



A famous face at LVC: Author and Poet Michael Rosen took part in a day of activities at the school, see Marsh Mail on page 3

## Granta Medical Practices update

AS I write this, the NHS is again in the throes of extreme winter pressures due to high levels of infectious diseases such as Flu, Covid, RSV and Norovirus. You can help stop the spread by following the three C's:

**CLEAN:** wash your hands often, using soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand rub;  
**COVER:** cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze. Use a tissue or your upper sleeve, not your hands;  
**CONTAIN:** if you get sick, stay at home until you're well again. Try not to spread your germs to others.  
Don't forget you can treat many minor illnesses at home with a well-stocked medicine cabinet. Colds and coughs, sore throats, and upset stomachs can all be treated by having a supply of health care essentials such as pain relief (paracetamol/ibuprofen), cough and sore throat remedies, a first aid kit, upset stomach treatment, rehydration treatment and heartburn/indigestion treatment.

And finally ... it isn't too late to get a Flu jab – they are available until the end of March – just give us a ring to book your appointment!

Wishing you all a safe and healthy February.

Sandra East  
Head of Patient Services

# Local bus drivers tackling abuse

CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S biggest bus operator has revealed some of the initial experiences of its drivers in standing up against Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Stagecoach East's buses officially became places of refuge for people in fear of abuse. Under the scheme, the operator's existing safeguarding procedures are being enhanced with additional training so that drivers recognise people who are in vulnerable situations either on or off the bus and have received guidance in how to offer help. Darren Roe, Managing Director of Stagecoach East said, "The message remains the same as it was at launch: your local bus is a place of safety. I would encourage anyone who is in fear or abuse, either on the bus or if they see a bus, to make themselves known to the driver, who will try to help them. Even after only the first few months, we have already had numerous incidents where drivers have intervened to stop abuse against women, and their actions have absolutely kept them safe on our vehicles. These have ranged from young women feeling safe seeing our destination messages, diverting a bus service to take a vulnerable woman to a safe area, and also making a direct intervention to keep predators away from a young girl, one of whom was arrested."

If a driver recognises that a passenger is in fear of



Darren Roe, Managing Director of Stagecoach East

abuse, they have been given a range of options to help. These are called the '5 D's' and include delegating, by involving others, distracting, and delaying until it is safe to challenge. All Stagecoach East buses now display BAA stickers with QR codes by their entrance doors, designating them as safe spaces and all our buses have multiple cameras, so cases of abuse will be recorded and reported.

Stephen Kiely  
Stagecoach East

## Parents strolling for sanity



The group meets regularly and is a great way for new parents to socialise and exercise

A NEW walking group is offering vital support to parents in and around Saffron Walden. Blaze Trails Saffron Walden is aimed at parents and their babies, and plans local walks (within 30 minutes of the town). They hope to get more parents outside, whatever the weather, for a free activity, providing a much-needed boost for parents and babies.

The group was set up by Lizzy Johnson and Lydia Stone, who met during antenatal classes. The walks take place on Fridays as both Lizzy and Lydia are now back at work, but they'd welcome new organisers to the team to widen their offer. "We try to organise a range of walks," says Lizzy, mum to Charlie, aged 11 months. "Our longer walks are designed for baby-carrying in slings or backpacks, but we stop for nappy breaks or to feed the babies. We post a description of each walk so parents can decide if it's for them." Blaze Trails is a national organisation, and uses the Mighty Networks group to share details of walks. "We don't post full details publicly," explains Lydia, mum to Finn.

A recent study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine highlighted the impact of exercise in reducing postpartum depression. "We hope that our walks will give people the chance to talk, share their experiences and enjoy being outside", added Lizzy.

After a break for Christmas, the next walk is on March 7<sup>th</sup> in Linton.

If you'd like to join, visit [community.blazetrails.org.uk](http://community.blazetrails.org.uk)

Lizzy Johnson

Linton and Brinkley Rangers present

## Bingo and Bakes



Friday 28th February 7pm  
Eyes down 7:30pm

Linton Infant School hall

£7 including 4 games, and cakes at half price

To book a spot please email  
[1stlintonrangerunit@gmail.com](mailto:1stlintonrangerunit@gmail.com)

Profit towards international trips in 2025 and 2026

See article on page 3

## QUIZ NIGHT

In Aid of The Friends of St Mary's



On  
SATURDAY,  
15<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2025

at  
ST MARY'S CHURCH

Doors Open at 6:30pm – First QuesKon at 7:00pm

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or 01223 892160

See article on page 2

## Cambridge Art Makers unveil half term courses

HAPPY New Year from Cambridge Makers! Our new term is now underway at our workshop and studio and we have lots of lovely short courses in store this year; old favourites and some exciting new ones, including our Family Editions. These are a wonderful opportunity for adults and children to get creative together in a fun and friendly environment. This February we're offering felting, printing, glass work and weaving courses; our familiar favourites in slightly shorter formats for slightly shorter attention spans! Aimed at younger people aged 8 and above attending with an adult. A chance for everyone to use professional tools and materials, this is an opportunity to introduce children and adults to a variety of craft practices on an equal footing so they can learn together! As well as being a lovely and fun thing to do, it also introduces children to professional art practices and activities that may benefit them in the future. Come and join us!

Rosemary Bingham



## Reader Writes

Dear Editor

The family of the late Maurice Edward Biggs wish to express their sincere gratitude for all the kind expressions of sympathy and support extended to them following their recent very sad loss. Many thanks also to those who attended the funeral service to pay their last respects, and for the donations to the British Heart Foundation made in Maurice's memory.  
Sheila, Julia & Heather Biggs

## Sonare sing at Hildersham

OUR third concert in support of the Friends of Holy Trinity Church, Hildersham is on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 7.30pm. This will be given by the professional vocal ensemble Sonare Choir, with one voice to a part: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor and Bass, singing unaccompanied. The title of their programme is *Elements*; it includes works by Mozart and Britten as well as more popular songs and folk songs such as *Linden Lea*.

For more information contact Athene Hunt, huntcam2015@gmail.com .

Athene Hunt

## Lent Lunches in Linton 2025

LENT Lunches are once more in our thoughts and here are the details in your diary. There is no need to book, just come along. Every lunch is in a warm and welcoming home venue.

At the lunches there will be a choice of two delicious homemade soups, fresh bread/baguette and cheese and coffee.

This year we are also meeting on a Tuesday and Thursday to accommodate people who have commitments on our usual Wednesday. The lunches run from 12-2 as a guide, since we often run so we can sit and chat over coffee.

Date	Host	Address
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Celia & George Fisher	37 Back Road, CB21 4LG
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	Judy & Keith Nightingale	11 Mill Lane, CB21 4JY
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	Jo George	89 High Street, CB21 4JT
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Judith & Richard Tonry	10 Market Lane, CB21 4HU
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	Margaret & Brian Cox	Richmonds, 65 High Street, CB21 4HS
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Janice & Brian Grey	St Mary's Pavilion (behind church) CB21 4JX

Everyone is welcome. There is no charge for the lunch, but donations would be welcome for this year's chosen charity which is the local Arthur Rank Hospice. Please Gift Aid your donation if you can do so.

Celia Fisher 01223 893839

## Headscratcher 7

HOW many people does it take for there to be better than an even chance that two people share the same star sign? A self obvious answer is 13 - but not so...  
An interesting follow-on from this; there are 8760 hours in a year. How many people as a minimum, would share the same birth hour? Just have a think, the answer will be given next time.

Answer to Headscratcher 6  
Fill the 2.5 L container. Fill 1.5 L container from it and empty the 1.5 L container. Then pour 1L remaining in the 2.5 L container into 1.5 L container (leaving a 0.5l gap). Fill 2.5 L container again. Fill 1.5 L container from the 2.5 L container (transferring 0.5 L) leaving 2 L behind in the 2.5 L container.

Aspasia

## Linton Jazz at Haverhill Arts Centre

LINTON Jazz is a 30-plus Big Band that was established in Linton 27 years ago. Over the years the band has performed many free concerts for numerous different charities. These charities include all the local schools, St Mary's Church, Bartlow Walk, Cancer Research, Anthony Nolan, Save the Children, Oxfam and Arthur Rank Hospice to name just a few. The band has raised over £360,000 for these charities.

The next concert on Sunday afternoon March 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Arts Theatre Haverhill is a celebration of all things Linton Jazz and a celebration of Big Band Music.

Please buy your tickets from the Arts Theatre for a fabulous afternoon of toe-tapping tunes.

Karen Sanderson (MD)

## Hadstock Silver Band returns to St Mary's

MUSIC lovers are in for a treat as the Hadstock Silver Band returns for a highly anticipated Winter Concert. The performance will take place at the beautiful St Mary's Church on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, starting at 7.00pm.

This delightful evening promises an enchanting selection of music from the acclaimed band, known for their captivating performances and rich sound. Tickets are priced at £12.50, which includes refreshments to make the experience even more enjoyable.

For advance tickets, please contact Sue Ellis at 01223 892257 or Charlotte Dodd via email at [events@stmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:events@stmaryslinton.org.uk). Tickets will also be available on the door. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to enjoy a magical evening of music in the charming setting of St Mary's Church.

Charlotte Dodd

## Dust off those brain cells

Tickets are going fast for the Friends Quiz on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February. Book now to avoid disappointment for what promises to be a very good night

Judith Tonry

# THE LINTON NEWS

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Call 893619 for an audio version of the paper

## February bin collection dates

Black: Wednesdays 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>

Blue: Wednesdays 5<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>

Green: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> only

## Village Diary

A round up of dates from this edition  
Please check with organisers before attending weekly events

### FEBRUARY

Mon 3	Abington Gardening Club, 7.30pm	Abington Institute
Tue 4	Scrabble Club 10 -12pm	Pavilion, St Mary's Church
Thu 6	ACE Soup and Roll Lunch, 12.30pm	Sports Pavilion
Sat 8	Hadstock Silver Band Concert, 7.30pm	St Mary's Church
Tue 11	Camsight Meeting, 2pm	Chalklands Comm. Centre
Wed 12	Author Talk, 2pm	Library
Thu 13	Linton Roots, 6pm	Dog and Duck
Fri 14	Valentine Craft Session, 2 - 4pm	Library
Sat 15	Coffee Morning 10 - 12pm	St Mary's Church
Sat 15	Quiz Night, 6.30pm	St Mary's Church
Mon 17	W. Wickham Gardening Club, 7.30pm	W. Wickham Village Hall
Tue 18	Scrabble Club 10 -12pm	Pavilion, St Mary's Church
Tue 18	Story and Crafts - under 5s, 10.30 - 12.30pm	Library
Tue 18	Historical Society, 7.30pm	Village Hall
Friday 21	Daylight Readers, 10.30am & 2.30pm	Library
Sun 23	Convoy4Ukraine Afternoon Tea, 3 - 5pm	St Mary's Church
Fri 28	Bingo and Bakes, 7pm	Infant School

### MARCH

Sun 2	Linton Jazz Concert, 2pm	Arts Theatre, Haverhill
WEEKLY		
Monday	Mini Movers, 10 - 11.30am	Cathodeon Centre
Tuesday	Duplo Club, 10 - 11am	Library
	Knit and Natter, 2 - 4pm	Library
Wednesday	Warm Hub, 1 - 4pm	Sports Pavilion
	IT Club, 5 - 7pm	Library
	Let's Run Girls, 7pm	LVC
Thursday	Stay and Play, 10 - 11.30am	Cathodeon Centre
	Baby Group, 1 - 2.30pm	Cathodeon Centre
	Games Afternoon, 2 - 4pm	Library
Friday	Duplo Club, 11 - 12pm	Library
	Badminton Club, 8 - 10pm	Comm. Sports Centre, LVC

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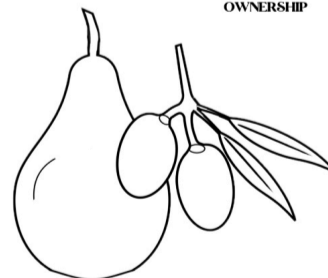
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# Marsh Mail

WE were very honoured to welcome back author and poet Michael Rosen in January (see picture on front page). Michael is a British children's author, poet, presenter professor of children's literature in the Department of Educational Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London. He has also served as Children's Laureate. He conducted a series of workshops with different year groups. Michael gave a poetry workshop to the whole of Year 7 where he told stories of his family's experiences during the Second World War and the students worked together to create some very moving poetry on themes of family, home, flight, empathy for others and compassion. After lots of book signing and interactions with students and staff, he worked with LVC dance company to plan a collaboration for a concert in June. He finished the day writing protest song lyrics with GCSE musicians. At the end of the day we had a visit from ITV who filmed an interview with Michael Rosen performing his poems in our library, with the homework club looking on silently. This was broadcast on ITV Evening News the same day. As well as Michael's visit, the cast of *We Will Rock You* (our latest school production) was lucky enough to be given an all-day workshop from Richard 'Woody' Woodford, alumnus of LVC and West End performer at the start of term. As well as directing and giving feedback to the cast, he spoke about his career and in particular, the path he has taken since leaving LVC. Thanks to the Friends of LVC for funding this opportunity. *We Will Rock You* runs at LVC from 6<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> February - tickets are now on sale.



Cast members and staff rehearsing for 'We Will Rock You' which starts in February.

Helena Marsh

## Infant School news

TIME marches on and as I write this, I notice that the evenings are becoming slightly longer! Spring must be around the corner. You may have seen us out and about on our Rudolph Ramble, raising funds for Arthur Rank Hospice. I am delighted to let you know that we raised an amazing £1,324 for this local charity! Thank you to everyone who supported us and well done to the children who managed to walk a mile at the end of the busiest term in school! As well as many families coming to look round our school, ready for September 2025, many of our current Year 2 children have been to look round their next school. The admissions window for those children due to start with us in September 2025 has now closed and offers of places will be made on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025. Please watch out for information regarding our New Parents Meeting in May and opportunities for the children to spend some time in school before September. I am also delighted to let you know that we are running a Summer Holiday Club for the first two and a half weeks of the summer holidays, along with the training days in September before we start back. This is open to children due to start with us in September up to children who are currently in Year 4. If you are interested in a space, please do contact Miss Hicks in the school office (01223 891421).



High Fives all round on the Rudolph walk

Kelly Harries

## New year, new headteacher

IT is with huge pride that I take on the role of Headteacher at Linton Heights. Having been Deputy Headteacher here for over 12 years, I have loved getting to know the children, families and wider community, as this forms such a big part of making our school what it is.

During our January INSET day, all staff completed an activity called 'Treasure, Tweak and Trash'. This was a great opportunity to make me and the other senior leaders aware of any changes they would like to see; and to communicate what they think makes LHJS special. It has been very exciting to implement some quick wins already, based on this feedback. We will also be talking to pupils, parents and governors about what they love about the school and what they think could be tweaked to improve it. Whilst I can't make any promises and I can't always please everyone, we are really excited to make our school the best it can be. If you have any feedback you would like to share with me, to shape the future of our school, feel free to email the office ([office@lintonheightsjunior.org](mailto:office@lintonheightsjunior.org)) to arrange a meeting.

We had an exciting phone call from the Co-op on the first day back, to let us know we had very kindly been nominated to receive £5,000! They are not allowed to disclose who nominated us but we would really like to thank them. Watch this space for how we spend it!

Caroline Webb

## GirlGuiding

JANUARY is typically fairly quiet in Guiding as we adjust into the new year. All of the units in Linton have now started back for the new year. Linton Brownies are spending this term focusing on learning *Skills for the future* nowhere they are practicing using money, doing some DIY, and trying their hand at cooking. 2nd Linton Guides have been cooking, celebrating the Lunar new year and trying some candle painting.

Linton Rangers have joined forces with 1st and 2nd Linton and Brinkley Guides and are running a Bingo night on February 28<sup>th</sup> to raise money for our upcoming international trips to Amsterdam and California.

GirlGuiding is the UK's largest charity for girls and young women. We provide an affordable space for all girls to learn new skills, have adventures, make new friends and have a huge amount of fun.

We help girls unleash their potential, boost their confidence, and share the world around them with others. We are always interested in new volunteers who can help in any way, big or small, but at the moment there is especially a need at Guides on a Monday night in Linton. We would also love to welcome any new girls who want to get involved.

If you would like to register your interest in either being a volunteer or becoming a Guide, please get in touch. Go online to [girlguiding.org.uk](http://girlguiding.org.uk) or email [LintonDistrict@gmail.com](mailto:LintonDistrict@gmail.com)

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# Library News

A FRIENDLY welcome awaits you at Linton Library: come and say hello to our new Library Assistant, Vicky; browse our shelves in the warm; use our computers for free or contribute to the jigsaw puzzle.

**Author Talk:** we have Jo Browning Wroe coming to give a talk on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2pm at the Library. The event is £5 so please book your place by contacting the library or email: [cambourne.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:cambourne.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

**Valentine Craft:** drop-in session on Friday 14<sup>th</sup>, 2-4pm. This event is aimed at children (with their parent/carer).

**50 Things Story and Craft event:** Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>, 10.30-12.30pm. This event is aimed at children under 5 (with their parent/carer). The event is free but please book your place by contacting the library.

**NEW Games Afternoon:** weekly, Thursday 2-4pm. Come and meet new people, learn to play Five Crowns (for example); board/card games provided, or bring your favourite to share.

**IT Club:** every Wednesday 5-7pm, knowledgeable volunteers are here to offer help, including how to use the Addenbrooke's MyChart patient management software.

**Duplo Clubs:** weekly in term time, Tuesday 10-11am and Friday 11-12pm. Come along and entertain your 0-4-year-old while chatting to others at this free session, in the children's section of the library.

**Knit and Natter:** every Tuesday, 2-4pm. Bring along any craft project you're working on. All welcome.

**Daylight Readers:** our Book Groups meet on Friday 21<sup>st</sup>, one at 10.30am and the other at 2.30pm. New members always welcome.

Vicky Anandraj and Ann King  
Community Library Assistants, Linton Library

Opening hours: Tuesday 10am-5pm; Wednesday 4-7pm; Thursday 2-5pm; Friday 10am-5pm; Saturday 10am-1pm  
Customer Services: 0345 045 5225  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library)

# Camsight VIPs

SONGS by Elvis, Cliff and Engelbert amongst others set feet tapping and voices singing at our January meeting, when we were entertained by Peter Day, of Jukebox Legends. Peter sang and played a selection of old favourite pop hits, and with stories of his career in entertainment gave us a very jolly start to the new year. This was followed by our afternoon tea and raffle, with prizes donated by members and volunteers.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm at the Chalklands Community Centre, when we will have a speaker from Medical Detection Dogs. If you would like any more information on our group meetings and on other services available at Camsight, please contact us through the Cambridge office, or on the number below.



Jean Mannion  
01223 893595

Peter gets toes tapping

# Bartlow Walk

LOTS of exciting things are planned for this year's Bartlow 3 Counties Walk – all in aid of three brilliant local charities:

- Tom's Trust, who give mental health support to children and young people going through the trauma of brain or other central nervous system tumour diagnosis.
- Addenbrooke's Charitable Trust who are supporting the Cambridge Cancer Research Hospital Appeal.
- Bartlow St Mary's Church Restoration Fund.



The walk will be on Sunday May 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be lots of activities for all ages, with the theme the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day in World War II. Linton Jazz Band will once again be playing in the afternoon. There will be lovely things to eat and drink in the farm yard and along the routes. The walks are suitable for all ages; dogs on leads are welcome too.

We had over 1,200 walkers last year, and great fun was had by all. Our ticket prices have been held from last year. Tickets and more information will be available soon on our website at [Bartlow3countieswalk.co.uk](http://Bartlow3countieswalk.co.uk)

Henrietta Findlay

# Linton WI



WE started the New Year with a crafty evening. First we decorated stones, with names, quotations and sparkles. A quiz followed which tested our craft knowledge, and we finished with a fun game of Bingo.

Next month our speaker is Graham Wylde speaking to us about the Maggie Letters which he found in an old stamp album. Maggie wrote these letters to her father between 1870 and 1878, and they offer a fascinating peek at life in Victorian England.

Liz Cox

## Calling all singers! Please reserve the date!

COME and sing Bob Chilcott's St John Passion at St Mary's Church Linton on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2025 from 1pm. The event is to raise funds for St Mary's, Linton.

Bob Chilcott turns 70 this April and he has composed many lyrical and accessible works. We will rehearse the work from 1pm and finish with an informal concert at 5pm to which friends and family are warmly invited. We are sure that this will be a moving and enjoyable work to prepare and perform.

The cost for singers is £15 to include music hire and tea (sandwiches, cakes). See @LintonComeAndSing Facebook page for more information. If you would like to take part, please email [anne@parry-smith.co.uk](mailto:anne@parry-smith.co.uk) to be added to our mailing list. The registration form will be sent from mid-February.

David Parry-Smith  
Director of Music at St Mary's, Linton

# Linton & District Historical Society

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025



## Crime scene search a talk by Alex Mair UK Police Search Adviser

LINTON VILLAGE HALL  
COLES LANE - 7.30 p.m.  
Refreshments and Raffle  
Visitors and new members always welcome

# The Hundred Parishes Society

ENJOYING a winter stroll along any of the described walks within the Hundred Parishes provides an opportunity to view the landscape features visible from various vantage points. Much of this countryside has been farmed by successive generations raising livestock and collecting variable harvests of grain. Spring 2024 was rather wet, and this resulted in disappointingly low yields but with the dry weather in autumn 2024, the sown wheat, barley and oats have germinated, with most fields now covered in fresh green shoots. Many farmers have cut back on growing oil seed rape, and they may choose alternatives such as sunflowers or borage to plant once the weather is warmer.

These farmed landscapes have traditionally supported a variety of wildlife including skylarks, rooks, ladybirds, bumble bees, butterflies, badgers and foxes. In addition, well-maintained soils contain not just beneficial fungi, but many sorts of earthworms and beetles, which in turn provide food for other creatures. Sadly, pests such as slugs and root-eating beetle or fly larvae are also present. Seeing a sizeable flock of birds following a plough demonstrates this plethora of food!

Recent concerns about the loss of insect life, especially pollinators or those that eat aphids, is encouraging farmers to find ways of enhancing habitats for insects by leaving marginal strips round fields for wildflowers, planting new hedges or creating beetle banks within their fields. These features may be visible from footpaths during the winter months so make a note of where they are and plan return visits during the summer to observe them full of flowers and other wildlife.

Tricia Moxey, Trustee  
[www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk)

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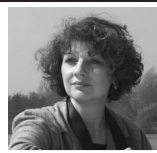
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# Country Matters

Text by Oriel O'Loughlin, illustrations by Maureen Williams



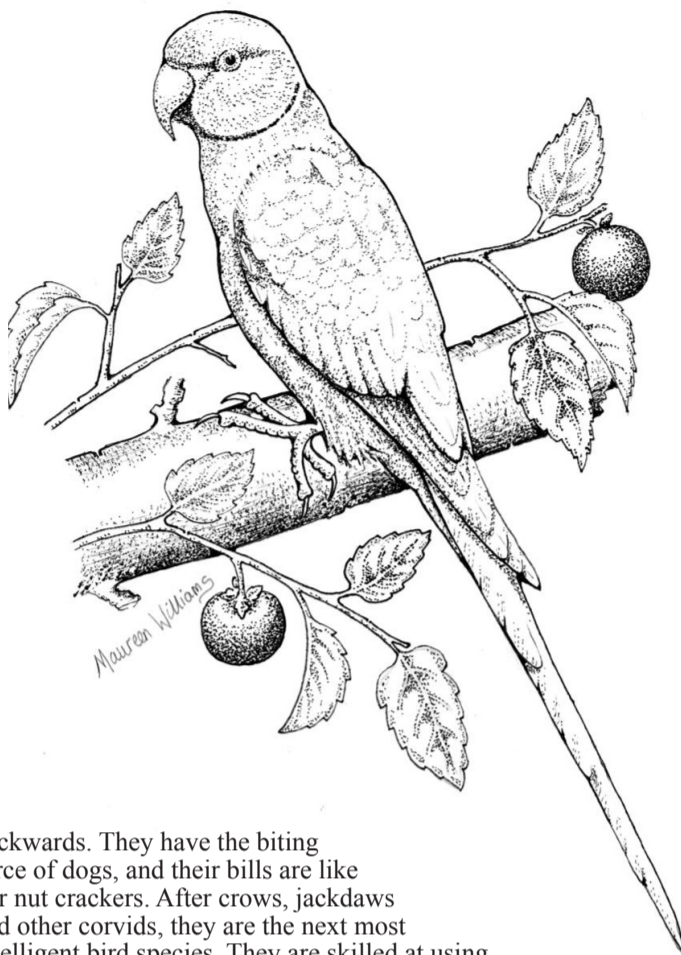
## Any parakeets in Linton yet?

If you've been to any of the magnificent parks in London, you may well have seen, or definitely heard, a green ring-necked parakeet. I'm prompted to write this by reports of parakeets spreading north gradually, and I wonder if anyone has seen one in their garden yet? Our friends in Waresley and in Huntingdon have had them, and someone said there was one in Bartlow. If you hear an unfamiliar, loud and out-of-place bird call, that will be the parakeet.

This parakeet, Latin name *Psittacula krameri*, is non-migratory and there are many theories about how they arrived in the UK and other European cities. It's probably a mix of escaped or released pets and damage done to some aviaries in the storm of 1987. There is even a story about escapees from Ealing Studios during the making of *The African Queen* in 1951. However they got here, there are now more than 12,000 breeding pairs, mostly to be found in London parks and gardens, but numbers are rising rapidly and are on their way north. There are huge roosts in some places, one being Twickenham Rugby Club, where the women's team is called The Parakeets. Is it global warming or just a successful foreign species? Due to its success, it is the most studied of all invasive bird species worldwide. But with the exception of squabbles at the bird table, it doesn't appear to have seriously threatened any of our native species. In Seville, there is a park where parakeets have driven out a type of bat by competition for nest holes in the trees, but the planned eradication of parakeets met with fierce local opposition – probably because of their charismatic and colourful characteristics. Wandering through Hyde Park or St. James's Park with all the ducks and pigeons feels so normal – then suddenly you come up against people with parakeets on their arms, taking seeds. Weird innit?

Parakeets are a member of the very large parrot family, with a long narrow tail, a bright red curved bill, an upright stance, and clawed feet, mostly found in Australia and South America. They are tripod, meaning that to move in trees they use their neck and beaks with equal force to that of their legs.

They have two toes facing forwards and two



backwards. They have the biting force of dogs, and their bills are like our nut crackers. After crows, jackdaws and other corvids, they are the next most intelligent bird species. They are skilled at using tools and solving puzzles and are of course famous mimics. In 2021, there were apparently 50 million parrots kept as pets, but trapping from the wild and importing is now banned by most countries. Buying one as a pet can be an impulse purchase – they require a lot of attention, grooming, veterinary care, training, and environmental enrichment through toys, exercise and constant social interaction. Without this they scream for attention, and can pull out feathers and self-mutilate. They often outlive their owners, living up to 50 years, causing mayhem. Just press pause if you're tempted and seek out a goldfish!

## Pub drop in kickstarts Linton Roots group

We were delighted to meet those of you who could make it to the drop in about our local environment. We all had a lively evening of introductions followed by sharing our thoughts and ideas about the village environment. Topics ranged from our open spaces, nature and litter, through to film screenings, traffic, the river, allotments, repair cafes, preventing waste and more. An interesting way to spend an evening!

We also decided on a name for the group – Linton Roots. We plan to meet to discuss the local environment further in The snug of The Dog and Duck on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 6pm. Do come and join us if you are interested and would like to be involved. All are welcome. If you can't make it, get in touch with us via [linton-roots@outlook.com](mailto:linton-roots@outlook.com).

Kirsten Newble & Yannick Auckland

## More than just a Gardening Club

OVER the past 12 months we have been delighted to welcome members and new visitors of all ages to our events, including the spring plant sale and rejuvenated summer fair, both of which we will build on this year. The photography competition is running again\* and the excellent homemade cakes baked by members will be a central feature of these gatherings!



Whilst many members are keen gardeners, an increasing number wish to find out more about nature, ecology and plants. Sharing knowledge after the monthly meetings is invaluable with tips from the more proficient members helping out those of us with less knowledge.

Dr Manos Kanellos will be talking on the subject of how to set up and maintain a terrarium in West Wickham Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February. Dr Kanellos is a plant physiologist who has been growing orchids for many years and is a qualified judge for the RHS Orchid Committee. Non-members are always welcome for a £2 entry fee.

Annual membership is £8 per person. Please contact Sue Boase on 07716 401646 [wwdgc@westwickham.org](mailto:wwdgc@westwickham.org).

\*Photography titles this year are: Frozen, Light and Dark, Terrific Trees. All categories are open to children with a special prize awarded for the best under 16's entry. Entries to be received by the end of August.

Sally Collins, Vice-chair

## Calling all flower enthusiasts!

ST Mary's Church in Linton is gearing up to host its much-anticipated Flower Festival from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025, and this year's theme, *Our Linton*, promises to bring the community's heritage, charm, and spirit to life through stunning floral displays.

Local flower arrangers are warmly invited to participate in this vibrant event and showcase their creativity. Whether you're an experienced floral artist or a budding enthusiast, this is your chance to celebrate our village.

To secure your place as a participant, contact Charlotte Dodd at [events@stmaryslinton.org.uk](mailto:events@stmaryslinton.org.uk). Spaces are limited, so don't delay!

For visitors, mark your calendars now. The Festival promises a visual feast of blooms and an inspiring celebration of Linton's essence through the language of flowers. Don't miss the opportunity to experience these captivating arrangements and enjoy the welcoming atmosphere of St Mary's Church.

Save the date – 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – and come join us for a blooming good time!

Charlotte Dodd

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# District and County Councillors' Report – January 2024

## Kingsway Solar Farm

The proposal by Downing Renewables/Kingsway Solar for a very large new solar farm on parcels of land between Balsham, West Wrating and West Colville completed the 'informal consultation' stage at the back end of 2024 and thank you to everyone that has engaged with this process. Shortly before the Christmas break, Kingsway Solar released their 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (EIA) document, which outlines what the applicants' environmental consultants see the environmental challenges and concerns to be. You can see this, plus all the other documents currently in the public domain, on their website - <https://kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk/>

The next stage of the process, once Kingsway Solar has digested all of the initial feedback, will be that they will hold a 'formal consultation' which will be asking for more of the same responses to the proposals, should they be more detailed, that they will present at this point. Again, we encourage everyone to engage with this process, as the scheme will impact everyone in this area, directly or indirectly.

It's worth reiterating that, given the size and scale of this scheme, the ultimate decision to approve, or not, will be made by a central government planning inspector, rather than any of the local planning authorities. This will be a major development covering a very large part of our countryside, if it does go ahead, so please do engage if you have any views on this proposal.

## Four-Day Week Consultation

The District Council has been trialling a 4-day work week for their staff since January 2023. The trial was supposed to be shorter than it has been but the previous government had indicated that they would be levying financial penalties to the Council for running this trial, but wouldn't say how much this would be, therefore the Council couldn't decide on whether to make the trial permanent. However, the new government has said they won't be applying any financial penalties on the Council, so SCDC are now in a position to decide on this. This will likely include a formal

consultation where people can give their views on the scheme since its inception.

## Local Government Reorganisation

Before the Christmas break central government announced that local government would be reorganised with the emphasis on much larger councils, run by elected Mayors, and doing away with smaller councils, such as District and possibly County councils.

It's unlikely that anything will happen in Cambridgeshire for some years, if at all, as we already have a directly elected Mayor in or county and have been designated as a 'non-priority' area for reorganisation.

## Greenway Progress

The 'greenway' that runs between Linton and Abington has made some progress over the past few months. The foot/cycle/horse path between Granta Park and runs down the side of Newmarket Road in Little Abington has been completed. This is the latest stage of upgrades to the stretch of the road. Future phases include a new Travel Hub at Babraham and an upgraded bridge crossing of the A11 to access this.

## Average Speed Camera & Accident Data

We have recently been sent the traffic data for the stretch of the A1307 between Linton and Cardinals Green – this shows the accident data as well as the number of tickets issued for people exceeding the speed limit. We're happy to provide these to people that are interested.

## Happy New Year

As this is our first report of 2025, we'd like to wish you all a Happy New Year and we look forward to working with you all throughout the next 12 months.

## Contact Details

District Council – John Batchelor – [johnbatchelor23@gmail.com](mailto:johnbatchelor23@gmail.com)  
District and County Council – Henry Batchelor –

# Planning Applications

Planning applications from 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025

**S/0073/20/NMA1, Validated: Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2024, Status: Decided**

Non-material amendment on permission S/0073/20/VC to reposition the post and rail fence boundary to the rear of 38 Back Road. Land At The Back Of 36 Back Road Linton Cambridgeshire CB21 4JF

**24/04089/HFUL, Validated: Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024, Status: Awaiting decision**

Removal of existing wooden shed in garden and replace with wooden summer house and removal of existing wooden gates and posts from driveway and replace with new wooden gates with steel posts moved 1 metre inside boundary of property. 130 High Street Linton Cambridgeshire CB21 4JT

**24/1379/TTCA, Validated: Wed 11<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024, Status: Awaiting decision**

T1 Ash. Crown reduce in height to a tree height of approximately 18m (a crown reduction of 5m). T2 Ash. Dead monolith. Reduce monolith to 3m in height (from a current height of approximately 6m). 6 Church Lane Linton Cambridgeshire CB21 4JX

## Balsham singers hit 30

THE Balsham Singers would like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped make their Christmas Concert such a great event. Our loyal advertisers, our front of house crew, the PCC and the Parish Council who allow us to use their facilities. Most of all thanks to our fantastic audience, the church was full but hopefully everyone was comfortably seated. A sum of £500 was sent to Ocular Melanoma UK as a result of our raffle and a choir donation.

The next day we sang carols around the village Christmas Tree and on the 20<sup>th</sup> December we were invited to sing for the Royal Papworth Hospital Charity, and were pleased to make a donation to their fund raising day. An unprecedented 3 gigs in a week! Thank you all for your support. In 2025 Balsham Singers will be 30 and we will have some celebrating to do, more next month.

Jo Stinton

## Arthur's Shed

HAPPY New Year! In 2024 we delivered over 145 sessions in Arthurs Shed and welcomed 27 people who had never visited the site before, that's a fantastic achievement! In 2025 we hope to welcome even more of you.

What is Arthurs Shed? Arthurs Shed is a beautiful studio in the garden of Arthur Rank Hospice. From here we deliver small workshops and groups on a wide range of topics, from Henna to Meditation! These drop-in sessions are relaxed, with around 8 members and a leader in a calm and quiet space. You can come as many times as you like and leave if you need to. Everyone is welcome we have a huge range of ages and backgrounds join us on our accessible site. Many assume you need a connection to Arthur Rank Hospice to join but this not the case, we want the Hospice site to be for all our community, not just those using our services. With this in mind, all sessions are free of charge and materials are provided, just bring yourselves!



A view of Arthur's Shed

Carers and loved ones are welcome to join, we just ask that you highlight any extra support you need when booking.

For a full calendar or to find out more contact us at 01223 675777 or

[Arthurs.shed@arhc.org.uk](mailto:Arthurs.shed@arhc.org.uk)

Hannah Touhey

## Walking aids for Ukraine

CONVOY4UKRAINE, who are speaking at the St Mary's Church afternoon tea on 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 3pm, have asked for donations of walking frames, walking sticks, crutches, wheelchairs, rollators and commodes for them to take to Ukraine in March.

Contact Cathy Watts if you can help 893687

Cathy Watts

## ACE Restarts in February

ACTIVITIES & Care for Elderly, ACE have planned a variety of events and outings for 2025. We are looking forward to welcoming friends, old and new, at these activities. A full list of dates and details will be available to take at our first lunch for 2025, on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February. 'Soup with a Roll' for £6.00 is in the Sports Pavilion on Linton Recreation Ground, 12.30 p.m. On the 6<sup>th</sup> February we will also be collecting the names and fares (£20.00) for our outing to Norwich on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

We hope to see you soon, if you need a lift to the pavilion, please call Jan on 01223 892420.

Sue Filby

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# Parish Council Matters

Parish Council Matters is written, edited and published by the Parish Council with the support of the Linton News Team.

## Cambridge Constabulary

One of the most talked about subjects at the regular Police Forums, that are open to everyone, is that crimes are often not reported.



Below are the different ways that we can report crime.

### Online

To easily report crime online please register with eCops.

### By telephone

In an emergency always call 999.

To report a crime anonymously please contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

For non-emergencies please contact Cambridge Constabulary on 101.

To find out more information please visit [www.Cambs.police.uk](http://www.Cambs.police.uk).

### Silent Calls

During November, Cambridgeshire Police received 43 silent calls. Most of the calls were from people suffering domestic abuse who couldn't say anything but urgently needed help to escape a desperate situation or tell officers what was happening to them.

If this applies to you **PLEASE dial 55 after calling 999**, this alerts police officers that you need help and you are in a situation where you can't talk.

**Dialling 999 55** also alerts the 999 operators that your call is genuine and they will do all they can to track your location. If you are unable to speak, listen carefully to the instructions and questions asked by the operator so they can arrange help.

To find out more information please look at [https://orlo.uk/silent-999\\_X61L6](https://orlo.uk/silent-999_X61L6).

Police Officers are working around the clock to make sure victims of domestic abuse are safe and perpetrators are dealt with. Domestic abuse affects women, men, and children from all walks of life. If you or someone you know is suffering from abuse please visit [https://orlo.uk/report-abuse\\_tUGVa](https://orlo.uk/report-abuse_tUGVa) or call 101.

### Drug/Drink Driving

This is one of the five fatal causes of collisions on the road. If you think someone is drink or drug driving you can report them anonymously 24/7 by calling 0800 032 0845.

For more information please visit [https://orlo.uk/Drink-Driving\\_bfn4W](https://orlo.uk/Drink-Driving_bfn4W)

## Linton litter picks 2025

LINTON Parish Council support Linton FROGS (Friends of the River Granta) with four Litter Picks annually.



The dates for your diary in 2025 are as follows:

- Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March
- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May
- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July
- Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September

The team meet at the Village Hall for a 10:00am start and return by noon to enable the litter to be sorted, counted and bagged ready for collection by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The regulars welcome all newcomers, often pairing up and making new friends. It is a friendly event with refreshments provided in exchange for a bag of rubbish!

We supply all litter picking equipment, including gloves, so just come along and join in. We guarantee you will leave happy and content that you have done one good deed to start your day!

Clerk

### E-scooters

E-scooters are still illegal in the UK.

It is currently impossible to get insurance for privately owned scooters, therefore it is illegal to use them on the road, on paths, in public spaces, car parks and shopping centres.

You can use them on privately owned land or in your garden, but you must seek permission from the landowner. If you are caught riding an E-scooter you could receive a fixed penalty notice and points on your licence.

### Battery Fire Hazard Warning

Be very careful when storing re-chargeable batteries. Recently a Cambridgeshire resident charged the batteries and added them to a bag of other batteries. The heat from the recharged batteries caused a 'thermal runaway' and the bag of batteries caught alight and caused a house fire.

### If using re-chargeable batteries please

1. Let them cool down once charged before storing them or using them
2. Only charge batteries when you are awake not overnight
3. Do not overcharge batteries, once they reach the full charge turn the charger off
4. PLEASE do not put finished batteries in household bins as they can cause fires in bin lorries or in landfill sites
5. Please take spent batteries to a re-cycling centre, most supermarkets have them, or put them in a labelled bag tied to the top of the blue bin - NOT inside the blue bin.

Cllr Karen Sanderson

## Support for all

The current demographic in Linton is that there are significantly more residents over the age of 65 than under the age of 18.

Over the years the Parish Council has been very supportive of initiatives related to the younger cohort, particularly with our largest budget lines going to Beacon Youth Trust and the Play Equipment on the Recreation Ground, but not so much for our seniors.



The Parish Council have formed a new working group for 2025 – the Seniors Working Group.

We have had discussions with Age UK, who provide and manage the Community Warden Scheme and with the ACEs (Activities and Care for the Elderly) Group and are planning to hold quarterly meetings. If you are interested in joining the Seniors Working Group please contact the Parish Council Office.

South Cambridgeshire District Council have recognised the value of the Community Warden in supporting people to remain independent and in their own homes. SCDC is continuing to provide funding, but they want this service to become self-supporting so the funding will gradually be reduced. It also means the costs to individuals is increasing from £12 to £15 from April.

We have written before about the Community Warden service – in many ways the name is a misnomer – it is also a befriending or companionship service.

The more people who engage with it, the more the costs to individuals are kept down and also support the sons and daughters that look after elderly parents – giving them the security of knowing someone else is keeping an eye out.

A parishioner commented, "knowing that my mum is safe is essential to my peace of mind. It helps reduce the worry of not being able to visit every day".

The Parish Council has also agreed, to be confirmed at the January Parish Council Meeting, to increase the grant that we give to Age UK this year. Also, we want to consider changing the basis of the funding, from one-off grants that have to be applied for each year, to a 3-year agreement with a Service Level Agreement, so the Parish Council can ensure your money is being spent as intended, just as we do with the Beacon Youth Trust.

ACE will continue to do what they do best – organising activities in the form of outings and lunches. So please continue to support them.

Cllr Merrie Mannassi

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# Parish Council Minutes

Parish Council Matters is written, edited and published by the Parish Council with the support of the Linton News Team.

ABBREVIATED minutes of the Linton Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at the Cathodeon Centre.

**Chairman's Comment**

The Chairman welcomed Jasvir Singh as a member of the Linton Parish Council following co-option.

**Open Forum for Public Participation (Maximum of 15 minutes) No public present.**

**Clerk's Report.** Written report available in councillor packs. **For Information.**

Consideration of a revised location or quote for fixing of three bicycle stands due to ground fixing issues on the cobble in the High Street. **Decision required.**

Cllr Merrie Mannassi proposed to accept the quotation to install three bicycle stands to the cobbled area with a maximum budget of £300.00 delegated to the Clerk to procure the root fixing style as required. Cllr Karen Sanderson seconded. **All Agreed.**

Cllr Chris Hine proposed that the three surplus plate fixing stands be installed at the Beacon Youth Trust hub on the Recreation Ground with a maximum budget of £300.00 to cover the installation by LHS. Cllr Merrie Mannassi seconded. **All Agreed.**

**Committees, Working Groups & Representatives**

Consideration for any changes to existing Committees, Working Groups or Representatives. Supporting documents available in councillor packs. **Decision required.**

The Chairman advised that her focus will be limited to the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group due to work commitments. It was raised that more councillors were needed on committees and working groups and councillors were asked to consider this before the next meeting in January.

**External Meetings**

Consideration of information received from the 'Unlocking the potential of your Parish' meeting held on 14.11.2024. **For information.**

Concerns were raised by Cllr Kate Kell in relation to the deadlines for the Local Plan which highlights the importance of the successful completion of the Linton, Little Linton and Hildersham Neighbourhood Plan. **Noted.** Consideration for the information received from the Joint Parish Council Forum held on 19.11.2024. Written report by Cllr Sanderson. **For information.**

Consideration for the verbal report of the Age UK & LPC Meeting held on 25.11.2024. **For information.**

Cllr Merrie Mannassi gave a verbal update on the meeting held with Age UK.

The meeting was very positive and discussions included expansion of the Community Warden service in Linton to surrounding villages. Funding has been confirmed with SCDC on a sliding scale for the next 10 years, at which point the scheme will need to be self-sufficient. The importance of the scheme was noted, especially the aim to help the elderly retain independence and continue to live at home. Age UK have applied for a grant for 2025-2026 which will be considered at the precept meeting to be held on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

The Clerk added that it had been suggested to apply an SLA to the Community Warden scheme, similar to the BYT to increase the stability of the scheme. An informal meeting to be set up with ACE in Linton and a further meeting with the Seniors Working Group, Age UK and ACE to be scheduled in early 2025. **Noted.**

**Consideration of the District and County Councillors Report for December 2024.** Written report available at the meeting. **For information. Noted.**

**Planning**

Notification of social media post encouraging parishioners to comment on stage one consultation for Kingsway Solar. **For information.**

The Stage 1 consultation remained open until 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The Chairman encouraged all councillors to submit comments. **Noted.**

**Finance**

Consideration for the status of the VAT reclaim by Linton Parish Council. **For information.**

The Chairman advised the councillors present that the VAT reclaims were now complete and that all funds due to be repaid to the parish were deposited by the end of October 2024. **Noted.**

Consideration for the request for funding from the Open Spaces Society for legal support of members. **Decision required.**

Cllr Chris Hine proposed no donation be given in addition to the membership already paid. Cllr Karen Sanderson seconded. **All Agreed.**

**Compliance - Policies and Procedures**

Consideration of the re-adoption of the Financial Regulations following revisions. **Decision required.**

Cllr Tony Smith proposed that the Financial Regulations be adopted with the current amendments and a further review be delegated to the Clerk and Cllr Lee Gardner in January 2025, the revised regulations to be brought back to the next available meeting following the review. Cllr Karen Sanderson seconded. **All Agreed.**

**St Mary's Churchyard**

Consideration for further information received on the status of the churchyard at St Mary's Church in Linton. **Decision required.**

No decision was taken on this item.

It was noted that the churchyard is closed to burials but ashes interments are permitted.

It was stated that the cost of ongoing maintenance of the churchyard is going to be high and that investigation into grant funding opportunities would be advisable.

**Traffic & Highways**

**Mobile Speed Indicator Device (MSID)**

Notification of the data captured from the Mobile Speed Indicator Device (MSID) for November. Written report available. **For Information. Noted.**

Notification of comments submitted in relation to the TTRO for A1307 Horseheath Bypass closure from 30.01.2025-02.02.2025 for re-surfacing works. Verbal update by the Clerk. **For information.**

The Clerk gave a further update that, following comments raised by the parish council, the road closure times had been adjusted to closing at 8:00pm and re-opening at 6:00am to alleviate the pressure on commuters, and that buses would be allowed access through the roadworks along with all emergency services. **Noted.** Consideration for supporting a parishioner requesting the reinstatement of a post box on Bartlow Road. **Decision required.**

Cllr Merrie Mannassi proposed to support the parishioner in the request to reinstate the post box on Bartlow Road. Cllr Tony Smith seconded. **All Agreed.**

Consideration for priority project requests for the Asset

Data Strategy of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways division. **Decision required.**

Cllr Chris Hine proposed that the area of Chalklands and Church Lane be resurfaced in addition to the full repair to the pavement in the High Street opposite the Co-op. Cllr Karen Sanderson seconded. **All Agreed.**

**Events**

Retrospective consideration for the request for permission for a Christmas Market on the Market Square on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024 between the hours of 10:00am-2:00pm. **Decision required.**

The Clerk advised that the owner of the Linton Kitchen had given assurance that the required documentation including Public Liability Insurance, Full Risk Assessment and written assurance for the Linton Kitchen to take full responsibility for all vendors in relation to insurance and compliance would be sent to the Parish Council office prior to the event. Cllr Chris Hine proposed permission be granted for the Christmas Market to take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024 pending receipt of requested documents. Cllr Karen Sanderson seconded. **All Agreed.**

**Pavilion**

Consideration of information received in relation to the replacement of changing room flooring at the Pavilion building. **Decision required.**

This item was deferred pending further discussions at meeting to be held with LGFC and LVCC early in 2025.

**Youth**

**Beacon Youth Trust (BYT)**

Consideration of the December 2024 report. Written report available. **For information.**

Consideration of the further information received from Beacon Youth Trust in relation to the SLA 2025-2027 and to schedule a meeting in January 2025. **Decision required.**

Cllr Chris Hine proposed a meeting be scheduled with the BYT in January 2025 to discuss the SLA, with all councillors invited to attend. Cllr Karen Sanderson seconded. **All Agreed.**

**Matters for Future Consideration.**

Cllr Anya Sparks raised concerns regarding the trees on the Rivey Bridlepath stating that some look to be unstable and one branch had fallen. The Clerk was advised to request that LHS conduct a site visit and report any immediate health and safety issues, to be addressed under delegated spend. It was also requested that the next tree survey include assessment of the trees on the Rivey Bridleway. It was advised that concerns in relation to trees on a public right of way must be reported via the CCC reporting webpage.

Full Minutes are and written reports are available on the Parish Council website.

Clerk

The Village Hall, Coles Lane, Linton, Cambridge CB21 4JS Tel: 891001  
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