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The newsletter of Holywell-cum-Needingworth

December 2025



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the Villager

The Newsletter of Holywell-cum-Needingworth

Published quarterly in March, June, September and December
Distributed free to every household in the parish of
Holywell-cum-Needingworth

Winter Issue, December 2025

EDITORIAL



Best wishes for a very happy Christmas to all readers of 'the Villager'.

This is not the time of year for many outdoor events, but sports such as bowls carry on indoors throughout the winter months (see page 27).

Details of carol singing and Christmas services organised by our two village churches, St John the Baptist Church and Needingworth Baptist Church, can be found on pages 19 and 21, and don't forget the Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 6th December in the Village Hall, run this year by Needingworth Community Preschool, but with stalls from various village organisations including the WI and the church.

Remember, I need contributions from villagers to keep this magazine varied and interesting. Please send me your news, articles, photographs or poems for inclusion in the March 2026 issue by the copy date of 1st February.

The editor, **Jennifer**

Editor and Advertising:

Jennifer Horn,
16 Willow Green, Needingworth, St Ives, PE27 4SW
Tel: 01480 468952 Email: needingworth@aol.com

Next issue deadline:

1st February for March, April and May 2026

The views expressed in this newsletter are submitted by readers and are not necessarily the views of the Parish Council or the Editor. Dates and times of events have been submitted by the organisers of the events and are passed on in good faith. Please check with the organisers before attending. The Villager is supported by the Parish Council but published independently.

Christmas

The sights, the smells, people full of good cheer
Reminds us all that Christmas is near.

Holly, Ivy and mistletoe,
And in the grate the Yule logs glow.

Cards are displayed along the shelf,
And didn't I just see Santa's elf?

Parcels wrapped in every hue,
And is there a present there for you?

Carolers singing in the cold night air,
And remembering people no longer there.

A star shines out from the top of the tree.
To remind us all of a special baby.

So ring those bells on Christmas morn
To herald the day that Christ was born.

Margaret Parsons

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PARISH COUNCIL

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
CLERK Miss Jane Bowd	Needingworth Village Hall, Overcote Lane, Needingworth	01480 468451
PARISH COUNCILLORS		
Mr A Whyte Chairman	23 Bramley Avenue	c/o 468451
Mr N Dyne	Anchor Cottage Holywell Front	07939 009911
Mr R Fountain	91 Ashton Close	496636
Mr D Jackson	c/o Parish Office, Needingworth Village Hall	c/o 468451
Mrs E Macpherson	6 Priory Road	07765 214200
Mrs E McNeill	Green Trees, Back Lane, Holywell	467212
Mrs S Martin	21 Bramley Avenue	07818 888182
Mrs S Mortlock	c/o Parish Office, Needingworth Village Hall	c/o 468451
Mr J Neish	7 Willow Green	466110
Mr G Norman	42 Harris Crescent	463724
Mrs C Norman	42 Harris Crescent	463724
Mr C Pearce	22 Harris Crescent	468759
Mrs S Martin	21 Bramley Avenue	07818 888182
DISTRICT COUNCILLORS		
Mr J Neish	7 Willow Green, Needingworth	01480 466110
Mr P Hodgson-Jones	Bluntisham House, Rectory Road, Bluntisham	01487 740778
COUNTY COUNCILLOR		
Cllr Alex Bulat	Email: alex.bulat@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	07745 908661
VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS		
Jane Banks Email: bookings@needingworthvillagehall.com Tel: 07970 217970		
MILLFIELDS BOOKINGS		
Miss J Bowd Needingworth Village Hall Tel: 01480 468451		

Meet Your Parish Councillors

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council consists of 13 Councillors. There is currently 1 vacancy, please contact the Clerk for details on co-option.

Councillor Sarah Mortlock, Vice Chairman



I am a married, working mother of two daughters. I have lived in Needingworth for 29 years and have a passion for village life.

I enjoy meeting new people and in my spare time enjoy walks with my dogs, reading and spending time with my family.

This is my second term on the Parish Council and my aim is to keep Holywell-cum-Needingworth a beautiful village to live in.

Committees: Appeals, Consultation, Environment (Chairman), HR, Leisure Facilities, Planning & Finance

Councillor Nick Dyne



My father moved into Holywell in 1981, and my family took over Anchor Cottage after he died 25yrs ago. I'm now retired having run a financial software company for many years. My wife is a writer. Like many on the Parish Council, I joined to put back something into a village I love. Living on Holywell Front, I'm particularly interested in how our historic village accommodates progress.

If you walk your dog between the Ferry Boat and Pike and Eel, you probably know me as the bloke with the short shaggy dog, Nolly. Access to the countryside around us is under

pressure. I hope the Council can resist this negative change which has implications for the health and wellbeing of all of us living here.

Having had a career in software, I'm keen to improve digital communication between Council and Parish and use new tools to improve decision making and better reflect the wishes of the community we serve. To that end, I am hoping we can attract younger people to the Council too.

Committees: Consultation, Environment, HR, Planning & Finance

Councillor Roy Fountain



I have lived in Needingworth for 21 years. Prior to retirement I was a graduate chemist and managed businesses throughout my career.

I have been a trustee of the Village Hall for 19 years and am involved with the annual Music Festival, the Village Hall's main fundraiser of the year.

I am a member of various village groups including the Beer & Wine Society, tennis club and the gardening club.

I am pleased to have been elected for my third term as a Parish Councillor and look forward to further serving my community.

Committees: Appeals, Consultation, Leisure Facilities, Planning & Finance

Parish Council Report

7 Councillors attended the August meeting when a representative of the tennis club addressed the members highlighting the importance of a club house to the club.

Members considered an application for co-option and are delighted to welcome Cllr S Martin back to the Council.

Payments totalling £14042.75 were approved.

The Clerk was asked to look into the provision of solar panels at Millfield's pavilion.

The signing of Client care letter and terms & conditions of business from Copley's Solicitors was approved relating to the purchase of Engineers Wood and Falklands Walk from Cambridgeshire County Council.

3 Planning applications were considered and all supported.

Council also agreed to the installation of bus shelters on Bluntisham Road with the added benefit of funds to support the ongoing maintenance under a s106 agreement.

An information technology policy was adopted.

September 2nd meeting was attended by 9 Councillors, Cambridgeshire County Councillor Alex Bulat and District Councillor Jon Neish.

Payments totalling £16588.48 were approved.

The Council cyber policy was renewed along with policies for Biodiversity, environmental strategy and the Local government code of conduct.

It was agreed that repairs identified in the latest RoSPA report were to be carried out but further quotes to be sought for the renewal of the surfaces in the under 12's play area.

A report on the meeting between Cllr McNeill and Cllr Whyte with the PCC was considered and quotes for the repointing of the wall coping stones is to be sought along with a second quote for repairs to the fences.

Quotes for removal of the dead conifer were considered and the contract awarded to Green Room Gardens.

The Council also considered further information relating to the installation of a defibrillator at Turnpike Close. The residents have raised a significant amount towards the purchase cost, but the power supply remains a stumbling block. The Clerk was asked to investigate alternative options such as solar and wind turbines as a source of power.

The purchase of 2 replacement trees for Overcote Lane playing field was approved due to 2 of the trees dying in the recent extremely dry conditions.

The Council also approved the Clerk and Assistant to the Clerks attendance at the upcoming CAPALC conference on 19th September.

The October full Council meeting opened with a presentation from the Accent group regarding the development at Lodel Lane Needingworth. Draft plans were tabled and the team answered questions from the Council. The planning application is yet to be received.

County Councillor A Bulat and District Councillor J Neish updated the members on local matters and also the option

being explored by HDC for a standalone unitary authority.

Payments totalling £1672.51 were approved for payment.

The fire safety inspection of Millfield's was noted along with remedial actions taken to date.

An update on the purchase of woodland Mill Way was received and Council decided not to have 4 land searches carried out due to being existing tenants.

A Christmas tree for 2025 was ordered and the contract for its erection and subsequent removal was awarded to Green Room Gardens.

2 planning applications were considered and supported by the Parish Council with decision notices on 3 applications being noted.

The annual inspection of the village hall was reported on, and the Clerk was asked to write to the trustees advising of work to be done.

The official record of all meetings are the minutes which are available on the Parish Council website

www.holywell-cum-needingworth-pc.gov.uk



Parish Council Surgeries



Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council are running surgeries at Chatters on the 2nd Thursday of each month:

Thursday 11th December 2025 1pm-2pm
Thursday 8th January 2026 1pm-2pm
Thursday 12th February 2026 1pm-2pm
Thursday 12th March 1pm-2pm
Thursday 9th April 1pm-2pm

Come and speak to a Parish Councillor to give your views, ideas and opinions on any matters relating to your villages.

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council

Tel: **01480 468451**

Email: clerk@holywell-cum-needingworth-pc.gov.uk

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PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE OPENING TIMES

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 10am – 12pm (Noon)
For any queries outside of these times please contact the
Parish Clerk on Tel: 01480 468451
or by email: clerk@holywell-cum-needingworth-pc.gov.uk
to book an appointment.

Planters refreshed at the Village Hall



At a recent Parish Council meeting members resolved to refresh the planters outside the Village Hall. Cllr Andrew Whyte and Sonia Clements have done a lovely job of painting and replanting the planters with various shrubs, trailing plants and pansies to add colour. I'm sure you will agree these look amazing and thanks go to all involved.



Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council
Email: clerk@holywell-cum-needingsworth-pc.go.uk
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U12's Play Area at Overcote Lane Playing Fields



The surfacing under the play equipment at the U12's play area was recently identified as requiring some attention, having been in situ since the play area was built, the Parish Council decided to replace the existing surfacing with wet pour. Due to a cancellation with the contractor they were able to start work earlier than expected and the resurfacing is now well under way. Having repainted the equipment a few years ago and with the replacement of one baby swing seat, the refurbishment of the area will now be complete.

Holywell-cum-Needingsworth Parish Council
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VJ Day 80



On Friday 15th August Councillors and one member of the public gathered at the war memorial to mark VJ Day 80.

VJ Day marks the anniversary of 15 August 1945 when Japan announced its surrender to the Allied forces.

The surrender was met with relief and celebration that after six long years the Second World War was finally over.

To pay tribute to all those who served in the Far East and the Pacific, the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr A Whyte laid a floral tribute of white flowers after which those present observed a 2-minute silence.



Remembrance Day 2025 was marked on Sunday 9th November 2025.

Holywell-cum-Needingsworth Parish Council

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COMMUNITY NEWS

YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOU

We have a shortage of Trustees/volunteers to help manage the hall, in the absence of further help we may not be able to continue in the longer term in the current vein.

We urgently need help to keep going.

Can you contact our Secretary Mark Hebert, secretary@needingworthvillagehall.com, if you are able to help please.

We are still arranging events for the community and users.

We had our biannual quiz on Saturday 22nd November, enjoyed by all.

On February 7th next year we have our next band night and have booked the Pink Floyd tribute band 'Totally Floyd', they are very good and popular; details of the booking will be advertised shortly.

Throughout the period we continue to improve your community hall having recently replaced the dish washer in the kitchen and propose to redecorate the hall in the near future.

We welcome any thoughts and ideas for making your community hall more attractive.

Roy Fountain, Trustee, Needingworth Village Hall

Snowdrop Coffee Morning

Saturday 14 February 2026

10-12 a.m. at

St John the Baptist Church
Holywell-cum-Needingworth



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If there is any way we can help you, please give us a call on **01223 620962** or email at **cambridgeshiredementia@alzheimers.org.uk**.

'the Villager'

Extra copies of this quarterly magazine can be obtained from the editor, **Jennifer Horn**, 16 Willow Green, tel. **01480 468952**

or from **Roger Beaman**, 17 Willow Green, tel. **01480 462379**.

WEBSITE: back issues of the Villager Magazine can be found on the Villager website needingworthvillager.org.uk

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CLUBS and SOCIETIES

WI

We celebrated the long hot summer with our August Summer Party, where we enjoyed an 'Afternoon Cream Tea' prepared for us by the Committee. Everyone was asked to dress up in style, and as many of us had made a hat at the June Meeting, it was a great opportunity to show off our creations. We also ran a 'Tombola' to raise funds, and played a game of 'Heads & Tails' it was a lovely meeting, hopefully enjoyed by All.



'Hell on Wheels' was the subject of our talk in September, our speaker was excellent and had us all questioning our knowledge of driving and the rules of 'The Highway Code', lots of great stories and laughter, the icing on the cake was Adele volunteering to have an imaginary 'Driving Lesson' which was absolutely hilarious.

Some of us also embarked on a 'Cream Tea Cruise' on the electric boat to Hemingford, followed by a cream tea at The Cock, sadly the day was not kind, the weather forecast was terrible, so the cruise part was cancelled, but despite this everyone thoroughly enjoyed the cream tea; it is highly recommended.

At the October meeting we welcomed back Bobbi from 'Walkeoke' who as always gave us a very entertaining work out, lovely music everyone left with a smile, after moving and shaking and singing to great music.



The cruise part of the 'Cream Tea Cruise' was arranged for the beginning of October, 10 of us enjoyed a lovely autumnal cruise up the river to Houghton and back, the scenery was beautiful, we even managed to catch sight of kingfishers, our captain was very knowledgeable, we will definitely look at booking another trip next year.

Every month we also organise the Knit and Natter Group, Scrabble and the very popular Lunch Club. Up to 20 of us at a time have dined at The Haywain, The Seven Wives, The Ferryboat, all of them have given us a great welcome, good food at a reasonable price, greatly appreciated as a nice break in the middle of the month and organised by Lynne.

We are busy getting things organised for our stall at the 'Village Christmas Bazaar' and of course our Christmas Party meeting, and the Annual Dinner in January which will be held this year at Slepe Hall .

We welcomed 5 new members last month, who all said they didn't realise that the meeting would be so much fun, so if you would like to come to a meeting and see for yourself you would be very welcome.

We meet the 1st Monday of every month.

Jackie Norris

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CLUBS and SOCIETIES

Beer and Wine Club

In September 5 excellent beers were entered in the beer competition which was won once again by Sandra's Barley wine.

October saw us making liqueurs once again in time for Christmas. During the making much tasting is required. A fun evening!

15th November was our annual show when all our best wines were judged against one another with points won added to our total for all the competitions over the year. Prizes are given at the AGM.

6th December is a meal out at the Mermaid in Ellington.

15th January the blackberry and elderberry wine competition with a guest judge coming from The Happy Brewer.

14th February is wine whist night. Richard has kindly offered to host this.

6th March is the AGM in the pavilion.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

Petronella

I can be contacted on 01480 466239 or Sandra on 01487 825669

YARNBOMBERS

As always, the Yarnbombers have been busy working on a variety of projects whilst supping tea and coffee at the Old Ferryboat Pub. Here's what they have been up to.....

You may have noticed that Harry Potter whizzed into Holywell cum Needingworth with his friends in September and October. A challenging time was had by Harry, his friends and Hogwarts School, as the wind and rain came in a gust. Yarnbombers to the rescue, who saved the day on more than one occasion.

Handmade Yarnbomber sunflower brooches and keyrings were sold alongside their wonderful homemade cakes at the Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning at the Old Ferryboat Pub. A fantastic £412 was raised through the sale of said items, along with the proceeds generated from the raffle and tombola.

In other news, the chemo blanket count continues to rise and now stands at 27 to date the year. Further items for the Butterfly Project have been produced and close to 200 squares have been crocheted for the fire engine giant tea cosy world record attempt.

In preparation for Remembrance Sunday the village has been adorned with poppies. In addition to the Tommy War statue near the



Needingworth village sign, Tommy War statues have also been erected in Holywell and Needingworth Park. Poppies with tags to write personal messages on and pin to a memorial board can be bought at The Queens Head and the Old Ferryboat.

If you would like to join in, the friendly group of around 18 Yarnbombers meet every Monday from 10.30am until 12.00pm at the Old Ferryboat Pub. All comers are welcome whatever your crochet and/or knitting experience, with help always at hand if you need it.



ART CLUB

We meet every two weeks on Fridays in the Village Hall.

We are a small, friendly group; if you are interesting in joining us,

please telephone
Paul on 01480 465536

"Bridge Bunch"

We meet on Friday afternoons from 2 pm - 5 pm at my house in the Furlongs.

We play the Benjii Accol system.

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CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Challenging time for the Gardening Club

As the Gardening Club reaches the end of another highly successful year we take time to look back on the highlights and challenges faced by such a large and active club.

One of the challenges which has arisen in the last few months is the problem of holding our meetings at the Village Hall as we have done for many, many years. We have had to negotiate with the Village Hall Trust regarding timing of the keys to open up and this has been very stressful. Hopefully this is now clarified for the future.

One of the other challenges of the Gardening world in general has been the highly variable and inconsistent weather during the year. This is forever the case but without doubt the extremes are increasing nationally. Some are felt much more keenly in our area of the East of England which is always one of the driest areas in the whole of the UK. This year the lack of rain has not only had a very serious effect on our farmers which has caused issues with food supply but it has also affected our gardens.

A warm and dry Spring gave way to one of the hottest summers on record with a number of regular heat waves.

These challenging conditions coupled with warnings about wide spread use of hose pipes in our gardens meant that many plants, lawns and other aspects of our gardens suffered badly.

Against this back ground the club has had an enormously successful year with a wide range of meetings, visits and events. This busy schedule brings its own challenges in order to maintain the high standards that we set.

On two occasions this year our pre-booked speakers failed to arrive so we had approximately 75 members in the hall to entertain. For one meeting we were able to find a replacement speaker at 12 hours notice but for the other I had no option but to deliver my own impromptu talk based on the many gardening dilemmas that I had faced in our various homes around the country. Fortunately it appeared to go down well.

Other than this we have had some excellent and knowledgeable speakers from all over England covering a very wide range of subjects for our large audience.

In addition we had our large and popular Plant Sale in May which was very successful and well attended and supported by the village community. The Sale produced a record profit to help fund the excellent work of the club in the year.

Our Spud in a Bucket competition created much laughter and enjoyment.

The club visits to Helmingham Hall and Abbey Gardens in Bury St Edmunds, as well as the lovely Elton Hall gardens in Peterborough, were excellent days out and then we had a great visit to the interesting garden at Lodel Farm in Needingworth where a fine picnic was supplied.

The committee along with the additional members have worked very hard to deliver a great club and have succeeded!

I wish you all a Merry Christmas from the Gardening Club.

Grant Williamson





Two recipes using apples

A simple warming pork casserole for this time of year (serves 4, freezes well)

- 450g fillet of pork (or pork loin, etc) cut into cubes and tossed in flour seasoned with salt, pepper and mustard powder
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 or 3 carrots, sliced
- 2 sticks celery, chopped
- 1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced (optional)
- 40g margarine for frying (or use oil)
- 2 level dessert spoons flour
- 2 teaspoons cider (or malt) vinegar
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- 1 dessert spoon brown sugar
- 250ml chicken stock (made with a stock cube)
- 1 apple, cubed (cooking or eating apples can be used)
- 250 ml cider or apple juice
- Salt and Pepper

Heat half the margarine or oil in a large frying pan and quickly brown the seasoned pork cubes. Transfer to a casserole dish which has a lid. Add the rest of the margarine or oil, reduce the heat and soften the onion, add the rest of the vegetables and sauté for about 5 minutes. Add the apple and then stir in the flour. Add the vinegar, soy sauce, stock, cider or apple juice and sugar, stirring as you add to absorb the flour. Season to taste. Bring to the boil and simmer gently for a few minutes before adding to the pork. Adjust the amount of liquid if necessary. Cover and transfer to an oven pre-heated to 200°C. Cook for 15 minutes then reduce the oven temperature to 170°C and cook for a further hour and 15 minutes. Good served with either mashed potatoes or rice.

Celeriac and Apple Soup

- 1 celeriac, peeled and cut into cubes (or easier to buy it ready cubed)
- 2 or 3 apples, peeled and cubed
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 medium potato, cubed
- Butter or oil for frying
- Small bunch thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper
- 1 litre chicken or vegetable stock (from a stock cube)
- 150 ml single cream

Gently sauté onion in a large saucepan until beginning to soften, add celeriac, potato, apple, thyme and bay leaf and continue to cook for a few minutes then add the stock. Season to taste. Bring to boil, cover and simmer for about 25 minutes. Remove from heat and cool a little before blending until smooth with a stick blender or use a food processor. Stir in the cream, adjust thickness by adding water if necessary and reheat before serving. Can be topped with a few crispy bacon pieces, chopped parsley and an extra swirl of cream.

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

- 1/ Which saint is 'Father Christmas' ?
- 2/ In what country was he born?



- 3/ How many reindeer does Santa have?

- 4/ In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas", the first gift was a partridge in a pear tree but what did the true love give on the 3rd day of Christmas?

- 5/ ...and on the 7th day?

- 6/ In the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas", how many gifts in total were given?



- 7/ True or false? Santa Claus was first depicted in a red suit in a Coca Cola advert.

- 8/ Which famous scientist was born at Christmas in 1642?



- 9/ Where was that scientist born?

- 10/ Which country gifts the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree to London every year?

- 11/ Which Christmas carol was the first song broadcast from space?

- 12/ Which of Santa's reindeer suggests bad weather?



Answers on page 29 (There MAY be some clues in the pictures)



From Our County Councillor, Alex Bulat

Your Future Council: Should Huntingdonshire Stand on Its Own?

It's been a full and busy autumn at the County Council, with many discussions about current local services, and how our councils might be organised in future. As your County Councillor, my duty is to represent the views of residents and make sure decisions are rooted in evidence and reflect local priorities.

I've enjoyed meeting many organisations and groups over recent months, and it's always encouraging to see the strength of community life across our area. A particular highlight was speaking to the Brownies at Needingworth Village Hall - they had so many questions about how local councils work!

Progress on Local Issues

The long-awaited EV charging points at the St Ives Park & Ride are now up and running, after much delay. The Environment Agency has repaired two gates at the St Ives sluices and allocated funding for a moderation project. Flooding remains a top concern for many residents, and I am speaking to the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to arrange a meeting with all key agencies, including our local flood groups, to keep this issue moving forward.

The first phase of the works at the Morrisons roundabout has now finished, installing solar studs and clearing the footpath between St Ives and Needingworth. The next stage - installing a new toucan crossing - is due to begin in January. I am working closely with the highways team to keep disruption to a minimum. I am also working with County Councillors David Keane and Julie Kerr on a joint response on the A141 consultation, highlighting the opposition to some of the proposals such as the bus gate on Meadow Lane, and making the case for the need to extend the bypass or have a third river crossing.

Local Government Reform: Evidence Over Politics

The biggest debate at New Shire Hall this autumn has been about local government reform. This is a major decision that could reshape how services such as highways, education, and social care are delivered for many years to come. It's important that such decisions are made carefully, with full information and shaped by residents' views.

In my view, that hasn't been the case so far. The Liberal Democrat majority County Council has put forward "Option A" for debate - this proposal will merge Huntingdonshire with Peterborough and Fenland to create a new unitary authority. Councillors had no published business case in front of them, the consultation was very limited, and untruths were said in the debate - such as Government not permitting splitting district boundaries, when the guidance clearly says they can if there is a case for this. Only one in five Huntingdonshire residents who took part in that consultation supported Option A - yet the administration pressed ahead regardless, including the Huntingdonshire councillors part of the administration, with the exception of Independent Julie Kerr (St Ives North and Wyton).

To me, the approach on this issue has felt political rather than practical and Huntingdonshire voices have been sidelined at best. We should be making decisions about the future of our councils based on clear evidence and what's best for local people, not on party convenience.

Why the Opposition Said "No"

At the October County Council meeting, councillors from across the political spectrum - Conservative, Labour, Reform, Green, and Independent - voted against the "Option

A" proposal. There are not enough of us to vote down the proposal, but that cross-party opposition shows that many of us, regardless of our usual party views, believe the County administration is moving too fast without the facts in place and without listening to Huntingdonshire residents.

District Councils will also put forward their own proposals. Cambridge City Council has said it prefers Option B, joining with South Cambridgeshire instead, while Peterborough appears interested only in selected and wealthier parts of Huntingdonshire. That could leave St Ives, Needingworth, and nearby villages sitting awkwardly in a "rump" area, neither fully connected to Cambridge nor to Peterborough and not keeping our Huntingdonshire identity. That's not good enough for our communities. Huntingdonshire has its own strong identity, a well managed local economy, and residents who should have a say on how their services are run. We shouldn't be treated as a leftover from other people's plans.

A Better Way Forward

There is an alternative. With new investment and jobs coming to the area through the Ministry of Defence's Project FAIRFAX for example, the case for Huntingdonshire to stand on its own is strengthened. "Option E", a single unitary authority for Huntingdonshire - deserves a fair hearing, like all the other options.

At the time of writing, I have not seen the business cases for any of the options, but there is cross-party consensus to consider Option E in Huntingdonshire, as it would allow decisions to be made locally, by people who understand our area.

District councils can submit their own proposals to the Government, and the Minister will decide in due course. My focus will remain on ensuring that whatever is decided is based on facts, fairness, and proper consultation.

Staying in Touch

Since being elected in May, I've been knocking on doors each week to listen to residents' concerns, and I aim to visit every street in the division at least once a year. But you don't have to wait for me to drop by - please do get in touch if you have any county issues to raise. You can email me at alex.bulat@cambridgeshire.gov.uk, or come along to one of my monthly surgeries at Chatters Café or St Ives Library.

Huntingdonshire has always done best when decisions are made locally, guided by evidence and common sense. That's the approach I'll continue to take - listening carefully, challenging constructively, and standing up for our communities.





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CHURCH NEWS

Parish Church of St John the Baptist Holywell-cum-Needlingworth

www.meridianbenefice.org.uk

The autumn months saw us celebrating Creationtide – thanking God for the wonderful natural world we enjoy. We were delighted to welcome many visitors to our Harvest Coffee morning in mid-September when we enjoyed meeting together over good coffee and delicious bakes. Wonderful local produce was on sale (with thanks to the Burgess family for their generosity in providing a lovely selection of items); money raised has been donated to the local food bank. The next day we held our Harvest Festival service. Thank you to everyone who supported this special weekend.

Later in October several pets (and favourite toys) accompanied by their owners joined us for the annual Pet and Special Toy Blessing Service. Commemorating St. Francis of Assisi, it was a joyful if at times noisy occasion and enjoyed by everyone. It was an opportunity to acknowledge how important our pets are to us and how much they contribute to our lives.



As the season of Remembrance approaches we were so pleased to be joined by members of the Royal British Legion (RBL) at our Morning Worship service on the 19th October. The RBL visit churches in the area on an annual basis to honour those from the community who gave their lives in World War I. Under the name 'Every Man Remembered' the programme of visits started in 2018, the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War. During the service a posy of poppies was laid on the Memorial Altar.

We invite everyone to worship with us – you can be assured of a warm and friendly welcome. Services at your local parish church are held every Sunday and alternate between Morning Worship (first and third Sundays) and Holy Communion (second and fourth Sundays). All begin at 09.30 am. For those who like to worship according to the book of Common Prayer there is BCP Holy Communion at 8 am on the first Sunday of the month. In addition, there is a midweek Holy Communion at 12 noon on the first Tuesday of every month, and a service of Compline (a short Evening Prayer of the church) at 6 pm on the third Thursday of every month.

Details of all our services are posted on the church notice board, in the bi-monthly newsletter *The Herald*, on our own and local Facebook pages, and on our website (www.meridianbenefice.org.uk)

If you are planning a baptism, a wedding or a funeral please contact the Vicar, Revd. Valmor Pimenta (vicar@meridianbenefice.org.uk, 01487 829882)

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Christmas is coming! We will be celebrating this holy season with opportunities to sing carols and special services to which you are all warmly invited. They are:

Monday 8 December: Carols in the Park at 6pm in Needlingworth Park. Residents of 'the Park' are especially invited to join us.

Monday 15 December: Carols by Starlight at 6pm in Holywell School playground. A popular short informal carol service, followed by refreshments

Sunday 21 December: Carols by Candlelight at 6pm in the parish church. A traditional service of readings and carols, followed by refreshments and the Grand Christmas Draw.

Wednesday 24 December –

Christmas Eve: Crib Service at 3pm in the parish church. An opportunity to hear the Christmas story and sing some carols. Please note that this service returns to the church after a number of years in the Village Hall.

Midnight Mass at 11.30pm in the parish church.

Wednesday 25 December – Christmas Day.

Holy Communion at 09.30am in the parish church.

Wednesday 31 December- New Years Eve – Service at 6pm in the parish church. Join us to welcome in 2026!

FUND - RAISING AND EVENTS

We will be fundraising over the next few months as follows:

Saturday 6 December – Needlingworth Christmas Fair in the Village Hall from 12 noon to 4pm. We will be at the fair with a variety of items for sale including our annual draw tickets. We look forward to seeing you!

Tickets for our annual Christmas Draw will be on sale during December - £1.00 per ticket may win you hampers, vouchers and other lovely seasonal gifts. Tickets are available from Wren Cottage Holywell, Chapel House 15a Needlingworth High Street, at church after services and at the Christmas Fair.

And in 2026 - Saturday 14 February – Snowdrop Coffee Morning from 10am-12 noon in the parish church. Come and greet the first signs of spring with coffee, baked goods, various stalls, raffle and pots of spring bulbs available. Everyone is welcome to this popular event.

RE-ORDERING PROJECT – WELCOME SPACE

We have commissioned a piece of work from our Architects to turn the outline plans, which were put forward for the approval granted by the Diocesan Chancellor, into the detailed technical specifications and documentation which will be needed to issue invitations to tender for the project. This is expected to take about 4 months. Further work is going on to explore fundraising avenues and possibilities.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

In closing, may we take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy and Holy Christmas, and a peaceful New Year.

Contacts:

Revd. Valmor Pimenta **01487 829882**
vicar@meridianbenefice.org.uk

Churchwardens:
Michael Williamson
Ben Peilow

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Elder – David Mann

Website – www.needingsworthbaptist.org.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES

We extend a warm welcome to you to join us on Sunday mornings in the chapel at 10.30am for our regular service of worship. Our aim is for our services to be reverent and simple and we hope you will feel at home. We do not currently have an evening service.

Not having a pastor at present, we are grateful to visiting preachers for leading our services. They do not bring their own ideas, but seek to help us to understand the message of the Bible and the Good News that Jesus brought.

Services are recorded and posted on our website on Sunday afternoon. If you would like to listen, go to: www.needingsworthbaptist.org.uk/recorded-services

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Carol Service – Sunday 21st December at 4pm

We are very much looking forward to our service of nine lessons and carols on Sunday 21st December at 4pm followed by refreshments and mince pies. There will be no morning service on that Sunday. Do come and join with us – we are sure it will be a happy occasion as we sing the well-known carols, listen to the familiar Christmas story and praise God for sending the Lord Jesus to be our Saviour and King.

Christmas Day Service

This will be at 10.30am on Thursday 25th December. What a joy it will be, in the midst of all the Christmas festivities, to remember the Lord Jesus coming into our world, as one of us, in such humble circumstances, to rescue us from our sins – “This day, in the city of David, a Saviour has been born, who is Christ the Lord” Luke 2:11. You will be very welcome to join us for our service.

PRAYER MEETING AND BIBLE STUDY

This is held every Tuesday evening at 7.30 pm on Zoom. We are currently studying through the book of Genesis. Please contact us if you would like to join the meeting.

TEA AND TIME TO THINK

The aim of these meetings is to provide a friendly home for those who would like to come for a cup of tea, home-made cakes and a chat. We try to think about important issues that may touch us or those we love. We often watch a short video. And we finish each meeting with a brief look at a passage from the Bible. Do join us at 2.30 - 4.00pm at 29 Priory Road on the third Thursday of each month as follows: 18 December, 15 January and 19 February.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Christmas has a story, or rather, Christmas is a story. We remember it and recount it every year. The children love it. We all love it. It's a story with particular characters – angels, a young couple, shepherds, wise men from afar, and a fearsome king. But at the centre of the story, the main character is a baby, born at night, born away from home, born in a cowshed and placed in a cattle's feeding-trough.

But this is not fiction. This is **a true story**. We are given the time – during a census, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. We are told the location – Bethlehem, the town of David. Luke, one of the writers who recounts the details of the Christmas story, tells us, in the first words of his Gospel, that he has obtained his information from many eyewitnesses, and carefully investigated everything. He tells his readers that he wants them to be “certain” of the things they have been taught. Christmas is history, not fantasy.

Christmas is a true story, but at the same time it is **a love story**. It is not just information, but is the story of God's love for people who have gone wrong and turned away from Him. In John's Gospel we read “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son...” (John 3:16). God sent His Son into the world, because it was, and is, the only way for men and women, boys and girls, to come to know Him.

This Christmas love story is the supreme **rescue story**. Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married. But before they had any intimate relations, Joseph discovered that Mary was expecting a baby. He was shocked and planned to break the engagement, but he had a dream in which an angel explained that this child was conceived by the Holy Spirit of God. That is to say, the child was both the Son of God and the Son of Man. And the angel said that the child's name would be Jesus, which means “rescuer” because He would “save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Jesus came into the world, not to give us a sentimental “Baby born in a stable” story – though that is how He came. He was born at Christmas – but He came in order to die upon the cross, bearing our sins, to bring us forgiveness and rescue us from judgment.

And Christmas is **a story with a happy ending**. This is the real “happily ever after” story. The shepherds, having seen the baby Jesus “returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard” (Luke 2:20). The wise men “were overjoyed” (Matthew 2:10). Mary “treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). But the story of Christmas does not end there. The message of Christmas is “good news of great joy for all people” (Luke 2:10). And Christmas brings eternal hope for all who will put their trust in Jesus. He was born in Bethlehem, died at Calvary, rose again and ascended into heaven where He now reigns, and to whom all who trust Him will come.

Charles Wesley wrote: “Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free. From our sins and fears release us, let us find our rest in Thee.” May that be our experience this Christmas.

* * * * *

Contact us –

David Mann – Tel. 300382 Email: da-vid.mann@cantab.net Website: www.needingsworthbaptist.org.uk

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1st Needingworth Rainbows

Our Rainbows have been buzzing with excitement this term as we worked towards two new interest badges – *Bee Rescuer* and *Pet Lover*. The *Bee Rescuer* badge is one of Girlguiding's latest additions and was featured in

the national news during July.

We welcomed Tim from the Huntingdonshire Beekeepers Association, who gave a fascinating talk all about bees. Inspired by what we learned, we made a bee pond to help thirsty bees in the summer, as well as colourful "Save the Bees" bracelets. We also learned how to spot different types of bees before heading outside for a bee hunt.

Caring for our furry friends

For the *Pet Lover* badge, the Rainbows made adorable dogs using cardboard boxes and were challenged to look after them – as well as their real pets – for a whole week! This included feeding, walking, and, of course, lots of cuddles.

Our leaders joined in by sharing stories about their own pets – from cats and dogs to rabbits and guinea pigs – and how they care for them at home. The highlight of the week was when Puffin brought in her three guinea pigs for some very special cuddles. The Rainbows absolutely loved meeting them!



Growing our Rainbow family

We're thrilled to be welcoming five new Rainbows to our unit this term, bringing us back up to a full group of 25. It's not just the girls making promises either – three of our adult leaders have also made their Girlguiding Promise this term. We're so grateful for our amazing team of volunteers who make everything we do possible.

A Colourful Day Out

We also had a fantastic time at the TOPAZ activity day, joining Rainbows and Brownies from Ramsey, Warboys, and Bury for a day themed around the country of Lesotho. The girls enjoyed a wonderful day of drumming, African dance, baking, biscuit decorating, friendship bracelets,



hut building, and a huge variety of crafts.

If you are interested in our unit and would like to find out more or get involved, check out our website:

ggneedingworth.co.uk com



1st Needingworth Brownies

This term, our Brownies have thrown themselves into two of the brand-new interest badges introduced by Girlguiding earlier this year – *Games Master* and *My Voice*. For *Games Master*, we kicked

things off with a fun-filled games evening, playing some of our favourites brought in from home. Then came the real challenge – designing and testing our own games! The creativity on display was incredible, and our leaders were so proud of the effort and imagination shown by everyone.

Finding our voices

The *My Voice* badge was all about speaking up and sharing our opinions – and learning how to compromise too (which can be a rather tricky activity). Together, the Brownies made suggestions about which activities they would like to do the following week. After making some compromises and combining activities, we decided upon a Halloween Party. We made Halloween crafts, went apple bobbing, ate donuts from a string without using our hands and made a cookie monster! It was a very hectic evening but full of fun and giggles!

Marching for change

For other parts of the badge, we wrote to Girlguiding HQ to share what we like about Brownies and what could make it even better. We also



learned about the suffragettes and their fight for women's rights. The Brownies made "Votes for Women" rosettes and posters before we marched around the hall, protesting for our right to vote!

Exciting adventures ahead

This interest badge leads very well to our visit from Cllr Alex Bulat, who we are really looking forward to welcoming, and our work on UK Parliament Week. Our district pantomime trip to the Burgess Hall is also fast approaching – over 80 members are booked in, and we're hoping for a special shout-out during the show!

Glowing with STEM fun

Later this term, we'll be joining the county STEM event *GLOW*, a celebration of light during the darkest months of the year. We'll be getting hands-on with glow-in-the-dark slime, Northern Lights art, Clubbercise with neon face paint, LEGO building, lantern making and much more.

If you are interested in finding out more about our unit, check out our website:

ggneedingworth.co.uk



Good King Wenceslas

Good King _____ looked out
 On the feast of _____,
 When the snow lay round about
 Deep and _____ and _____;
 Brightly _____ the moon that night
 Though the frost was cruel,
 When a poor man came in sight,
 Gath'ring _____ fuel.

'_____, page, and stand by me,
 If thou know'st it, telling
 _____ peasant, who is he?
 Where and what his dwelling?'
 'Sire, he lives a good league hence,
 Underneath the _____,
 Right against the forest fence,
 By Saint _____' fountain.'

'_____ me flesh and bring me _____,
 Bring me pine logs hither,
 Thou and I will see him _____
 When we bear them thither.'
 Page and _____ forth they went,
 Forth they went together,
 Through the rude wind's wild lament
 And the _____ _____.

'Sire, the night is darker now
 And the wind blows stronger;
 Fails my heart, I know not how,
 I can go no _____.'
 'Mark my footsteps, good my _____,
 Tread thou in them boldly:
 Thou shalt find the winter's rage
 Freeze thy blood less coldly.'

In his master's steps he trod,
 Where the _____ lay dinted;
 Heat was in the very sod
 Which the _____ had printed.
 Therefore, Christian men, be sure
 Wealth or rank possessing,
 Ye who now will _____ the _____
 Shall yourselves _____ blessing.

Words written in 1853 by ?



W	E	A	T	H	E	R	F	J	M	O
I	E	V	E	N	A	B	I	H	O	H
N	E	N	I	W	G	R	N	N	U	C
T	L	P	C	E	N	I	D	E	N	R
E	R	O	E	E	E	N	N	H	T	A
R	E	O	N	E	S	G	M	P	A	N
E	D	R	O	G	A	L	S	E	I	O
H	N	S	H	A	E	I	A	T	N	M
T	O	O	S	P	R	R	I	S	N	N
I	Y	E	A	C	L	S	N	O	W	E
H	S	S	E	L	B	I	T	T	E	R

Can you help the carol singers by filling in the missing words from the well known Christmas song, 'Good King Wenceslas'? All the answers can be found in the Word Search, forwards, backwards, up, down or diagonally.

If you can find all the words, the name of the author will be revealed. The carol was written for the Feast of St Stephen, better known as Boxing Day, and it celebrates the long tradition of charitable giving on the Second Day of Christmas. Although the words were written in 1853, the tune dates back to the 13th century.

The 'good' king of the song was, in fact, a Duke of Bohemia in the 10th century, only being declared 'king' some years after his death, however he was venerated as a saint and a martyr almost immediately after his murder in 935. A statue of Wenceslas can be found in the city of Prague and his remains are said to be buried in the cathedral there.

Answers to the Word Search are on page 28.

PreSchool



During the summer holidays the Pre-school garden area went through a wonderful transformation. The old sandpit and beach huts were removed and replaced with a large storage shed, raised beds and bench seating areas.

The children have already enjoyed sitting on the little benches whilst sharing books and chatting together. Over the coming months we plan to plant some sensory plants –herbs, grasses and winter pansies. The children will also be planting and looking after vegetables.

All of this was only possible due to the hard work of the Pre-school committee and its Fundraising Team. A great big 'thank you' to them for this.

The work was undertaken by Colin and his team at Green Room Gardens. What a fantastic job they did.



Thanks to Fundraising and local installer, Frank Dolan, we have also been able to brighten up the classroom with new blinds.

Cathy Biddle
Senior Practitioner

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The world is growing darker every day
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A ADMIT you're a sinner
Romans 3:10 - "There is no one righteous, no, not one."
Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

B BELIEVE Jesus is Lord
John 14:6 - "Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
Romans 10:9-10 - "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

C CALL upon His name
Romans 10:13 - "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."
Psalm 145:18-19 - "The Lord is near to all who call upon Him. To all who call upon Him in truth."

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Bowls Club

Merry Christmas from all at the Bowls Club.

The 2025 season was the most successful of the clubs recent history.

We finished with both Men's & Ladies EBF Senior Singles County Champions. We also had Both Men's & Ladies League Singles Champions.

We had Division 2 Over 60's Champions, getting promotion into Division 1

We also got Promotion into Division 1 of the Men's League with our team finishing Runner Up in Division 2 this year.

Our other league teams consolidated their positions after promotion last year.

So we are a club that is on the up. Its a perfect time to come and join us. This coming year, 2026 will be our 40th Anniversary year. We have various events lined up to celebrate this achievement, including a celebratory match against a Disability Bowls England team. Keep your eyes peeled for information throughout the spring for our upcoming events.

We'd love the village to come and join us to help celebrate our 40th Everyone is welcome to come in and watch, have a drink, and enjoy the calm yet competitive game we call Bowls.

Better still if you fancy being part of it we hold a new bowlers day in May or just come and 'nab' one of us and say you'd like to get involved. We start again in April.

We are now in the close season for the outdoor club But we don't just lock up and go home.

We run short mat bowling in the village hall every Thursday at 2pm. If anyone is looking for something to do for a few hours. Come along and have a go. Its very easy; we supply all equipment and you can make some new friends.

We are holding our Christmas party mid December; it's always very well supported and lots of fun is had on the night.

Our Bingo continues. Held in the village hall it's well supported from members and the wider community. It's open to anyone over 18 to come and play. It's possibly the only bingo offered in the village. Our next eyes down is Sun December 14th at 7pm. For details call Alan 07368422241.

In the new year we will hold a ten pin bowling night up at Pidley which is great fun.

We then open the doors to the wider community again hosting a Social Evening Race Night.

A really enjoyable night of cine racing hosted by a professional Race Night supplier it is a good night out.

Always very popular and the clubs biggest single fund raiser of the year. Next year the horses will be under starters orders on March 7th 2026. Again for details contact Alan on the number above.

Alan, Club Secretary



Needingworth Tennis Club

With the clocks going back and the nights getting shorter, the Winter League is under way for our teams. Good luck to all those competing - before you know it, it will be back round to the Summer Leagues. Reflecting back on Summer 2025, a huge congratulations to the Men's C team who gained promotion to Division 2 in the Hunts and P'boro League.

Our annual Club Tournaments, consisting of Men and Women Singles, Doubles and Junior matches, has come to a close this year. Well done to everyone involved - it was great fun and to those who arrange and manage the events, we couldn't do it without you. Congratulations to all our winners.

This year's Junior Club Championships ran alongside the adult events — well done to all who took part!

12 & Under: Rafa defeated Henry 4-0, 2-4, 10-5.

14 & Under: Huxley claimed his 4th consecutive title, beating James 4-1, 4-1.

16 & Under: Rory edged past Will 1-4, 4-2, 11-9 in a tight match.

18 & Under: Singles: Oscar overcame Will 4-3 (7-4), 4-2 for his third title in a row.

18 & Under: Doubles: Oscar and Will teamed up to defeat Max and Jake 4-1, 4-1. Oscar's second title of the day and Will's first of the season.

Congratulations to all players — we look forward to seeing you at the 2026 Junior Championships!

Our Head Coach Ian hosts the popular Pickleball sessions - these will continue over the winter months on a Thursday evening from 5.00 – 6.00pm. Contact info@needingworthtennis.co.uk to join Ian's Pickleball WhatsApp Group.

Do keep an eye on our website for additional coaching programmes, as this gets updated on a regular basis.
<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/NeedingworthTennisClub>

Or come along for free and try out one of our club sessions:

Wednesday morning, 9.00 – 11.00am (the most social session)

Wednesday evening, 6:30 - 8:30pm (for players of all standards)

Sunday morning, 10:30 - 12:00 (for players of all standards)

The internal Fast4 singles league continues to be as popular as ever with 25 players competing in 5 divisions – well done to Marcus Watling, our most recent Div 1 winner.

Membership

At Needingworth Tennis Club we offer both competitive and social tennis, and pride ourselves on being a very friendly club that offers great value for money. We welcome new players of all abilities. You can join on the website or contact Debbie for more details.

Contacts

Chair – Sue Pandey (info@needingworthtennis.co.uk)

Membership – Debbie Yates

(info@needingworthtennis.co.uk)

Secretary – Jim Hunter (j.hunter2011@btinternet.com)

You can also find us on social media!



THE GREAT RIVER OUSE

This course will cover the river's Ice Age origin, the medieval period when it had the most valuable watermills in the country, its inspiration for artists, its use in the 20th century, and current threats and opportunities.

Tutors: Keith Grimwade and Bridget Flanagan



Fee: for 5 weeks Early Spring term course, £25

Begins: Monday 12th January 2026

At Bluntisham Baptist Church ~ 10.00am to 11.45am

History of the Fens

This course will cover the geology, geography, history and drainage of the Fens.

It will also consider the impact of climate change, environmental issues and government policy on the future of this unique environment.

Tutor: Keith Grimwade



Fee: Later Spring term course for 5 weeks, £25

Begins: Monday 23rd February 2026

At Bluntisham Baptist Church ~ 10.00am to 11.45am

To register or for more information on either course, please contact Marie Quick on 07905 911558

or email marie_quick358@hotmail.com

Try out the first sessions free.

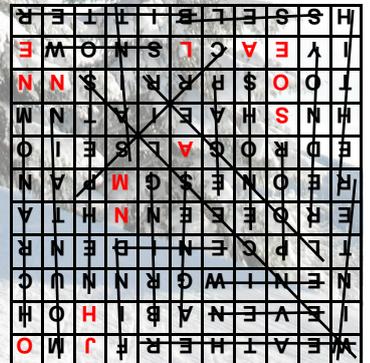


Bluntisham
Meridian
Learning
Experience

Answers to Christmas Word Search

Words written by John Mason Neale in 1853

Shall yourselves find blessing.
We who now will bless the poor
Wealth or rank possessing,
Therefore, Christian men, be sure
Which the Saint had printed.
Heat was in the very sod
Where the snow lay dinted;
In his master's steps he trod,
Freeze thy blood less coldly.
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Tread thou in them boldly;
Mark my footsteps, good my page,
I can go no longer.
Falls my heart, I know not how,
And the wind blows stronger;
Sire, the night is darker now
And the bitter weather.
Through the rude wind's wild lament
Forth they went together,
Page and monarch forth they went,
When we bear them thither.
Thou and I will see him dine
Bring me pine logs hither,
Bring me flesh and bring me wine,
By Saint Agnes' fountain;
Right against the forest fence,
Underneath the mountain,
Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Where and what his dwelling?
Yonder peasant, who is he?
If thou know'st it, telling
Hither, page, and stand by me,
Gather winter fuel.
When a poor man came in sight,
Though the frost was cruel,
Brightly shone the moon that night
Deep and crisp and even,
On the feast of Stephen,
Good King Wenceslas looked out



Do you enjoy taking photographs?

St Ives Photographic Club meets every Tuesday during the autumn/winter season at 8pm in the Free Church, St Ives. We have indoor meetings on the first three Tuesdays in December and start weekly meetings in the new year on 6th January. We would be delighted to welcome new members, beginners and experienced photographers alike. For more information see our website

www.stives-photoclub.org.uk

or email membership@stives-photoclub.org.uk



NEEDINGWORTH COMMUNITY
PRESCHOOL HOSTS

**THE NEEDINGWORTH
CHRISTMAS
BAZAAR**

SAT 6TH DECEMBER 2025
Needingworth Village Hall

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE SEASON!
STUNNING STALLS FROM LOCAL VENDORS, CHRISTMAS CRAFTS,
AND SANTA'S GROTTO FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

**St John the Baptist parish church
Holywell-cum-Needingworth
welcomes you to our Christmas services
this December**

Monday 8th
6 p.m. Carols in the Park
Needingworth Park

Monday 15th
6 p.m. Carols by Starlight
Outdoors at Holywell C of E Primary School

Sunday 21st
6 p.m. Carols by Candlelight
St John the Baptist parish church

Christmas Eve
3 p.m. Crib Service
St John the Baptist parish church

11.30 p.m. Midnight Mass
St John the Baptist parish church

Christmas Day
9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
St John the Baptist parish church

WHAT'S ON in the Village



December 2025

- Mon. 1st WI Christmas Party/Fish and Chip Supper
- Sat. 6th Christmas Bazaar, Village hall
- Sat. 6th Beer and Wine Club meal out (p13)
- Mon. 8th Carols in the Park 6pm
- Sun. 14th Bowls Club Bingo, Village Hall (p27)
- Thur. 18th Tea & Time to Think, Needingworth Baptist Church (p21)
- Sun. 21st Carol Service, Needingworth Baptist Church 4pm (p21)
- Sun. 21st Carols by Candlelight, Holywell School Playing Field (page 19)
- Wed. 24th Crib Service, St John the Baptist Church 3pm

January 2026

- Thur. 15th Beer and Wine Club blackberry and elderberry wine competition (p13)
- Thur. 15th Tea & Time to Think, Needingworth Baptist Church (p21)

February 2026

- Mon. 2nd WI Mindfulness & Yoga Talk with Steve Iddon
- Sat. 7th Band Night, Village Hall (p9)
- Sat. 14th Snowdrop Coffee Morning (p9)
- Sat. 14th Beer and Wine Club Wine Whist Night (p13)
- Thur. 19th Tea & Time to Think, Needingworth Baptist Church (p21)

Advance Notices:

- March 6th. Beer and Wine Club AGM
- March 7th Bowls Club Race Night (p27)

If your organisation would like any future planned events listed here in the next issue of the Villager, to help avoid clashes, please send me details by the next copy date (1st February)

Answers to Christmas Quiz

- 1/ St. Nicholas
- 2/ Modern day Turkey
- 3/ 9
- 4/ 3 French hens
- 5/ 7 swans a swimming
- 6/ 364
- 7/ True
- 8/ Sir Isaac Newton
- 9/ Wootsthorpe Manor, Lincolnshire
- 10/ Norway
- 11/ Jingle Bells
- 12/ Blitzen

Bus Times

Dews Service No. 301

Monday to Friday—Needingworth to St Ives

NEEDINGWORTH, Church St. 06.32 07.17 10.05 11.17 16.47
St Ives Bus Station 06.42 07.27 10.15 11.27 16.57

Monday to Friday—St Ives to Needingworth

St Ives Bus Station 11.45 13.45 16.30 17.30 19.00
NEEDINGWORTH, Church St. 11.54 13.55 16.39 17.39 19.09

Saturdays—Needingworth to St Ives

NEEDINGWORTH, Church Street 07.32 10.05 13.32
St Ives Bus Station 07.42 10.30 13.57

Saturdays—St Ives to Needingworth

St Ives Bus Station 11.30 14.30 16.30
NEEDINGWORTH, Church St. 12.00 15.00 16.39

The bus service between Needingworth and St Ives is run by Dews Coaches.

If you are not a regular bus user, you can check the current times by going to Dews Coaches' web page www.dews-coaches.com or by telephoning **01487 740241**

AN ISLAND CHRISTMAS

The last passenger ferry of the year left at the end of October

But the cargo boat still runs three times a week,
Unless the engines or the weather give out
Leaving us stranded on our granite islands.

Larders and freezers are full in readiness
for gales, or fog as thick as a bag,
But we never give up on Christmas
Here on the islands.

Someone spent days stringing coloured lights
Along the north-facing harbour wall
And the southern promenade
To rattle and be battered by the gale-force winds.

Summer tripper launches are out of the water,
Bottoms scraped of barnacles and detritus,
Pots of paint in traditional colours
In readiness for the first signs of spring.

Blue and gold flags quatered by St. Piran's gleaming cross
Are furled and stowed away,
Everything is ready for the festivities, then Wham!
Imprenitable fog descends to dampen and shroud
Everything outside except the Islanders' spirits.

© Steve Puttick – Needingworth Scribblers



Wildlife Trust for
**Beds, Cambs
& Northants**

**Huntingdonshire
Local Group**

Women in Nature – Untold Stories

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust is pleased to welcome Dr. Hilary Allison on Wednesday 10 December at 7.30pm at Brampton Memorial Hall.

Hilary is Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants and she has kindly agreed to join us for our pre-Christmas event. Hilary is currently working as an environmental consultant and is also researching the history of women's roles in conservation management and her chosen subject for us is Pioneering Women in Nature.

At this time of year, we will have our Christmas Raffle and will offer wine and mince pies in addition to the usual tea and biscuits.

Wildlife of Panama – from Canal to Cloud Forest

The Huntingdonshire Local Group of the Wildlife Trust is pleased to welcome back Jo Thomas on Wednesday 14th January at 7.30pm at Brampton Memorial Hall.

Many of you will know Jo, who worked for the Wildlife Trust for many years and was a previous Chair of the local group and warden at Grafham Water. Since then Jo has worked for WWT at Welney, alongside running Wild About Travel for over 20 years. Jo says she appreciates all things wild both at home and abroad. Today's talk will focus on Panama, where Jo has seen an amazing number of birds, including the Harpy Eagle and the Resplendent Quetzal. This promises to be an exciting presentation and will provide a change from our more usual UK based talks!

Everyone is most welcome to attend. Booking is not necessary. The charge is £5.00 (£4.00 for Wildlife Trust members; under 18s free). Payment is by cash or card. We meet at Brampton Memorial Hall, Thrapston Road, Brampton, PE28 4TB. For more information please contact Tim – 07941 261346 or timpfryer@googlemail.com.



Letter to the Editor

Today I went to Holywell church to visit the grave of my grandmother "Edith May Haynes" nee Odell.

By chance I picked up a copy of The Villager from inside the church and was delighted to see in the pictures of Holywell CofE Primary School on the 1923 photo there was my Grandmother "... O"Dell" who is Edith May Odell before she married my Grandfather Charles Robert Haynes. (Edith is the girl in the middle of the photo.)

I also think "H Few" is a relative as my father's cousin was Ronald Few.

Could you please pass this info onto Guy Harvey who supplied the pics - I would love to be in contact with him.

You can print my letter in a future edition as I would like to know any more history of my relatives O"Dell / Haynes families

I currently live in Kings Lynn

Regards, Paul Haynes

Paul@toetruck.co.uk



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
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Working together to improve community safety

Take Charge and Be Safe this festive season

As the festive season approaches and people look for presents and take advantage of Black Friday deals, many are looking to save money on electrical items. However, we continue to urge people to Take Charge and Be Safe when buying devices, especially items that require batteries or chargers.

You can help keep yourself and your family safe by following a few simple safety measures, including ensuring to buy electrical items from reputable dealers, being awake and at home when using and charging devices and adding safety to your bedtime routine.

Electrical devices are a key part of everyday life and are often bought in Black Friday deals and as presents for family members and friends. Games consoles with controllers, tablets, laptops and e-bikes and e-scooters are on lots of people's present list. All these items require charging as they contain lithium-ion batteries.

Most devices come with failsafe features to ensure they do not overheat when being charged, but rely on the manufacturers' provided charging cables and adapters to work. Also, using the plug and cables supplied with the product rather than cheaper versions will help charge devices safely.

The Service is reminding people to Take Charge and Be Safe, not only when charging their devices, but also when planning on purchasing devices and presents. Most new items come with a suitable battery and charger, however if you are looking to purchase additional ones then make sure they are the right voltage and are fully compatible. Other things like charging a mobile phone while you are awake and alert, rather than while sleeping, means the device won't be overcharged and risk overheating the battery. This can be the same for any device.

We are encouraging people to plan a good bedtime routine including things like making sure electrical sockets are switched off, all internal doors are closed, any candles are out,

heating appliances are off and hallways and stairs are kept clear of obstructions. This will not only help prevent a fire from happening but also ensure an easy escape if one does.

Disposing of batteries safely

Batteries can be a fire hazard if they are not disposed of properly. They should never be put in household rubbish or recycling bins.

During the processing of waste or recycling, a battery can be compacted and damaged, which can lead to ignition of the highly reactive lithium, leading to a fire starting.

Any kind of battery can cause a fire if not disposed of correctly and safely. This includes vapes or other e-cigarettes as well as standard batteries.

Fires involving batteries cause damage to refuse vehicles and roads, as well as significant delays to bin collections and road closures.

How to dispose of batteries

There are many places to safely dispose of batteries. As well as local recycling centres, many shops around the county have collection bins in-store.

To find your nearest battery collection bin, visit either <https://www.recyclenow.com> or <https://www.recycleyourelectricals.org.uk> to check where your closest location is.

Help keep your home and family fire safe – complete our online home safety check

You can carry out your own home fire safety check online by visiting the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service website.

The online home safety check helps you carry out your own fire risk assessment and is a simple way to help reduce risks and keep your home safe from fire. It takes you through some simple questions about you and your home, then provides an action plan that you can download and print. You can fill it in for yourself or a member of your family that might need help.

Visit https://bit.ly/Home_Safety_Check to find out more and start your online home safety check.

BUS TIMETABLES

Details of the Dews Coaches service no 301 are given on page 31 but we recommend checking the web site www.dews-coaches.com before travelling or telephone 01487 740241.

For guided bus service from St Ives to Cambridge or Huntingdon telephone **01223 433 250** or go to web page

<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/regional-service-updates/east/cambridgeshire>

POST OFFICE (within One-Stop Shop)

Please note current Post Office opening hours are: **9 am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday** and **9 am to 1 pm on Saturdays (closed Sundays)**

POST COLLECTION TIMES

from the post Office:

Monday to Friday, 4.15 pm;

Saturday 9.45 am

(Sundays & Bank Holidays no collections)

MOBILE LIBRARY

1st Wednesday of every month

Holywell - Ferry Boat car park
3.40pm to 3.55pm

Needingworth - Playing field (Overcote Lane)

4.00pm to 4.35pm

For renewals or enquiries ring 0345 045 5225

REFUSE COLLECTIONS

To print a calendar of collection dates go to the following web site, enter your post code and click on your address.

<http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins>

Most addresses in Holywell-cum-Needingworth have collections on the following days:

GREY BINS (general waste)

Dec. Thurs. 11th and **Wed. 24th**

Jan. **Fri. 9th** and Thurs. 22nd

Feb. Thurs. 5th, and 19th

GREEN BINS (garden waste)

Dec. Wed. 3rd and 17th

Jan. **Fri. 2nd**, Wed. 14th and 28th

Feb. Wed. 11th and 25th

BLUE BINS (recycling)

Dec. Thurs. 4th and 18th

Jan. **Sat. 3rd**, Thurs. 15th and 29th

Feb. Thurs. 12th and 26th



EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

24 HOUR EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Hospital - Huntingdon (Hinchingsbrooke) 01480 416416

Hospital - Cambridge (Addenbrookes) 01223 805000 or 01223 245151

Gas Leaks (Any Supplier) Transco 0800 111 999

Electricity Power Cuts & Emergencies 105

Drinking Water - Supplies Failure/routine enquiries (Cambridge Water Co) 01223 706050

Sewerage, Services Failure (Anglian Water) 03457 145 145

Rivers - Pollution and Flooding (Environment Agency) 0800 807 060 or Floodline 0345 988 1188

PUBLIC & IMPORTANT SERVICES - ROUTINE ENQUIRIES

Cambridgeshire Country Council 0345 045 5200

Electricity (UK Power Networks) 0800 029 4285

Sewerage Services (Anglian Water) 03457 145 145

Telephone Services (British Telecom) 0800 150 111

Police (non-emergency no.) 101

Trading Standards (business queries) 0345 045 5206

Age UK 0300 666 9860

To stop unwanted mail 03457 740 740

To stop unwanted phone calls 0345 070 0707

The Villager is printed by Eden Print Ltd.
www.eden-print.co.uk

WHO'S WHO

Baptist Church David Mann 300382

david.mann@cantab.net

Beavers Chris Huddleston

agslfirstneedingworth@hotmail.com

Beer & Wine Petronella Britton **466239**

Book Club Sue Forrest **464082**

sueforrest65@hotmail.com

Bowls Alan Blackley **07368 422241**

leetheflee@sky.com

Brownies Julie Swindells **07597 569582**

needingworth.brownies@yahoo.com

https://ggneedingworth.co.uk/brownies/

Chatters Community Cafe

Sue Martin *sue.martin22@btinternet.com*

Church, Parish Church of St John the Baptist

Revd Valmor Pimenta **01487 829882**

vicar@meridianbenefice.org.uk

Churchwardens Michael Williamson **465821**

Ben Peilow **496958**

hcn@meridianbenefice.org.uk

Cricket Club Tim Webb **07818 032164**

twdecoratingservices@hotmail.co.uk

Cub Scouts

aleta.watson@1st-needingworth-scouts.org.uk

Football Email via web site:

https://needingworthcoltsfc.com/contact/

Gardening Club Grant Williamson **493360**

parkingcare@globalnet.co.uk

www.hcngardening.weebly.com

Guides Helen Whitehead **460838**

Needingworth.guides@yahoo.com

https://ggneedingworth.co.uk/guides/

Holywell School Association Michelle Dolan

Holywellschoolassociation@outlook.com

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre, St. Ives

Branch Glenn Morris **01480 301462**

Karate Glenn Morris **07917155254**

sensei_morris@gmail.com

Neighbourhood Watch

Mike Norris **465997**

michaelnorris852@btinternet.com

Pre-School Admissions **07592 919514**

admissions@ncpreschool.uk

Website: https://www.ncpreschool.uk/

Rainbows Julie Swindells **07597 569582**

needingworth.rainbows@yahoo.com

https://ggneedingworth.co.uk/rainbows/

Scouts

chris.boddy@1stneedingworth-scouts.org.uk

Tennis Club Debbie Yates

dyates4physio@gmail.com

www.needingworthtennis.co.uk

Village Hall Trustees Mark Hebert

secretary@needingworthvillagehall.com

Village Hall Bookings Jane Banks

07970 217970

Email: bookings@needingworthvillagehall.com

Wellworth Players Karen Bays **01480 463505**

Website: www.wellworthplayers.co.uk

mailto:admin@wellworthplayers.co.uk

Women's Institute Jackie Norris

jackienorris@btinternet.com

Yarnbombers *jackienorris@btinternet.com*

Youth Cricket Stephen Mitcham **301679**

Chairman Parish Council

Cllr Andrew Whyte **468451**

Parish Clerk Jane Bowd **468451**

clerk@hollywell-cum-needingworth-pc.gov.uk

www.hollywell-cum-needingworthpc.org.uk

District Jon Neish **466110**

Councillors Mr P Hodgson-Jones **01487 740778**

Post Office **465121**

Village Hall tel: Outgoing calls emergency line only

Incoming calls **01480 498351**