

The Heron

Community Magazine

Delivered to homes in Christchurch, Euximoor and Tipps End

January 2024

In this issue

Road Closures	2
Townley School	3
Advertising	4
Diary Dates	4
Heron News	5
What Flies Over/Hearing Loss	6
Your Letters	7
Whitemill Environment Fund	8
Cambs Fire & Rescue	8
Church News	9
Christchurch Umbrella	9
PC Snippets	10
Puzzlers	11
Kids Page	12
Magpie Centre/L.E.A.P.	13
Calling All Lego Enthusiasts!	14
Clubs Pages	15-16
Recipe	17
Welle Cinema	21
Useful Numbers	22
Community Info	22
Starling Murmuration	23
Santa & Fenland Farmers	23
Why Welney Floods	24
Parish Lunch Raffle Winners	24

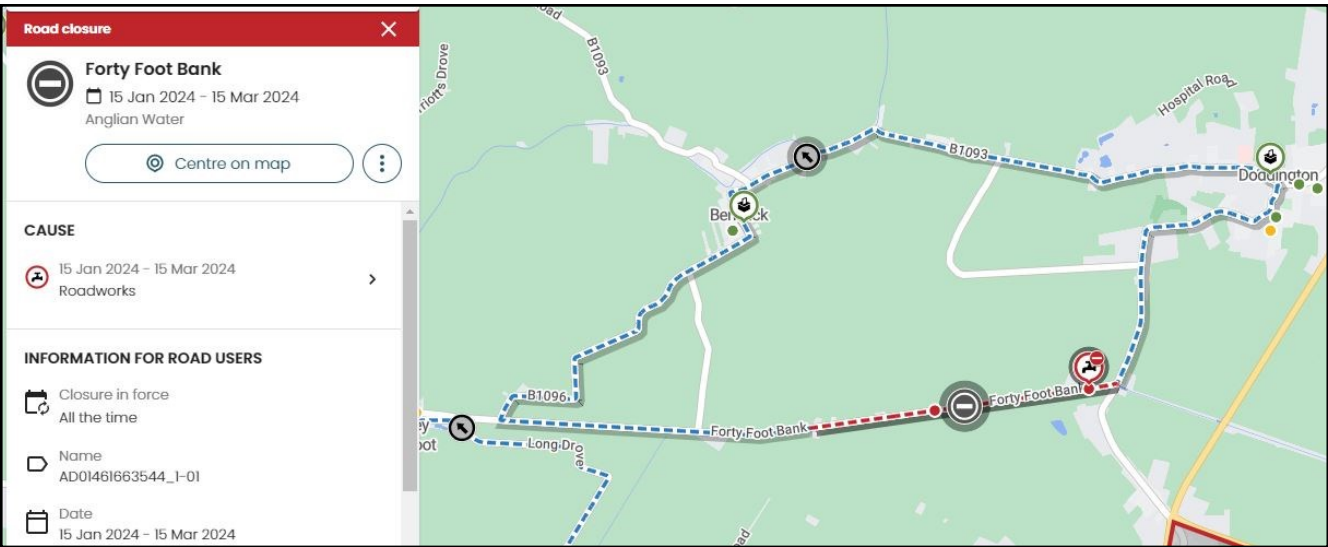
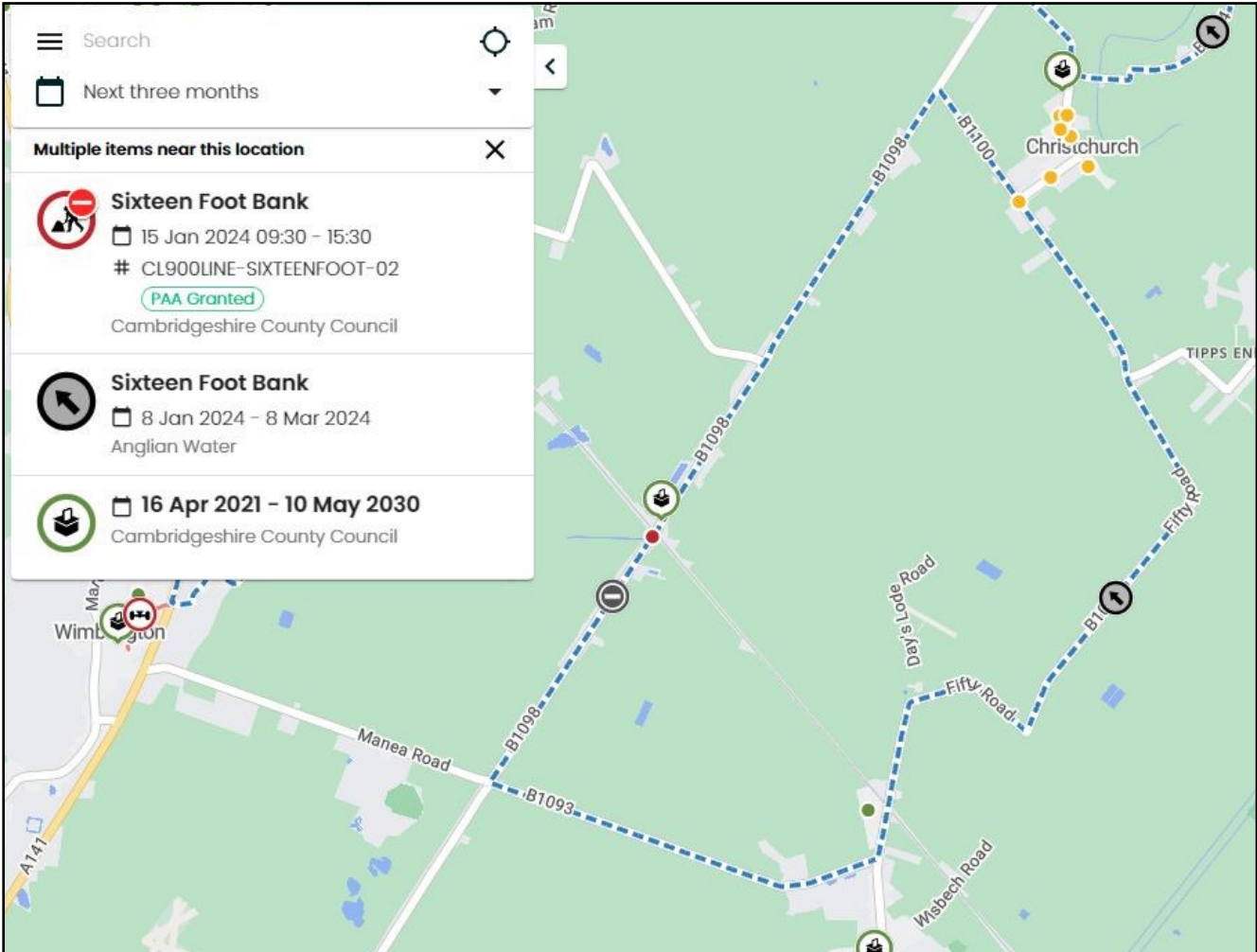
Wishing you all a very
Happy New Year!



ROAD CLOSURES

There are a number of sets of roadworks starting in January that will affect the area – maps for the 16 foot closure and 40 foot closure are shown. It has been made clear that the 16 foot closure will be enforced with concrete barriers, and not even cyclists will be able to pass so plan alternative routes beforehand, not when you get to the barriers (we can only hope that Welney Wash will be open by then).

Use www.one.network for details of all road works – don't use the Anglian Water website as the diversion routes on there make little sense in some cases.





TOWNLEY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Christchurch, Wisbech, Cambs. PE14 9NA
office@townley.cambs.sch.uk
Website: www.townley.cambs.sch.uk
01354 638229



Facebook—Townley School and Pre-School

Remember that our website has lots more information about school.

DECEMBER 2023

December is always a busy month in school, the children are always excited for the start of advent and to see what advent calendar they will have in their class! The EYFS children have been opening a book each day, which they have been able to take home with them. The older classes have held class assemblies. As I write this update three of the classes have just returned from the pantomime at Ely, I think it was their favourite production so far. EYFS watched the CBeebies Pantomime so they weren't left out completely!

We enjoyed being part of the village Las Posadas, where we gave shelter to Mary and Joseph overnight at the beginning of the month. We thought about and/or prayed for the homeless and refugees. Next week we have our Christmas production in Key Stage 1 and EYFS, the children are performing Jesus' Christmas Party. It has a little bit of a rewrite if you know the story as our cast is very girl heavy! We also have our Christingle, although it is not quite the same in school as it has been holding it in Church. Below are some photographs from this month in school.

Wishing you all a safe and happy new year from everyone at Townley School.

We have a vacancy on our Governing Body for a member of the community, if you would like to know more, please contact the school office using the details at the top of the page and our Chair of Governors, Sue Rudge will get in touch with you. Governors play a vital role in supporting the school and ensuring high standards of education for all the children. We cannot do our job effectively without the support and challenge from Governors.

You might have noticed the new sheds in the playground, this is all part of the new build classroom work, hopefully we will start to see some work early in the new year. We are very much looking forward to having a new classroom to replace the mobile, as every classroom is going to be impacted by the new build we have paused any decorating in school, so it will be brilliant to see the work completed for September 2024.



Advertising in the Heron

Quarter Page (14cm High x 9.5cm Wide)

Portrait Format

6 x issues £52

12 x issues £92

Eighth Page (6.5cm High x 9.5cm Wide)

Landscape Format

6 x issues £36

12 x issues £66

Please contact adverts@theheron.info or phone Elaine on 01354 638310.

Advertisers - all our advert rates and conditions can be found on our website www.theheron.info. Business advertisers can book a series of 6 or 12 adverts, paid in advance. Adverts for village fundraising events, personal announcements, or small private ads are usually free.

Diary Dates

Date	Event	Time	Place	Page
Tue 2nd Jan	Mobile Library	12:15pm	Fen View Layby	22
Sat 6th Jan	Quiz and Curry	7:30pm	CCC	9
Sun 7th Jan	Welle Cinema - Indiana Jones	1:30pm	3 Holes Village Hall	21
Mon 8th Jan	Parish Council Meeting	7:30pm	CCC	10
Tue 9th Jan	Art Club	1:30pm	Village Hall	15
Tue 9th Jan	Book Club	7:30pm	Old Police House	15
Tue 9th Jan	WI - Abuse in the Home	7:30pm	CCC	16
Mon 15th Jan	16 foot & 40 foot road closure starts			2
Tue 23rd Jan	Art Club	1:30pm	Village Hall	15
Thu 15th Feb	Heron Special General Meeting	7pm	CCC	5

Regular Weekly Events				
Every Monday	Short Mat Bowls	7pm-9pm	CCC	15
Every Tuesday	Christchurch Hobby & Craft Club	10am-1pm	CCC	15
Every Wednesday	Chair Based Exercise Class	10-10:50am 07880543821	CCC	
Every Thursday	Coffee/Cake/Chat - Christchurch Umbrella	1:30pm-3:30pm	CCC	9
Every Friday	Breakfast - Christchurch Umbrella	9.30-11.30am	CCC	9
Mon,Tue,Wed,Thu	Mobile Post Office	4:10pm/4:30pm	Lay By near Fen View	22
Every Sunday	Car Boot Sale	8am-12pm	Skylark Garden Centre	

At the time of going to press, all information is as accurate and up to date as we can make it. Changes and updates may be published subsequently. All information contributed by outside agencies, including dates etc., will be assumed to be correct.

NB as a matter of courtesy no content from the Heron should be used without prior permission.

Heron News... Heron News... Heron News... Heron News

Dear Readers,

We do hope you are enjoying our local community magazine and find it an interesting read as well as an excellent way of exploring what goes on in our local area and keeping up to date with news from our village organisations.

I am sure you are only too aware that the cost of everyday living continues to rise as do our Heron running costs. When I was little, my mum and dad frequently reminded me that 'money doesn't grow on trees'. Thankfully our Christchurch Parish Council, along with generous donations, a multitude of fund-raising efforts, monies from advertising and subscriptions, helps to keep the Heron afloat. However, there have been occasions when our bank balance has looked a little precarious.

One of my main aims as Chair of the Executive Committee is to look at how we can put the Heron on a more secure and stable financial footing.

We will be holding a 'Special General Meeting' on 15th February at 7pm in Christchurch Community Centre. The purpose of this meeting will be to consider adopting the recognised Charities Commission Constitution. If this is all agreed, our next step would be to apply to the Charities Commission for charity status. The benefits this will bring include being able to apply for grant funding only available to groups with recognised charity status as well as being able to re-claim gift aid on many of the donations received from private individuals.

Please support our meeting and help us to steer the Heron into a more secure and stable future.

Lorna Kirk
Chair of the Heron Executive Committee

Copy Deadline - The deadline for copy for the February edition of the Heron is 25th January.

Enjoy reading the Heron?

If you haven't donated already and are interested in helping to support the production costs, you can now donate electronically at: www.madegreat.co.uk/sponsorship

100% of your donation goes towards printing costs.

You can choose to have your name printed in the next issue of the magazine or keep your donation anonymous.



Do you know someone who would like to receive a Heron each month, who doesn't live in the village?
Contact us at adverts@theheron.info and we will send them a subscription form.

The cost is £27.00 per year (including P&P).

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Editorial Team Leader - Clive Benjamin - editor@theheron.info

Editorial Team Members: Sue Norman, Elaine Reed-Hughes, Pat Rigby, Wendy Yates, Liz Scott

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Support—Lewis Bennett (IT), the Delivery & Postal Team, Publishers and Printers

General Queries - enquiries@theheron.info



Website: www.theheron.info

What Flies Over

CV-22 Osprey

Primary Role	Special Operations Forces, Long-range Infiltration, Exfiltration and Resupply
Power Plant	2 x Rolls-Royce Liberty AE1107 Engines, Thrust – more than 6200 SHP per engine
Dimensions	Length 54ft 4ins, Height 22ft 1in, Wingspan 83ft 10ins, Rotor Diameter, 38ft each
Max. Take-off weight	57,000lbs short take-off and Landing (STOL), 53,600lbs Vertical take-off and landing VTOL
Max. Speed	280 knots, max. Ceiling 25,000 ft
Combat Range	500 miles, unlimited with air-to-air refuelling
Crew	4 (Pilot, Co-pilot, 2 flight engineers)
Armaments	1.5 Calibre machine gun on ramp
Payload	Up to 32 personnel or 10,000lbs of mixed cargo



Hearing Loss

I recently visited St Elizabeth hospital for an audiology appointment, and while I was sitting in waiting, I noticed a poster with some very interesting information about hearing loss, namely, that on average, it takes around 10 years from noticing hearing loss, to actually doing something about it (in my case, much longer). My uncle was a Chemist and Optician (rare to be both) and he often commented on the fact that people were quite willing to wear glasses (and so admit that their eyesight wasn't perfect) but were unwilling to wear a hearing aid - no logic at all. And those of us who are older may remember Eric Sykes wearing those black framed glasses – very occasionally, you may have seen him rub his eyes through the glasses, in fact they didn't have lenses in them, but were actually bone conduction hearing aids.

Here's some statistics around hearing loss:

It is estimated that there are approximately 11 million people in this country with a hearing loss which makes it the second most common disability in the UK.

However, as an invisible disability, it so often goes unnoticed, making it easier for those living with hearing loss to be ignored or forgotten.

- 1 in 6 of the UK adult population is affected by hearing loss.
- 8 million of these are aged 60 and over.
- 6.7 million could benefit from hearing aids but only about 2 million people use them.
- About 900,000 people are severely or profoundly deaf.
- About 12,000 people in the UK use cochlear implants.
- Many people with hearing loss also have tinnitus which affects 1 in 10 adults. They may also have balance difficulties.
- Hearing loss is associated not only with mental health conditions (see below) but also with numerous physical health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, anaemia, chronic kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis, sleep apnea, balance problems and an increased risk of falls.

Clive Benjamin

Statistics from baaudiology.org

Your Letters

It is a sad duty as Editor for me to report the passing of two people in the village last month.

The first is Richard Guilford. I never met him personally, but it is largely because of his work that this publication exists, which (I hope) has improved the village in which we all live, and for that I think we owe a big thank you.

Peter Owen died just before this magazine was put together, so there will be more about him in the next edition when we have had more time to put something together that befits all that he did for the village, but thank you to Dave Gibbs for writing a short piece for this issue. I was fortunate enough to know Peter in the short time I've been here, and to me he was the very definition of a gentle man, quietly spoken, but you heard every word he said, and I, amongst many, will miss him immensely.

Our thoughts go out to the family and friends of both, and if anyone wishes to write more about either of the two, please send to me and we will include what we can in the next issue.

Clive Benjamin

Richard Guilford

We were sorry to hear of the recent death of Richard Guilford, a previous editor of The Heron.

The Heron had existed in one form or another for more than 40 years, with a number of changes of format and editing team. It had remained a valued part of village life for information and news about local events, and also for the adverts. However, in early 2014, we heard that it would no longer be produced, unless someone new came forward to take it on.

Richard offered to do this, with our encouragement, as we thought it was too valuable a resource to lose, and he had previous experience in editing a Koi Carp magazine. He was also interested in creative writing, and had had some of his poetry published. He had a vision for making The Heron into a larger and more colourful magazine-style production, rather than just a newsletter as it had sometimes been in the past. Most of the new ideas for content were his, though Paul did the design, including a new logo. Vivien was treasurer and did the proofreading and general admin.



We worked together as a team for several years.

Another of Richard's interests was music. He had the idea of 'Heron Aid' concerts - he and Steve Waye featured in the very first one. They proved very popular fundraisers, at that time, for the magazine.

Vivien & Paul Haresnape (former residents of Christchurch)



Peter Owen

It is with great sadness that I find myself reporting on the sudden and unexpected passing of Peter Owen. Just three days ago I sat next to Pete at this month's Parish Council meeting and he was his usual self. Fortright in his opinions and ready to do battle with bureaucracy and his new *bête noire*, the banks.

Pete was elected to Christchurch Parish Council on 7th May 2015 and a year later he became the Chairman, a role he held for six years. I first met Pete early in 2018 when he and Will Sutton visited me at home to talk about Christchurch. Like most people in the Fens, I knew it existed and roughly where it was, but had never visited. Pete spoke with great passion and enthusiasm about the village and its new Community Centre, as well as the vacancy for a Clerk for the Parish Council. He persuaded me to attend a Parish Council meeting to meet the team, following which I applied for the role. Working with Pete was never dull, often challenging, but always enjoyable. Whilst we sometimes viewed the World through different eyes, we never crossed swords.

We know very little about the nature of his passing so soon after the event, and doubtless all will become clearer in the coming weeks. I am sure that his many friends, neighbours and colleagues will wish to add their own personal tributes in next month's Heron, so I'll conclude by saying simply that Pete made a difference and for that he will be missed by many.

Dave Gibbs

Whitemill Environment Fund

Do you need funding for a community environmental project in: Coldham, Elm, Friday Bridge, Rings End or Christchurch? Then the Whitemill Environment Fund could help you.

The Whitemill fund can provide grants for community organisations to fund projects that improve the environment and enhance residents' knowledge of an environmental issue. The types of items for which you may bid include energy and water efficiency improvements to a communal building or asset; community scale renewable energy; wildlife enhancement or protection to a local green space, projects that reduce, reuse or recycle waste that is currently being thrown away, activities that increase the use of more environmentally friendly transport, and using greener materials.

The fund was established in 2013 and money will be added to it for a total of 25 years by the owners who operate the wind farm. The fund is managed by a committee which includes Fenland District Council, Elm Parish Council and local representatives living within the catchment of the turbines. The application process is very straight forward with funding being awarded twice a year.

The closing date for applications is in January and July. If you have any queries, please contact the Street Pride Co-ordinator by calling 01354 654321, visiting www.fenland.gov.uk/article/13488/Whitemill-Environment-Fund or emailing rrobinett@fenland.gov.uk

Caring for the elderly and vulnerable Keeping elderly and vulnerable residents safe

If you or anyone you know has difficulty hearing, seeing or moving about, you need to take extra care when dealing with fire risks.



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together to improve community safety

Remember, we can provide a free home fire safety check for those who are most vulnerable in our community, which includes the elderly and those who are disabled.

How can you help to prevent accidents?

- If you have an elderly relative, friend or neighbour who you think might be vulnerable to fire hazards or burning or scalding themselves, help them to stay safe by encouraging them to take the following precautions:
- If they smoke, warn them about the dangers of smoking in bed and encourage them to smoke outside.
- A fireguard should be fitted.
- If they use electric blankets - make sure they are using them correctly and they are checked regularly. When cooking suggest they use the rear hot plates/hobs on a cooker and that they turn the pan handles away from the front of the cooker.
- Ensure that hot water bottles they use are of good quality and do not show signs of wear.
- Kettles shouldn't be overfilled as boiling water could spill and scald.
- As a safety precaution, they should use coiled kettle flexes or a cordless kettle which are either spout-filling or jug shaped.
- Tea and coffee making facilities shouldn't be too far from the living area so hot liquids don't have to be carried far.
- Propose they fit a thermostatic mixing valve which regulates bath water outlet temperature and reduces the risk of severe scalding.

Most importantly, advise them to book them a home fire safety check so smoke alarms can be fitted if necessary, and also any other potential fire hazards can be spotted.

Cambridge Fire And Rescue have a number of resources to help save lives. Details can be found here:

Smoke alarms - <https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/home-safety/smoke-alarms/>

Further information on their website at <https://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/home-safety/>

Services in the Benefice in January

All services are at 10.30am unless otherwise stated.

- 7th January - Christchurch, Morning Prayer
Doddington, Holy Communion
- 14th January - Manea, Holy Communion
Wimblington, Plough Service
Benwick, Evening Prayer 3pm
- 21st January - Christchurch, Holy Communion
Doddington, Morning Prayer
- 28th January - Manea, Morning Prayer
Wimblington, Holy Communion
Welney, Holy Communion 4pm



Coffee/Lunch Break

Alternate Wednesdays CCC: 11.00am – 1.00pm

Free entry and hot drink.

Bring your own lunch if you would like to.

**Dates for January 2024 are:
10th & 24th**



Cake, Coffee and Chat

Every Thursday CCC: 1.30 – 3.30pm

Free entry and hot drink. All welcome.

Monetary donations accepted for cake.



Breakfast

Every Friday CCC: 9.30 - 11.30am

Free hot drink and slice of toast.

Other breakfast items including
a cooked breakfast available to buy.

Events

A big thank you to all who supported our Christmas Fayre and Community Carol Service. What a wonderful time of year Christmas is.

Quiz & Curry Night

Christchurch
Community Centre
Teams of up to 6

**Saturday 6th
January**

7.30 start.

**£6.00 per person
(includes a curry)
Book your team
in, message or
phone Helen on
07702 225259.**

An acknowledgment was made to Richard Guilford, who sadly passed away this month. It was noted that it was his work that was responsible for helping the Heron become what it is today.

There was a follow up discussion from last meeting regarding planning re stable behind Fen View, with the Parish Clerk explaining the processes involved in the planning process and possible timescales for these.

Will Sutton expressed his appreciation at being asked to lay a wreath for Remembrance Sunday and noted that he would be happy to continue in the future, but equally would be happy if anyone else wished to do this in the future.

The street lights on Church Road, adjacent to The Croft are out of action, and the Telecoms cover at the end of Fen View still needs replacing after many months. The PC will chase this up.

Matters outstanding

- Affordable housing – the household survey has not yet been received, but is expected imminently – there is a 3 week timetable usually but this has been extended due to holidays
- Upwell road, household items outside house there need clearing
- PC is Chasing up Highways Office regarding Wayside, no response yet, and it was noted that the officer is very hard to get hold of.
- The parishioner engagement survey has now closed, with some interesting responses received
- Santa run – this is set for 16th Dec 6pm at CCC
- Bowls club donation – this is still to be decided upon, possibly benches or sports equipment.
- Play equipment - all inspections completed where appropriate.

There was no police report.

Councillors report

Cllr Dal Roy reported that Cllr Taylor is encouraging support for local produce, and more local support. A knock on effect would be that more local land is required for agriculture and supporting ecosystems, and infill planning applications could be challenged on the basis of supporting ecosystems.

Internal drainage board – it was noted that the space required for access has not always been adhered to, and on occasions rubble dumped into drains by builders. The enforcement of Riparian drains needs to be looked at.

Other matters

County council are promoting *Be Winter Wise*.

Garden collection cost is increasing.

Dog mess is a constant issue, possibly also due to dogs loose. It was noted that if a dog is loose, the correct action is reporting to dog warden – this could result in a £75 fine to the owner, and was noted that this is extremely effective in preventing future incidents. A request will be put to street scene to come and inspect near school, where there seems to be a particular issue. Manea fire station closure was discussed - PC are not in favour. It was suggested that a strongly worded letter should be sent to Steve Barclay with 2 large fires in recent times, including danger to life. 'Safe and Well Visits' is a service provided by the fire service – perhaps a Heron article on what the fire service offer.

The PC has set up Facebook page and this will be promoted in the Heron in future.

In response to a question on road closures, the Clerk directs us to the website www.one.network which is an all-encompassing website for road closures.

Green Lane - a discussion on whether any signs could assist in showing that this is unsuitable for motor vehicles following the stranding of a delivery vehicle in December.

Dole Money- available to people over 65 who have been resident over 5 years - older get more. It was noted that Upwell get a higher payment. This is run by Upwell (Cambridge) Consolidate Charities.

Recreation ground extension - still more to do, but the weather has been bad. The footbridge to this extension may go to playing field.

Planning

Highways – discussion on lighting and a grit bin, but latter is not allowed. Consideration over a 20mph limit around school/wayside possibly, and any other speed considerations.

Jackson corner – consideration on double white lines on the approach to this along the 16 foot bank to prevent overtaking up to the junction.

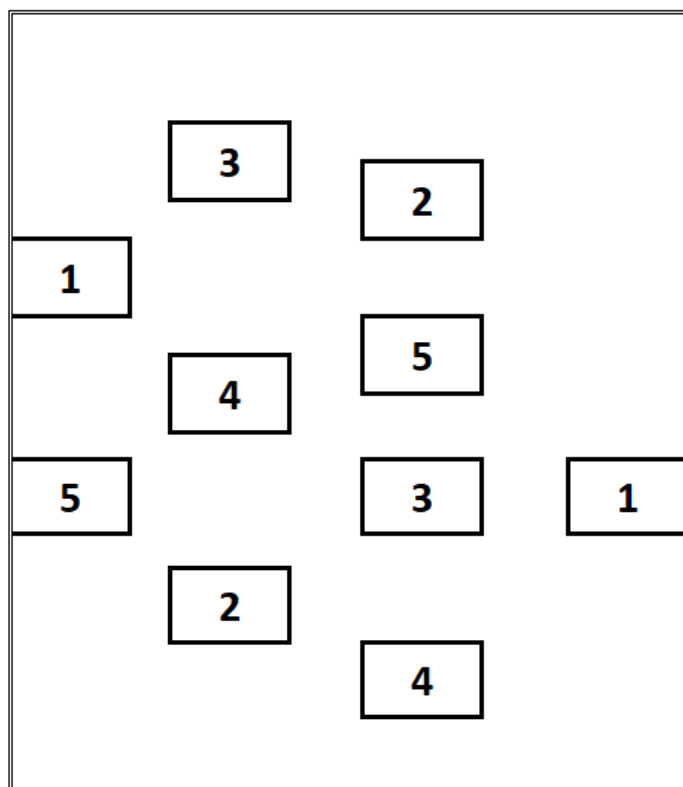
Planning - officers recommendation no 52 Church Lane planning application is to grant consent. The PC can't find sufficient grounds for an objection, however concerns exist regarding access to drains.

Finance – there are still issues with Barclays though they have reinstated the accounts, and the 2024/2025 budget was discussed.

Next meeting is 8th January 2024, 7:30pm at CCC

Puzzler

Try drawing lines to join the matching boxes, but your lines mustn't cross, and you can't go outside the puzzle border



Easy Sudoku

2		4		6	5	3	1	7
5		1	3	4	9		6	8
8		3				9		
	3				2			
		5					2	6
			6	9		5	7	
	1	9		8	6			
		6				7		
	5		2	3				1

Answers on page 14

Can you decode the puzzles below:

10 MIAC
1963 YPKA
2 STES
3 WOMW
1 FOTCN
3 MIAB
76 TITBP
29 DIFIALY
1666 GFOL
13 UFS

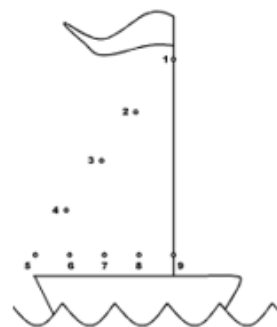
1024 BIAK
3600 SIAH
1 DAAT
13 LIABD
3 BGG
1852 MIANM
1588 YOTSA
180 DIAT
16 OIAP
7 DIAW

101 D
220 YIAF
1940 BOB
24 LITGA
1086 DOTDB
999 TNFTES
1 SDNMA
7 DS
20000 LUTS
1000 YIAM

7 YI
366 DIALY
4 GIAP
30 DHS
3 FIAY
7 S
666 MOTB
1984 BBGO
26 LOTA
64000 DQ



Sail into The New Year!



Question ... What have potatoes, round fruit and onions have in common? Answers ...

COLUMBIA



On the last night of the year, Colombians place three potatoes—one peeled, one unpeeled, and one half peeled—under their beds. At midnight, they pull out the first potato they touch. Peeled means they'll have financial problems, unpeeled indicates abundance, and half peeled...well, somewhere in between.

THE PHILIPPINES

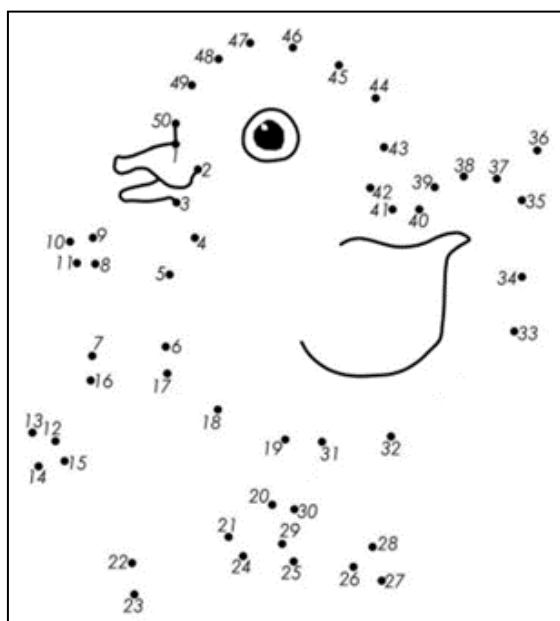


Filipino culture celebrates the New Year by serving 12 round fruits. The round shape symbolises coins, which represent wealth for each month of the New Year.

GREECE



To Greeks, Onions are a symbol of good luck. On New Year's Eve, families in Greece hang bundles of onions above their front doors, hoping they will help the family be prosperous.



Leftover Cracker Jokes!

Knock, knock. *Who's there?* You. *You who?* Yoo-hoo! Anybody home?

Time flies like an arrow. *Fruit flies like a banana.*

I only know 25 letters of the alphabet. *I just don't know y.*

Knock, knock. *Who's there?*
Weirdo. Weirdo who?
Weirdo you think you are going?



MAGPIE CENTRE LOOKS FORWARD TO SPRING

Now that the festive season is fading into memory, it's time to look forward to the spring.

And what better way to put a spring in your step than a Ceilidh/Barn Dance? The Magpie Centre, home of West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled

Association is running this event, which features a caller and a live band, on Saturday, February 17th at Stow Bridge Village Hall, Holme Road, Stow Bridge PE34 3PW. 7.30 pm – 11.00 pm.

Tickets, at £17.50 per adult and £8.50 per child (13 years and under), include a Hog Roast supper (with vegetarian option). Bring your own drinks.

This bright start to 2024 is bound to be popular, so to book your places now, call 01760 337056 or email suer2006@hotmail.co.uk.

Website: www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk .

Many thanks to those who answered our call for volunteers. We had a brilliant response, and the new team members are scheduled to start their training in January.



The Award Winning Free Home Energy Advice Service for Residents

We are writing to advise you of the LEAP scheme which is available for residents in Peterborough, Rutland and South Cambridgeshire.

LEAP is a free-of-charge service run in partnership with local councils, which offers free home visits to help keep residents home warm and save money on their energy bills.

The LEAP service can help with:

- Tariff advice
- Fuel debt advice
- Smart meter advice
- Tips and advice how to reduce energy
- Free small energy efficiency measures – LED bulbs, radiator panel, draught proofing etc
- Income Maximisation
- Onward referrals to other organisations when required.
- Boiler repair/replacement – (Owner occupiers only – where/when available)
- White goods (where/when available)

How to refer residents

Use the online form <https://applyforleap.org.uk/apply/> or call us on 01733 646253.

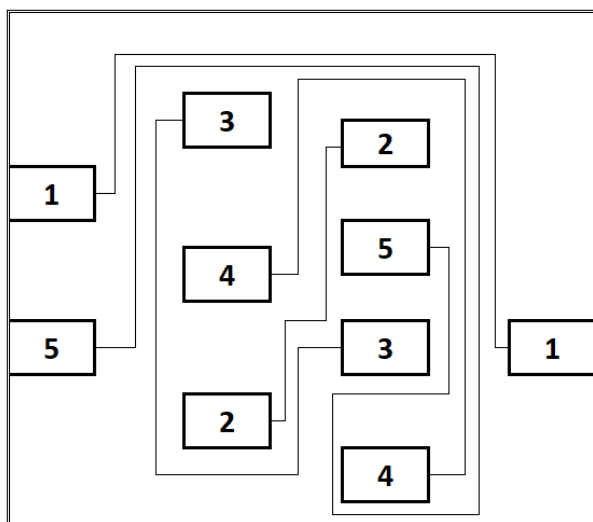
Eligibility

To be eligible for our service, residents must have a household income of below £31,000 a year, or must be in receipt of certain benefits as listed on our website.

Want to become a referral partner?

If you would like any further information, or to become a referral partner, please get in touch with emma.deaton@greenenergyswitch.co.uk

Puzzler Answers



2	9	4	8	6	5	3	1	7
5	7	1	3	4	9	2	6	8
8	6	3	7	2	1	9	5	4
6	3	7	1	5	2	8	4	9
9	8	5	4	7	3	1	2	6
1	4	2	6	9	8	5	7	3
7	1	9	5	8	6	4	3	2
3	2	6	9	1	4	7	8	5
4	5	8	2	3	7	6	9	1

10 MIAC Millimetres in a Centimetre
 1963 YPKA Year President Kennedy Assassinated
 2 STES Sides to every Story
 3 WOMW Wheels on my Wagon
 1 FOTCN Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest
 3 MIAB Men in a Boat
 76 TITBP Trombones in the Big Parade
 29 DIFIALY Days in February in a Leap Year
 1666 GFOL Great Fire of London
 13 UFS Unlucky for Some
 1024 BIAK Bytes in a Kilobyte
 3600 SIAH Seconds in an Hour
 1 DAAT Day at a Time
 13 LIABD Loaves in a Bakers Dozen
 3 BGG Billy Goats Gruff
 1852 MIANM Metres in a Nautical Mile
 1588 YOTSA Year of the Spanish Armada
 180 DIAT Degrees in a Triangle
 16 OIAP Ounces in a Pound
 7 DIAW Days in a Week

101 D Dalmations
 220 YIAF Yards in a Furlong
 1940 BOB Battle of Britain
 24 LITGA Letters in the Greek Alphabet
 1086 DOTDB Date of the Doomsday Book
 999 TNFTES Telephone Number for Emergency Services
 1 SDNMAS Swallow Does not make a Summer
 7 DS Deadly Sins
 20000 LUTS Leagues under the Sea
 1000 YIAM Years in a Millenium
 7 YI Year Itch
 366 DIALY Days in a Leap Year
 4 GIAP Gills in a Pint
 30 DHS Days has September
 3 FIAY Feet in a Yard
 7 S Seas
 666 MOTB Mark of the Beast
 1984 BBGO Book by George Orwell
 26 LOTA Letters of the Alphabet
 64000 DQ Dollar Question

Calling All Lego Enthusiasts!

Many of us remember playing with Lego as children and it is regarded the greatest selling toy of all time. Lego was created in Denmark, in 1932 by Ole Kirk Kristiansen and it is still owned by the Kristiansen family. Lego has progressed into the impressive sets with big models such as a replica of the Colosseum in Rome which has 9,036 pieces, the Eiffel Tower with 10,001 pieces and World Map with 11,695 pieces.

Back in October, I visited the annual Lego Brick show in Murrow, where people came to visit stalls selling Lego and displays. Being married to a Lego enthusiast - the adults known as AFOL (Adult Fan Of Lego), I went along for a morning out (well enticed with a promise of breakfast out) and was surprised to see a good variety of displays including a pretty impressive Titanic model, trucks, a Star Wars Millennium Falcon and an Eiffel Tower to name just a few. The stall holders were very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their displays and it was a very enjoyable morning.



I wondered whether there would be any interest in holding such a display here in the village - along with a few stalls selling Lego kits and Lego to make your own models. I know there are some adults and children in the village who do Lego, so if anyone would like to display some of your models or just interested in coming along, please contact me on 07776 142642 to let me know and I will get the ball rolling in 2024.

Pat Rigby

A bird doesn't
sing because
it has an answer.
It sings because
it has a song.

-Maya Angelou



HealthyPlace.com

Christchurch Hobby and Craft Club

**Every Tuesday
10.00 AM- 1.00 PM
Christchurch Community Centre**

Bring your art, craft or hobby along to the club to work on and share with like-minded friends.

Maybe you will introduce us to something new or find something you would like to try, i.e. artwork, needlework, crochet, card making, Lego, or maybe there is a jigsaw puzzle looking for someone to finish while you are thinking of what to start.

Interested?

Contact Janet Harper on 07941 465319 or Pat Rigby on 07776 142642.

Indoor Short Mat Bowls

New club meeting every Monday 7-9pm at Christchurch Community Centre.

ALL WELCOME! (Spare bowls available to loan.)

For further details call Janet Harper on 07941 465319.

Christchurch Art Group



We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month 1.30-3.30 in the Village Hall (term time).

- Our focus is to explore and experiment with the various painting and drawing media
- To enable participants to develop their own style
- Above all to have fun and enjoy the sessions
- The sessions are planned and adjusted to suit, depending on the experience and interests of the group
- The group leader is experienced in a wide range of media, and has some art materials for you to try out if they are new to you. *We have suitable paper for a reasonable cost to purchase and materials can be borrowed until you have your own*. Our group is friendly and relaxed and we love to welcome new folk.



If you would like a programme, please contact Jan and one will be sent with any further information.

Please contact Sandra 01354 638478 or Jan 01354 638217. (clifford.jjr5846@gmail.com)

Christchurch Book Club



The Christchurch Book club met in December to discuss the book *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri.

Mixed reviews on this book, which follows the story of a man and his wife and their escape from war torn Syria and their perilous journey to reach the UK where their cousin had already made his home.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 9th January hosted by Elaine Reed-Hughes at The Old Police House in Church Road where we will discuss the current book *The Miniaturist* by Jessie Burton. The next book in February is *The People on Platform 5* by Clare Pooley. New members are always welcome.

For further details or if you would like to come along to one of our meetings, please contact Pat Rigby on 07776 142642.



Our December meeting on 12th was an Open Meeting, where we welcomed the Upwood Ukelele Band. What a fun evening it was too, with jokes and music! This is a group of musicians – all good friends – who enjoy making music together, and raising funds for their chosen charity, MAGPAS, (Air Ambulance). We heard that they have, to date, raised a total of £65,000 for them. That is just incredible! Well done all.

The members of the band don't ask for travelling expenses or fees from their Gigs. Instead, they donate all that they raise to MAGPAS. Each member of the band was dressed for Christmas Fun.... Christmas jumpers, Santa hats, reindeer antlers, Hawaiian garlands, and even Mexican Sombreros! Songs were performed wearing the relevant hat. Their musicianship is of an excellent standard and we were treated to great performance. Occasionally, the audience took part one way or another, and sang along. If you missed the occasion, you missed a treat! They are on YouTube and have a Facebook page as well. Check them out. Very talented group.



Our next regular meeting is on Tuesday January 9th, where member Linda Potter will be raising our awareness about "Abuse in the Home". The competition is 'something square'.

We wish you a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Christchurch Gardening Club

"In the not so cold mid-winter"

January, the cold winds blow, the weeds don't grow, and we venture into our gardens clad in many layers of clothing. At least that's how it used to be. But what of the future?



There, it seems, is more confidence in the global climate change models which all point to an ever-warming climate. A quick chat over the garden fence will soon confirm that the frost is nowhere as prevalent or as thick as in the past, as well as plants arriving earlier than has been seen for generations. The six o'clock news will confirm coastal erosion, flash floods and periods of drought becoming more common. But what can your average gardener do about it? Quite a lot it seems.

Too many paved areas in the garden might be great for a barbecue, or somewhere to park the car, but does encourage flooding, whereas lawn and border areas soak up rainwater, even the humble gravel drive is better than concrete, as are areas of pebbles and stones. Growing a mix of plants, some that enjoy dry conditions along with those that like to get their feet wet will also help to manage the climate imbalance and create a more friendly eco system for plants and animals. Hedging rather than fencing is another way to encourage wildlife into our gardens. More information can be gleaned from various websites including the RHS. RHS.org.uk

But whatever we all decide to do have a great gardening new year.

The gardening Club re-convenes in February. To join please call 01354638230 or come along on the night.

Steve.



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Recipe

Sausage, kale & gnocchi one-pot

Prep: 5 minutes, cooking 15 minutes

Ingredients

1 tbsp olive oil
6 pork sausages
1 tsp chilli flakes
1 tsp fennel seeds (optional)
500g fresh gnocchi
500ml chicken stock (fresh if you can get it)
100g chopped kale
40g parmesan, finely grated

Method

Heat the oil in a large high-sided frying pan over a medium heat. Squeeze the sausages straight from their skins into the pan, then use the back of a wooden spoon to break the meat up. Sprinkle in the chilli flakes and fennel seeds, if using, then fry until the sausage meat is crisp around the edges. Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon.

Tip the gnocchi into the pan, fry for a minute or so, then pour in the chicken stock. Once bubbling, cover the pan with a lid and cook for 3 mins, then stir in the kale. Cook for 2 mins more or until the gnocchi is tender and the kale has wilted. Stir in the parmesan, then season with black pepper and scatter the crisp sausage meat over the top.



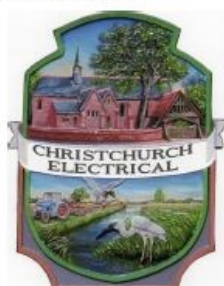
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Community Information

Mobile Post Office:

Visits Monday to Thursday in the lay-by on Upwell Road Monday and Thursday - 16.30 to 17:00
Tuesday and Wednesday - 16.10 to 17:00
Fridays - no service.

ANYONE WISHING THEIR ITEMS TO BE POSTED, ON THE DAY, WILL NEED TO GET THEIR POST TO THE VAN BY 4.40PM - WHICH IS WHEN IT IS COLLECTED.

Use it or lose it!

Mobile Library:

OUR MOBILE LIBRARY COMES ONCE A MONTH, ON THE FIRST TUESDAY, AT 12.15-1.00PM.

The van parks in the lay-by on Upwell Road, opposite to the entrance of Fen View. **USE IT OR LOSE IT?**

The Mobile Library visits March, Christchurch and Manea:

March Elliot Lodge 9:30 - 10:10
March Shaftesbury Lodge 10:20 - 10:50
March Upwell Park 10:55 - 11:15
March Fleming Court 11:30 - 11:45
Christchurch Layby 12:15 - 1pm
Manea Festival Close 2pm - 3pm
Manea High Street 3:10 - 4:30pm

As well as a large range of library books, you can get your NHS hearing batteries, replacement walking stick ferrules and you can dispose of old household batteries.

You can use the Select and Collect service online, or by calling 0345 045 5225.

https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Select_and_Collect

Please support your local Library Service, right in the heart of your community.



Please remember that no dogs are allowed on the playing field. Thank you. Your co-operation is much appreciated.

Useful Telephone Numbers

Age UK Cambridgeshire	0300 666 9860
Alzheimer's Society (Fenland)	01945 580480
Churchwarden - Mrs Helen Chappell	01354 638092
Citizens' Advice Bureau, Wisbech	03442 451292
Community Centre Bookings (Bryan)	07918 664402
Community Fire Safety Officer	07717 858166
District Councillor - Dal Roy	07885 381007
District Councillor - Matthew Summers	07725 629947
Electricity Faults - UK Power Networks	105
FACT Dial-A-Ride	01354 661234
Fenland District Council	01354 654321
Floodline	0845 988 1188
Library - March	0354 045 5225
MIND (Mental Health Crisis Line)	116 123
National Debtline	0808 808 4000
NHS	111
Norfolk Dial-a-Ride	01553 770310
Parish Clerk - David Gibbs	07932 191050
Parish Councillor - Jill Bliss	01354 638343
Parish Councillor - Ryan Feeney	07785 907509
Parish Councillor - Julia Hayes	07591 537001
Parish Councillor - James Hughes	01354 638310
Parish Councillor - Shaun Potter	07825 016990
Parish Councillor - Andrew Sparrow	01354 638020
Police - Emergency	999
Police - Non Emergency	101
Samaritans	116 123
Telephone Preference Service	0345 070 0707
Townley School	01354 638229
Trading Standards	03454 040506
Train Information	03457 484950
Upwell Health Centre (and out of hours)	01945 773671
Upwell Health Centre - Pharmacy	01945 774934
Veterinary Centre - The Crossings	01366 382219
Water Emergencies	03457 145145
Club Contacts	
Art Club - Jan Clifford	01354 638217
Book Club - Pat Rigby	07776 142642
Gardening Club - Marion Hawthorn	01354 638230
Short Mat Bowls Club - Janet Harper	01354 638681
WI - Margaret Hayes	01354 653240
Jazz Club - Cat Johnson	musiciancat@hotmail.co.uk
Christchurch Stargazers - Mark Andrews	07425 165415

Letters to the Editorial Team

The Editorial team welcome letters from its readers. Please email letters to: editor@heron.info or post them to *The Editor of The Heron, 1 Brimstone Close, Christchurch PE14 9EE*. **PLEASE NOTE:** Letters will only be considered for publication if they are accompanied by name and contact details. The Heron will not share any contact details unless given permission.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Starling Murmurations

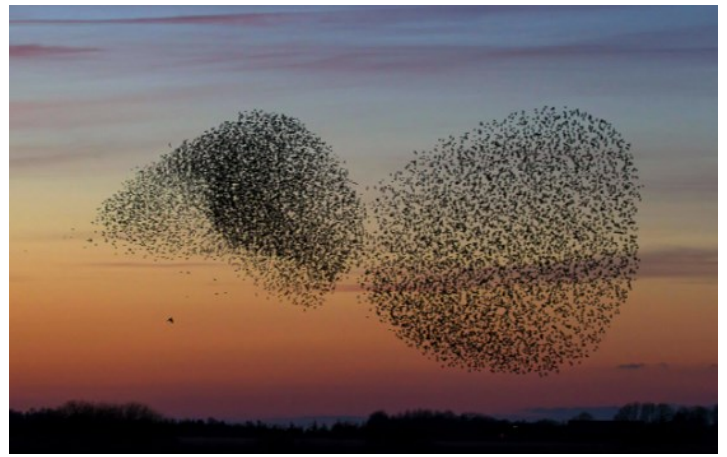
Every year, as the time to roost at dusk arrives, thousands (though large murmurations can be into the millions) of starlings take flight sending waves of unified movement pulsating in the sky. In Christchurch and surrounding areas, we are fortunate to see small groups of Starlings, taking flight at dusk, weaving beautiful patterns. An innate sense seems to tell the birds when to turn as the flock move together.

Starlings are known as 'partial migrants': birds that migrate in some places but not in others. Our own starlings tend to stay put while those from colder countries in eastern Europe head to our shores, swelling our numbers during autumn and winter to form seriously impressive flocks.

Scientists believe that murmurations offer safety in numbers; protection from predators attracted by the sheer number of birds. After all, it can't be easy to single out just one starling bird from a whirling group of hundreds or even thousands! Experts still aren't completely sure how each starling knows which way to turn without bumping into its murmuration-mates.

Murmurations always form over the birds' communal roosting site. As the number of starlings reaches its peak and the last of the daylight begins to fade, an unspoken signal seems to tell the group to funnel towards the ground with one last sweeping motion and calming *whoosh* of wings.

Roosts can be anything from a reedbed to a seaside pier where the group can huddle together for warmth and chatter about the best feeding grounds.



Whilst murmuration describes the movement of starlings (the name comes from the sound made by the wings), other birds can create similar patterns but this is then known as flocking. Commonly this is found in wading birds, when there is an exceptionally high tide, when the waders are all forced to fly as their wading options disappear.

Again, we are fortunate to be able to witness, during Spring and Autumn high tides along the Norfolk coastline, one of the best displays being given by Redshanks.

If you go out on the coastline today, or across the Fens, keep your eyes peeled.

Liz Scott

Material from www.brockholes.org

Photo by Alamy Stock

Santa Visits Christchurch ... pulled by a festively-lit tractor!

On Saturday 16th December Santa set aside a couple of hours to come and visit us in Christchurch. Starting his journey in Padgetts Road, Santa and his Fenland Farmers helpers slowly wound their way around the Streets, Closes and Lanes of our village - collecting money and gifts as they went. Finally finishing with a pint in the Dun Cow! Organiser, Steve Neugebauer gave us fair warning of Santa's imminent arrival and he didn't disappoint - Ho Ho Hoing his way around the village - to the delight of all the young villagers.

All money collected on the night was split between various chosen charities - with any gifts donated going to Holly Ward at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. Photographs courtesy of Giles Thorlby.



Why Welney Floods

The Ouse Washes have a dual purpose as a wetland habitat and to act as the floodplains of the River Great Ouse at times of high rainfall. The tiny fragments of wetlands we see today are the last remaining fragments of what would have been a much wider expanse of this habitat covering much of the Fens area. When storing flood water, the Ouse Washes are protecting the homes, businesses and arable farmland which today covers much of the area along the length of the River Great Ouse. The water needs to go somewhere so that it does not overwhelm farmland and inundate homes. However too much water, for too long, and occurring too often is not good for the habitat, or the birds using the site.



The Ouse Washes are the manmade flood plains of this river system, which have been in place since the 17th Century, largely keeping much of the Fens free from flooding. Today we face challenges from climate change and experience greater amounts of rainfall. The speed at which water now flows through the whole river system results in prolonged and deep flooding across the Ouse Washes some years. Developments further upstream from building, increased infrastructure and a reduction in natural landscapes result in more runoff feeding into the river system. Natural flood management along the whole of the river system could help slow the flow of water, allowing wetlands like the Ouse Washes to cope in more years, than it currently experiences extreme flooding. Sustainable drainage systems, or SuDS for short, can allow water to be stored along the whole of the river system in manageable amounts until it can slowly enter the flow of the river.

In years when the flow of water is slower and flooding is managed well by the Ouse Washes silt carried in the water from further upstream is deposited in the slower stretches of the river, this can build up around sluice gates and along drains. Therefore, a faster flow of water which normally coincides with deeper flooding can be beneficial for removing this silt. A deep flood once in every five years or so, helps this process.

During deeply flooded winters, the number of birds the wetlands of the Ouse Washes can cater for reduces, from 70,000 to around 20,000 as wading birds, dabbling and grazing ducks struggle to find food on the washes, so they disperse into the local area. This can have the knock-on effect of depleting food in those areas with more birds feeding and so the flocks have to travel further in search of food or are forced to choose less suitable feeding areas. In very deep floods the swans may even choose not to roost on the Washes in large numbers, favouring the shallow pools on Lady Fen, reservoirs or the flooded areas on arable fields.

From wwt.org.uk, photo by Simon Stirrup

PARISH LUNCH RAFFLE WINNERS!

Congratulations to the winners of the Parish Lunch Christmas Raffle Fundraiser:

- 1st Prize - £50 - Susan and Andy Street
- 2nd Prize - Hamper - Linda Potter
- 3rd Prize - Two Bottles of Wine - Marie Melton
- 4th Prize - Christmas Wreath - Sheila Smart

Our thanks go to all those people who purchased tickets. Just over £400 was raised which will all go back into helping fund next year's Parish Lunch for the Over 65s in the village.

Thank you and a Happy New Year to you all from the Parish Lunch Committee.



Any views expressed in The Heron do not necessarily reflect the views of The Heron Editorial Team.
The team aim to provide a balanced view of village opinions where such views are expressed.
We reserve the right to edit any submissions where we feel this is appropriate.



The Heron is printed by
March Stationery & Print, 5 Fenland Walk, March, Cambs PE15 8TW
Tel: 01354 656614 Email: sales@marchsp.co.uk