

# Pigeon POST

MARCH 2026



‘for Starston people’



Issue 410

Issue Editor: Craig Marven

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Cover: Redwing - Lynda Marven

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The editorial team do not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed by contributors, however the magazine is here for local people to air their views. Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Editor reserves the right to alter or amend any copy received.

Items for inclusion in the next issue MUST reach the Co-ordinating Editor by noon on the 12<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month, (usually earlier in December). Space in the magazine will be allocated at the Issue Editor's discretion. Photos and pictures are welcome and will be used wherever possible.

Please send copy by e-mail to: [pigeonpost19@gmail.com](mailto:pigeonpost19@gmail.com)

## Distribution.

Pigeon Post is delivered free to every home in Starston. It is also sent in PDF format to an email list. To request a PDF version please contact the Co-ordinating Editor at: [pigeonpost19@gmail.com](mailto:pigeonpost19@gmail.com)

If you know of any new residents in the village please tell Norman Steer (854245) or Brian Greathead (852352) to ensure they are welcomed and receive the Pigeon Post.



## Village diary.

Warm Welcome lunch in the Jubilee Hall	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	11.30am
Parish Council meeting in the Jubilee Hall	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	7.30pm
Warm Welcome lunch in the Jubilee Hall	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	11.30am
Glebe Meadow spring bash	Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> March	10:00am

## Jubilee Hall.

Starston Jubilee Hall is available to hire for activity classes, family parties, meetings, informal gatherings, etc. Its capacity is approximately 60 people, or 40 people if seated. The Hall has kitchen facilities, fast broadband and some private parking.

For more information visit [www.starstonvillage.co.uk/jubilee-hall](http://www.starstonvillage.co.uk/jubilee-hall)

Please contact the Jubilee Hall Bookings Manager, Robert Wood, on 01379 852535 or [starstonrobert@gmail.com](mailto:starstonrobert@gmail.com)

## Advertising in Pigeon Post.

For advertising rates please contact:

Advertising Manager: Liz Stacey Tel: 01379 853427 Email: [elizabethstacey99@hotmail.com](mailto:elizabethstacey99@hotmail.com)

Copy must reach us by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month to be considered for inclusion.

Pigeon Post accepts no responsibility for the content, offers or validity of any flyer or advertisement

Final copy date for the April 2026 edition:  
12.00 noon on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March



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Around and about.

Bun, cuppa and chat.

The next monthly veteran's event will be from 2.30 to 4.00pm on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March at the Mariner's Galley Cafe in Rushall. Contact: [rosemarysteer55@gmail.com](mailto:rosemarysteer55@gmail.com)

Quiz night at the Pennoyer Centre.

**Quiz and chips**, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March from 7.00pm to 10.30pm  
<https://pennoyers.org.uk/event/quiz-night-4/>

Film night at the Pennoyer Centre.

**Four Letters of Love (12A)**, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 7.00pm  
**Please note start time:** Doors Open 19:00. Film Starts 19:30.  
<https://pennoyers.org.uk/event/film-night-four-letters-of-love-12a/>  
or call 01379 676660 for tickets.

Request for Raffle Prizes - Hunters' Dinner.

The Hunter's Dinner is being held on 7th March at 7pm and this will include a raffle to raise money for Starston Jubilee Hall and the upkeep of the Glebe Meadow. Any donations for prizes would be greatly appreciated. Debbie Griffin and Frank Pearson are collecting the prizes.

The dinner is nearly sold out, however, at the time of writing this there are still a few tickets available.

Please contact Debbie email [deb.stu@hotmail.com](mailto:deb.stu@hotmail.com) Telephone 01379 854233

Regular 'what's on' information.

Harleston Information Plus: 8, Exchange St, Harleston, IP20 9AB  
[www.harleston-norfolk.org.uk](http://www.harleston-norfolk.org.uk)

Fisher Theatre Bungay: <https://fishertheatre.org/FisherTheatre.dll/WhatsOn>

Diss Corn Hall: <https://www.thecornhall.co.uk/whats-on-list/>

Pennoyer Centre - Pulham St. Mary: <https://pennoyers.org.uk/events/>



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## Editor's notes.

Last month, Christina commented on the rain. Little did she know then quite how damp and grey the next few weeks would be! Lynda and I escaped to Malta for a break from it. It wasn't hot, but at least it wasn't grey and damp. Hence Pigeon post is a little late this month.

We get a good variety of birds in our garden but generally just the ones we all see. I've not noticed redwings before but we were lucky enough to get a few good pictures of a small flock came to feast on the holly berries recently and one of these is on the cover this month. Redwings are one of the few birds that will eat holly berries with relish.

We have a great range of articles this month with all of our regular contributors, including Janice Brooks' 'Day in the Life' feature. This month's subject is Herbert Websdell and his incredible 80 years of bell-ringing. See page 14.

There is also the annual report from Julian Taylor on the rainfall for 2025. As he says, it's not all about 'how much' but a lot about 'when'. See page 12.

As always, we welcome letters, articles, photographs, opinions or any other contribution that helps keep Pigeon Post relevant, interesting or fun.

*Craig*

## Glebe Meadow spring bash 21<sup>st</sup> March.

Please note in your diaries Saturday morning 21<sup>st</sup> March for the first 2026 volunteer session in Glebe Meadow at 10.00. If you could spare a couple of hours to help it would be brilliant and would help set Glebe Meadow up for the year.

This year the priorities include:

1. Digging up individual hemlock plants and barrowing to the bonfire heap
2. Clearing fallen branches and debris to enable summer hay making
3. Cutting back sycamore regrowth on the bank and overhanging tree branches
4. Completing repairs to the bank and meadow after the car incident in the Beck
5. Clearing scrub from the area between the Beck and Low Road by the footbridge
6. Levelling mole hills

Refreshments are provided but if you have them, please bring spades, rakes, wheelbarrows, heavy pruners, saws, strimmers and your own PPE.

Hope to see you on Saturday 21 March.

*Peter Grimble*



Advertisement Feature

## Join Care UK's nationwide 'Big Dementia Conversation'

Did you know that nearly four in 10 people (39%) avoid visiting relatives living with dementia because of how difficult it can be to communicate and connect\*?

Dementia can change the way someone communicates. Messages in the brain may take longer to reach the right place, which can make conversations more challenging.

As dementia progresses, families and friends may feel unsure how to stay connected. In a national survey, nearly all respondents (93%) said communication barriers made meaningful interaction harder, but it doesn't have to be this way. Understanding why communication

becomes more challenging is the first step in remaining connected with your loved one.

### Staying connected

We know many families feel they don't have enough support with communication after their loved one develops dementia. That's why Care UK has created **Staying connected: a guide to dementia-friendly conversations**.

The guide is available for free in your local care home and online as part of 'The Big Dementia Conversation' online advice hub. This hub is all about sharing knowledge and real-life experiences to support those who are looking after someone living with dementia.



If you're caring for a loved one with dementia and need a little extra support, why not visit our website to discover more ways we can help you and your loved one.

Visit our online advice hub to find out more by scanning the QR code.



Join us for our next event at Hartismere Place

Spring memories tea dance  
Wednesday 11th March, 2pm - 4pm

Come along to our spring memories tea dance - a relaxed, feel-good afternoon for everyone. Enjoy familiar music, dancing, friendly chat, and a fun nostalgic quiz, all in a dementia-friendly and welcoming space. It's a chance to connect, share memories, and enjoy being together, while also picking up simple, practical tips for communicating with people living with dementia, helping everyday moments feel easier, kinder, and more meaningful.

To book your free place, call **01379 398 423** or email [angela.hodge@careuk.com](mailto:angela.hodge@careuk.com)

If you're considering care, call your local care home Hartismere Place on **01379 398 423** or visit [careuk.com/hartismere-place](http://careuk.com/hartismere-place)

## Burns Night supper - thank you.

On 7th February this popular event raised £392 for the St. Margaret's church fabric fund. Thanks to all that contributed and helped especially the ringers, music provided by Starston All Stars, and the piper Mr Philip Astor.

This is the last Burns Supper I will organise. Altogether I have organised 35, I think a good number to finish on. Thank you for your support over the years.

Herbert

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## Benefice letter - Gale's Tales.

Have you given up something for Lent? In my youth we always gave up sweets for Lent. Then came the joy of Easter Day, when we could unwrap our Easter Eggs and begin munching sweets and chocolates again!

In my childhood it wasn't quite like that. Sweets and chocolate were still on ration. My uncle, who worked in a chocolate factory in Nottingham, always took all our coupons. When they came to visit us over Easter he brought a year's supply of goodies!! (which were mostly finished by the end of Eastertide!).

What we gave up for Lent was more to do with our behaviour, and we usually "gave up" time. I remember giving up playing with my farmyard animals for six long weeks, and instead I read a book! I was never a great reader, and that was a real penance!

*...but I wonder?*

When we look back to where this "giving up" began we need to be with Jesus in the desert. He went into the desert to think, to explore his feelings, to talk to his heavenly father, and ask the question, "What *should* I be doing with my skills, my talents, my *life*?"

While in the desert he gave up, not just his food, but his friends, his family, his ordinary life. Jesus asked the question – "What *should* I be doing with my skills, my talents, my *life*?"

.... and the devil said, "You're hungry. Turn these stones into bread."

But humans don't live on bread alone – or sweets... or playing with farmyard animals!

Jesus asked the question – "What should I be doing with my skills, my talents, my *life*?"

.... and the devil said, "You're God's son. Throw yourself off the top of the temple and he will send his angels to catch you so that you are not harmed. That will show everyone how great God thinks you are!"

But humans shouldn't put God to the test. Our talents are God's gift to us, for each of us to share with others, not to use for our own glory.

Jesus asked again – "What should I be doing with my skills, my talents, my *life*?"

.... and the devil said, "You're God's son. Come with me up the mountain and I will show you the world, and give it to you to rule if you kneel down and worship me."

But Jesus said, "Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

*...I wonder?*

Whom do I serve? Myself? My family and friends? My community? My church? ....

... may we serve the God who gave us what gifts we have, and love Him as He loves us.

*Gale*



## Notes from a Starston garden.

Winnie The Pooh was not part of my childhood. I didn't meet him until I was 50, but my introduction to A A Milne happened when I was 5 and was given "Now We Are Six", one of his books of poems for children. My favourite was one about a sailor shipwrecked on a desert island. He could think of plenty of things to do – make a fire, build a shelter, look for water – but which to do first?

I feel like that in my Starston garden in March. So much to do, so little time - and which to do first. For me, having already bought onion sets and seed potatoes, the priority is to get them in the ground. The onions go in as near to the start of March as possible, the spuds at the end of the month.

Then there are seeds to be sown in the greenhouse – leeks, the first sowings of lettuce (various varieties) and carrots (Nantes 5). I grow the carrots in large, deep pots of compost because I've never had much success with growing them out in the veg beds.

With those jobs done or scheduled, I can turn my attention to the rest of the garden. I am one of those people who don't do much cutting back in the autumn. Instead, I leave the remains of the perennials as shelter over the winter for ground beetles and ladybirds. The dying and dead stems can also offer some protection against frost for any new shoots emerging at the base. But at some

point in March the old growth has to be cut back. The knack, of course, is to do it without damaging any of those new shoots.

The Miscanthus also has to be cut back - using loppers, not secateurs. I've found from experience that the canes are not strong enough to be used as plant supports, so I cut them into short pieces which I store until winter when they come in handy as fuel for the wood burner.

Then there's my lovely white Buddleia in the front garden. I hack this back by half in the autumn – no finesse needed – then prune it properly in March, cutting it back to near its woody base. Again, the woody stems that are pruned out can be cut up and stored for winter fuel.

And there are several jobs that I meant to do during the winter – like cutting back the overgrown honeysuckle – but which were thwarted by the incessant rain.

So much to do, so little time, but whatever happens don't be like A A Milne's shipwrecked sailor who, faced with so many tasks, couldn't decide which to do first and ended up doing nothing.

*Dee the Gardener*



## Starston rainfall report.

Jan 2.29"	Feb 1.90"	March 0.42"	April 0.53"	May 0.98"	June 2.18"
July 3.40"	Aug 0.95"	Sept 2.48"	Oct 3.21"	Nov 4.84"	Dec 1.63"

Above are the bare facts of the rainfall measured for last year by month. The total for the year was 24.81" which is below the average of 25.56" since our records began in 1900.

I have, in the past, commented on the distribution of rain throughout the year and how crucial it is in relation to the various crops and their stages of growth. 2025 was incredibly dry from the beginning of February through to the 7<sup>th</sup> of June when the weather broke and we measured 0.83". This particular storm, although very welcome, was too late in the year to lift cereal yields, the damage having been done by the prolonged earlier drought. We do not have any irrigation on the farm so we are very reliant on mother nature. In the years to come with Global Warming (now a certainty) farms will have to adapt and adopt new practices as they always have done to the changing conditions. There are now more acres of vines being grown in Britain than when the Romans were here!

The cereal crops this year were to say the least, 'disappointing', with yields well below average and to make matters worse there seemed to have been bumper crops

elsewhere in the world so that the world price of both wheat and barley were at levels we received in the 1980's. Sadly input costs have not reduced to their 1980's levels.

Our sugar beet crop was drilled at the optimum time, late March, into warm and dry seedbeds, the only problem was that the next rain of any consequence was on June 7<sup>th</sup>! We had various small amounts of rain between times but the sugar beet plant requires a good soaking every 10 days to reach optimum yield by mid-November, when we lift the crop.

I am not sure that everyone knows that in this country we are contracted to sell our beet crop to British Sugar who process the beet at four factories Newark, Wisington, Cantley and Bury St Edmunds, the one that we use. Between them they process 6.5m tonnes of beet from which they extract over 1.2m tonnes of sugar and sell to the public as Silver Spoon Sugar and to the food industry for inclusion in many products including the drinks industry.

British Sugar is a Monopsony which allows them to dominate their growers without the Government challenging their position



as they are the only buyer of sugar beet in the country, meaning they can determine the price of sugar beet seed and the price they are prepared to pay its growers.

Having mentioned the Government you would find it odd if I didn't express a view on the proposed Inheritance Tax regime. Through various negotiations and pressure groups the Government has moved the threshold from £1m to £5m. This in itself will be viewed as a huge relief for many small farms under 200 acres and other family run businesses in towns and cities. However, many farming operations in Norfolk have machinery alone that is valued at more than £5m.

The larger family run businesses are still trying to persuade the Government that the threshold is still too low and that a greater amount of tax could be raised by other means that would not destroy generations of work put in by farming families and business owners.

Back to the weather!

The July rains were needed by most of the farm but typically when the combine needs to roll in to the oil seed rape and barley crops it would have been better not to have had rain on 11 of the 31 days. For every day that it rains, it takes another day at least for the sun to dry the crop enough to harvest. The heaviest rain fell on July 21<sup>st</sup> when we had 1.02". August was dry on all but 6 days so the wheat

harvest was completed in good time but as I have said earlier, not with good yields.

Moving into the late summer and early autumn the oil seed rape seed was drilled into good soil conditions and these crops have started well. The wheat crops were drilled in either early October or following the sugar beet harvesting in November.

Some of you will have noticed that there was a crop flowering in December. This is a radish drilled immediately after harvest to proceed a spring crop, in our case sugar beet. This growth has been prolific and is there to not only absorb sunlight and store that energy but also help towards reducing soil erosion and increasing the water holding capacity of the soil. We call this a 'green cover crop' and it is destroyed by mulching in late February and then worked into the soil ahead of drilling the sugar beet.

Using the same formulae as in previous years 24.81" is equivalent to 2,804 tonnes of water per acre or 673,768 gallons. Starston remains at 2244 acres so received 6,292m tonnes of water or 1,512m gallons of rainwater.

Would anyone like to guess or work out how much of that is retained and converted into drinking water by Anglia Water? Answers on a postage stamp!

*Julian Taylor*



## A day in the life: Herbert Websdell - St. Margaret's church Tower Captain.

Introducing Herbert Websdell, a wearer of many Starston 'hats', but today we are focusing on his tenure as St. Margaret's Church Tower Captain.

Tower Captains are at the coal face of setting the culture and atmosphere in a tower. They are the make or break of how individuals are recruited, utilised, encouraged and developed. The Tower Captain leads the ringing team, is responsible for organizing practice sessions, Sunday service ringing, and weddings and funerals, and they act as the main liaison between the ringers and church authorities.

A big part of the role is safety and compliance, they ensure bells, ropes, and all fittings are in good working order, and manage safe access for the ringers. On the admin side, they maintain records, and manage data in accordance with GDPR.

*I understand that you began bell ringing in 1946, so how did it all start ?*

"As a family we had just moved to Pulham Market, and my mum suggested that I start bellringing. I was 13 years old and my brother had tried, but quickly lost interest, but with me, something just clicked, and here I am, 80 years later, the Tower Captain at St. Margaret's, and with a lifetime of wonderful memories.

I started at Pulham Market, then moved to Pulham St. Mary, and then to



Redenhall, and Starston. Starston had bells, but they hadn't been rung for a very long time, and until the late seventies had a bell tape recording. I was contacted and asked to help find and train a team of bell ringers, and worked with Dr. Cattermole, a bell specialist, who ensured that the bells were in working order, and once confirmed, I started gathering a group of like-minded people, and I am still here today, proudly now as the Tower Captain.

The St. Margaret's team consists of bell ringers from Starston and the surrounding

area, with a core set of 5 ringers, we practise every Wednesday at 7pm, and ring the Starston bells for the Sunday service, starting at 10.30am.

I am privileged and proud to say that I have rung at two Royal Coronations: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1953, and King Charles III on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023".

There will be a bells festival at St. Margaret's and on Glebe Meadow on Saturday June 20<sup>th</sup> this year, which will celebrate Herbert's 80 years of ringing in the Church.

There will be a bell demonstration and anyone interested can have a go!

The service at St. Margaret's will be at 2.30pm, and during the service Herbert will announce his retirement as the Tower Captain, and will pass the tower keys to the incoming, still to be announced, Captain. Herbert will still continue to ring as part of the main core.

Starston welcomes any new members, for more information, or to join the group or have a taster session, please contact Herbert on: 01379 853967.

*Janice Brooks*





## Harleston Library.

Tel: (01379) 852549 Email [Harleston.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Harleston.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk)

As part of our quotation-themed displays throughout 2026, during February we have asked the members of our Meet & Make and Family Time groups to help us decorate the library with daffodils. They have done a lovely job and if you are passing, please take a moment to admire the window display and the board in the Children's area. As ever, a big thank you to everyone who has contributed.

On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2.00pm-3.00pm we will be welcoming Mary-Jane Riley to our Book Café. Mary-Jane has worked as a radio talk show host, a journalist and is now the author of several novels, her latest being 'Beattie Cavendish & the White Pearl Club', a story of a former Secret Operations Executive agent who post WWII refuses to settle into civilian life. Book Café is free and there is no need to book, just drop-in.



We are very lucky to have gained a very diverse range of individuals with interesting backgrounds, lives and musical experience over the past 25 years.

One of our longest standing founder members, is Peter Heard, who has lived in

Harleston for over 40 years and joined in 2000 as a tenor. He had always enjoyed singing but never had the opportunity to sing in a formal group. Peter can't read music and doesn't play any instruments. He is 68, retired and worked previously as a solicitor. He has also been a marathon runner and loves his real ale! Peter enjoys HCS because he has found all the members are friendly, welcoming and supportive.



Our newest member joined just a few weeks ago - Kathryn Rayner from Bush Green, Pulham Market. Kathryn is 63 and retired after 40 years as a nurse and midwife. She has joined us after previously singing and performing a variety of music in a community choir in Hertfordshire. She plays the piano and can read music but this is her first time in a choral society. She has found HCS to be a friendly bunch of people, singing beautiful music and is enjoying the challenge of learning new pieces. Kathryn also loves gardening, cycling, swimming, crochet and cooking.

So, whatever your background, if you want to join us, rehearsals are on Monday nights at 7.30pm at The London Road Church, Harleston, IP20 9BH. For further information and contact details, take a look at our website [www.harlestonchoralsoc.org.uk](http://www.harlestonchoralsoc.org.uk)



## Cosmic Fun Fitness



We offer Fun Zumba classes for all abilities, from our all-seated Chair class, low-impact Zumba Gold to our high impact Zumba class!

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
10.30am Zumba Gold, <a href="#">King Georges Hall, Harleston</a>	10am CHAIR Zumba Gold (inc. drink), <a href="#">Wortwell Community Centre</a>	10am Zumba Gold+ (med impact) 11am Zumba Gold, <a href="#">Needham Village Hall</a>	10.30 Zumba Gold, <a href="#">Wortwell Community Centre</a>	10.30am Zumba Gold, <a href="#">King Georges Hall, Harleston</a>
5.30pm Zumba Gold	<b>COMING SOON</b>	6.30pm Zumba Gold	<b>COMING SOON</b>	
6.30pm Zumba <a href="#">Wortwell Community Centre</a>	<b>ZUMBA GOLD AND ZUMBA STEP!!</b> King <a href="#">Georges Hall</a>	7.30 Zumba, <a href="#">Brockdish Village Hall</a>	<b>ZUMBA GOLD</b> 7pm Zumba, <a href="#">Needham Village Hall</a>	

All classes are £6 per person per class (except CHAIR class which is £5) Our loyalty scheme is free to join

Want to find out more? Check out our new website [www.cosmicfunfitness.co.uk](http://www.cosmicfunfitness.co.uk)

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- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Morning Cakes & Savouries at The Penoyer Centre, Pulham - Dial-a-Ride
- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> – Brunch at Wortham Tea Rooms – Dial-a-Ride
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> – Bungay Market Day - £10.00
- Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – Thetford Town and Garden Centre - £15.00
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Lunch at Earsham Hall Tea Rooms - £8.00
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – B&M and Beccles Town Centre - £15.00
- Monday 30<sup>th</sup> – Holt Town and Garden Centre - £20.00

To book or for more information please call: 01379 854800

Or visit our website: [www.borderhoppa.org](http://www.borderhoppa.org)



## A word from Rosedale bereavement support.

I am wise enough to know that the cold, wet month of January is the worst time to go on a radical diet. I just can't bring myself to eat a cold salad when my body is begging me for warming comfort food!

Far better to start a new healthy eating and exercise regime when the days are longer and sunnier and to accept and learn to love what we've been given, whilst continuing to nurture our well-being, growth and development.

For many who are bereaved, the year may have changed but the grief still remains. However, that doesn't mean we have to remain stuck in the past and can't still enjoy the life we have now. Practicing self-care and putting some things in the diary to look forward to, can be a way of developing hope and a forward-facing mindset. We should not feel guilty about this. It does not mean we are forgetting our loved ones or leaving them behind. Rather, we continue to hold them close but also move forwards with life. We can grieve and fully live at the same time.

Guilt is not a helpful emotion and is often present for those who are grieving. It keeps us locked in a cycle of self-recrimination. We may ask ourselves 'Why did I say that?' or 'Why didn't I do that?'

Often, when it comes to someone we love, we always wish we had done better. It is not helpful to blame ourselves for things that are only known with the benefit of hindsight.

Being human means, we mess up and make mistakes. Punishing ourselves will not bring our loved one back.

Practising acceptance and forgiveness is a much healthier approach. It frees us to stop fighting our circumstances and the things we cannot change. When we let go of the questions we may never know the answers to, we can freely live, making the best of what we have left.

This sentiment is summed up in the well-known Serenity Prayer which is often used in recovery programmes. Whether God is our 'cup of tea' or not, we can all acknowledge our need for more serenity, courage and wisdom:

**God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know the difference.**

If you've recently had a bereavement (or at any time in the past) and would like to talk to others in a similar position call 01379 640 810 to reserve your free place on our next bereavement group. Rosedale's bereavement support groups are safe, confidential and local to Norfolk and Suffolk.

More information about support following a bereavement can also be found at [rosedalefuneralhome.co.uk](http://rosedalefuneralhome.co.uk)

*Sarah Howard,  
Rosedale Funeral Home Bereavement  
Support Group Facilitator*



## Car in the beck, again!

Two emails from our correspondents and one photo from each. History really does repeat itself!

Dear editor,

A car has run off the road on the bend at Starston bridge. It was approaching from the direction of the Pulhams, smashed into one of the 4" square wooden posts, knocking it out of the ground, then smashed through one of the fence panels and down the bank, ending up in the beck just downstream of the bridge. It happened late on 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan or in the early hours of 24<sup>th</sup> Jan. Photos attached.

I'm guessing nobody was hurt – I've not been aware of any activity of the emergency services.

*Best wishes,  
Pigeon Post correspondent on The Street*



Dear editor,

I know you have had several pictures of the recent beck incursion but thought you might be amused by these from June 2018, different car, same place, same outcome, same fence, same post (well probably replacements for the two latter). Our then dogs Sahara and Roscoe checked it out, got very muddy and had to be thoroughly cleaned before being allowed back on the sofa!

*Kind regards, Rosemary*





## County Council report.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January the Government announced that this May's county council elections would not go ahead, so the council can focus on local government reorganisation and devolution. This accompanies their decision to cancel the Mayoral Elections scheduled for May. The council agreed to delay the 2025 elections to secure the Government's devolution deal, based on the promise that a Mayor would be elected in 2026. That timetable was changed without warning in November 2025, delaying the Mayoral election until May 2028, despite the significant work already done to prepare. There will be a county council by-election in Diss and Roydon on Thursday May 7<sup>th</sup> due to Cllr Keith Kiddie standing down.

Norfolk County Council's ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan has transformed public transport across the county, driving a 26% increase in passenger numbers since 2022 and making Norfolk an example for sustainable travel. Improvements include enhanced bus services on 44 routes, more evening and Sunday services, affordable fares, a green fleet with up to 100 zero-emission buses and improved passenger experience.

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has rolled out 160 new Axon body-worn cameras across stations in Norfolk to help improve safety and decision-making at incidents. Cameras have been issued to all fire appliances and operational officers, as well as to protection and prevention

teams fire investigation officers, the training school and Trading Standards officers. The Axon devices provide live streaming, location data and two-way communication, allowing footage to be shared in real time with control room staff during emergency incidents. This supports quicker, better-informed decisions, improves firefighter safety by identifying risks earlier and helps coordinate responses with partner agencies.

Research shows that children thrive best in family environments. More foster carers are needed to make family homes a reality for the five children a week who come into care in Norfolk. A new mini documentary has recently been launched that asks the questions people often have when first considering fostering. It follows writer, comedian and family man Adam Buxton as he visits two local authority foster families in Norfolk and Suffolk. Adam doesn't know anything about fostering or having children in care before he meets the foster carers. He finds out more over cups of tea, emptying the dishwasher, Top Trumps, a dog walk and a kick-about in the garden. The full documentary can be seen at [www.fostereast.org.uk](http://www.fostereast.org.uk)

Residents are encouraged to consider fostering – to find out more visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/fostering)

My next surgery will be at HIP on Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup> at 10am

*Best Wishes, Martin*



## Parish Council report.

Dear Starston residents,

At the January Parish Council meeting, after a detailed review of the Parish Council's budget for the coming year, it was concluded that it would be necessary to increase the village Precept (the portion of *Council Tax* fixed to cover the Parish Council's expenditure) for 2026/27 to £8,252. This increase covers the need for replacement IT equipment and additional measures to be taken, required by law, for the Parish Council to meet new accounting requirements. Further details of the Parish Council's finances can be found in the papers for the meeting on the village website.

The Parish Council has also agreed to contribute £100 to Redenhall and Harleston Town Council to ensure free parking continues in the town, which I am sure we all find of great value.

Following the incident in the early hours of Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January involving a car misjudging the sharp corner before the bridge over the Beck, Cllr. Astor has been in touch with Norfolk Council's local highways engineer, highlighting yet again the need for improved signage and other measures to ensure that motorists reduce their speed on the approach to the bridge.

At the meeting in March the Parish Council will consider grant applications received. Grants can be awarded to groups and organisations within the Parish at the discretion of the Council. Any

charity, voluntary group or community organisation that proposes to apply this year can access the Grant Awarding Policy and up-to-date application form on the village website or from the Clerk; (please note that the policy is currently under review). Applications should be sent to the Clerk by 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Hall. If you would like to attend the meeting, or you would like any matters raised in the public forum, do please contact me in advance.

*Jo Madders*

*Clerk to Starston Parish Council*

*starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk*

### Advance notice

Starston Bridge will be closed to vehicular traffic between 16<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> March inclusive for rebuilding the northwest parapet wall after it was demolished for the second time in the past year. On this occasion by vehicle impact.

Let's hope the rebuilt brickwork lasts a bit longer this time!

*Thanks to Stuart Taylor for this.*



## Answer to the February quiz - football teams.

Last month's quiz was a departure from the norm, challenging you to fill in the blanks in our story from a list of football team names. We hope you had a go at it and below is our view of the best answers, though other combinations may well be possible.

The sun shone **Brighton** the day we set sail for the **Portsmouth** in a ship with a **Hull** riddled with holes.

We sailed down the river which **Leeds** to the sea.

We waved to the fair maiden leaning against the **Millwall**.

The **Crewe** was made up of Scots, Irish and others of the **Celtic** race.

The exception was the cabin boy named **Peterborough** whose job was to **Stoke** the boilers.

He was illiterate, but won our **Hearts** with his **Stirling** efforts to improve his **Reading**.

He was sent to **Coventry** by the villains on board, who had brought their **Arsenal** of weapons.

They were a rowdy lot and, when drunk, they did, in fact, **Wrexham** furniture.

The voyage made my **Motherwell**, who had not had a holiday **Forfar** too long.

We landed **Leyton** in the day on the **Southend** of the island, below where the locals **Bury** their dead.

We crossed a stream and entered a dense forest where the **Wolves** roamed freely.

We **Preston** regardless and eventually met a group of **Rangers** dressed in **Lincoln** green.

After a day's journey we caught some black fish in a **Blackpool** and tried to get milk from a herd of cows, but they objected to having their **Huddersfield**.

At last we came to our destination, the home of the Hawaiian monarch, the **Queen of the South**.

She greeted us with a friendly **Alloa**, but was obviously upset, as her **Crystal Palace** had been smashed when the **Walsall** fell down.

While her **Newcastle** was being built she had to live in a sumptuous **Villa**.

When we found the treasure we put the **Luton** the ship, determined to put it straight in the **Clydebank** when we got home.

That night we ate some **Dundee** cake and some **Chelsea** buns for tea, also some **Oldham** which made us feel ill.



**Friends or family visiting with (or without) dogs, but need somewhere to stay?**

Blackthorn Retreat is our large homely & cosy secluded shepherd's hut in Starston, and is perfect for reactive dogs, and is set alone in its own 1/3 acre meadow. 4' fencing all around. Wonderful views and walks. Kitchen, shower, king-sized bed, air con, under-floor heating, hot tub, fire pit, pizza oven, air fryer oven, loungers, hammock, laundry, games etc

<https://www.airbnb.com/h/blackthorn-retreat-starston>  
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## March quiz - anagrams - know your Norwich.

Can you unscramble these Norwich locations? Some are better known than others.

Example: GEE PAT TROT(1) becomes POTTERGATE

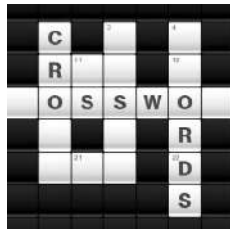
The number in brackets denotes the number of words in the answer.

- |                              |                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Spoilt lard (2)           | 6. Letage stew (1)      |
| 2. Sable sheets oh yum (3)   | 7. The coals cradle (2) |
| 3. Glower lean oat (3)       | 8. Spear kwell (2)      |
| 4. Lah lah lamer (2)         | 9. hud gale hill (2)    |
| 5. Shoe stream pant tree (3) | 10. Deliah Celpf (2)    |

## Answers to the February crossword.

### Across

1. Decorum
5. After
8. Precautionary
9. Satan
10. Absinth
11. Duress
12. Crypts
15. Apician
17. Catch
19. Yellowhammers
20. Essay
21. Resists

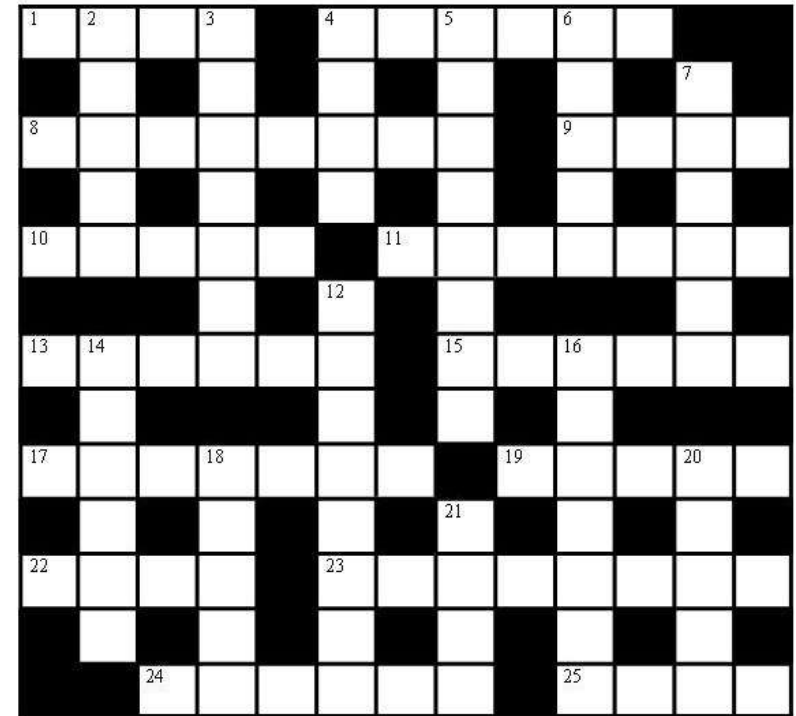


### Down

1. Dupes
2. Chesterfields
3. Rhamnus
4. Mitral
5. Axons
6. Trainspotters
7. Rhythms
11. Dialyse
13. Racemes
14. Anchor
16. Ivory
18. Hosts



## March crossword by Gruidae.



### Clues across

1. Summit of a hill (4)
4. Film starring Kate Winslet 'The .....
8. A scrape or graze (8)
9. Copper Roman coin, 1/12<sup>th</sup> of an as (4)
10. A large lobed abdominal organ (5)
11. Pickled herring (7)
13. A ridiculous or embarrassing failure (6)
15. To force into (6)
17. Used in cooking and herbal medicine, Pimpinella anisum (7)
19. Nascence, nativity (5)
22. Single stemmed woody perennial (4)
23. Preservation method that predates the domestic freezer (8)
24. Human offspring during 2-8th weeks of development (6)
25. That, over there [archaic] (4)

### Clues down

2. The minister of a synagogue (5)
3. Came as refugees to Norfolk from Flanders. Now have their own WAY (7)
4. A surprise attack (4)
5. Fluid essential for 24 across (8)
6. Of the same value (5)
7. From one side to another (6)
12. Betwixt Mike and Oscar (8)
14. Pay no attention (6)
16. Distinctive pattern and a Scottish town (7)
18. Vapourised water (5)
20. Tongue of wood for insertion into a mortise (5)
21. Boy's name of German origin (4)



## Benefice services in March.

	1 <sup>st</sup> March Lent 2	8 <sup>th</sup> March Lent 3	15 <sup>th</sup> March Lent 4/Mothering Sunday	22 <sup>nd</sup> March Lent 5/Passiontide	29 <sup>th</sup> March Palm Sunday
<b>Pulham Market</b>	9.30 Communion	9.30 Messy Church	9.30 All Age Communion	9.30 All Age Worship	10.30 Benefice Procession and Communion
<b>Pulham St Mary</b>	8.00 BCP Communion	11.00 Communion	11.00 All Age Mothering Service	11.00 Communion	
<b>Starston</b>	11.00 BCP Communion	11.00 BCP Communion	11.00 All Age Mothering Service	11.00 BCP Morning Prayer	
<b>Dickleburgh</b>	9.30 All Age Worship	9.30 Communion	9.30 All Age Mothering Service	9.30 Communion	
<b>Thelveton</b>	11.00 Morning Prayer	Church Open for Prayer	3.00 All Age Mothering Service	11.00 Communion	
<b>Rushall</b>	Church Open for Prayer	11.00 Communion	Church Open for Prayer	Church Open for Prayer	

### All-age worship - suitable for everyone

Dickleburgh	9.30am	1 <sup>st</sup> Sundays (breakfast from 9am)
Starston	11.00am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sundays (breakfast from 10.15am)
Pulham St Mary	11.00am	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays (breakfast from 10.15am)
Pulham Market	9.30am	4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays (breakfast from 9am)

For updates on Starston Services contact John Formston 853042 or [jformston07@talktalk.net](mailto:jformston07@talktalk.net)

Starston PCC Secretary:  
Ruth Cawcutt Tel:01379 852087  
Email: [rcawcutt1@btinternet.com](mailto:rcawcutt1@btinternet.com)

All services are subject to change. For up to date information please go to the Benefice Website: [www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/26-107EP/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/26-107EP/)



## Starston Parish Council.

Philip Astor: Chairman	<a href="mailto:philipastor@mac.com">philipastor@mac.com</a>	07753 800594
Janet Broadhurst: Emergency Plan Co-ordinator	<a href="mailto:janetbroadhurst@aol.com">janetbroadhurst@aol.com</a>	01379 853480
Stuart Griffin: Member	<a href="mailto:stuartgriffin@live.co.uk">stuartgriffin@live.co.uk</a>	
Karen O'Keeffe: Vice-chair & Internal Control of Finances	<a href="mailto:kareno.keeffe@icloud.com">kareno.keeffe@icloud.com</a>	
Chris Sparrow: Footpath Warden	<a href="mailto:chris.sparrow2211@hotmail.co.uk">chris.sparrow2211@hotmail.co.uk</a>	
Val Baker: Member	<a href="mailto:crewdy@icloud.com">crewdy@icloud.com</a>	

Highways Defects, Village Maintenance, SAM 2 Equipment, General Enquiries  
Joanne Madders: Clerk to the Council & RFO

To contact Starston Parish Council: [starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk)

There is currently a vacancy on the parish council, please see the parish council report in this issue for more information

## Local councillors.

Martin Wilby	County	<a href="mailto:martin.wilby@norfolk.gov.uk">martin.wilby@norfolk.gov.uk</a>	01379 741504
Clayton Hudson	District	<a href="mailto:clayton.hudson@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk">clayton.hudson@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk</a>	01379 676259
Delme Thompson	District	<a href="mailto:delme.thompson@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk">delme.thompson@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk</a>	

## Waveney Valley MP.

Adrian Ramsay:	Suite 1B Navire House, Mere Street, Diss, IP22 4AG <a href="mailto:waveneyvalleyoffice@parliament.uk">waveneyvalleyoffice@parliament.uk</a>	01379 830200
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## Community services.

Local Buses - from Starston to Harleston and Starston to Long Stratton and Norwich	For information Ring: 0871 200 2233 12p a minute plus access charge
Border Hoppa - dial-a-ride service	Ring: 01379 854800
Police - (non-emergency)	Ring: 101
Safer Neighbourhood Team	Email: <a href="mailto:sntharleston@norfolk.pnn.police.uk">sntharleston@norfolk.pnn.police.uk</a>
Report Power Cuts	Ring: 105
Report Flooding	Ring: 03448008013
If you are in danger call 999	Email: <a href="http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding">www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding</a>
NHS Emergency & Urgent Care Services (Including Emergency out of hours chemist)	Ring: 111 when it's less urgent than 999
Refuse Collection and Queries	Ring: 01508 533830
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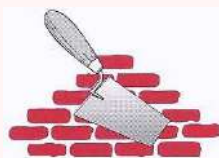
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