



The Mallard

Issue 412

July 2026

Something magical is coming!

At the time of printing, works will have begun on the second phase of the new **Massingham Together Adventure Playground** with Flights of Fantasy™ transforming the play area behind the Village Hall.

Unfortunately, the 'Under 5s' area will need to close temporarily while the works take place. The equipment is staying, but construction will be happening too close by for it to remain safely open. We know this is not ideal at the start of the summer holidays, but it should be well worth the wait.

Some familiar equipment is heading into retirement, including the old metal zip wire, slide and exercise equipment. In its place a much bigger, more exciting and more inclusive playground - racing zip wires, a younger children's zip wire, climbing towers, slides, rope bridges, swings, balance trails, monkey bars, sensory play, accessible in-ground trampoline, seating, picnic space and a small outdoor classroom / shelter.

The official opening is set to take place on the afternoon of **Sunday 2nd August** with a celebration hosted by the **Village Hall**. Talks are also under way to secure a surprise celebrity guest to cut the ribbon!

Please bear with the mess and temporary closure. Something brilliant is on its way.

Massingham Together Playground Working Group



Letter from the Editor!

With June bringing Pride Month and rainbow flags everywhere in support of the LGBTQ+ community, it feels fitting that this is also the month *The Mallard* finally gets to show off in full colour, every page!



Huge thanks to the Village Fund Initiative for awarding the funding to make this happen and to the Parish Council for their ongoing support in many facets.

I am in total awe of previous *Mallard* editors who have done this work selflessly, month after month, building a local resource to be totally proud of. It is delivered to our doors, keeps our community connected, informed and engaged, and is a real credit to the village. Any changes that may take place will happen slowly, as it is **quite** an undertaking to pull everything together but it is most definitely 'evolution' rather than 'improvement' in any way!

When my children were a bit younger, they made up an uncharacteristically saccharine game of how lucky we are to live in this village, they would list everything as we travelled through; the shop, the pub, the playground and playing fields, the village hall, allotments, fire station, farm shop and butcher, school, ponds (with ducks!), Doctors, tennis club, bowls, fishing, the green, village events, funfairs, yard sales, fetes. Then there's the NDP, biodiversity project, Historical Society and on and on it goes. *The Mallard* celebrates all that is wonderful about our village(s) and local community and we want it to reflect and inform *everyone* that lives here.

Please, if you have ideas or local interest pieces, dig out your inner journalist and send something in. Have an idea for an event, we can publicise. If you notice something picture-worthy, snap it and send it over! Let's continue the evolution and inclusion of all. In multicolour...!

Bit of housekeeping; we have had a few people say they are no longer receiving the electronic version despite previously being on the list. If you would like to be added, or re-added, to the **email distribution list** please send me a quick email. Note that this will be in addition to, not a replacement of, the paper copy.

Editor: Georgie Harries

Address: The Old Rectory, Little Massingham
Phone: 07946 649 955

Please send any articles to:
themallardeditor@gmail.com

Closing date for next issue:
17th July

This Parish magazine is published every month for residents of Great and Little Massingham with support from the Great Massingham Parish Council, The Parochial Church Council and Great Massingham Village Hall Trustees



Ox-Eye daisies at sunset on Solstice



GREAT MASSINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

15th June 2026, 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Kevin Hobart Chair, Alexis Brun, Peter James, Robin Arbenz, Pete Harries and Oliver Locke. Borough Councillor Alistair Beales and County Councillor Lee Jarvis.
Apologies: Cllr Sue Nash and Cllr Kim Frazer

Residents began by raising **accessibility concerns** for people with hearing loss at public meetings. The Council noted the importance of improving understanding and agreed that the issue of hearing loop provision should be raised with the Village Hall.

Parking on the village green was discussed, following the recent beer festival at the Dabbling Duck. Council recognised the frustration caused to nearby residents and will arrange a meeting with the Dabbling Duck and Cllr Beales to discuss the matter, including wider parking options.

The **fishing warden vacancies** have now been filled by Jasmine Longhurst and Gavin Cole. The Council has also met with the Angling Trust, which provided advice on pond management, silt, fish stocks and useful contacts. Updated fishing rules will be made available.

The **new village noticeboard** is due to be installed on 26th June. Council has also received the tree survey from Houghton Estate and will follow up on overhanging trees and future notification of works.

For the **land behind the surgery**, councillors are still awaiting the valuation from Brown & Co. A public drop-in session was agreed as the preferred next step, allowing residents to view information and share views.

Massingham Together **Play Area Opening** and **Village Fete** now taking place on **2nd August**. Previously approved £1k funding will be provided to Village Hall to run the event.

Other matters included ordering a new triple-fronted recycling unit, progressing replacement village green bins, checking registration of the defibrillator outside the Dabbling Duck, and adding the telephone box to the July agenda.

Highways issues raised included road signs on Drunken Drove needing cleaning, the footpath towards Little Massingham needing cutting back, and soil left on the Castle Acre Road footpath following clearance works.

Council also discussed pond dredging at Weasenhams Road, repairs to village benches, Christmas lighting safety, and arrangements for the Christmas tree switch-on road closure.

Two applicants have come forward for the Parish Councillor vacancy, with co-option due to take place before the next meeting on **Monday 20th of July, 7.30pm**.

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News from the Village Hall

By the time you read this The World Cup will have finished and hopefully the England team will have done us proud. Closer to home our Bowls teams are progressing well, the Green is looking great down to Colin and Marc Whitmore's diligence.



The Football teams are training hard for the forthcoming season and work is in hand to upgrade the facilities that the league requires. The Tennis club is thriving, matches and training sessions are in full swing. All sports taking place here are open to all, whether you want to play or just spectate you will be made welcome. The 2nd August will see the opening of the Park refurbishment, a day for all to come along and see what has been achieved, enjoy a BBQ, music and other activity's for the whole family . Look out for the posters to see what's going on. It never fails to tug at the heart strings at how lucky we are to live in a village where the community comes together for such events, fund raising to achieve our goals and more importantly live in harmony with each other.

Debs Lambert

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School Monthly Draw May Winners

1st Barry Hardingham
2nd Anth Robinson
3rd Liz Jeffery

You're Quizzard!

A massive **thank you** to those of you who came along to the Dabbling Duck for the Quiz night last month. We are pleased to announce that we raised an incredible £458 for Veterans Central West Raynham. Thank you to the Pub for allowing the use of its Barn and for donating the winning prize of six vouchers for Sunday lunch. A special thanks to Amy at the Dabbling Duck who ensured all of our needs were met.

Robert Taylor

Save the date! Macmillan Coffee afternoon

Saturday 19th September
2-4pm

Great Massingham Village Hall

MACMILLAN



Shop window



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WE'RE OPEN

Monday - Saturday 7am - 7pm
Sunday 9am - 7pm

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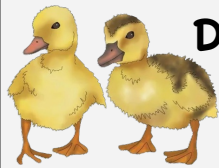
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MASSINGHAM
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Friday July 17th
7.30pm at The Village Hall

**DEFENDING ON THE
HOME FRONT**

By Ken Besfer

A Talk about the HG ROC
ARP & the ATA with a Myriad
Of Artifacts

Including a Photographic Display

Members free, Guests £3, Bar open

Harpley Village Hall

Coffee Morning
Saturday 11th July
10am – Noon

Mondays: **Regular Events**

Chair Fit, 10.30-11.15am

Women's Fitness & Boxing, 5.30-6.30pm

Harpley Choir, 7.30-8.30pm

Tuesdays: Pilates, 6.15-7.15pm

Thursdays: Table Tennis Club, 5.00-7pm

Fridays: Fitness Pilates, 9.00-10am

Email : Harpleylive@gmail.com

www.harpleyvillagehall.uk

Film Night - Song Sung Blue (2025)

Weds 15th July

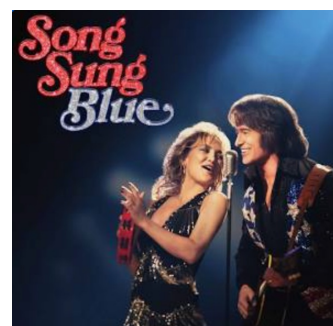
7pm

Village Hall

Based on a true
story, two down-on-
their-luck musicians
(Hugh Jackman and
Kate Hudson) form

a joyous Neil Diamond tribute band,
proving it's never too late to find love
and follow your dreams.

NB – Change of day to Wednesday!!



**GAYTON
COFFEE MORNING**

Saturday 11th July

10am – 12noon

St Nicholas Church, Gayton

Coffee, tea, homemade cakes & cookies.
Catch up with friends, meet new faces &
support our local community

Everyone is welcome!

Contact Christine 01553 636913 or email

revdsuemartin@gmail.com

Bring a friend and spread the word!

Lunch Munch Bunch

Tuesday 21st July

12.30 - 2.30pm

MAIN

Moroccan Chicken

Couscous and roasted vegetables

DESSERT

Strawberry cheesecake and cream

£9.00

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Biodiversity Project



June was a month for orchids and they could be found in and around the village. There are two small areas of amenity grass in Charles Dewar Close where residents had the foresight to suspend summer mowing, allowing a rich community of wild flowers to thrive. Bee Orchids (left) can be found there.

Nearby on the heath, pyramidal orchids (right) have been flowering. Orchids can take years for their dust like seed to produce viable plants and depend on the development of micorrhizal fungi in the soil, but it is certainly worth the wait!



It has also been a good spring and early summer for butterflies and many people will have noticed good numbers of painted ladies this year. Later species are just emerging now, such as this large skipper at the Biodiversity Project a few weeks ago.

Tim Baldwin

From the Parish Council

Have your say - land behind GP surgery

The Parish Council is asking for views on land behind the GP surgery, including whether it could help provide a new purpose-built pre-school building. The consultation opens on 1st August, with online and paper surveys available.

Councillors will be in the Village Hall at the Playground Opening on Sunday 2nd August to answer questions and gather views.

Part of the national *Clean Up Britain* day of action GREAT MASSINGHAM CLEAN-UP DAY

Saturday 4th July

Join neighbours for an hour, or whatever time you can spare, to help keep the parish looking its best. Bring gloves and a litter picker if you can and take before-and-after photos to celebrate the difference.

Please pick only where it is safe and avoid busy roads.

Massingham local awarded OBE



On Saturday 13th June, a Great Massingham resident, Alison Johns (Lady Stephenson) was honoured in the King's birthday honours list, receiving the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for Services to Higher Education.



Alison has made an exceptional contribution to promoting UK Higher Education internationally

through extensive unpaid work overseas. She supported Australia's higher education sector for more than 25 years, including a national review whose recommendations were fully accepted, establishing Australia's AUS\$55m Office for Learning and Teaching. She has worked with the British Council and ministries in Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Egypt on women's career progression, teaching quality and leadership. Her contributions have been recognised through honorary fellowships and appointments in the UK and abroad, including Senior Honorary Fellow of the British University in Egypt, Honorary Fellow of Cardiff Metropolitan University and Rose Bruford College, and Visiting Professor at the University of Staffordshire. In the UK, she has held senior national roles including first Head of Policy at HE Funding Council for England, Chief Executive of Advance HE and Chair of Trustees at Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

Alison is a member of Great Massingham Historical Society and St Mary's Church, where she was married, and a regular visitor to the Dabbling Duck. It is a wonderful personal achievement; an honour that recognises work on an international scale and also a proud moment for the village. A reminder of the calibre of people who form part of village life here. Alison's achievement shows once again how much talent, service and commitment exists within our community.

Thanks to Kind Strangers

Glenda Dunn would like to say a heartfelt thank you to the two nurses (and the café staff) who helped her when she collapsed in The Cartshed tearooms on Monday 15th June. She is hugely grateful for the kindness, care and support she received and would like them to know how much it was appreciated.



Together This Summer

While summer is seen as a sociable time of year, it can be a lonely period for some older people. Regular routines may change, community activities may pause, and family or friends may be away on holiday.

Together This Summer campaign encourages simple acts of kindness to help older people feel connected, supported and valued. Get involved by **volunteering**, **donating** to support befriending services, **attending** community activities, **sharing** the campaign message, or simply **checking in** on an older neighbour, friend or family member. Sometimes, even a small conversation or act of kindness can help someone feel remembered, included, and valued.

For more information and to sign up for news and ways to support visit:

www.ageuknorfolk.org.uk or call 0300 500 1217. 9



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Pew Polishing at St Andrew's, Little Massingham

If you popped in to St Andrew's, Little Massingham on the 17th-19th June, you would have found three wonderful ladies, all members of the Friends of St Andrews Little Massingham (FOSALM), cleaning our beautiful church.

Caroline Parkins travelled all the way from Dorset, her brother from Australia. It was their family – the Meredith family – who built the manor at Little Massingham, and their grandfather was killed during the First World War, remembered on the plaque in the church. Jenny Knowelden came from West Wrating in Cambridgeshire and Zena Worship from St Albans Hertfordshire travelled from afar and all stayed with Annie Varley in her B&B in Weasenham.

They, and any helpers that dropped in over the three days, have done a wonderful job and the pews look absolutely fantastic, positively glowing in the warm sunlight. Everyone worked incredibly hard with delightful music playing in the background, big broad smiles on faces and taking huge pleasure in their work. They were enthralled with the results they achieved and the old wood looks truly brilliant. They have also managed to remove most of the bat dropping stains!

Terry Holloway



Additional information and news can be found at www.littlemassinghamchurch.org.uk
Instagram account: little_massingham_norfolk

Walks Around the Parishes

Come and join us for a moderate walk of around 3 to 4 miles, taking in local paths, lanes and countryside around our neighbouring parishes.

These friendly walks are a lovely way to enjoy the outdoors, meet others, and explore some of the beautiful villages and churches in our area. Please wear suitable footwear and bring a drink if the weather is warm.

Coming up:

Wednesday 1st July, 3pm - Starting from St Mary's Church, Gayton Thorpe

Wednesday 5th August, 6.30pm - Starting from St Andrew's Church, Congham

For more details, please contact Rev'd Sue Martin at revdsuemartin@gmail.com
or Rosemary Mehers at rosemarymehers@hotmail.com, 07720 971753.



FROM THE
REVEREND



Dear Friends,

July and August always seem to have a different rhythm. Schools finish, suitcases appear, gardens grow faster than we can keep up with, and even those who are not going away often find that the pace of life changes a little.

Summer can be a gift, but it can also be deceptive. We imagine rest will arrive simply because the calendar says it should. Yet many of us know that life does not always become peaceful just because the sun is shining. Worries come on holiday with us. Grief does not take August off. Work, family, money, health and responsibility can press in just as heavily in summer as in winter.

That is why Jesus' words in Matthew's Gospel are so precious: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." He does not say, "Come to me when everything is sorted." He does not say, "Come to me when you have earned a break." He simply says, "Come."

Christian rest is not just putting our feet up, though that can be holy too. It is remembering that we are held by God before we achieve anything, organise anything, fix anything, or prove anything. It is learning to receive the day as a gift. It is finding God in the ordinary: in a cup of tea in the garden, a walk down a familiar lane, a conversation at the village shop, the laughter of children, the silence of church, the beauty of creation.

So, this summer, whether you are travelling far away or staying close to home, may you find moments of true rest. May you notice God's goodness in small things. And may our churches continue to be places where the weary, the joyful, the anxious and the thankful can all come and find welcome.

With every blessing this Summer,

The Revd Joshua Whitnall, Rector

rectorggmbenefice@gmail.com 01485 750075

Church Services

Date	Time	Service	Location
1st July	9.00am	Holy Communion	Harpley
5th July 5 th Sunday after Trinity	8.30 am 10.00 am 10.30 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Family Service Holy Communion Holy Communion	Roydon Harpley Grimston Gt. Massingham
12th July 6 th Sunday after Trinity	8.30am 10.30am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Songs of Praise	Congham Gayton Gt Massingham
15th July	9am	Holy Communion	Grimston
19th July 7 th Sunday after Trinity	8.30 am 10.00 am 10.30 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Family Holy Communion Morning Praise	Ashwick Harpley Gt. Massingham Grimston
26th July 8 th Sunday after Trinity	8.30am 10.30 am 10.30 am 3pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Holy Communion Celtic Service	East Walton Gayton Lt. Massingham Gayton Thorpe

Please note that there have been a couple of changes to the rota mainly regarding the 8.30 services switching round.

Please check the website for any alterations to services.

www.ggmbenefice.uk

TRIP TO ST ALBANS

A few spaces left!

*Coach journey and guided tour of the Cathedral
on **Thursday 24th September, Cost £30***

The afternoon is free to enjoy the lovely city.

Meet 8am, Hudson's fen, Grimston (PE32 1BY).

Coach will leave St Albans at 4pm so back approx. 6pm.

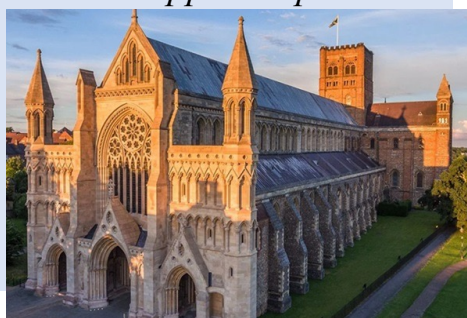
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Joy Smith

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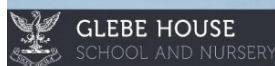
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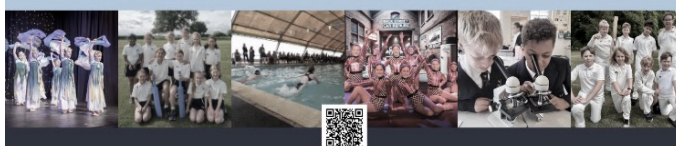
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Useful Contacts

Allotment Association	Daisy Robinson	07979 723 288
Biodiversity Project	Tim Baldwin	520 813
Borough Council	Alistair Beales	cllr.alistair.beales@west-norfolk.gov.uk
Bell Ringing	Dale Gagen	520 024
Bowls Club	Malcolm Hipkin	520 393
Cartshed Tearoom	Jemma Whitmore	520 272 (Option 3)
Church Contacts	Stephen Hudson Rev'd Josh Whitnall	07949 989 977 01485 750 075 rectorggmbenefice@gmail.com
Community Car Scheme	Office	520 823
Coronation Club	Jill Whitmore	520 609
County Councillor – Dersingham Div.	Lee Jarvis	lee.jarvis.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk
Dabbling Duck Pub	Mark Dobby	520 827
Doctors	Gt Massingham Surgery	520 521
The Film Night	Arthur Allen	07810 042 816
Fishing Warden	Jasmine Longhurst	PC Clerk
French Conversation Group	Arthur Allen	07810 042 816
Trefoil Guild	Rita Gostling	520 730
Massingham Historical Society	Jeanne Robinson	520 455
GM Stores & Post Office	Mark Eldridge	520 272 (Options 1 & 2)
Neighbourhood Plan	Jess Cunningham	gmndplan@yahoo.com
Parish Council (Clerk)	Caroline Boyden	clerk@greatmassingham-pc.gov.uk
Police, non-emergency	Norfolk Constabulary	101
Pre-School	Pip Grange	07807 185 746
School	Hillary Myhill	520 362
Tennis and Multi-Sports Club	Steven Gould	07557 357 415
Village Hall (Hall & Bar)	Debs Lambert	07717 416 487

GUTTERING SERVICES NORFOLK

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Dates at a Glance

Date	Event	Time	Place
2 nd July	Film club Member's evening Dinner/Film	7pm	Village Hall
9 th July	School Play	1pm	Village Hall
	Trefoil Guild Meeting	7pm	Village Hall
10 th July	Bingo!	7pm	Village Hall
15 th July	Creative Arts Workshop	1pm	Village Hall
	Film Club – nb. Weds not Thurs!	7pm	Village Hall
16 th July	Polling station	All Day	Village Hall
17 th July	Historical Society	7.30pm	Village Hall
18 th July	Silent Disco	7pm	Village Hall
20 th July	GM Parish Council Meeting	7 for 7.30pm	Village Hall
21 st July	Lunch, Munch, Bunch	12:30pm	Village Hall
23 rd July	Quiz Night	7:30pm	Village Hall Bar
2 nd Aug	Playground Opening Celebration	3pm	Playground



QUIZ NIGHT

Hosted by quizmaster Ann Bowen


Date: Thursday 23rd July 2026


Venue: Bar of the Village Hall


Time: 19:30

- £2.50 per Social Club member to enter
- A guest fee for non-members will apply on the night
- Maximum team size: 6
- No need to book
- Come along with a full team or join another team on the night
- Half of the entrance fee fund will be presented to the winning team as a prize, with the other half going to the Village Hall




Reminder: there will be no quiz in August. *Happy holidays.*

St Botolph's Church
Grimston
presents

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MUSICAL VARIETY CONCERT

ON
Saturday
19th September
2026
At 7.30pm

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Joy Smith 01485 600402

St Botolph, Grimston
Gayton Road
Grimston
PE32 1BH
Charity No 249318

Mobile Library	Little Massingham	Shrublands PE32 2JS	12.05 – 12.25pm
	Great Massingham	59 Station Road PE32 2HW	1.35 – 1.50pm
	Great Massingham	Sunnyside PE32 2JH	1.55 – 2.15pm
	Great Massingham	St Mary's Church PE32 2HY	2.20 – 2.40pm
	Great Massingham	Weasenhams Road PE32 2EY	2.45 – 2.55pm