

THE Grapevine

March 2025



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Gardening
Love it or loathe it?
pages 22-23

PLUS

- Local information
- Community interest
- Church services
(Benefice) page 29

Useful contacts

St Peter's VC Primary School, Easton	01603 880553
Easton College	01603 731200
Easton College Tennis Centre	01603 731302 easton.tennis@ccn.ac.uk
Colton Village Hall	Vicky Green – 01603 881336 vicky@mgarchery.co.uk
Little Owls at Colton Village Hall	Katie Kemp 07790 276499
Colton Art Group	Rosanna Ellis – 07765 294347
Colton Carpet Bowls Club	Dennis Mickleburgh – 01603 880391 Avalon, The Street, Colton
Easton Bowls Club Secretary	Jan Hudson - 01603 880811 eastonbowls.bh@btinternet.com
Easton Crafters' Club	Mrs Janet Morris – 01603 471144
Easton Football Club	Michael Cossey – 01603 880143 73, Marlingford Way, Easton
Easton Good Companions	Pamela Hooker – 01603 880867
Easton Gym Club	01603 960511 enquiries@eastongymnasticsclub.com
Easton Judo Club Coach	Chris Abel – 0845 388 6895 chris@eastonjudoclub.co.uk 29, Goulburn Rd, Norwich
Easton Junior Football	Gavin Tipple – 01603 731585 gtipple@easton-college.ac.uk
Easton Sports Centre	Colin Brzeczek 01603 731263
Easton Post Office	Open Tues and Thurs 9am-12pm 01603 880007
Easton Village Hall	Roly and Christine Chapman 01603 880654
Easton WI Secretary	Mary Blathwayt – 01603 880574
Marlingford Village Hall Bookings	John Bailey M: 07986 609319 jaydeebailey@gmail.com
Community Car Scheme for Easton only	Jean and Dave Ditton – 01603 880857
Citizens' Advice Bureau	Wymondham 03444 111444
Relate	01603 625333
Samaritans	0330 094 5717

Doctors surgeries

Costessey, Roundwell 01603 744014
Beechcroft 01603 746683
Hethersett 01603 977477
Mattishall 01362 850227

Hospitals

**Norfolk & Norwich
incl W Norwich** 01603 286286
Julian & Hellesdon 01603 421421
Dereham, Northgate 01362 697300
Kelling 01263 710575

Police

Non urgent 101 **or visit website:**
norfolk.police.uk/contact-us/6-report-it
Urgent 999

Parish Council Clerks

Easton: clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk
Marlingford & Colton
Maria Hutson 01603 850118
marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com

Councillor South Norfolk District and Norfolk County

Margaret Dewsbury 01603 759693
6, Park Avenue, Barford NR9 4BA

Location of defibrillators:

Colton - Village hall, Norwich Rd; NR9 5BY
Easton - Village hall, Marlingford Rd,
NR9 5AD
Rembrandt Restaurant, 65 Dereham Rd.
Lower Easton, 76 Ringland Rd;
Marlingford: The Bell, Bawburgh Road.
NR9 5HX

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Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR30 3LA
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Web: blackwellprint.co.uk

The Grapevine

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Advertising in The Grapevine

Contact the Assistant Editor or the
Treasurer for more advertising details.

Annual advertising rates 2025

Black & white inside:

1/8	1/4	1/2	Full page
£50	£75	£125	£200

Black & white back page:

	£150	£200	
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Colour inside:

1/8	1/4	1/2	Full page
£100	£150	£250	£400

Colour back page:

	£300	£400	£500
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Front cover: Long-tailed tits and Great tit
feeding. Picture: Annette Hudson.

Please note: information in The Grapevine is provided
in good faith. The publication and its board cannot be
held responsible for any inaccuracies and any opinions
expressed are the author's own.

Parishes of Easton, Colton, Marlingford and Bawburgh

Benefice Rector	Revd Laura Montgomery eastonbeneficeoffice@gmail.com 172 Fairways, Queen's Hills, Costessey NR8 5GB	01603 744551
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Reader	Peter Pease, 19 Woodview Road, Easton	01603 880255
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St Peter's Church, Easton

Churchwardens	Peter Pease, 19 Woodview Road, Easton	01603 880255
	Margaret Seely, 8 Kennedy Close, Easton	01603 880888

PCC Secretary	Anthony Perry, 7 Pegg Close, Easton	01603 882265
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Treasurer	Vacancy	
------------------	---------	--

St Andrew's Church, Colton

Churchwarden	Sarah Smith, Bickerston Cottage, Church Lane, Colton	07769 976173
---------------------	---	--------------

PCC Secretary	Liz Plater, Church Cottages, Church Lane, Colton	01603 880556
----------------------	---	--------------

Treasurer	Judy Scrivener, The Old Post Office, Norwich Road, Colton NR9 5BZ	judy.scrivener@ googlemail.com
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St Mary's Church, Marlingford

Churchwarden	Felicity Maton, West Cottage, Barford Road, Marlingford	01603 880846
---------------------	--	--------------

PCC Secretary	Felicity Maton, West Cottage, Barford Road, Marlingford	01603 880846
----------------------	--	--------------

Treasurer	Carol Chiles carolachiles@gmail.com	01508 578352
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St Mary and St Walstan's Church, Bawburgh

PCC contact	Lin Gibson	01603 744683
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Need a bus? Here are your local bus services

Bus services: Colton, Easton and Marlingford

There have been some changes to the bus services in Easton, Marlingford and Colton. Norfolk County Council has announced the following timetables which came into force in **May, 2024**: (All services are excluding Bank holidays)

Service 808 on Tuesdays and Thursdays only:				
From	At	Arrives	Connects to	
Marlingford Bell	09.08	Easton: Dereham Road bus shelter at 9.17	Konec 4 service from Easton to Norwich at 9.38, arriving 10.05	
Colton, The Street - Pond	09.13			
Colton, Junction Norwich Road and The Street	09.14			
Konec 4 service from Norwich to Easton at 12.15 arriving 12.42.	Longwater Retail Park, Link Road at 12.50	Easton: Dereham Road Bus Shelter at 12.55	Colton, Junction Norwich Rd and The Street	12.58
			Colton, The Street - Pond	12.59
			Colton, Junction Norwich Rd and The Street	13.04
Longwater Retail Park, Link Road at 11.15 (Easton: Dereham Road Bus Shelter at 11.20)	**Additional Service from Longwater only		Colton, Junction Norwich Rd and The Street	11.23
			Colton, The Street - Pond	11.24
			Marlingford Bell	11.29

For more information, visit: ourhire.co.uk

The Flexibus service will continue to be provided with the service now being supplied by Our Bus. In addition to the current arrangements, there will be a new per-booked service to the N&NUH at 7.50 and 17.45. To book a bus, call 01603 223956.

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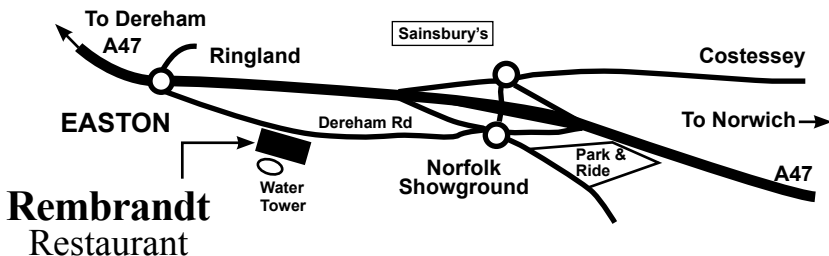
Friday 4pm - 8pm

Saturday 4pm - 8pm

*For latest information
please see the website or phone*

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Hethersett,
Norwich, NR9 3EN

Hingham: 01953 850330

15 Norwich Street,
Hingham,
Norfolk, NR9 4LJ

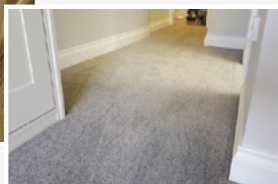
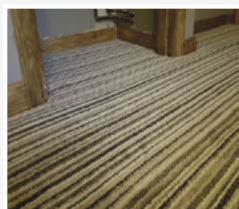
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Facebook: [martinscarpetsltd](https://www.facebook.com/martinscarpetsltd)

Customer satisfaction is our priority.



THE Grapevine

Crazy horses are taking over our world...

There are so many cars on the road today. Gone are the days when one car was enough for a family of four. It now seems that every family member 'needs' a car as soon as they are old enough to drive. It's not unusual to see four cars crammed into a home's driveway. Is our public transport so poor that using the bus is just not an option? I understand that certain villages have hardly any public transport, but park and ride is a very good alternative service. Maybe when the cycle routes along the Dereham

road are functional, people might consider the healthier option of cycling to work or the shops. Worse still are the ridiculously huge cars on the road. Folk are only getting from A to B most of the time. Does it really require the use of a diesel-guzzling, small pantechinon to do it? If you need a car, seriously consider a small one. You can still get four people in it, it's more economical and you will always get into a parking space!

Annette (editor)

Where you can find our online editions

You can access each issue of *The Grapevine* online. Visit the **Easton parish council** (eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk) and the **Marlingford and Colton parish council** (marlingfordandcoltonpc.co.uk) websites, the **Nextdoor** website and on the Easton **Festival Park Facebook** page. If you would like digital copies, please send your email address to: **annettegh57@gmail.com** and you will be added to a list of subscribers.

Our printed editions are published in Dec/Jan, March, May, July/Aug and October and are distributed in Easton, Colton and Marlingford. If you enjoy reading *The Grapevine* and would like to make a donation towards the cost of more printed editions, you can do so by bank transfer:

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Thank you!

Deadline for items for the April issue: Friday, March 21, 2025
Email as word doc to: annettegh57@gmail.com

YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Colton village hall

● Coffee morning

Saturday, February 22: Come and mingle with friends and neighbours to chat over coffee, tea and cake. 10.00am -12 noon.

● Coming up:

Saturday, March 1: Beetle Drive

After last year's popular event, we will be hosting another opportunity to get to know the locals in the frantic race to draw a complete beetle! Doors open 6.30pm for a 6.45pm start.

● Village Hall Committee AGM

Monday, March 10:

All are welcome to attend this public meeting in Colton Village Hall.

Dom Castle

Easton village hall

● Easton Good Companions

March 13th: Horse Racing

March 26th: Bingo

We meet every two weeks at the village hall on Thursdays 2- 4pm. Over 55s welcome.

Tony Perry

● Easton Pop In

March 4: Shrove Tuesday. We will be serving **free pancakes** to all our regulars. We welcome everybody to come and join us for coffee or tea and to keep warm in this cold

spell. We are open from 10.00am until 12 noon every **Tuesday** morning at the village hall. Come and join us!

Brenda and Tony

● Easton Crafters

Easton Crafters are organising a trip to Lincoln to the **Stamperama Show**, which is a show for crafters (mainly card making). It is on **Sunday April 27** and the coach will leave Easton at 8am. Anyone who is interested can ring Janet on **01603 471144**.



We meet every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at Easton Village Hall between 1.30pm and 4.30pm.

● **For more information, ring Janet Morris on 01603 471144.**

Marlingford village hall

● Book Sale

Saturday, March 22:

10.30am - 2.00pm. Tea and coffee and cakes for sale. All proceeds go to the Marlingford Church Restoration Fund. Donations of books very welcome. **Please contact Felicity or Jane for more info: 07713 074029.**

BEETLE DRIVE

COLTON VILLAGE HALL

SATURDAY

MARCH 1

DOORS OPEN 6.30PM
FOR 6.45PM START
£5 PER PERSON
TEA/COFFEE/CAKE AVAILABLE



NEVER DONE THIS
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Roll...Draw...
6 Body
5 Head
4 1 Leg
3 1 Eye
2 1 Antenna
1 Tail

FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!



*Come and celebrate the
Women's World Day of Prayer
with the women of the
Cook Islands – and with us!*

**Friday 7th March at 2pm in
All Saints', Mattishall**

Everyone is welcome to join with women in the Pacific, praising God and sharing their lives and faith. It would be great to see you there.

Frances Middleton (01603 880345)

SPRING



73 PRIZE 22
BINGO 88

Saturday April 12

Colton Village Hall
Doors open at 6.30pm
Eyes down at 7.00pm

PLUS RAFFLE

Refreshments available at
'half time' but please bring
your own alcohol.

**Colton Village
Hall Committee**

AGM

MONDAY

MARCH 10

COLTON VILLAGE HALL

7.00pm

ALL WELCOME

St Peter's Primary school pupils thrill in special O2 arena concert performance

On Monday, February 3, children from years 5 and 6 at St Peter's Primary School travelled to the O2 arena in London to take part in *Young Voices 2025*.

They were joined by 8,500 other children from all over the country to form the largest children's choir in the world.

The children had worked incredibly hard to learn all the songs, actions and dances in the run-up to the concert.

On the day, they rehearsed tirelessly and, in the evening, performed the most amazing concert to the watching audience.

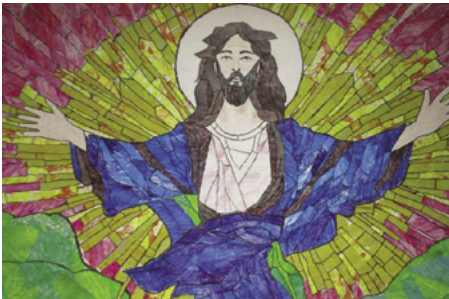
We were all so thrilled with their dedication and impeccable behaviour – they made us all very proud.

Fiona Flavell, Head of School



Audience enjoys watching the children's performance.

Jesus's light shining from pupils' window



The children in Owl class at St Peter's Primary Academy have been looking at colour theory, pattern and texture and linked it to their RE themes of light in faiths by making a giant stained-glass window that is currently being displayed in the school hall.

News from Easton Women's Institute

Hamlet Centre visit

Easton WI members enjoyed a talk about the **Hamlet Centre** in Norwich. This a charity formed over 50 years ago to support families having children with additional needs. It has grown into a well-respected organisation which supports people from pre-school to adult in three centres in the city. We were very impressed with their dedication to, and enthusiasm for, the work they do.

Open invitation

At our next meeting on **Thursday March 13** at 7.30pm, we would like to invite anyone from the village or further afield to join us to celebrate our 72nd birthday meeting. This meeting is open to anyone who would like to join us. We will be entertained by

Saffron Summerfield

(pictured) with her live musical talk featuring the history of the guitar, playing classical, Spanish and blues music plus some of her own songs. She will accompany these on two guitars and a Venezuelan cuatro. Her talk is entitled **Milton Keynes to Mississippi**. During the evening, there will be a raffle and refreshments.



Forensic investigation

At our meeting in **April** our speakers will be **Rhiannon** and **Edith** who will be giving us an **Introduction to Forensics**. CSI here we come!

Meeting with WI groups

On Monday, April 28, Easton WI members are invited to the spring meeting of the **Barford and District Group of WIs**. This will be held at Barford Village Hall at 7.30pm. The meeting is free to all members and we will be entertained by **Rhiannon Rae** who plays guitar music from around the world.

Come and join us!

Easton WI always meets on the second Thursday of the month (except August) at Easton Village Hall at 7.30pm. We would love to see anyone who is interested to know more about the WI.

We are a small friendly group who come from three villages. Most months, we have a speaker or an entertainer and we often have visitors from other WIs to join us. We are happy to welcome visitors to up to three meetings a year but after that we will politely ask them to join us as a WI member. We also go out and about between meetings visiting places of interest. There is often eating involved!

Mary Blathwayt

Were you a witness to this collision?

Police are appealing for witnesses following a fatal collision in Marlingford. It happened at 2.55pm on Saturday, January 25 2025 on the B1108 Watton Road at Bow Hill, when a red Ferrari left the road and collided with a tree. The road was closed while emergency services attended the scene.

The driver of the Ferrari, a man in his 30s, sadly died at the scene. The passenger, a woman also in

her 30s, was taken to hospital with serious injuries.

Officers would like to speak to anyone who may have witnessed the collision or the manner of driving prior to the incident.

Anyone with any information or any relevant dashcam footage is asked to get in touch via the following channels, quoting reference 36/5923/25:

W: [norfolk.police.uk/tell-us](https://www.norfolk.police.uk/tell-us)

Email: sciu@norfolk.police.uk

Bethel Street station now open to the public

Bethel Street police station in Norwich's city centre reopened to the public on Monday, January 27 following refurbishment work.

Work to refurbish the police station started in August 2023, with the first teams moving back into the building in November last year.

The project is almost complete with the last remaining teams

expected to move into their new accommodation by the summer.

The office will be open to the public during these hours:

- **Monday-Wednesday**
9am-5pm
- **Thursday-Saturday**
9am-6pm
- **Sunday (and bank holidays)**
Closed

Your Local Safer Neighbourhood Team

Beat Manager

Stuart Barnard Sgt 499

E: SNTCostessey@norfolk.police.uk



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Beat Manager

Andrew Sneddon PC

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E: SNTCostessey@norfolk.police.uk



Engaging with your community to solve local issues and helping to keep you safe.

Continuing a series of pieces taken from the *Memories of Marlingford* book featuring stories about the village and villagers, past and present.

Ella Poyntz

As recorded in the church magazine of February 1992.

“It hardly seems possible to believe that I shall have the good fortune to celebrate my one hundredth birthday on 21st February. Of course life has changed a great deal since I was born in Marlingford in Queen Victoria’s reign. Practically everybody went to church and the Sunday school outing was the only outing of the year, so attendance was very high as this important day approached. If a car splashed through the river, it was so exciting that all the children would rush to watch. There were carts with delivery rounds for groceries but most household articles were brought by the carrier from Norwich to Colton and had to be collected on foot. We were quite happy to walk to Barnham Broom and back for a harvest supper and on midsummer’s eve, we would tempt the ghost on the Beech tree crossroads. On Valentine’s day, we went round the houses to collect our orange or a coin – it was rather like the American ‘trick or treat’. Electricity, which was put in during



the fifties, really changed our lives, but, sad to say, people moved in and out of the village so quickly and were bound up with their own lives, you no longer knew everybody in Marlingford.

I had very good neighbours and friends who supported me all the time they lived in Marlingford, but now, apart from Mr and Mrs Rix, all my old friends like Mr and Mrs Brand, who ran the post office, Mrs Lewin, Mrs Bailey and Mrs Morgan, the headmistress, have already gone to their maker. Life has not been easy for me, particularly during the two world wars, and my biggest sadness was bearing a daughter who had spina bifida.

After caring all my life for my disabled brother, without my faith I could never have coped.

I have had, and still gain, pleasure from my life, particularly gardens, children and animals and am certainly going to enjoy my glass of champagne on my birthday”

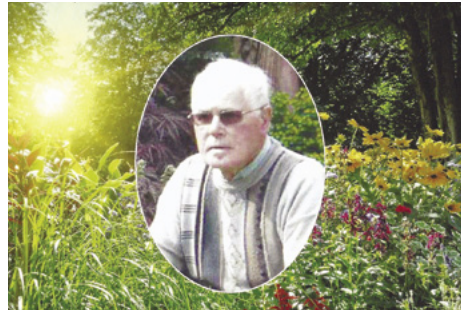
Revealing her secret for long life:

“I have never smoked and never drank, but I do eat one onion every day”.

Remembering Thomas Jay 12.12.1932 – 5.12.2024

Born in Scotland - nurtured and matured in Norfolk

Many of you will remember Tom and his wife Irene. Cath and I moved to the village in February 1989, first meeting Tom and Irene at The Bell. At this time, he was in his late 50s. A whole chunk of his life had been lived by then. He was born in Scotland, an only child. His father worked for Trinity House on the light ships. The move to Norfolk was at a very young age so in essence Tom was a child of Norfolk. They lived in the Fleggburgh area. He did national service where he learnt his trade as an electrician. In the early 1960s he met Irene. They were married in 1965. This was the year Tom met Malcolm. What resulted was a lifelong friendship. They ran two businesses together – a camper-van hire company and a builders' merchants called *Plastics for Building*. Tom tired of being behind a desk and, in the late 70s, the business was sold. He continued as a self-employed electrician. In the early 80s, living in an on-site caravan, they built their new home on a plot in Mill Road, naming it, when completed, after the tree that at the time was next to the entrance to the drive – 'Ashtree House'. Tom and Irene were much involved



in village life. They were regulars in The Bell and members of the crib team. Tom was on the parish council and was, for a period, chair. With others, he was integral to changing an unused piece of council land into what is now the conservation area, woodland walk and playground. In the mid 90s, Tom was involved in steps to revitalise the village hall. Keen gardeners, the rear garden at Ashtree House featured in a national gardening magazine. For work, he drove a Vauxhall Rascal van often with a border collie called Beau on board. Beau was a stray who took a liking to the van, hopped in and lived the rest of his days in the van or curled up in Ashtree House. The only other living thing allowed in the van was Tom. In his late 60s, Tom wound the business down. Tom and Irene along with Malcolm and his wife Moira socialised

and holidayed together. Getting to France was often in Malcolm's four-seater plane with Tom, on occasion, taking a very supervised control of the aircraft. Their friendship lasted nearly 60 years and it was Malcolm who gave the heartfelt eulogy at Tom's funeral. Tom's other interests included his allotment in Easton and taking lessons on the baby grand he installed in the house. In August 2006, they moved to a smaller house with a smaller garden in Costessey.



Tom is often described as a quiet man. He was but it came from an innate calmness and confidence. He was generous with his time. He was a helping hand if needed. He had a lovely sense of humour and an infectious chuckle that sometimes spread to his shoulders. When his face was relaxed you could tell that it's natural presentation to the world was a smile not a frown. In addition and above all else he also had Irene - and Irene had Tom.

Malcolm and Aidan

Tribute to Julian Mobbs



Julian passed away peacefully on January 4, aged 82. He was a much-loved father to Justin, Rachel and Claire. Julian and his beloved wife Jennie lived in Easton and then, in 1972 moved to Marlingford. As chairman of Larkin Gowen accountancy firm, JP at Norwich Magistrate courts, governor of Taverham Hall and Hethersett Hall schools, former chairman and life member of Oulton Broad Yacht club, Exiles Hockey Club and Marlingford Cricket Club, he had a busy and fulfilling life, always enjoying his pint with friends at the Marlingford Bell.



Traffic report following recent A47 weekend roadwork closure

As our residents were all too aware, the A47 was closed over the weekend of February 8 and 9 to enable National Highways to install some water pipes as part of their ongoing dual carriageway construction work. Residents of Colton and Marlingford were very anxious about what was likely to happen on our single-track roads, after what happened following the overnight closure on January 10 and, of course, the road closure caused by flooding during Storm Babette, in October 2023. Strenuous attempts were made by the parish council to pressurise National Highways and Norfolk County Council to limit the amount of traffic using the villages as a “rat run” rather than take their prescribed, but much longer, diversion on A roads via Thetford, and Swaffham. Unfortunately, their planned timing clashed with the extra traffic caused by supporters of Derby County Football Club, visiting Norwich City that weekend and the Norfolk Gazelles organising their annual Valentines 10K run through both Marlingford and Colton. After much lobbying and articles



Stills from a video that was recorded during the run. placed in the *Eastern Daily Press* and on BBC Radio Norfolk, Konnect Bus at the last minute agreed to re-route their number 4 service between Norwich and Dereham, thus avoiding Colton, and Excel Buses cancelled their services altogether. That only left us to worry about larger commercial vehicles and, of course, local drivers who were not going to follow the prescribed route. The weekend passed with significant increases in traffic volume but, luckily, without the expected congestion and bottlenecks. In expectation, we had installed our SAM 2 cameras at either end of the Norwich Road, and held our breath.



An analysis of the data gathered showed that, for traffic heading eastward along Norwich Road, we recorded an increase in volume from approximately 300 vehicles per day, during the preceding week, and also the same week in 2024, to between 1100 to 1500 vehicles per day. Similarly, traffic heading westward on the camera outside the Colton village hall showed a similar increase from, approximately 270 vehicles per day, to between 600 and 850 vehicles per day over the period February 8 and 9.

Although there was clearly a significant increase in traffic volumes during the A47 closure, we were fortunate that the cars

were, with some evidence of damage to grass verges, able to pass each other and keep moving. We were not aware of any significant traffic congestion. Previous issues of larger vehicles and buses travelling in both directions recorded during the overnight closure in January, were eliminated, due to the bus companies rescheduling their usual routes and commercial vehicles presumably following the official 'A' routes.

We therefore noted that there was more traffic coming through Colton in an easterly, rather than westerly direction.

However, a significant number of drivers were seen heading down Colton Road towards Marlingford, particularly during the Norfolk Gazelle's planned 10K run. The 10K run took place without the traffic being stopped during their activities. This is a potentially dangerous situation and must not happen again.

So, to conclude, we think we got away with it this time. We do hope however that the 'powers that be' learn from this event, and if the A47 is closed for a protracted period again, everybody will learn from our experience.

John Morse
Chair Marlingford &
Colton Parish Council

How many kinds of sweet flowers grow...?

It's the time of year that gardeners love, is it not?

The time when Mother Nature thaws enough to push a few green buds out, some spring flowers, perhaps a little blossom. The garden is waking up. Proper gardeners love it. I dread it.

It means that the weeds are coming; green waves of nettles, brambles, goose grass, bindweed all washing over the plot, a tsunami of unruly vegetation that won't be tamed.

It wasn't always like this. A dozen years ago, when we moved into our little Colton home, the garden was a testament to its late owner. The lawns were weed-free carpets, the beds lightly, but tidily, populated with assorted shrubbery, roses and a couple of fruit trees.

During our first year we were greeted by little surprises; snowdrops, bluebells, daffodils and tulips popped up, delicate snake's head fritillaries nodded in the breeze and flashy day lilies burst open in a blaze of orange.

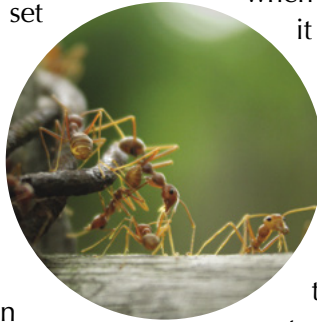


Busy with work, maintenance was restricted to cutting the lawns and snipping the dead heads off the roses. Even so, it all looked good, at least from afar. But even then, it was far from good. Tendrils of convulvulus were already stealthily snaking around the garden, brittle stems appearing overnight to choke the established plants. Nettles, as tall and gangly as teenagers, gathered in mobs behind the sheds, ready to stampede. Tentacles of bramble spilled out to snag a bare shin or spike the ungloried hand.



Even so, I thought it was controllable. In autumn I set to, tugging out sheaves of nettle (perversely, I find the stinging not unpleasant, at least after that first eye-widening moment) and hauling great handfuls of bindweed to the brown bins.

Huge lengths of bramble – I measured one at 16 feet – were dragged out and after a few hours of labour and some minor flesh wounds, order was restored. But you, the knowledgeable gardener, will know that it wasn't. All I had done was angered the



Pictures: Pixabay

gods of the weeds and their wrath was terrible. Over the succeeding years they took over – a wall of plant matter that defied any attempts to control it.

Even the front lawn was overrun, though by animal matter, rather than vegetable.

Red ants, legions of them, assumed control, making the grass unmowable.

I called a pest controller.

"How many nests do you have," she enquired.

"Fifty-seven," I said.

There was a moment of silence.

"That's a lot," she said.

It was a lot, too many to be defeated, as it turned out. I fear that

when the end of days arrives, it will only be my ants, cockroaches and Trump supporters left alive.

So this year I'm accepting my fate. I am going to allow the green wave to engulf the garden without

stressing about it. I am

weary of the struggle. I will let the weeds do as they will – I believe that they are described properly as 'plants in the wrong place.'

Well as far as I'm concerned they're in the right place.

Failing that, there's always a brush cutter.

Dominic Castle

Marlingford and Colton Parish Council

Your Parish Councillors:

Mr J Morse, Chairman

Vice Chairman

Mark Pfeiffer

Cllr Deborah Perfect

Cllr David Woods

Community litter picks

A community litter pick is being held in **Colton** on **Saturday, March 29** from **9.30am - 12.00pm**.

Please meet at the village hall to collect a hi-vis vest and litter grabber. There will be refreshments after for the volunteers.

Marlingford will be holding a community litter pick also on **Saturday March 29**. Meeting point will be the village conservation area near the playground at 10.30am to collect a hi-vis and litter grabber. Cake available for all volunteers afterwards – venue to be confirmed.

Picture: Freepik



To register your interest (to ensure enough vests and grabbers, please email the clerk on **marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com** stating how many people are attending and which litter pick you will be attending.

Electric blanket safety testing events – Monday, March 10 to Thursday, March 13 2025

Norfolk Trading Standards and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service are offering free electric blanket safety testing at eight events in March. As well as the opportunity to have your blanket tested, there will also be the chance to talk to their friendly teams about product safety, home fire safety and how to best protect yourself from scams.

The events are:

- **Monday, March 10**
10.30am-12.30pm
Cromer Library
2.30-4.30pm
Gorleston Library
- **Tuesday, March 11**
10am-noon
Thetford Library
2-4pm
Wymondham Library
- **Wednesday, March 12**
10am-noon
Hunstanton Library

2-4pm Dereham Library

● **Thursday, March 13**

10am-noon Norfolk and
Norwich Millennium Library
(The Forum)

2-4pm Diss Library

CPR training

It is hoped that CPR training will be arranged for residents this spring with NARs. This training will provide essential information on how to use a defibrillator and give emergency first aid. More information to follow soon.



Parish council meetings and public inclusion

Parish council meetings are held in **January, March, May, July, September and November**, normally on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm.

Agendas are posted on the parish council noticeboards and the website at least three days beforehand. The public are welcome to attend all parish council meetings; there is an opportunity to speak and ask questions.

Please note: if you would like an item to appear on the agenda, details must be sent to the clerk at least 10 days before the meeting. The council is unable to make a decision on anything not included

on the agenda but can discuss newly-raised matters and refer them to the next meeting.

Minutes are posted on the website: **marlingfordandcoltonpc.co.uk/minutes-agendas** and are available from the clerk but remain in draft form until they are agreed at the following meeting.

The next meeting will be held on;
● **March 11** – Colton Village Hall

Parish council contact

Maria Hutson, clerk to Marlingford and Colton Parish Council.

T: 01603 850118

E: marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com

W: marlingfordandcoltonpc.co.uk

Easton Parish Council

Your parish councillors:

Chairman – Mark Caton

Vice-chair – Jan Hudson

Cllr David Lewis

Cllr Des Fulcher

Cllr Peter McCarter

Cllr Roly Chapman

Cllr Mark Cordy

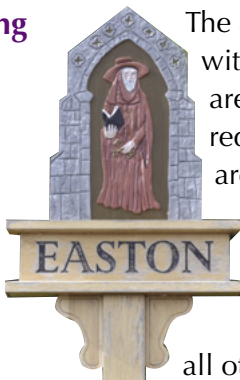
Cllr Mike Jobling

Cllr Mike Bowman

Budget and precept setting

You will be aware that the parish council has been facing significant financial challenges associated with the community centre project. It is anticipated that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will approve the re-profiling of the existing loan over a greater time period, reducing the annual repayment costs and releasing much needed funds, which, along with Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding expected in April, will repay the outstanding community centre debts.

This has enabled the parish council to set its budget for the year ahead, April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026 and the resulting precept – the amount of money paid by residents of Easton to the parish council as part of their council tax. While the increase is considerably less than originally feared, there will still be a significant increase.



The annual costs associated with the community centre are around £40,000, the reduced loan repayments are expected to be £30,000 and the insurance of an empty premises is around £10,000. The parish council has reduced all other operational costs wherever possible, but the resulting precept will be £68,898 as opposed to £25,926 for the current year. This represents a 122.46% increase or £53.72 for a band D resident. While this is obviously a sizeable increase, the council is relieved that it has been able to limit the increase, on average, to just over £1 per property, per week.

Easton Community Centre

It is still the aspiration of the parish council to complete and open the community centre as soon as funds are available. If you feel you have skills that may be able to support this, please get in touch – email clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk



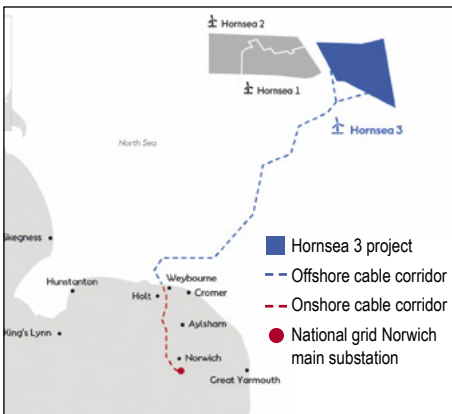
The new community centre. Picture: Annette Hudson

Persimmon development

The council will be hearing from Persimmon on plans for phase three and four and then making representation. The full application can be found on South Norfolk Council's website.

Hornsea 3 project

A representative of VolkerFitzpatrick, the company laying the cables for the Hornsea 3 project, attended the last meeting. They updated the council on the upcoming drum movements which



Source: hornseaproject3.co.uk

will start coming through the village from March to mid-June. There are between eight and 12 drums to be moved each weighing 45 tonnes. All homes en-route will receive letter drops and the council has highlighted that consideration needs to be given to access to the school and other facilities. Advance warning notices will appear in the next few weeks and all movements will have a police escort.

Norwich Western Link

The planning application has been withdrawn by Norfolk County Council following objections from Natural England. The project remains an aspiration of Norfolk County Council and they will continue to work with central government to try and find a solution.

Parish council meetings

The council meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the village hall. Members of the public are always welcome and there is an opportunity for you to ask questions or to make comment.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the parish council will be held on

Tuesday, March 4 at 7pm in Easton Village Hall.

E: clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk

W: eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk



What sort of choices will you make for Lent?

This year Lent begins on March 6 – Lent being the church season leading up to Easter which is traditionally associated with sacrifice, with ‘giving up’, and self-denial. A season which says ‘no pain, no gain’.

But there’s little point giving something up unless we put something more valuable in its place. God doesn’t want us to be miserable, let alone to be pleased with ourselves for feeling miserable. If giving up chocolate gives us a warm glow of holiness because we want it but are heroically resisting, then we’re doing Lent wrong.

So if we give up chocolate, it should be with a purpose: perhaps so we can eat more fruit which will nourish us better and help us (re)appreciate subtle tastes not overwhelmed with fat and sugar.

And I say this as someone who absolutely loves chocolate!

Or perhaps so that we can put the money we would have used buying chocolate to a better use.

Or we can even buy chocolate and donate it to a foodbank.

And, of course, as Lent ends, we haven’t really ‘given up’ chocolate – we’ve simply laid it aside temporarily. This is a very different way of looking at it which we can

Church services March 2025

Sunday 2	10.00am	Easton – Holy Communion, next before Lent
Wednesday 5	10.00am	Marlingford – Ash Wednesday
Sunday 9	10.00am	Colton – HC 1st of Lent, all age service
Sunday 16	10.00am	Marlingford – HC 2nd of Lent
Sunday 23	10.00am	Bawburgh – HC 3rd of lent Lent
Sunday 30	10.00am	Colton – HC Mothering Sunday , all age service
CLOCKS GO FORWARD		

Church services April 2025

Sunday 6	10.00am	Easton – Holy Communion 4th of Lent
Sunday 13	10.00am	Colton – HC Palm Sunday , all age service
Thursday 17	6.00pm	Easton – Maundy Thursday , bring something to share
Friday 18	2.00pm	Bawburgh – Good Friday , an hour at the Cross
Sunday 20	10.00am	Marlingford – Easter Day , HC
Sunday 27	10.00am	Bawburgh – HC 2nd of Easter

Marlingford Church 50 Club – If number holders wish to continue their membership this year, please pay £20 per number into the this **Barclays Bank account** – account name: **Marlingford PCC**, account number: **00378445**, sort code: **20-62-53** before the end of March. Please reference your deposit with your name.

apply to other things in our lives. We might lay aside meat in order to discover new kinds of vegetable and new ways of cooking them. We might lay aside television in order to read more. We might lay aside social media in order to write letters or spend time with others in person. Lent is a journey from now to Easter, but it can also begin a journey from ‘now’ to ‘new’ for the whole of our lives. Unlike the 40 days of Lent, we can start a life-long journey of discovering how to live. And it’s not

some super-spiritual thing for the religious elite – the ones who can give up chocolate and television for Lent – it’s for everyone. We can embark on the most valuable ‘laying aside’ of all as we stop putting ourselves front and centre and instead, putting God and neighbour there – committing to the everyday, nitty gritty hard work of looking at those around us, figuring out what will make life better for them, and doing it. What are you going to lay aside this Lent?

Rev Laura Montgomery

Mobile library 2025 – March dates

Marlingford – Route: CEN 423 Thursday: March 20

Stop	Arrives	Departs	Postcode
Mill Road	10.40am	10.55am	NR9 5HL
Colton Road near Home Farm	11.00am	11.20pm	NR9 5HS

Colton –Route: CEN 319 Wednesday: March 19

Ex post Office	9.45am	10.00am	NR9 5DB
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Easton –Route: CEN 423 Thursday: March 20

Parker's Close	11.30am	11.50am	NR9 5EE
Marlingford Road	11.55am	12.15pm	NR9 5AD
Marlingford Way	12.20am	12.40pm	NR9 5HB
Kennedy Close	12.45pm	13.05pm	NR9 5EY
St Peter's Drive	13.10pm	13.30pm	NR9 5HF

Please note this information is subject to change or amendment both on a permanent and temporary basis. For all enquiries call 01603 222303.

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Socialise and meet others from the local community every Wednesday 9:00am-11:00am in the Goat Shed kitchen.



'HOOF IT' WALKS

Join us on our monthly 'Hoof It' walks around our beautiful countryside and enjoy a refreshment on us. Head online for upcoming dates.



**GOAT
SHED**

MEET THE KIDS

We're approaching kidding season and cannot wait to meet the latest members of our boer goat herd. Keep an eye out for future 'meet the kids' and 'goat spa' sessions.



GRAZING BOARDS

Enjoy a range of freshly made sandwiches, sausage rolls, and homemade bakes on our grazing boards for two. Served all day in the kitchen, Monday to Saturday, no booking required.