

The Heron

Community Magazine

June / July 2026

Delivered to homes in Christchurch, Euximoor and Tipps End

**Important news on PAGE 3, from
The Heron Executive Committee...**

In this issue

Village Events	Pg 2
Heron Exec Team Message	Pg 3
Support Fenland	Pg 3
Diary Dates	Pg 4
Editor's Ramblings	Pg 5
PCC Chairman's Report	Pg 6 - 7
Cambs Fire & Rescue	Pg 7
Community Centre Hire	Pg 8
Church News	Pg 9
What's On	Pg 10
March Summer Festival	Pg 10
Magpie Centre	Pg 11
Neale-Wade Academy	Pg 12
Dun Cow Bike Night	Pg 12
Hedge Maintenance	Pg 13
Stonea Bridge	Pg 14
Craft Club	Pg 14
Live on The Green	Pg 15
Gardening Club	Pg 15
Dorothy L Sayers	Pg 16
Women's Circle	Pg 16
Short Mat Bowls	Pg 17
Cars and Coffee at the Crematorium	Pg 17
Dog Show	Pg 17
Our Advertisers	Pg 17 - 21
Clr Dal Roy	Pg 22
Glass Paperweights	Pg 23
Penny Farthing	Pg 24





This month, the PCC held its AGM, which was well attended, and included a talk by Lizzie Bruce on the Welney Wetland Trust, which was very interesting, about the background and the work that is done.



There was a good discussion on the work that the PCC does, and the Chairman's summary of the last year is included in this magazine.

In April, the CCC hosted the play "Crumbs", playing to a full hall. This was an excellent performance, and hopefully this will be repeated next year. There was the added bonus that the bread baked as part of the performance was delicious – I can't think I've ever been to a play where anything like this has been done.



Finally, just in time to be included here, and with glorious weather, the annual tractor run came through Christchurch



Message from the Heron Executive Team

It is with sadness, but also a sense of pride at what the Heron team has achieved over the many years, that we share with you our decision to bring The Heron to an end. This is the final regular edition with a special Celebration Edition in October.

At our recent Executive Committee meeting, we made the difficult but unanimous decision to stop publishing. This is not because of financial issues. Our small team feels we have given a lot of time to The Heron and have done our part. We believe it is now time to finish.

The Heron began about 45 years ago because local newspapers like the Fenland Advertiser, The Cambridgeshire Times, and Wisbech Standard gave very little coverage to our village. The Heron became an important way to share local news with our Parish, long before social media and mobile phones. Now, as printed newspapers have declined, we feel it is the right time to finish. We will hold our final Annual General Meeting on 3rd September at 7pm at Christchurch Community Centre.

After we finish the October edition and settle all invoices, we will reimburse any money owed to our advertisers. Any remaining funds, after all commitments are met, will go to our Parish Council as our constitution states. The Parish Council will hold these funds for a time to support any future Parish magazine that may be created.

We want to sincerely thank everyone, past and present, who has been part of The Heron. We are grateful to all who have supported us over the years. Special thanks to Lewis for ICT support, Steve for printing services, and our dedicated team of deliverers and proofreaders.

To all our readers, we thank you.

support
fenland



Our aim is to create a stronger, better supported, voluntary and community sector with greater confidence and

enhanced connections that are better able to achieve more positive outcomes for their communities.

- Regular Voluntary Group Networks in four market towns
- Partnership networking events
- Work alongside colleagues in the business and public sectors, promoting collaboration
- Promoting volunteering through Volunteer Pop-ins, Volunteer Cambs and volunteer fairs
- Love it, Hate it, Shape it – empowering local communities to make change that they want
- Provision of one-to-one support for local groups

Training in person, online and on-demand

Support Fenland builds on a pilot project that began in 2021, assessing the support needs of Fenland voluntary and community groups. We are grateful to the National Lottery Community Fund for supporting this ongoing work.

Funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

Contact us by

emailing fenland@supportcambridgeshire.org.uk

**LOVE IT, HATE
IT, SHAPE IT!**



Diary Dates

Tue	2nd June (1st Tuesday)	Mobile Library	12:15pm	Fen View Layby
Tue	11th June	Book Club	7:30pm	Contact Pat Rigby
Thurs	4th June (1st Thursday)	Bike Night	6:30pm	The Dun Cow Pub
Mon	8th June (2nd Monday)	Parish Council Meeting	7:30pm	CCC
Tue	9th June (2nd Tuesday)	Women's Circle	7pm	CCC
Sun	7th June (1st Sunday)	Welle Cinema	1:30pm	3 Holes Village Hall
Fri-Sun	12th - 14th June	March Summer Festival	All weekend	West End Park
Sat	13th June	Cars & Coffee at the Crematorium	10am - 3pm	Fenland Crematorium
Sun	14th June	Fun Dog Show (at March Summer Festival)	10am	West End Park
Tue	16th June (3rd Tuesday)	Gardening Club - Summer Buffet	7pm	CCC - call 07508 281306
Fri	19th June (3rd Friday)	Social Evening	7pm	CCC
Sat	4th July	Live on the Green	3pm	CCC

Regular Weekly Events

Monday	Short Mat Bowls	7pm - 9pm	CCC
Tuesday	Hobby & Craft Club	10am - 1pm	CCC
Sunday	Car Boot Sale	8am - 12pm	Skylark Garden Centre
Wednesday	Chair Based Exercise	10am - 10:50am	CCC - 07880543821
Thursday	Cake, Coffee & Chat	1:30pm - 3:30pm	CCC
Thursday	Indoor Bowls	7pm	3 Holes Village Hall
Thursday	Car Boot Sale	9am onwards (buyers)	Upwell Field
Friday	Christchurch Umbrella Breakfast	9:30am - 11:30am	CCC
Friday	Purdy's Auction (drop off from 7:30am)	6:15pm (viewing from noon)	3 Holes Village Hall
Saturday	Bingo	5:30pm for 6:30pm	3 Holes Village Hall
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thurs	Mobile Post Office	4:10pm - 4:30pm	Lay-by near Fen View
Wed & Friday	Upwell Town Youth Football	5:30 pm - 6:30pm	3 Holes Village Hall

Letters to the Editorial Team

If you have something important you wish to be included in our final, celebration, edition in October, 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!

EDITORIAL TEAM:

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

Editorial Team Members: Elaine Reed-Hughes, Pat Rigby, Tracy Giles-Benjamin, Kay Miller, Danielle Carver

Treasurer, Advertising Manager - Elaine Reed-Hughes - adverts@theheron.info Tel: 01354 638310

Deliveries Manager - Clive Benjamin Tel: 07767 872810

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

General Queries - enquiries@theheron.info



Website: www.theheron.info

Editor's Ramblings

Hello,
As you will have read, this is the final regular edition of the Heron – after over 40 years, it was time to retire and let the techy-aware upstarts (mainly Facebook) carry the mantle for spreading information about the village, and aside from the Community Facebook page, I would encourage you to sign up to the Parish Council Facebook page.

I would like to thank quite a lot of people, so bear with me.

Firstly, the team involved who have helped to put the Heron together, who work quietly behind the scenes – from supplying me with content, to putting together the magazine from random articles that I throw together, proof reading, printing, and delivering to every household. Also, to the teams in the past who have continued with the Heron to get us this far.

Then there are those involved in the running of the Heron, to keep it running smoothly, liaising with the Parish Council for funding and general awareness, plus all the other administration and financial work that has been necessary to keep the Heron running. Professional services, Lewis Bennett for his continued IT support including the website with old copies of the Heron, and to Steve Bailey of March Printers for a very professional service, and an extremely rapid turnaround when we get the copy to him, and to Derek for getting the finished copies to me.

The companies who have supported us by advertising in the Heron, I hope that it has been a good investment for you all, and I wish you continued success in the future. Next, the Parish Councillors who have been tremendously supportive of the Heron, and who do an amazing job, often unseen, in working for the best for the village, all done on a voluntary basis, and to Dave Gibbs, Clerk to the Parish Council for his time, vast knowledge and fantastic sense of humour.

To Cllr Dal Roy, a big thank you for his support to me, and his contributions to the village – aside from very exceptional circumstances, he has attended all PC meetings and I know that this is not just for show, but continues his work diligently behind the scenes between meetings and is happy to get out and meet people, rather than simply sit behind a desk.

If I have missed anyone, then I apologise for doing so, and my thanks to you in any event.

For the future, the new community garden - when it's created - is planned to have a noticeboard which will be a source of local information for those who prefer not to rely on Facebook, and if you really want to stay up to date, come along to PC meetings on the second Monday of each month – I have been going ever since I became the editor, but I plan to continue attending, so would be nice to see others there.

So, there will be a final celebration copy of the Heron in October – a “limited edition” run of around 430 copies – if you have memories of the village you would like to be included, then email me at editor@theheron.info and we'll see about putting it in.

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.

Christchurch Parish Council Chairman's Report 2026

Over the past 12 months, the Parish Council has met 11 times on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are publicised on our Facebook page and notice board and remain open to the public, giving residents the chance to raise questions and concerns. They also allow district and county councillors, police representatives and other partner organisations to report to the council and respond to local issues.

During the year, the council has continued to focus on practical improvements across the parish, balancing day-to-day responsibilities with longer-term projects designed to improve safety, public spaces and community facilities.

Among the main areas of work have been upgrades to village defibrillators, with the first replacement unit ready for installation at the Community Centre and a plan in place to standardise all four devices. Work has also progressed on Green Lane through initial clearance with the community payback team, with longer-term plans being developed to improve access, restore the lane's character and enhance biodiversity.

Further work has included early planning for the Clarion Garden project, which aims to create a small community space at The Hill, including planters, a notice board and a memorial rose. Planning and research have also continued for the village centre regeneration project. At the recreation ground, the council has maintained grass cutting, playground upkeep and monthly inspections. Work on the nature park has also moved forward: after a period of closure for safety reasons, the field has been treated and prepared for reseeded, fencing has been repaired and future grant applications will support gates, boundary planting and a small community orchard. On road safety, the council has secured success through the Local Highways Improvement initiative for measures on the Wayside Estate, while upgraded markings have already been completed at Jackson's Corner. Other ongoing work has included vegetation issues on public paths, parking concerns near Townley School, planning consultations, and grant support for local groups.

Alongside project work, the council has continued to review and update its policies to ensure good governance and compliance. Over the year, updates were made to a range of policies including IT, complaints, grievance, disciplinary, publication, equality and diversity, homeworking, expenses and website accessibility. I am pleased to report that the council has also passed its recent independent audit with a clean outcome, reflecting the strong work of our clerk in maintaining records and keeping us up to date with legislation.

Councillors have also continued to support wider community activity, including the Fenland Farmers Santa's Run, which raises money for local causes and Hinchingsbrooke Children's Hospital wards, and representation at the District Council Chairman's Community Carol Service in Wisbech. We have also continued to report potholes and failed streetlights, although progress on these issues is often frustratingly slow once they pass beyond our control.

The work of the council would not be possible without a committed team of volunteer councillors and our Parish Clerk. We do this because we care deeply about improving our parish, and I would like to thank everyone involved for their time, energy and dedication over the past year.

Chairman's Report cont...

It has been an honour to serve as Chair over the last 12 months and to help move forward projects that will benefit the whole community. While the role can at times be frustrating, particularly where progress depends on outside bodies, the council remains committed to acting on behalf of residents and continuing to improve the parish.

I am pleased to present this report as a summary of our work over the past year.

Andrew Sparrow - Chair of Christchurch Parish Council



CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



Stay fire safe while enjoying the summer weather!

Staying safe outside is just as important as keeping your family safe from fire in your home.

As the Summer weather hopefully continues many will take the opportunity to get out in the garden and give it a tidy. There are a few simple things to do which will help reduce the risk of having a fire:

- Dispose of garden waste using either a local waste pick up service, or take it to a local recycling centre. Do not light a bonfire!
- Ensure cigarettes are completely out

Do not leave glass bottles lying on the ground – the sun's rays reflect through the glass and can start a fire.

If you are planning to have a BBQ:

- Use barbeques on a hard, flat surface away from grass, shrubs or fencing
- Put disposable barbeques on bricks, do not place directly on grass.

Don't be tempted to swim in open water!

When the weather is hot and sunny it might tempt people into swimming in open water. It might look nice and warm, but the water temperature can still be very cold, which could cause cold water shock making it difficult to swim to safety. The water might also be deeper than it looks, with hidden dangers under the surface.

We know water is tempting when it's warm outside and as friends gather looking for something to do it can seem great fun. But the fun can quickly turn to tragedy and that is what we are trying to prevent by ensuring everyone understands the risks and hidden dangers.

As much as we discourage people from doing so, we are aware that people will decide to swim in open water. If you get into difficulty, you should "Float to Live", by leaning back, using your arms and legs to stay afloat, and try and control your breathing. Once calm, either call for help or try and swim to safety.

Also a really useful tip to help pinpoint your location is giving us a what3words reference. This is easy to do by downloading the app before heading out and encouraging everyone in your group to do the same, making a note of where you're swimming. The app is free and available to download on any mobile device.

How to hire the Community Centre

Christchurch Community Centre Committee have recently changed their booking system. They have invested in a new system (Lemon Booking), which is user-friendly software for managing the venue bookings, events and website. This website allows the user to fill in their own booking forms to hire out the facilities – clearly showing on a calendar whether the venue is already booked or not.

It also allows the committee to update the Community Centre website, promote regular groups and activities, sell event tickets and eventually manage regular class sign-ups.

This system is very popular with lots of village halls and centres in the UK and we hope that this will simplify the booking process and give the user more flexibility, to pick what aspects of the facility they would like to hire.

Within the website you can view the centre in all its glory - in brief - or simply download a brochure which gives you a more detailed idea of exactly what facilities are on offer and how much they are to hire. The Events page gives you a list of public events that are coming up at the centre and directs you straight to further information about that event, along with how you can book tickets.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HIRE THE COMMUNITY CENTRE?

For a copy of our brochure or to make a general enquiry:

Email: enquiries@christchurchccc.co.uk

Website: <https://christchurchccc.lemonbooking.com>

Competitive rates for hire of our hall and enclosed gardens - suitable for corporate meetings, wedding receptions, dances, cookery demonstrations, BBQs and family gatherings. Latest audio/visual equipment, easily-assembled stage, amply equipped kitchen and a fully stocked, licensed bar with WiFi throughout.

Log on now or contact us to book your event!



One of the first events to use the new system will be Live on the Green. A music event being held on the old bowling green on 4th July. Further details available on page 14.

Why not have a look:
<https://christchurchccc.lemonbooking.com>

GORDON MATHEWSON

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Gordon who died on Wednesday 20th May.

Our condolences go to Jackie and the rest of the family at this sad time - especially so soon after the passing of Shirley who died on 9th March.

From all at the Heron.

SIXFENCHURCHES

JUN 26

SERVICES

Sun 7th 09:30 Breakfast Church, Wimblington
Sun 7th 10:30 Holy Communion, Doddington
Sun 7th 18.30 Evening Prayer, Christchurch

Tue 9th 13:30 Cafe Church, Doddington Church Rooms

Sun 14th 10:30 Holy Communion, Manea
Sun 14th 10:30 Morning Prayer, Wimblington
Sun 14th 15:00 Holy Communion, Benwick

Sun 21st 10:30 Holy Communion, Christchurch
Sun 21st 10:30 Morning Prayer, Doddington

Sun 28th 10:30 Holy Communion, Wimblington
Sun 28th 10:30 Pet Service, Manea
Sun 28th 15:00 Holy Communion, Welney

SIXFENCHURCHES.ORG

Please note the change of time for 7th June

Services in July will follow the same pattern: 1st and 3rd Sundays in Christchurch and Doddington at 10.30; 2nd and 4th Sundays in Manea and Wimblington at 10.30; 2nd Sunday Benwick at 3pm and 4th Sunday Welney at 3pm.

Saturday 18th July 2026

Christchurch Community Centre

Film and Lunch

12 noon until 4ish

Variety of salads with new potatoes.

Followed by a light dessert.

£7.50 per person

Raffle and interval ice creams to buy.

For details and to book contact

Helen - 07702225259

A very grateful thank you to all of you that support our church.

Many of you come to our events, whilst others have spent time clearing up the church yard. Some have donated money and yet others, items for us to sell on. We've even had help with selling stuff on eBay.

The next church yard tidying day will be Saturday 11th July 10am until 3pm. All help welcome.

Looking for somewhere to go?

What	When	Where
Family Day - crafts, badge making, mini-beasts hunt, wildlife of the fens	Saturday 6th June 2026 12pm - 4pm	March Library, City Road
Car Show - free-entry, selection of local stalls. Food available & bar open.	Sunday 7th June 2026	Christchurch Community Centre
Yard Sale	Sunday 14th June 2026 10am - 2pm	Upwell & Outwell Villages
March Summer Festival - live music, dog show, farmers fayre	Friday 12th to Sunday 14th June 2026	West End Park, March
Outfest - bands, barbecue, bar, stalls	Saturday 20th June 2026 From 12pm	Outwell Village Hall, PE14 8PA
Live on the Green - hot food, music, licensed bar, cocktails	Saturday 4th July 2026 from 3pm	Christchurch Community Centre
Manea Gala - tractor display, motor show, transformers, inflatables race, stalls, bar, live music	Saturday 11th July 2026	S M Guy Memorial Playing Field

MARCH SUMMER FESTIVAL IS BACK 12TH-14TH JUNE 2026



26 YEARS OF HISTORY.

What began in 2000 as a small millennium celebration has grown into one of Cambridgeshire's most loved festivals.

A handful of local groups came together to put on a summer show for the town, alongside the unforgettable Colourscape installation - a walk-through world of light, colour, and music. From operatic revues and sharp local satire to school bands and playful performances, the spirit was simple: bring people together and celebrate creativity.

By 2002, the festival had found its stride. With funding secured and a full weekend programme in West End Park, it evolved into the vibrant, multi-day event we know today - packed with live music, grassroots talent, performances, family entertainment, and community spirit.

Over the years, we've hosted everything from parades with marching bands and vintage cars to dance tents, dog shows, storytelling, and more.





Tea with a Pony Returns This May at The Magpie Centre

We're delighted to announce that our much-loved Tea with a Pony sessions are returning for the 2026 season! Sessions began on 6th May and will run through until the beginning of October at The Magpie Centre in West Norfolk.

Tea with a Pony offers a relaxed, welcoming opportunity to meet our wonderful ponies up close, enjoy refreshments, and learn more about the work of Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) and The Magpie Centre. These sessions are designed to be inclusive, friendly and accessible, creating meaningful experiences for people of all ages.

The sessions are particularly popular with Local community groups, Dementia support groups, Care homes, Schools and children's groups and Social clubs and wellbeing groups

Spending time with ponies can be incredibly therapeutic. For some visitors, it brings back fond memories of horses from years gone by. For others, it's a rare opportunity to enjoy animal interaction in a calm and supportive setting. The combination of gentle pony interaction and tea and cake makes for a truly special outing.



Each session offers the chance to Meet our ponies, learn about their personalities and daily routines, discover the impact of RDA sessions at The Magpie Centre, enjoy tea, cake and good company

If you're part of a local organisation and would like to arrange a group visit, we'd love to hear from you. Full details can be found on our website

For more information or to book please contact us:

📍 The Magpie Centre, West Norfolk 🌐 Website: www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk ☎ Phone: 01553 810202

Could You Help The Magpie Centre Make a Difference?

The Magpie Centre, based in the heart of West Norfolk, is currently looking for new trustees to join its board and help guide the future of this much-loved local charity. The Magpie Centre is making a real difference across our community.

To continue this important work, the charity is keen to hear from people who can offer their time, skills, and passion. They are particularly interested in those with experience or an interest in areas such as governance, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, fundraising, partnerships, and grant applications, but most importantly, people who care about their local community.

Holly, a current trustee, shares:

"I started as a volunteer which is so much fun and so rewarding. I then moved to be a trustee and offer my support in a marketing role so we could spread the Magpie message further and wider — it's a great cause."

Becoming a trustee is a rewarding way to give back, meet new people, and help shape the future of a charity that changes lives every day.

If you're interested in finding out more, The Magpie Centre would love to hear from you. At the above number.



Neale-Wade Academy

The Department for Education (DfE) has threatened to oust the trust that runs the Neale-Wade Academy, ranked as needing "significant improvement".

Ofsted had concluded that pupils at Neale-Wade Academy in March, Cambridgeshire, were

consistently underachieving.

The DfE warned the Active Learning Trust, which runs the school, that it had until 5 June to set out how it would make "rapid and sustainable" change.

The trust told the BBC it was committed to providing high-quality education and that progress was already happening "at pace".

According to Ofsted, 1,222 pupils attended the school as of January.

It was sent a termination warning notice by Jonathan Duff, the DfE's regional director in the East of England. "I need to be satisfied that the trust has capacity to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement at the academy, if I am not satisfied that this can be achieved, I will consider whether to terminate the academy's funding agreement in order to transfer the academy to an alternative academy trust." he wrote

'Historical weaknesses'

The main concern raised by Ofsted was about poor pupil performance "over a sustained period of time".

Inspectors found "historical weaknesses" in the curriculum and said: "Many pupils do not achieve well."

However, it was noted new leaders had started to drive change and there was a good safeguarding culture. The school confirmed it had received the letter and said it was writing to parents to update them. A spokesman for the Active Learning Trust said it was confident its "robust and thoughtful" plan would pay dividends.

"We are committed to providing an excellent education and learning experience across all our schools and Neale-Wade's recent Ofsted report clearly pointed to the improvements and progress that have already been made, we know that there is more work to be done and we have continued to make meaningful progress and improvements since our inspection in January."

From BBC News, Lewis Adams, Image from Neale-Wade Academy

New Bike Night at The Dun Cow

FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH - Next one is Thursday 4th June!

All bikes welcome, and the event starts at 6:30pm.

Just bikes, a pint and a bit of nonsense. Turn up, Park up, Enjoy.

Green Lane, Christchurch, Wisbech, PE14 9PU

Understanding Your Legal Responsibilities for a Hedge Bordering a Public Footpath



If you own or occupy land next to a public footpath or other public right of way in England, you may be responsible for making sure your hedge does not obstruct or endanger people using the route. In general, vegetation should not encroach onto the path from the side or above, and the route should remain reasonably passable and safe for the public.

Key Legal Responsibilities

The main legal duty is to avoid obstructing the public path. This means you should cut back hedges, branches and other growth so that walkers can pass without being forced off the route. If a hedge narrows the path, overhangs into it, or creates a risk of injury, the local highway authority can require the obstruction to be removed. Obstructing a public right of way can amount to a criminal offence, and the authority may carry out the work itself and recover the cost if the owner or occupier does not comply.

Practical Maintenance Expectations

- Inspect the hedge regularly, especially during spring and summer when growth is fastest.
- Cut back growth to your boundary so the full width of the path can be used safely. You should be able to clearly see the retaining kerb of the pathway.
- Remove thorny, low or protruding growth that could catch clothing or injure pedestrians.
- Take extra care where visibility is affected near bends, entrances, signs or lighting.
- Keep a record of inspections and maintenance if the hedge has caused complaints in the past.

Notices, Enforcement and Seasonal Considerations

Where a hedge, tree or shrub obstructs or endangers users of a highway or public path, the local authority may serve notice requiring the owner or occupier to cut it back. If the work is not done within the time allowed, the authority may arrange for the work to be carried out and seek to recover its reasonable costs. Although hedge cutting can be affected by wildlife and nesting bird protections, safety-related cutting to remove an obstruction or danger may still be necessary, so it is sensible to check the position carefully before delaying essential work.

Liability and Final Point

If someone is injured because a hedge has been allowed to become hazardous, there may also be potential civil liability depending on the facts. As a result, regular inspection and timely trimming are usually the safest approach. This article is general information only and should not be treated as formal legal advice.

Christchurch Parish Council

Stonea Bridge

Upgrading a level crossing at one of Britain's most frequently struck railway bridges remains an "unfunded aspiration"

The Stonea Road bridge, near March in Cambridgeshire, was the joint second "most bashed", with 17 strikes recorded between 2023 and 2024 - although residents believe the true number is much higher.

The ex-chief inspector of railways Ian Prosser was recently quoted in Rail Magazine saying: "This underpass is not safe in my view. I would close it to vehicles and upgrade the crossing and the signage."

Network Rail welcomed Prosser's comments but said: "Closing the underpass and upgrading the level crossing would require substantial investment."

Motorists have a choice of whether to go under the bridge and railway line or go over the railway line using the road right next to the bridge, which is controlled by a level crossing.

Network Rail added: "As there is no current funding solution in place to deliver this work, the closure of the underpass remains an unfunded aspiration."

Last year Cambridgeshire County Council, working alongside Network Rail, put in a traffic camera system to monitor the two-metre-high (6ft 6in) structure and collect data, such as general traffic information and near-misses.

The council said it regularly reviewed the bridge and "have checked all the warning signs and road markings at the bridge/level crossing".

"We'd urge drivers to check their vehicle heights," a spokesperson added.

"Whilst there have been no injury collisions at this location since August 2023, we're collecting more data which will inform any future decisions. The cameras are expected to remain in place until the end of the year."

From BBC News, Phil Shepka, Image Cambridgeshire Police



Christchurch Hobby and Craft Club

We enjoy both the crafts and the company of those taking part.

We meet from 10am until 1pm on Tuesday mornings at the CCC. The first week is free, and then it's £3 per week or £10 per month, plus £1 for lunch – pop along and see, you'll be made very welcome. Here are some examples of the latest work

We can also offer a Working with Stained Glass course over 4 weeks for a charge of £85, However places are limited.

Please contact me for further details if you are interested.

Janet Harper 07941 465319



**Hot Food
Licensed Bar
Cocktails**



Maria May Sings



We politely ask that only food and drink purchased from us, on the day, be consumed at this event.

**Nik
Legend**



TICKETS

£5 in advance
(£8 on the gate)
Children under 12
go FREE. Scan
below or call
07803 178824



**Also Music
from
“Just
Us Too”**

**4th
July
3pm
Gates Open
4pm
Live Music**

**Christchurch
Community Centre
PE14 9LL**

The Legionees



Check out our Facebook page:
Live on The Green, Christchurch...
8 tickets will be given away soon!

Local acts, hot food, delicious cocktails which were trialled at the last CCC Social Night and went down VERY well!

With thanks to local business sponsorship:
Christchurch Refrigeration
Celeste Events
The Village Cakery
H.E.S Lubricants Ltd

SAVE THE DATE:
Christchurch Community Centre Social Evening:
Friday 19th June from 7pm

Christchurch Gardening Club

Schedule of Events 2026

- June 16th - SUMMER BUFFET
 - July 21st - Jim Paine: Trees For all Seasons
 - Aug 18th - Video Club Night: Subject TBC
 - Sept 15th - Ray Almond: Tudor Human History
 - Oct 20th - Steve Waye: The History of the Guitar
 - Nov 17th - Club Night: Dinner with Alison
- All enquiries, or to join the Club, call Marion on 07508 281306 or alternatively, Steve on 07740 948925



Dorothy L. Sayers (1893—1957)

Dorothy L. Sayers, the renowned English crime novelist and creator of Lord Peter Wimsey, had deep ties to the Cambridgeshire village of Christchurch. Her father, Reverend Henry Sayers, served as the village rector from 1917 until his death in 1928. Coincidentally, she was born in another Christ Church – the headmasters house at Christ Church Cathedral School in Oxford, where her father was the headmaster.

The village and its marshy fen surroundings served as the primary setting and inspiration for one of her most celebrated detective novels, *The Nine Tailors* (1934).

Key connections between Sayers and Christchurch include:

- Inspiration for *The Nine Tailors*: The novel centres heavily around bell-ringing (campanology) and is set against the atmospheric area of the Fens, capturing the geography and local colour of the Christchurch and Upwell area. Considered to be one of the best Wimsey stories. She stopped halfway through writing it to write *Murder Must Advertise* in 1933, because she had a deadline to meet and didn't want to rush her pet project.
- The Sayer Graves: Reverend Henry Sayers and his wife, Helen, are buried in the graveyard at the northeast side of the local church. Their graves were originally unmarked per Dorothy's request, but today a marble stone bears their names. A commemorative tablet dedicated to them by the parishioners remains in the church.
- Local Folklore: Sayers famously had a complicated relationship with the remote, flat fens. She is reputed to have quipped about the village: "*Christchurch is the last place God made, and when He'd finished He found He'd forgotten the staircase!*"



Christchurch Women's Circle

At our May Meeting we were privileged to be able to visit the workshop and gallery of Layne Rowe in March. Layne is a Glass Blower and Sculpture creating some most amazing works of art in Glass. He talked and demonstrated us though the process, achieving such high standard of exquisite pieces many retailing in galleries around the globe for thousands of pounds. Our sincere thanks to Layne and Lisa for a very interesting, educational and enjoyable evening.

June 7th Cake Stall at the Christchurch Car Show

June 9th Talk by MAGPAS
Competition Letter F

July 14th Talk by Chapel Cottage Plants - Wimblington.

This is an open meeting for all, do come along and hear the history behind this very successful local business.

Visitors £4.00 including Light Refreshments and a Raffle.

Visitors and New Members are always welcome.

Indoor Short Mat Bowls

Meets every Monday 7-9pm at Christchurch Community Centre.

ALL WELCOME! (Spare bowls available to loan.)

For further details call Hazel Spry on 07768 648619 .



CARS AND COFFEE AT THE CREMATORIUM FOR MENS MENTAL HEALTH



JUNE 13, 10AM TO 3PM

£3 ENTRY FEE ALL PROCEEDS GO TO CHARITY

IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND,
CONTACT SCOTT ON
07513 426007

ALL CARS, MOTORBIKES,
VANS WELCOME

CRACKLEFEST AND RAFFLE!

HELD AT FENLAND
CREMATORIUM
KNIGHTS END ROAD PE15 0YJ

**FOOD AND DRINKS
AVAILABLE**

FUN DOG SHOW

Organised by Doggy Styling Professional Dog Grooming
Sunday 14th June 2026



West End Park, March, PE15 9LS



Classes start 11am - Pay in the ring £1.50 per class

Rosettes to 6th place & goody bags for all entrants

1. Handsome Pedigree Dog Sponsored by Heidi's Pet Friends
2. Prettiest Pedigree Bitch Sponsored by Dog Club With Kelly
3. Handsome Crossbreed Dog Sponsored by AE & EA Hudson Ltd
4. Prettiest Crossbreed Bitch Sponsored by Happy Pups Manea
5. Waggiest Tail Sponsored by Amy's K9 Adventures
6. Best Rescue Sponsored by With Kelly Pet Services
7. Fancy Dress Sponsored by Well Dog Hydrotherapy
8. Childs Best Friend Sponsored by Barks Bestfriend
9. Cutest Puppy under 1 year Sponsored by Tip Top Pet Sitting & Dog Walking
10. Vibrant Veteran 10yrs+ Sponsored by Wing Goes Walkies Pet Sitting
11. Best Condition Sponsored by Passion for Paws- Natural Treats

All first place go forward to Best In Show

For more information contact Sam at

Doggy Styling, 128 High Street March PE15 9LP

07738 155 974

Tombola
& Stalls



CHRISTCHURCH REFRIGERATION

Air Conditioning & Air Source Services



SPECIAL OFFER

**10%
OFF**
FOR NEW
CUSTOMERS

Our Services

- Air Conditioning Installation
- Air Source Heat Pump Maintenance
- Servicing & Preventative Maintenance
- Fault Diagnosis & Repairs
- Residential & Commercial Systems
- System Upgrades & Replacements

Why Choose

Christchurch Refrigeration?

- Experienced & Certified Engineers
- Reliable, Professional Service
- Energy-Efficient Solutions
- Competitive Pricing
- Flexible Maintenance Plans

Areas Covered:

Christchurch, Manea, Upwell, Outwell, March, Wisbech, and all surrounding areas

Call Today for a Free Quote

📞 07521025968

✉ service@christchurchrefrigeration.co.uk

Christopher THE LOCKSMITH

ARE YOUR LOCKS BEHAVING BADLY?

We Value Old Fashioned Customer Service
A Local Trusted Family Business Since 1989



Specialist in UPVC & Wooden Doors



No Call Out Charge



No Fix No Fee



All Work Fully Guaranteed



10% Senior Citizen Discount



For More Advice & Help Call Christopher:

07772 111 222

www.christopherthelocksmith.co.uk

CHRISTCHURCH ELECTRICAL

Simon Freeland Hill Farm, 3 Church Road, Christchurch, PE14 9PQ

Tel: 01354 638802 Mobile: 07727 046439



Domestic electrical work undertaken.
No job too small.
Free quotations / estimates.



www.electricalcompetentperson.co.uk

www.electricalsafetyregister.com



ALL PESTS CONTROLLED
Domestic & Commercial Pest Control

www.allpestscontrolled.co.uk

WOODWORM
BEDBUGS
MOLES
MICE
RATS
ANTS



SQUIRRELS
RABBITS
WASPS
BIRDS
FLEAS
BEES

Call Danny on

Tel: 01945 772 153

Mob: 07795 073 985



SARAH JANE'S NURSERY

Mobile: 07905 368729

The Bungalow, Fifty Road, Manea, Cambridgeshire.
PE15 0HN

Sarah Cross

sarahjanesnursery@outlook.com

Also on Facebook

FOUR SEASONS TREE SERVICES

Qualified & Professional Tree and Client Care

PRUNING ● LOPPING ● FELLING
PLANTING ● REDUCING & RESHAPING
CROWN RAISING ● HEDGE TRIMMING
THINNING ● POLLARDING ● STUMP REMOVALS
OVERGROWN GARDENS PUT BACK INTO SHAPE
FRUIT TREES TREATED ● LOG & WOODCHIP SALES



FREE ESTIMATES & ADVICE WITH NO OBLIGATION

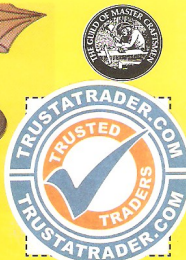
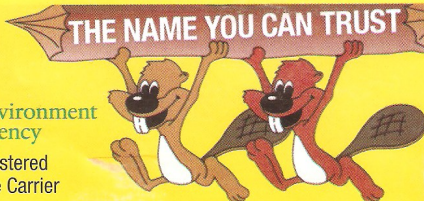
For quality jobs at a competitive price call:

Home: 01353 721665 - Mob: 07771 707921

All work carried out to BS 3998 Standard

A genuine family managed business est. for over 30 years - Fully Insured

THE NAME YOU CAN TRUST



This company offers a 7 day cooling off period



645 Services Ltd

For your complete Oil Services

Registered Office: 12/13 The Crescent, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 1EH - Director: B E Easey
Company Registration Number: 07872493
VAT Number: 126 5422 30

For a competitive oil quote, for delivery in the village and surrounding area, (Outwell, Upwell, Tipps End, Welney) please call 645 Services' local

Representative, Elaine, on 01354 638310 or 07803 178824

(office hours only please)

or Email: elaine@645services.co.uk

We will always try and be the best price around - with local deliveries scheduled for most weeks throughout the month.



HICKS COATINGS
PRIDE WITH EVERY COAT

**Your Local, Professional Spray & Traditional
Painting Company**

Air/airless Spray Painting
Traditional Brush / Roller Paint & Decorating
Upvc Window & Door Painting
Exterior Timber Treating



Simply Contact Us On:
07703 459675 or hickscoatings@yahoo.com



March Stationery & Print

**Booklet Printing
Business Cards
Digital Photos
Leaflets
Newsletters
Banners**

01354 656614

sales@marchsp.co.uk

5 Fenland Walk, March, PE15 8TW

A.R. CLINGO

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

**Family Independent
Business**

**Private Chapel of Rest
Personal Attention**

24 Hour Service

Full estimates given at all times

Golden Charter
Funeral Plans



Pinfold House
St. Peter's Road
Upwell, Wisbech
Phone 01945 772502

Outwell Timber

For all your Timber and Building Supplies

**ISLE ROAD, OUTWELL
PE14 8TD
Tel: 01945 77 21 16**

**FENCING, PANELS, TRELLIS
TIMBER, PLYWOOD, DECKING**

SAND, BALLAST, GRAVEL

SCREWS, NAILS, BOLTS

PAINT, SILICONE, HAND TOOLS

**LOCKS, ELECTRICALS, PLUMBING,
GUTTERING
UNDERGROUND PIPE & FITTINGS**

CEMENT, MULTIFINISH, PLASTERBOARD



High quality, personalised, homecare services in the comfort of your own home

- Wisbech
- Downham Market
- March
- And all surrounding villages



SHORT & LONG-TERM CARE

DEMENTIA PATIENT CARE

REHABILITATION CARE

DISABILITY CARE

COMPANIONSHIP CARE

DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL CARE

Please call us on:
01945 773861

www.purehearthomecare.co.uk



Upwell Computer Repairs

Sales – Repairs - Maintenance - Upgrades

Sales & Support

Laptop Screen Replacement

Broadband Setup

Windows Reinstallation

Virus Removal

Hardware Upgrades

Tuition

Software Upgrades

Web Design

On-Site Services

Email Setup

Custom Built PC's

System Installations

Internet Security

Data Recovery Services

Network Installations



Contact Lewis today for a free consultation

Phone: 01945 772717 - 07849 778525

Email: support@upwellcomputerrepairs.co.uk

Web: www.upwellcomputerrepairs.co.uk

dermalogica®



Beauty Treatments by Jane

NVQ – op.i – Babcac.

Rose Cottage, Christchurch,
Cambs.

Telephone: 01354 638378



JESSICA®
Manicures & Pedicures



Microdermabrasion
Facials
& Gel Nails
& Pedicures



ST. TROPEZ
The Ultimate Tan

Non-surgical Face lifting Treatments

FENVISION

(Est. 1923)

CARING FOR THE NEEDS OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Our services include home visits, monthly support group meetings in March & Ely, outings, support, advice, visual aids & much more.

For further information please call 01354 656726, email office@fenvision.org or visit us at March Town Hall, Market Place, March.

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30am – 12.30pm

Karen's Cut and Strip

Dog Grooming Service

Professional dog groomer of 28 years. For a quote and appointment:

Tel: 07825810299 Email spotties101@gmail.com

Victoria House
Euximoor Drove
Christchurch
PE14 9LR



GRANARY STUDIO

Your local picture framer

01354 638614

www.granarystudio.uk

The Granary
Hall Farm, Upwell Road
Christchurch
PE14 9LJ

Russell's Family Butchers

**Family butchers for 5 generations.
All of our meat and poultry is fresh
free range from our own farm.**

**Visit us at our shop in Upwell or at
our market stall in March
(Saturdays) or Wisbech
(Thursdays and Saturdays).**

**48 Town Street, Upwell,
PE14 9DA
Tel: 01945 773419**



LW Vehicle Services Ltd Car and Commercial Repairs

- Class 4 and 7 MOT Testing
- Full Diagnostic Service
- HGV Maintenance
- Batteries - Tyres - Exhausts
- Welding and Fabrication
- Timing Belts
- HGV PMI Inspections
- Aircon Service and Repair
- Courtesy Car Available
- All Service and Repairs Undertaken
- Car and Van Sales

Call 01354 610172
Email lwvs@outlook.com
Web lwvehicleservices.com



March Road, Welney, PE14 9SE



Wisbech

• FUNERAL SERVICE •

Independent Family Funeral Directors



*Funeral Directors James
and Laura are proud to be
serving the community*

**Personal, caring & affordable
Advice without obligation
24 hours a day**



FUNERALS FROM £2,495
Inclusive of all fees

Chapel of Rest
Traditional, Modern & Eco-friendly funerals
Pre-paid & pre-arranged funeral plans

17 Old Market, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE13 1NB
01945 405950 (24hr)

www.wisbechfuneralservice.co.uk

Village Contacts and Useful Information

By now you should have all received a hard-backed copy of the Contacts and Useful Information which featured regularly in the magazine. It was decided that we could free up a page in the magazine by offering this as a 'pull out and keep' page for readers. However, if you are new to the village, and haven't received a copy, please let us know (enquiries@theheron.info) and we will do our best to get one to you.

Your Local Councillor

Dal Roy - Independent Councillor - Elm and Christchurch
Mobile : 07885 381007 Email : droy@fenland.gov.uk

Dear Residents,

As we move through May 2026, I would like to take a moment to thank everyone across the Parish for your continued community spirit, kindness, and determination. It has been a busy and rewarding month meeting residents, supporting local initiatives, and listening to the issues that matter most to you. It was encouraging to see some new faces at the Annual Parish Council meeting. I encourage you all to attend these to keep up to date and raise any new concerns.

This month, I had the privilege of attending several community events, neighbourhood improvement activities, and discussions with local groups and businesses. As well as welcoming a new Mayor in Wisbech and in Rugby, as an independent councillor I regularly visit other areas to get an idea of how other councils are dealing with similar challenges such as those we face here in Fenland. From environmental clean-up projects to youth engagement programmes and conversations about safer communities, I have been inspired by the passion and dedication shown by people throughout the Parish. This passion is often reflected in other parishes similar to ours.

One of the things that continues to motivate me most is seeing neighbours helping neighbours and communities coming together with positivity and purpose. Fenland is built on strong values, hardworking people, and a shared commitment to making our towns and villages better places for everyone.

Christchurch Parish Council have a proactive and forward-thinking team and it's great to see their achievements and ideas for this coming year. I am currently supporting the set-up of a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in Christchurch.

I also want to especially encourage our young people. Your ideas, energy, and ambitions are important to the future of our district. Never doubt your ability to make a difference. Leadership begins with service, respect, and the courage to contribute positively to your community.

As I often say:

"Every positive action, no matter how small, helps build a stronger future for us all."

We all face challenges in life, but progress is made when we work together with understanding, determination, and hope. Let us continue supporting one another and taking pride in our communities. As a locally focused councillor I am actively involved in many local initiatives. I am pleased to be able to add value to those as our communities grow.

Over the coming months, I remain committed to listening to residents, supporting local projects, and working hard on behalf of the wards I represent. Your voices matter, and together we can continue building a district filled with opportunity, unity, and compassion. Feel free to contact me anytime and I will always respond. Thank you once again for your continued support and encouragement. Enjoy the sunshine as it's finally here, we can all look forward to ice creams and barbecues.

With best wishes,
Councillor Dal Roy



Glass Paperweights

The history of glass paperweights spans from ancient artisan techniques to modern sculptural masterpieces:



Ancient Roots & Early Beginnings (100 BC – 1840s): The mosaic techniques used inside glass paperweights date back to ancient Egypt and Rome. However, the modern glass paperweight as we know it was developed in the 1840s in Central Europe (Bohemia/Silesia) and Venice. Venetian glassmaker Pietro Bigaglia is widely credited with bringing them to the forefront, showcasing them at the 1845 Vienna Industrial Exposition.



The "Golden Age" (1845 – 1860): Following the 1851 Great Exhibition at London's Crystal Palace, paperweights became the ultimate European desk accessory. The renowned French factories of **Baccarat**, **Saint-Louis**, and **Clichy** dominated this era. They mastered *millefiori* (thousand flowers), *lampwork* (sculpting delicate flora and fauna in molten glass), and *sulphides* (encased ceramic portraits).



American Expansion (Late 1800s): The trend quickly crossed the Atlantic. Companies like the **New England Glass Company** and the **Boston & Sandwich Glass Company** in Massachusetts, along with Gillinder & Sons in Philadelphia, created their own highly collectible floral and fruit weights. Pittsburgh glasshouses also patented methods for creating early, utilitarian advertising and portrait paperweights.



Decline and Rediscovery (1900 – 1950s): By the late 19th century, paperweight production fell out of fashion, and the intricate techniques were largely lost. It wasn't until the 1950s - spurred by French collectors like Paul Jokelson and innovative studio artists like Paul Ysart and Charles Kaziun—that the flame-working and encasing techniques were rediscovered.

Modern Art Glass (1960s – Present): Today, paperweights are prized as fine art. Visionary artists like Paul Stankard pioneered hyper-realistic, intricate botanical and insect paperweights, while contemporary studio movements continue to push the boundaries of what can be encased in molten crystal. Historic British makers like Caithness Glass also shifted from historical reproductions to sleek, modern art-glass paperweight designs.



Penny Farthing rides high in town for 115 years

A Fenland garage that has had various versions of a Penny Farthing on its roof for well over a century said the bike continued to be part of the "everyday fabric of life" in the town.

Martyn Hopkins has worked at the garage in March, Cambridgeshire, since 1986, and renamed it after the Victorian-era bicycle when he took over the business seven years ago.

He said the unusual landmark had become so well known that people even referenced it when giving directions.

Colin Bedford, who ran the site in the 1960s and '70s and later set up a local vintage cycle club, has discovered that variants of the bike have sat on the garage since 1911. He said the Penny Farthing was a unique piece of Fenland history. The business has gone through various names in that time, including Rose's Garage and John Clarke's Garage.



Colin, who is now approaching 90, has a razor-sharp memory of his hometown and garage's past. He said the site was first owned by the Rose family, who made and sold pedal bikes and dealt motorcycles. "Mr Rose first had the Penny Farthing in 1906 but couldn't sell it, as people were constantly having mishaps and falling off while testing it," One day the owner got so fed up with the bike, which has a huge front wheel and a small rear one, that he put it on the roof "to keep it out of harm's way" - and there it stayed. Christmas revellers, in their high spirits, managed to knock it off in 1972 and it was damaged again a few years later, he

said.

The current version, which does not operate, was created in the mid-'70s by a local engineering firm to immortalise it in history, in a town known for its quirks.

Hopkins said the garage he now runs holds many special memories, as his late mother also worked at the premises as a petrol pump attendant.

He said he hoped to see the bike riding high for many years to come.

"The Penny Farthing is a local landmark and everyone recognises it - even people out of town know exactly what you mean when you mention it," he said.

Martyn Hopkins renamed the business Penny Farthing Garage when he took it over, calling it "the obvious choice"

From John Devine, BBC News. Images from John Devine and Martyn Hopkins



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.

