

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### Citizens Advice:

Cambridge 03448 487979

Royston 03444 111444

### Councillors:

County: Susan van de Ven 07905 325574

District: Jose Hales 01763 221058

Sally Ann Hart 07791 233303

### Doctors:

Orchard Surgery, Melbourn 01763 260220

Granta Royston Health Centre 0300 2345555 option 7

Granta Market Hill Surgery, Royston 0300 2345555 option 5

Roysia Surgery, Royston 01763 243166

### Hospital:

Addenbrooke's Hospital 01223 245151

### Police:

Non emergency Number 101

**Samaritans:** 01223 364455 (charges)

116 123 (free)

### Transport:

National Rail Enquiries 03457 484950

Stagecoach East 01223 433250

Myalls of Bassingbourn (Bus 17) 01763 243225

Centrebus (Bus 26) 0116 410 5050

### Utilities:

Anglian Water 03457 145145

Cambridge Water Company 01223 706050

Electricity Emergency & Supply Loss 08007 838838

### Vets:

Melbourne Veterinary Surgery 01763 262696

Royston Veterinary Surgery 01763 242221

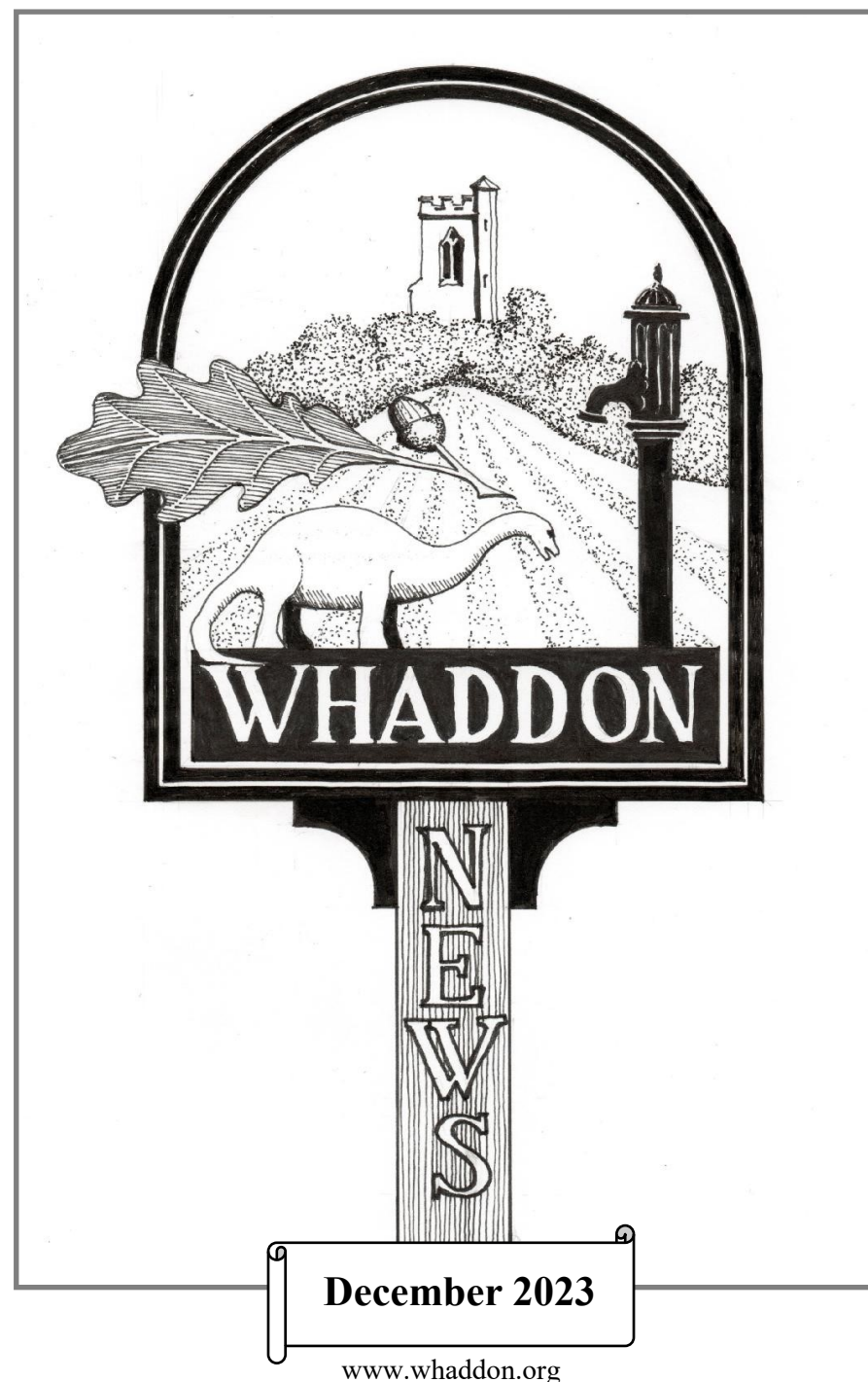
## WHADDON NEWS ADVERTISING RATES

Half page advert for one issue £12.50

Half page advert for one year (4 issues) £40.00

Other options may be available on request.

Contact Angela Bridges, the Parish Clerk:  
whaddonparishclerk@outlook.com



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3rd Dec	Christmas tree lighting	3rd Jan	Coffee morning
6th Dec	Coffee Morning	8th Jan	Parish Council
13th Dec	Charity Quiz	17th Jan	Coffee morning
17th Dec	Carol Service	24th Jan	'A Story in Stone' talk
20th Dec	Christmas lunch	7th Feb	Coffee morning
22nd Dec	Christmas sing-a-long	8th Feb	Parish Council
24th Dec	Informal carols	12th Feb	Newsletter deadline
25th Dec	Family communion	21st Feb	Coffee morning

### NEWSLETTER

*The deadline for the next newsletter is **12th February**. Items of local interest are always welcome.*

*Joan Pascoe C 208062  
joanpascoe@aol.com*

### VILLAGE HALL HIRE

Special rates for those within the village - ideal for birthday parties and most functions.

Village Rate: £9 per hr  
Non-village Rate: £15 per hr

Please contact:  
[whaddonhalltrust@whaddon.org](mailto:whaddonhalltrust@whaddon.org)

### BIN COLLECTION DATES

Thurs 7 Dec	Blue/green	Thurs 25 Jan	Black
Thurs 14 Dec	Black	Thurs 1 Feb	Blue only
Thurs 21 Dec	Blue/green	Thurs 8 Feb	Black
Friday 29 Dec	Black	Thurs 15 Feb	Blue/green
Thurs 4 Jan	Blue only	Thurs 22 Feb	Black
Thurs 11 Jan	Black	Thurs 29 Feb	Blue only
Thurs 18 Jan	Blue/green	Thurs 7 Mar	Black

### Mobile Library

Every 4th Wednesday  
10.00 - 10.30  
Meldreth Road

Wednesday 27 December

Wednesday 24 January

Wednesday 28 February

### Friends or tradesmen visiting ?

The roads through our village are not that wide so it may be safer for their cars or vans to be parked off the road either on your drive or, if that's not possible, in the village hall car park for the day.



### LIST OF PARISH COUNCILLORS

Mr Lee Ginger	Chair	07850 252015	lee.ginger@btinternet.com 14 Carlton Rise, Melbourn SG8 6BZ
Dr Nigel Strudwick	Vice Chair	C 207434	3 Town Farm Close
Mr Will Elbourn	Councillor	C 208955	College Farm, Church Street
Anita Birch	Councillor	07748 908164	68 Bridge Street
Joanne Hart	Councillor	C208009	108 Church Street
Deborah Townsend	Councillor	07388 033616	36 Bridge Street
Claire Hales	Councillor	07901 523525	5 Bridge Street
Mrs Angela Bridges	Clerk/ Finance Officer	07565 381203	whaddonparishclerk@outlook.com

### NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH TEAM

Malan Peyton	Whaddon Village Coordinator	Ermine Farm, Dyers Green	C 207358
<b>Coordinators:</b>			
Karen Coningsby	Meldreth Road/Church Corner	17 Church Street	C 207514
Carole Aldred	Church Street/Town Farm Close/ St Marys Close	104 Church Street	C 208147
Maria Mould	Lower Bridge Street / Ridgeway Close	39 Bridge Street	C 207231
Helen Smith	Upper Bridge Street	9 Bridge Street	C 207631
Malan Peyton	Dyers Green	Ermine Farm Dyers Green	C 207358

### Local Enforcement:

Neighbourhood Policing Team (Cambourne):

[www.cambs.police.uk/LocalPolicing/SouthCambs/Cambourne](http://www.cambs.police.uk/LocalPolicing/SouthCambs/Cambourne)

### Dial 999 to report a crime actually happening or when lives are at risk.

For a non-emergency matter please consider using [www.cambs.police.uk/report](http://www.cambs.police.uk/report) or web chat **#safercambs** to report a crime. Both of these are likely to have a quicker response time than dialling 101.



## Bassingbourn Community Library

The Old School Community Centre  
Telephone : 07593 853189

[bassingbourncommunity.library@gmail.com](mailto:bassingbourncommunity.library@gmail.com)

Your local volunteer run library has a stock of over 5000 books, and we give access to the Cambridgeshire County Library, from where you can order almost any book.

*And our café is open to sell tea, coffee, cold drinks and delicious treats.*

### Normal Opening Hours

Monday	2 - 4.30pm
Thursday	2 - 4.30pm 6 - 8pm
Saturday	10 - 12 noon



**Library membership is free – so join us today!**



01223 207325

[www.whaddongolfcentre.co.uk](http://www.whaddongolfcentre.co.uk)

Tuesday to Sunday

**Open to All**

9 Hole Par 3 Approach Course

Bar

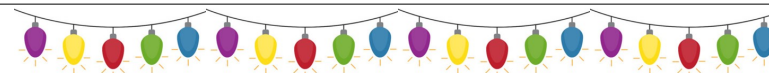
Driving Range

Coffee

Tuition

Snacks and Ice Creams

Newspapers



### Village Hall Christmas tree lighting and decorating

As last year's Village Hall Christmas Tree decorating was such a huge success, bringing so many new and existing residents of the village together, we have decided to make it an annual event.

This year's tree decorating will be taking place on **Sunday 3 December 2023 from 4.30 pm**, please do come along to help decorate and light it up, it won't be the same without you. We hope to light the tree just after 5pm.

So this is your chance to get creative and for those who were sadly unable to make it last year or have moved into the village recently, we would love to see you and encourage each household within the village to bring either a homemade or bought decoration to place on the tree, though if you have children and they would like to make one each, please do encourage them to do so, we will find space.

There is no colour theme, so please be as colourful as you like, perhaps it's a theme you have at home. The decoration should be no bigger than 8 cm across to enable each house to have their decoration on display, feel free to bring more than one.

Mulled wine, a non-alcohol option and minced pies will be available. Though there will not be a charge for this, small contributions would be gratefully received.

This is not just a children's event; it would be lovely to see as many people as possible from the village.

Our delightful village choir have kindly agreed to lead us through some carols once again following the lighting of the tree to boost the festive cheer still further.

For reassurance, all the beautiful decorations made and brought along last year have been carefully stored and will be used to decorate the hall walls for Christmas.

If you would like to come along or are unable to but would like your decoration placed on the tree for you, please contact Nikki Cross by email on [nikki3004@live.co.uk](mailto:nikki3004@live.co.uk) and confirm numbers attending **as soon as possible** to ensure we can cater accordingly.

Looking forward to seeing you all.



### Whaddon Christmas Lunch



**Wednesday 20th December 12:30 for a 13:00 lunch.**

at Whaddon Village Hall

Lunch has been available to those over 65 and has been popular the last couple of years. Hopefully we will be able to keep this a FREE community event with the generosity of villagers and local businesses.

Wear something festive and enjoy the festive cheer.

Please advise of any dietary needs.

**RSVP:** [DeborahTownsend@btinternet.com](mailto:DeborahTownsend@btinternet.com),

01223 208247 by **9th December** please.



## ST MARY'S CHURCH WHADDON

### December Services at St Mary's Whaddon

Sunday 3rd December	9.30am	Morning Prayer
Sunday 10th December	9.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday 17th December	6.00pm	Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies
Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve)	-- 5.00pm	No 9.30am Service Informal Carols - bring candles, torches, for a candle lit evening
Monday 25th December (Christmas Day)	10.00am	Family Holy Communion Service at Whaddon
Sunday 31st December	--	No Service

### 2023 Christmas Card Competition

This autumn the PCC again organised a competition for children under the age of 16 living or associated with the parish to design the cover of the PCC's Christmas card, which is distributed to every household in the parish. This year we received 27 colourful and lively entries spread across the three age groups, and which gave the judges a tough task. After much deliberation, the results are as follows:

Overall winner and winner in the 5 - 10 age group: Olivia Coningsby

Winner in the 11 - 16 age group: Lucy Hughes

Highly Commended in the 11 - 16 age group: Connie Hills

Highly Commended in the 5 - 10 age group: Harry Hughes

Winner in the Under 5s age group: Martha Timoney

Highly Commended in the Under 5s age group: Freya Kristensen

Congratulations to our winners, who will receive their book tokens and certificates shortly. All entries will be on display at the back of the church in December.

St Mary's Whaddon PCC

### Contact Details for Rev. Helen Orr

Tel: 07761 241190 Email: vicar@whaddon.org

My days in the parishes are Tuesday and Thursdays and weekend services



## RECENT INFORMATION FROM CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

### E-scooters and e-bikes

E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming a popular mode of transport and when bought from a reputable seller, with the correct battery and charger, and maintained well, they can be used safely.

Simple tips can help reduce the risk of overheating a battery:

- Use the correct charger for your battery, and make sure to buy from a reputable seller
- Make sure your battery and charger meet UK safety standards – look for the CE mark
- Ideally, don't charge your e-bike or e-scooter overnight or while you are sleeping. If you must charge overnight, charge the bike/scooter in a room away from escape routes, close the door to the room and ensure the room has a smoke detector in it
- Keep an eye out for warning signs that your battery might be failing and becoming a fire risk – if the battery is getting very hot, making a noise, smoking, leaking or bulging or the charger cable is frayed, stop using it and get a replacement. It is normal for batteries to feel warm when charging but if it is extremely hot to touch it is a sign it may be defective and could start a fire
- Let your battery cool after use before charging it
- Unplug your charger once the battery has charged.

**Rothwell's**  
Carpet Cleaning

01223 832 928  
[www.Rothwells.biz](http://www.Rothwells.biz)

### Carpet Cleaning

#### Stone Floor, Upholstery & Rug Cleaning.

*A few points that make us stand out from the others,*

Rothwell's has been in business since 1993.

We're an honest local family firm.

Our large truck mounted machines mean more cleaning & drying power for the best results possible.

Members of both the NCCA and TACCA.

We will move the furniture for a thorough clean.

100% satisfaction or it's FREE.

*Call Oliver and Max Campbell for expert help today.*

Rothwell's, Malting End, Kirtling, Newmarket, CB8 9HH



**SUSAN VAN de VEN** Cambridgeshire County Councillor

### **Zoom Cuppa Surgeries: Mondays 5 - 6PM**

If you'd like to meet with your councillors by Zoom, to bring any concerns or ask any questions, please come along to our weekly Zoom Cuppa Surgery, now on Mondays from 5-6 PM. Please contact Sally Ann for a link: [Sallyannhart@riskingonpurpose.com](mailto:Sallyannhart@riskingonpurpose.com).

Alternatively, you can contact Susan on 07905325574 or email [susanvanden5@gmail.com](mailto:susanvanden5@gmail.com)

### **Monthly Newsletter:**

Susan writes a monthly e-newsletter on issues affecting our area – please do let her know if you'd like to receive it, or would like anything to be included in it. Susan van de Ven County Councillor for Bassingbourn, Melbourn, Meldreth and Whaddon.

### **ANTHONY BROWNE MP**

Surgeries are regularly held and can be booked by email, telephone or letter.

**Email:** [Anthony.browne.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Anthony.browne.mp@parliament.uk)

**Tel:** 01223 603677

**Address:** Broadway House, 149-151 St Neots Road, Hardwick, CB23 7QJ



**Specialising in DIY jobs around the home and garden.  
Need help with DIY call for a no obligation estimate.**

**Ashley Ives, High Street, Orwell**

**Best contacted on my mobile: 07900 815 262**

**Or Email: [4ashley.ives@gmail.com](mailto:4ashley.ives@gmail.com)**

**If you prefer, leave a message on 01223 207 342**

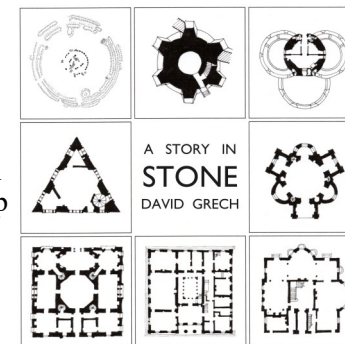
**Public liability insured, DBS cleared, references available**

### **Work to St Mary's Whaddon**

The sharp-eyed among you might have noticed that we have had contractors back in St Mary's to undertake more builders' work in advance of the next phase of the new heating in the church. This builders' work involves some more replastering, this time at the west end of the south aisle, and excavating pipe trenches to run in front of both the north and south doors. At the same time the builders will install new matwells and carry out repairs to the tiled flooring, removing the current trip hazards by the north door. So far only the defective plaster at the west end of the south aisle has been removed, leaving the stonework exposed to allow the wall to dry out before the new lime plaster is applied, but we hope that the rest of the work will be completed either before Christmas or early in the new year. Once the builders have finished, we will then be able to commission the heating engineers to install four more radiators at the west end of church.

This work is being funded by the PCC and, to help with that, a fund-raising talk will be held on the evening of **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 7.30pm**, in the Village Hall. David Grech will give an illustrated talk entitled **A Story in Stone**, which will trace the story of English Architecture through 25 buildings in the care of English Heritage (and as a follow-up to his 2021 talk on buildings of the National Trust). Tickets are £7:50 each and include a glass of wine or soft drink, and can be purchased from David Grech, Spring Cottage, Bridge Street (01223 208938) or the Whaddon Golf Centre.

St Mary's Whaddon PCC




### **N. HERTS AND DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

The Royston office is open **Monday and Wednesday 9.30am to 12 noon.**


To contact the local CAB please call 01462 689801 and leave a message or email [northhertscab.org.uk](mailto:northhertscab.org.uk)

The CAB also hold a session at the **Melbourn Hub** on **Wednesdays 9.30am to 11.30am.** No need to book - just drop in.

Alternatively contact the CAB national phone service: Tel 0800 144 8848.



## Christmas at Whaddon Golf Centre.



Wednesday 13 December 7.30 for 8.00pm Christmas Quiz.


Friday 22 December 7.00 for 8.00pm Christmas Carols and Sing along  
Mulled wine and mince pies for St Mary's Church Whaddon.

**Christmas Opening:**

Sunday 24 December 9.00am - 3.00pm  
Open again after informal carols in church

25 December to 8 January Closed

Tuesday 9 January Open as usual.





## Age UK - OUR SERVICES

Age UK Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is your local independent charity working with and for older people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our objectives are to help older people to maintain their independence and health and wellbeing, by providing services that meet individual needs.

We can provide support to older individuals and their carers, to connect to other services or signpost on a range of issues which include:

Benefits and Allowances. Finding Help at Home. Residential/Nursing Home Care. Housing Issues. Domiciliary Care. Safeguarding. Aids and Adaptions etc.

### Services include:-

**Information Services:** Information & advice  
Visiting support service

**Social Opportunities:** Day services and friendship clubs  
Sharing time and telephone befriending  
Volunteering

**Practical Support:** Cambridgeshire Handyperson and Home Checks  
Community Wardens  
Home Support  
Hospital Discharge and Admission Support

**Contact:** 0300 666 9860 Mon - Fri 9am - 3pm  
infoandadvice@ageukcap.org.uk  
www.ageukcap.org.uk



**Located in Wimpole Village Hall and serving the surrounding villages.**

**Open Monday to Friday during term time.**

**For 2 to 4 year olds.**

Highly experienced staff provide stimulating learning experiences through play and structured activities.

Spacious, versatile indoor play space and exciting garden area.

Dedicated Rising 5s session, links with local primary schools.

For more information visit: [www.mothergoosepreschool.co.uk](http://www.mothergoosepreschool.co.uk)

email: [admin@mothergoosepreschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@mothergoosepreschool.co.uk) or

phone: 01223 208527.

### REGULAR ACTIVITIES AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Monday	17.00 - 19.00	Knit and Natter
Tuesday	09.30 - 10.30	Yoga
	17.45 - 19.15	Dog Training
	20.00 - 21.00	Table Tennis
Wednesday	10.30 - 12.00	Coffee morning (1st & 3rd Wed )
Thursday	18.25 - 20.25	Pilates
Friday	09.15 - 11.30	Yoga
	17.45 - 19.15	Dog training
	20.00 - 22.00	Royston & District Model Railway Club

## Nature Notes cont'd

and verges, with the low winter sunshine behind them. *Lunaria annua* (biennial honesty) and *Lunaria rediviva* (perennial honesty) have common names of moonwort, penny flower, silver dollars and money-in-both-pockets. Its pink, purple or white flowers show in April and are much loved by bees.

The year's best meteor shower, the Geminids, with a possible 150 meteors an hour will best be seen on 14/15<sup>th</sup> December when the moon is but a "waxing crescent on the peak" as they say! Each meteor shower has a "radiant", a point in the sky from where it seems to emanate. The Geminids' radiant is near to the star of Castor in the Gemini constellation (look to the south-west, find Orion's Belt and then look above and to the left), and when you see your first shooting star of the night, don't forget to make a wish.

The Full Cold Moon is on 27<sup>th</sup> December. Although not a Super moon, there is something about the brilliance of a winter moon that casts intensely dark shadows from trees and hedgerows... and people. Have a care not to step on a person's shadow. Folklore says that it can cause that person suffering. Don't ask! I don't know. January's full moon, called the Wolf moon, is on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

Perry Littleboy  
Bassinbourn

### Bus times between Whaddon and Royston

#### **To Royston** (from Bridge Street)

- buses leave for Royston calling at Tesco, Royston Station and Bus Station at:

**08h31** on Mondays to Fridays – **Bus 17** direct

**09h40** on Wednesdays only – **Bus 15** via Meldreth Road

**10h15** on Mondays to Saturdays – **Bus 17** via Meldreth Road and Melbourn.

#### **Return Buses**

- buses leave Royston Bus Station at:

**12h30** on Wednesdays only – **Bus 15** via Meldreth Road

**13h10** on Mondays to Saturdays – **Bus 17** via Melbourn and Meldreth Road

**17h10** on Mondays to Saturdays – **Bus 17** direct

**(Please tell** the driver if you want to travel to Whaddon)

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#### **Bus 17 between Cardiff Place and Royston on Mondays to Saturdays**

##### **To Royston**

**08h28** (not Saturdays), **10h13**, **12h15**, **14h40**, **16h40**

##### **Return Buses**

- buses leave Royston Bus Station at:

**09h10**, **11h10**, **13h10**, **15h10** and **17h10**

**(Please tell** the driver if you want to travel to Cardiff Place)

## The Whaddon village email list and web site in 2023

As a number of families have moved into the village recently, I just wanted to summarise what we have in Whaddon for communication.

**Email list:** this is probably the most immediate way of finding out what is going on in Whaddon. All you have to do is send an email to **emaillist@whaddon.org** asking to be added to the list, and I will gladly do so. There are usually no more than three to five messages in an average week, and I promise not to clog your inboxes with messages.

- The Parish Council sends round not just information relating to council meetings, but also very timely public service announcements—the usefulness of it was demonstrated when we were all restricted at the height of Coronavirus;
- The Village Hall Trust announces its public events;
- The Churchwardens send round weekly news and information about St Mary's;
- And lastly, we have heard about villagers announcing items for collection, Teddy bear hunts, Halloween pumpkin competitions, various jigsaws, or asking for recommendations, and also messages about lost and found pets and keys.

Emails from the Whaddon email list come from **emaillist@whaddon.org**. As the one who runs the list, I respect everyone's privacy, and individuals are only on the list because they have given me their explicit permission to be contacted for the purposes of village-wide emails ONLY. Remember, you only have to drop me an email to be removed and I will do it immediately.

**Don't forget that we also have the web site (<http://www.whaddon.org/>) and Facebook (WhaddonCambs). Ideas and especially contributions for both would be welcome!**

Nigel Strudwick

### Soft Plastic Recycling



We are now collecting soft plastics at the Village Hall. We are no longer collecting blister packs and the wheelie bin is being repurposed for soft plastics.

Soft plastics are all those things that you can't put in the District Council blue bin, such as food bags, cereal liners, bubble wrap, salad bags etc. Anything with this pictured logo, which sometimes says 'not at kerbside'.

Thank you for helping making Whaddon slightly more sustainable. Any queries, then please just contact Paul Evans at [paulevans13@btinternet.com](mailto:paulevans13@btinternet.com) or 07876117796

## Whaddon Parish Council Matters

### Whaddon Gap road safety scheme

The scheme was finally completed and almost everyone agrees that it is a major improvement to road safety at Whaddon Gap. Once again, thanks to all who have helped us achieve this major safety improvement at a junction that has been the scene of numerous near misses and accidents.

### Whaddon Parish Plan

The Parish Council has begun to set up working groups for some of the areas highlighted in the plan in particular to set up a 'Sustainable Whaddon' group, to look at sustainability, ecology and environmental issues. We are very grateful to Paul Evans who has volunteered to head up this activity and is currently undertaking a training course to help him in this venture. We are also talking to the Physical

Activity Locality Co-ordinator of South Cambs District Council, to look at starting additional leisure activities for villagers as outlined in the Parish Plan. Watch for further news in the village email and newsletter in the new year on both these schemes.

### Byway 22

The width restriction has stopped larger vehicles from using the Byway but unfortunately a few large vehicles have managed to drive around the post on one side. We shall be placing an additional wooden post to stop this in the near future. Generally, the scheme has increased safety for walkers, cyclists and horse riders who use this route frequently.

### Weedkilling along the edge of our roads

You may have noticed that County Highways have stopped routine weed treatment on pavements and roads,



### Village Garden & PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Family run Business based on Meldreth Road

Grass Cutting, Hedge Cutting, Fencing, Pressure Washing, Gutters, Plastering and much more...

Contact us:

Neil - 07540605860

Suzanne - 07835400637

Home - 01223 207960

Email - villagegardenandproperty@gmail.com



Greater spotted woodpecker

Our most common woodpecker will find the most sonorous tree or telegraph post (including the metal cap) to strike at between 10 and 40 pecks a second but because their beaks are attached to their skull by a spongy cartilage, as well as having a tongue that wraps up inside the skull and acts as an additional shock-absorber, they do not seem to take harm.

This month is a good time to learn to identify our trees without the "tell" of a leaf shape. Each species of tree tends to have its own distinctive "jizz", something that you learn to recognise and helps you identify trees without much hesitation. I mentioned the growing catkins on a hazel, which has smooth shiny bark and is multi stemmed, particularly if it is a "lapsed pollard" (has been pollarded at some point in the past). So that one is easy. Young beech still hold on to their withered pale brown leaves in December (a habit of

some species which is called marcescence and a tree which displays marcescence is said to be everciduous!) so they are quite easy to identify. Even if your beech has lost its leaves, they have a straight trunk, few low branches and their bark is stone-smooth and grey in colour but, significantly, their leaf buds are thin and narrow, like the finest of paint brushes hardened by varnish. Horse chestnut have low branches that turn up at the ends with bulbous sticky buds. The other tree with branches that hang down and turn up at the ends is the Ash, but they are the only tree with black (actually very dark brown) looking buds. And then silver birch is easy because the bark is paper-thin, pale with black lenticels or cross "cuts" and slender branches. So that is five trees you know. We will do five more in February.

We have mentioned Ash Dieback in earlier articles, but another blight effecting our gardens is box blight. Wimpole Hall recently followed Monty Don's lead in grubbing up their boxwood parterre at the front of the house as the apparent inevitability of infection required a change of garden plan. The disease of box leaves and stems is caused by two closely related fungi, *Calonectria pseudonaviculata* and *Calonectria henricotiae*. It was first discovered in the UK only in 1994 and then 4 years later in New Zealand, since then it has spread across Europe, Turkey and now the US and Canada. The pathogen thrives in wet conditions. The fungus doesn't kill the roots of the plant but the damage to leaves and branches makes it unsightly in one's garden. The fungus is not easily defeated by fungicides and the spores can remain viable in leaf litter for 6 years. The RHS website has good advice on how to control the blight if you have an infestation.

Susie Dent reminds me of a word that seems to have been used only in the early 1600s and is now obsolete. It is apricity, which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as the warmth of the sun on your back on a chilly winter's day. What a terrific word. Let's un-obsolete it.

Nacreous is another fabulous word, meaning opalescent or pearly and describes the characteristic colour and transparency of those discs of honesty seed pods, held aloft by the plant's stiff dead stems, that stand out in hedgerows



Honesty seed pods



## NATURE NOTES

I write this in November and the tawny owls are very active at night and will still be heard in December, often around 3am in the morning, with the female's "Ker-wick" and the male's "Who-hoo" surprisingly loud. They are mapping out territories and breeding holes, but if last year's young bird, evicted from its natal home, should fly through one of these territories, then all hell breaks loose, with blood-curdling shrieks as he or she is chased away by the resident adults. Does anyone else find that there is something atavistic about hearing two tawny owls serenading the darkness, both unsettling and welcoming at the same time, and difficult to turn to sleep again?

Lawn mowing has long ceased as grass won't grow after three nights of below 5° temperatures. I wonder whether we are in for another harsh twelfth month. Last December, we had 10 days of bitter cold and heavy snow that ended abruptly on 18<sup>th</sup> December with a night of 11° and a day at 14°. The effect was like a hairdryer, on a low setting, being drawn over the fields and verges, revealing the grasses, all beaten down, and the thistle and hogweed stems snapped from the weight of the snow blanket. We all lost many treasured garden plants as a result and our roads suffered cruelly. 2023 must have been a good year for tyre manufacturers, as well as garden centres!

It is also 60 years since the UK recorded its coldest and most prolonged freeze since 1740. It was 1963, and it snowed from Christmas Day till March, with some snowdrifts 20ft deep and even the sea froze on the shoreline in places. No wonder the No 1 Christmas hit was the Beatles' "I want to hold your hand..." just to keep mine from freezing.

A snowy track is a great place to go looking for the footprints of animals and birds. I discovered one morning that a hare had skirted around our garden perimeter the night before and yet we have never seen a hare around our garden before. Their spoor is unmistakeable, with four prints in a T-shape, like a mask. The two eyes are actually the hind feet being placed beyond where the front right paw (the mouth) and the front left paw (the nose) has landed.

Depending on how fast the hare is moving depends on the length of reach of the bound. Rabbit prints, again often in a T-design, are much closer together and, unlike the more solitary hare, will often be a jumble of prints where a number of rabbits have been crossing and re-crossing each other's tracks. Prints that are dog-like, slim and long clawed are possibly a fox. Badger prints are broad, almost elliptical, and show five toe pads side by side, and muntjac have two long pronged hoof marks and, if running, the slots will be more splayed.

It doesn't take nature long to heal itself after prolonged cold and my journal for 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> December last year reminds me that the hazels were putting out their male catkins, small and green at first but lengthening over the weeks and turning yellow with pollen. Also dunnoek, robin and great tit were all delivering their spring song and the greater spotted woodpecker was declaring his territory and drumming for a mate.



which is why weeds have been allowed to grow unfettered. There was no consultation on this and we and other parish councils have taken them to task. In some places it has left our roads and villages looking shabby and unloved and could, in time, undermine kerbs and road surfaces. We have been promised an opportunity to contribute to a review that they have promised to undertake in December. More will be known by the next copy of the Whaddon Newsletter.

### Melbourn and District Warden Scheme

This local charity warden scheme exists to give social contact and practical assistance with eleven wardens calling daily on sixty-three vulnerable people. As you can imagine, this provides an excellent service to these folk in local villages, which includes Whaddon. Currently the scheme receives funding (£8,500) from Cambridge County Council but

this is likely to cease from next year. The Warden Scheme have produced a long-term financial strategy to see them through the next ten to eleven years. This year, the PC, together with our own local charity, the Alfred Palmer's Trust, have given jointly a small financial donation and we are minded to give another donation next year to help keep this valuable scheme alive.

### Parish Council meetings

These normally take place on the second Monday of each month at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. There is no meeting in December so the next meeting will be held on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024**.

Minutes of PC meetings are on the village website [www.whaddon.org](http://www.whaddon.org) and on the noticeboard at the Village Hall in Church Street.

*Compiled by Lee Ginger*

### PC Repairs

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## Whaddon Cricket Club 2023 - Fixtures and Results

DATE	MATCH	VENUE	RESULT
23 April	Longstowe	Away	Loss
30 April	Steeple Morden	Away	Cancelled
14 May	Sandon	Home	Win
21 May	Huffer XI	Home	Loss
18 June	Train Boys	Home	Cancelled
25 June	Bassingbourn	Away	Win
2 July	Sandon	Away	Loss
9 July	Royston Dads	Home	Win
23 July	Guilden Morden	Away	Win
26 July	Royston Misfits	Home	Win
6 August	Cantabs	Home	Win
13 August	Cambceylon	Home	Loss
3 September	Church St v Bridge St	Home	Win by Church Street
10 September	Hare Street	Away	Cancelled



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## Table Tennis in the Village Hall Tuesdays 20:00 to 21:00



Table tennis has now been running for about 9 months since restarting after shutting down for Covid. There are about half a dozen regular players.

We have two table tennis tables and other equipment is provided. The cost is £2.00 per person per week.

Anyone who would like to join us are very welcome. An hour of fun and exercise and an opportunity to meet other villagers.

Those interested please contact Nigel Strudwick, [ncs3@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ncs3@cam.ac.uk)

Hope to see some new faces soon!



## Whaddon - White Poppy Appeal

A big thank you to everyone who bought a white poppy. £25 was donated to the Peace Pledge Union (<https://www.ppu.org.uk/>)

Paul Evans. [Paulevans13@btinternet.com](mailto:Paulevans13@btinternet.com) or 07876117796

## ARRINGTON GARDEN CENTRE

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The American heavy four engine B-17 "Flying Fortress" bombers conducted unescorted daylight bombing raids on industrial centres in Germany and other important wartime strategic targets all over Europe. They did suffer crippling losses and it was not until the Americans developed effective long-range fighter escort aircraft that they started to reduce these losses. In total, they flew 340 missions from Bassingbourn until 25<sup>th</sup> April 1945 but they lost more bomber aircraft from Bassingbourn (197) than from any other American airfield in the UK.

The most well-known aircraft to operate from Bassingbourn was the Memphis Belle which was said to be the first US aircraft to complete a full tour of twenty-five missions. There is some debate about that and the records show that another B-17 aircraft, 'Hell's Angels', based at nearby RAF Molesworth, beat the Memphis Belle by some six days! The American authorities wanted the aircraft and its crew to undertake a tour of the country to raise morale and US war bonds but they were worried that the name Hell's Angels may prove a little controversial in America, so they chose the Memphis Belle instead. The crew of the Belle were visited by the King and Queen at Bassingbourn on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1943, before they left for home. The Supreme Allied Commander, Dwight D. Eisenhower also visited Bassingbourn, on 11th April 1944 and christened a B-17 bomber 'Ike' with a bottle of Mississippi river water!



Memphis Belle crew

There are two films about the Memphis Belle. The first from 1943 (directed by the acclaimed American director, William Wyler, is in colour and shows a lot of the aircraft flying over our local wartime area). The other is the 1990 Hollywood film, some of which was filmed at Duxford. One of its stars, the B-17 aircraft that is based at Duxford, Sally B, is decorated on one side to represent the Memphis Belle. The real 1943 Memphis Belle is now fully restored and rests in the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, Ohio.

Another little-known fact is that during the war, Mettle Hill, the local road between Meldreth and Kneesworth, was closed off because it was used to store bombs for Bassingbourn. They were also kept on Byway 22 down towards Dyers Green. The bombs were not all taken away until winter 1947/48!

The entry point to the bomb storage area was at the 'Wireless Station' at the top of the hill from Kneesworth, where there was also a small building that housed the radio transmitters serving RAF Bassingbourn.

The American Air Force departed from Bassingbourn on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1945 and the RAF returned the next day.

*To be continued - Peacetime to Closure.*  
*Lee Ginger*

## WHADDON POPPY APPEAL 2022

Once again, on behalf of The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal I would like to thank the villagers of Whaddon for their generosity in donating towards the appeal.

In total we raised a cash total of £503.53 which although slightly lower than last year's total, doesn't take into account any donations made via online banking using the RBL QR code. Thank you to everyone who also donated in this way.

I would like to thank Kate French and Gill Taylor for their help in carrying out door to door collections around the village and also Richard and Lorna Green at the Whaddon Golf Centre for hosting a collection box.

Also many thanks to Whaddon Parish Council for their kind donation and the congregation of St. Mary's Church who, together with representatives of Bassingbourn Barracks, came out in force to the Remembrance Sunday service and donated generously.

Henry Burgess

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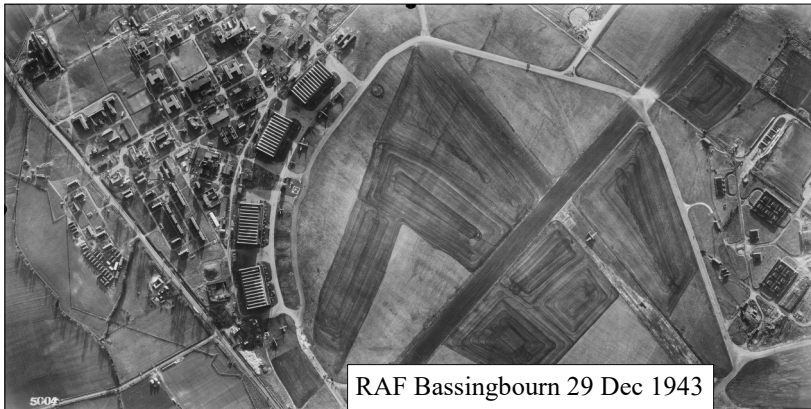
# TIMES PAST

## Bassingbourn Airfield (1)

### *Tales from the Bassingbourn 'Country Club'*

This is the first of a series of short articles about our largest and most famous neighbour, Bassingbourn Airfield. This is not a full history but I have carefully checked all sources and dates. With three different users – the Royal Air Force, the American Air Army Air Force and the British Army, a lot of history has been created at Bassingbourn which continues to this day with the Army's new Mission Ready Training Centre.

### The beginning...



In the 1930s, it became clear that storm clouds of war were forming in Europe and there was a major effort to build up military infrastructure and hardware. As part of this, RAF Bassingbourn was constructed by John Laing & Son between 1937 and 1939 at a site that was on low ground between several tributaries of the River Cam. The area had been long cleared of forest and tended to be swampy and unstable, and because the boggy ground produced a persistent mist over the large meadow, the site was considered ideal for airfield camouflage. The four large hangars were built in a semi-circle on the south-eastern side of the airfield and are all very much still there today.

The technical site was built with permanent, kerbed streets and landscaped. Originally treeless, Bassingbourn was made one of the most attractive RAF stations by the planting of hundreds of plum trees as part of the project.

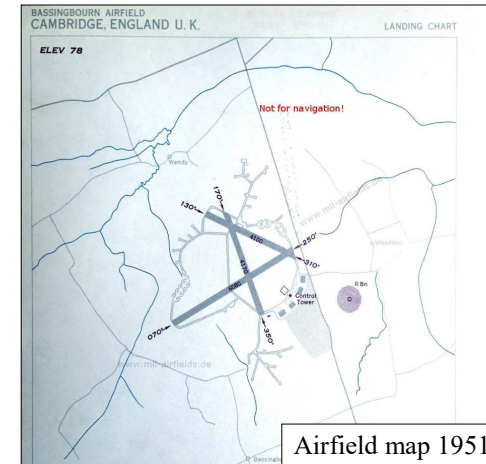
Hawker Hind light bomber



Bristol Blenheim light bomber



The runways were originally all grass and the first RAF aircraft landed there on 2nd May 1938. RAF Bassingbourn became an Operational Training Unit and retained that role at the outbreak of the Second World War. It remained unscathed until 5th April 1940 when an isolated German raider dropped ten bombs. In August that year, eleven men were killed and fifteen injured by a bomb from an enemy aircraft which was dropped on a barrack block.



Aircraft development was proceeding rapidly, however and they inevitably became much larger and heavier. As such, the grass runways soon became not fit for purpose and were being heavily rutted. In 1941 work started on the construction of concrete runways which were then extended further from August 1942. In all, apart from the three long runways, over seven miles of taxiway were built. Four aircraft dispersal areas were created, the most interesting of which was Dispersal Area D which was built in the grand avenue of Wimpole Park, the tree-lined entrance to Wimpole Hall. This was across the main A14 (A1198) from the airfield and bombers

using this dispersal had to cross the road to marshal for take-off. Enough hard standing was created to accommodate sixty-seven bombers.

Bassingbourn continued its task of training aircrews and served as a refuelling base for bombers flying to targets in Germany and Northern Italy. May 1942 saw the famous "Thousand Bomber" raid on Cologne and to raise this number, Bomber Command employed every aircraft capable of taking to the air, including 20 Wellington Bombers from Bassingbourn which were primarily used for training. Subsequently, aircraft from here often contributed to major raids.

### The opening of the 'Country Club'...

With American air squadrons arriving in large numbers in the UK in 1942, the RAF departed Bassingbourn on 25th September 1942 to make way for the United States Army Air Force (USAAF). The American 91st Bombardment Group occupied Bassingbourn on 14th October and operations commenced the following month. The 91<sup>st</sup> BG came from RAF Kimbolton in Huntingdonshire as the runways there were not strong enough to support the heavy B-17 'Flying Fortress' bombers. The Americans regarded Bassingbourn as relatively well-appointed airbase compared to war-built airfields and they quickly gave it the nickname 'the country club'! The Americans officially numbered Bassingbourn, Station 121.



B-17 taking off