

WYMONDHAM Magazine

ISSUE 68 | DECEMBER 2022

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From the Editors...

Welcome to your December issue of Wymondham Magazine.

We're pleased to say we've been able to add an extra 8 pages on top of what we were able to print for our September edition. So you've got 40 pages to flip through this month. And it's exclusively thanks to the advertisers you see on these pages. We receive no other outside financial help.

So if you enjoy reading the magazine, we'd once again encourage you to make use of the advertisers' products and services featured in this edition. And as ever, be sure to tell them where you saw their advert!

Throughout the month there are a number of events and performances big and small for you to take part in. As our front cover celebrates, it's almost time for Wymondham's biggest event of the year: Wynterfest! So wrap up warm on 4th December and we'll see you down there.

In January, Wymondham Magazine will be taking a well-earned month's hibernation. But we'll be back on your doorstep in February, in an exciting new development for 2023. And you can always find our articles on our website too.

But for now, sit back with a hot cuppa and let our fantastic contributors' articles get you in the festive spirit.

Kim and Jimmy



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CHRISTINGLE SERVICE RETURNS TO ABBEY

By Sandra Pennell

A child-friendly church service will take place in Wymondham Abbey at 3:30 pm on Saturday 17th December, purely to celebrate Christingle.

Christingle dates back to 1747 and was established by the Moravian Church as a symbol of Christ's light and love. The Church of England Children's Society introduced it into the Church of England in 1968. Most Christingle celebrations take the form of a church service but they can also take place in schools or other community venues.

The Christingle itself is made up of a lighted candle (symbolising Jesus as the Light of the World) mounted on an orange (representing the world) and a red ribbon around the middle of the orange, (symbolising the blood of Christ.) Four cocktail sticks bearing dried fruit and sweets (symbols of God's creation) are also stuck in the orange to signify the four seasons and

the fruits of the earth.

During the service, each child is given an orange with a ribbon around the middle and the rest of the components to build their own orange when they come into the church.

A welcome, a carol and a prayer then the Celebrant gives a short and simple explanation as to the significance of Christingle and then guides the children as to how they build their oranges, their candles are lit and the children parade around the church in semi darkness whilst the congregation sing a carol. It is an atmospheric sight. A collection is taken which goes to support the work of The Children's Society.

This magical event is open to everyone, not just regular church attendees.



Photos: Children's Society



UKRAINE CHRISTMAS SHOE BOX APPEAL

By Michelle Fernandes

Wardrobes Boutique in Fairland Street Wymondham is proud to be associated with 'North Norfolk aid for Ukraine' in offering to be a drop point for donations. The team are regularly making trips to drop off supplies which are urgently needed.

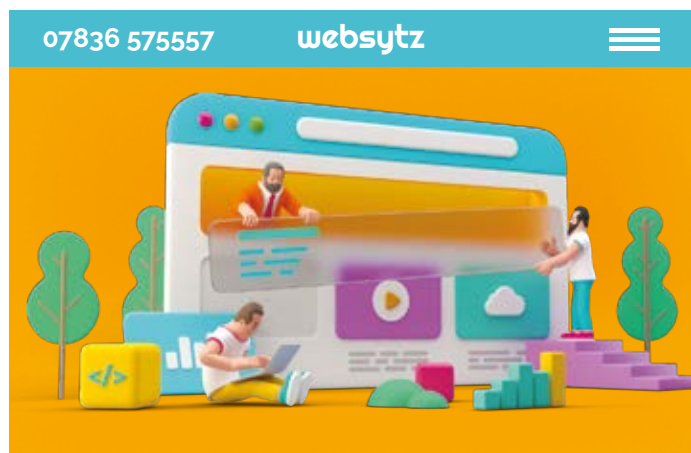
The following items have been requested -

MEDICAL - cold and flu remedies such as paracetamol, ibuprofen

CLOTHING - warm winter coats with synthetic fillings, waterproofs, hats, scarves, gloves, fleeces, hoodies, military style boots, new thermal underwear.

CHRISTMAS - shoeboxes filled with hygiene items, food, toys and household supplies as per the detailed list on their Facebook page linked below.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100087006567556>



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Photo: East Anglia Transport Museum

NEW PARK & RIDE FOR WYNTERFEST

By **Fran Young**

Wynterfest 2022 brings more shopping choice than ever before, with most of the shops in Wymondham open for Sunday 4th December 12-5pm, as well as more local market stalls. The stage offers a full line up, including the headline band The Walks, Kayleigh Gare singing festive Music, our regular Mark the Busker as well as music from New Buckenham Silver Band and performances from Beyond Any Limits and Zumba.

Around the town we welcome back the annual Christmas Tree Festival at Wymondham Abbey and a new Art Exhibition at the URC Church on Fairland. The Made In Wymondham Market will take place again at the RC Church Hall on Norwich Road and back by popular demand is the Spangles Steel Drum Band. Roots Café on Queen Street invites you to visit the Donkeys at Bethlehem, and The Alpacas will be at Priory Gardens until 3pm. The businesses on Town Green invite you to visit the Reindeer outside their shops near the War Memorial.

New for 2022 is a Park and Ride Facility, Park your car for free with thanks to East Anglian Motor Auctions and Multimatic, using their spaces on Copper Smith Way. Catch the vintage bus courtesy of East Anglian Motor Museum (suggested donation for fuel £1 per family) to Fairland Green where you can visit the art exhibition and indoor market before walking into town. Nativity sets and crafts will be in the Methodist Church and Gray's Funfair are bringing their children's rides. A great day out for all the family on our doorstep, and a wonderful shared experience for the whole community.



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THE TREE FESTIVAL IS BACK!

By *Suzie Heylings*



Wymondham Abbey are relaunching the tree festival this December! The grand opening will be on Saturday 3rd December from 11am to 3pm. With over 20 trees decorated by community groups and local primary schools displayed around the Abbey throughout December, it's an event you don't want to miss. We are looking forward to welcoming the community back. This year there will also be a '12 days of Christmas Trail' taking place, so make sure you get a programme when you visit the festival for another fun winter activity to do in the school holidays. It is available to view during Abbey opening hours 10am - 3pm when services are not taking place and 12 noon - 3pm every Sunday.

We would like to thank all the support shown by the businesses and community groups already, we look forward to seeing you all in the Abbey.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE AT ASHLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

By *Clare Suter*

After a four year break, Ashleigh Primary School is delighted to announce the return of its popular Christmas Fayre, on Saturday 3 December.

Doors open at the school at 11am, and the fun will continue until 2pm, with a range of games available to keep the kids entertained. Craft activities and Santa's

Science Lab will also add to the fun - plus there'll be refreshments and gifts to buy. And why not bring the whole family to have a Selfie With Santa, as he will also be popping in to say hello.

Entrance is 50p for adults (children free) and all money raised will go to the Ashleigh Friends PTA.

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WARM SPACES

Several places in and around Wymondham are offering free warm space sessions this winter. The idea is that people can turn down the heat at their own home to save on their energy bills, and come together at a warm space session instead. Sharing not only the warmth but also conversations, newspapers, board games, puzzles and more depending where you go.

Alive Church: Butterflies Women's Group meets every other Monday from 10am-12pm in Central Hall.

Town Green Centre: Open Door 10am-12pm Tuesdays. Meeting Point (adults only) 10:30am-12pm.

Baptist Church: Home From Home on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2-5pm. Roots Community Cafe Monday and Friday 10am-1pm.

Wymondham Abbey: open daily 10am-3pm with a special warm space session on Fridays including hot drinks and soup at lunch time.

Morley Village Hall: Thursdays 10am-2pm with free hot drinks, cordial, biscuits and cake plus activities, reading materials and more.

CLASSIC MOVIE SHOW

By Philip Yaxley



There's a chance to enjoy a charming classic comedy when *The Smallest Show On Earth*, a 1957 movie, is screened in the Regal Lounge at the Wymondham and District Ex-Services Club on Sunday 4th December at 2:30pm (during the town's Wynterfest event). Presented by the Ex-Services Club, supported by members of the former Regal Experience Group, the show is a tribute to local cinema legend Michael Armstrong, who passed away in 2020. Before the show the club's new kitchen, made possible by Michael's kind legacy, will be officially unveiled, while there'll be a short film about his cinematic odyssey and a display.

The Smallest Show on Earth will bring back happy memories for older folk, who regularly went to the pictures before the coming

of the multiplexes. The story revolves around a young couple, played by Virginia McKenna and Bill Travers, inheriting a run-down picture house staffed by eccentrics. The cast make the movie hugely entertaining with the inimitable Peter Sellers as the projectionist, Margaret Rutherford the pianist and Bernard Miles the doorman.

The bar will be open and there will be ice creams available and maybe bowls of roast potatoes.

Admission is free, but donations, if desired, may be placed in a tin for the PACT Animal Sanctuary.

The photo shows Michael Armstrong explaining the workings of the old Kalee 12 projectors to Virginia McKenna on her visit in 2007 when he also presented her with a cheque for £1200 for the Born Free Foundation.

TREE PLANTING CEREMONY FOR THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY

By Cllr Penny Hubble



Photo: queensgreencanopy.org

The Wymondham Women's Institute and Wymondham Dementia Support Group are planting a tree on Fairland Green as part of the Queen's canopy to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee, and now in memory of Queen Elizabeth II.

The event is planned for Friday 2nd December 2022 on Fairland Green, Wymondham beginning at 11am.

Greening Wymondham will be undertaking the planting of the tree and all its members have been invited to attend to mark the occasion.

Wymondham Dementia Support Group will be providing tea and cake at the United Reform Church which overlooks fairland green and all of its members have been invited to attend.

Wymondham Women's Institute has funded the project and all of its members have been invited to attend.

The celebration of the Platinum Jubilee in being part of the Queen's Green Canopy and also now in memory of Queen Elizabeth II is a poignant point in time and your presence would be greatly appreciated to help reinforce its significance and importance.



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SHOPPERS' NIGHT OUT

By Kim Carsok

On Saturday, 14th December, several of Wymondham's independent shops will be open late to do some Christmas shopping while having a good time. This will not just be your average shopping evening, with all participants offering a little something extra to thank you for shopping locally.

The Shoppers Night Out will be a chance to finish off your shopping in town with treats and tipples along the way. Every purchase in a participating shop will earn you a free raffle ticket. The raffle winner will receive a premium Totally Locally hamper filled with goodies provided by Wymondham's independent shops.

Shops which have already confirmed they will be participating include:

- Wardrobes Ladies Fashion and Accessories
- Little Boutique
- Elementals Magickal Emporium
- Kett's Books
- Mad Hatters Tea Shop
- Hemstock's Jewellers
- The Marmalade Tree
- Ebony Interiors
- Middletons Clothing
- Wymondham Antiques Centre
- Yum Yum's Sweet Shop
- Cavick House Farm Café
- Town Green Garden Café

Shopkeeper Michelle Fernandes said: "Wardrobes Boutique in Fairland Street are looking forward to joining in the Christmas Shopping open evening. The shop will be well stocked with festive clothing as well as our normal range of winter wear and accessories. In the evening we will be offering our customers refreshments and double loyalty points for those of you who participate in our scheme. Every customer who brings in this article on the night between 4-8pm they will receive 10% off their purchase in Wardrobes."



Shoppers' Night Out

An evening of chilled shopping with complimentary treats. Browse unique gifts and holiday essentials in Wymondham's independent shops.

Wednesday 14th December 4-8pm

WYMONDHAM TOWN CENTRE

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By **Jimmy Young**

With a living standards squeeze facing residents and an economic headwind blowing towards our high street businesses, Wymondham Town Council didn't have anything to discuss in November, so cancelled its full meeting. But this column couldn't let down its loyal supporters, who turn up on the terraces come rain or shine. So put on your scarf, strap on a big rosette and get spinning your rattle, it's kick off time for Town Council Watch.

With no A-team fixture, our focus switched to the Leisure, Environment, Enterprise and Tourism committee, chaired by a promising young player coming up through the youth ranks, Cllr Kim Carsok (Con).

Personally, I'd never heard of her.

TREES FOR GOALPOSTS

In the public gallery were 5 or 6 members of that infamous local firm, the Women's Institute, who fortunately behaved impeccably throughout. They were there to speak in favour of an idea to plant a new sweet chestnut tree on the Fairland as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

Councillors liked the proposal despite being wary of placing the tree directly in the centre of the open space. And once an amendment to ensure a native species was chosen (*British trees for British picnickers*), the measure was approved to a round of applause from the gathered WI members.

A great atmosphere inside Kett's Park tonight.

BOARD SCORE

Next, the committee discussed funding an upgrade to display boards at the Tourist Information Centre in the Market Cross, to be created in conjunction with Wymondham Heritage Society. After a short verbal kickabout, it was decided to approve the measure and let the Clerk use his discretionary spending powers to pay for the boards, once the designs had come back to council to be approved.

BOGGED DOWN ON FOOTBALL PITCHES

Then the ball bobbled onto the topic of football pitches. A topic that proved far more entertaining than you'd imagine.

Cllr Carsok asked the Clerk for an update on a number of issues about the Kett's Park pitches, which the Town Council maintains but leases to South Norfolk Council. One bugbear according to conversations she'd had with Norfolk FA, youth football clubs and South Norfolk Council was the length of the grass:

"They asked that the grass for football pitches is 30mm. They've regularly been measuring it at 40 to 50mm," reported Ms Carsok to the committee.

Well. Councils love kicking things into the long grass don't they?

The Clerk, whose job is to manage the maintenance of pitches, decided attack was the best form of defence:

"Can I ask you why you attended a meeting and who invited you to the meeting and who you were representing at this meeting?"

Town Council Watch presumes the several hundred people in Wymondham that elected her...

But Ms Carsok's back four weren't going to be troubled:

"They asked me if I could potentially help, because they felt that they weren't entirely sure multiple people were aware of the issues, because they've been going on for so long that Wymondham Town United Football Club has cancelled, in the last year, 123 games because of the state of the pitches, so they've asked for outside help to ensure that they don't have to cancel future games."

Elected councillors talking to people in the community to help solve an issue? Apparently a bookable offence at Wymondham Town Council.

The Clerk decided to have another attempt on goal:

"I have to say I'm a little bit surprised as you've emailed me to say that you didn't attend it in any capacity representing the Town Council and now you're telling me that you did."

But Carsok cleared her lines once more:

"I attended as a councillor. I did not attend giving the view of the council as a whole. I attended as a person who is a councillor and is there to represent, and hear issues about what's going on in the community and I am very much entitled to do so."

End-to-end stuff. Entertaining for the neutral.

Cllr Carsok resumed: "Could you please share with us that information, so is it possible to reset the mowers to 30 mil?"

Oh yeah. I'd forgotten that's what they were talking about.

The Clerk provided an explanation about how much more complicated a pitch mower is than your home mower but eventually conceded that it should indeed be possible.

"Perfect thank you", replied Ms Carsok: "um... so the grass will be cut to 30 mils where possible?"

"Sorry I didn't say that," deflected the Clerk. "Sorry the message has been received, my groundsman would cut it in accordance with the agreement."

"Okay which says 30. They would prefer it to be nearer to 30 mil than 30 to 40," persisted Ms Carsok.

"If you read the agreement between the two parties, there are two different levels of the grass depending upon the season, the time of the year," scabbled the Clerk on the goal line.

"Right and in season, when they're playing football, which is now, they'd like it to be cut to 30 mil, so I'm just sharing that information so everyone's aware." Carsok finished.

Here's a quick piece of football trivia for anyone reading that wasn't aware. South Norfolk Council like their pitches cut to 30mm. Who knew?

Cllr Penny Hubble (Con) then wanted to know why 120 games had been cancelled.

"It's quite simple", harrumphed the Clerk. "you have no knowledge of what's happened in the past and how many games have been cancelled previously so the figure that you've quoted there is not surprising to me".

A deadpan Cllr Hubble came back:

"You're quite correct that I don't have this knowledge and that's why I asked the question and thank you for answering my question".

For Cllr Robert Savage (Con), all this detail business was too much for a Tuesday evening: "I'm a little bit disappointed at the degree of detail that the question has been brought to this council, uh this committee, it's not normal in my view to go into this kind of detail."

"We're all here in a voluntary capacity," came the response from the Chair.

The casual onlooker might have started to doubt this was a friendly we were watching.

More from this series at:
[wymondhammagazine.co.uk/
 town-council-watch](http://wymondhammagazine.co.uk/town-council-watch)

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CONSIDERING TAX WHEN GIFTING THIS CHRISTMAS

By Jo Tinson, Partner at Spire Solicitors

Christmas shopping usually means a visit to the high street or browsing online retailers, but the season of giving can be a good time to make sure you're maximising your opportunities for inheritance tax reliefs, whether to family, friends, or charity, while spreading some seasonal cheer.

While larger gifts may be taken into account for inheritance tax purposes, anyone can make smaller gifts without tax being considered, as long as some simple rules are followed.

Broadly, these come under two headings: gifts where the exemption is automatic if the gift fits the rules, and those where the exemption must be claimed after death, such as gifts out of surplus income. The exemption includes gifts to charities or political parties, gifts on marriage or civil ceremony (subject to the limits stated below), an annual exemption of £3000, and small gifts up to £250 per person.

Any number of so-called small gifts can be made each year, of up to £250 per recipient, with no limit on the number of recipients if no one person receives more than £250. If anyone receives more than £250, then the whole small gift exemption in relation to that recipient is lost for the year, not just the excess. Gifts include money, household and personal goods, property, land, and stocks and shares. Gifts can also include any money you lose when you sell

something for less than it is worth.

The annual exemption of £3000 can be used to make gifts to one or more people. There's an added benefit if the allowance isn't fully used in any year, as any remaining allowance can be carried forward one year. It cannot be combined with the small gift exemption for any one individual.

In any tax year, you can also give a cash gift when a friend or family gets married or has a civil ceremony. The limit is £5000 for a child and £2500 for a grandchild, or £1000 for those outside immediate family, whether a friend, niece, or cousin.

You can also make payments to help with another person's living costs, such as an elderly relative or a child under 18.

If you're looking to give to charity this Christmas, it's worth knowing that gifts to charities and political parties will not count towards the total taxable value of your estate. You can also cut the Inheritance Tax rate on the rest of your estate from 40% to 36% if you leave at least 10% of your 'net estate' to a charity.

When it comes to relief on gifts from surplus income, record-keeping is essential as the gift will only qualify for exemption if it is part of a regular pattern of giving, and if you can demonstrate that you maintained your normal standard of living after making the gifts and all other usual expenditure.

The exemption for gifts from surplus income must be claimed after death, by the executors of a person's Will, and can be used for any regular payments, such as monthly contributions to a grandchild's savings account or payment of school fees or making regular gifts on special occasions such as birthdays and Christmas.

Any other gifts made to individuals will be potentially exempt transfers (PETs), which become exempt if you survive the making of the gift by seven years. Otherwise, the value will be brought into account for inheritance tax purposes. Further, it is important if you want a gift to become exempt for inheritance tax purposes that you do not retain any benefit from the gift.

If you are considering larger gifts this Christmas and need some advice, or would like to discuss anything in this article, please contact our Wills, Tax & Probate team on

01953 606351.





NATURE TO NEW BUILDS

By Neville Cameron

It's been a funny old month, with galloping pain in my right leg, ankle and foot, struggling with depression, even struggling with changing our old settie to make room for a new one. Anyway that's all been documented in Love Wymondham on Facebook.

Now people are always passing their views about change and one of the biggest grumbles must be new building developments. I'm sort of on the fence with this one, I'm a retired plumber who earned a living working not only on older places but new builds and sites as well. Personally I adore architecture including new builds, but there are some, well fugly sights around caused in my opinion by a word called bonus, you know the one, "build it quicker and get paid more for your efforts".

I'm not a big believer in this but it makes buildings go up quicker and cheaper.

At the moment, Right Up Lane in Wymondham has succumbed to the building machine and there's lots of new builds popping up. It's a classic really as it's very beautiful around there not least because it leads onwards to The Lizard and other lovely spaces to explore. I've spent many hours walking around the area and believe me it's gorgeous, if you know where to go.



The biggest problem in my mind, and I believe it's a modern problem, is the shortage of new schools, doctors, dentists. In short there's no infrastructure to support the growing population. But that isn't about housing so much as politics. A subject that's a foreign language to me as it is to many others. I'll moan, saying politics or whatever needs sorting out. But it's a hard one to sort out especially for people like me!

Anyway it's a real pity losing all that greenery to concrete and pipes which I've made a living at putting in where we're told to put them for a living.

Now the walk:

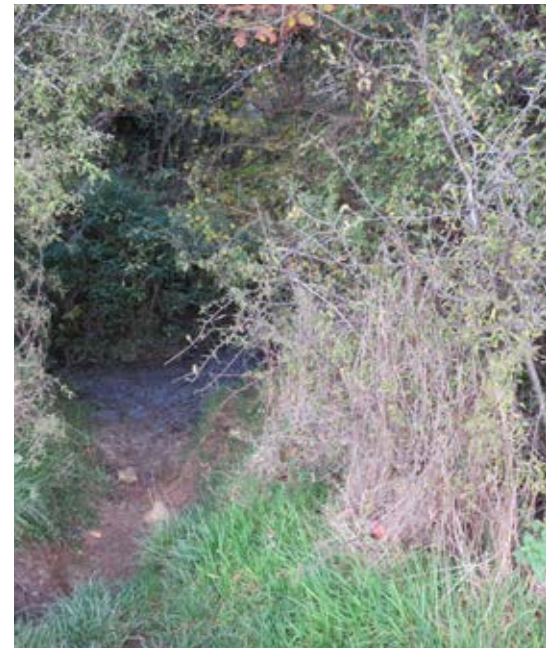
Parking was easy on The Lizard just past the car wash, under the bridge on the left and up the steps to Elan Close, following it around leftish towards Right Up Lane. Simply walk straight on past the few houses, past the building sites until you reach the top. On the left is a footpath through the woods leading to The Lizards greenery, straight

over towards another gate and over the field with the viewing tower on the left. Continue on over the brick bridge crossing the river onwards towards an old railway bridge. Now I had to turn back from there as my pain threshold demanded I walked no further even with my stout aluminium walking stick. It's a place of real magic where on the left there's steps leading upwards towards the old railway line which leads left towards the entrance back near my starting point. I'm not sure if this route is safe now because it certainly wasn't when I last used it!

Anyway it was an about-turn for me and turning right at the gate towards the

viewing tower which is really worth a visit then follow the path back towards the Lizards main entrance, and back down The Lizard towards where I'd parked. Painful bones and bits but wow I really loved every step.

There's some upgrading going on around there so it should be getting even more pleasurable if you can agree not to disagree about the massive new housing developments. Please enjoy the photographs, it was a real pleasure taking them.



“THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN MY MIND IS THE SHORTAGE OF NEW SCHOOLS, DOCTORS, DENTISTS. IN SHORT THERE'S NO INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE GROWING POPULATION.”

Apart from its new builds there are lots of older buildings around there of great character which are well worth a look at but need searching out as I've done.



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WHAT'S IN A PHOTO?

A Snowy High Street

By Philip Yaxley



With snow around, a relatively quiet Market Street is shown in these photos from January 1963, but a month earlier, sixty years ago, it had been abuzz with shoppers looking for Christmas presents and festive fare. Before the advent of superstores and internet shopping, Clarke & Co, seen on the right of the first picture, was a multi-purpose emporium with grocery, drapery and millinery departments, but in 1962 the town also boasted an impressive range of varied independent shops, for example Claude Slaughter's in Damgate, catering for every need. With decorated window displays and "pretty lights" it was a delight. So what were some of the sought-after gifts in Wymondham that Christmas?

Popular children's presents included annuals of the Beano, Dandy and Eagle comics, which could be purchased from Geo. R. Reeve Ltd in Market Street, then on the other side, and H. G. Stone & Co's in Town Green. Stone's also offered Corgi and Matchbox models, while Dinky toys, Meccano and Hornby train sets were available at Fred Standley's, then on the Market Place. Gifts for teenagers reflected the growing pop culture of the time with record players and the then much in vogue transistor radios, colloquially referred to as trannies, on sale at Fred Standley's, Eddie Buttoph's and

George Smith's, all in Market Street, and C. H. Standley & Son Ltd in Town Green. At Smith's, pop-pickers were able to choose from 3000 records, among them that December were Elvis Presley's "Return to Sender" and Brenda Lee's "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree". Aldiss & Hastings and John Little's, almost facing each other in Market Street, offered a range of menswear, including gloves, scarves and socks, while Mrs. G. Bedingfield in Middleton Street and Geraldine Barber on the Market Place catered for the ladies with everything from handbags and jewellery to frocks and coats. Then there was Proctor's famous shoe shop, where a pair of slippers, always a favourite present, could be bought. Other gifts, say a box of chocolates or a tin of biscuits, could be bought from Corstons in Damgate or Rusts in Fairland Street, while there was also F.W. Woolworth & Co Ltd in Market Street, as well as the Co-op and the International stores on the Market Place. A good bottle of wine from Ken Whitehand's in Market Street always went down well!

With a wonderful selection on offer Wymondham folk had no need to visit Norwich for purchasing presents for family and friends. Christmas celebrations and life were great in the Swinging Sixties!



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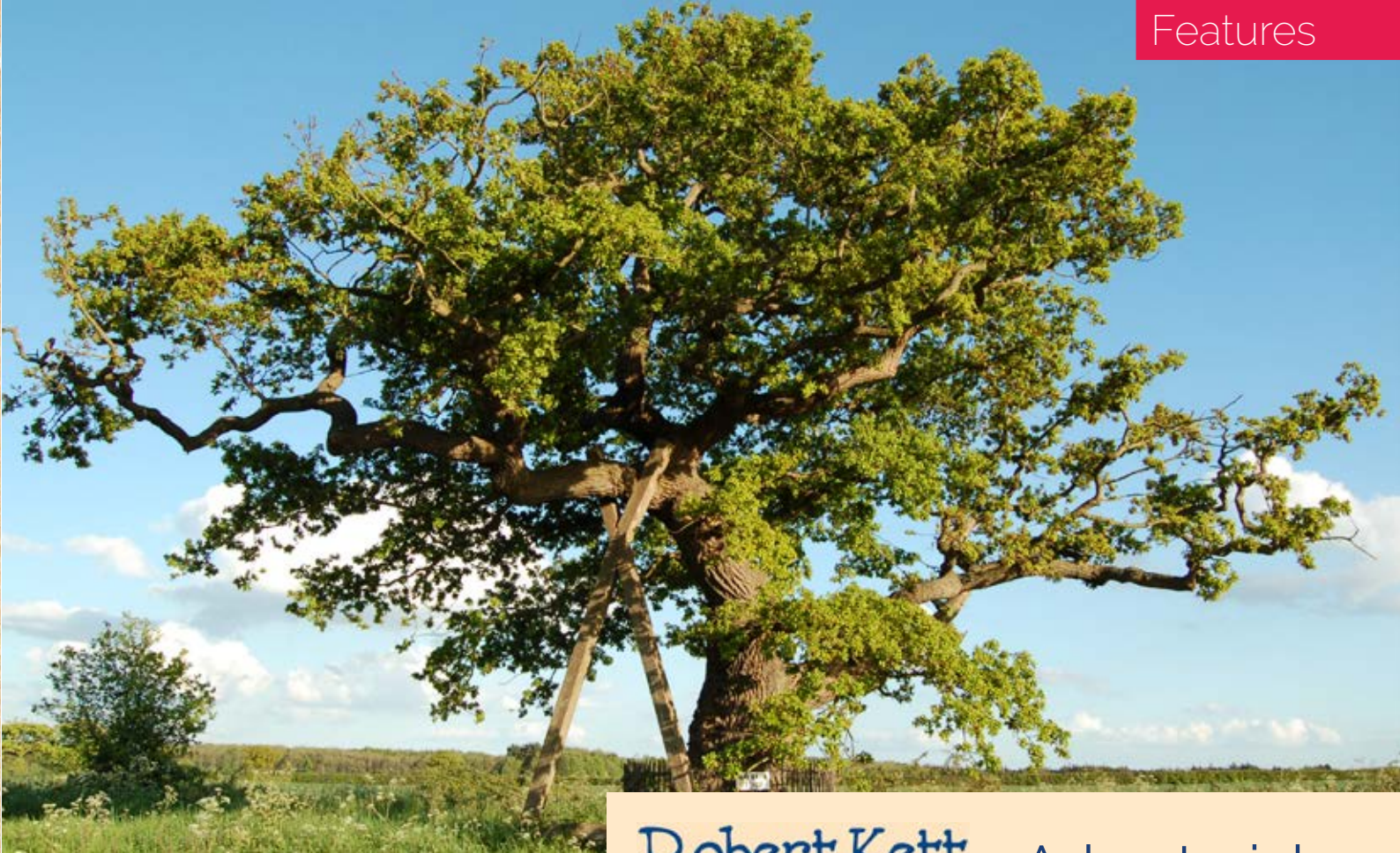
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Robert Kett
Primary School

Advertorial

WHO WAS ROBERT KETT?

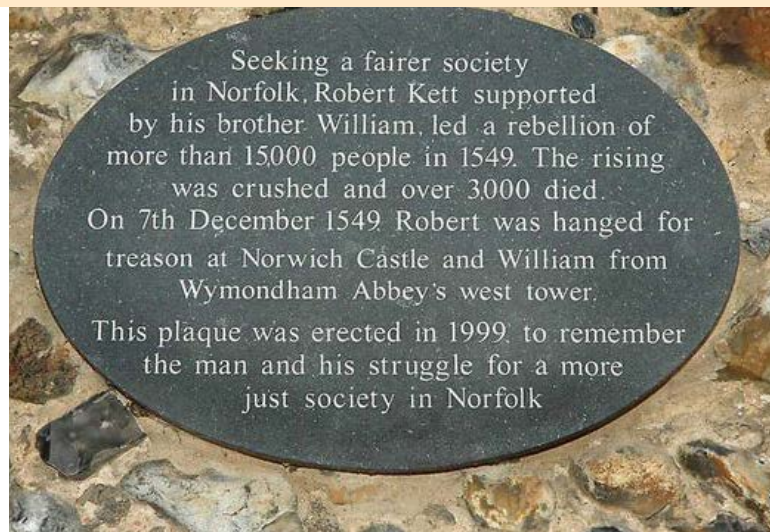
By Karen Hurst

Robert Kett was the fourth son of Thomas Kett, of Fornsett, Norfolk and his wife Margery. He is thought to have been a tanner and, seeking a fairer society in Norfolk, Robert Kett supported by his brother William, led a rebellion of more than 15000 people in 1549. The rising was crushed and over 3000 died.

On 7th December 1549 Robert was hanged for treason at Norwich Castle and William from Wymondham Abbey's west tower. A plaque was erected in 1999 to remember the man and his struggle for a more just society in Norfolk.

Kett's Oak is one of the 50 Great British Trees. This ancient oak tree is located at the side of the B1172 road between Wymondham and Hethersett in Norfolk, England. The tree is the traditional location where in 1549 Robert Kett and his brother William addressed a group of men in what was to become Kett's Rebellion.

Robert Kett Primary School was built as a junior school in 1969, and became a leader in educating 'junior' children. The school took Robert Kett's name as a role model and ethos for the school to thrive as Robert believed in standing up for the common people and the rights for common land and right to an education. In September 2015, Robert Kett became a 'primary school' educating children from 4 to 11 years.





CHRISTMAS SHOPPING ...THROUGH TIME

By Sarah Standley

This month I'm sharing some photos and memories from my own collection of Christmases past in Wymondham focusing on the town's shops at Christmas and Dickensian Evening.

Dickensian Evening was launched in 1986 and the annual event soon became popular. Many residents and businesses entered into the spirit, donning Dickensian style costumes and sharing mince pies together. Over time, Dickensian Evening evolved into a Christmas Fayre, then a Steam Punk themed Christmas Fair and now it is comfortably ensconced into Wymondham's calendar as Wynterfest and held on a Sunday at the beginning of December.

On Dickensian Evening in 1988, as the real Father Christmas was so busy preparing for the big night, he had help from Brian Seager owner of Geo R Reeve Ltd printers, booksellers, stationery and gift shop, who wore

the red suit and waved as he was driven to the Market Place through Market Street, where he greeted children with lots of Ho Ho Ho's!

Brian was a vibrant character in Wymondham and is greatly missed. His Uncle, George Reeve started a printing

business in 1928 in a room at the rear of Walter Lane's gentleman's outfitters in Middleton Street. As George's 'Model Press' expanded he moved into premises in Church Street opposite Becket's Chapel and opened a bookshop in Market Street in 1949. He then opened a shop on the corner of Damgate now part of the RSPCA charity shop for a short time before moving the print works and shop into Clarkes former Drapery and Grocery store on Damgate Corner. The printing side of the family firm relocated to Town Green in 1994 and the shop floor increased in size. The print works closed in 2010, however the stationery, card and gift shop remains a busy town centre store today and run by Brian's daughters Amanda and Rachel. It is a 'must visit shop' when Christmas shopping in Wymondham with gorgeous gifts and beautiful cards and a friendly hello.

Many of Wymondham's shops created fine window displays of Christmas produce and gifts, decorated with tinsel, crepe paper and strings of lights. Brian was one of the first businessmen to go a step further for the town with a stunning display on his Market Street premises of Christmas icicle lights, with the dormer windows forming a perfect setting. Brian loved

being a part of our town and certainly is one of our lost characters. The family kept the lights switched on for several Christmases after Brian's sudden death in 2003. Now we are lucky we have Wymondham's Town Team fundraising and decorating much of our town with lights galore.

As mentioned many townsfolk enjoyed dressing up and taking part in Dickensian Evening in its early years and Margaret King's antique shop on the Market Place proved the perfect backdrop for Margaret as seen here in 1988. Margaret ran the shop with her husband Norman for many years from the early 1970s to some time after 2007.

The property in the 1880s was a butchers, owned by Thomas Cann and then in the 1890's by Christopher Laycock who soon opened a Grocers and Drapers next door in what we know as Abbotts.

Then in about 1917 Alice Standley moved her furniture and antiques business here having moved from Pople Street. The Market Place shop was known as 'Ye Olde Curiosity Shop' and after Alice died Billy and Winnie Standley took over until the late 1960s.

Margaret King continued the tradition of selling antiques and furniture here and after she closed her shop, David Hurrell refurbished it and opened Market Cross Antiques shop,

which even featured on an edition of Antiques Road Trip filmed in October 2014. The shop closed in 2019 however David Hurrell continued in the antiques trade.

These days the Antique shop is home to stART Studio, an art studio owned by Sarah Ashcroft, who took on the 17th century property to build her community art studio running a wide selection of popular art classes, activities and events



for all ages.

Many will know my Standley family roots are in the Ironmongery trade as my Great Grandfather Charles Harvey Standley opened his own ironmongers shop in Wymondham on Town Green in 1886. Originally Charles sold all the traditional hardware and ironmongery goods for the home, including earthenware, basketware, tin baths, oil lamps, oil and paraffin... the list is endless. As time progressed Charles diversified into new innovations including petrol, cycles, gramophones and radios.





◀ Shopping guide and Dickensian programme



◀ Philip Standley in 1987



Reeve's shop in Market Street lit up for Christmas c.2004, courtesy of Philip Yaxley ▶



Brian Seager dressed as Father Christmas heads up Market Street on Dickensian Evening, 8 December 1988 ▶



▲ Margaret King dressed for Dickensian Evening 1988

▲ Brian's wife June with daughters Amanda and Rachel Seager dressed for Dickensian Evening on 8 December 1988.



More from this series at:
wymondhammagazine.co.uk/a-shop-through-time

Charles died in 1932 and his son Eric continued in the trade and a year later Standley's were hosting promotions with K B Radio. They even had a large advert for K B Radio and Television painted on the wall above the shop.

These photos date from around 1951 and show an impressive Christmas window display of the latest K B Radios in the left hand window.

The other window includes baking trays, gloves, crockery, flasks and just what every housewife wants for Christmas - sets of saucepans! When my Aunt Pamela took on the housewares side of the shop she was known for her fine windows displays of china tea sets which sold well. As a girl I was mesmerised by the retro Christmas decorations stored in the attic with a mass of coloured crepe paper used for window displays.

My Dad, Philip, with Pamela continued the business after their parents died and televisions and video recorders were sold alongside hardware like kitchenware, wallpaper and paint.

The coloured photo is of my Dad Philip, decorating the shop window in 1987, the Christmas before the shop closed in 1988. The premises is now occupied by Wymondham Antiques Centre (which has also appeared on Antiques Road Trip) and Town Green Garden Cafe.

We all love picking up Christmas gift guides to peruse through and here are some attractive Wymondham Shopping Guides from 1978, 2004 and 2007. The adverts from 1978 may evoke some memories for you particularly the prices of alcohol at G C Harvey of Back Lane, Fred Standley selling toys, the toyshop Variety Fare in Church Street, Muriel Bedingfield's shop in Middleton Street and John Little's men's clothing store. All these shops have now disappeared from our streets.

As we make new memories this Christmas, take time to look back and cherish the Christmases of our past and remember the people and places who are sadly no longer with us. Happy Christmas to you all!

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By Kim Carsok

Q&A

Father Christopher, Wymondham Abbey

Father Christopher Davies was ordained in Southwark Cathedral in the late 80s, after spending the first 15 years of his working life as a farmer in Hertfordshire. Ten years as a vicar in the big city proved plenty, and he moved to Wymondham in 2006 and stayed for ten years before retiring. His retirement didn't last long and he recently returned to Wymondham Abbey for a three year post.

Why did you agree to come back?

I've got great affection for the people of Wymondham, the town of Wymondham.

When you're in a place for ten years as vicar, you make so many connections. First of all with people, in sad times and happy times. I hope that I can bring the stability and reassurance that the Abbey is here for the whole community.

Any challenges you've faced?

The administration is in need of a lot of TLC. We are working on that with a great team of wardens. They're already putting in place systems and structures which are robust with governance in terms of accountability. Which is right as we are a publicly facing organisation where essentially all of our income is given.

We are beginning to do what churches should be doing all the time, and that's serving the community. The church has no other reason other than to serve other people. The fact that we are now open every day of the week sends a powerful message. Certainly when

I've been backwards and forwards in the town, people say 'I hear you're open!', which is lovely.

And you're reopening the shop?

Yes, it's already open and has started in a fairly modest way. The shop contributed considerably to the Abbey's finances in the past because it was entirely staffed voluntarily. And a lot of the stock sold was homemade, stuff like jams and honey and all sorts. Which people love to buy as a souvenir. In my last year here we had something like 30,000 visitors. There's nothing they like more than taking home a bar of chocolate with Wymondham Abbey written on it, or a piece of cake or a postcard or something. So that's coming back on stream.

Equally importantly we offer a warm welcome, a no strings welcome at the desk. When people come in the door they see a smiling face saying 'do come in'.

It was very significant in my first week back, I deliberately spent a lot of time in the church itself, a lot of people wanting to talk about the Queen's death. A significant number, when I was near the entrance, people would put their head around the door and say 'are we allowed in?' And that's very significant because nobody should feel they are not allowed to go in a church. It's there for everybody.

The numbers coming through the door are increasing all the time. We'll still be open every day in the winter, we'll be heated. We're prepared to make that expenditure because we feel it is important. If you go into a library in the middle of winter you don't expect to sit there with your coat on. So why should the church be any different?

A significant number of people in our towns, and particularly our villages, live alone. I know for a fact that many people

will go several days without speaking to another person. We're going to try and organise transport for some of them to be able to visit.

Any specific goals or plans for your 3 year post here?

The Church of England regards every resident as a parishioner. Because we are the established church, I am available for anybody in the parish of Wymondham of all faiths and none, should they wish to make contact. We are not a congregational church, I am not simply a chaplain for the people who turn up every Sunday for worship.

For example, a lot of schools have asked me to go in and talk to kids. Some will be coming here to use this as a classroom space. Schools will have their carol services here. We see those community links as very important.

We've taken bookings for the symphony orchestra and salvation army brass band. The Abbey has always had a strong music tradition. Any music group that wants to put on a concert should feel free to get in touch. And indeed any other group, we've had art displays in the past, we've had heritage displays. It's just such a great space for community use.

We're doing a Christmas Tree Festival. The very first one we had was organised by Suzie Heylings, and now her mother Rosemary is coordinating it. That will run all of December, starting on Saturday 3rd December.

The duck race will also come back. It is traditionally held on the Easter bank holiday Monday. A number of plastic ducks are thrown into the Tiffey and they bob along for about 500 yards. The person who bought the duck which makes it to the end first wins a prize. It's been going for a long time and people come from miles to attend. It's good simple fun.

Do you find it challenging running a religious institution within a tourist attraction?

There are tensions, but I think they can be positive tensions. The building just so lends itself to doing the things in tandem. When it was originally built it would have been a market as well as a church. So things like the winter craft fair do well. I can remember one very memorable year when we had the duck race inside because the weather was so atrocious. I think we put all the ducks in a sack and drew one out like a raffle. That to my mind is exactly what would have happened in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. The town and community would've come to the building and the church to do their trading, socialising and celebrating. It's only relatively recently in the last few hundred years where churches became solely a place of worship. I think a lot of churches are rediscovering that recently. It does make so much sense. Particularly in a place so significant as the Abbey.

No one community can say 'we own this building and we are therefore not going to allow anybody else in', that's just unthinkable nevermind contrary to the gospel. As far as I'm concerned the more that's going on, the more it's building up community spirit.

The number of contacts that have come through activities on the edge has far exceeded those that come through the worshipping community. For example, people asking whether it is possible to get married here, have a baby christened here, or have a funeral.

I've had some very very poignant funerals. Teenagers, babies. Where the whole community turns up because they want to express solidarity with the family. With those sorts of numbers, five to six hundred people, there's nowhere else for them to meet. That's where a building like this comes into its own. It's at the heart of what we're about.

What do you think is special about Wymondham?

I think its heritage speaks loudly. I don't just mean the Abbey. Becket's Chapel, the shop fronts and the older bits of the town centre. You think gosh, this community is just full of history. The stories it could tell if it could talk. The classic one is the great fire of Wymondham. Look at the front of the Green Dragon with the charred wood. How authentic that is I don't know. It certainly makes you think. If you go inside there's a little door in the corner that says 'to the Abbey'. And apparently, the monks originally had a tunnel from their

dormitory so they could collect their ale. Again, how true that is I don't know, but it is all part of the rich tapestry of life that adds a bit of colour and a bit of interest.

I've never found the tunnel on this end. When there was building work going on here there was a lot of surmising - would they find the tunnel? They didn't, but they did find a lot of old graves.

The monastic community here was a significant part of the town. Indeed the Abbey was why the town flourished originally, because they provided a lot of work for local people. About 30 monks lived here and the building of the place needed a lot of labourers. What you see now is only a fraction of what was here. Every bit of stone came up the river Tiffey, from Caen in France. You can imagine carting all that up in little rowing boats.

In our archives we've got some original doodles which the monks did of how they wanted certain bits of the Abbey. And we've got one of only four 1611 bibles in the country. It can only be displayed for certain amounts of time per year. There are some real treasures in here.

The Abbey has certainly made its mark on the town, in mediaeval times, and I think it is now a significant part of the town. I'm not saying it influences the town but it is a significant part. It brings tourists in.

I hope above all, the message is that we are open, we are welcoming and we want to work with the community and the town."

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Advertorial

By [Rebecca Mills](#),
EweMove Wymondham



What is the property market doing and is now a good time to sell?? These are hot questions right now, so let's simplify and acknowledge the basics to ease your decision-making.

There are certainly adjustments taking place throughout the property market: inflation rates and mortgage costs will inevitably affect house prices moving forward. However, buyer demand is sustaining, lenders are still lending, and houses are still selling. It's fair to say that the peak in sales and sale prices has been and gone, with the market now mirroring many of the statistics of 2019. So, if you have a need or wish to sell, you can. The questions are when and how?

For those of you with a need and tight timescale to sell by, you may be thinking of launching your property to market as soon as possible. It's important to recognise that December is the least active month for property sales, therefore pricing and marketing strategy is crucial. Now is not the time to test the market.

Sellers who do not have an immediate need or restricted time frame should hold back, prepare, enjoy the festivities, and launch from Boxing Day into January. Planning this effectively will not only

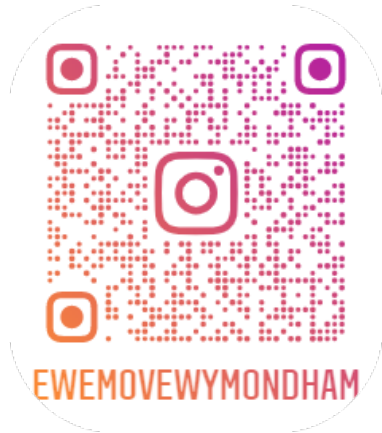
remove excess anxiety caused by the thought of selling, but also introduce your property to a more motivated audience of serious buyers when the times of turning over a new leaf are in play.

Regardless of your decision, it is essential to get the pricing right and to have a plan in place.

Recent months have seen a rise in quick reductions within our local market, many of which remain on the market today. It's important to know your audience and to strategize your course. Last month I highlighted the importance of knowing your figures. This exercise will bring structure to your journey and may well prompt subtle changes that could make a big difference in the long run.

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Achieving Together

STAR THROWERS DECEMBER UPDATE

By Victoria Pigg

SERVICES

Our free cancer support services continue to be very much needed in the community; we are proud to deliver a wide range of support sessions to those who are affected by cancer. Our support is open to people at any stage of a cancer diagnosis and beyond and their carers. We offer cancer information sessions, nutrition support, counselling, fatigue management, lymphoedema support, complementary therapies and group support sessions. For more information, please contact by email: info@starthrowers.org.uk or call 01953 423304

FUNDRAISING

We recently visited Coltishall Primary School who raised a fantastic £1300 at their 'Glow Up' walk to support cancer services in Norfolk. If you are interested in finding out more about supporting Star Throwers or organising a fundraising event for us, we are holding monthly 'Supporter Open Mornings', please contact us to find out about coming along: victoria@starthrowers.org.uk.

Looking for a challenge for 2023? Take part in the Spring Blickling Half Marathon on Sunday 19th march for free – all you need to do is commit to raising £100 in sponsorship for Star Throwers. Enter online today or contact us to find out more: <https://totalracetiming.co.uk/race/371>

SHOP

Our new 'Treasure Trove' shop continues to be doing well with a constant supply of new items available to view and purchase, we are currently open Mon-Fri from 10am-4pm. Find our new shop next to the centre on Melton Road in Wymondham. We have a range of Christmas cards on offer in both our shops – all profits go towards supporting Star Throwers. Email Victoria to find out more: victoria@starthrowers.org.uk or call 01953 423304.



YOUNG FARMERS' PANTO AND CALENDAR

By Ezara-Mai Downes

Wymondham Young Farmers has a busy few months ahead with rehearsals under way for our annual Pantomime The Wizard of Oz. Performances run from 18th - 21st January 2023 at Central Hall. Tickets are available via this link <https://wyf.lite.events/> or at Reeves on Market Street. But they do sell out fast!

We have also been busy completing the photoshoots for our naked calendar, raising money for our chosen charity this year, it's on the Ball. We have been lucky enough to have the support of Mary from ETT photography who has donated her time and photography skills to help support our charity with this initiative.

Alongside Liz Holbrook the owner of Reymerton hall who allowed us to use the wonderful grounds and reception rooms of the wedding venue for our shoot. Calendars are available to pre order via text on 07786244456 at £10 each.

Our meetings this year have been a great success with member numbers still booming. We are particularly impressed with the uptake of our countrysiders club after the break for lockdown. We have been enjoying welcoming them to some of our young farmer meetings with the older members and are looking forward to involving them even more over the festive season and of course our pantomime!



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CHARITY BURNS NIGHT CEILIDH

27th January 2023

By Terry Hickman Smith

Wymondham Rotary Club has had to operate differently over the last three years. Although lockdowns and associated difficulties curtailed many aspects of the Club's work, fundraising has still taken place and, as a result, many thousands of pounds have been given to charities at home and abroad throughout that time. Now things are getting back to some sort of normality.

Therefore at last and to general delight Wymondham Rotary Club, in association with the Wymondham Lions, are once again holding their annual Burns Night Ceilidh. This will be the first time it has been possible since 2019 and club members are really looking forward to welcoming guests to this very popular event once more.

This annual Charity Burns Night and Ceilidh will be held, as usual, at Central Hall in Wymondham and will take place on Friday 27th January 2023. The evening will start with the Selkirk Grace and the formal address to the haggis followed by the Burns Night supper complete with haggis, baked potatoes, mashed neeps and, of course, whisky gravy. The meal will end with a traditional Scottish dessert. Vegetarian and gluten free

options will be available.

The tables will then be cleared and the Happy Feet Ceilidh Band will lead traditional dancing, complete with their brilliant caller. Each year the dancing enthusiasm has been wonderfully infectious.

The doors open at 6:30pm and the meal will start at 7:00. Dancing will commence at about 8:00 continuing until 11:00. The bar will be open all evening and will be manned by Rotary and Lions members. Therefore all proceeds from bar sales will go to the selected charities. There will also be a tombola which will add to those charitable donations.

The charities selected by Rotary include the Eradication of Polio Campaign and the provision of a Shelterbox for emergency international aid relief, as well as other international charities. For the Lions the proceeds will benefit local Wymondham charities.

Tickets will be available at £25 per person and will include the meal. They will be on sale at Reeves and through the emails and websites below.

Do come and join us for this happy and energetic evening. Ticket numbers are limited to ensure enough room for dancing so make sure you book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are available from:

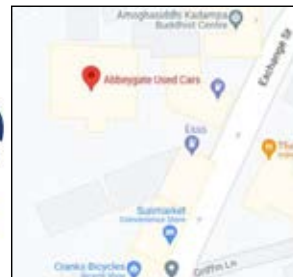
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Online at: www.wymfest.org.uk

**Via the contact page at
www.wymondhamrotary.org.uk**

**By email to jamwilde@hotmail.com or
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RADIO STATION ADAPTS TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

By David Mann

South Norfolk Radio (SNR), the local volunteer-run Community Radio Station based in Wymondham, is, like many other small businesses, having to rapidly adapt to the changing financial circumstances.

"It would be fair to say that the financial crisis has impacted our plans" says Anthony Woods, Chair of the local not-for profit Community Interest Company (CIC). "We've been affected especially by the lack of advertising revenue for the station, despite some extremely attractively-priced packages available for local businesses to advertise to local people. But we are focussing on the future which we think still looks good for Community Radio, and currently we're actively exploring possible grant funding from various

sources for an educational project that we're keen to set up in conjunction with local schools in the South Norfolk area."

"We've had to look at expenditure across all areas of the business, and we realised that our spacious Wymondham studio was being severely under-utilised" says Anthony's fellow SNR Director, and regular #BreakfastBriefing presenter, David Mann. "Happily an opportunity has now arisen for us to arrange to share another existing radio studio facility in the town, the one operated by the long-established charitable organisation, the Wymondham & Attleborough Talking Newspaper (WATN), and still based in central Wymondham. We'd like to say a huge thank you to the Chair and Trustees of the Charity for welcoming

us."

A spokesperson for the Talking Newspaper said "As our own charitable objective of providing community information in audio form is similar to that of the radio station, it makes sense for us to work together, for the benefit of both organisations."

"We're looking forwards to working in shared facilities alongside our new colleagues at the WATN" says South Norfolk Radio's Chair Anthony Woods, "and although we remain two separate organisations, it's obvious that the objectives of both are clearly focussed on serving the local community."

South Norfolk Radio can be heard on-line at www.snradio.uk, through leading radio streaming apps and on Smart Speakers.



YOUTH MUSIC SOCIETY

By Linda White

Wymondham has long had a rich musical scene. We're particularly proud of our young musicians, at a time when arts funding across education is limited. If your child plays an orchestral instrument, Wymondham Youth Music Society would love to welcome them!

Wymondham Youth Orchestra has been running 34 years. It exists as an outlet for enthusiastic and talented pupils to further their musical education. In 2000 we became Wymondham Youth Music Society. Over the years we have evolved to include a highly successful Junior String Group and a Senior Ensemble.

Chris Jaggard Junior Strings tutor said "we welcome beginners up to Grade 3+ and the present group includes violas and cellos as well as violins".

WYMS Musical Director Margery

Baker added that "the Senior Ensemble (orchestra) has gaps for viola and cello in particular, but any orchestral instrument from Grade 4+ upwards to Grade 8+ can find a place with us".

All rehearsals and classes take place on Thursday evenings in term time in the Function Room at Wymondham Rugby Club, Bray Drive, Wymondham NR18 0GQ. This is at the northern end of the new estate off Norwich Common, Wymondham. It's well signposted. Perhaps you would like to visit us before making up your mind? If so please do let us know in advance via email on enquiries@wyms.org.uk.

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We look forward to welcoming you to our merry group of musicians!

Come and see the young musicians in action at a concert at Wymondham Central Hall, 7pm on Thursday 1st December! Tickets on the door at £8 for adults and children free. For further details please see www.wyms.org.uk or contact us on enquiries@wyms.org.uk.



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WYMONDHAM PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY: PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Downward Spiral by Alex Park

By John Staines

Downward Spiral was the judge's favourite image during our Open Print competition on October 25th. The image, taken on an iPhone, perfectly illustrates that expensive photographic equipment is not always essential to achieve a competition score of 10/10. The judge explained that generally about 70% of his score is for technical competence with the other 30% reflecting subjective items that enhance and detract from the image including the "wow" factor that makes the image stand

out from the rest.

The appeal to the judge was also personal in that he had had a frightening experience whilst taking a similar shot so appreciated the author's intent in taking this image.

Alex commented that this staircase image was taken in a Paris hotel during a visit earlier this year, using my iPhone. The information on the phone reads 26mm @ f1.6. Which, of course, is automatically set by the phone. Very little processing was done except to darken the image for dramatic effect.



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GARDEN CLUB GREETINGS

Season's Greetings to Wymondham Magazine Readers from the Garden Club.

The Clubs' December meeting is a Christmas Social - the first since Covid struck - a friendly get-together with Christmas fare, some songs, a fun quiz and the award of the coveted Cookery Cup! It will be on 12th December at Town Green Centre at 7:30pm. Members get free entry and guests are £4.

The 2023 Club Programme will also be available (more on that next month). Good news for any readers thinking of joining the club, the membership fee for 2023 is held at £18 for 2023 - big bargain value for garden lovers.

For further information about the club contact wymondhamgardenclub@gmail.com. Merry Yuletide Everyone!

KEEP ON GREENING!

By Nicola Maunders, Greening Wymondham

With all the bad news, we have some good news - and keep working to make Wymondham a better, greener and more liveable place for everyone.

Over the summer we took part in the Great Big Green Week where amongst other things, people could take stuff for free and there was a very well attended Bat Walk with approximately 50 people attending. In the future, working with Wild Tribe, there will be a clothes swap at the Library on Saturday 26th November between 10am and 12 noon. To say nothing of the restocked Vegepod outside the White Hart with veg and salads to collect.

Our long term work at Browick Road Community Orchard won funds from the National Garden Scheme. It has changed a neglected area into a wonderful place with an orchard, bulbs and wildflowers - with the help of so many local families. Greening Wymondham also received a donation from Waitrose which was presented at the Browick Road Community Orchard.

Next month, Greening Wymondham will give the second generation of primary school leavers their own garden tree to plant or dedicate to their school. With the help of Greening Wymondham a tree will be planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy on Fairland Green to both celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and in memorial, an event organised by Wymondham WI and Wymondham Dementia Support Group.

Check us out on Facebook or our website:
www.greeningwymondham.org or
email us at
greening.wymondham@gmail.com





THE
LOWE
DOWN

With Freddy Lowe



POSITIVE CHEER

When I left Wymondham in September 2022, Wymondham Magazine was kind enough to keep me on as a writer, all the way from my bedroom in Scotland. Not only was it an extremely nice gesture, but it gave me a sense of purpose in those scary first days of university. As the Queen's procession was about to start in Edinburgh, I arrived to cordoned-off roads, heavily armed police officers, high-vis jackets everywhere you turned, and snipers on church roofs. Anything to keep me connected to Wymondham was a godsend, and the magazine was that connection.

(Although, I hear that the snipers were charming. One of my friends waved and got a wave back.)

For our final 2022 print edition, a reflection on the year we've had seems in order. Notably, Generation Covid, who had their GCSEs cancelled back in 2020, finally finished their A-Levels and were able to move on from school. The 2022 Chinese Zodiac was the 'Water Tiger', and according to the Tiger folklore on chinahighlights.com, we Monkey-born people needed to make "comparatively more effort" for our achievements. Nothing sums it up better. A-Levels were the first

“TAYLOR SWIFT, REMINDE ME: MALE OR FEMALE?”

proper exams we had sat. However, we got through the ordeal, from the exams themselves to the dismally pessimistic headlines...which, for Wymondham High, were largely misrepresentative.

Here's to the teachers of Wymondham High, most of whom are professional, fantastic people who work relentlessly to keep their students sane in difficult times. I can only imagine how challenging that is, and they do it tirelessly.

2022 saw the deaths of many public figures, the most notable of course being

Queen Elizabeth II. Among others were Angela Lansbury and Robbie Coltrane, widely known as Jessica Fletcher and Hagrid. I knew them better as Miss Marple and Valentin Dmitrovich Zerkovsky, Coltrane's James Bond character. In *The World is Not Enough*, he saves Pierce Brosnan's life with a walking stick that shoots bullets! (Which was clairvoyantly reminiscent of Hagrid's magic umbrella.) How cool is it to do that for a living?

Angela Lansbury, similarly, was a wonderful and underrated actress. I once chanced upon a couple of Wymondham teachers who were quoting *Mary Poppins* in the corridor. When I stared blankly, they asked incredulously, "you've never seen *Mary Poppins*?" I proudly replied, "no, I'm more of a *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* guy." It might not be a thing you admit out loud with the cool street kids, but we all love that film deep down. Those who deny it are lying to themselves. As mentioned, she also played Miss Marple in the criminally underrated *The Mirror Crack'd* from 1980. It would make a brilliant Christmas present for crime fans!

Speaking of Christmas presents (and of Rubeus Hagrid), this year was brilliant for Potter-related literature.

J.K. Rowling released her sixth crime novel, whilst Tom Felton and Alan Rickman (posthumously) published books about their experience of working on the Potter series. Re: broader literature, Hanya Yanagihara published her third book *To Paradise*. Yanagihara is the author of *A Little Life*, a long but utterly phenomenal bestseller which I have wanted to reread ever since finishing. She could have sat back and bathed in the glory, but instead, she continued writing. How fabulous. She more than deserves the spotlight; any of her books would make brilliant, if emotionally distressing, gifts.

The year is also heavily associated with Taylor Swift, not just because of her new album *Midnights*, but for me personally. I was surrounded by fans of hers growing up, both among schoolmates

and teachers. I remember being asked once if I was a fan, to which I responded, "Taylor Swift, remind me: male or female?" Then, years later when my sister and I went interailing, she said, "ugh, I don't like Taylor Swift, BUT... knowing you, there is one song of hers which you will love," and she played it to me despite herself. It was *I Knew You Were Trouble*, and she was correct. (She knows my tastes well.) I was humming it for the rest of our trip, and now she affectionately rolls her eyes when I mention that it's on my playlist. To this day, it is a phenomenal university cheer-up song.

While dinosaurs like me are quietly catching up on Swift's back catalogue, her 2022 album *Midnights* is unsurprisingly topping all the charts. A Wymondham-era friend of mine got up specifically at 3:00 am to listen to it. That is the dedication we have to her.

Has she ever had an album which hasn't topped the charts? Thank goodness that, in an era of much fear (be that about climate change, political division, or our running tally of 2022 prime ministers), some things remain constant. Taylor Swift will always release an album that completely dominates the charts. People will still get up at 3:00 am for the wackiest of reasons. Now is a more important time than ever to keep those positive constants and to stay sane. So, on that note, Happy December, Wymondham Readers. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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Guest Column

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE



By George Freeman, MP for Mid Norfolk

The movement of more and more people to our beautiful part of Norfolk on the Norwich-Cambridge Corridor, and the associated new housing, creates a huge challenge – and opportunity – for Wymondham and the surrounding villages. With the right strategic vision and plan for sustainable transport (with bike lanes and integrated road, bus and rail links), this could be the catalyst for reviving the historic Town Centre and cementing Wymondham as a beautiful and historic gateway to Mid Norfolk for tourists, small companies and investors heading to the Norwich Research Park.

Without a clear vision and plan, the risk is that the new housing creates an urban sprawl of commuter housing, congestion, pollution and decline of the Town Centre.

Which will it be?

I deeply believe that with a real vision and plan we can unlock a "Rural Renaissance" of local business, enterprise and prosperity in our area, spreading jobs, opportunities and wealth throughout our Mid Norfolk communities, as well as breathing fresh life and vibrancy into our High Streets and services.

Located between Norwich and Cambridge (two of the UK's biggest and fastest-expanding science, research and innovation growth hubs), Wymondham is ideally placed to make the most of this vision. I believe Wymondham Station should be a stunning gateway for tourists, residents, businesses and innovators alike – and that's why I continue to call for a proper regeneration package that finally maximises the potential of this wonderfully historic site, while also ensuring it is finally accessible to ALL.

It is unacceptable that, in 2022, people are unable to access Platform 2 due to a lack of adequate access. It is shameful that people have to travel to either Norwich or Attleborough to change platforms and get on the right side of the track.

While the power to resolve this issue is not directly within my power as the local MP, I have tried on numerous occasions, alongside local councillors, to energise the long campaign to get key stakeholders to finally take action and deliver results. Time and time again however, we have seen those efforts halted by new problems and further, seemingly endless delay – even after we helped to secure £600,000 as

part of the Greater Norwich bid to the Government's Transforming Cities Fund, specifically for access improvements to Platform 2.

Sharing local anger that still no progress had been made, I recently convened another urgent summit with key stakeholders and left them in no uncertain terms that the situation needs to be resolved quickly. Although there are some complexities to overcome, there must not be endless foot-dragging. The community must be able to see results.

Resolving Platform 2's access issues must be the first step of the broader regeneration vision for the Station and I have set out a clear list of actions that I want key stakeholders to rapidly carry out.

Wymondham Station should be a 5G Hub with meeting, community and business incubator spaces, a small supermarket and perhaps some flats for first-time buyers – all packaged in a way that retains the Station's unique beauty and heritage and is accessible to all.

We don't want to turn this into a party-political football. We need all of us who "get it" to come together and speak with one voice.

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"HIGH TIME TO SUPPORT OUR HIGH STREET

By Todd Baker

It is not news that the British high street is in a worrying state of decline. Figures from Power To Change, an organisation providing grants to local communities to invest in 'community businesses', suggest that 16% of shops on the country's high streets are currently empty. Wymondham's high street is sadly becoming an unwelcome example of this concerning trend.

Walking from Town Green to the Market Cross takes in six empty lets, all of which have become vacant in the past three years. This period has invariably been challenging for businesses, let alone independent retailers or restaurants, with the pandemic being served with a chaser of an economic crisis. Indeed, research conducted by PWC last year shows that 62% of people are visiting their high street less now than they were before Covid-19. Can we say, in truth, that our high street was in the strongest place

before these crises came long? Having grown up in Wymondham at the turn of the millennium and returned here in 2020, I am not sure how much our high street has really evolved in this period despite the town seeing vast increases in its population and developments of other facilities such as the Leisure Centre & Kett's Park.

The future of our town centre is for us to decide. The same PWC research found two-thirds of respondents wanting more local, independent retailers and restaurants opening in their towns. Many people I have spoken to in Wymondham pine for the same. For this to happen, we must give confidence to potential investors by ensuring existing businesses continue to perform strongly. We must proactively choose our town centre over a jaunt up the A11 to Norwich or an online order.

We may, perhaps, need to go further still. Communities across the UK are taking these matters into their

own hands. There are now 150 pubs in the UK owned by community groups with 250 pending applications for similar schemes currently underway. This compares to just 14 examples of this ownership model in 2010. There are plentiful examples of community enterprises - cafes, youth centres, retail businesses - breathing new life into empty lets. Just down the road in Diss, the town's Community Team has taken on a lease for a unit which allows a number of smaller traders to split the rent and overheads whilst Norwich Mustard was set up in the wake of Colman's exiting the city in 2020.

Wymondham is full of people who value our town and its community. Whether it is events such as Wynterfest or the Jazz Picnic or the emotion with which people clamoured for change at the Abbey, it is regularly evident that we live in a strong and engaged community. I think it is time we showed this on our high street too.



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Claire Cullens, CEO Norfolk Community Foundation



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BOOK REVIEW

Verity by Colleen Hoover

By **Laura Duffy**, Volunteer at Kett's Books Community Bookshop

"Does he feel like home to you?" This question was asked in a movie called *Midsommar*, directed by Ari Aster. I decided to watch this movie earlier in the year, not long before I read *Verity*. I realised the movie had a lot of similarities with Colleen Hoover's novel (and not just a mutual age restriction). They both include trauma, relationships, and more importantly a sense of perverse perseverance, it needs to be finished.

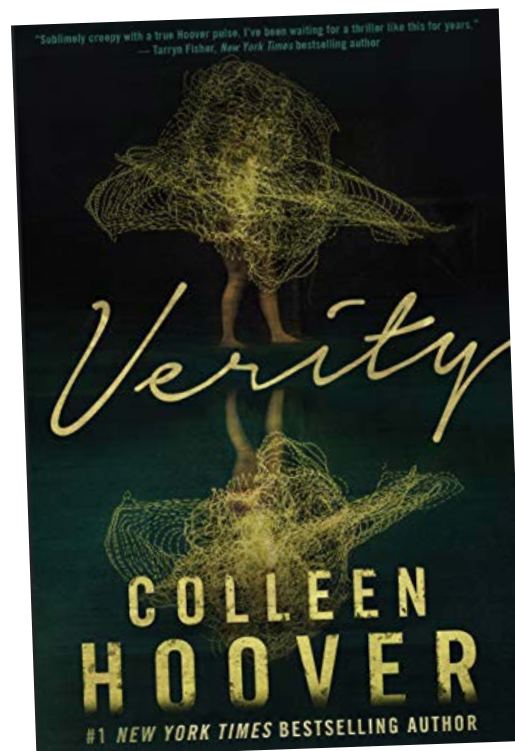
Colleen Hoover is the author who has outsold the Bible by over 3 million copies. How has she done this? Booktok. When TikTok initially launched in 2016, I was not convinced that the app would do me any good. I was happy with YouTube. But in 2018, I decided I would try it, which turned out to be the best idea ever. Booktok was the first thing I came across on TikTok, a whole world of books with many reviews, just waiting to be read. *Verity*, *It Ends With Us* (Colleen Hoover) and *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* (Taylor Jenkins Reid) were the thriving books I saw to begin with, and as I kept searching, there were many more.

Verity was first published in February 2020, just before lockdown. I decided to read it this year and I am not lying when I say that it changed me. Even with the first sentence, you're immediately hooked. Hoover has a way of guaranteeing that the reader is going to read her book and finish it because each starting sentence is weirdly hypnotic. Some deem her to be overrated, but the way she can control and manipulate your emotions is mesmerising.

Before *Verity*, I never had a problem with putting a book down and saving it for another day, until I got to around Chapter 4. There are two perspectives in *Verity* and I think that's what encouraged me to read on. Why two

perspectives? Is one more significant than the other? Something which did become apparent, was that I learnt about different sides of characters, the duplicity engraved in each chapter.

"Does he feel like home to you?" I can assure you, this book will not make you feel homely. You will feel a kaleidoscope of emotions at once; amazement, perhaps unease, and possibly even worry for Colleen Hoover's imagination. Overall, I would recommend this book to anyone who is open to reading something different, something suspenseful and thrilling. I could definitely reread it and still enjoy it just as much as the first time.



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STAY HYDRATED DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON

With the festive season upon us, this will more than likely mean parties, drinking and generally letting ourselves go a little. But keeping hydrated is important.

Your body is mainly made up of water, just over half of a woman and almost two thirds of a man.

Water is super important and helps carry out various tasks including joint lubrication, controlling your temperature, transportation of nutrients and even makes your skin look good!

As an approximate guide, the average adult requires 2-2.5 litres of water per day. The more exercise you do the more you will need. The hotter the climate the more you will need to drink and the older you are the more you will need to drink as your body stores less water and your kidneys aren't as efficient.

Most will come from drinks but some will come from fruit and vegetables. Here are the top ways you can meet your daily water requirement:

1. WATER

It's as simple as that. From the tap or in bottles, still or sparkling.

2. FRUIT JUICE AND SMOOTHIES

Not only are these great for water but they also contain lots of vitamins and minerals, however be aware of the sugar content. A good way to limit sugar is to reduce the fruit and add crushed ice and use water rich fruits like grapes, watermelon or vegetables.

3. MILK

As well as containing water it also has calcium which is great for the bones. Where possible choose semi or skimmed milk to keep the fat content down.

4. TEA OR COFFEE

Again these are good, but if possible try decaffeinated versions as this will reduce the diuretic effects.

If you don't keep up with your water content you may become dehydrated. A good way to tell if you are dehydrated is to look at the colour of your wee. The darker it is, the more dehydrated you are. Other signs could be that you are feeling thirsty, have a dry mouth, feel

dizzy or lethargic.

The diagram is from Bupa, is a great illustration to show the effects of dehydration on your urine.

So, enjoy yourself this winter but make sure you keep hydrated to keep your body in as tip top condition as you can. If you are going out to a party and having some drinks, balance it out with some water when you are home before you go to bed. Your body and head will thank you in the morning!



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With **Paul Jewiss**



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NEW SPONSORS FOR WTUFC

By Andy Poll

Wymondham Town United Youth Football Club has been run on a voluntary basis for its entire 27-year history. The significant population growth in the town over recent years has seen demand for places at the club grow exponentially and the club now runs over 24 teams with more than 400 players (aged 5 to 18 years), making the club one of the largest providers of youth grassroots football in Norfolk.

Trying to ensure as many children as feasibly possible can participate in football has placed significant challenges for the football club with player demand significantly outstripping the available local facilities, including both grass pitch and 3G availability at Ketts Park. The club's growth has also meant the time required for the few volunteers that support on the administrative side has increased dramatically over recent seasons. We would like to express a huge thanks to all who have supported over the



years, although with one or two key people stepping down recently, a large volunteer gap exists and we would welcome and encourage anyone who is interested in supporting (in any capacity) to step forward and contact wtufcchair@gmail.com

Post the worst ravages of the recent pandemic, children and young adults need more and improved facilities than ever before to enable greater access to sporting activities which can help support both mental health and physical wellbeing. Despite all of the headwinds Wymondham Town United Youth Football Club is rightly proud to play a pivotal part in striving to support this aim and afford as many youth sporting opportunities in the community as possible. None of this could be achieved without the ongoing generosity of the local business community who, (despite challenging financial times) have consistently supported the growing football club

with both time and sponsorship to help with the purchase of training kits, equipment and much more.

We would like to express our thanks to all of our local sponsors past and present and particularly those who have recently sponsored our teams over the past year including: Anglia Gas and Heating Ltd, Beyond Any Limits, Middletons Clothing, DragonFly Lettings, Money Properties, R G Durrant and Sons Roofing, KOPPISPACE, Norfolk Mortgages, CARNEL, P&D Tanks, Sam Mallet Roofing Services, Qualifications For Ltd, M.W. Sweepers, Eastern Windows and Doors Ltd, The Crosskeys, Boilercare and Dustguard.

We remain incredibly proud of all our local footballers, volunteers and sponsors and look forward to seeing the club continue to grow and play a vital part in supporting youth football development within the local community.

If you are interested in discussing any of the points raised in this article further, please contact via:

Website/social media: wtufclub.wixsite.com or WTUFC | Wymondham | Facebook

New player enquiries: wtufcnewplayers@gmail.com

Sponsorship opportunities: wtufcsponsorship@gmail.com



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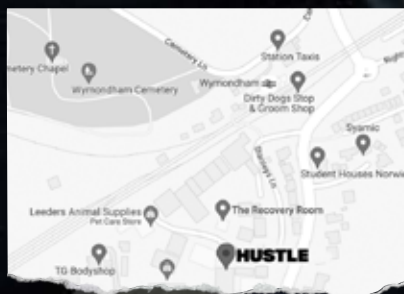
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Thursday 1st December

Youth Music Society Concert
7pm, Central Hall
Tickets £8 on the door, children free.
Questions to enquiries@wymys.org.uk
wymys.org.uk

Friday 2nd December

Meet, Make & Mardle
10am-12pm, Big C Furniture & Craft Shop
Free to attend, bring along your latest project and meet new friends.
01953 603320
www.facebook.com/bigcwymondham

Tree Planting for Queen's Green Canopy
11am, Fairland Green
Join the WI, Dementia Support Group and Greening Wymondham for a tree planting ceremony in honour of Queen Elizabeth II.

Saturday 3rd December

Christmas Coffee Morning
10am-12pm, Methodist Church
Gather for hot drinks and view a display of Cribbs in the Church.

Tree Festival Grand Opening
11am-3pm, Wymondham Abbey
Over 20 trees decorated by community groups and local schools will be on display throughout December. Make sure to pick up a programme for the 12 days of Christmas trail too.
www.wymondhamabbey.org.uk

Christmas Fayre
11am-2pm, Ashleigh Primary School
Festive fun for all the family
www.facebook.com/events/ashleigh-primary-school-nursery/ashleigh-friends-christmas-fayre/499576238467557/

'Old Farts' Music Afternoon
1pm, Ex-Services Club Members Bar
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Charity Horse Racing Night
7pm, Ex-Services Social Club
First race 8pm in the Members Bar
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Christmas Oratorio
7:30pm, St Mary's Church Attleborough
Wymondham Choral Society

performance of Bob Chilcott's Christmas Oratorio and other joyful music for the season. Tickets £10 on the door, cash or cheque only, under 16s free.
www.wymondhamchoralsociety.org.uk

Sunday 4th December

Wynterfest
12pm-5pm, Wymondham Town Centre
The town's main festive event with stalls, fun fair, santa's grotto and independent shops.
www.facebook.com/events/511431530904124

Wymondham Photographic Society Members evening
8pm-10pm, Dell Bowls Club
Guest Speaker: Ian Harard (Street Architecture)
www.wymondham-ps.org.uk

Wednesday 7th December

Wymondham Art Society
7:15pm, Catholic Church
Christmas Social with in-house demonstration and a fun quiz
www.wymondhamart.org

Thursday 8th December

Wymondham Nature Group Indoor Meeting
7:30pm, Town Green Community Centre
"A Year with the Broads Team South", a talk by Norfolk Wildlife Trust's Adam Houlgate, including a wildlife skull identification quiz.
Admission £2.
01508 488337
www.facebook.com/WymondhamNatureGroup

Friday 9th December

Meet, Make and Mardle
10am-12pm, Big C Furniture and Craft Shop
Free to attend, just bring along your latest craft project. Make friends and have a mardle.
01953 603320
www.facebook.com/bigcwymondham

Monday 12th December

Garden Club Christmas Social
7:30pm, Town Green Centre
Annual end of the year club social with Christmas Fare, some songs, a quiz and a few surprises! Presentations of Banksian medal, Presidents Cup & Gavin Brown Cookery trophy. No Show, Club or Craft Table exhibits this month. Members Free, guests £4. For further information about the club contact wymondhamgardenclub@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100077254060337

Tuesday 13th December

Open Door at WMC
10am-12pm, Town Green Centre
All welcome for refreshments and conversation with colouring, jigsaws, crosswords and more.
wymondhammethodistchurch.com/



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Bingo Night
7pm, Ex-Services Social Club
Cash prizes, raffle, eyes down 8pm in the Regal Lounge.
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Tuesday 6th December

Open Door at WMC
10am-12pm, Town Green Centre
All welcome for refreshments and conversation with colouring, jigsaws, crosswords and more.
wymondhammethodistchurch.com

Full Town Council Meeting
7pm, WTC Kett's Park Office
Public welcome
www.wymondhamtowncouncil.org

Full latest listings:
wymondhammagazine.co.uk/whats-on

Charter Market

Every Friday
8am to 2.30pm Market Place

Farmers' Market

Third Saturday
(17th December)
9am to 1pm, Market Place
www.wymondhamtowncouncil.org
01953 603 302

Diabetes Group
2pm-4pm, Fairland Church
Wymondham Ukulele Group will be playing for the group. Everyone is most welcome. For more details email wymdiabetes@gmail.com.
01953 606054

Wymondham Photographic Society
Members Evening
8pm-10pm, Dell Bowls Club
Member Presentation: Alex Park (Infra Red Photography)
www.wymondham-ps.org.uk

Wednesday 14th December

Shoppers' Night Out
4pm-8pm, Town Centre Shops
An evening of chilled Christmas shopping in Wymondham's independent shops. Finish off your festive list with treats and tipples up and down the high street. Earn a free raffle ticket with every purchase for a chance to win a premium Totally Locally hamper.
www.facebook.com/totallylocallywymondham

Friday 16th December

Meet, Make and Mardle
10am-12pm, Big C Furniture and Craft Shop
Free to attend, just bring along your latest craft project. Make friends and have a mardle.
01953 603320
www.facebook.com/bigcwymondham

Police and Crime Commissioner Drop In
1pm-3pm, Wymondham Library
A public Q&A session to ask questions regarding Policing and Crime in Norfolk.
www.norfolk-pcc.gov.uk

Saturday 17th December

Children's Christmas Party
2pm-4pm, Ex-Services Club Regal Lounge
Ticket entry only, details at the bar.

Christingle
3:30pm, Wymondham Abbey
This is just one of the many magical traditions for children at this time of year and we look forward to welcoming everyone from the town to join us to celebrate.
www.wymondhamabbey.org.uk

Music Night with Mark Anthony & Isaac
8pm, Ex-Services Club
Regal Lounge
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Sunday 18th December

Gift Service
10:30am, Methodist Church
Bring your Reverse Advent Calendar
Appeal gift bags of non perishable items to this special service. Email tgc.2016@outlook.com for more information.

Club Christmas Quiz
7:15pm, Ex-services Club
Members Bar
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Tuesday 20th December

Open Door at WMC
10am-12pm, Town Green Centre
All welcome for refreshments and conversation with colouring, jigsaws, crosswords and more.
wymondhammethodistchurch.com/

Vets Christmas Tree Party
11am, Ex-Services Club
Members Bar
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Wymondham Photographic Society
8pm-10pm, Dells Bowls Club
Christmas Buffet and Quiz
www.wymondham-ps.org.uk

Friday 23rd December

Meet, Make and Mardle
10am-12pm, Big C Furniture and Craft Shop
Free to attend, just bring along your latest craft project. Make friends and have a mardle.
01953 603320
www.facebook.com/bigcwymondham

Saturday 24th December

Disco with "Owen"
7pm, Ex-Services Club
Members Bar
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Saturday 31st December

NYE Party with 'The Glamastics'
8pm, Ex-Services Social Club
Ticket only, details at the bar
www.facebook.com/groups/130014680369369

Thursday 12th January

Nature Group Talk
7:30pm, Town Green Centre
"Amazing Amazon – a brief exploration by boat and canoe", by Julia Burton. £2 to attend.
01508 488337
www.facebook.com/WymondhamNatureGroup/

Friday 27th January

Charity Burns Night and Ceilidh
6:30pm-11pm, Central Hall
2-course supper, tombola, piper & Selkirk Grace, pay bar with profits to charities. Dancing to Happy Feet Ceilidh Band. Tickets £25 each from Reeves or online. Organised by the Rotary and Lions Clubs.
www.wymfest.org.uk

SUNDAY CHURCH SERVICES

Alive Church 10.30am, Central Hall
www.alivechurch.org.uk/wymondham

Baptist Church 10.30am and online
www.wymondhambaptist.org.uk

Hope Community Church 9.30am & 11.30am
www.hopecommunitychurch.co.uk

Methodist Church 10.30am
www.wymondhammethodistchurch.com

RC Church 8.30am and 10am
www.wymondhamrcchurch.org.uk

Wymondham Abbey 11am
www.wymondhamabbey.org.uk

* check individual websites for Christmas service times

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