

# IN-TOUCH

## Great Hockham News Sheet

Issue No 568  
January 2026



### Editorial

It's time to roll out your New Year resolutions again. Mine is the same as it has been for the last 60 odd years which is to stop putting off until tomorrow what I should be doing today. The fact that it's the same resolution every year shows that it doesn't last long, but I will keep trying.

January is the time for the In-Touch committee to show our appreciation for all the help we have received over the past year. Without the help of contributors, advertisers, the school staff (especially Georgina), delivery ladies and gentlemen, generous people who gave donations, and, most importantly, our readers, our job would be impossible. So, to all of you, a very big thank you.

A special thank you to my fellow committee members for their hard work throughout the year, with a special mention to Angie, who puts it all together every month, without whom we would be lost.

Whilst on the subject of the In-Touch committee, we are looking for new members to help with the monthly running of our newsletter. More details inside this issue.

Happy New Year to everyone mentioned.

**Coffee  
Cake  
Chat**

*(A great way to meet up with old friends and make new ones...)*

Need a lift?  
Call Bev Plummer on 07741 270204 or 01953 498243

17 January, Village Hall, 10.30 am

### Poppy Appeal 2025 Update

Thank you to all who contributed to this year's Poppy Appeal.

Great Hockham raised a total of £1,840.25 and my area has raised a total of £5,600.

If there is anyone in the village who would like to help during the 2026 Poppy Appeal please get in touch with me.

Thank you all.

Miles Howard  
Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator  
07523850444

**The Wayland Group of Parishes**  
*Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Stow Bedon and Thompson  
In the Church of England Diocese of Norwich*

## Worship in the Wayland Benefice

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

10.30am United Holy Communion  
St Martin's, Thompson

### **6.00pm Carols with a Difference**

St Peter & St Paul, Griston

### **Sunday 11th January**

10.30 am United Holy Communion  
St. Margaret's, Breckles

### **Sunday 18th January**

10.30 am United Holy Communion  
Holy Cross, Caston

### **Sunday 25th January**

10.30 am United Holy Communion  
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February**

10.30 am United Holy Communion  
St Peter & St Paul, Griston



### **Happy New Year!**

I have just returned from a lovely walk around Lynford Lake with my husband Jonathan and our labrador Berkeley.

And, as I often do when I walk, and particularly at this time of year, I find myself reflecting on the paths I've taken as well as the path that lie ahead, how I'll walk it and with whom.

As a Christian, the “with whom” is important to me. Sometimes I go walking with friends too, believing that the God I follow calls me to community – reminding me that my faith is not a solitary endeavour but a shared pilgrimage. Like travellers on a winding trail, we can lean on one another, for strength, encouragement, and joy in spending time together.

One of my favourite places to walk is in the woodland because, along the way, I discover not only the healing power of nature but also the profound resilience that comes from walking side by side through challenges. As I navigate rough terrain and unpredictable weather, I learn to embrace the journey with courage and hope, finding beauty and strength in unexpected places.

Life's journey is often filled with uncertainty and hardship, isn't it? But have the assurance that we never walk alone, that walking in faith together means leaning into this calling — supporting one another, sharing burdens, and celebrating victories, large and small.

As we step into 2026, let us commit to being people that walk together. Whether that be through small group gatherings, worship services, acts of kindness, or shared moments of joy, we are called to strengthen one another, to face the challenges of the year with courage, trusting that God walks with us every step of the way.

May this January be the start of a meaningful journey for us all — a journey of faith, love, and togetherness. And as we walk with God and with each other, I pray that we'll step forward together in hope, peace, and unity.

Happy New Year!

Vanessa

***Reverend Vanessa is the rector for the Wayland parishes of Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Thompson, and Stow Bedon. She is available for baptisms, weddings, funerals and pastoral visiting.***

***You can contact her on 07984 318885 or by email at [vanessadlayfield@gmail.com](mailto:vanessadlayfield@gmail.com)***

# THE EAGLE

Harling Rd, Great Hockham, Thetford IP24 1NP  
01953 498893

## Dates for your Diary:

1<sup>st</sup> January

New Year's Day Quiz 8pm start

3<sup>rd</sup> January

Thai Orchid 4.30-8pm

(Strongly advise to pre-book a table)

6<sup>th</sup> January

Book Club 7.30pm

7<sup>th</sup> January

Crib 12.30-3pm £1

7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> January

Bingo arrival for 7.45pm 18+

(Please book a table)

14<sup>th</sup> January

Crib 12.30-3pm £1

14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> January

Quiz 8pm start

(Call to book a table, max 6 per team)

21<sup>st</sup> January

Crib 12.30-3pm £1

28<sup>th</sup> January

Whist 1-3pm £1

## Upcoming dates:

14<sup>th</sup> February

Cheese & Wine Night £20pp

## Annual Pie Weekend

27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> February & 1<sup>st</sup> March

Must book well in advance

For our food serving hours in January please see our Facebook or call as we do differ from our usual times.

If you fancy doing something different this new year, why not join one of our many clubs or teams. We have 5 darts teams including a ladies' team, 4 pool teams, book club, crib and whist. For more information on these please call us.

## Opening Hours

Monday – Thursday 12-2.30pm/6-11pm

Friday – Saturday 12-11pm

Sunday 12-10.30pm

## Food Available

Fish and Chip Fryday: 12-8.30pm

(Takeaway and eat in)

Saturday: 12-8.30pm

Sunday: 12-3pm

## Exploring Drawing

### From charcoal to collage

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Call melodie on 07531 875713

Email: melcookartist@icloud.com

Instagram @exploringdrawing

Facebook Melodie Cook Artist

*The content of the articles in In-Touch is the responsibility of the named contributors, not the Newsletter Committee. Anonymous items will not be accepted.*



## Great Hockham Gardening Club



Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January

Chris Bell, Weatherquest

Modern Day Weather Forecasting

"What can you trust?"

Membership fees are £10 per annum

Indoor meetings are held in the Edinburgh Hall, Harling Road, Great Hockham, IP24 1NT on the second Wednesday of the month

Doors open 1.30 pm / Speakers start at 2 pm

Indoor meetings free to members / £3 to visitors

Outdoor visits are subsidised by the club but members may have to pay a small contribution for some visits

Secretary: Stacey Smith

[secretaryghgc@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryghgc@gmail.com)

Website:

[greatesthockhamgardeningclub.org.uk](http://greatesthockhamgardeningclub.org.uk)

### November Rainfall

November 2025		101.8 mm
November 2024		48.6 mm
Jan-Nov 2025		394.4 mm
Jan-Nov 2024		688.6 mm
Highest Nov since 1979	2022	106.8 mm
Lowest Nov since 1979	1994	19.9 mm



## Village Hall Bookings January 2026

### Regular Bookings

Monday	Reserved for	
	Parish Council	Evening
Tuesday	Carpet Bowls	Evening
Wednesday	Yoga	6.00-7.30pm
Thursday	Taekwondo	6.00-8.00pm

### January 2026

Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sound Bath	PM
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1715-1915
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council	1930 start
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1830-2030
Mon 12 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1815-2015
Tues 13 <sup>th</sup>	Exploring Drawing	1000-1300
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>	Gardening Club	PM
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1830-2030
Sat 17 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee Cake & Chat	AM
Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1815-2015
Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Dog Training	1830-2030
Mon 26 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1815-2015
Tues 27 <sup>th</sup>	Exploring Drawing	1000-1300
Fri 30 <sup>th</sup>	Dog Training	1830-2030

For Yoga information ring June on 07766 108075

For Taekwondo contact Dave Robb 01953 882848 or 07710 666133

For Sound Bath contact Tracey Mathison 07748 213397

For Hall bookings contact Chris Garrod 07770 710307 or e-mail [chris@oaklands4.co.uk](mailto:chris@oaklands4.co.uk).

### Mobile Library Service

CHESTNUT SQUARE	10:55 – 11:10
SCOTGATE CLOSE	11:15 – 11:35

Date of forthcoming visits (Thursdays):

29 Jan / 26 Feb / 26 March



## Cranberry Rough & Hockham Fen

On the Northwestern edge of the parish lies a boggy and dangerous area of "hoverland", referred to as Hockham Fen and Cranberry Rough. Today it is managed by Norfolk Wildlife Trust under ownership of the Trust and the Forestry Commission, but the fen once belonged to the Fuel & Furze Charity, who sold it to the then Norfolk Naturalists Trust in the 1960's. The charity retained the sporting rights, and occasionally invited guests are allowed to try and shoot wildfowl or the occasional pheasant there. Strict rules apply, but rights need to be exercised from time to time, as long as wildlife is fully respected. Nothing's been shot for 20 years!

The Rough and Fen were the site of Hockham Mere, one of the largest meres in Breckland in its day, which is mentioned in Francis Blomefield's History of Norfolk as;

*Hocham Meare, alias Cranberry Fen, is a separate water of the lords of this manor; (Rolls 7. 10 H. 7. 13. 22 H. 8. 16 Eliz.) it contains fourteen score acres, and is in circuit 708 perches, every perch containing 18 feet, and the lord hath a fish-house there.*

The fish house is mentioned in a number of old documents, and the area was a good fishery in Tudor times with boats and nets at the fish house. The occasional person was convicted for stealing fish and a swannereve was employed there as swans were the property of the royal family and so well protected.

On the edge of the mere, several finds of flint implements have been made and recorded, particularly Mesolithic finds of worked flints anddebitage, plus the occasional palaeolithic find.

Cranberry Rough is so called because natural cranberries used to grow there among with Royal fern, though I know of no one who has located these species in recent years, albeit as mentioned the terrain and bog is treacherous.

Hockham Fen is used as core base data from a series of core samples taken by Godwin and Tallintire in the 1940's and 50's and there is a published paper by H.D Bennett from 1983 called *Devensian Late-Glacial and Flandrian Vegetational History At Hockham Mere, Norfolk England*. More recently Sheffield University have taken further core samples and both John Craven and Ray Mears have visited the area.

In the centre of Cranberry Rough, there are some amazing mosses, lichens and vegetation, almost primeval in their looks, but one wrong step and you disappear into several feet of mud and would likely never get out.

A booklet in the 1930's by Mosby, gives detailed information about the fens make up and history and the rare vegetation and insects inspired Ted Ellis the well known Norfolk Naturalist, to fall in love with the fen and its flora and fauna, it was one of his favourite places and he regularly wrote about his findings in EDP articles of the 1970's and 80's.



Chris Garrod

## School Birthdays



"Happy Birthday" to Ted, Eden S, Jack F, Dexter and Zack.

## Tuesday JANUARY 27th

Demonstration by  
**DAVID WRIGHT**

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For more information contact :

**Jane Dalton (Secretary) 07557517064**

Email : [jane.dalton@btinternet.com](mailto:jane.dalton@btinternet.com)

Facebook : [gtellinghamanddistrictflowerclub](https://www.facebook.com/gtellinghamanddistrictflowerclub)

#### NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS WANTED

The In-Touch committee are looking for two new members. This would suit a couple.

We are looking for people to take a full part in producing In-Touch each month. This would include joining the rota to write the editorial, and photocopying, at the moment just under 200 copies.

We don't have regular committee meetings, only when necessary.

For more information, contact Geoff Stuart on 07585 806497.

**Please use the village bottle bank**



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN FLOWER ARRANGING?  
(at any level)

WOULD YOU like to meet up once a month with other FLOWER ARRANGERS for a sociable & interesting AFTERNOON out?

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We are affiliated to NAFAS and use well qualified demonstrators.

Our meetings start at 1.30pm

Doors open 1/2hr earlier

Membership £35 per annum

Guests usually £7 per meeting.

We would love to enlarge our membership.

Please contact: Jane Dalton (Secretary)

Mobile: 07557517064

Email: [jane.dalton@btinternet.com](mailto:jane.dalton@btinternet.com)

... for more details or for a lift to meetings.

We are known as a very friendly club and look forward to welcoming new members.

So do come along and see what we are about - you will love it!

Check us out on:

<https://www.facebook.com/gtellinghamdistrictflowerclub>

#### Great Hockham Carpet Bowls

The Carpet Bowls Club meets every Tuesday evening at 7pm - 9pm in the Village Hall either for matches in the Spring and Autumn and / or for practice games between ourselves.

For more information - Tel 07737 046121

Robin

# BOOK CLUB



Happy New Year! If your new year resolution is to make more time for yourself and curl up with a good book then why not come and join us on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm at The Eagle.

The book club met up on 2nd December to discuss The Midnight Library by Matt Haig.

The main character of the book (Nora) has reached breaking point in her life and finds herself in a mystical library that allows her to explore infinite versions of her life. Through her journey in the midnight library, Nora learns to appreciate the life she has and be grateful for the choices she has made. She also learns that it is okay to have regrets, but she cannot dwell on them.

This thought provoking book was a big hit with the group and scored 8.5 out of 10.

Our December book (we will be discussing this on the 6th January) is The Shrimp and the Anemone by L P Hartley.

If you enjoy reading why not come and join us, new members are very welcome.

Happy New Year and happy reading.

Leonie Jones

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