new era where data, automation and real-time intelligence are transforming how we grow food," says the UK Agri-Tech Centre.** "The shift from reactive farming to fully adaptive ecosystems is accelerating and it's reshaping productivity, sustainability and profitability. Intelligent agriculture is no longer just a concept; it's becoming a reality.

"Sensors, drones and imaging tools are giving farmers deep insights into crop health and soil conditions, while AI turns that data into precise actions. Robots are stepping in to handle crop-specific tasks like thinning lettuce or harvesting asparagus, easing labour shortages and cutting costs." - *Brian Chester, brianrobertchester@gmail.com, 01572 757600*

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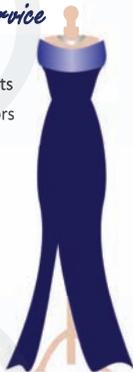
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We are always looking for photos of seasonal events, interesting scenes, or flora and fauna of East Bergholt for the cover of our magazine. We are keen on receiving pictures of the village's architecture and heritage, as well as nature scenes. If you have taken a suitable photo, please send it to [barnaby.page@gmail.com](mailto: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 Chris Smith.

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*Back cover photographs: courtesy of Daphne Glen and Steve Chapman.*

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