



CHET CONTACT

Produced by the Chet Valley Churches

December '25/January '26





Christmas In the Chet valley Churches



*Celebrate the Joy of Christmas with us throughout December.
Seasonal refreshments, good cheer
and a warm welcome await you.*

SUNDAY 7th 10.00am ALL SAINTS, CHEDGRAVE
Christingle for Everyone at Café Church

FRIDAY 12th 7.00pm ST MARGARET, HARDLEY
Carols by Candlelight

SUNDAY 14th 6.30pm Carols at the WHITE HORSE PUB,
CHEDGRAVE

SATURDAY 20th 6.30pm HOLY TRINITY, LODDON
Loddon Carol Service

SUNDAY 21st 4.00pm ST MARY, SISLAND
Traditional Carol Service

SUNDAY 21st 5.30pm ALL SAINTS, CHEDGRAVE
Nine Lessons and Carols

CHRISTMAS EVE

11.00am CAROL SINGING AT THE CHEDGRAVE SHOPS

4.00pm HOLY TRINITY, LODDON - FAMILY CAROLS
All are invited to this informal and fun Christmas celebration.
Come dressed as your favourite Nativity character!

9.30PM HOLY TRINITY, LODDON
'MIDNIGHT IN BETHLEHEM'
First Communion of Christmas (Midnight mass)

CHRISTMAS DAY

9.00am St Margaret, Hardley - Holy Communion
9.00am St Mary, Sisland, - Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am All Saints, Chedgrave, - Holy Communion
10.00am St John's, Loddon, Holy Communion



Chet Valley Churches Information

Clergy



Miriam Fife: 07593 163920 rector.cvb@gmail.com

Jill Haylock: 01508 520248 jillhaylock@aol.com

Ros Hoffmann: 01508 548200 roshoffmann2011@gmail.com

Martin Keenan: 01502 560178 martin.keenan@methodist.org.uk

To arrange a wedding, funeral or interment of ashes, baptisms and thanksgivings please contact Rev Miriam.

For prayer requests and home communion please contact Rev Ros.

Postal address: St John's Chapel, George Lane, Loddon NR14 6NB.

Phone: 01508 520897, Email: website.chetvalleychurches@gmail.com Both are monitored regularly and the Office open on Mon. and Wed. 10am-12noon .

Church Websites

Chet Valley Churches www.chetvalleychurches.org

The Diocese of Norwich www.dioceseofnorwich.org

Chet Contact

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Please include your name and telephone number.

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From the Editor

This always feels weird, writing the Dec/Jan edition in the first half of November and wishing you all a Merry Christmas!! Mind you, one of the Coop staff said to me this morning that they've had Christmas products since August. Will there be hot cross buns by New Year?! The cover pic is January Dawn by the way, because this copy is for two months and poor old January usually gets overlooked.

Looking forward to Christmas though there is a lot going on and I think I've included everything that has been forwarded to me so browse through and see what interests you. I hope that it will be a happy time of family, friends and good memories for all of you and also an opportunity to think of those less fortunate than ourselves. To find some way to offer them some good cheer, whether it be by donating -money, gifts, food or simply good wishes or your time. There are a variety of ways of doing this, some appearing in the magazine.

Whatever is happening for you I wish you all happiness and good health into the New Year that is just round the corner.

Roger



Front Cover: <i>A January dawn over Loddon Ed.</i>			
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Ministerial Musings

As one year draws to a close and another begins, this time of year holds very different significance for all of us. We navigate through darker days and longer nights, hunkering down, trying to keep warm and relishing the opportunities to sparkle as we enjoy the delights of the Christmas season. In the Church we relish the opportunities to share our Christmas Joy, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus; Christ, the Light of the World, born to give all people hope – hope for the future and that at the time of death we will be reunited with those we loved in this life.

As we delight in all the smells, sights and sounds of Christmas traditions through the ages and gather together in our family, community and Church family groups there are many for whom this time of year is a difficult balance between joining in the festivities, and coping with things that trouble them; those whose loved ones have died and who are sorely missed at family celebrations; those who struggle financially day to day and feel the stress of trying to provide extras at Christmas; those who experience painful or difficult memories, the lonely, and others who find the exuberance of Christmas overwhelming. In our churches, we recognize all these things and offer to all a space for quiet reflection throughout the week, and during our services times of quiet and prayerfulness alongside the Carols, and the fellowship we enjoy all year round. Christmas has become such an exciting, fun-filled, busy time – it's just lovely! If you feel the need to step off the merry-go-round, we are here for you.

The story of the Nativity – the birth of Jesus – can't be told or heard too many times, but remember that Jesus isn't just for Christmas! Christina Rossetti wrote 'Love came down at Christmas...'. That Love is still with us 2,000 years on, bringing Light and Life into every dark corner. The birth of Jesus signaled a new beginning for humanity; let us go into the New Year filled with the joy of that new beginning. The gifts of Love, Hope and Peace are yours to unwrap at Christmas, whatever your circumstances. Hold them close throughout 2026; share them when you can. Your life and the lives of those around you will be enriched beyond measure.

Rev Miriam



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Across the Chet Valley Churches

Worship in the Chet Valley



You are welcome to join us at any of our services

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday at one or other of the Chet Valley Churches: either Book of Common Prayer (BCP), Common Worship, informal or Celtic style. See weekly news sheets for details.

Morning Worship is held regularly in Loddon and Hardley.

Evening Prayer (BCP) is on the third Sunday of the month in Sisland.

Café Church is on the first Sunday of the month at All Saints Chedgrave. This is a relaxed and contemporary way of 'doing church'. Open between 10:00am and 12.00 you can join in with as much or as little as you wish; every session will be a variety of coffee, cake, discussion, crafts, games, stories, reflection and song, suitable for all ages.

All Together Worship is on the third Sunday every month at All Saints, Chedgrave, starting at 11:00am. January, March, June and September are followed by a shared lunch. The service is designed to be as inclusive as possible: a mixture of formality and informality; traditional and modern; activity and stillness. We hope it will have points of contact with people of all ages and all backgrounds.

Last Sunday Praise is held on the last Sunday of the month in Loddon: Join us as we sing and pray together in this informal service of Contemporary Worship.

In Loddon and Chedgrave there is the chance to enjoy a chat over refreshments after services. There are toilets and baby-changing facilities at St John's, Loddon and All Saints, Chedgrave.

Families are welcome at all of our services.

Home Communion: If you would like home communion, because you are unable for any reason to get to a Sunday service, please contact one of the clergy.

***Times and details of the services can be
found in the centre pages of the magazine.***



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Church Groups

Friends and Neighbours

If you've been widowed or have lost your life partner join us at St John's Lecture Hall on the **first Thursday of the month**. Make new friends, enjoy tea or lunch together.

Future Meetings:

4th December—12.30pm Lunch
at Old Hall Farm, Woodton.

No meeting in January!

To join the group, please ring Rev Jill on 01508 520248.

Monday Mardles

If you like a relaxed and informal chat with others or are looking to meet some new friends, join us at a Monday Mardles for refreshments and to swap books at Chedgrave Church Rooms.

Mardles are held **every Monday 10:00am-12:00 noon**. Come and go as you choose. You will be made very welcome.

('Mardle'—in Norfolk it means a good old natter!)



Small Groups

Some of us like to meet during the week in small groups where we can enjoy each others' company, study the Bible together and pray for one another and for others.

Those who attend find their small group a real help and support.



To join or just to know more, please contact Rev Miriam on 07593 163920.

Noah's Ark

A drop-in group for babies, toddlers and their parents and carers at St. John's, George Lane, Loddon.

Wednesdays: 9.15am—12 noon

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For further details please call - Rev Miriam 07593 163920 or email: rector.cvb@gmail.com

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From the Parish Registers

Baptisms & Thanksgivings

*Heavenly Father, we praise you for all children.
Surround them with your blessing that they may know your love,
Be protected from evil, and know your goodness all their days.*

Funerals

Roy Bloss who died on 3rd October 2025 aged 85 years
Funeral: 7th November at All Saints, Chedgrave

Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. So we will be with the Lord for ever. 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 17b

To arrange a thanksgiving or baptism (christening), weddings, or funerals or interment of ashes at one of our churches or at the crematorium, contact Rev Miriam on 07593 163920 or rector.cvb@gmail.com.



4C ~ 4C ~ 4C ~ 4C ~ 'FOUR C'?

WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?

'4C' is the name our young people have given to the Friday Youth Group which meets in St John's Loddon in term time, 4.30 – 6.00pm.

Working with Youth For Christ. We 'foresee' them designing a new logo for themselves, having fun, asking questions, exploring Christian faith through games, media, discussion and more, including all their 4C's (come along to find out what they are!)

Open to all Y6 – Y11 students

£2 per person; £3 for two or more from the same family. To join contact Rev Miriam on 07593 163920 or Gary Watson at gwatson@norwichyfc.co.uk.

ST MARGARET'S CHURCH HARDLEY

Carol Service on Friday 12th December at 7pm.

Everyone is welcome

Refreshments in the church after the service. '

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First Bus have recently changed the timetable for buses coming to Loddon and Chedgrave. Although this was explained to me as an improvement, I know many people don't see it like this. However, we need to remember that this is a commercial service, although subsidised by the County Council, so they need to have sufficient numbers using it to justify the frequencies. I hope the new bus stops on Beccles Road will enable people from that end of town to more easily catch the bus and will serve the new houses once built. We are also looking at putting in some bus shelters there. I have seen people using the service on the A146 and hope that by giving lots of options we will increase public transport use and take some traffic off our overloaded roads

NCC has now officially signed up to the government's devolution deal for Norfolk and Suffolk. We will be having elections for the new Mayor in May 2026. You can find out more at www.norfolksuffolk-cca.gov.uk If you have any issues or I can help in any way, please contact me at kay.masonbillig.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

Firstly I'd like to start by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, and thanks for all the fantastic support and friendship through the year. I'd like to again highlight our annual ChetChat Christmas hampers, which have become a bit of a local tradition, and which we're looking forward to distributing again this Christmas. Please let me know if you'd like to nominate someone – they need to be over-60, and a person who'd appreciate knowing that they mean a lot to someone. Sometimes people donate money on behalf of someone, either in memory or instead of a Christmas present. These donations are always welcome, as is anything that anyone is able to spare when they see us collecting outside of the Coop in Loddon.

Every penny we receive goes towards the cost of making and delivering the 100+ hampers we give each year.

In terms of Chairing the Scrutiny Committee, on behalf of residents, our most recent meeting was looking at the record of local housing providers, which I feel was important and useful.

Finally, it was great to be joined by local MP Ben Goldsborough at my recent surgery. Next one is **2-3pm 29 November** in Loddon Library. If there is anything I can help with, do get in touch. We are elected to serve, not the other way around.

Jeremy 07733323581

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Chedgrave Parish Council

All enquiries please contact the Parish Clerk: Hayley Goldson.

Tel: 07592 933174 Email: clerk@chedgraveparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website: <https://chedgraveparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Chedgrave-Parish-Council>



Chedgrave Parish Council held its meeting on 6th November 2025.

Remembrance Sunday: Chedgrave Parish Council laid wreaths at the Lychgate War Memorial on 9th November at 12 noon accompanied by a short prayer and period of reflection.

The Pits Play Area: Fundraising is underway with several grant applications. The project team shared a plan showing the layout of the new equipment.

Langley Road Industrial Estate: The council submitted a response to this application strongly objecting to the current proposal and District Councillor Jeremy Rowe advised this would be called in to the SNC Planning Committee for consideration.

Council Vacancy: Please consider joining your parish council! Following a councillor resignation, there is a vacancy on Chedgrave Parish Council. This is a great opportunity to have your say in decisions which directly affect the village. Please consider joining this friendly and committed team whose sole aim is Cherishing Chedgrave for all of us. Please contact the Clerk for more information.

Chedgrave Courier: The next issue will be distributed towards the end of the year. Please get in touch if there are any topics you would like to see discussed.

Parking on White Horse Plain: Please try and park considerately in order that the parking area can be best used by all.

St Felix Park Street Names: The council thanks those who responded with street naming ideas and agreed a shortlist of suggestions to submit to the developer.

Brian Clarke Room: Do you need a bright modern room to run your club or association? The Brian Clarke Room is adjacent to the play area, has a fully equipped kitchen, is wheelchair accessible and has a hearing loop. It's great for parties, family gatherings, meetings and clubs. Please contact Georgina Buckle to book 07981 856270 or brianclarkeroom@chedgraveparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Allotment Vacancies: The allotments currently has a ½ plot vacancy. Residents from Chedgrave and surrounding villages can apply. Please contact the Clerk.

Dogs: Please keep your dogs on a lead, keep them out of our play areas and PLEASE remember to pick up any poo left by your dog!

Next Meeting: Thursday 4th December at 7pm, Brian Clarke Room.



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All enquiries please contact the Parish Clerk: Emily Curtis

Tel: 01508 522020 Email: clerk@loddontowncouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.loddontowncouncil.gov.uk for info on meetings, etc.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/loddontc



 **Victorian Evening & Christmas Lights** - The official Christmas light switch-on will take place on Friday 5 December 2025 during the ever-popular Victorian Evening on Church Plain. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Chet Valley Festival Group for once again organising this much-loved community event.

Thank you also to everyone who helps make Loddon sparkle each Christmas. The Council's contractor will be installing the LED string lights along Church Plain, Bridge Street and the High Street at the end of November. This year, we'll also have a new Christmas tree on the Staithe Car Park. A special thank you to the residents and businesses who kindly provide power for the lights. If you spot any faulty lights, please call the Town Council emergency phone line on 01508 486128 or email parishwarden@loddontowncouncil.gov.uk.

 **Love Loddon Community Group** - A big thank you to all our fantastic Love Loddon volunteers for their hard work throughout the year. We're also delighted that Cecil Amey will be sponsoring the flower towers in 2026 – thank you for your generosity. If you'd like to join this friendly group and help keep Loddon blooming, please come along. The group meets at 10am on Church Plain, unless otherwise stated.

- Sat 7 February, 10am – Planning meeting in The Swan

- Sun 1 March, 10am Sun 22 March, 10am

 **Chet Valley Community Larder** - This festive season, the Community Larder will be spreading some extra cheer with its Christmas Bag Service, available during the usual drop-in sessions on Mondays and Saturdays. Registered users will receive an invitation to collect their festive goodies.

Community Larder Sessions:

- Mondays: 12.00 – 1.00pm Saturdays: 1.00 – 2.00pm

Both sessions take place in Loddon Library. For the latest updates, follow the Chet Valley Community Larder Facebook page.

Donations welcome! - We'd love donations of Christmas food items and treats to help local families celebrate. These can be dropped off at the Council Office (Tuesday–Thursday, 9:00am–12:00noon). We're also collecting bottles of any kind for our ever-popular Bottle Stall at the Victorian Evening – please bring your donations to the Council Office.

Stay in Touch For meeting dates, contact details etc, see top of page.

Chet Valley Acupuncture

Acupuncture to support a range of issues incl. musculoskeletal, neurological, gynae / menopause, headaches/migraines, psycho / emotional

Naomi Last BA, BSc, LicAc, MBAC

tele: 07522 231169

naomi@chetvalleyacupuncture.co.uk

www.chetvalleyacupuncture.co.uk

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PILATES
WITH KATRINA

New Pilates Mat Class
Langley Village Hall, NR14 6AD
Mondays at 10.15am

Strengthen, Stretch, and Energise Your Week

Contact Katrina to book a space or for more information.

07725 527669

katrina@pilateswithkatrina.co.uk
www.pilateswithkatrina.co.uk
facebook.com/pilateswithkatrina

Whether you're new to Pilates or
looking to deepen your practice,
this class is designed for everyone.

Scan code for website and full timetable



Start your Mondays the right way—move, breathe, and feel great!

Hales & Heckingham Parish Council

For all enquiries please contact: clerk@halesandheckingham-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.halesandheckingham-pc.gov.uk

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Hales & Heckingham Parish Coun-](https://www.facebook.com/Hales%20&%20Heckingham%20Parish%20Council)



Next Parish Council Meeting: Monday the 8th of December 2025 and 5th of January 2026 @7.30pm

Meetings held on the 1st Monday of Every Month

Held at the Hales Assembly Hall, Briar Lane, Hales. Agendas are posted on the notice board in the brick bus shelter opposite Masala Garden and on our website 3 days before the meeting. Minutes are displayed in the same places.

Signs, Potholes & Footpath Issues – If you see anything that is not right please advise South Norfolk Council through their webpage <https://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/HighwaysDefect/>.

Dog Walkers – A polite reminder to observe the Country Code, especially at this time of year with livestock around. Please pick up your dog's poo, as it is a health hazard as well as being unpleasant. Thank You

Hales Green Common – We kindly remind residents and visitors to abide by the bylaws which are displayed on the public notice boards around the common.

Community Volunteering Scheme – We continue to seek your help in supporting community projects to improve village life. We are currently looking for volunteers who would be interested in changing the composite site into Community Gardens. Please let us know if you would like to get involved by emailing the Parish Clerk.

Councillors Vacancies – If you care about where you live, we have vacancies on our Parish Council. We provide a voice for concerns, ideas, and initiatives that help promote village life. Please get in touch with our Parish Clerk on the above email.

Do you need help? – South Norfolk and Broadland's hub assist with a wide range of problems. Contact details [Tel:1508 533933](tel:1508533933) or via email at helphub@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk. Opening hours are 8.15am until 10.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Langley with Hardley Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Natalie Wilson Answerphone: 07516 361239

Email: langleywithhardley.pc@gmail.com



Web site: <https://langleywithhardley.pc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk> Find us on Facebook.

Due to unforeseen circumstances our meeting of 4th Nov 2025 had to be postponed. A provisional date of 18th Nov 2025 has been set. Meeting will start at 7.30pm.

Langley with Hardley Village Hall



Spud Club-Friday 5th December 11-1

Great Christmas raffle and helpers will all be wearing festive jumpers!!! and in the Christmas spirit!!!

The Anyones-live band, Saturday 6th December, Doors open at 8 o'clock
Tickets must be pre-booked on 01508 520184 from Tibby or Jane.

Tickets £7 each which includes a buffet. Children go free.

Bring your own alcohol.

Come and join us for a great night of music and dancing!!!

From Langley with Hardley Village Hall committee Merry Christmas and Happy new year!!!

Thank you to all who support us.

Spud Club-Friday 2nd January 11-1,

Raffle, bric-a-brac, books, clothes and craft stall as well as delicious food and drinks with good company.

To hire the hall call 01508 520184 Jane or Tibby. It has a well equipped kitchen, disabled access and toilet. Good sized space for any function.

**Anyone wishing to fill a Christmas shoebox for 'Samaritans Purse' charity for children, please contact Jill Haylock
01508 530248 or email jillhaylock@aol.com**

Notes from Sisland

We are fast approaching the end of the year and while we have reflected in November, we turn our attention to the celebrations which accompany the Christmas season and the start of a new year. As in many villages, Sisland will be holding a carol service at 4pm on Sunday 21st December 2025. It will be a traditional service



with readings from the Christmas story and interspersed with traditional carols. Please come and join us, we will be serving mulled wine and mince pies after the service. We will also have a service of Holy Communion on Christmas morning at 9am.

Did you know that you can raise funds for St Mary's Church? Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for Sisland Church - Norwich with easyfundraising? **Easyfundraising.org.uk** is an easy way to raise funds just by shopping online. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! There are no catches or hidden charges and Sisland Church will benefit from your donation. We would really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment.

All you need to do is:

1. Go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/sislandchurch> and join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping. You can also download a useful app which can check for you.
3. After you've paid, the retailer will donate to Sisland Church - Norwich at no extra cost to you whatsoever!

Fund raising continues in order to carry out work on the church tower. Sisland Church plans to run a tombola stall at the Open House in Holy Trinity, Loddon on Friday 5th December. We already have in our plans Sunday teas again in August, but we will be looking to other fund raising events during the year.

Sisland Church continues to be open during the winter, even if the door is closed it will be unlocked, so please take the opportunity to visit us if passing. We look forward to seeing you.

Rowena Bryce, Churchwarden

Sport

Loddon Ladies Hockey Club



Feel like you want to get involved in a new sport? Or perhaps you used to play when you were at school and fancy giving it another go? We welcome new members of all ages (13+) and abilities. Come and get fit, have fun and meet friendly women from in and around the local area. We train every other Tuesday night at Langley School (NR14 6BJ), 7:00pm-8:30pm. More info: www.loddonhockey.com; email hello@loddonhockey.com.

Hobart Badminton Club

We are looking for players to join our friendly club of all ages from 16+. Playing experience desirable. We meet at Hobart High School sports hall, every Tuesday from 7:30-9:30 pm. Cost £6:00 per session, first session free. More information from Terry: terryhayden.sportsclub@gmail.com.



Loddon Junior Badminton Club

Held at Jubilee Hall, sessions are just £3.50.

Wednesday evenings: 6:45-7:45pm, children aged 8-14 years.

Thursday evenings: 7:30–8:30pm, children aged 15-18 years.

Open to all children regardless of ability.

Sessions run by qualified coach. Rackets and shuttles provided.

For more info, contact Paul on paulr2677@gmail.com or 07903 794613.



Loddon Swan Bowls Club

If you've never bowled at our club please come and give it a try.

We have a very competitive evening league, a cup competition monthly and Roll-Ups Mon, Wed and Fri at 2pm and Tues, Wed and Sat at 10am.

Subs are £30 (Sept to April) Match Fee £3

Come and give us a look, you will be very welcome.

Further information from—Paul Clemence (Chairman) on 07833 764698.

Loddon Community Gym

The Library Annexe, Church Plain, Loddon, NR14 6EX

Tel: 07534 946143 www.loddoncommunitygym.com



Whatever your age, there's strong evidence that physical activity helps a healthier and even happier life. Exercising regularly can reduce risk of many chronic diseases, heart disease, stroke, type-2 diabetes and some cancers. Regular exercise can boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy levels.

Here at your Community Gym in the Library Annexe we are well-equipped, affordable and not-for-profit and for over 11 years have offered the opportunity for our members to achieve and maintain a level of fitness to help improve their wellbeing and quality of life. There is a friendly and relaxed atmosphere and a genuine feeling of a social environment, and definitely no pressure!

For more information why not drop by to see us or call our qualified trainer, Louise on 07534 946143. We are open every weekday to those 16 years old and over. Full details of our hours and costs can be found at www.loddoncommunitygym.com or scan the QR code shown.



Jubilee Short Mat Bowls Club

We meet on a Tuesday afternoon, 1:30-3:00pm in the Jubilee Hall, George Lane, Loddon, and are a very friendly non-competitive little group. Beginners are very welcome; just bring flat indoor shoes and we can supply some bowls. The right money, £3 and a sense of humour are also appreciated. Info from—Sara: 01508 521958 or Sheryl: 01508 677272 .



Loddon Tennis Club

Loddon has two floodlit courts, situated adjacent to the Loddon & Chedgrave Playing Field. We are a thriving tennis community with over 150 members. Memberships are affordable; pay and play is at £5/hour. Website: <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/LoddonTennisClub>.

Email: loddontennis@loddontowncouncil.gov.uk



Davy Place Enquiries to Carol Castle on 01508 826488.

Bingo—Monday afternoon at 2:00pm. All money is given back as winnings.

Hoy is on the last Saturday in the month at 7:00pm.

Cards is on a Wednesday afternoon at 2:00pm.

Come along for a relaxing time. All welcome.

Community Groups, News and Events

Chet Valley Patchworkers

We are a small group of friendly sewers who get together on the last Wednesday of the month to enjoy their shared pastime. We meet at The Brian Clarke Rooms, Chedgrave 9:30am to 12:00 noon where we share our quilting successes, failures and learn from and with each other. Whilst we do not 'teach' how to do patchwork or quilting we do share the vast amount of knowledge we have within the group—so those starting out in the craft can pick up how to, tips and tricks; somebody is always willing to give advice or show you how. If we don't have anything to work on at group meetings we often bring along other crafts such as crochet or knitting and enjoy a show and tell of finished items and each other's company. If this is something you think you might like to come along to, your first meeting is free - we pay by annual membership, which is decided each May. Contact Vicki Radley on 01508 538461 or email vicrad@live.co.uk. We look forward to welcoming you.

Loddon and Chedgrave Social Group

Winter Walk and Pub Lunch -Walberswick -Wed 7th Jan- 10.20 for 10.30am

This is your chance to walk off some of that Christmas food (weather permitting)! We will meet in Walberswick Quay car park (there is a charge for parking - max £5 - you need to have the RingGo app or pay by phone). Lunch will be at The Bell in Walberswick at 1.00pm. Please contact June on 01508 528853 or email lcsg.secretary@gmail.com by Friday 2nd January to book your place and/or lunch.

Thank you - Sadly, three committee members have recently tendered their resignations and we thank Peggy and Keith Fulleylove and Tony Durrant for their many years of service. We are very pleased to welcome Lynne Pearson (Treasurer), Linda Seeger (Minutes Secretary) and Mark Knowles to the committee.

How to join - Throughout the year we run a variety of events for our members including walks, talks and visits to gardens, museums etc. Hopefully there is something of interest for everyone. If you would like to join our friendly group the annual fees are only £6.00. Please contact Hillary Meredith (Membership Secretary) on 01508 520457 or email Sharon Brown (Secretary) at lcsg.secretary@gmail.com.

Loddon & District Day Centre

The Day Centre meets at Saxon House, Kittens Lane, Loddon, on Tuesday and Fridays from 10:00am-2:00pm. We chat, enjoy games, talks and light exercises, together with refreshments and a home made two-course lunch. Why don't you come and join us? We'd love to see you! Please contact Karen on 07765 866 507 or via loddondaycentre@gmail.com for more information

Loddon Bell Ringers



Our members have been busy supporting practice nights held at Bergh-Apton, Beccles, Redenhall, Gt Yarmouth Minster and St. Peter Mancroft in Norwich. A tower outing took place to the churches at Worlingham, Wenhamston, Wissett and Chediston in Suffolk. This gave our newest ringers the opportunity to experience ringing bells other than those here at Loddon which in turn helps with their progress.

We have rung in Quarter Peals at Reymerston, East Raynham, North Creake, Castle Acre, Hockwold cum Wilton, Mundford, Watton, Necton, Redenhall and Diss. We also rang some eight and ten bell quarter peals here at Loddon.

We also took part in two Peals. One of 5040 Seven Surprise Minor methods at Watton in 2 hours 35 minutes and another of 5056 Cambridge Surprise Major at Hethersett in 2 hours 50 minutes.

We will ring the bells for events and services planned during the festive season leading up to Christmas. A peal is also scheduled to welcome in the New Year at Loddon on Thursday 1st January starting around 2pm and if successful finishing around 5pm.

As another year comes to a close, we would like to thank you for your support over this last year and the band of ringers at Holy Trinity wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year. **Steve Rabong**

Royal British Legion—Loddon & District Branch



Remembrance has been a time to remember. Now as we go into Christmas and the New Year, we at RBL, wish you all well and thank you for all your support, in this momentous year.

Our next meeting will be on February 16th 2026, starting at 7pm.

We meet in the Lecture Hall on George Lane. We can be contacted on 01508 521136 or the RBL direct on 08088028080 Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, from us all at Loddon & District RBL.

You do not need to have served in the Forces, to join.

Our branch meetings are held on the 3rd Monday evening of each month at 7:00pm in The Lecture Hall, George Lane, Loddon. Sometimes we are in the chapel, adjacent to Hall. Meetings are followed with light refreshments, coffee/ tea/ biscuits: time for friendly chats and catch ups.

Contact Chairman Colin, if any queries, on 01508 521136.

Church Services

7th December

9:00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	St Mary, Sisland
10:00-12 noon	Café Church	All Saints, Chedgrave
10:45am	Holy Communion	St John's, Loddon

Friday 12th December

7pm	Carols by Candlelight	St Margaret, Hardley
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14th December

9:30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints, Chedgrave
10:45am	Morning Worship	St John's, Loddon

Saturday 20th December

6.30pm	Carol Service	Holy Trinity, Loddon
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Sunday 21st December

10:45am	Holy Communion	St John's, Loddon
4:00pm	Carol Service	St Mary, Sisland
5.30pm	9 Lessons and Carols	All Saints, Chedgrave

24th December

11am	Carols at Chedgrave Shops	
4pm	Family Carols	Holy Trinity, Loddon
9.30pm	Midnight in Bethlehem	Holy Trinity, Loddon

25th December

9 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	St Mary, Sisland
9 am	Holy Communion	St Margaret, Hardley
10 am	Holy Communion	All Saints, Chedgrave
10 am	Holy Communion	St John's, Loddon

Church Services

28th December 2025

10.45am	Benefice Service	St John's, Loddon
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4th January 2026

9:00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	St Mary, Sisland
10:00-12 noon	Café Church	All Saints, Chedgrave
10:45am	Holy Communion	St John's, Loddon

11th January

9:30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints, Chedgrave
10:45am	Morning Worship	St John's, Loddon

18th January

10:45am	Holy Communion	St John's, Loddon
11:00am	Morning Worship	All Saints, Chedgrave
4:00pm	Evening Prayer (BCP)	St Mary, Sisland

25th January

10:45am	Benefice Service	St John's, Loddon
7:00pm	Last Sunday Praise	St John's, Loddon

Daily Morning Prayer 9:00am <i>All Welcome</i>	Monday	St John's, Loddon
	Tuesday	St Margaret, Hardley
	Wednesday	All Saints, Chedgrave
	Thursday	St John's, Loddon
	Friday	St Mary, Sisland

Thursday during school term	Roots and Shoots 3.30—4.30pm Thursday at St John's Informal worship for all but especially families with primary school age children
Prayer at Home	'If you would like to receive the weekly prayer and reflection sent out by email, please contact Rev Jill (jillhaylock@aol.com) <i>All are welcome</i>

Catholic Church *of* Our Lady of the Annunciation

21 Upgate, Poringland, NR14 7SH

Priest-in-Charge: Fr Andrew Eburne

✉ andrew.eburne@rcdea.org.uk

☎ 01508 494770

Weekday Mass times may vary – please check our website:

www.ourladyporingland.wordpress.com

Church Room available for hire, with modern AV facilities.

For services in Beccles and Bungay see www.WaveneyValleyCatholics.church

Mass times:

Saturday 6pm
(*anticipatory*)

Sunday 9am

Weekdays
10am / 6pm

Christmas services at the Catholic Church—

December 14th 4 pm Candlelit Ecumenical Carol Service
 December 24th 6 pm Christmas Vigil Mass
 December 24th 10 pm Midnight Mass
 December 25th 9 am Christmas Mass of the Day



LODDON + CHEDGRAVE VICTORIAN EVENING

On Friday 5th December from 6.15pm – 8.30pm the annual Victorian Evening will take place in the town centre.

At 6.30pm, Father Christmas will arrive for the “grand switch on” of the Church Plain Christmas lights.

Thanks to the generosity and support of many of the town’s businesses, we are all set for another fun filled evening of events:

- + Chet Valley Voices performing outside the Co-Op from 6.15pm
- + Visit Santa in his grotto at Bay Tree House with gifts courtesy of Browne and Sons
- + Punch & Judy Show at 6:45pm and 7:15pm in the rear of The Hollies funded by Loddon Town Council
- + [Vintage steam engines at](#) Mutton Cottage opposite Loddon DIY
- + Open House at Holy Trinity Church & St John’s Church in George Lane with charity stalls, hot drinks and mince pies
- + Fire Brigade and First Responders with a Fire Engine display and BBQ at the Loddon Fire Station
- + Country Market at The Hollies with festive goodies and crafts

With further activities to be added! Many of the town’s traders throughout the town will be open and welcoming you to thank you for your custom throughout the year.

Loddon Library

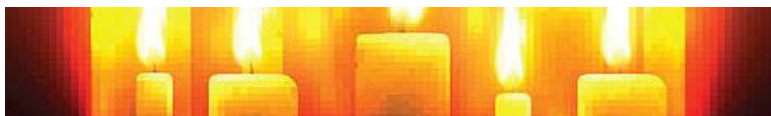
Bookends Join volunteer, Belinda, 3:30pm – 4:30pm alternate Thursdays for story time and themed crafting.

Family Social A quick, relaxed play session for neurodivergent children with our expert volunteer, Jane. Whether it's Lego, colouring or another activity, there's a safe space to play with our expert volunteer, Jane. Alternate Thursdays, 4– 4:30pm.

Just a Cuppa Drop in for a cuppa and chat. 10:30am – 12:30pm on Fridays. Early bird gets the custard cream! **Bounce & Rhyme – call out for volunteers!**

We're still looking for volunteers to lead our Thursday Bounce & Rhyme session, on a fortnightly basis, 10:15am – 10:45am. We'd love to have you on board!

Is there something you'd like to see at your local library? Pop in and have a chat with us, send us an email, or give us a call. We're always open to new ideas for how to make your library work for you. Loddon.lib@libraries.norfolk.gov.uk (01508 520678)



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, LANGLEY

Christmas Service of Light

Thursday 11th December at 5.30pm v- All Welcome

Carols and Readings voicing the REAL Spirit of Christmas

Loddon Day Centre needs YOU!

Would you like to give some of your time to help the older residents of Loddon socialise? The Day Centre meets at Saxon House on Tuesday and Friday mornings, and we need more people to help us support our members. You'd help with serving refreshments and lunch, playing games (yes, including bingo!), quizzes, doing crafts and reminiscing with people. In return you'll get a free lunch and the gratitude of our members!

Chet Valley Voices



Chet Valley Voices is a community choir of varying ages from 15-80+. We enjoy singing a variety of music from classical to modern and are a happy friendly bunch. Come along, make new friends and get to know others in the community. Singing is good for your mental health and well-being, so you will leave rehearsals feeling uplifted. Why not come to a free taster session?

Rehearsals: Thursday 7:00-8:30pm (doors open 6:45pm) in St Johns Chapel, George Lane, Loddon. £5 on the night, £3 for under 18s. New members always welcome, especially men. More information from: Sue 01508 528069; suemartin303@btinternet.com or chetvalleyvoices@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter: @ChetValleyVoices. www.chetvalleyvoices.co.uk.

Breathing/Vocal Technique Sessions

Do you enjoy singing but feel that your breath control could be better? Are you a non-singer but feel that you could do with help to improve your breathing? Would you like tips on vocal technique?

Tanya Chelovskaya is a trained vocal coach leading sessions at Chedgrave Church Centre on Wednesdays from 10:00-11:00noon. The cost is £8, which includes refreshments. If interested, please contact Tanya at t.chelovskaya@gmail.com or WhatsApp on 07737 765098.

"I come away from Tanya's sessions, uplifted and with the knowledge that I can own my voice, and possibly even have the confidence to sing. Breathing, vocal and gentle physical exercises combine and lead to a wonderful sense of well-being."

Bridget M Ward



The Loddon Band

We are a friendly and dynamic brass band in the historic town of Loddon. We are currently seeking the following players to come and join us: Cornet, Tenor Horn, Euphonium, Eb Bass. We welcome all brass players and percussionists.



Rehearsals are at The Hollies, High Street, Loddon on Tuesday evenings, 7:45-9:45pm. Our rehearsals are fun and enjoyable so why not pop along to see what we are about. For more information, contact Louis (Secretary):

Email: Loddon.band@gmail.com or phone 07463 770068.

Loddon and District Women's Institute



By the time this is being read, we will have had our stall on the Victorian evening at the Church in Loddon's Open House and our annual Christmas party. If you visited our stall, thank you for supporting us and we hope you enjoyed it. As 2025 draws to its end we are looking forward to another year of interesting speakers, theatre trips and outings. We take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and healthy New Year.

Meetings for December and January (7.15 for 7.30 p.m. St John's Lecture Hall, George Lane.)

Wednesday 17th Dec. Christmas Party with musical entertainment.

Wednesday 28th Jan. New Year Social evening.

There will be no Book Club in December or Open House in January due to the Christmas and New Year Holidays.

Our membership is still open, so if you think you might like to join us or find out more about what we do, just come along to the next meeting, or we can be contacted through our Facebook page or at loddonwi@gmail.com

Chet Valley Medical Practice PPG

How can it be December already with all that Loddon has to offer during the Festive Season? The committee have decided not to do the Christmas Raffle this year and are working hard behind the scenes to be more pro active in their fundraising. There are a few exciting projects in the pipeline! Watch this space.

Following the successful evening with Dr Kate Ashdown Nichol telling us all about the Menopause, we are hoping to arrange other Open Evenings in the New Year dealing with male issues and mental health issues. These are very important topics which we hope will be well attended. Just a reminder: while sat waiting to be called by your doctor, do please listen out for the beep from the dot matrix board! Unfortunately the beep cannot be made any louder or the name on the screen stay longer.

As always, if you have any queries please contact the PPG on ChetvalleymedicalpracticePPG@gmail.com

The CVMP PPG wish all patients and staff a very happy Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year.

Loddon Flower Club

Loddon Flower Club wish you all the very best for the Festive Season, thanks for your support over the past year

We meet in St John's Lecture Hall on the first Tuesday of the month, on George Lane in Loddon.



The Festive season is upon us and Loddon Flower Club wish you, your family and friends the very best as we look forward to our Christmas Open Evening on Tuesday 2nd December, when Wendy Goodliff is demonstrating for us, her title being "Countdown to Christmas". All her arrangements will be raffled at the end of the evening. The evening is open to all, members free, visitors £12 which includes a glass of Punch and Festive nibbles. There will also be a Tombola, a Quiz to win a garden voucher, a number board to win a Christmas Cake, a raffle for a Christmas Hamper and the Chet Valley Voices will be singing to get us into the spirit of things, come along and enjoy a fun and relaxing evening. Doors open at 6.15pm and the demonstration starts at 7pm.

We have no meeting in January as it's our club annual lunch, so our next meeting will be in February on Tuesday 3rd, with a talk on "Plants for Summer Colour" by Rosemary Ward - doors open 6.30pm for a 7pm start.

For more information - our website is www.loddonflowerclub.co.uk we have a ebook page - Loddon Flower Club, call Tricia on 01508 480522 or Jenny on 0150820254, email loddonflowerclub@gmail.com, we look forward to seeing you.

Loddon & Chedgrave Ladies 8 O'clock Club

We are a friendly group of ladies who meet on the last **Wednesday** of each month in the back room of The Hollies, Loddon High Street.



Next Meetings: No meeting in December.

The meeting on **Wednesday 28th January 2026** will be our **AGM** when £10 membership fees will be due and please bring along any ideas / suggestions for speakers and outings for our 2026 programme.

New members always welcome. Any queries please contact June 01508 528853 or Hillary 01508 520457.

Loddon and District Horticultural Society



Our Society is decorating a windowsill for the Victorian Evening/Open House at Holy Trinity Church in December, so please do take a look if you can. We do not have a meeting in December, as we will be having our Christmas Meal at The Old Feathers, Framingham Pigot. Then we start the New Year with a talk on January 14th when we have Laurie Poulson from the British Cactus and Succulent Society coming along. His title is 'Three Gardens, Three Countries, Ten Miles'. It covers three exotic gardens (with lots of cacti and succulents) in Eze in France, a garden in Monaco and one in Ventimiglia in Italy. It also includes four other gardens, two in Nice and two in Monaco. Sounds interesting. Laurie will be bringing some plants for sale too.

We meet on the third Wednesday of the month at the Jubilee Hall Clubroom, Loddon and meetings start at 7-30pm with doors opening at 7pm. A raffle is held and refreshments available. Visitors are £2. Contact our Chairman Jean Cope on 01502-710024 or jeancope52@gmail.com or Secretary Hazel Copland on 01508-520890 or happyhaze50@gmail.com.

Parkinson's UK Charity Shop, Loddon

2 Little Money Road, Loddon Industrial Estate.

Look forward to seeing you all there.

Jenny

PARKINSON'S^{UK}
CHANGE ATTITUDES.
FIND A CURE.
JOIN US.

Loddon Community Cinema

Our Next Presentation is:

"THE BALLAD OF WALLIS ISLAND". 99

Minutes Rated 12a. Starring Tim Key, Cary

Mulligan and Tom Basden. Comedy. Charles (Key) is an eccentric lottery winner who lives alone on a remote island and fulfils his dream of reuniting his favourite musical duo, Mortimer-McGwyer (Mulligan and Basden), to play a private show. However, old tensions resurface and Charles tries to salvage his dream gig.

Showing on **THURSDAY, December 4th** at St. John's Lecture Hall, George Lane, Loddon. Doors open 7pm, film starts at 7.30pm. Adults £4, under 16 £2. Pay on the door, or in advance from Loddon DIY.

Tickets: £4 adult, £2 under-16, available on the door or in advance at Loddon Garden & DIY. Email: loddoncommunitycinema@yahoo.co.uk.



Chet Staithe Probus Club

We are a club for retired gentlemen, and friendship. The atmosphere is relaxed, jovial, with little formality. Dress code is casual. We have a good mardle, and a different speaker every meeting on varied subjects. Afterwards, members either go home, adjourn to the bar, or stay for a pleasant lunch. Your choice. We meet at The White Horse, 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month,at10am.

Next meetings:

2nd Dec Bob Johnson Antarctica

16th Dec - Christmas Lunch

6th Jan Tony Brown More Interesting Photographs

20th Jan Paul Dickson Guided tour of Norwich on the Dark Side

Come to our meetings and try us out; no pressure to join.
Clive Boyd, Secretary, on 520547, cliveboyd28@gmail.com.



Chet Valley Probus Club

Chet Valley Probus Club welcomes people who are retired, semi-retired or approaching retirement and who've had some measure of responsibility in their working life. We are friendly and excellent company, enjoy fascinating talks on a variety of subjects, good food and meeting others of like mind. Why not come along and give us a try with no obligation? We meet on Tuesdays at Chedgrave White Horse, sat 10:30am, lunch is optional.

Next meetings:

9 December- No meeting, Christmas Lunch

13 January- "Crime Scene Examiner" , Simon Cusworth

27 January- "Dragon Hall" Michael Giddings

Info from—John McCormack 01508 521899, probusonline.org/chet-valley.

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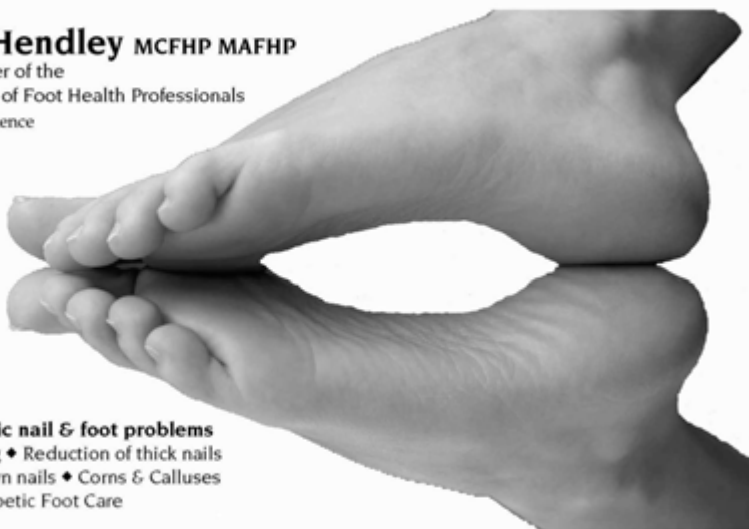
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WEA Loddon Branch

We are looking forward to a series of exciting courses in the Autumn Term. We have worked hard to bring these face-to-face lecturers to Loddon – no other courses are available in Norfolk from the WEA apart from dreaded online ones!

Started on 6th October, Nigel Herwin's series of lectures **Exploring the Films of Stanley Kubrick**, Course No. Q00023969.

Joe Williams will be giving a course on **English Poetry from Shakespeare to Today** started 3rd November, Course No. Q00024485.

Finally, Neil Storey will be looking at **Three Different Views of Norfolk** during the 1st and 2nd World Wars and also the social history of the Norfolk Coast starting 24th November, Course No. Q00024233.

No previous knowledge of the subject is necessary and you can be assured of a lively discussion! Each course will be of three weeks duration and take place in the Jubilee Hall, Loddon on Monday afternoons from 2.00 – 4.00 pm. Each course will cost £48.00. To enrol: Visit www.wea.org.uk and search course code, location or title and pay online, or phone: 0300 303 3464. Remissions are available for those receiving certain benefits.

Hardship Funds Available in the Chet Valley

If you are struggling to make ends meet at the moment, funds are available to help. Local charities, set-up to help people in need in Chedgrave, Hardley, Langley and Loddon. If you are in need, please draw on these funds.

Loddon Town Estate Trust: Contact Julie Ponsford on 07976 902487.

Chedgrave Church Discretionary Fund: Contact Churchwarden, Roger Outlaw 01508 528710, or treasurer Richard Ball on 01508 528126.

Hardley and Langley Discretionary Fund: Contact Rev Miriam or churchwarden (details in Hardley church porch).

Langley Trust Fund: This can be applied for via its Trustees, who are: Barbara Leathersich (01508 521979); Stephen Lutkin (01508 480989); Stella Wright (01508 520102); Susie Wheeler (01508 528429); Shirley Keeler (01508 528939).

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Waveney Valley Arts Society



We are a friendly group who meet at the Fisher Theatre in Bungay on the first Wednesday of every month. Events provide a welcoming place to hear expert lecturers share their specialist knowledge. The theatre is open from 10:00am and our lectures start at 11:00am

Next meetings:

Wed. December 3rd - A History of Colour: BLUE! - Alice White.

Wed. January 7th 2026 - Puzzling Out Picasso - Alan Read.

Guests are welcome for an individual lecture but there will be a charge of £10 and pre-booking is essential. If you wish to join the waiting list to become a member of our society, the contact details are on the website: <https://theartsocietywv.org.uk>.

Social Whist

We will continue to meet as usual in November on the 14th and 28th November but our dates in December are slightly changed to take account of the Christmas period. We will meet on the 12th December (second Friday) as normal and we will also meet on Monday, 29th December - to fill the gap between Christmas and the New Year. It will be the usual format, a lively evening of whist with lots of chat, fun winning or losing, interspersed with a cup of tea/coffee and a biscuit and further chat. We look forward to welcoming existing players and hopefully some new - you don't need a partner, you don't need to have even played before, but if you would like an evening of social entertainment, fun, chat and hopefully a little brain stretch, this could be for you. If you need a lift, please give me a call on 01508 528875. We continue to meet in the back room of The Hollies, 7.30pm for a 7.45pm start and, following the Christmas slight changes, will recommence with the 9th and 23rd January 2026. Look forward to seeing and new players on any of the above mentioned dates.



Jane Hale

Tuesday Market



It's been lovely to see so many of our customers enjoying teas and coffees with their friends (and one of our delicious cakes!) Why not join us all-(refreshments are a bargain £1 a cup), especially as days are getting shorter.

You'll always find a warm welcome at Loddon Tuesday Market, 10 - 11.30 at the Hollies. We always have freshly baked sweet and savoury dishes, local eggs, preserves, seasonal vegetables, fruit, plants and flowers as well as a great selection of locally made crafts, ideal for presents.

Orders and enquiries to Sheila Ford (chairman) 01508 520752.



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Chedgrave Art Group

This friendly painting group has **relocated** to—
the **Brian Clarke Meeting Rooms, Chedgrave**
& will now meet there every Thursday morning 10.00 - 12.30.

Info from Sandra snowart05@gmail.com or Linda linda@ashehamhouse.com

Chedgrave Church Centre Hire

All Saints Church, Chedgrave has a lovely church centre. It has two rooms (one upstairs), a kitchen and a loo. Wheeled tables are easy to move. It is warm even in winter! Available to book for £8 per hour. If you're looking for a meeting venue, a party or activity space, contact Anne Jackson who is responsible for hall bookings on 01508 502278.

Chet Valley Photography Club

We are looking forward to welcoming members and newcomers to our next monthly meetings in December (8th) and January (12th) at Brian Clarke Meeting room, Chedgrave. Doors open at 6:45pm for a 7:00pm start. For December, we hope to feature an in-club speaker and will have a mince pie or two. We are currently awaiting confirmation from a potential external speaker for January. Please check our website for updates as details become available.

Visit www.chetvalleyphotography.org.uk to learn more about the club. Whether you are a seasoned photographer or just starting out, new members are always warmly welcomed. The club is open to everyone, regardless of experience or skill level.



Loddon Young Farmers



Christmas tree sale at The George & Dragon Thurton NR14 6AL.

Dates are on the 22nd, 23rd, 29th, and 30th of November!

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Loddon and District Local History Group

Professor Claire Jowitt gave us a fascinating talk in October entitled 'Why the wreck of the Gloucester in 1682 matters: the secrets of a restoration warship'. The Gloucester was a 3rd rate Royal Navy frigate which sank on the 6th May 1682 at 5.30am after hitting a sandbank off Norfolk. Within an hour the ship was underwater with between 130 to 250 of the passengers and crew drowned. The most significant passenger James Stuart, Duke of York and heir to the throne survived. He was travelling to Edinburgh to collect his pregnant wife and daughter.

The episode was an immediate press sensation because of its royal passenger but soon criticisms of him emerged. James' rescue boat was under filled and people who tried to get on it were attacked. James delayed his departure until 15 minutes before the ship sank because he hoped it could be saved. Protocol meant no one else could evacuate before royalty had left and his delay meant there was only time for two other rescue boats to launch. James had also been instrumental in deciding which route they would take through the sandbanks. He had been the former High Lord of the Admiralty so had some experience of navigation. In the end blame for the tragedy was assigned to the pilot of the Gloucester, Ayers, and Gunman, captain of the Mary that had been ahead of the Gloucester and not warned them. There were two court-martials.

Professor Jowitt argues that this is an important episode in history because James was the heir to the throne as his brother, Charles 11, had no legitimate heirs. By 1688 James had been ruling for 3 years but ended up losing his crown in the Glorious Revolution which established the Bill of Rights, the origin of modern government. Another significant passenger was John Churchill who became Duke of Marlborough and later led some important military victories for the country. If these two men had drowned history would have taken a different course. The incident also reinforced the belief that good mapping of this area was essential. In 2007 the Gloucester was discovered on the seabed after a 4 year search and over 500 artefacts have been rescued. These range from the ship's bell, clothes, much wine, cutlery, spectacles, trunks with some silk clothes, coins, animal bones and some medical equipment like a large bowl for bleeding patients. In June 2022 the discovery of the Gloucester was publicly announced before a massive exhibition of the finds was opened at the Castle Museum.

Next meetings: Wednesday December 17th - David Crease '19th and 20th century brewing'. This will be held at the Hollies.

Wednesday January 21st - talk on Samuel Pepys.

All meetings are held in St John's Lecture Hall, George Lane, Loddon starting at 1:30pm. Admission £3 (includes light refreshments). All welcome. For more information email Elvie: Elvie.herd@uwclub.net.

Visit our website at: www.loddonhistorygroup.co.uk.

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Read Any Good Books Lately?

The Killing Stones, by Ann Cleeves

I've read a few books by Ann Cleeves now and in this one her popular detective Jimmy Perez returns in a gripping and atmospheric murder mystery set on storm-ravaged Orkney. One of his childhood friends has been found slain by a Neolithic stone. As the case progresses, more murders are committed and the way forward looks progressively more murky. The setting and characters are compelling and Cleeves spins a web of mystery around the whole case.

The Pull of the Stars, by Emma Donoghue

There is an almost breathless quality to this book set in Dublin in 1918 at the height of the Spanish Flu pandemic. Told over the course of three days we meet Nurse Julia Power, who works at an understaffed hospital in the city centre, on a tiny ward, caring for expectant mothers who have contracted the flu and are in quarantine. In the midst of chaos we see how the best medical professionals strive to achieve order and help maintain everybody's dignity. Julia and her colleagues lose patients to this baffling pandemic, but they also shepherd new life into a fearful world. Quite an intense read!

London Rules, by Mick Herron

(Review from David Redford)

Before the iconic Apple TV series, *Slow Horses*, came the books by Mick Herron. I've read a few but my favourite so far is *London Rules* and it's this book that was adapted for the latest TV season (#5). The internal monologues of Roddy Ho, one of *Slow Horses*' great comic creations, are a treat. Herron's writing is witty and the dialogue is razor sharp, while the high-stakes plot and the cynical, carefully drawn characters provide the perfect political satire for our times.

I'm looking forward to reading

Silent Nights: Christmas Mysteries, edited by Martin Edwards

I enjoy reading crime and mystery and this collection of wintry-themed short stories by well-known writers look the perfect book to curl up on the sofa with a mug of hot chocolate! With stories from Arthur Conan Doyle, G.K. Chesterton, Edgar Wallace, Dorothy L. Sayers and Margery Allingham to name but a few!

Ruth Redford

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Nature Notes

It seems strange to be typing this at the beginning of November, but I'd like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a blessed 2026.

Last month I said my Hardley Staithe year list of birds heard or seen had reached the grand total of 99, and I am pleased to say that number has now been surpassed. On Wednesday 15th, I received a message from a friend that there were good numbers of Bearded Reedlings showing in the reeds between the shooting pits and Hardley Mill. This was one bird species I hadn't seen this year, though I had expected to. So, the following day, I decided to set out early with the dogs. We fortuitously set out later than I intended, and my friend joined me with high expectations. Just past the shooting pits, my friend informed me he could hear them "pinging" in the reeds on the other side of the river. I could hear nothing, even with my hearing aids in. It wasn't long before we saw some flying on the other side of the river. The best was yet to come, as we soon found some on our side and I had brilliant views of four males together—absolutely stunning. It was also good to be able to share the moment I reached 100 with someone. Later in the month, scanning through wildfowl on the shooting pits, a pair of swans didn't look right for Mute Swans. Their beaks were different, and after a few moments I realised I was watching two Whooper Swans. I have seen these winter swans here previously, but not regularly, my total moved on to 101.

Earlier in the month, a Turkistan Shrike was reported at Dunwich Heath between the entrance road and the coastguard cottages, so a friend and I set off on Monday to see if we could spot it. Parking in the National Trust car park, we walked a short distance behind the cottages and could see a wide circle of birders looking intently at a gorse bush. I could see something light at one end of the bush, which proved to be our target bird and not a dead stick. We then moved closer, joining the other birdwatchers and photographers, and enjoyed some stunning views of the bird. I even managed to get a recognisable photo using my phone and telescope. Having enjoyed this bird—normally located in Siberia and Central Asia—we decided to travel on to Minsmere. Here, a Glossy Ibis flew past us as we sat in the Bittern Hide, and we found a Little Stint, a very small migrant wader, from South Hide. Overall, it was a very good day's birding, having also seen a Dartford Warbler while watching the Shrike. Earlier today, I was working over at the Earsham Wetland Centre (no, it's still not open) and had returned to my car to collect my lunch when I noticed something odd in the lake. I assumed it was either a cormorant or a large fish, but with my binoculars I was able to see it was an otter. So, sitting on a log, I watched it playing in the water while eating my lunch, until I lost sight of it at the far end of the lake. A while later, it reappeared twenty yards in front of me. Wonderful lunchtime entertainment. As the New Year approaches, I wonder what my final bird count for Hardley Staithe will be by the 31st of December. May you find enjoyment in 2026 in the wonder of the creation that is all around us.

Richard and Rachel Hull

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Gardening Notes

From Another Garden - There are multicoloured leaves in the long grass, I might get a day dry enough to cut it but until then at least it looks lush and verdant. Worms will start to pull the leaves into the earth to nourish it and I will let piles of leaves gather in corners of the garden for small mammals and bugs to over winter under.

The greenhouse has been thoroughly cleaned inside and out and shines in the sun. A lingering smell of Jeyes fluid inside lets me know it's been disinfected. Tender Cannas and some Salvias are inside ready for winter hibernation, cacti and succulents are back in the house filling the windowsills once more. It feels so good to be in a warm greenhouse with a cuppa, door closed against the wind and rain.

Outside the back door under the porch are Nerine Bowdenii and Hydrangeas flowering in soft pastel pinks and blues, large ferns and Phormium Sundowner give form and structure, and two Monterey Pines in pots, grown from seed, close to the house, are fabulous, planted out they can reach 50 to 100 feet in height!

Today I removed the last of the outdoor tomatoes, there will be green tomato chutney cooking very soon. The Cape Gooseberry plants are still enormous, for the size of the plant they don't produce many fruits, I eat a few each morning for the Vitamin C.

I am drinking in the Autumn colours before they disappear, making the most of watching huge skeins of honking Canada geese like drawings in the sky, smelling the earthy pungency and floral decay, spotting little colonies of fungi on old wood. It feels a little sad saying farewell to plants for the winter but looking a little closer I see fresh new leaves at the base of herbs and shrubs and the green spears of bulbs starting their journey towards Spring, there is always something to look forward to.

Hazel Copland





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