

Willingham News

FREE TO EVERY HOME
village website: www.willinghamlife.org

willinghamnews@gmail.com
March 2026



Queen Sue and King Howard of the Berry at Willingham Wassail in January – see page 19.

Photo – Steve Moore Photography

Primary School Young Voices at the O2 Arena – see page 5



Photo by Laura Sutton

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Please note the deadline for your contributions is now the 4th of each month.

Bin Collections

Friday 6 March Blue and Green

Friday 13 March Black

Friday 20 March Blue and Green

Friday 27 March Black

Monday 30 March Blue and Green

(Please note the early collection on 30 March, there will not be a collection on Friday 3 April. All dates correct at time of going to press.)

Councillors' Contact Details

Councillor reports can be found on their websites

County Councillor

Yasmin Deter [www.facebook.com/
share/16a1voz7GB/?mibextid=wwXlfr](https://www.facebook.com/share/16a1voz7GB/?mibextid=wwXlfr)

District Councillor

Bill Handley www.facebook.com/billhandleylibdem

District Councillor

Dan Lentell www.facebook.com/ClIrDan

**To contact local police, phone 101 or email:
SCambsCops@cambs.pnn.police.uk**

PLEASE NOTE:

Back issues of *Willingham News* from October 2005 to the present are now available on the Willingham Life website run by WAG: www.willinghamlife.org/page

If you have any changes to the Village Directory please send them to us at: willinghamnews@gmail.com

Advertising

Advertising is sold on an annual basis for an insert into 12 issues beginning in January. Send any advertising queries or copy to: **advertising.wnews@yahoo.co.uk**, marking your emails Adverts.

The *Willingham News* team wishes to thank all the advertisers for their support and interest. They play a vital role in maintaining this publication and also in our community as local businesses supplying goods and services. If you contact an advertiser, please mention that you saw their advertisement in *Willingham News*. Thank you all very much.

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Old Willingham



This photo, taken around 1900, shows the corner of Church Street and Long Lane, where the One Stop shop is today. As can be seen, there were actually three houses here – the centre one appears to be a shop, but the others could be homes. Either way, they all burned down together, which was the fate of so many village buildings in the days of thatch. The replacement buildings were put up in 1910.

See more photos at www.oldwillingham.com.

Friends of Willingham Church

QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 27 March

7 pm for 7 30 pm start

At The Octagon

Willingham Parish Church

Teams of up to six people

£10 per person

Supper and soft drinks included

Bring your own alcohol

Raffle on the night £1 a ticket

**Please enter your team in advance and
pre-pay for your tickets by contacting:**

**friendsofwillinghamchurch@
gmail.com**

Primary School at the O2 Arena

On Friday 23 January, we took 68 members of the Willingham Primary School Key Stage 2 Choir to the O2 Arena to perform at a *Young Voices* concert – the picture on Page 2 shows the wonderful atmosphere greeting us.

The children had been learning the various songs and dance routines since July and were very excited to finally go and perform with over 8,500 other children from different primary schools. After rehearsing all afternoon with the live musicians, the arena began to fill up with family members, and we were ready to perform to a sell-out crowd!

We sang our hearts out to a range of songs, from a *Wicked* medley to *Sea Shanties*, as well as a Primary School favourite, *Power in Me*. This year marked 30 years since the first ever *Young Voices* concert and it felt very special to be a part of the anniversary celebrations. A huge well done to the children who performed brilliantly and were great ambassadors for our school.

Laura Sutton

Year 6 Class Teacher – Choir Lead

Willingham Memory Box Café

If you're living with any form of memory loss or other illness, and would like to join us please come and join us to sing or just listen to songs of the 60s and 70s and, at the same time, relax and have Refreshments, Company, and Fun.

Please do come with a friend, family or carer

on Saturday 14 March

from 10 am to 12 noon

In the Octagon

(behind the Parish Church, There is wheelchair access and no steps).

All Welcome No Charge

Sponsored by St Mary & All Saints Church

For further details call 07780 610382 or

Email: memoryboxcafe@yahoo.com.

Do join us for a cheerful March morning!

The Octagon Community Hub

Monday mornings 10 am – 12 30 pm

Come and join us on Monday mornings in the Octagon, behind St Mary & All Saints Church, where you will find someone to chat to if you would like some company. We offer free tea, coffee and biscuits at all sessions. We also serve a light lunch which is often fresh home-made vegetable soup, pasta or filled jacket potatoes.

There are magazines, books, puzzles, games, knitting and mindful colouring to enjoy too.

We also have regular visits from our Village Agent, who is supported by Cambridgeshire ACRE. She can offer confidential and free independent advice and support, covering different issues as well as helping you access a range of services.

Please follow the footpath to the left of the Church gate and you will find the Octagon behind the Church. We are wheelchair accessible and have a disabled toilet. We make no charges for our refreshments, but donations towards the second phase of the Octagon Improvement Project are always appreciated.

We look forward to seeing you in March.

History Group – Cambridgeshire Murders!

Some of the most notorious murder Cases in Cambridgeshire History.

From a simple puppet show that ended in the deaths of nearly 80 people, to the little drummer boy who haunted his murderer until he confessed.



The murder of Martha Jane Beeby. (Police Illustrated News)

This is a collection of the county's most dramatic and interesting cases from days gone by – a selection of cases that gripped the nation in their day, not just the county!

Find out about more at the WHIG meeting on **Monday 30 March** at 7 30 pm in the Social Club – £4 on the door to cover the cost of the room.

Willingham Women's Institute



Our next meeting will be on **Monday 9 March** from 7 pm at the Social Club, with refreshments available and time for a chat. At 7 30 pm we will have a short Annual Meeting followed by a Beetle Drive.

In January, Steve Marsh came to talk to us about *Pinkster Gin*. He explained how, 20 years ago, he had to stop drinking beer and wine because the yeast content made him ill. As a hobby, Steve started making gin in his kitchen, by adding different combinations of botanicals and juniper to redistilled alcohol. To make the gin more compatible with food, he tried adding fruit and decided on locally grown raspberries, which delivered the best flavour and a unique natural pink hue.

In 2013, with backing from some friends, he left his lucrative marketing job and set up *Pinkster*. The gin won many awards and was a great success. But then Covid came, sales plunged, gin was no longer as fashionable and costs grew very fast.

In 2024, the brand was sold to Cambridge Drinks Collective Limited, headed by Angus Hinton and Amy Norris. Steve had first employed Angus as a school leaver back in 2015 and Amy had been his first sales hire in 2014. Steve has now returned as a consultant with 'do what you like' written into his contract, so is still very much involved.

The evening finished with a very enjoyable tasting session of the smooth, dry *Pinkster* gins. We compared the taste: with and without ice, Fevertree tonic, orange zest or 'spanked mint'. Highly recommended!

WI Quiz, 23 January

The evening was a great success with 63 quizzers taking part. Thank you to everyone who came and supported us. A donation from the raffle will be made to the Over Day Centre.

Looking for friendship, laughter and something new?

Our informal, warm and welcoming group is open to all women – whether you like listening to interesting speakers, activities or simply enjoy a chat over a cuppa.

When? The 2nd Monday of every month (except August).

Where? The Social Club.

Arrive from 7 pm for refreshments and a natter, 7 30 pm for a speaker or activity. Come and meet us for a free taster session. Hope to see you soon.

Find out more: willinghamwi28@gmail.com or call Vicky on 01954 201405.

Willingham Gardening Club

At our first meeting of 2026, the Gardening Club welcomed Geoff Hodge who gave an excellent talk sharing tips and tricks for healthy happy house plants.

His guidance included:

- Checking for healthy roots at the bottom of the pot when purchasing houseplants.
- Maintaining a constant level of hydration and nutrients, rather than sporadic overloading of water and feed.
- Recognising that over and underwatering result in similar signs of plant distress (such as wilting), so careful monitoring is important.
- Regular misting is also beneficial to some plants that would naturally grow in more humid environments compared to many of our comparatively dry homes.

Our next meeting will be on **Monday 2 March**, where we will have our short-form AGM and a talk by local tree surgeon Ben Hudson entitled *Tree Surgery and Wood Turning*.

The Gardening Club meets on the first Monday of the month at the Social Club, with refreshments from 7 pm. The meetings begin at 7 30 pm.

New members are always welcome and can sign up for a membership now. If you are interested in joining or learning about the benefits of membership, please email: willinghamgardeningclub@gmail.com. Information can also be found on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/WillinghamGardeningClub. There is an entrance fee of £4 for non-members.

Jack

Willingham Gardening Club

Mystery Photo

In an effort to make the Mystery Photo even more challenging, maybe last month's was a step too far? It was a morphed image of the barrels on the sign outside The Bank on the High Street. Hopefully, this month's might be less of a challenge! No prizes, just the satisfaction of a good guess.



Readers' Letters

Dear Editors

Old Willingham – Willingham News February 2026

My mother and I were highly amused to see, in the Old Willingham section of the February Willingham News, mention of the pubs the Black Horse and the Black Bull, that were shown in the photo, having both been demolished.

This is not entirely correct... whilst the old Black Bull was demolished in the 1950s and replaced by the newer Black Bull, which is now The Porterhouse, the Black Horse stopped trading as a 'beer house' in the 1940s. However, it remained as a private dwelling and was later bought by my parents in 1969 when they moved into the village.

While it is no longer in the best state of repair, the former Black Horse is still standing as 3 Station Road. The building has been continuously lived in since the mid-1740s and we have the vast majority of the original deeds from then until now, should they ever be of interest to any of the local historians.

Rohan Platts (and Mum!)

Dear Editors

I hope that it is not too late to wish the good people of Willingham a happy and healthy New Year in 2026, and especially the young lady who came to my rescue on the morning of 24 November when I was in a panic whilst waiting at the Post Office.

We are so grateful that we still have a Post Office.

Peter Dennis

Friends of Willingham Church

Please help, we really need your support.

We are short of committee members to help with fund raising ideas and planning events like our quiz later this month. The officer positions are filled so it would just entail attending meetings every other month, often in a local café. We typically arrange three events per year. We're a friendly group so why not join us and help us raise much-needed funds. Our desire is to preserve the church building so future generations can enjoy it as much as we do.

If you would prefer to join us as a Friend member, you will receive updates on our building restoration projects when they get underway. We would ask you to please support the Friends with a donation of £10 every six months (per household) or whatever you can afford. You can set up a standing order or make payments by BACS.

If you would like to find out more, please contact us at: friendsofwillinghamchurch@gmail.com.

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FOR URGENT MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT, PLEASE CALL 111 AND SELECT OPTION 2

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- Free and easy to take part
- Make new friends and feel part of the local community
- Every Sunday morning

A free, fun and friendly weekly 2K event for juniors (4 to 14-year-olds). It's held every Sunday and starts at 9 am at Western Park, Peppercorn Drive, Northstowe, Cambridge CB24 1BF. It's FREE, but please register before you come along.

Please see www.parkrun.org.uk/westernpark-juniors/ for more details or speak to a member of practice staff.

Contacting the Surgery

Emails to the surgery are not the appropriate route for our patients to make clinical contact with the GP and we ask that you do not convey any clinical information this way. This includes, for example, asking clinical questions, letting the GP know that you are changing doses of your medication or wanting to update the GP before attending an appointment with them. On receipt of such emails, our only response will be to ask you make a GP appointment.

PIP Supporting Letters

We understand that applying for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) can feel challenging. Please be aware that the Practice is unable to provide supporting letters for PIP applications. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) uses the information you include on your application forms to make their decision. If the DWP needs any further medical information or clarification, they will contact the GP Practice directly.

If you need help with completing the forms, there may be local advice services that can offer support and our Social Prescriber, Alaine Bunce, may be able to help in some instances to facilitate a referral to support services such as the Social Care Welfare Benefits Team.

Volunteer Opportunity: Chair of the Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We are looking for a new Chair for our Patient Participation Group (PPG). The PPG is a group of patients who work with the practice team to help improve services, share patient views and support the development of the practice. As Chair, you would lead meetings, help set agendas, and act as a key link between patients and the practice.

Any patient registered with Willingham Medical Practice, who is interested in representing patient views and helping shape local healthcare services, can apply. No previous experience is required, just enthusiasm, good communication skills and a willingness to get involved. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Sharon Unwin, Practice Manager. We would love to hear from you and welcome new voices to the PPG.

NEW SURGERY OPENING HOURS

Willingham Medical Practice		Longstanton Branch Surgery	
Monday	8 am – 6 30 pm	Monday	8 30 am – 1 pm & 2 30 pm – 6 pm
Tuesday	8 am – 6 30 pm	Tuesday	8 30 am – 1 pm
Wednesday	8 am – 6 30 pm	Wednesday	8 30 am – 1 pm
Thursday	8 am – 6 30 pm	Thursday	8 30 am – 1 pm
Friday	8 am – 6 30 pm	Friday	8 30 am – 1 pm

Closed on Bank Holidays

WILLINGHAM PHARMACY Tel: 01954 261787

NORMAL OPENING HOURS

Monday	8 30 am – 1 pm	2 30 pm – 6 pm
Tuesday	8 30 am – 1 pm	2 pm – 7 pm
Wednesday	8 30 am – 1 pm	2 pm – 6 pm
Thursday	8 30 am – 1 pm	2 pm – 6 pm
Friday	8 30 am – 1 pm	2 pm – 6 pm

Vaccinations

The Pneumococcal Vaccine is available year-round for everyone who is aged 65 years and over.

The RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) Vaccine is available year-round for everyone who is aged between 75 and 79 years of age and for all pregnant women who are over 28 weeks.

The Shingles Vaccine is available year round for everyone who is aged between 70 and 79 years of age and have never received a shingles vaccine, for individuals who reach the age of 65 or 70 years of age during the period 01/09/23 and 31/08/2028 (these individuals should be vaccinated on or after (but not before) their 65th or 70th birthday), individuals who are aged 50 years and above and meet the definition of severe immunosuppression and for those who are aged between 18 and 49 years and receiving a stem cell transplant. *Please note, when booking your second (booster) shingles vaccination, that this cannot be administered any sooner (even by one day) than six calendar months after the first vaccination was given.*

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Meeting

The PPG brings together patients, GPs and staff from a GP practice. They meet to discuss issues relating to their surgery and the services provided to patients. All our patients are welcome.

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 11 March** from 7 – 9 pm at the Willingham Medical Practice.

Carers' Meetings

If you are a carer for someone and need advice and financial or emotional support, please come along to our carers' support meeting on **Wednesday 4 March**, at the Wilford Furlong Centre in Willingham, where we will be holding a drop-in session between 2 and 4 pm. Please come along and get some support from other people in the local community. Refreshments are provided, there's no need to pre-book and it's completely FREE! Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month.

For more information please contact alaine.bunce@nhs.net @nhs.net.

Willingham Medical Practice

SUDOKU

By Willow
Answer on page 17

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

Sports Quiz

by Herewill

Here are some questions about a variety of sports. See how many you can answer!

- Where do Warwickshire County Cricket Club play their home games?
- Which boxer did Muhammad Ali fight in 'The Rumble in the Jungle'?
- In April 2021, the annual University Boat Race took place in which city?
- In the Women's 2025 Euro final, which team did England beat?
- In darts, what is it called if a player hits the single, double and treble in a single turn?
- The Chicago Bulls are a team in which sport?
- What date do all racehorses in the Northern Hemisphere celebrate their birthday?
- Which football team plays at The Hawthorns?
- In rugby union, what is the name of the trophy awarded to the winners of England vs Scotland in the Six Nations Championship?
- Which tennis player became the first woman to earn over \$1 million in a season?

Answers on page 17



Young Readers' Corner

March Wind

March wind is a jolly fellow;
He likes to joke and play.
He turns umbrellas inside out
And blows men's hats away.
He calls the pussy willows
And whispers in each ear,
"Wake up you lazy little seeds;
Don't you know that spring is here?"

Quiz about Winds!

March tends to be a very windy month in the United Kingdom – see if you can answer these questions!

1. What do we call a wind?

Winds have names and are based on the direction they come from. Which of these examples is correct:

- An East wind blows from East to West
- A South Westerly wind blows from South to South East
- A North wind blows from East to North

2. How do we measure the wind?

Meteorologists use a special instrument to measure wind speed. What instrument would they use?

- An Anemometer
- A Kilometre
- A Thermometer

3. What is the Beaufort Scale for wind?

This Scale is used to describe the speed of wind. For example, a gentle breeze is described as Force 3 and a gale is Force 8. What force is used to describe a destructive force like a tornado or a hurricane?

- Force 1
- Force 9.5
- Force 12

4. Other planets have wind too!

Which planet has the fastest wind in the Solar System? Is it Earth, Mars, Neptune or Venus?

You can check your windy answers on Page 17.

You can't see the wind, but you can imagine how it might look. Can you draw a picture in the space below of how the wind looks on a stormy day?

Café Church

You know what a Café is and you know what a Church is – but do you know what a Café Church is?

Café Church is a more informal gathering of a church's congregation to worship God, explore the Bible, enjoy mostly Christian music and pray together in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Those attending sit around tables and enjoy refreshments as part of the service. At St Mary & All Saints Church Willingham, we hold such a service on the second Sunday of each month.

Our services are held in the Octagon Hall (behind the Church) and start at 10 50 am when warm drinks and light refreshments are served as people gather. Around 11 am we move into a time of worship – which will include a short talk about the Bible reading of the day and a chance to reflect on it, through discussion and activities. Children are included (accompanied by an adult) and appropriate activities are available for them too. Services last about one hour.

It can be a bit daunting to come to something new but be assured a warm welcome awaits you. You'll be free to join in as much as you would like or just sit back and absorb what's being offered.

Interested? Our next Café Church Service at the Parish Church will be on **Sunday 8 March**.

Jan Payne Licensed Lay Minister

Poetry Corner

A Poem about Worrying and Wondering

I worry and wonder quite a lot.
I worry that too many birthdays can actually kill you,
that there's no other word for synonym,
that monosyllabic has five of the critters,
and I wonder why my stairlift drives me up the wall.
I wonder why tins of evaporated milk
are never empty.
I worry that I always wanted to be a monk
but never got the chants.
I worry that if a mime artist falls down a well,
they'll never get out.
I've always wondered if a bigamist is a thick fog in Italy.
And I wonder if Mozart, when he died, decomposed.
I used to wonder why some poems
leave the reader hanging at the end. But now I know —
it's because

John Lawrence

March Poem

I am waiting for Spring to appear
and I'm sure that it's almost here.
The snowdrops in gardens so white
tell us nature has got it just right.
The first day of Spring is a chance
for hares and their babies to dance.
So welcome the Spring with your heart
for I know it will bring a new start.

Christine Lacey

Rare Loggerhead Turtle Rescue

Local resident, Steve Foreman, formerly of Foreman's Garage, was on a short break with his wife Sue and some other family members in Dunwich just recently when he rescued a rare loggerhead turtle. He was taking an early evening walk on the beach when he spotted the turtle which had been washed ashore in the atrocious weather conditions. Steve and Sue are no strangers to the east coast but had never seen the sea as rough as it was then.

Initially Steve didn't know whether the turtle was alive but then detected some movement once he had picked it up. Acting quickly, he googled for advice on what he should do, which was to get in touch with the British Divers Marine Life Rescuers. He carried the turtle back to his campsite, placed the turtle on a mat with its head tilted forwards to clear its lungs and within twenty minutes or so the volunteers arrived. The turtle was examined, assessed and weighed and then taken to a vet and from there to Hunstanton Sea Life Centre.

The turtle, a juvenile female, was about thirty centimetres long and weighed two kilograms. Loggerhead turtles are rarely found in UK waters but this one had got washed up during the recent storms and was suffering from 'cold shock'. Steve did exactly the right thing in contacting the BDMR. If he had put it back in the water, it wouldn't have survived. Hunstanton Sea Life Centre has the facilities to rehabilitate loggerhead turtles and it could take up to a year before it is fit to be released into warmer waters.

Loggerhead turtles are considered a vulnerable species. The adults can grow to over a metre in length and weigh approximately 135 kg. They are normally found in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans as well as the Mediterranean Sea.

Liz Cosford





St Mary + All Saints

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Services – in Church (except where shown)

1 March	11 am	Holy Communion
8 March	11 am	Café Church – in The Octagon – see description on Page 11
15 March	11 am	Holy Communion
22 March	11 am	Morning Prayer – Based on the Book of Common Prayer
25 March	9 30 am	Morning Prayer – see note below
29 March	11 am	Holy Communion

Memory Box Café

Our next Memory Box Café will be on **Saturday 14 March** from 10 am in the Octagon with the usual mix of music, refreshments, laughter and fun. Everyone living with memory loss or other illness, accompanied by a carer, friend or family, is welcome. See page 5 for further details.

Octagon Community Hub

The Octagon Community Hub is open **every Monday morning** from 10 am to 12 30 pm. Come and join us for great company and free tea, coffee, toast and also a hot light lunch. There are always magazines to read and borrow, jigsaw puzzles to do, board games and card games to play, colouring sheets to colour, wool to knit with or you can just chat to others in a comfortable, friendly environment. Also advice and guidance around finance. Everyone is welcome.

Wednesday Services of Morning Prayer

On **each Wednesday** a short Morning Prayer Service is held in one of the four 5folds Churches at 9 30 am. Services in March are: 4 March, Over; 11 March, Swavesey; 18 March, Longstanton; 25 March, Willingham. Everyone is welcome.

Prayers for Ukraine and World Peace

We continue to keep an area set aside in Church for those who wish to spend some quiet reflective time to pray for Ukraine and its people during daytime Church opening hours. Also, **every Thursday** at 4 30 pm, we offer a time to gather to pray for peace in Ukraine and the Middle East and for an end to conflicts worldwide. Everyone is welcome.

Octagon Hall

The Octagon is available for group and private bookings at a cost of £16 per hour. For further information and bookings, please contact Colin Smith at the administration office, Tuesday to Friday, 9 30 am to 12 noon, using the contact details shown below.

Contact Details

Clergy:

Rev Ed Green (Team Vicar) 01954 716894 or
ed@5folds.org.uk

Rev Stephen Dove (Team Rector) 07944 014521 or
stephen@5folds.org.uk


Licensed Lay Minister:

Canon Jan Payne 07780 674563 or
jan.payne@northstowe.church

5folds Administration Office:

Colin Smith 01954 203459 or
admin@5folds.org.uk



George Street, Willingham, Cambridge CB24 5LJ
www.willinghambaptist.org and 

Minister: Rev Kwaku Efah

Sunday Morning Services – 10 am

Friendly contemporary services with songs, prayers and fellowship.

1 March	Service with communion
8 March	Family service
15 March	Mothering Sunday
22 March	Service
29 March	Service

EVENTS

Wednesday Fellowship – Coffee Morning, 10 – 11 30 am

Every Wednesday, Open Door for coffee and chat.

Men's Breakfast – Saturday 21 March, 7 45 – 9 15 am

Breakfast and chat. Speaker is Malcolm Wylie – *My Father, a Bletchley Codebreaker*. Followed by a trip to Bletchley – to book contact Pete on whammensbrek@gmail.com.

Community Lunch Club – Thursday 12 and 26 March

Book through Daphne on 07919 024857.

TOPS Baby and Toddler Group – Tuesdays at 9 45 am (term

time only). Meet other families while the children play. For children up to the age of five.

Contact Debbie Allen on 01954 261581.

Nimble Fingers Craft Club – Mondays 2 – 4 pm

Bring your crafts and join with others, learn a new skill or just chat. Contact Daphne on 07919 024857.

Women's Bible Study Group – Monday 30 March 7 pm

For all events contact: secretary@willinghambaptist.org.

Catholic Parish of the Sacred Heart, St Ives

Details of services at St Ives at www.sacredheart-stives.org.

Mass is also held at **6 pm on Saturdays** in the Church at Bar Hill, at Hanover Close, CB23 8EH.

For more information about the Diocese of East Anglia, see www.rcdea.org.uk.

Thought for the Month

As you read this, Muslims around the world are once again observing the Islamic lunar month of Ramadan—a time that envelops the Muslim community in shared devotion, reflection, and spiritual renewal. As the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, Ramadan culminates in the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, the Festival of Breaking the Fast, marking the conclusion of a month-long journey focused on deepening one's relationship with the Divine. This year, Eid al-Fitr is expected to fall on 19 or 20 of March, depending on sighting of the new moon.

At its core, Ramadan is a profound act of worship centred on fasting from dawn until sunset—abstaining from food, drink, and other physical needs. Yet the fast extends far beyond physical restraint. It is a deeply spiritual discipline intended to cultivate self-control, empathy for those less fortunate, and a heightened awareness of God. By willingly embracing hunger and discomfort, Muslims seek to strengthen their character, purify the soul, and draw closer to God. The emphasis is inward: personal growth, mindfulness, and sincere repentance.

This spiritual focus resonates across the Abrahamic faith traditions, and highlights a universal human capacity for self-discipline, reflection, and the pursuit of forgiveness. Each day of fasting begins before dawn with Suhoor, a pre-fast meal that sustains through the hours ahead. The day concludes with Iftar, the sunset meal that breaks the fast, often shared with family, friends, and neighbours, reinforcing bonds of community and generosity.

Within our own community, Ramadan brings a noticeable increase in congregational activity. Muslims come together for extra nightly prayers traditionally observed during this month, alongside greater participation in charitable acts, communal Iftars, and discussions aimed at deepening understanding the words of God. As Ramadan unfolds, it serves as a powerful reminder of the shared values of faith, patience, compassion, and community – values that connect us all.

Kashif Sheikh

Willingham Muslims

Nature's Names

The yew tree owes its modern name to the Proto-Germanic *iwo* and Old English *īw* or *ēow*. In Hampshire the yew is locally known as 'Hampshire Weed' but please don't Google that, in case the Drug Squad come knocking. The fruits of the tree have also inspired the delightful name *snotty-gogs*. In Australia, the tree is often referred to as the *Snottygobble*, and historically had medicinal value to Aboriginal communities, despite its toxic tendencies.

The longevity of the yew tree is impressive. It is classed as a living fossil, as its genus dates back 200 million years to the Triassic period. Survivors from the era of dinosaurs!

Many churchyards contain yews that are as old, and maybe older, than the church itself. Individual trees can live for many hundreds of years, some into their thousands, but age is tricky to assess as the tree eventually loses its heartwood, becoming hollow, so that ring-counting is often out of the question. New roots can form inside the tree, which can then 'resurrect' itself as a new tree when the outer shell decays.

In literature, the yew has often been used as a symbol of life, death, rebirth and eternity. We can rely on good old Willy Wordsworth to sit beneath a yew in Lorton Vale with his scratchy pen to compose a poem about it... it's unsurprisingly called *Yew-Trees* and in it he effuses thus:

*This solitary Tree! a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed.*

Informative but not his best work, some might say. He obviously had a power struggle between yews and daffodils, and the daffs must have won. Although, in 1898, he did write another yew poem. The title was (deep breath) *Lines Left Upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree Which Stands Near the Lake of Esthwaite on a Desolate Part of the Shore, Yet Commanding a Beautiful Prospect*. Yup, that was the title, which means that there's no space left in this item for the poem itself. Sorry!

John Lawrence



FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

www.WillinghamParishCouncil.gov.uk

Minor Highways Bid

Speeding and safety continue to be worrying issues for our pedestrians, residents and motorists alike. The Parish Council's latest Local Highways Initiative is to improve the pedestrian crossing along the High Street with a raised table. This would be similar to those found joining large junctions which let buses, etc, drive safely across but at appropriate speeds. Our improvement would probably extend from a safer and better-lit pedestrian crossing towards the Covent Garden entrance.

Willingham's successful bid last year for double yellow lines at various locations in the village is unlikely to be implemented until the autumn. (This is due to the number of Traffic Regulation Orders currently being processed by Cambridge County Council Highways.)

Barton Field Access

The neighbouring strip of land north of Barton Field now has a new owner. The Woodland Trust have given permission, and the necessary help, to plant a wood on that piece, which will be amazing. It is now fenced to protect the newly planted young trees from deer and other large animals. Hedgehogs and the like, however, will be given access! Can we please respect this secure edge, not take short-cuts and keep to our official access when visiting Barton Field.

Dogs

We have tried hard to facilitate special areas where we can exercise and enjoy our pets. The Orchard is well-fenced and gated, so it is a good space for walking dogs. The WAG group's volunteer who emptied the smaller second waste bin cannot now do the job. If another volunteer is found, then that bin will be repositioned, but in the meantime... **please...** could all dog-poo bags be placed in the bin at the Orchard entrance along with all rubbish.

Around the village there are reports of increased dog mess which is so disappointing. Dog owners really need to be responsible for clearing up their pet's poo and then to use the many bins placed for your convenience. It seems *some* are giving *all* dog walkers a bad name by letting their animals leave piles along our streets. Assistant or guide

dogs are allowed into our cemetery, so it is shocking that last month a few dumps of dog poo had to be cleared away in that special place.

Litter

We do have a lovely lady who works to keep our streets litter-free. It is understandable there may be a few pieces of litter that happen to not make it to one of our numerous bins around the village, however it is really bad that some people still deliberately dump their rubbish around here. So, can all unwanted items be put in a bin? If you have had a coffee, a sugary snack or an energy drink, then please, use that energy to wing it into a bin!

Help Keep an Older Person Safer in 2026

While cold calling itself is allowed, traders must respect 'No Cold Callers' notices – it's actually against the law if they don't! Do you know of an older person who would like to receive a free 'Do not Knock... or disturb' door sticker? If so, simply email www.ablecommunitycare.com or call 01603 764567.

Contact Details

Councillors' details can be found on the website but below are the details for the Chair, Vice Chair and Lead Councillors. Election date is set now for **7 May**.

Meetings

Meetings are generally held on the first Wednesday of the month, starting at 7 30 pm in the Octagon. Agendas are published on the website and the noticeboard outside the Public Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend and can speak briefly or ask questions. (See agendas for further details.)

Council Office Details

Ploughman Hall, West Fen Road, Willingham CB24 5LP
Tel 01954 261027

email clerk@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Opening hours: Monday – Thursday 10 am – 1 pm (closed bank holidays)

Clerk: Mandy Powell

D Law	Parish Council Chair	cllr.law@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	01954 202188
J Hutchcraft	Parish Council Vice Chair & Police Liaison Lead Cllr	cllr.hutchcraft@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	07305 435771
B Todd	Planning Chair	cllr.todd@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	07956 993603
L King	Leisure and Amenities – Lead Cllr	cllr.lking@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	01954 260780
J Watson	Green & Boundary – Lead Cllr	cllr.watson@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	01954 200245
B Mansfield	Cemetery – Lead Cllr	cllr.mansfield@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	01954 261540
S Clark	Halls – Lead Cllr	cllr.clark@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	07948 830406
N Harris	Highways – Lead Cllr	cllr.harris@willinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk	07792 611226

Willingham Library

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

0345 0455225

Opening hours:

Tuesday: 10 am – 1 pm and 2 – 5 pm

Thursday: 4 – 7 pm

Friday: 10 am – 1 pm

Saturday: 10 am – 1 pm

Your Online Account

Log in to your account at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library, using your library card number and PIN to see your loans, renew items, search the catalogue, and reserve items. You can also access our online services with a wide range of eBooks, eAudio books, eComics and eMagazines – all free of charge. If you're not a library member yet, it's easy to join online or in person at any library.

2026 is a National Year of Reading, supported by all libraries. The aim is to encourage people of all ages to read for pleasure.

A Special Event: Author Midge Gillies will visit Willingham Library on Wednesday 25 March

Doors open at 7 pm for refreshments. The talk starts at 7 30 pm, followed by Q&A, with time to buy books and have them signed by the author. Midge will talk about her book *Atlantic Furies*. This is an outstanding story of six female aviators, who battled to become the first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean by plane.

Admission - £3 per person. Please pre-book in person at the Library or by emailing BarHill.referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Willingham Library is proud to offer this author event in the **National Year of Reading**.

Engage in the Afternoon

Wednesday 4 March, 2 – 3 30 pm

'Cyber Escape Room' Can you crack the case before time runs out? You're part of a top cyber investigation team. After taking down a notorious cyber gang your detective chief inspector has been accused of fabricating the evidence. Solve the puzzles in 30 minutes to prove the DCI's innocence and lock the criminals away for good. Work in teams of up to five people. The fastest team wins. Pre-book please in the library or by email to the Bar Hill email address shown above.

Digital Buddy Drop-in Session

Tuesday 10 March, 10 30 am – 12 noon

Struggling to access the web? Need help with an online application? Drop into our library on the second Tuesday of the month to get assistance from our digital buddy for free.

After School Lego Session,

Thursday 12 March, 4 – 5 pm

2nd Thursday of the month, term time only. Children four and over please, with an accompanying adult.

Family Lego Club

Saturday 14 and 28 March, 10 15 – 11 45 am

2nd and 4th Saturday of the month, term time only. If you love Lego, then come to the library and enjoy some time building with Duplo or Lego. Children four and over with an accompanying adult.

Meet Roxy, a Pets as Therapy Dog

Tuesday 17 March, 2 – 3 pm

Come along and enjoy some time in the company of the gorgeous Roxy, a Pets as Therapy dog and her friendly owner. This is a drop-in session. A big thank you to all who have visited and supported these sessions, Roxy looks forward to seeing you again!

Postage Stamps – The Library now has a used stamp collection box.

Friends of Willingham Library Events

Contact willinghamlibraryfriends@gmail.com for further information.

Family History Session

Friday 6 March, 10 30 am – 12 noon

The library computers will be available for research on Ancestry (access is free of charge at the library) as well as other genealogy sites. A volunteer will be available to offer advice if needed. If you would like to know more, contact us on the above email address.

Second-Hand Book Sale

Saturday 7 March, 10 30 am – 12 noon

We have a good variety of quality second-hand books for adults and children for sale. Still at the great price of 50p each or three for £1.

Games and Social Afternoon

Wednesday 11 March, 2 – 4 pm

Come and join us for a relaxing game of Scrabble or one of the other games we have at the library. Maybe bring a favourite game from home to share. Or you're welcome to just sit, chat and enjoy some company and refreshments.

Knit and Natter

Wednesday 18 March, 2 – 4 pm

Join us for an informal and friendly get together at the library bringing your knitting or any other type of needlework or handicraft. We'll be sitting and chatting while working on our pieces and perhaps giving help and advice to others. Refreshments available, donations welcome.

Advance notice of the next Poetry and Prose evening

Tuesday 21 April, 7 30 pm

The theme this time will be *Spring Delights!*

Join us for an enjoyable and entertaining evening of Poetry and Prose. Choose a poem or prose that is Spring-related to share with the group (or you can just sit, listen and enjoy the company).

Please wear something appropriately bright or floral or bring something along to show off the vibrant colours of Spring. Refreshments available.

Cambridgeshire Libraries

Sign up for the Library Service's monthly email newsletter to find out the latest about what's going on in your local libraries. www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/libraries/news-and-events/library-news.

The website also has Recommended Reading Lists and up-to-date news.



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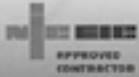
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Willingham Wassail

The annual Willingham Wassail (olde English for 'Be Healthy') took place at the Community Orchard on 11 January in less-than-optimal weather. However, the rain mostly held off and, led brilliantly by Chief Druid for the day Alison Widdows, together with Queen Sue and King Howard of the Berry (see their official Royal Portrait on the cover of *Willingham News*), the 60 or so attendees (a multiple more than expected) enthusiastically completed their ritual duties, scaring off the malicious spirits and waking up and anointing the trees.

Just enough mulled cider and hot sausages were provided courtesy of WAG, with the fire pit proving to be a welcome warmer.



Willingham Photo Club

Photo Club Assignment News

Members of our village Photo Club undertake a monthly assignment. The resulting photographs are discussed at the next meeting, and it's always interesting and enjoyable, never competitive. Sometimes the assignment photos are a result of workshops, which again are enjoyable and educational, but without any pressure to succeed!

One recent assignment was Graffiti, and we hope to show some of those colourful images next month. Meanwhile, samples from other recent assignments are shown here.

The next club meeting is at 8pm on Monday **16 March**, in the Baptist Church. First session free, £20 every six months thereafter.

For further details please contact derek@ballandia.co.uk.



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WHAT'S ON

DATE	EVENT	ORGANISATION	VENUE	EXTRA INFO
Sun 1 March	Jazz Club	Jazz Club	Social Club	12 30 – 3 30 pm Rosie-Val 01954 789670
Mon 2 March	AGM and talk: <i>Tree Surgery and Wood Turning</i> with Ben Hudson	Gardening Club	Social Club	Doors open from 7 pm, see p7
Wed 4 March	<i>Willingham News</i> Deadline	<i>Willingham News</i>		See p3, articles to be sent to: willinghamnews@gmail.com
Wed 4 March	Cyber Escape Room	Engage in the Afternoon	Library	2 – 3 30 pm, see p15
Wed 4 March	Carers' Support Meeting	Surgery	Wilford Furlong Centre	2 – 4 pm, see p9
Wed 4 March	Parish Council Meeting	Parish Council	Octagon	7 30 pm, see p14
Fri 6 March	Family History Session	Friends of Willingham Library (FOWL)	Library	10 30 am – 12 noon, see p15
Fri 6 March	Willingham Music Night	Willingham Music Night	Social Club	7 30 – 10 30 pm
Sat 7 March	Second-hand Book Sale	Friends of Willingham Library (FOWL)	Library	10 30 am – 12 noon, see p15
Mon 9 March	AGM & Beetle Drive	Women's Institute	Social Club	7 pm, see p6
Tue 10 March	Digital Buddy Drop-in Session	Library	Library	10 30 am – 12 30 pm, see p15
Wed 11 March	Patient Participation Group	Surgery	Willingham Surgery	7 – 9 pm, see p9
Wed 11 March	Games & Social Afternoon	Friends of Willingham Library (FOWL)	Library	2 – 4 pm, see p15
Thu 12 March	Community Lunch Club	Baptist Church	Baptist Church	Booking essential, see p12
Thu 12 March	After School Lego Session	Library	Library	4 – 5 pm, see p15
Sat 14 March	Family Lego Club	Library	Library	10 15 am – 11 45 am, see p15
Sat 14 March	Memory Box Café	Parish Church	Octagon	10 am – 12 noon, see p5
Mon 16 March	Meeting	Photo Club	Baptist Church	8 – 10 pm, see p19
Tue 17 March	Roxy 'Pets as Therapy' Dog	Library	Library	2 – 3 pm, see p15
Wed 18 March	Knit & Natter Afternoon	Friends of Willingham Library (FOWL)	Library	2 – 4 pm, see p15
Sat 21 March	Talk: <i>My Father – Bletchley Codebreaker</i> with Malcolm Wylie, & tour of Bletchley Park	Men's Breakfast	Baptist Church	7 45 – 9 15 am, see p12
Wed 25 March	Talk: <i>Atlantic Fairies</i> with author Midge Gillies	Library	Library	7 pm, see p15
Thu 26 March	Community Lunch Club	Baptist Church	Baptist Church	Booking essential, see p12
Fri 27 March	Quiz Night & Raffle	Friends of Willingham Church	Octagon	7 for 7 30pm, see p5
Sat 28 March	Family Lego Club	Library	Library	10 15 am – 11 45 am, see p15
Sat 28 March	In-person Stall	Friends of The Rosie	Bar Hill Community Market	10 am – 1 pm, see p 17
Mon 30 March	<i>Cambridgeshire Murders</i>	History Group (WHiG)	Social Club	7 30 pm, see p6

VILLAGE DIRECTORY

Council and Community	Parish Council		01954 261027	
	County Councillor	Yasmin Deter	yasmin.deter@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	
	District Councillor	Bill Handley	01954 200287 / cllr.handley@scambs.gov.uk	
	District Councillor	Dan Lentell	01954 713000 / cllr.lentell@scambs.gov.uk	
	Willingham Community Planning Group		07506 385554 / communityplanning@willinghamlife.co.uk	
Services	Surgery		01954 260230	
	Dispensary for repeat prescription requests	Weekdays 10 am – 12 noon and 3 – 4 pm	01954 207602	
	Library		0345 045 5225	
	Pharmacy		01954 261787	
	Community Warden	Joanne Twinn	joanne.twinn@ageukcap.org.uk / 07812 496002	
	Patient Participation Group	Chris Thornhill	07721 029494 / crthornhill@gmail.com	
Schools	Primary School	Mona Paalanen	01954 283030	
	Willingham Out Of School Club (3–6 pm only)	M Lenk	01954 283033	
	School Governors Chairperson	Chris Shaw	chair@willingham.cambs.sch.uk	
	School Association	c/o school	01954 283030	
	British School Trust	Ray Croucher	willinghambritishschooltrust@gmail.com / 07881 521041	
Children	Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Tim Mead	tim.mead@1stwillinghamscoutgroup.org.uk	
	Honeypot Pre-School (term-time only)	Kate Van Dort	01954 201567	
	Koala Kidz, Children's Day Nursery	Edith Jeffrey	01954 260046	
	Brownies, Guides and Rangers	Lynn McGoff	willinghamguides@hotmail.co.uk	
	TOPS (Baptist Church Toddlers Group)	Debbie Allen	01954 261581	
	Little Rainbows Baby & Toddler Group	Tiko Pending	tmwale31@gmail.com	
Halls	Ploughman Hall Bookings	Through Parish Council	01954 261027	
	Wilford Furlong Centre		01954 261445	
	The Octagon		admin@5folds.org.uk	
	Baptist Bookings and Rentals	Jenny Ambrose	secretary@willinghambaptist.org	
	Willingham Social Club Bookings	Lynne Sadler	01954 260557 / willinghamsocialclub@gmail.com	
	Willingham Youth Centre Bookings	Through Parish Council	01954 261027	
Local Representatives	Allotments		Clerk@willinghamcombinedcharity.org.uk	
	Billavincea Lodge 8719	David Plummer	01480 492912	
	Fen Edge Community Association	Mark Hurworth	chair@fenedge.co.uk	
	Over & District Royal British Legion	Jane Matthews	07983 630265 / overanddistrictrbl@yahoo.com	
	OWLS Community Car Scheme	Lorraine Hunt	07505 254363	
	Willingham Action Group (WAG)	Paul Knighton	07787 530394	
	Willingham Combined Charities	Lynn McGoff	clerk@willinghamcombinedcharity.org.uk	
	Willingham Bee Group	Corrin Hoyes	07903 937718	
	For information about swarm collection please see the information here: Swarm Collection – Cambridgeshire Beekeepers' Association			
	Clubs	Friends of Willingham Church	Rosemary Tiley	friendsofwillinghamchurch@gmail.com
Friends of Willingham Library (FOWL)			willinghamlibraryfriends@gmail.com	
Willingham Carpet Bowls Club		David Young	01954 200561 / orchardist44@ntlworld.com	
Willingham Gardening Club			willinghamgardeningclub@gmail.com	
Willingham Men's Breakfast		Pete Sacré	01954 261655/whammensbrec@gmail.com	
Willingham Social Club		Lynne Sadler	01954 260557 / willinghamsocialclub@gmail.com	
Willingham Music Night		Julian Eales	01954 201818	
Willingham Photo Club		Derek Law	derek@ballandia.co.uk	
Willingham Running Club		Monica Garcia	gcompass.monica@gmail.com	
Willingham Writers		Keira Garner, Jo Pilsworth	07539 292540 (Jo)	
Willingham Youth Club		Prakash Nayee	07722 489850 / pnayee@btinternet.com	
Women's Institute	Vicky Baggaley	01954 201405		
Sport	Angling	Colin Dodd	07773 719330	
	Badminton	Emma Byrom	01954 202481	
	Bowls Club	Mark Chapman	mark.chapmanwbc@gmail.com	
	Crickets Club	R Ambrose	01954 610113	
	Cycling Club	Nigel Leaney	nigel.leaney@outlook.com / 07979 518200	
	Willingham Diamonds Netball Club	Emma Byrom	01954 202481	
	Willingham Sports Pavilion	Through Parish Council	01954 261027	
	Willingham Wolves (Boys & Girls Football)	Jamie Smith (Sec)	01954 261141	
Churches	Baptist Church	Jenny Ambrose	secretary@willinghambaptist.org	
	Roman Catholic Priest	Rev. Trindade Monteiro	Trindade.Monteiro@rcdea.org.uk / 01480 462192	
	Parish Church	Rev Stephen Dove	07944 014521/stephen@5folds.org.uk	



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