

your Wimbotsham

May 2026



Produced by Wimbotsham Parish Council

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

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 - 23rd June; 28th July; 8th September; 20th Oct and 8th December

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	cllrhartley@wimbotsham-pc.gov.uk
Steve Mingay	13 Napthans Lane	07714 761871
Anne Smith	30 Church Road	07948 725224
Jackie Squires	88 West Way	07538443386

Chairman's Notes

Welcome to the Summer 2026 edition of the Wimbotsham Newsletter.

Thank you again to Carolyn for putting this newsletter together. A great way of sharing the village news. Any contributions you have or would like to be asked, just let us know your number/email and you can submit articles, information, events or something of interest.

The good weather has arrived (hopefully, still here by the time we go to print!) and we have had daffodils around the green, wildlife busy and more people out and about.

Lots of activity in the village and outdoor events happening in the Chequers and Easter Egg Hunt trails, the village is showing signs of the better weather life.

Litter Picks: Regular litter picks are organised and will be advertised in plenty of time. We are in the process of getting our own litter picking kits, which means we should be able to do these regular and keep the village clean and tidy. Keep an eye out for the notices, the more the merrier.

Flag Pole On the Green: New Flags have arrived and we have had both up over this last couple of months.

St Mary's Church: The work has started and they seem to be progressing very well, fingers crossed the weather doesn't hinder the work they are carrying out.

Village Hall: Lots of new events and always a hustle and bustle when the auction is happening. Great work on making it an integral part of the village again. Make sure you follow them to join the bingo, quiz and other events.

Also a thankyou to the Hickling family for donating the Fund Raising Plaque from 1937, to us. Peter Hickling was the Estate Manager of The Hare Estate and Chairman of Wimbotsham Village Hall Committee. .

/contd on page 4.....

Chairman's Notes

..../contd from page 3

They had the plaque displayed in the Stow Museum many years ago. Lovely for this to be given back to us. Ian Cable has agreed to display the sign in the village Hall on behalf of the PC for everyone to see. See page 9.

Parish Councillors: One vacancy remains for a parish councillor, if you are interested in becoming a parish councillor, please take the time to attend a few parish council meetings as a member of the public. If it looks like something you would like to do, then please apply via the Clerk.

Recreation Ground: Busy as always - Easter Egg Hunts, maintenance work on the equipment, fund raising for new equipment and lots of preparation for the Midsummer Fayre. Any help or support you can give to keep this asset as an integral part of the village, I know would be appreciated.

Café Connect: The success story continues due to the hard work by all the volunteers involved, great work everyone.

Dean Chilvers

Your Councillors in the

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

County Councillor:

Olivia Morris. Watlington and the Fens,

Email: Olivvia.morris.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

Borough Councillors:

Vivienne Spikings. Tel: 01945 772248

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

Colin Rose. Tel: 07542 473409

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

*PLEASE—will all residents observe the 20mph
speed limits in Church Road, West Way,
Low Road, Honey Hill and Napthans Lane,
At All Times of the Day*



Easter Trail on Good Friday

This fabulous tradition continues and was enjoyed by around seventy or so children plus parents and grandparents who came along to walk The Easter Trail. They had to follow a quiz sheet with a map and solve several questions by spotting clues in and around the village so they could take home an Easter egg.



The answers were checked over and all the children did so well and got to enjoy their prize.

The other great part of this event is that many families stayed on afterwards with the children and as the



weather was good on the day, they could use the Recreation Ground equipment. This year we also had a “pop up café” selling freshly brewed coffee, cakes, chocolate, crisps, which was a real success.

..... /contd on page 7

Easter Trail on Good Friday/contd from page 6

All the money raised on the day goes to keeping the Recreation Ground in good working order.

A really big thank you to all who came along. Special thanks to Sarah who put the quiz together and Chloe who manned the café.
See you next Easter



Before and after the Fayre, we especially need volunteers to help with gazebos on Friday evening and again on Sunday morning. Any other assistance will be very welcome.



Volunteers and potential stall holders to contact Steve or Sarah on wimborecgroundchair@yahoo.com



Wimbotsham Village Hall 2026

May 15th

June 12th

July 10th

August 7th

September 4th

October 16th

November 13th

Doors Open 6.30pm Eyes Down 7.30pm

*Please check posters & social media nearer the time just in case
there are any changes!*



Follow us on Facebook for events: [Wimbotsham Village Hall](#)

Contact: 07876 473896 wimbotshamhall@hotmail.com

Raising funds for Wimbotsham Village Hall

Charity No: 113062

Wimbotsham Village Hall

The hall continues to have a number of regular bookings along with a number of birthday parties and other celebrations. If you have any ideas for future events, please let us know. Regular maintenance continues, there is always something to do and something that needs fixing, so thank you to our volunteers for this.

Stow & Wimbotsham Coronation Fund

We were recently gifted a Coronation Commemorative fundraising target board from 1937, beautifully made and obviously well stored, we thought it appropriate to display in the village hall, so this is now proudly hung on the wall for all to admire. The coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on May 12 1937 was marked by extensive nationwide fundraising efforts and commemorative initiatives were designed to reinforce national unity and support charitable causes. This board with a target of £300 would have been the local effort. Equivalent to £18,000 in today's money. So not an inconsiderable target sum!



Village History

Continuing on the theme of Wimbotsham past, for added interest in the Village Hall we have decided to hang some old photographs of Wimbotsham and surroundings in the hall. So when you visit the hall in the coming months do take a minute to look and see if you recognise some of the places.

Bingo

Our monthly Bingo evenings continue to be a popular social evening as well as raising funds for the village hall, so if you have not been along please feel free to join us on one of our future dates (see poster for dates), not too serious, though serious enough! And you might win a few pounds or even several pounds. Fun for younger ones too, we have players from 8 to 80 ish!

..../contd on page 10

Village Hall/contd from page 9

A little HELP is needed on Bingo dates please? A few agile volunteer helpers to put out the tables and chairs would be really appreciated, most of our committee are retired and maybe not as agile as they once were, though still very willing! Maybe a few of the mums or dads on the school run might be able to spare ½ an-hour Please let us know via phone or email and we can arrange at a convenient time. Thank you in anticipation.

Quiz Night:

Our summer quiz night is on 29th May. With light hearted summer themed questions, so you didn't need to be Einstein to take part!

Indoor Car Boot & yard Sale:

Following on from the suggestion reported in the last newsletter, the village hall committee have decided to take up the mantle of organising a village car boot and yard sale. The format is to be an indoor car boot sale for anyone within or outside the village to have a stall, there will be tea, coffee, cake etc available too. A map of the village showing the location of yard sales will be available from the village hall to help increase footfall to all the yard sales whether on West Way or tucked up Chapel Lane or elsewhere. Another opportunity for the village to come together, shine and have a clear out before winter! Please book early to help make organising easier, and allow us to publicise. Look forward to some interesting bargains, you never know what's in your neighbours shed!! See poster for more details.

Wimbotsham Bike Event:

We are supporting the event again this year, see poster, with a bike helmet store for visiting riders and opening up the hall for bike related stalls and craft stalls, so hopefully something for everyone, not just bikers.

We look forward to seeing you.

WIMBOTSHAM

INDOOR CAR BOOT SALE & YARD SALES

SUNDAY 23RD AUGUST 2026

— 9 - 12 —



≡ COLLECT YOUR MAP FROM THE VILLAGE HALL ≡

To book your pitch or yard sale contact Wimbotsham Village Hall:
07876 473896 Or wimbotshamhall@hotmail.com

(Deadline for yard sale bookings to be included on map 7th August)

Start your **bargain hunting** at the village hall to obtain a
yard sale map... and explore Wimbotsham



Follow us on Facebook for events: [Wimbotsham Village Hall](#)

**£5
per pitch**

Time for a clear out, bag some cash and help raise a few £ for the village!

Raising funds for Wimbotsham Village Hall

Charity No: 113062



Wimbotsham Village Hall will be supporting this years event, hosting a helmet store, craft & bike related stalls. To book a pitch contact:

07876 473896 Or wimbotshamhall@hotmail.com



Follow us on Facebook for events: Wimbotsham Village Hall

Indoor pitch from £10

Please come along and take a look

Raising funds for Wimbotsham Village Hall

Charity No: 113062

Community Notice Board

You are welcome to place community notices here. To keep this board tidy and useful, please adhere to these guidelines:

- ◆ Content: Local, non-commercial, non-political events, and community information only.
- ◆ Size: Maximum A4 size (A5 preferred)
- ◆ Duration: Please remove your notice immediately after the event has passed, or after a maximum of 3 weeks.

Rules: No drawing pins or staples – please use either the magnets or blue tac

Unauthorised, excessive commercial, or out-of-date material will be removed.

Some of the noticeboards are locked and to use those that are locked, please forward a copy of your notice to the Parish Council Clerk:- **clerk@wimbotsham-pc.gov.uk** who will ensure that the notice is posted -

Presenting our
youngest reader



Good Deeds do not go unnoticed!

Grateful thanks from a villager, to all those who work anonymously around our village to keep everything looking good.

- ♦ A couple cleaning the bus shelter on The Green.*
- ♦ The person who trims back the hedge along the Recreation Ground on Low Road*
- ♦ The litterpickers*
- ♦ The people that fill the potholes in Millers Lane.*
- ♦ Our Parish Councillors who work hard on our behalf.*
- ♦ Those who planted the daffodil bulbs that made the village look good this Spring.*
- ♦ The lads and lasses who erect and decorate the Christmas tree and take it down again.*

Our village would be much less attractive without them.



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

WEST NORFOLK PRIORY GROUP

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

From the Vicar

My dear reader,

As we look back on 2025, we remain thankful to Almighty God for all His goodness towards our churches in West Norfolk. Our buildings are watertight and adequately insured, our treasuries are solvent and we paid our full Ministry Share for the year, we have served our parishioners through pastoral visitations, Home Communions, schools ministry, Residential Home ministry, engaging with RAF Marham and the different Parish Councils, and officiating at baptisms, weddings and funerals.

We have also shared our income with the needy in our communities through local Foodbanks, King's Lynn Night Shelter and the Downham Swan Youth project. In 2025, the attendance at our Sunday and mid-week services was stable with some new faces beginning to appear especially on Sundays. Despite losing nearly fifty percent of our Sunday congregation since Covid (due to death, ill health or moving away), our attendances have recovered to pre-Covid levels and have grown modestly.

In 2026, we intend to continue doing what we already do well and to expand our ministry with children and young adults by organising more regular events for them. The aim is to build upon the good work that we are already doing through our Baptism and Wedding ministries. More information is available on our website.

With small rural congregations, church buildings are always a challenge. Our churches are seriously exploring different possibilities to make our buildings physically and financially sustainable.

/contd on page 16.....

From the Vicar -/contd from Page 15...

Ministering in a huge benefice continues to be a challenge and as our Lay Ministers reach a certain age, we are praying that Almighty God would graciously renew our Ministerial team as He renews our churches too.

TWELVE CHURCHES, ONE MISSION

With prayerful good wishes,

DK

The Revd Canon Dr David

Contact us at

www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk;

Tel:07596 707469 (9.30am to 12.30pm, Mon-Friday)

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

Upcoming Sunday Services

24th May 9.30am, Fincham – Holy Comm. 9.30am, Tottenhill – Holy Comm. 11am, Wimbotsham @Stow Holy Communion 6pm Online & Phone – Evening Prayer	14th June 9.30am, Shouldham Thorpe – Holy Communion 11am, Fincham – Morning Prayer 11am, Stow Bridge – Holy Comm. 11am Watlington – Holy Communion 6pm, Online & Phone – Evening Prayer
31st May 11am, United Benefice Eucharist Runcton Holme 6pm, Online & Phone – Evening Prayer	21st June 9.30am, Wormegay – Holy Comm. 11am, Shouldham – Holy Comm. 11am, Marham – Sunday Service 6pm Online & Phone – Evening Prayer
7th June 9.30am, Runcton Holme – Holy Comm 11am, Shouldham – Morning Prayer 11am, Marham – Holy Comm. 6pm, Online & Phone – Evening Prayer	28th June 9.30am, Fincham – Holy Communion 9.30am, Tottenhill – Holy Communion 11am, Wimbotsham@Stow – Holy Communion 6pm, Online & Phone – Evening Prayer

Litter Picking Dates in Wimbotsham 2026
Saturday 4th July & Saturday 7th November

9.00 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 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 : **01553 660808** or, email

abigail.waters@visionnorfolk.org.uk

Magpie Centre Update

‘Tea with a Pony’ returns this May at the Magpie Centre

We’re delighted to announce that our much-loved **Tea with a Pony** sessions are returning for the 2026 season. Sessions begin on **6th May** and will run through until the **beginning of October** at The Magpie Centre in West Norfolk.

Tea with a Pony offers a relaxed, welcoming opportunity to meet our wonderful ponies up close, enjoy refreshments and learn more about the work of Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) and The Magpie Centre. These sessions are designed to be inclusive, friendly and accessible, creating meaningful experiences for people of all ages.



The sessions are particularly popular with: Local Community groups, Dementia Support Groups, Care Homes, Schools and Children's groups, Social clubs and Wellbeing groups.

Spending time with ponies can be incredible therapeutic. For some visitors, it brings back fond memories of horses from years gone by. For others, it's a rare opportunity to enjoy animal interaction in a calm and supportive setting. The combination of gentle pony interaction and tea and cake makes for a truly special outing.

Each session offers the chance to :- Meet our ponies; learn about their personalities and daily routines; discover the impact of RDA sessions at The Magpie Centre; enjoy tea, cake and good company.

.../contd on page 20

Magpie—Tea with a Pony Returns /...contd from page 19

If you're part of a local organisation and would like to arrange a group visit, we'd love to hear from you. Full details can be found on our website

We're also pleased to share that one of our dedicated volunteers, Caroline, is available to give talks to local groups. Caroline shares the history of RDA and The Magpie Centre, the difference our work makes in the community and how people can get involved.



If your club, society or parish group is looking for an engaging and informative speaker, please do get in touch. We look forward to welcoming both familiar and new faces to Tea with a Pony this season, it's a simple pleasure that brings smiles, sparks memories, and strengthens community connections. For more information or to book please contact us:



The Magpie Centre, West Norfolk
Website: www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk Phone: 01553 810202





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

Café Connect



Welcome to our village cafe which has been running for over 2 years and has proved very popular. Cafe Connect is open on the First Saturday of every month from 10am to 12 noon. Our next Cafe is on Saturday 6th June.



All are welcome, bring your family, pets and friends and enjoy home-made cakes and savouries.

Diary date:-

Saturday 6th June

Wimbotsham Methodist Church

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

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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

penny.whitby@visionnorfolk.org.uk

From your MP Terry Jermy

Tackling Rural Poverty

As someone who has lived in South West Norfolk my entire life, I am acutely aware of the many inequalities that rural communities face. This was part of the reason why I stood to become a Member of Parliament; I wanted to highlight what the challenges were and put forward proposals for how to address them.

Last Summer, more than 40 rural and semi-rural Labour MPs and I launched the Labour Rural Research Group (LRRG), to ensure that rural voices are heard at the heart of government and to develop the research, evidence and policy solutions needed to tackle rural poverty, unlock rural potential, and deliver meaningful change across the countryside.

Recently, we worked to secure £53 million in Government funding for a heating oil financial support package. Another key focus has been calling on the Government to develop a rural strategy to tackle rural poverty, following a landmark report that LRRG and I published, which warns that rural poverty is deeper and more widespread than official statistics suggest, with families across the countryside paying a structural 'rural penalty' just to reach a basic standard of living.

Drawing on evidence from councils, NHS bodies, charities, rural businesses and dedicated focus groups with residents, our report Rural Poverty in Britain finds a consistent pattern - rural households are expected to travel further, pay more and rely on fewer alternatives, yet national funding and service models continue to assume urban density, economies of scale and proximity to services.

Research undertaken in rural areas and conducted exclusively for the report reinforced these findings. Rural poverty is experienced less as isolation from places, and more as isolation from systems. Transport unreliability, overstretched health services and thinning education pathways are seen as mutually reinforcing and negative pressures, creating a persistent sense that rural living demands more from households while offering fewer supports in return.

...../contd on page 25

From your MP Terry Jermy/contd from page 24

Communities like ours know the cost-of-living crisis hits differently in rural areas. That is because families already pay more for fuel, more for food and more for transport simply because of where they live. This 'rural penalty' isn't about lifestyle — it's about structural costs.

If we're serious about fairness, we must deliver a Rural Strategy that recognises these pressures and ensures rural households are no longer paying more just to get by. What our report makes clear is that we need co-ordinated, cross-government action to ensure our rural communities can thrive, which is why we are calling for a Rural Strategy to sit at the heart of national policymaking, not on the sidelines.

My LRRG colleagues and I have set out 24 recommendations that address the root causes rather than symptoms of hardship; going beyond isolated interventions or 'rural add-ons'. These address poverty across income, employment, education, health, housing, crime, connectivity and access to services. You can access the full report through my website; www.terryjermy.com Rural Britain has huge untapped potential. With the right investment in connectivity, transport and local enterprise, South West Norfolk communities will have the opportunities to grow.

Ignoring rural disadvantage isn't just unfair, it's economically short-sighted. Separately, I would like to remind households that the Government's £53 million heating oil support package can be accessed. Already, two thirds of applications that have been completed have been awarded support.

To apply for support, please visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/heatingoil or call 0344 800 8020.

As always, should you or someone you know need support, please do email me:

terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk

The Spring Walk

Our Spring walk In late April a group of residents joined in a Spring walk around the lanes of the village. It was a warm and sunny day, perfect for a gentle walk. As promised, we identified numerous bird calls, all a lot easier to hear than see! The hedgerows were in full spring growth with a diversity of species such as guelder rose, hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, maple and bramble offering the perfect habitat for birds and small mammals.

We looked at the oak trees which at regular intervals, dominate the lanes with their small catkins and bright green leaves. Mature oak trees support more life than any other UK tree – up to 2300 species. The dappled shade along the lanes provides an ideal habitat for butterflies such as the speckled wood and with wild flowers such as stitchwort, bluebell and red campion at ground level, there was a lot to observe, discuss and enjoy. To finish off the walk we enjoyed a refreshing drink at The Chequers pub – sitting outside in the warm sun. The next walk will be in the Autumn, where once again we can observe the changing seasons.

Diary date: **Sunday Sept. 20th - 10am meet at the Village Hall**



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@serenitydancestudio.com)
- Wednesday: 6:30pm to 10:30pm.
Downham Market Independent Gaming Society
- 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:

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 even though it is before 9.30am. **This is an anomaly peculiar to Wimbotsham.**

As experienced by the writer, if the bus driver is new to the route you may get charged £1.70. If you do, please telephone the Lynx Bus Service on 01553 611955, quote the time boarded the bus and where, explain your problem. If you pay by card, they can look up the payment instantly at their offices which will confirm the payment and refund.

No. 37 Return from King's Lynn 12.28— a request stop opposite Village Hall in front of 2 West Way. **The above times are Monday to Saturday.**

The No. 37 buses also 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 (called Church Road stop) 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

* The 9.40 bus from the bus shelter on Wimbotsham Village Green travels all the way to Kings Lynn Bus Station. The return journey from Kings Lynn Bus Stations leaves at 13.05 from Stand H.

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:-

9th June; 7th July; 4th August; 1st September; 29th September
27th October; 24th November; and 22nd December.

Please note the above dates and times are subject to change or amendment on a permanent or temporary basis.

All enquiries, please telephone 01603 222303

*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.

The Chequers News

Hi All

It's been a long time since we have written an article for the newsletter, so we wanted to give you a quick update.

Like many pubs across the country, we are feeling the pressure to remain trading, we have a core support from the village but as the pub is an integral part of the village, it would be really lovely to see more of the community visiting us.

Just as a reminder to everyone, we have a function room available for hire, pool table, darts, and live music on Sunday afternoons. We also run a two-course lunch most weekdays for £9.95 and on Wednesday's for £8.95.

An event to look forward to on August Bank Holiday is our **Bike Meet**, which I know all of the village love to see. We are looking for any volunteers that can help guide the bikes into the parking areas safely. Please get in touch if you can help with this. We will have a band on the green, BBQ, ice cream van and hopefully sunshine.

Tel: 01366 386768



A potted history of Wimbotsham

References to Wimbotsham pre-date the Norman Conquest and in the Middle Ages it was a place of some importance, certainly more so than Downham Market at that time.

In 1086 there were 36 villages in Clackclose and the Abbots of Ramsey were Lords of the Hundreds. There were also Lords of one of the Manors of Wimbotsham. In Wimbotsham, there was a Courthouse, a jail, a Tithe Barn and a Manor house, (the foundations of which can be seen from the air to this day). Robbers and wrongdoers were held in the jail, tried at the court and if condemned to death, hanged. The local gallows was probably only erected when required but were thought to be in the lane between Church Farm and the Churchyard, as skeletons were dug up in the vicinity.

The Ramsay buildings were on the site of which was Mr Cox's farm buildings, now Church Upper and Lower Farms. Wimbotsham was originally divided between three manors but by 1654 all had been acquired by the Hare family. Wimbotsham was much larger in early Victorian times than now, when it



Sketch of St Mary's Church about 1888

shrank from 2000 acres to 1500. It further contracted in 1988 when the boundary with Downham moved from Mill Lane to Low Road, so that Broomhill became part of Downham.

St Mary's Church is first mentioned in a document dating from about 1230. By the middle of the 19th century it was in a state of semi-decay with its thatched roof removed in 1853. It was restored and partially rebuilt in 1854/5. The cost of the work £1,620 – being largely met by St Thomas Hare and the Revd. George Dashwood. After the devastating 2019 fire, St Mary's is once again being rebuilt

...../contd on page 32

A Potted History of Wimbotsham .../contd from page 31

In 1836, a parish workhouse is recorded. The 1841 Tithe map stored in the Norwich Archives, shows this at Plot 107. It was 2 small semi-detached cottages which would have stood in the front garden of what is now 2 Church Road. It not only served Wimbotsham but several of the surrounding villages. It fell into disuse when the new Downham Union Workhouse opened in 1837.

There were two windmills in the village. One was on the knoll, near the original Downham boundary on the Lynn Road. Most likely a wooden post mill but it burnt down around 1900. The other was a brick-built tower mill, situated on rising ground in a field off Miller's Lane. It was let in connection with the bakery and worked by Mr Lee who lived in The Street (now Church Road) and sold bread to the villagers. Unfortunately, the planting of Slubberdike Wood was to see the demise of this mill. The plantation grew higher and robbed the mill of wind, making it inefficient. It fell into disuse and neglect and the sails and cap flew off in a gale in early 1900s and it was demolished about 1913.



Wimbotsham School Abt 1900

There has been a village school since 1869, enlarged 1895 for 250 pupils. A very popular Headmaster was William Turner, who is buried in the churchyard. Turner's Close was named after him.

A Reading Room was erected in 1903 on land donated by the Hare family and contained a lending library of over 200 books. It was also used as a Working Mens' Club in the winter. The site is where the village hall now stands. The Reading Room was damaged in a storm and replaced by the present village hall in 1951.

The Feast was held annually on the Village Green and held on the Monday and Tuesday following Trinity Sunday. It was quite a large fair with stalls reaching up The Street (now Church Road) as far as the Bell Inn, the last recorded as being in 1928. This Bell Inn once stood where Turner's Close is sited. .../A futher instalment in the next newsletter