

your Wimbotsham

Spring 2026



Produced by Wimbotsham Parish Council

Find us at: www.wimbotshampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk

Every effort is made to ensure that information is accurate at the time of going to print but no liability will be accepted for losses caused by inaccurate information.

Your Parish Council

Contacting the Parish Council

The best way to contact the Council is via the Parish Clerk. Please remember to provide your name, address and telephone number.

Clerk to Wimbotsham Parish Council: Nicola Forrest

Email: clerk@wimbotsham-pc.gov.uk

or, Telephone 07557 118580

Parish Council Meetings

Meetings are held in the Methodist Church, Chapel Lane at 7pm

Everyone is welcome to attend

If you would like to address the council, there is an opportunity to speak.

Agendas & Minutes are published on the village notice boards and on the website:

Next Meetings 2026 - 10th March, 21st April, and 12th May 2026.

Your Councillors are:

Dean Chilvers (Chair)	45 West Way	01366 386211
Chris Hitchens (Vice-Chair)	53 Church Road	07977 275884
David Fendley	12 Millers Lane	01366 383436
Jo Hartley	36 Church Road	johartley71@gmail.com
Steve Mingay	13 Napthans Lane	07714 761871
Anne Smith	30 Church Road	07948 725224
Jackie Squires	88 West Way	07538443386

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of the Wimbotsham Newsletter

This newsletter is put together by volunteers with 99% being compiled by Carolyn Seymour our local Wimbotsham History Group custodian. Thank you for your efforts Carolyn. Any contributions you have, or would like to be asked, just let the Parish Council know your number/email and you can submit articles, information, and events, or something of interest.

Another great start to the year and the Parish Council have been working hard in ensuring that our village is in good shape for the good weather to come.

The winter showed quite some activity in the village with Armistice Day, the Christmas tree going up (looking great as always!) Christmas Carols around the tree, a great sense of community, something of which we should all be proud.

Always something to do and great to be part of the team who hold the village dear to their heart.

Litter Picks

Regular litter picks are now organised and dates are listed on page 15. Unfortunately, we usually collect a lot of rubbish and it seems to be never ending. However, thank you for all your support and the more the merrier if you fancy helping.

Flag Pole

After many years of raising and lowering the flag on the relevant occasions, Steven Hewitt, who has carried out this role for many years is moving to Downham Market and has now passed on this role. Thanks to Steven for his many years of service to the village. As the old flags were getting rough around the edges, new flags are on order and will be in use from their arrival.

New Village Sign

Please see pages 8/9 for the whole story.

Village Notes/continued from page 4

Village Hall

Lots of new events and always a hustle and bustle when the auction was happening. Great work on making it an integral part of the village again.

Parish Councillors

We welcome Jo Hartley onto the Parish Council. A villager of many years and an active person in the community, who will aid our Parish Council. One vacancy remains for a parish councillor. If you are interested in becoming a member of the team, please take time to come along to a few of the meetings as a member of the public. If it looks like something you would like to do, then please apply via the Parish Clerk (details on page 2).

Christmas Tree

The Village Christmas tree was once again put up by some very hard-working volunteers on the large village green, and it looked fantastic once again. Funded by the Parish Council, it really adds a focal point to the village at Christmas.

Recreation Ground

A very enjoyable evening around the Christmas tree for the Carols, organised by the Recreation Ground Group. A lovely enjoyable Christmas event. Thank you all for organising the evening. The recreation ground is always well used and as we know costs keep escalating. Any help or support you can offer to keep this asset as an integral part of the village, would be much appreciated.

Café Connect

What a success story Anne, Jackie and the volunteers have made of this monthly cafe. From concept to the event it is today, congratulations on your 2nd anniversary and for the great service you provide for the villagers.

Dean Chilvers

Parish Council Chairman

The Precept

The “Precept” refers to money that Wimbotsham Parish Council asks the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk to collect on its behalf through your Council Tax.

The Precept is:

- A local charge added to your Council Tax bill
- Set by the Parish Council (the very local tier of government),
- Collected by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk—on behalf of the parish.

The Precept is not a separate tax; it’s included in your overall Council Tax bill.

Why do you pay the Precept?

You pay it because the Parish Council needs money to deliver very local services and projects that the borough or county council doesn’t provide. Examples include:

Grass cutting of open spaces

Litter bins, dog bins, bus shelters and other street furniture

Village halls and community facilities

Support for local groups and amenities

Footpaths, signage and minor environmental services.

The Parish Council does not get regular funding from central government, so the precept is its main source of income.

How the amount is set

The Parish Councillors agree a budget each year at a public meeting.

They calculate how much they need to deliver planned services.

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The Precept Contd from page 4

That amount becomes the Precept, which is divided between households via Council Tax

Your Council Tax bill will show the parish precept as a separate line.

The precept for the coming year will be £24,530.66 increasing by 1%.

Parish Councillors are elected locally, in principle, residents can influence how the precept is set and what it funds—by attending parish meetings, asking questions, or standing for election.

**Your Councillors in the
Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk**

County Councillor: Brian Long

Tel: 07885 258448

Email: brian.long.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

Borough Councillors:

Vivienne Spikings.

Tel: 01945 772248

Email: cllr.vivienne.spikings@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Colin Rose.

Tel: 07542 473409

Email: cllr.colin.rose@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Daffodil planting



Village volunteers planting Daffodil bulbs last October and hoping everyone will see a splash of colour around the village green this Spring.

Wimbotsham Village Sign

From the village archives, Wimbotsham has had a village sign from at least 1979. A note was found in the history archives that there may have been a sign before 1979 but it did not last more than 8 years and there are no pictures of this one and elders of the village cannot remember ever seeing one before 1979.



The old 1979 design

Doris Boughen, Wimbotsham Parish Council Chairperson and former Mayor of King's Lynn and one-time Lynn News correspondent, began the campaign to commission a new sign that would last longer than the previous one.

From her handwritten notes there were various suggestions as to what to include on the design. From a monk (the Abbots of Ramsay owned land in our village), to a gallows, or a masked person holding a pair of scales — Wimbotsham at one time was larger than Downham Market and had a court, jail and a gallows. Perhaps a Coat of Arms representing the various Lords of the Manor in our area. Apparently, the Arms of the Warrennes are similar to The Chequers Inn sign holding the original colours of the knight and squire.

/Continued on page 6.....

Village Sign /continued from page 5...

It was decided the new design, sketched by Mr Walter Edgeley, was to hold two emblems of significance to the village - St Mary's Church, which is the oldest building in Wimbotsham, plus the Stirling bomber, being the first plane to fly over Wimbotsham from RAF Downham Market. The sign was carved on Japanese Oak having been donated by Gordon Hoskins of Hoskins Joinery.

The search was then on to find a wood carver. Surprisingly, the person was discovered driving the mobile library that Mrs Boughen visited. Brian Edwards-Lethbridge's hobby was wood carving and even more surprising, he lived just 2 doors away from Mrs Boughen in Lynn Road. The cost was raised by donations from several local societies. The sign was erected in 1979 and shortly after Mr Edwards-Lethbridge moved to Spain.

Fast forward to 2023, the 1979 version was deteriorating and it was taken down in November of that year to see if the wood could be dried out before repainting.

By mid-2024, it was clear the wood had rotted beyond repair. The Parish Council set about looking for a replacement and a new design. It was decided to use metalwork for the whole sign and various ideas were submitted. The church and aeroplane remain, with the addition of a Tower Mill, which once stood in a field off Miller's Lane, together with a horse and plough to represent the farming community of the area.

Thanks is given to Paul Goodrum who took down the old sign and stripped and stored it to see if it could be repaired.



The artwork was by Kevin Hutton of Newtec (UK) Ltd. The sign was manufactured by Jonathan Horton of J H Engineering (Bexwell) Ltd and some subject matter was provided by Carolyn Seymour from the Wimbotsham History Archives. Thank you to everyone who helped with this project.

Armistice Day: 11th November 2025



Today at 11am, pupils and teachers of Wimbotsham and Stow Academy joined residents and paid their respects to the fallen at Wimbotsham memorial.

Alan Cobham, who served with the RAF during conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, led the proceedings and after the two minute silence, wreaths were laid and children from the school read a tribute to those who served, past and present.

Our thanks go to Alan for leading the event.



Lest we Forget



Carols Around the Christmas Tree

It was a dry but cool evening for the Carols event on 20th December. The tree looked very sparkly, as did Steve's hat! The mulled wine flowed with a plentiful supply of mince pies. There were estimated to be over 100 residents taking part. Song sheets were circulated and Steve Mingay and Paul Whyman played their guitars to accompany the singing. The children enthusiastically joined in with bells for the Little Donkey carol.



Great fun ensued when it came to sing the 'Twelve days of Christmas', with numbered signs and objects handed out to each of 12 groups to represent one of the 12 days. Most groups managed to sing rousinglly for their part but it was the the group singing "Five Gold Rings" who really had the loudest voices.



Spring Walk

Join us for a gentle spring time walk around the beautiful lanes of Wimbotsham. This walk will be short (about 1 hour) and will be at a gentle pace. This is an opportunity for new people in the parish to get to know the accessible countryside Wimbotsham has to offer. Great for families to experience what's on their doorstep. Children will love it.



We will be observing the changes that spring brings, looking at the ancient oaks and hedgerows along the way

and the wildlife they support. We will be listening for and watching bird activity, using technology to identify bird calls.



Meet at Wimbotsham Village Hall car park, Low Road

on Sunday 26th April at 10am.

Everyone is welcome.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Cafe Connect

It has now been two years since the opening of Cafe Connect. It first opened its doors in February 2024 with an attendance of just 16 people. Since then, attendance has risen dramatically regularly attracting over 40 visitors each time.



Feedback from customers is always positive – an opportunity to socialise with neighbours new and old, to enjoy home made savouries and cakes and hot drinks served in attractive vintage china. It seems customers look forward to the cafe and regularly attend.

The cafe is also used as a venue for outside services to attend bringing advice and information

for residents such as free portable appliance testing (PAT) – ensuring people's electrical appliances are safe to use. The Borough Council has also attended offering warm homes advice and Anglia Water with equipment and advice to conserve water at home. The Wimbotsham History project has also been on display attracting a lot of interest.

Anne and Jackie are Parish Councillors and with the backing of the Parish Council they oversee the running of the cafe. Plenty of volunteers ensure it runs smoothly by offering their time with setting up the hall's tables and chairs, baking the goods, helping to serve, managing the cash, helping in the kitchen preparing drinks, clearing tables and washing up. It is a hands on job for everyone but so rewarding.



We would like to encourage more people in the parish to come along to the cafe ,especially families. It is your café, so you are all welcome to attend, Dogs are welcome too.

Recreation Ground News

At the moment the recreation ground is in a poor state of repair.

Following the result of an inspection carried out on the recreation ground some safety issues were raised. In January, the condemned climbing frame was demolished and removed. A huge thanks goes to Gary and his team from Downham Tool Hire who kindly did the work for us for the benefit of the village.

This moves us one step closer to getting the playground sorted. We, as a committee, are doing our best to try and keep the remaining equipment going for as long as we can.

We have had to take summer equipment out of use due to damage and, unfortunately, have been unable to afford the cost of replacement or repair at the moment. We have been told, following safety inspections, that the remaining equipment is likely to be unusable after another two years. To that end we are looking to gain funding to improve the playground with new installations.

This will involve the demolition of some of the existing structures and we hope to replace them with new steel ones. We are seeking funding to meet this cost, hopefully through grants and a successful Midsummer Fair, which we will be holding on 20th June this year.

It is anticipated that the total spend will be somewhere in the region of £50-60,000 to update and improve the equipment. We ask you to bear with us and if you come to any of the events please be as generous as you can with your donations.

Thank you,

Steve

Wimbotsham Recreation Ground Chair.

Litter Picking Dates in Wimbotsham 2026

Saturday 7th March, Saturday 4th July & Saturday 7th November

9.30 am—Meet in the Village Hall Car Park in Low Road.

Hi-Vis vests, litter picker tools and bags will be provided.

Please wear suitable footwear and gloves.

Children should be accompanied by an adult.



WIMBOTSHAM CHARITY CRAFT FAIR

IN HONOUR OF THE JAR PROJECT



**JUVENILE
ARTHRITIS
RESEARCH**

**WIMBOTSHAM VILLAGE
HALL**

**SATURDAY 14TH MARCH
10AM - 3PM**

**FOR INFORMATION REGARDING TABLES PLEASE
CONTACT THE SWEET CIRCLE ON FB OR
KERRY@THESWEETCIRCLE.CO.UK**



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

WEST NORFOLK PRIORY GROUP

FINCHAM | MARHAM | NORDELPH | RUNCTON HOLME |
SHOULDHAM | SHOULDHAM THORPE | STOW BARDOLPH | STOW BRIDGE | TOTTEHILL |
WATLINGTON | WIMBOTSHAM | WORMEGAY

From the Vicar

My dear reader,

2025 has been busy with baptisms, weddings, funerals and school services. In 2026, we expect even more baptisms and weddings. Meanwhile, I and our Lay Ministers are preparing couples for Holy Marriage in our churches. We expect every couple to engage with a Marriage Course so as to alert them to the challenges they may expect and to give them skills to build healthy marital relationships. We hope too that a stable home will produce a new generation filled with confidence and hope.

But if two people are in love, is there need for marriage preparation? Is love not enough in and of itself? The well-known author Denis de Rougemont in his famous book *Love in the Western World* wrote: "Why should neurotic, selfish, immature people suddenly become angels when they fall in love?"

Scholars have identified four marks of self-centred people. First, selfish people are dogmatic and always sure of every point of their beliefs. Secondly, they are fault-finding, prone to self-pity and are never satisfied. Thirdly, self-centred people need lots of praise and are easily offended. Fourthly, they tend to talk a lot about themselves and are poor listeners.

In an increasingly self-centred world where bad behaviour is being normalised, may we be given grace to nurture healthy relationships and to mend broken ones.

*"O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim
your wondrous deeds. So even to old age and gray hairs, O God,
do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another
generation, your power to all those to come" (Psalm 71:17, 18)*

TWELVE CHURCHES, ONE MISSION

With prayerful good wishes,

DK

The Revd Canon Dr David

www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk; Tel: 07596 707469 (9.30am to 12.30pm, Mon-Friday)

Email: office@westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk. Follow us on Facebook!

West Norfolk Priory Group—Services

1st March

9.30am Runcton Holme—Holy Communion

11am Shouldham—Morning Prayer

11am Marham—Holy Communion

6pm Online & Phone—Evening Prayer

8th March

9.30am Shouldham Thorpe—Holy Communion

11am Fincham—Morning Prayer

11am Stow Bridge—Holy Communion

15th March

9.30am Wormegay—Holy Communion

11am Shouldham—Holy Communion

11am Watlington—Holy Communion

6pm Online & Phone—Evening Prayer

22nd March

9.30am Fincham—Holy Communion

11am Wimbotsham@Stow—Holy Communion

6pm Online & Phone—Evening Prayer

29th March (Palm Sunday)

11am United Benefice Eucharist (Venue TBC)

6pm Online & Phone—Evening Prayer

5th April (Easter Day)

9.30am Runcton Holme—Holy Communion

11am Shouldham—Morning Prayer

11am Marham—Holy Communion

6pm Online & Phone—Evening Prayer

Magpie Centre Update

Happy New Year from The
Magpie Centre – Looking
Ahead to an Exciting 2026



As we step into a brand-new year, everyone at **The Magpie Centre**, home of **West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled**, would like to wish our wonderful community a very Happy New Year!

We'd like to take a moment to say a heartfelt **thank you for your incredible support throughout 2025**. Whether you've volunteered, donated, attended events, or simply cheered us on, your kindness has helped us continue our vital work supporting people and animals across West Norfolk.

Looking ahead, **2026 is shaping up to be an exciting year**. We have a range of upcoming events and activities planned, and we'd love for you to be part of them. Be sure to **visit our website regularly to keep up to date with what's happening throughout the year**, including opportunities to get involved, support us, or simply come along and enjoy a great day out.

We're also proud to introduce **The Nest**, our alternative provision here at The Magpie Centre. The Nest offers a supportive, nurturing environment that helps individuals thrive through tailored activities, therapeutic support, and meaningful connections with animals and nature. It's an exciting and important part of our work, and we look forward to sharing more about its impact as the year unfolds. As always, we are incredibly grateful to our local friends, families, and neighbours for standing by us. Your continued support means everything as we move forward into 2026 with optimism, ambition, and a shared commitment to making a difference.

Thank you for being part of The Magpie Centre community, we can't wait to see what the year ahead brings, together.

Find out more: www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk

Contact Us:

Magpie Centre, Wallington Hall, South Runcton, PE33 0EP

☎ [01553 810202](tel:01553810202)



Downham Dementia is a local charity aiming to improve the lives of those living with dementia and their care givers. There is a thriving Café that works alongside the advocacy and sitting services.

Registered charity no 1195466

Our Dementia cafés are held in the Main Hall at

**The Methodist Church,
Paradise Road, Downham Market PE38 9JE.**

A varied program of activities and outings is on offer as well as support for Carers.

All Welcome, attendance is free with a small charge for refreshments.

Monday Morning Cafés 10am-12 noon.

Every Monday in the month except 5th and bank holidays.

Tuesday Afternoon Cafés 1pm-3pm.

1st and 4th Tuesday of the month.

New members are always welcome.

A warm welcome awaits.



For further information:

www.downhamdementia.org

cafe@downhamdementia.org 07514698126

manager@downhamdementia.org 07720651346



Registered charity No 1195466

Downham Dementia is a local registered charity aiming to improve the lives of those living with dementia and their care givers. There is a thriving Café held in The Methodist Church that works alongside the Advocacy and Sitting services.



Do you enjoy meeting, engaging and sharing an activity with people?

Are you good with people?

We are currently looking for Volunteers to join the team.

This is an opportunity to make a difference to someone who is living with Dementia and their unpaid family Carer?

Can you give an hour a fortnight for the Sitting service?
Or two hours a month for the Café?

The Café is held at the Methodist Church and the Sitting service is about spending time in the home with the Café user to share an activity after attending the café for several sessions. Both services are a way to support the Carer to have a break.

As a Volunteer you would be given full training and be fully supported. You would not be expected to undertake any personal care or lifting.

Are you able to support Downham Dementia?

For more information or a volunteer application pack:

www.downhamdementia.org

Or for a chat call Pippa on 07720651346. Or email

manager@downhamdementia.org

From your MP Terry Jermy

As a rural MP, farming and the environment is at the heart of the constituency and throughout the election, I made clear it would be one of my top priorities. It is for this reason I spent the last year campaigning against changes to Agricultural Property Relief. Having met with dozens of South West Norfolk farmers, both in the constituency and in Parliament and working closely with both the National Farmers' Union (NFU) and the Country Land and Business Association, I promised I would voice their concerns about this policy and I do so.

I wrote directly to the Prime Minister on a number of occasions, lobbied the Treasury and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), met with Secretaries of State and other Ministers and spoke in the House of Commons raising these concerns. I took the voices of South West Norfolk farmers with me in every conversation and in every correspondence, urging the Government to find another way and mitigate the worst impacts of this policy.

Just a few weeks ago, the Government showed it had listened, announcing that the threshold would rise from £1 million to £2.5 million per person, meaning up to £5 million for married couples or civil partners.

The change represents a significant boost for family farms and rural business, helping to ensure that agricultural land and property can, pass on to the next generation without forcing sales to meet inheritance tax liabilities. The announcement has been welcomed by the NFU



/contd on page 23

Your MP Terry JermynContinued from page 22

Another aspect of farming, that has been a core focus of mine, has been ensuring the Government quickly re-establishes the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). SFI is a government scheme that helps fund the implementation of sustainable farming practices and provides much needed financial assistance for farmers. Though the scheme had aspects that needed addressing, it was a key fund for farmers and growers to access and I was disappointed with its sudden closure.

I urged DEFRA to commit to bringing the scheme back and presented findings from a survey I conducted with local farmers to the Secretary of State and other Ministers, showing ways that the scheme could be improved. I was very pleased with the announcement in January that the scheme will return and I look forward to hopefully seeing some of the suggestions proposed by South West Norfolk farmers in its new iteration.

Whilst I recognise these announcements won't solve every issue, they are both significant steps forward and will do much to support small family farms, many of which are right here in the constituency and they both show that this Government listens. I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Labour Rural Research Group and as a member of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee to raise concerns and champion farming.

Would you like a Village Yard Sale?

There has been an idea put forward to hold a Village Yard Sale in Wimbotsham. It may be a very worthwhile event.

This could be at villager's homes, garages, or at a community space in our village.

If anyone would like to organise or help set up a little committee/group for such an event, please let the Clerk know of your interest.

Contact Nicola Forest, Telephone: 07557 118580

Email: clerk@wimbotsham-pc.gov.uk

Wimbotsham Methodist Church

For further information and latest updates, please call Mary Davies on 07980 196611.

*We warmly welcome all to join
us for worship and
Fellowship*

Sunday Morning Services:

Every Sunday at 11am

Coffee Morning held 10am -12 noon

on 3rd Saturday of every month with

Home-made cakes, bric-a-brac, books and jigsaw puzzles



Macular & More Support Group

**Meetings held at Downham Market Methodist Church
Social Centre on 3rd Tuesday each month.**

1.30pm to 3.30pm

We warmly welcome anyone living with a Vision Impairment, together with family members and friends. Learn about the support available, build your confidence and enjoy a cuppa and chat with others who have experience of Sight Loss.

We have an enjoyable programme throughout the year with speakers on various topics. If you would like more information then please call :**Penny Whitby on 01553 660808**, or email

In Memory of Cynthia Doran

It was very sad news when we heard Cynthia passed away at her home in Chapel Lane, on 25th October 2025 after a year of ill health. Her funeral service was conducted by Revd. Canon David Karoon at Holy Trinity Church in Stow Bardolph on 27th November last. The Eulogy was given by Vicky Robinson and Jean Clark read the poem "Bright Field".



A few years ago Cynthia was kind enough to allow me to record her story and below are some extracts.

Cynthia was born in Downham in 1938. Her parents came from Downham Market and Wimbotsham. Her mother was "in service" before she married in St Mary's Church in Wimbotsham. Rector Robert J Small of Stow Vicarage conducted the ceremony. The Rector also baptised Cynthia at St Mary's, Wimbotsham.

Cynthia spent her early years living in Downham West. Cynthia remembers milk was delivered to the door by milk churns and poured into their jug. Their cottage was one, amongst others, built into the bank of the River Great Ouse, but they were demolished many years ago. Cynthia remembers their home being rather damp. Her family subsequently moved to Station Road (now Westway) Wimbotsham and later to Chapel Lane.

Cynthia worked for the Gas Board in Downham Market and Kings Lynn. Cynthia remembered that whilst working for British Gas, it was normal practice for buyers of new cookers to receive a visit from a home economist, once it was installed, in order to demonstrate its uses.

/contd on page 26.....

In Memory of Cynthia Doran, /continued...

One such demonstrator had experienced working at cookery demos with Fanny Cradock in Norwich. It was felt that Fanny was a difficult person to work alongside

Cynthia was fond of dancing and when attending a dance at RAF Marham, she met Audi, who was to become her husband. After their marriage, they travelled far and wide and lived in many RAF bases in other countries but eventually purchased a home in Westway and subsequently moved back into her old home in Chapel Lane.,

Cynthia was always very active within Wimbotsham attending many village events. At one time she was Chairwoman of the Parish Council. A Millennium Sundial was purchased at Cynthia's instigation and was installed on the wall of the Chequers Pub, to the left of the main door.

Cynthia had a great talent with floral decorations and Wimbotsham Church had been a receiver of her flair for weddings arrangements. She was known as a wonderful cook and loved her garden, growing flowers, vegetables, fruit and a grapevine. She played bridge and belonged to a book group. Cynthia was a person everyone found kind and supportive and a happy person, always very ready with entertaining stories to tell..



Audi and Cynthia had one daughter, Theresa, but she died suddenly in an accident at age 25. Audi passed away in May 2023. There was great sadness in her life but Cynthia carried on, going on holidays and meeting up with friends. To many she left a deep impression of a lovely, kind person with a passion and zest for life and will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

Written by Carolyn Seymour, Wimbotsham History

St Mary's Church— News update 2026

You may have noticed that after such a long time work has started on the restoration of St Mary's. The main contractor Draper & Nicholls from Costessey, started the contract on 5th January. The contract is for 58 weeks so, in theory, we should have a new church by the Spring of 2027. It's been a long road to get here, all of you would say that the Church of England moves at the pace of an injured snail. However, we found that the Borough Council moves even slower!

Scaffolding is being erected at the moment, giving full access to the structure for all the tradespeople needed to complete the works. First, will be replacing the nave roof and then inside replastering of all the walls. Before that many specialist engineering and construction works are planned to take place before we reach that stage.

An unusual operation in that sequence is when the protective cladding has been removed from the internal walls, as the wall surfaces have to be manually recorded. An archaeologist will painstakingly draw any features uncovered by the fire and where plaster has to be removed. All the existing features, if any, will be noted for posterity. We have not been able to have a thorough look at the walls yet because they have been protected from the elements by box cladding, which will be removed next month.

Some interesting features have already appeared. Medieval initials scratched into the bricks high up in the tower have been



uncovered. These would have been made by someone around 1450 as that is when the tower was built. Bearing in mind very few people knew how to sign their name in this period, it makes the find even more intriguing. All such recorded features will be archived and kept at The Norwich Records Office.

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St Mary's Church Update — contd from previous page ...

Early on in the investigation period, an eagle-eyed church expert spied a feature known as a 'Spoiler'. It is situated in the higher part of the tower and depicts a very ugly, cowed, grimacing face. It looks very miserable. It's known as a spoiler because it represents the opposite of beauty. The mason responsible for the building of the tower could have been a suspicious person and in order to balance the religious aspect of the building he (perhaps) decided to include a devil-like image. Spoilers exist in most religious buildings and like the one discovered here at Wimbotsham, they are never, or rarely seen by most people. The Lincoln Imp at Lincoln Cathedral and the Ely Imp in Ely Cathedral are both examples of this type of Spoiler sculpture and both exist at considerable height in the buildings.



South nave scaffolding - January 2026

Access to the churchyard is still possible even though it may look like it's not. To get to a grave, travel up the church lane and then walk to the right hand side of the Contractor's gates. The footpath has been re-routed to enable access. Funerals and burials are still taking place in the churchyard. Please do not hesitate to ask Debbie in the Parish Office if you need help and advice. Tel: **07596 707469** or, Email: **office@westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk**

Wimbotsham Village Hall Diary

- Monday: 8.00pm - 10.00pm Ouse Washes Molly Dancers
Contact via Facebook or email **owmolly@gmail.com**
- Tuesday: 3.45pm—9.00pm Serenity Dance Studio
(Contact Abbie: **abbie@serenitydance studio.com**)
- Wednesday: Available
- Thursday: Available
- Friday: 10.00am—12 noon, Line Dancing—Contact via
Downham Market & District U3A (see website)
- Saturday: 10am—12 noon, Café Connect
1st Saturday of each month
Everyone welcome, Walkers, Dogs & Owners too.
Come and have a chat & enjoy a cuppa with a cake

Also available for hire Friday, Saturday or Sunday
Hall Hire fee: £8 per hour plus £50 deposit

For all Village Hall enquiries and bookings:

Please note new contact and telephone number

Contact Ruth: 07876 473896



Bus Services stopping in the centre of Wimbotsham

No. 37 Towards King's Lynn 0914—**request stop** at main entrance to Village Hall, in Low Road, there is no visible bus stop sign. The senior bus pass can be used on this bus.

No. 37 Return from King's Lynn 12.28—**request stop** opposite Village Hall in West Way. **The above times are Monday to Saturday.**

*The No. 37 buses run hourly to King's Lynn from Lynn Road, turn right at the top of Church Road and the stop is approximately just past the first 3 white gate posts of Hill House (Usually, there are free bus maps on board these buses). The return bus from Kings Lynn to Downham Market stops at the field entrance just opposite No. 28 Lynn Road. Both are **request stops** with no visible bus stop signs.*

No. 47, Go to Town, Monday to Friday to Downham Market (Ask Driver for return times) From Wimbotsham, The Chequers—08.53: 09.40: 09.53: 11.39: & 14.23

Norfolk County Council Mobile Library Service

Route No. DER 204 This service stops in Wimbotsham on the following **Tuesdays** outside No. 2 Southside, from 10.05 to 10.20 on the following dates:- **17 February 2026 • 17 March 2026 • 14 April 2026**

More will be published later on in the year. *Please note the above dates and times are subject to change or amendment on a permanent or tempo-*

Norfolk County Council also run a Home Library Service

The home library service provides books on wheels to the homes of people who like to use the library service but are unable to get to a branch or mobile library due to age, disability or mobility.

If you would like to use this service, email us

at libraries@norfolk.gov.uk to ask to be added to a local delivery route.

[Visit the Royal Voluntary Service website](#) if you would like to volunteer to help deliver the Home Library Service.



WIMBOTSHAM VILLAGE HALL

Low Road
Wimbotsham
PE34 3QQ

☎ 07876 473896

✉ wimbotshamhall@hotmail.com

The village hall is at the heart of the village, and a central point for village activities and events.

The hall boasts a spacious venue, with a large main hall, with a further interconnecting medium sized room, a spacious kitchen, a stage and facilities.

Ideal for:

Bingo

Quiz Nights

Conferences

Club & Society Meetings

Pilates / Yoga / Fitness groups

Birthdays, Weddings & Anniversaries

Outside the hall has parking for several vehicles.



**Need help
with
transport?**



**Feel
isolated?**

**Door to Door
Transport?**

**We have the following options
available in your area:**

Rural Dial-a-Bus
Villages to the nearest town,
perfect for a spot of shopping

Community Car Scheme
Transport by volunteers to
medical appointments

**For more information
Call 01553 770310**