

LITTLEPORT

MAGAZINE

www.littleportlife.co.uk

ISSUE 60 SPRING 2021

Your Community Magazine

Spring has Sprung

**100 pages packed
with features and
articles about
and for Littleport
people**

Includes 41 pages of Littleport Businesses & Services





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In this spring edition - local businesses and service providers directory and news from all your favourite groups, organisations, sociable goings on and features including a special March window exhibition of skating history at Adams Heritage Centre in Main Street.

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Front Cover Photo of Cherry Blossom in Littleport by Cathy Gibb-de Swarte

Welcome from the Editor

Welcome to Littleport Life in Spring 2021

As the poet declaimed with certainty in the last line after the misery-filled verses he'd written before it, if winter comes can spring be far behind? And as we embark on this new season having struggled through the pandemic restrictions and perhaps even illness in the winter just gone, your magazine is here to reassure you that Littleport has been and will be soldiering on regardless! And fascinatingly the title of Shelley's poem was Ode to the West Wind, and we know that blows the most in these parts harsher in winter and lighter and brighter in springtime.



All the businesses and services provided locally have been doing their best to fulfil customers and clients' needs and we would like to thank all our advertisers for continuing to support the production and printing of your community magazine even though money has been so tight during the months of lockdown.

The Littleport community with its groups and organisations that have found ways to keep in touch with not only their members but with the wider population through social media like the Littleport Community Group on Facebook – and the Covid 19 help and support group (Littleport) with both sites giving valuable contact in isolating times.

The bad news is we lost some wonderful Littleportians in the winter. Among them Norman South and Francis Brown. And you can read tributes to them on pages 23 and 26.

You will find much to interest you in this quarter's magazine whether you are a newcomer to Littleport, lived here for any number of years or born here.

What we do ask is that you use our advertisers where and when you can, shop as locally as you can as often as you can and keep Littleport itself the vibrant and caring community it has always been. Don't forget that in the hardest times gone by that that caring for each other spirit lived in Littleport. The May 1816 riots started after a meeting of the benevolent society at the Globe Inn now the Co-op in Main Street. They found it hadn't got enough funds in the kitty to help the families starving in Littleport after the Napoleonic war ended and the hard winter turned into a harder spring...

Read all about it on page 36!

The Littleport Society has more interesting input on page 34 about Littleport's first church clock that was published by the Ely Standard.

Cast your eye over our contents list opposite and you'll be spoilt for choice of interesting reading about all things Littleport!

With best wishes from the team of Littleport Life,

Lyn

Contents

Littleport Life Advertising Rates	3	Vine Community Church	30
Welcome from The Editor	4	Littleport Christian Spiritualists –	32
Contents	5	NCSS Principal Minister Rev Lyn	
Advertisers	6	answers the question:	
The WI – Takes A Trip Down Memory Lane...	7	What Earthly Comfort can we	
Joy Tod's Black Horse Drove Kitchen	8	expect from Spiritualism?	
Littleport and District Flower Club	9	The Littleport Society –	34
Littleport Ex-Servicemen's Club	10	Historic Clock Returns to Littleport!	
still has that Fighting Spirit!		The Littleport Society – Littleport Riots!.....	36
Reports the Littleport Life Editor		Spring is here at last. Time for	39
News From Branching Out	11	some spring cleaning says	
Littleport vets Johnson and Scott	12	Littleport resident Digby	
saved the life of a beloved dog		Rotary Club of Littleport.....	40
for Christmas!		Keeping Littleport Supplied with Food	42
Littleport Independent Foodbank.....	13	and Essentials! Cathy Gibb-de Swarte	
Littleport Remembers	14	Looks at how our local retailers are	
Littleport Scouts Group –	15	coping with the pandemic.	
Onwards and Upwards!		ThePort Youth Group Looks Forward.....	45
Learning Matters by Educationalist	16	Scout and Guide Hut Good News!	46
David Barker		Littleport Lions Club continues to help	47
Littleport Primary Community School.....	18	those in need at home and abroad!	
News – Headmaster's Message		Reports Genevieve Battey	
Millfield School – Deborah Hannaford,	21	The Littleport Players Receive a New	48
Headteacher		Props Shed	
Littleport Leisure Update – Clare Pendle	22	The Royal British Legion	49
Littleport Life's Cathy Gibb-de Swarte.....	23	Littleport Branch	
remembers Norman South		363MCC Keep their motors running!	50
Written in 2015, we reproduce this	24	Adams Heritage Centre fascinating.....	51
slightly truncated article featuring		window exhibition of early fenland	
Norman South as part of Littleport Life's		ice skating	
tribute. Focus On Littleport Cricket Club		Littleport's brass band has been far	54
– and Norman South!		from idle in the months leading up	
Final 'Public Service Announcement'	26	to Spring!	
Of Littleport Community Volunteer		Peacocks Meadow	56
Francis Brown		The Littleport Anthem –	56
Mothers Union – Christian Care for	28	Written by Elizabeth Sutherland Fleming	
families – The Mothers Union is Worldwide		Welney Wetland Trust	57
St George's Church – A Message.....	29	Medical Centre – Contact Details,.....	99
Of Good Cheer From St George's		Opening Hours and Clinics	
		Useful Contacts	99

Advertisers

Accommodation

The Gate House B&B	86
--------------------------	----

Accounting & Bookkeeping

Red Shoes Accounting Services	90
-------------------------------------	----

Beauty

Erika's Barbershop	66
Kim Mobile Hairdressing	91
Mel's Mobile Hairdressing	72

Building Services

Ben Layn Builders Ltd	93
D Silcock (Construction)	77
EverBrite Conservatories	98
MAM (Tiling).....	79
ML Roofing Services Ltd.....	75
Nigel Ingram Carpentry & Building Services	86
Pains Plastering Services.....	86
SJP Maintenance (Decorating.....	61
Plastering & Property Maintenance)	

Care Homes

Littleport Grange & The Croft	60
-------------------------------------	----

Charity Shop

Branching Out. Have Spare Time? Volunteer!	62
--	----

Church & Faith Groups

St John's Methodist Church.....	31
Vine Community Church.....	31

Community Services

Littleport's Adam's Community Market.....	76
---	----

Computer, TV, Telecoms

BM Aerial & TV Services Ltd	70
McLatchie Electrical Services.....	68
Millrose Telecom	76
TW Electrical (Ely) Ltd	93

Driving Tuition

R1M – Motorbike & Moped Training.....	66
---------------------------------------	----

Education

Darrell Richings, Music Teacher	78
---------------------------------------	----

Electrical Engineers & Contractors

DS Electrical Complete Solutions Ltd.....	91
James Lee Electrical Ltd.....	71

Farm Supplies

Fen Farm Supplies.....	83
------------------------	----

Florists

Flowers by Chloe.....	91
-----------------------	----

Food & Drink

Clare's Kitchen (Sharman's Garden Centre).....	92
PizzaTown	92
Rumbles of Littleport	85
Station Café	75
Swan BBQ & Pizza Takeaway.....	73

Funeral Directors

R J Pepper & Son.....	94
-----------------------	----

Garden Services

Fenland Spirit Services (Lawnmower	97
Sales, Servicing & Repair)	
M.J.M Specialists	72
TNS - Thurlow Nunn Standen.....	67

Health & Fitness

Fiona Gilbert (Foot Care).....	92
Kim Pearson BAUK, BTAA Bowen	66
Technique Therapist	
Loach & Wade (Optometrists).....	95

Home Interiors & Services

AC Property Services.....	89
Bargate Master Locksmith.co.uk	77
Enkay Flooring.....	76
Frames Conservatories Direct.....	95
John Olive Property Maintenance Building Services	68
Mitchell & Mayle Ltd.....	74
William James Decorating.....	70

Leisure & Interests

Littleport Ex-Servicemen's Club	64
Timebank - Get Help & Volunteer.....	78
Trelander Camping & Caravanning.....	75

Motoring

BKD Motors Ltd	80
Glovers Autocentre Chettisham Garage.....	96
Lg MOTS AT Lg Car Sales Ltd.....	88
Mildenhire - Car, Van, MPV & Minibus Rental	100
RPM – Garage Services/24 Hour Recovery	65

Musical Instrument Services

Sparrow Violins.....	63
----------------------	----

Pets

Neuter your Cat for £5	61
Isle Veterinary Group.....	84
Johnson & Scott (Vets)	81
Jurassic Bark Pet Supplies	87
Karine's K9 Grooming.....	66
Meow Bow Wow – Daycare &	82
Boarding Kennels and Cattery	
Nails To Tails.....	72
Northfen Grooming.....	89

Plumbing & Heating

Aspire Plumbing & Heating Ltd	83
EPH - Ely Plumbing & Heating	71
LNW Plumbing & Heating	92
Mark's Gas, Heating & Plumbing Services	63
Mark A Bennett Plumbing & Heating.....	83
Port Plumbing Heating, Bathroom & Electrical Supplies.....	69

Security

Star Security Services.....	2
-----------------------------	---

LITTLEPORT WOMEN'S INSTITUTE Takes a trip Down Memory Lane

How many people remember the WI Concert Party?

We thought about it and decided it was a good idea. It was a great success!

There were 20-25 members involved. We did sketches, poems and songs from the roaring twenties and popular shows.

We performed around other villages and said we were on tour. We had no problem getting an audience. They clapped when things were right and even louder when things went horribly wrong.

Doreen Arnold wrote many of the sketches, in one of which she and Madge played parents to Cynthia and Val. Cynthia was out of control laughing so much that the producer, Winnie, was frantically telling Val to stop her. The audience loved it.

Later Val came on as Boy George and got asked for her autograph.

In the 'Allo 'Allo take off, Doreen's moustache started to slip, she tried to blow it off which had

the others on stage in hysterics.

When we did the circus scenes Maggie was a tight rope walker- no fear of falling off as the rope was stretched across the floor.

There was lots of singing and dancing, solos and duets, by the whole company, accompanied by pianists Mrs Kerridge and Irene Howe.

One memorable time was when we had finished our concert and were told to help ourselves to the refreshments. There were two beautiful sponges uncut. I was handed a

knife and was told 'Val you cut them as you are good at that'. Unfortunately we ate the two main draw prizes, the two lovely sponges.

After one concert it had been snowing and we had to get off the coach to help push it out of a snow drift.

Mrs Winnie Law had the unenviable task of producing the show and trying to keep us all under control.

There are too many tales to relate on this page, but fun was had by all.

***Submitted by members
of the WI Concert Party.***





JOY TOD'S BLACK HORSE DROVE KITCHEN

Joy says this cake is easy to make and very tasty. A popular recipe from previous editions of the famous BeRo Home Recipe book.

Milk Chocolate Cake

Ingredients

- 200g (7oz) Self Raising Flour
- 225g (8oz) Caster Sugar
- 1 x 2.5ml spoon (half tsp) Salt
- 25g (1oz) Cocoa Powder (sieved)
- 100g (4oz) Butter or Margarine
- 2 medium Eggs
- 5 x 15ml spoon (5 tbsp) Evaporated Milk
- 5 x 15ml spoon (5 tbsp) Water
- Few drops Vanilla Essence

Method

1. Heat oven to fan 160 cent, conventional 180 cent, Gas 4.
2. Grease 2 x 20.5cm (8 inch) tins, if loose bottomed tins, line with grease proof paper otherwise mixture will run out.
3. Mix flour, sugar, salt and cocoa.
4. Rub in butter/margarine.

5. Beat eggs with milk.
6. Stir egg mixture, essence and liquids into the dry ingredients and beat well.
7. Place mixture in prepared tins and bake for about 25 - 30 minutes
8. When cold sandwich and top with Milk Chocolate Icing.

Milk Chocolate Icing

Ingredients

- 60g (2.5oz) Butter or Margarine
- 1 x 15ml spoon (1 tbsp) Cocoa Powder
- 250g (9oz) Icing Sugar sieved
- 3 x 15ml spoon (3 tbsp) Hot Milk
- 1 x 5ml spoon (1 tsp) Vanilla Essence

Method

1. Melt butter/margarine, blending in cocoa, then stir in icing sugar, milk and essence.
2. Beat until smooth and thick.

Littleport and District Flower Club

Pam Hayes, Programme Secretary, gives us an update

It has come round to finding a report for the magazine and in these very difficult times it is hard to find anything to report on.

Like most clubs we have had to close all meetings and so have not had our usual monthly meetings with our wonderful Demonstrators to see and admire.

I am sure that you are all hoping 2021 will prove a more happy year and with the vaccination now being run out it is hoped that some semblance of a normal life can be ahead of us by the summer and the committee hope that we will all be back at the Village Hall socialising and admiring the wonderful talent of our Demonstrators.

We have not had a Zoom Committee Meeting since November 2020 when the decision was made to cancel all Demonstrators up to April 2020, and it was hoped that the April meeting would be the start of the Club meetings when David Wright would be the Demonstrator.

However at the present time it looks very unlikely that this will happen until we see how this new lockdown is working and if all restrictions can be lifted. We will keep all Members informed of any decisions made.

We have learned that one of our esteemed regular Demonstrators, Adele Kent, is standing down from the East of England NAFAS and sadly will not be doing anymore demonstrations. We wish her luck in her retirement and will be very sad not to be able to call on her talents in the future.

We hope that you have all been keeping safe in these difficult times and send our best wishes to you all.

If you wish for more information, please contact Sue Constable the Secretary on 01353 861012 or Carol Weyman the Chairperson on 01353 360289.



Arrangements by Adele Kent



Adele Kent Demonstrated in August

Littleport Ex-Servicemen's Club still has that Fighting Spirit!

Reports the Littleport Life Editor

Nothing daunted and not to be downhearted Littleport's entertainment and social venue that has seen 2 world wars and survived all-sorts is looking positively at the future!

A new opportunity has arisen for local businesses and service providers, whether as individuals or companies, to put their hands in their pockets and dig deep to help the Club at this difficult time.

Cheerful Chair Adi Keating has welcomed this idea from entertainment maestro Derek Timbers of Disco nights fame to get sponsorship for music nights to offset the downturn in the coffers due to the pandemic. He says: "In these troubled times the Club would be happy to accept sponsorship of our musical events to help pay the artistes fees. We would of course advertise the nights as 'sponsored by' and your name – or equally you can remain anonymous if you so wish. All advertising of the event would carry your business' name and supplied flyers and or cards would be placed on the tables and on the bars." And in conclusion Adi says: "Our club is an important community hub that not only offers a fine music venue, but it also has a selection of good beers/wines and food, all served by our great friendly team."

Adi's wife, Melanie, of MellyMade Designs, has chipped in to start the ball rolling! And more community-minded businesses like Trevor Wibrow (Trevor Wibrow @ TW Electrical (Ely) Ltd.) have come aboard since!

Derek, who says "I just woke up one morning and the sponsorship idea was there!" is contactable by email: dmroadshow@aol.com and on his mobile: 07867906026.



MellyMade designs at 16 Main Street



Littleport Brass Disney concert at the Club



Rock and Roll at the LESM Club!



Musical entertainment at the Littleport Ex-Servicemen's Club!



'Supporting adults with learning disabilities to live active and fulfilling lives'

Branching Out is a registered charity (number 1047403) Est. 1994

News from Branching Out

I am sure everyone is obeying the lockdown rules imposed by the Government. It is paramount that we all follow the advice which is being given to ensure we are able to put an end to the restrictions imposed on us all. The vaccine programme is being rolled out and the people of Littleport and surrounding villages are now being invited to attend for their jab.

The Branching Out Charity Shop had to close following the Christmas break. Hopefully by the time you read this, things will have changed and all non-essential retail shops are re-opened. If this is not the case, please stay safe.

Despite repeated requests not to do so, we had some problems with donations being left in the doorway during the closure but most people were doing as we ask and not leave anything until the shop re-opens. Thanks.

During lockdown 3 our day service for adults with learning disabilities at Grange Lane has remained open. Those who require a physical service are able to still attend and everyone else is being supported remotely. Our garden is still being maintained and our plants which will

be for sale again on the trolley outside our site at 27 Grange Lane Littleport.

There is always a mountain of legislation and paperwork which needs doing at times like this. We are keeping on top of this and also socially distancing and following guidelines.

We appreciate the support that we receive from the local community. However, we are unable to produce the usual quantity of handmade items which we sell, both on social media and at the charity shop. If you would like to continue supporting us, we have a Just Giving page - Branching Out - JustGiving. The money we raise is needed to continue the service we offer and make a difference to the lives of the adults who attend our provision.

We wish everybody a safe transition through the pandemic and hope that we will be back to 'normal' soon. Take care and keep safe everyone, from the staff, volunteers and people we support at Branching Out. Thanks for your support.

DONATE NOW WITH
JustGiving™

Littleport vets Johnson and Scott saved the life of a beloved dog for Christmas!

Here is a heart-warming story about one of Littleport Life magazine's supportive advertisers!

Rosie the much-loved Jack Russell companion to doggy Daisy and humans Cathy and Lyn Gibb-de Swarte became progressively more unwell in December.

Rosie was adopted by them 4 years ago after a life spent as a breeding bitch in an outside concrete pen when the owner decided to put her up for sale being surplus to requirements on an internet dog-selling site.

Expecting the worst, on December 23rd a very worried Lyn and Cathy headed to Littleport vets Johnson and Scott's other surgery in nearby Witchford.

After a scan, they were told Rosie needed urgent treatment and to return in the morning for the operation.

Dawn hadn't broken yet on Christmas Eve and the Main Street in the village was dark and quiet, but as the trio drove into the big house at number 186, it was a light-filled hive of activity that greeted them as they parked near the door.

Practice partner and surgeon Jo Johnson came out in person to collect Rosie and told the girls to return late afternoon...

After an anxious day Lyn and Cathy went to pick up Rosie.

They found themselves in a whole queue of animal lovers who had had their pets treated on that same day before Christmas!

It was like a conveyor belt of happy pet owners – all masked up and obeying social distancing of course.

Then it was their turn. Rosie had been operated on by both Catherine Scott and Joanne Johnson! It turned out to have been a truly life saving 2-hour procedure as they removed 15 big stones



Bladder stones!



Daisy happy with a recovered Rosie!

from Rosie's bladder! And performed a cystotomy as well.

The delighted couple said "It was the best Christmas present ever. To have Rosie back with us over Christmas and to see her enjoying her Christmas dinner with Daisy a real Joy! We have had a

real happy start to this new year with Rosie thanks to our amazing vets Jo and Catherine aka Johnson & Scott."

Rosie has fully recovered now and is enjoying her new lease of life and her pal Daisy is happy too with her newly invigorated playmate!



Cathy Scott about to take Rosie's staples out!



Surgeon Cathy Scott off duty enjoying a Littleport parkrun!

LITTLEPORT INDEPENDENT FOODBANK UPDATE!

We have doubled our numbers this winter and we cannot thank the people who support us enough.

There are so many generous people out there who give food, money and time. I know it is a cliché but we would not survive without them. Great donations from the men in Whitemoor Prison and because of Covid we have not visited them for a year but they do not forget us.

We deliver to homes and will collect donations.

If you need help please text us on:

07766111080-Elaine

07999841326-Susan

We are an independent FoodBank and we will support you for as long as you have problems.

With spring now upon us if anyone has spare vegetables or salad to donate we will be happy to collect.



363MCC Remembrance

Littleport Remembers

Remembrance Day dawned like any other this year – and the citizens of Littleport were ready to attend the special November service as usual.

Although there was no march through the village, cancelled due to the pandemic, the leaders and members of Littleport's many organisations and groups still mustered at the parade's objective, the War Memorial on the green opposite St George's.

Organised and conducted by Littleport Royal British Legion Branch President Garth McGowen, the single-persons only wreath-layers were placed at strategic intervals in a queue; while all those attending were socially distanced around the periphery.

Littleport Brass were represented by James Stygall who played the poignant Last Post as the St George's tower First World War Memorial Clock struck 11 am, followed by the rousing Reveille to end the Two Minutes Silence.

Among those walking forward with their poppy tributes was (pictured) the Right Rev Nick Brown of the Littleport Christian Spiritualists NCSS Church, Mr Adi Keating Chair of the Littleport Ex Servicemen's Club, Mr Mark Robinson President of the Littleport bikers 363MCC, Ms Julie Double for the Scouts, for Guiding Ms Lauren-Elise Terry and young footballer Tay Morgan for Littleport Rangers.

Lyn Gibb-de Swarte



Ex-Servicemen's Club Chair Adi Keating



Revs Nick Brown and Lyn Gibb-de Swarte



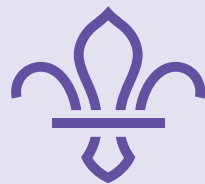
President Mark Robinson
363MCC



Julie Double and Lauren-Elise Terry with Caitlin Maul, Scouting & Guiding

Littleport Scout Group

Onwards and outwards!



There is a definite theme of the great outdoors running through the online activities offered by the 1st Littleport Scout Group this spring. The Beaver Scouts have been busy gardening, making bird feeders, and designing kites, plus there has also been a spot of indoor den building.

'Den building is one of the activities we love to do when on camp, so to see the Beavers having fun at home with our adapted activity indoors was great,' says Beaver Scout Leader Susannah Webb, known to the Beavers as Chestnut. During the half-term, she is going to keep on encouraging the children to be active – especially important now regular sports and activities are closed – by organising a scavenger hunt around the village that the Beavers can do with their families. They will have to follow clues to find letters that spell a word. 'We are trying to help parents and carers get their children out and about, which we know can be harder during the colder weather,' she says.

The Scouts are also embracing outdoors life. They too made bird feeders and took part in the RSPB's annual winter bird watch. Between the 15-17 January, the 1st Littleport Hereward Scouts joined in virtually with Scouts across the world to attend the online Wintercamp 2021. The young people had more than 150 activities to choose from across the weekend, as well taking part in the Wintercamp challenge, which meant completing two challenges every hour.

'Nearly 700 teams took part and we finished in 36th place – a fantastic achievement,' says Scout Leader Philip Watson. 'Well done to those who took part.'

Meanwhile, the Cubs have decided to follow a more culinary theme in their activities. 'The most popular activities for the Cubs in the autumn term were cooking and using sweets in a mini pioneering project, so it came as no surprise that they were keen to include as many food-related activities as possible this term!' says Cub leader, Dan Seaman, known to the Cubs as Akela. During the term, Cubs will be challenged with a photographic scavenger hunt, a quiz of their own making, den building and cooking pancakes in an unusual way. Leaders are also planning something different for the Cubs to try: building a marshmallow catapult. 'I selflessly volunteered to prepare and test a design,' Dan says. 'The design is still at the concept stage for now, yet the ammunition has dwindled inexplicably!'

The Leaders are keeping everything crossed for a return to some form of face-to-face Scouting in the summer term. 'We can't wait to see our young people again, particularly those who haven't felt comfortable or able to join the Zoom sessions,' says group leader, Julie Double. 'In the meantime, we'd like to say how proud we are of all of them for continuing to deal with the difficult situation. Stay safe and well.'

If you want to join Scouting or know of a child who does, please get in touch with Group Scout Leader Julie Double at info@1stlittleportscoutgroup.org.uk

We are also looking for more volunteers to join our Executive Committee, that looks after the behind-the-scenes running of the group. Please email info@1stlittleportscoutgroup.org.uk to find out more.



LEARNING MATTERS...

By Educationist David Barker

I have just been saying to my ever patient and loving partner, as she stood beside me, asking what I was up to, that this will be the fourth article I've written for Littleport Life for which the phrase 'lockdown learning' could apply. I sincerely hope that we will be out of this soon, but, as I write this, in the throes of a cold and miserably wet January day, none of us know, as yet, what March will bring. I am hoping, as we are no doubt all are, that March and the beginning of Spring will see us returning to that oft used word, and oft longed for state, 'normality'. However, so much has changed over this past year, that who knows what that will be like?

Whatever normality is, and whatever has changed, many things will be the same and also many things will be changed. Just look at the new terminologies we have been accustomed to using, that 12 months, or so ago, would have been alien to us ; lock down, bubble, tiers, shielding, social distancing, 'zooming' and 'R' rate

to name but a few. Will it be a case of a return to a 'new normality' or a more of a return to the old normality? We don't know exactly how things will be. Will schools be open? Will they be offering a full curriculum? What will happen to SATs, GCSEs and the other raft of exams? How will the lockdowns impact more broadly upon the young? These are questions, that as yet, we don't know the answer to, and to even contemplate such questions can feel a little overwhelming. However, as one person wisely said; don't look at the mountain, look at your steps.

And so, in the spirit of looking at what we can do and what is within our control I'd like again, to look at the steps that can be taken in every home to help the progress, development and learning of every young person. Parents and the home have always played a critical role in the development of every child. It is not for nothing that the Jesuits have a saying "Give me a child till he is seven

years old, and I will show you the man" (by 'man' the reference is to a humanity as a whole). Not only do parents, families and the home create the basis from which the young can develop as secure, confident human beings. The home is where character and personality traits are formed, and these too, we know, have a very important role to play in each child's learning, development and future success. After all, the young spend the overwhelming majority of time at home, even when schooling is running full time. So, lockdown or not, what happens at home is crucial. So, what can parents, families and the young, do at home that helps? I have written, in articles prior to this one, about how encouraging independence, and domestic self-sufficiency is crucial. I have also written about the incredible impact of reading in all its forms. Both of these are still highly relevant and can make a huge difference. What else helps? The Education Endowment Foundation (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk>), whose core purpose is in promoting research led educational practice, have helpfully produced some guidance on 'what works' at home.

Firstly, they say, it is important that parents know about the work their child is being asked to do and that they support their child in doing the work, but that they don't actively become too involved in the actual work itself. This means that taking an interest in, and giving encouragement for learning, is key, as opposed to direct involvement. An important skill is to ask for help, so if the learner in your life is stuck and doesn't know what to do, encourage them to ask for help from those who can help, albeit 'remotely' (e.g. class mates, teachers, the school). Encourage this skill set and attitude and avoid the temptation to directly get involved.

Secondly, encourage good habits for when the learner is working. These good habits include; goal setting, planning, organising use of time, organising resources and encouraging 'stickability' (persistence). When I was working on tutoring, we used to call these 'X Skills' and we saw that learners who were able to apply these skills achieved well across the board. A tip from the Education Endowment Foundation, is to have 'five minute plan' - a quick chat with the learner in your life about what they will be doing. Include questions such as; 'what are you hoping to achieve?'; 'how will you use your time?'; 'what equipment will you need?'; 'what will you do if you find yourself losing concentration?'; 'what will you do if you encounter a problem?'. These are very important questions and discussion points, which can also be referenced at the end of any period of work, when they become useful tools to help reflection; 'how did it go?', 'what can you learn from this?'

Finally, if you do wish to have an involvement in your child's learning, then using quizzes is a great idea. Quizzes can help with recall and also help with reinforcing of ideas/ concepts and information learnt and they can help build long-term memory. You can either make some up yourself, or search for an appropriate quiz on the internet or, even better, ask the learner in your life to come up with a quiz that you can use and quiz them on at the end. This could be a great project for them, say, for example, at the end of a week as a way of summarising/reinforcing their learning. Keep these quizzes and over time you will have a handy resource of quizzes to aid recall and learning!

I sincerely hope that these tips are helpful and also that by the time they are read, that something approaching normality has returned, whatever that entails. In the meantime, happy learning!



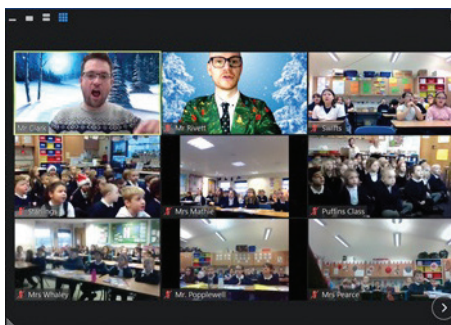
Littleport Community Primary School News

Headteacher's Message

December 2020

'Tis the season to be jolly careful!
Christmas under COVID conditions meant that things were a little different at the end of the autumn term for the school community. Instead of hosting a series of Christmas concerts and shows full of family and friends taking in the outstanding work of the children and truly setting the scene for family gatherings, we instead had to settle for recording our Christmas productions for sharing with parents and carers to watch from the

comfort of their own home. Not quite the magic of a packed hall under stage lights but absolutely necessary for the situation all schools are facing. However, at a time of such disruption for our young learners, all of the staff at Littleport Community Primary School felt that it was important for us to try to maintain as many of the usual Christmas traditions as possible and so we handed out Christmas cards, ran our PTFA pocket money shop, had our Christmas lunch (including a socially distanced visit from Santa too) and

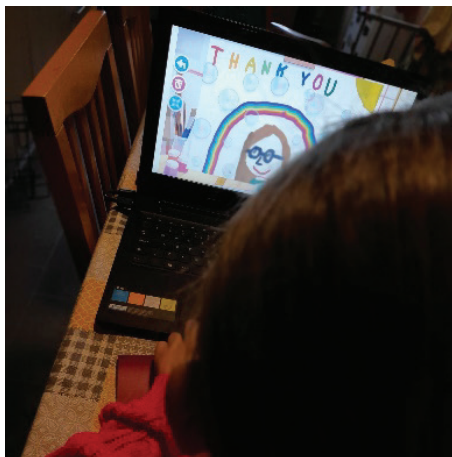
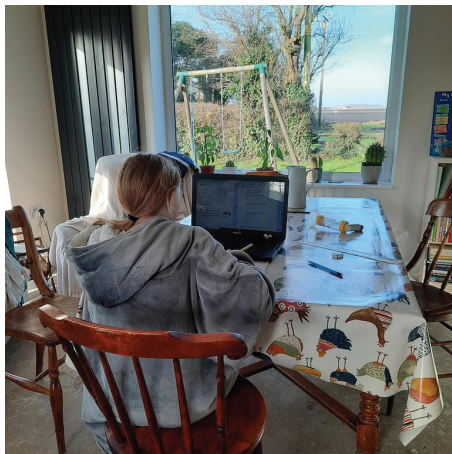


decorated the classrooms. The weather even allowed us to get outside and enjoy some fun and antics in the snow – a very welcomed break from routine! At the very end of term, the whole school joined together remotely for our annual Nine Lessons and Carols. We were sad we weren't all able to come down to St George's Church as usual but we still enjoyed the carols and readings.

All of this was positively reassuring for the children and the whole school community were very happy that we could keep some sense of normality despite what was going on.

January 2021

The beginning of the spring term was meant to be a continuation of routines of the autumn term despite concerns raised by in Parliament by MPs and teaching unions. In fact, communication went out to parents and carers as late as Friday 1st January letting them know the intended arrangements for their child's return to school after the Christmas break on Tuesday 5th January. Staff attended the scheduled INSET session on Monday 4th January and used part of the afternoon as preparation for the classrooms to be full of children the next day. Then all of that changed. As you will no doubt be aware, on Monday evening schools across England were told that they would be closed to all but critical worker and vulnerable children and that schools needed to implement their remote learning offer. At 8.15pm Monday evening communication was in place to establish who was entitled to a place in school and the decision was made to closed the school to all children on the Tuesday to allow staff to adequately prepare for the 'closure' and education to resume as of Wednesday 6th January.



It is frustrating to think that these plans could have been made sooner and the time at INSET used to prepare instead but the whole team acted swiftly ensuring that we were in a strong position to open as soon as possible.

We learned a lot about the home learning provision from the first lockdown and staff are now comfortably balancing face-to-face learning with our remote offer. Children at home get to experience pre-recorded English and mathematics sessions with their class teachers on a daily basis and we are back to holding regular Zoom calls to check in with families at home. The feedback from parents and carers juggling remote learning with their own work responsibilities has been overwhelmingly positive.

Staff at Littleport Community Primary School wish to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their support, kind words, gestures of appreciation and patience as we re-enter lockdown. I want to thank staff too for their hard work and dedication to the education of children in Littleport. These are challenging times for all and we look forward to welcoming all children back when it is right to do so. In the meantime, we love seeing photographs of our children learning from home and wanted to share some of those snaps with you.

Stay safe!

Mr Adam Rivett

Headteacher, Littleport Community Primary School



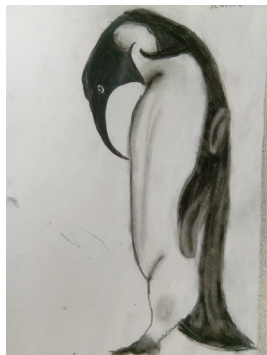


Millfield School



I am writing this article at the very end of January and you will be reading it when it comes through your letter boxes sometime around Easter- I am looking forward to things being different at Easter compared with how they are now and it's important that we remain hopeful.

As I write this we are in a national lockdown and schools are 'closed' - but I think the definition of 'closed' must have changed. Yes, schools are not open to all children but they are to many; staff in schools are working harder than ever and many children are learning from home. Of our 330 children on roll, we have 130 children attending



school on site, with the remaining undertaking remote learning from home, planned and set by school staff. This is bringing huge challenges to us all- children, parents and staff- but I know that everybody is doing the very best they can, and that is all that can be asked of anyone.

All of us in schools are trying very hard to provide learning that is as close to 'normal' as is possible and whilst the remote learning can't be identical to

that which is taking place in school on site, it is planned to be as similar as possible- this is so that when all the children return to school the 'gap' in learning between the children is as small as possible. It feels very different to the first lockdown and it is- this is because the role of schools at that time was to provide childcare; now it's about continuing with the curriculum and learning that would be expected to take place normally.



We can't thank parents enough for the commitment they have shown in supporting their children at home with their learning and for the words of kindness from those who are sending their children into school every day.

Deborah Hannaford
Headteacher



LITTLEPORT LEISURE UPDATE

by Clare Pendle

As I write, Littleport Leisure continues to be closed during this third period of lockdown. The bright spot is the rapid vaccination programme which is in progress within this area and throughout the UK.

The majority of the most vulnerable have already received their jabs. We all hope that this programme will continue at speed, and our local community and the country will be increasingly protected.

We will not be able to reopen until central & local government deem it safe for us to do so. We will ensure that when we reopen, the building & equipment will have been cleaned to the highest standards so that our users can be confident of exercising in a clean & safe environment. These standards will then be maintained, and the additional Covid measures in place will be continued for as long as is necessary.

It is possible of course that by the time you read this, we will have been allowed to reopen.

If we are open let me remind you of some of the fantastic sports and activities that we can offer both you and your children.

- Mature and Active Sessions for the Over 55's
- Roller Skating
- Netball
- Walking Netball
- Judo
- Korfball



- Table Tennis
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Park Run
- Fun Skate
- Football
- Football Fun Factory (including tot's sessions)
- Little City Group (children's role play)
- Monkey Music (children's activity)



We also offer exercise classes such as:

- Yoga
- Pilates
- Circuits
- Hiit
- Clubbercise
- Boot Camp



Once reopened, only some of our sports, activities and classes will have returned, but we hope to welcome back all User Groups, working to full capacity in the very near future. This will only be possible once their governing bodies allow this to happen. Please keep checking with us for news.

These are difficult & uncertain times for us all, but we hope to see you as soon as possible and we will continue providing our local community with the exercise opportunities and activities you have previously enjoyed.

Stay well and stay safe!

Adam, Aimee, Clare, Kevin and Tanya
Your Littleport Leisure Team

Littleport Life's Cathy Gibb-de Swarte remembers Norman South

When Littleport's sporting legend "Twink" Norman David South left his beloved village to move into Swaffham's The Paddocks Care Home his presence was missed by so many of us who were used to bumping into him on a practically daily basis at the local shops! He was such a likeable and humorous man and the headlines reporting his passing on Christmas Day were a great shock and sadness for the whole of Littleport.

I had met Norman on many occasions, especially at the old sociable Littleport Leisure Centre where he played indoor bowls. He loved sharing tips on how to improve people's game, especially in the art of turning the ball instead of hurling it onto someone else's mat which somehow I had the regular habit of doing when I partnered him.

Then we would often meet up at the bar either after I had just completed my yearly 10k local run to enjoy sharing my free sandwiches which we were given for competing, or we would watch his beloved Littleport Cricket Team (sadly now defunct) in the summer, and Littleport Town football team during the winter months. Those memories will always stay with me because as a sports reporter, I had met and interviewed many top professional sports people over the years, but there was something about the warmth and honesty of this genuine sportsperson that I just had to find out more about his

sporting life, so I was excited when I managed to book an interview with him for Littleport Life Magazine six years ago.

At that time Norman's memory was very sketchy, so it made the interview that slightly more difficult as he tried to remember dates and facts, but we still had fun piecing the article together as he reminisced about his amazing sporting achievements, including the highest honour of all being chosen as one of the Olympic torch bearers for the London 2012 Games.

But Norman did remember that he had also picked up two Ely Standard Unsung Hero Awards in 2008 for his dedication to local well-being and sport, plus inspiring others to contribute to their community.

Supremely unselfish, Norman also regularly did his bit of fund raising, especially for the Ely Branch of the MS Society and raised over £30,000 after organising carpet bowls tournaments.

I do recall during our interview that one minute Norman would be talking about his surprise birthday party at the Leisure Centre, and then suddenly switch to speaking about his great great grandfather Tom, who at the age of only 22 was one of the five Littleport rioters who were executed.

And Norman's feeling on the subject was summed up in just one sentence: "He was hung because of standing up for his rights of the working man as in those days aristocracy ruled the roost."



Norman South, Olympic torch bearer ahead of the London 2012 Games walked the quarter-mile through King's Lynn on July 12th 2012.

One of Norman's grandchildren said, "Heaven needed another angel Christmas Day. He wasn't just my Grandad, he was a true inspiration, a hero, a true gentleman. He didn't have a bad bone in his body and he was always there no matter who it was. I would say RIP but that's not his style."

And on the day of his funeral on January 19th the family put up on social media: "Today we lay our Granddad to rest. Littleport won't ever be the same and if my sons turn out to be just half the legend he was that would make my Grandad proud," as they laid a floral wreath in the shape of cricket bat in memory of Littleport's never to be forgotten Sporting Legend.

(Cathy's interview with Norman is within the feature on Littleport Cricket Club, Littleport Life, Summer 2015 and reproduced on page 24 in honour of Norman South)

Written in 2015, we reproduce this slightly truncated article featuring Norman South as part of Littleport Life's tribute.

FOCUS ON LITTLEPORT CRICKET CLUB – AND NORMAN SOUTH!

"Come on Racey – you can do it", cried Littleport Town Cricket Club's Chairman and last year's Captain Chris Farnell urging his team to notch up a good score only to be beaten by 8 wickets by winners and visitors Milton one sunny but blowy Saturday afternoon down at Littleport's Leisure Centre ground. Andy Race is Club Secretary and delighted to be playing in the Junior Division 1 League this season after the club's promotion at the end of last season from Junior Division 2. "You don't always expect a good turnout at village cricket games these days, but that doesn't stop us from enjoying the sport as well as the camaraderie that goes with it," said Doug Marsh, who at 48 admits he's not as fit as he used to be. "I used to think playing two matches a week was such a doddle". Mind you Doug who has played cricket for a good 22 years now recalls playing with some great cricketers, and one name that springs to mind is their President Norman South who Doug was fortunate to play with and proudly comments, "And I've seen Norman take some wickets in his time which made it a pleasure to be part of that era." Norman South who was given a surprise birthday party at the Leisure Centre in February mentioned that his great great grandfather Tom at the age of only 22 was one of the five rioters executed, and as Norman points out, "He was hung because of standing up for the rights of the working man as in those days aristocracy ruled the roost". Norman's cricketing career where he was renowned as a good fast bowler and not bad with the bat either spanned a good 30 years, playing for County Colts and for Cambridge but as he stated, "that is about as good as I got". Littleport's cricket matches were played at Highfield on the Ely Road, courtesy of owner John Martin, in front of decent size crowds and recalls his team providing the home game teas, as well as congregating



Norman and Hilary's Wedding Day

at the Plough and Harrow pub afterwards to enjoy a pint or two to discuss the finer points of the game. Norman's father Herbert South was also a good footballer playing left wing for Littleport and won some silverware in the 1920-1921 season. Norman himself played for Waterbeach, Ely City and Littleport Town FC, as well as making an appearance in the 1956 FA Cup final. His association with Littleport Town Cricket Club began in 1947, and he was instrumental in developing youth cricket in both Ely and Littleport. He is President of the longest standing cup competition The Kirkland Cup, Norman was also quite a dab hand at

table tennis even representing the County. Sadly with the Littleport and Ely branch of the MS Society no longer in existence, Norman always raised thousands of pounds for the MS Society charity which was dear to heart as his wife of 51 years, Hilary, an ex footballer herself, died of that disease. In 2008, Norman South was awarded with the 'Unsung Hero Award' at the Ely Standard Sports Awards for his dedication to local sports, and in 2012 he was one of the Olympic torch bearers which for Norman was such an honour. Norman South can always be seen every Saturday watching his beloved Littleport Town Cricket team from the balcony of the Leisure Centre bar, and he particularly likes to monitor his grandson's James' progress who scored an impressive 102 with the bat against Bottisham-Lode and is also a mean fast bowler, following up in his grandfather's cricketing and footballing footsteps. I have often watched James South go into many a crunching tackle, as he takes no prisoners, playing football for Littleport Town FC who finished a commendable 3rd in Division 1B of the Newmarket Motor Company of the Cambridgeshire FA County league this season. Littleport Town Cricket Club are on the lookout for players and sponsorship - after all it costs them £6,000 a year to run the team which includes maintaining their diesel run mower for the cricket pitch which has to be cut at least three times a week. "Unfortunately we don't have a Colts system anymore, but we hope to get one when the new schools open," said Chris, who was delighted to tell Littleport Life that the current side is made up of youngsters who have come through the ranks of the Colts. The club celebrating



Norman and Nick Marsh with a Cricket Club trophy

its 126th year, have three sides who play mid-week, Saturday, and in the Norfolk League on Sunday. "It's one of the friendliest clubs around. We have a good harmony and this is the highest standard we've been at for ages. We do a lot of charity events. The last race night we raised £400 but we know we need different ideas because the money is always coming out of our pockets" said Chris who is also one of the Trustees of the Leisure Centre.

Cathy Gibb



Norman with Littleport Town FC team photo



Norman and the Bowls Club with their trophies

FINAL 'PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT' OF LITTLEPORT COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

Littleport resident and long-time local community volunteer, Francis Brown passed away suddenly on Wednesday 20th January 2021, in Addenbrookes Hospital aged 75 years.

Francis, better known as Frank, spent much of his adult life working tirelessly for and in the communities in which he lived, starting in 1964, when he joined the Cambridgeshire Constabulary as a Special Constable, continuing this volunteer role for 35 years when he retired from his post as Divisional Officer. During this time, he walked the beat in Ely, Littleport and surrounding areas, created Boat Watch, which then became part of countryside watch after his retirement, and represented the Police Force at the



Helping run the church with his son Nick.



32 years a Special!

Cenotaph, in London, the year before his retirement, which he always considered the pinnacle of his police career.

Not wanting to fade away from public service, he joined the Parish Council in Littleport soon after, working within the community on various parish projects, of which, his final achievement before leaving the council was being instrumentally involved in securing the reduced speed limit on Branch Bank.

After this, he continued to work on the Committee of Littleport Village Hall, and provide support, knowledge, and aid to those of the community that were in need, as well as supporting his son in running the Littleport Christian Spiritualists. All of this, whilst working full time, first as a Taxi driver, a Lorry driver, then Stoker in the boiler house at the former RAF Hospital in Ely, then after a short time in Cambridge City Council, the Environment Agency until he retired at 65 years old, continuing

part-time working on the Forecourt of the BP in Ely, then owned by James Graven & Sons.

Francis is survived by wife Linda, daughter Sharon and her husband Paul, son Nick and his partner Nigel, two grandchildren Tiffany and Cassandra, and great-granddaughter Grace. In the days following Francis passing, the family have been deeply touched by the outpouring of personal tributes made to Francis, not just for his public service, but for the personal touches and approach Francis used to those whom he would help and support, even outside of and of his official roles. To quote several residents of the village, 'he was a Littleport Legend'.

His children, of course, followed him into the family tradition of service of others, with Sharon working as a Head of Care Nurse in brain injury rehabilitation, her two children Tiffany and Cassandra working as Nursery Practitioners in Childcare, and his son,

a voluntary Suffragan Bishop, with the New Christian Spiritualists Society.

Francis would often be heard offering travel and other advice to those individuals whole had visited the church on a weekly basis, as well as ensuring tea, coffee and biscuits were available every Thursday night, before the Covid lockdown. In addition, he was also a very convincing stand-in for Father Christmas, with his beard not removable as many are.

Francis' Celebration of life was conducted in Cambridge Crematorium in Tuesday 16th February 2021, by his son Nick, with readings from daughter Sharon and also Jonathan James, long time friend and police associate. Jonathan read a letter of tribute from Cambridgeshire Constabulary Chief Constable Nick Dean, and a Police escort was arranged by Ely police station, as friends and family gathered to see Francis leave the village for the last time, at the Harley Davidson memorial.



Family man Francis Brown.

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

The Mothers Union is World-Wide

Because we are not meeting or holding fundraising events during lockdown I will tell about what Mothers' Union does worldwide.

At the beginning of the pandemic there was an emergency shortage of cash to fund Mary Sumner House in London. This is the centre of Mothers Union worldwide activity. Members rose to the challenge and gave money, just as individuals. Enough was raised to enable the work to go on which was rather wonderful.

We have over 4 million members in many parts of the world and each place has different requirements, so it stands to reason that each branch, diocese and country will have different projects.

There is an excellent little film on the Mothers Union website that shows members in Manchester making up beds in a church hall for rough sleepers to come in from the cold. It shows members from the valleys in Wales making up boxes of toiletries and washing bags for people who have only the clothes that they stand up in. Another branch may be helping women in a village in Africa to earn money in a communal farm so that they can pay for their children to go to school or to pay for their school uniform.

Look on [www. mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org) or facebook.com/mothersunion, to learn more about us. We fund reading programmes so that some of our members in outlying parts of the world can learn to read and to handle money. In

the past they were not given the chance to go to school just because they are women. They were sometimes cheated out of their wages because they couldn't count them. Other members in African countries are university graduates who keep in touch with us over the internet.

So everything we do has to be adapted to the place where we are. In Littleport we collect money for holidays or days out for families who cannot afford a break. We hold a coffee morning each year, in normal times, to raise money for mothers in other countries. Our money last year, through Ely Diocese, contributed to sending a pig 'in pig' to a widow in another country. We have heard that it has done well and that she has been able to give pigs to other widows, increasing their wealth and status in their home towns. It all seems a bit remote from East Anglia but very useful nevertheless.

Like everyone else we have learned to operate quite differently now that we cannot meet together.

Our theme last year was 'Building hope and confidence'. In 2021 we have added two letters, the theme now reads 'Rebuilding hope and confidence'. As people all over the world seek to come to terms with loss of all kinds, bereavement and loss of livelihood we will be aiming to join in with those who are working to help.

Pauline O'Connor
Branch Leader

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

A Message of Good Cheer from St George's

I think once you read this we will be well into Lent and all set to celebrate Easter - who knows what we will be able to do to then but I hope that you have something fun to look forward to! The week that I write this the season of Lent started. We've just celebrated Ash Wednesday, the day when Christians are marked with an Ash cross on their forehead. Lent is often thought to be a serious time, a time when Christians 'give up' things to prepare for the Easter festivities. Who feels like they've already given up a lot since the start of the first lock down - school, seeing family, meeting friends, celebrating birthdays? We've given up all sorts of things this year, and some people are grieving. It might seem like the whole time at the moment is giving up things! But we are coming closer and closer towards Easter.

Depending on where we are in our lives, we may be focussed on the things that reflect new life, joy and the future or we may be focussed on the things that reflect death, sorrow and loss. So often in our lives, these things go hand in hand. Two sides of a coin. Things that go together like; joy and sorrow, hope and future, life and death. As we welcome spring, we see the fading away of winter. Lent is a time to grieve over our losses and regrets and but also look forward to the new life breaking through on Easter day.

Many people from all sorts of backgrounds will talk about how they love to see the sunrise. It's a beautiful, daily, new beginning. The dawn on

Easter day is extra special. It's a sign of hope, a great new beginning that reminds us that everything has changed, Jesus has risen and a new day, a new life is here, now. A day for feasting and celebrating - however you might do that, but definitely involving chocolate! The good news of Easter isn't just involving chocolate though, but it is a message of hope and love. The message is that death, while that's a real part of our lives, isn't the final part of our story. And it's a message that says we are loved and valued, here and now. There's hope that our world, and our lives are changing - and changing for good! However you get to celebrate Easter, I pray that you will see glimpses of God's love and hope in the coming weeks.

We'll be celebrating Holy Week and Easter in different ways this year, both at St Georges and with other Churches in Littleport. Go on our Facebook page and look out for different ideas of how you can learn more about Easter and celebrate the day, with activities, prayer and chocolate! In the meantime, may you know God's love and peace for you and those you love, Madeleine

Contact: email is:
revdmadeleinealbert@gmail.com
and my mobile is 07741466458



Vine Community Church

Thoughts on Freedom

As I write in January, we have entered our third period of lockdown because of the Covid 19 pandemic. Numbers being infected are rising rapidly, as are hospital admissions and deaths. Vaccinations are taking place increasingly quickly, but there seems little prospect of the situation being much better soon. Most of us are having to adapt to a very different and constantly changing world. We are realising that we are all vulnerable – in the words of James 4:14, *'You do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.'*

Freedom from ...

So how have we at the Vine responded to this emergency? We have become more aware of those who would find periods of enforced isolation difficult, such as the elderly, the infirm or those living on their own.

Our weekly church newsletter has been distributed to all members of our congregation, by email, What'sApp, post or hand delivery. By April we were filming a short Sunday Worship service involving a wide range of people, when possible filming them in (more attractive/tidy) parts of their gardens. We set up a system of Garden Churches, groups of up to six meeting weekly to study and pray in someone's garden. We have used modern technology, with Zoom prayer meetings and as it became too cold to meet outdoors, Zoom House Groups. For those unable to use such technology, telephone conversations provide a link and the assurance that no one is forgotten.

During the Autumn it became difficult to provide a weekly service, except when we were not in lockdown. Even then we were

limited to 22 attending physically. So we provided suggestions about other Sunday services people can access, but our aim is still to produce at least one service each month ourselves.

Freedom to ...

This is the other aspect of freedom. We all want to maintain our right to individual freedom as far as possible and perhaps are unhappy with the lists of new rules, whilst recognising their importance in keeping us safe. But in many parts of the world, people's freedom to live as they wish is always limited. They may not have enough food or clothing to survive or be free to hold certain beliefs. They may have no access to medicines. This has been brought into sharp focus in parts of East Africa where harvests have failed because of drought, floods or wars. Now Covid 19 has arrived and there is no money to pay for vaccines or the infrastructure to administer them. So should we use our 'freedom to' urge governments like our own with abundant supplies to make them available in these places, for example?

What next?

We hope that we will regain freedom to meet and celebrate Easter in early April. Easter reminds us that Jesus came to this earth to set us free. By His death on the cross, he took all our sins upon Himself, freeing us from the requirements formerly stated in the law, which was impossible to keep completely, providing we confess our sins and seek to follow Him. His resurrection on Easter Day provides the hope of our own eternal life after our physical death. *'It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.'* (Galatians 1:5)

Enjoy your Easter!

Ken Hobday



VineCCL

The Vine Community Church



Baby and Toddler Group Monday

(term) 10.00 - 11.30am
Tel. Julie 07790 304099



House Groups (evening) - Tuesday and Wednesday times vary ~ 7.15 - 9.15pm

House Groups (day) - Wednesday
10.30am - 12.00noon (biweekly)

Coffee Break - Thursday (term time) 10.30 - 12.00noon - Coffee/Tea and home made cakes



ENERGISE! - Friday (term) 5.15pm to 6.30pm
5 - 11 year olds



Sunday

Worship 10.30am - 12.00 followed by refreshments
We have a **crèche** and **Stars** Children's Group

You are very welcome to visit us. For further information email vineccl18@gmail.com or tel. 01353 861478 and leave a message.

The Vine Community Church, Globe Lane, Littleport. CB6 1PW
We are also on vineccl.org.uk and facebook.com/vineccl

St John's Methodist Church



High Street, Littleport

Sunday Services

Morning: 10.45am – weekly

Evening: 6.30pm – 2nd Sunday of each month

Coffee Mornings

9.30-11.30am on the first Saturday of each month

Minister: Rev. Catherine Dixon (01353 662426)

Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals by arrangement

<http://www.elyandnewmarketmethodists.org.uk/littleport>



***Alive in Christ..... Worship,
Mission and Service***

LITTLEPORT CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS

NCSS Principal Minister Rev Lyn answers the question:

What Earthly Comfort can we expect from Spiritualism?



All the religions in the world, regardless of their philosophy, doctrine, dogma, ritual and opinion of other religions, all offer comfort to their adherents and followers in times of personal distress.

The form that takes can be any amount of rituals and ceremonials with supplications and requests for help both from the sufferer of all those 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' and those who would seek alleviation and melioration from them on their behalf.

The carrying out of these prescribed activities, the sometimes palatial buildings in which they take place and sumptuous apparel of celebrants, leaders, from head honcho down, can impress, inspire and comfort their adherents.

And all this does help. But our Spiritualist religion, surprising as it may seem with the words Spirit and Spiritual as its main root, even where the expression of it differs, according to the group or organisation, church or centre, if not as fancy, has a far more solid base to offer the hopeful earth-dweller.

The philosophy of Spiritualism actually springs from the physical manifestation of an eternal life in the spirit dimensions, the usually invisible world that co-exists and interpenetrates this material existence. And the demonstration of it as a fact by mediumship, the determined communication between the two states of being.

Modern Spiritualism began with loud inexplicable noises occurring all night at the Fox family's rented cottage in Hydesville, Rochester, in the US in 1848. They had reputedly caused disturbance for the previous occupants too.

Somehow the three women in the house, Margaretta and Kate with their mother Margaret (one of the sisters, Leah, and the man of the house, John Fox, were away) curiosity overcoming their fear, were prompted to play a game with the 'noises' to see whether a Morse Code-like system could be employed to decipher the meaning behind them; Morse Code having been recently invented in America, coincidentally... Of course we know that nothing is 'coincidental' in our Spiritualistically informed

understanding of life's twists and turns.

They must have been amazed to find that there was indeed an intelligence behind the noisy reverberations that had disturbed the peace of their home for so many nights.

By this means he identified himself as a commercial traveller who'd been robbed, murdered and buried in the cellar along with his empty tin box.

This person of humble earthly life had been given the blessed task by those elevated beings in the realms of light to instigate an event that was to change, transform the earthly lives of many millions, and start a new truly spiritual movement, a new religious experience, that would gather strength through the forthcoming centuries.

The Foxes were a Methodist family, and interestingly the family home in Epworth, Lincolnshire, of founders of the Methodist denomination John and Charles Wesley, both ordained ministers of the Church of England, had also experienced similar loud noises over a century before. It's on record that these started at Christmas 1716 and stopped in March 1717...

On an amusing note it was recorded that objects started to be thrown around too – we can imagine the frustration of the would-be communicator finding their efforts being basically ignored.

What was being demonstrated was the fact that there is a world interwoven with our current

habitation that can impact it in a solid and perceivable interaction.

What this phenomena also showed, was that such contact and indeed help from the spirit side of life was not, is not, dependent on any one person's station in life, their culture, creed, tribe affiliations, gender or sexuality.

We have, through our Spiritualist mediums who have attained the highest levels of spiritual consciousness, received modern revelation, that confirms the primary message of Jesus in the prayer he suggested, advocating a kind, caring and inclusive attitude to all life and all that live on the earth plane. And that there is another dimension of spirit wherein we all live, both incarnate and discarnate. That those discarnate in the higher realms of light may not only communicate with us but are able to manipulate matter for our benefit.

Jesus explained that after his passing he would return as the great comforter and Holy Spirit, and our Spiritualist experience and knowledge affirms that statement to be a great truth. And it is by our basic Spiritualist understanding of the truth contained in that statement, that those in the spirit dimensions are real conscious human beings and willing and able to manifestly help us in our earthly life, that we are comforted.

May God bless you, comfort you and keep you safe in times of trial.

Rev Lyn

Historic Clock returns to Littleport!



Having spent the latter part of its life with one side covered with a slab of plate glass as a hall table, at 11 o'clock on Thursday November 26, 2020, the old clock from St George's Church tower, that was replaced by the current one in 1919, was returned to Littleport.

A gift from Rev Walter Barnes, vicar at St George's for 45 years, the clock was first emplaced on the tower in 1744. It got a good overhaul in 1827 by Murfitt the clock makers in Sutton – however by 1873 it was noticeably decrepit, its face faded and with only an hour hand.

An appeal was launched successfully by the parish magazine editor in 1873 and in 1878 James Dean, turret clock maker of Wisbech, took it for repair.

It was converted to going for 8 days with a new dial, works, dead beat escapement and to strike on the tenor bell.

Now some of the money collected back then was left in the account - and after the armistice in 1918 it was decided to purchase a replacement clock as a War Memorial.

Made by Smiths of Derby it was dedicated at a service in December 1920 conducted by vicar Rev Shelton. All who live or work or visit Littleport know its tuneful Cambridge Chimes on the quarter and its strike.

As the vicar said back then "Those chimes when we are dead and gone will ring out to coming generations the deathless fame of those who fought and died in the Great War."



Vice Chair of the Society Raymond Youngs takes delivery of the clock!



Making sure it's secure until it can be displayed

After it was taken out, the original clock had eventually ended up in Aldeburgh with the Luddington family, and after the passing of her husband Ted, Moya Luddington donated it to the Littleport Society. Ted and his brother David who arranged the delivery are descended from St George's churchwarden William Luddington, their great great uncle whose name appears on one of two plaques on the clock dated December 1878...

The clock will be displayed with due respect in the fairly near future.

Lyn Gibb-de Swarte



Vice Chair Raymond Youngs with Membership Secretary Bruce Frost outside the Littleport Society HQ





THE
LITTLEPORT
SOCIETY

Littleport Riots!

Between the 22nd and the 24th of May 1816 Littleport rioted against the injustice of so many of its people starving!

There had been a very hard winter and spring hadn't alleviated the spiralling costs of staple foods. There was little work to be found in and around the farms in the area. Therefore the fact that it is on record that average wages were about 8 to 9 shillings (£31 - £35) a week meant little to those without a wage of any size.

In 1815 a pound of bread was quoted at over 4 shillings (£15) and predicted to rise to over 5 shillings (£19) and in early 1816, 28 pounds of wheat cost 52 shillings (today's money, £200) rising through 76 shillings (£293) in May to 103 shillings (£397) in December.

On the 22nd of May, 1816, a group of 56 residents met at The Globe Inn on Main Street in Littleport, now the Co-op, to look at the situation caused by the lack of work and rising grain costs. They had always maintained a pot contributed to by everyone who could put something in for redistribution to those most in need. At this dreadful time there was no money to give.

Their anger proved too much to contain and they decided to walk

around the village to the houses of those well to do and first stop was to the house of farmer Henry Martin. He had been made 'overseer of the poor' in 1814 and was not well liked by the parishioners. One man went to get a horn from Burgess, the lighterman, and started blowing it outside The Globe Inn, gathering hundreds of villagers to join the first group, and so the riot commenced! It is recorded that the protestors, now called rioters, threw stones

Hundred of Ely, *In the Isle of Ely.*

The **MAGISTRATES** agree, and do Order, that the **OVERSEERS** shall pay to each poor Family **Two SHILLINGS** per Head per Week, when **FLOUR** is Half-a-Crown a Stone, such Allowance be raised in Proportion when the Price of Flour is higher, and that the Price of Labour shall be **Two Shillings per Day**, whether Married or Single, and that the Labourer shall be paid his full Wages by the Farmer who Hires him.

No Person to be prosecuted for any thing that has been done to the present Time; provided that every **MAN** immediately returns peaceably to his own Home.

ELY, May 23, 1816.

BRUCE THOMAS, ESQ.

ARCHIVE TEACHING UNIT: RIOT AND BE HANGED 3

Proclamation by Ely magistrates to quell the riot
May 23 1816

through Mingey's shop windows, and then they invaded Mr Clarke's property and threw his belongings into the street. Next, at Josiah Dewey's place, the Reverend John Vachell and his wife arrived to try to calm the rioters. Vachell had been vicar of St George's since 1795 and was also a magistrate; he was an unpopular man, as he dealt harshly with even minor offences. He read, or tried to read, the Riot Act, without effect, as the crowd told him "to go home."

It was also reported that the rioters next visited the premises of disabled 90-year-old Mr Sindall, throwing his furniture into the street and his housekeeper, Mrs Hutt, was intimidated by a rioter wielding a butcher's cleaver. After stopping at the place of Mr Little, who gave the angry crowd £2 (£154) they continued to Robert Speechly's and demolished his furniture. Next they broke into the house of Rebecca Waddelow looking for Harry Martin, her grandson. He had seen them coming and escaped out the back. Rebecca Cutlack was visiting at the time, and they robbed her and removed property worth between £100 and £200 (£7,711 and £15,422)

At about 11 pm, the rioters arrived at the house of the Reverend John Vachell, who, after threatening to shoot anyone who entered his house, was disarmed when three men rushed him. He fled on foot with his wife and two daughters towards

Ely. After Vachell had left, the rioters destroyed his goods and chattels according to his report and stole some of his silverware. Vachell was later to sue the 'Hundred of Ely' for the damages under the Riot Act. He received over £708 which is about £54,594 in today's money, an award which was challenged in the press, as many people complained about the size of the resulting district levies used to pay for it. The rioters then stopped a post-chaise returning with Hugh Robert Evans senior and Henry Martin from a turnpike trust meeting in Downham. They robbed Evans of 14 shillings (£54) before allowing them both to proceed. On reaching Ely, Evans alerted the magistrates who sent a carriage for Reverend Vachell, which collected him and his family walking towards Ely.



*Riots Sign on George and Dragon site
13 Station Road*

The protestors aka rioters marched to Ely where magistrates attempted to calm the protests by ordering poor relief and fixing a minimum wage. (See printed bill) The following day, May 24th, encouraged by Lord Liverpool's government, a militia of the citizens of Ely, led by Sir Henry Bate Dudley and backed by the 1st Royal Dragoons, pursued the rioters.

The Littleport protestors made a stand in the George and Dragon on Station Road, now a private dwelling but a plaque is on the wall, and when they refused to come out the militia was used. Assembled outside, Thomas Sindall, who had been involved in other protests in other villages, attempted to take a musket from Trooper William Porter, but was not successful. Sindall tried to run away and when he did not stop when ordered, he was shot through the head. That marked the end of the resistance and they were taken to Ely. Edward Christian, brother of Fletcher Christian of Mutiny on the Bounty fame, had been appointed Chief Justice of the Isle of Ely in 1800 by the Bishop of Ely. As the Chief Justice, Christian was entitled to try the rioters alone. The government, in this case via the Home Secretary, Lord Sidmouth, nevertheless appointed a Special Commission, consisting of Justice Abbott and Justice Burrough. The rioters were tried in the assizes at Ely during the week commencing 17th of June 1816. 23 men and one woman were condemned, of which five were subsequently hanged.



Adams Riot Exhibition Harley Noose

Their names are:

William Beamiss, George Crow, John Dennis, Isaac Harley and Thomas South.

The execution took place on Friday 28th June at Parnell or Mill Pits. which was in St. John's Road, Ely. The authorities had to go to Cambridge for a cart to carry the men to the gallows, because local suppliers refused. The bodies were placed in coffins and taken to a cottage in Gaol Street, Ely, where many people came to view them. The men were then buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's. The stone slab placed on the church tower is a grim reminder of the injustice of the time.

Spring is here at last. Time for some spring cleaning says Littleport resident ‘Digby.’

Digby has plenty to say on the issue of cleaning up.

‘During this past strange year, my owner and I have been taking more local walks around Littleport. I was appalled to see so much litter and rubbish blighting our streets and open spaces. The town sometimes looks more like Litterport than Littleport! I had a word with my owner and we decided to do something about it. I’ve trained her to use a litter picker, and you may have seen us out and about in the past few months. We do this on our exercise walks. Of course, I’m only a small dog and I can’t clear up all the litter in town by myself. So, I am making a plea to all you lovely Littleport dogs to persuade your owners to join us in picking up some of the rubbish in your neighbourhood. Obviously, your owner needs to do this safely, wearing gloves and certainly not touching hazardous items such as broken glass or drugs paraphernalia. If we all do a little bit, we can make a huge difference. I am happy to see that other humans in the town feel the same way and are also doing their bit to clear up. Together, we can make Littleport a safer and more pleasant environment for all. Litter is not only horrible to look at but can be dangerous for us dogs, cats and wildlife - not to mention little humans. During these difficult times our street cleaning



services have been unable to operate as effectively as they would like. So, it’s up to all of us to play our part. Perhaps we can also remind some of our owners to use litter bins rather than chucking their rubbish on the ground. And we know that all good owners clear up after us in other ways too. Most owners use dog poo bags and dispose of dog waste responsibly. Sadly, there are still some who don’t. (I bet you’re ashamed of them, aren’t you!) So, come on all you lovely Littleport canines... please encourage your owners to make the town just that little bit nicer to live in. Yours sincerely Digby. (aged 8 and 3/4)

Rotary Club of Littleport – Update



We haven't had our regular weekly club meetings for over a year, we have been Using Zoom meetings as many have, through out the Covid-19 Pandemic.

We frequently look at ways to generate funds which we donate to various causes.

Our former President Colin Every is hopeful of running his **Annual Golf Event** which previously took place at **Felixstowe**. It was a super venue and those who attended were most complimentary both about the golf course and the organisation that went into arranging the day. **Typically £1000** is raised for good causes—golf is probably the most likely sport you could hold a minor tournament, in the summer. Its all down to Covid-19 status



A Wine Tasting & Call My Bluff Evening is scheduled at The Anchor Little Downham. (Late Summer)

Looking forward we plan to hold another **Quiz Evening** – this time on **Friday 22nd** October. For those of you who have been before it will be similar to the previous **Quiz** which includes a fish and chip supper. This is a golden opportunity to test those brain cells and this year we have decided to make the questions slightly easier (largely to help the **Quiz Master** who regularly has trouble pronouncing the long words and reading maps)



About Rotary

Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland is the association of Rotary clubs within England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. We have over 1,800 clubs consisting of more than 50,000 men and women from all walks of life.

Our clubs are based in local communities where members meet on a regular basis to enjoy friendship, networking and to plan projects that will benefit the lives of others. Clubs utilise the skills, expertise and dedication of their members to help improve the lives of people in communities both at home and abroad.

We are community champions who stand up for our communities both locally and overseas. We support those who need help, we strive to improve lives and we bring about positive change in our neighbourhoods. Every event, initiative or project that we run – whether it is local, national, international or online – is rooted in the notion of community. This is because we believe that society works better when communities work together

Local— Our clubs carry out a huge range of **activities and projects at home** aimed at improving and building community spirit. Many charities are appreciative of their local Rotary club for the money they receive through initiatives such as sponsored bike rides, Christmas collections and swimathons. A huge amount of hands on work is also carried out by members, such as organising and supervising days out for disadvantaged children, volunteering at local residential homes, and working with schools to run competitions. The list of local projects and initiatives is endless. Each Rotary club individually tailors the projects they get involved in to their community's specific needs.

Why not visit our Facebook Page – you'll see plenty of pictures of what we get up to and it may even inspire you to consider joining the club – new members are always welcome.



If you want to have a chat about becoming involved in Rotary, call:

President **Ian Burrows** on: 07803 088352

If you want to find out more about our Rotary Club. **Take a look at our website: www.littleportrotary.org.uk** **Paul Cox – Design Studio**

Keeping Littleport Supplied with Food and Essentials!

Cathy Gibb-de Swarte says almost a year on - how are our local retailers coping with the pandemic.

Last March there were of course government guidelines to abide by and the Littleport community rallied helping people who had to self-isolate by setting up a Community Covid Help group which involved picking up shopping and/or prescriptions or making a friendly call and posting the mail - nothing was too much trouble for the quickly assembled volunteers that could remind us of the Home Guard during the war!

More lockdowns and restrictions ensued and more frustration for mainly the shoppers.

So how are the retail workers coping as they continue to religiously serve the general public.

Garry Noble and his wife Katie who this year have worked at Littleport's 'small' Co-op Main Street store for 24 and 21 years respectively, admitted that in these times the work has "got much harder."



Main Street Coop manager and staff
L-R Matt, Anita, Angela, Garry



Georgia Hudson who was manager of Wisbech Road Coop

Garry without fail is there every day, while his wife Kate works most days, but they have had to juggle their shifts around their two children so as to allow for home schooling and childcare.

"I am so glad that we still have jobs to go to, and that we have the rewards of knowing we have kept the store going to support the community," Garry told Littleport Life.

And Garry's Manager Matthew Thorogood reiterates that life on the retail frontline during the pandemic has its ups and down, but: "We are pulling together to provide a service which I know the majority of our customers truly appreciate!"

The larger Co-op in Wisbech Road saw the departure of Manager Georgia Hudson who had been commuting from home in Peterborough for four and a half years, and she has nothing but praise for her former dedicated workforce.

"There are currently 35 colleagues including management at this Littleport branch, and they are

a full team of hard working and dedicated colleagues, who without them this Co-op certainly wouldn't be as strong as it is today.

"They had some fantastic support from customers and members who are always thankful of everything the staff has done and it has certainly given the team a tremendous boost which has literally kept them going.

"Throughout the pandemic the staff there have gone from strength to strength ensuring that they can give everything they can to the community and continue to do so.

"I've enjoyed every day here at Littleport working with some fantastic colleagues and meeting our lovely community.

"I will thoroughly miss each and every one of my team and people of the Littleport community, but I am so pleased to have left the strongest team we have ever had to continue supporting everyone throughout these challenging and unknown times," said Georgia Hudson, who has now taken up her managerial Co-op role in her hometown of Peterborough and everyone at Littleport Life wishes Georgia well and we thank her for diligently serving our Littleport Community.

Claire Butcher is the great Manager of One Stop and during her 12 year spell at the helm hasn't experienced anything like the pandemic conditions, and recalls when the shop first implemented their cleaning station.

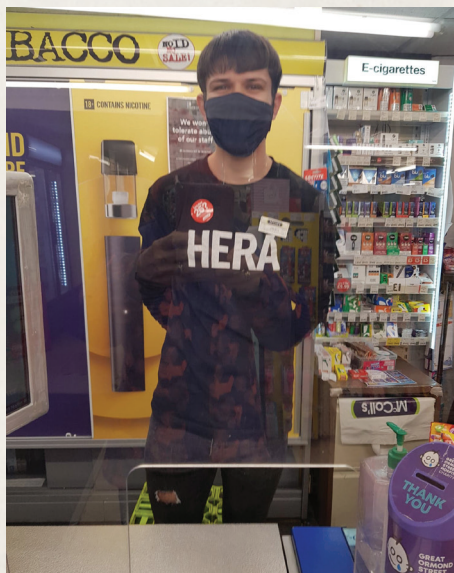
"We had a hand sanitizer and cleaning spray to clean the shopping baskets which most customers used, but then you get the odd few non-compliant ones.

"Then social distancing was soon put in place in the store and I recall spending the morning on the floor marking out squares 2 metres apart until we finally got our permanent vinyl flooring.

"We've been very fortunate that none of our staff have contracted Covid, but some of our members have had to self isolate," revealed Claire, who has seen an increased number of people shopping locally which was probably due to people not wanting to use large out of town supermarkets.



Outside One Stop in Wisbech Road
L-R Trina Gathercole, Karen Bean and manager
Claire Butcher



McColl's James Carlin

Claire said that with the first lockdown it was manic with empty shelves, but as she says: "Luckily people have calmed down and realise that there is really enough to go round."

Claire also wanted to thank her staff for "their continued hard work through this hard time."

The local and friendly Costcutter proprietor Thillaiyarthayan Poopalisingam reports that business had been a bit quiet since the last government restrictions in January, but that he was still more than happy to keep the store open in order to provide a service for the local community.

Mr Poopalisingam explained that the store remained opened from 10 am to 7 pm every day, but that "someone would always come in at the last minute needing to get a pay as you go top up on their gas card or electric key because they had run out," he said.

The local Post Office which doubles up as McColl's Newsagents caters for everyone and anyone and they certainly pull out all the stops when it comes to their customers.

Zoe Coulson, who has been a hard-working employee there for 12 years says her work colleagues, Sarah, Alice, Yvonne, James, Christine, Sue and Marie are a really good team together.

"Since these difficult times I would say 90% of the customers understand the rules in the shop. Of course you are going to have a few who can be a bit rude, but I just smile politely because after all we are here to help and of course that is our job," said Zoe, who continued: "And if any customer can't get out to buy their daily newspaper, they are asked to just ring the shop, and if they need anything else then me and James are happy to deliver it to them on their doorstep."

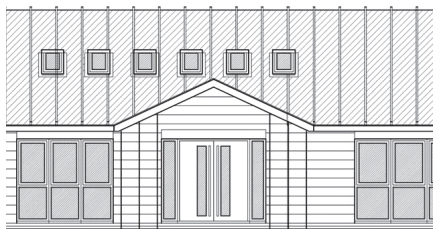
At the other end of the village down Wisbech Road at the A10 roundabout the BP Garage houses an M&S food store and the management and staff there are always happy to serve from early morning to late at night.

The vast array of takeaways and restaurants, from Rumbles, PizzaTown, Ali Kebabs, Habis, Spice Lounge to name but a few, still provide a service and even The Swan on the River bistro pub and bed and breakfast have set up a their own brand "The Swan BBQ and Pizza" collection and/or delivery service and you can download their details on Apple or Google Play or visit www.swanbbqandpizza-app.co.uk

Littleport's shops are the best!

ThePORT Youth Group

ThePort Looks Forward!



Proposed Littleport Youth Centre drawing

A planning application for a new youth centre in Littleport has been submitted to East Cambridgeshire District Council.

The document has been drawn up by chartered architect Andrew Fleet.

One of the main points it makes says: *"The Port Youth Group is an all-inclusive youth group run by volunteers and funded completely by grants. At present the group meets in a small room to the rear of the Ex-Serviceman's Club, which they have totally outgrown."*

If given the go-ahead by East Cambridgeshire planners, it will become a dedicated centre for young people and hub for the wider community.

The application submitted by Littleport Parish Council outlines a modern building on a 0.6-acre site on land east of 29 Cornfield Lane.

Proposed plans show an entrance lobby, a café area and tea bar, a large community hall, an office and toilet facilities.

Grant funding has been obtained to finance the project.

A design and access statement submitted alongside the application states that Littleport has a slightly higher

than average number of residents aged 0-19 than the rest of East Cambridgeshire.

It also says that as the town is growing, a key priority is to expand the range of shops, eateries and other facilities on offer for young people.

Primary organiser of ThePort, Joanne Coe, says: "We are very much looking forward to being allowed to open ThePort hopefully in the not-too-distant future... The plans for the new Community Centre are now with the ECDC. We hope to enhance options for not only youths but the wider community, offering space both indoors and out along with events and activities throughout the days and evenings. We can only thank the huge efforts of the Parish Council for applying for the funding for this building to be possible."



Painted Pebbles by ThePort placed round the village to find, put a pic on Facebook and replace for the next finder!



Littleport Guide & Scout Hut

Scout and Guide Hut Good News!

Littleport's scouting and guiding community are going to really enter a sparkling new era when they get to meet again in their hut! While they've had to take an enforced rest, the committee have arranged to have the floor completely renovated! There was a problem caused by a break-in and to compound it some graffiti of the not too artistic variety was daubed on the outside...

Nothing daunted all the damage to the locks and vandalism were dealt with swiftly and contractors M&M Resin Flooring (from Soham) came in to do the floors and Littleport based Paul Barham of Bargate the Locksmiths fitted the new doors with extremely safe locks!



Donate to the Easter Raffle to raise funds!



Paul Barham



Graffiti Vandalism



New floor laid down ready for new activities to begin again



Lions Club of Littleport

Littleport Lions continues to help those in need at home and abroad!

Reports Genevieve Battey

It is encouraging news about COVID 19 vaccinations and I would like to extend our biggest thanks from Lions Club of Littleport to the NHS and COVID 19 scientific research teams during these challenging times. Also, it is important to thank all the community groups who have helped during this pandemic. Teamwork as a community to follow the rules and helping with much needed supplies is so important to combat COVID 19.

We recognise it is also important during this time that Lions Clubs across the world continue to serve. As enormous challenges due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) persist, so too do natural disasters. Lions Club International Foundation continues to support recovery efforts from natural disasters worldwide, providing emergency grant funding when and where it is needed. Our global foundation, Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), quickly responded and approved US\$10,000 in emergency grant funding to allow Lions Clubs to respond to urgent needs of the Croatia Earthquake Disaster in March 2020.

Now in November and December 2020 Lions Club International Foundation continues to support recovery efforts from natural disasters worldwide, providing emergency grant funding when and where it is needed.

Lions Club International Foundation recently has provided US \$235,000 in emergency grants for flood relief in India, Brazil, Italy and Sri Lanka. Funding has been also provided for tropical storm relief in Colombia, typhoon relief in the Philippines and for earthquake relief in Greece.

Locally Lions Club of Littleport continue to contribute to Littleport Foodbank and are holding fundraisers online as a club to contribute to charities such as East Anglia Children's Hospice.

Our next online Lions Club of Littleport meeting is 7th February 2pm on Zoom, where we continue to welcome new members. We are a friendly and welcoming club who welcome new members. For an invite to the online Lions Club of Littleport meeting and information to join please contact lionscluboflittleport@gmail.com



Littleport Players



The Littleport Players Receive a New Props Shed

Although the Littleport Players have been unable to rehearse or perform since the start of the pandemic, they were very pleased to receive a brand new props shed!

Becky Smith, Chair of the Littleport Players said: "The previous props shed had indeed served us well over the last 20 odd years but it was in dire need of repair, it was leaking badly and had started to fall down. I don't think it would have survived another show or winter to say the least. Luckily, we have received some funding from the Parish Council and the Rotary Club towards a new shed and we are delighted to say it is now in place and all props are now in a secure, dry, new home and they couldn't be more happy! We would like to thank SMC Patio and Fencing Centre for their expertise and of course the Littleport Parish Council and Littleport Rotary Club for their donations. We now just need to sit back and wait patiently until we are able to perform again - watch this space for any announcements. And we hope to see you all very soon!"



The Littleport Players Props Shed

Becky continued: "If you are interested in joining the Littleport Players either on or off stage or require any further information, please email rebekahsmith2016@outlook.com or message us on our Facebook page: The Littleport Players. We strive to entertain the public and our aim is to promote singing, dancing and drama within the local community. Commitment is a must - as is a love and passion for theatre."



Some of the cast promoting Disco Inferno at the Harley Memorial 4th July 2019



Disco Inferno!



The Royal British Legion Littleport Remembers

When I started to think about writing this I had planned to concentrate on writing of the men from Littleport who died on the second and subsequent days of the Battle of the Somme. But we are now in the second national lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic and people's main hope at this time is that we will be out of lockdown by March 2021. It made me wonder how I could write about one group's suffering whilst so many are suffering. Then I realised that just as we have hope about the winning of this war against a virus so the men then had hope of winning the war and returning home soon. Many more were to die before the war was won but I like to believe that they never gave up hope of winning just as we should hope to beat the virus.

The men of Littleport who died in the the Great War:

2 July 1916

2574 Pte H Fyson 7th East Kent Regiment died of wounds. Buried in Grave 8, Row A, Plot I, La Neuville British Cemetery, Corbie, France

3 July 1916

23949 Pte C H Nicholas 7th Suffolks, Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

18173 Pte S Rutterford 7th Suffolks, Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

9225 Cpl W Willett 7th Suffolks, buried in Grave 7, Row E, Plot VI, Ovillers Military Cemetery, France.

6 July 1916

16960 Pte J Sallis 11th Suffolks, died of wounds, buried in Grave 25, Row N, Plot 2, Le Treport Military Cemetery, France.

22 July 1916

2nd Lt. Wilfred Cross, 1st/4th Leicestershire Regiment, Buried in Grave 10, Row A, Plot XI, Bienvillers Military cemetery, France.

23 July 1916

68657 Bdr EC Blunt 'C' battery, 159 Bde, RFA buried in Grave 48, Row D, Plot I, La Neuville British Cemetery, France.

In just 23 days of July 1916 14 men from Littleport had died in the Great War. But the battle of the Somme raged on until the end of November and many more men were to die...

Let us hope that Littleport does not have losses of this magnitude but let us remember those who do succumb.

Garth McGowen
President, Littleport RBL.



363MCC Keep their motors running!

Even though this will be the second year when the annual May Day fundraising bike show with music, live rock bands and merrymaking, have had to be cancelled, the 363 Motor Cycle Club are keeping busy helping the community.

The very name of the club invokes and commemorates the infamous Littleport Riots that began in May 1816 and ended with the hanging of 5 men from Littleport. The riot was caused by the realisation that there was no money left in the communal pot to relieve the starvation being suffered by most of the villagers at that time.

President of 363MCC Mark Robinson says:

"In these strange times, we have had to adjust and re-evaluate our lives and way of thinking. We are all guilty of taking our daily lives/freedom for granted, but I believe it has given us a brief glimpse of what our grandparents and great grandparents had to suffer during the wars. Giving us an even greater respect for what they endured for us. As a club we have stayed cyber active during lockdown to keep the club tight and provided food for such good causes as 'free meals for kids in half term' and donated to the food bank, we are also continuing to provide care in the community for some



363MCC President Mark Robinson

elderly residents like shopping and general errands. There is light peering through the darkness now and we shall soon be able to emerge from hibernation. Stay safe everyone. Love and Respect to all of you from all of us in 363 MCC."



Summer camp fire get-together



An August Holiday ride out

Adams Heritage Centre

Throughout March the Adams Heritage Centre window in Main Street Littleport will feature a fascinating montage of early fenland ice skating.

The Fens of East Anglia, with its rivers, dykes and flooded meadows, form an ideal skating terrain. From the mid 19 century in the cold winters, skating matches were held in towns and villages all over the Fens. It became known as the golden age of fen skating when thousands of people turned out to watch such legendary skaters as Larman Register, William 'Turkey' Smart, 'Gutta Percha' See, and brothers George 'Fish' Smart and James Smart.

In these local matches, men and sometimes women and children would compete for prizes of money, clothing, or food. It was recorded that 'During severe winters it is no uncommon thing to see joints of meat hung outside the village pub, to be skated for on the morrow.'

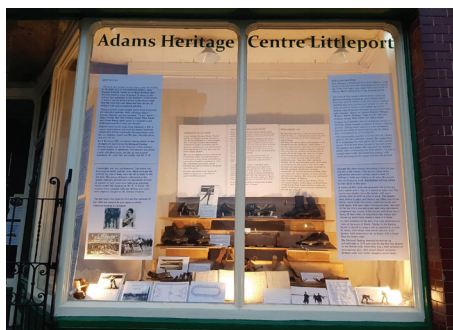
The championship matches took the form of a Welsh main or 'last man standing' contest. The competitors, 16 or sometimes 32, were paired off in heats and the winner of each heat went through to the next round. The farmers and gentry who organised the matches would raise a subscription for prize money. £10 was a typical purse in the mid-nineteenth century, with about half going to the winner and the rest divided amongst the other skaters according to how far they had got in the contest. This was at a time when agricultural labourers typically earned about 11 shillings a week and nothing at all

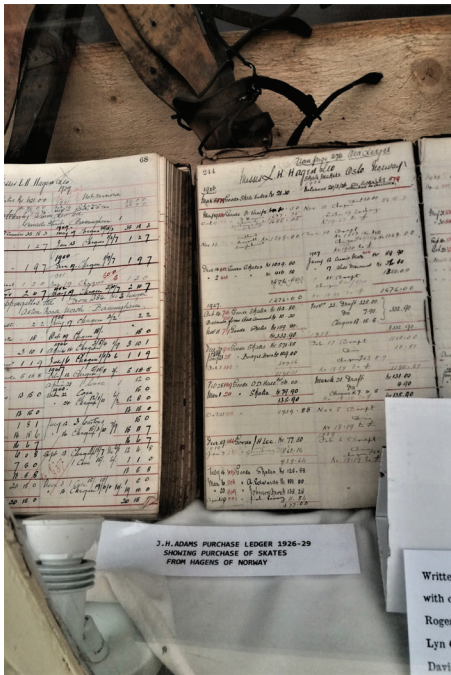


when the ground was too frozen to work. Substantial betting added to the thrill of the race.

Littleport had become an important centre for skating in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when Thomas Peacock (owner of the Hope Brothers shirt factory) leased a piece of ground, 28 acres, by the railway line and flooded it in the winter to form an ice skating ground known as the Moors. Until then the local rivers, dykes and washes had been the site of racing events and recreational activities.

'Skating special' trains brought hordes of people from London to see organized matches, while individual skaters such as Larman Register, and his successor,





LITTLEPORT BRASS

LITTLEPORT BRASS CAN COMPETE WITH THE BEST!

Littleport's brass band has been far from idle in the months leading up to Spring!

I am sure you have enjoyed the online Christmas Concert Littleport Brass produced and all those other updates on their Facebook page.

They have made a video of their excellent work and entered it in the Kapitol Cory Online Championships 2021 contest on 19th of March.



Superbly produced by Musical Director Ian Knapton it's a 10 minute selection of music played over wonderful views of the fens and Littleport.

This contest will be live streamed and details can be found on their Littleport Brass Facebook page or on Littleport Life Facebook page.

The competition entry on video compiled by the band's gifted Musical Director Ian Knapton is introduced by retired Mayor of Ely Michael Rouse whose heartfelt words are spoken as the music swells:

"Welcome to Littleport the largest village in Cambridgeshire and just north of the city of Ely. Let Littleport Brass take you on a journey through some of the history of the village. When gazing over Littleport it is hard to imagine that such a scenic vista can also hold a terrible warning of the perils of rampaging and killing that led 6 men to their deaths by hanging and others to transportation to Australia. The story of the Littleport Riots begins after the victory over Napoleon in 1816. England was left in a very poor condition following the Wars. Hundreds of people across the country were not only poor but at the point of starvation. On 22nd May 1816 a group of disgruntled Littleport residents gathered at the Globe Inn. After some heavy drinking their anger at the prices of bread and wheat, and their alleged mistreatment by a local landowner and farmer, William Martin, spilled over onto houses and shops in Main Street where they rampaged through the village. After a time their gaze now turned towards Ely. Mounting a cart, and arming themselves with punt guns, shovels and pitchforks they set off to vent their anger. In Ely they caused more disruption and drank more ale before returning to Littleport. The vicar

who had fled Littleport however had raised the alarm in Ely. Troops (Royal Dragoons from Royston Troop of Cavalry and Militia Staff stationed in Ely) were brought in and marched to meet the rioters... They soon brought the situation under control, although in the battle for control several people were shot or maimed. By this time unrest had spread to the surrounding areas such as Downham, and it was as late as June 10th before all of the stragglers were brought in."

The passage of the seasons are pictured and as the winter with frozen fens and skaters are shown, to the tunes 'I Predict a Riot' and 'Lake of Tenderness' local fen skating enthusiast and campaigner for the Littleport Ice Stadium (and editor of Littleport Life and Publicity Officer for The Littleport Society) Lyn Gibb-de Swarte, says with feeling:

"The Fens of East Anglia are magic. They mean flat lands, calming and sky. Lots of sky and weather and in Spring there is planting, nurturing through Summer and harvesting in Autumn, but come Winter, then the Fen folk get their skates on when the washes and the shallow flooded fields freeze over and all the fun and games of Bandy and

racers over the ice had been the order of the day for 400 years. You'll see some champions on here. Speed skaters, and Bandy players from times gone by but now the waters freeze less often in a winter so plans are afoot to emplace a refrigerated ice pad big enough to race on to play Bandy games, and everyone and their dog to enjoy themselves in the traditional way of the Fens."

Littleport Brass are looking forward to the next actual concert where all Littleport residents will be able to sit together once more to enjoy music in each other's company.

Meanwhile if you shop online you can help the band. It costs you nothing just shop online but use the app to go to your favourite shops like Amazon and then the band get a donation. You can even order takeaways online and the band receives a donation through various takeaway apps.

It's easy, FREE and makes such a BIG difference during these difficult times. All you need to do is use **#easyfundraising** to raise FREE donations for them every time you shop online with over 4,300 retailers. Sign up now: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/.../littleportbrass/...>



President of Littleport Brass sits next to Graham one of his 2 sons who play in the band in his last ever concert



Playing in Ely Cathedral and another of President Sharpe's sons Simon pictured 3rd left

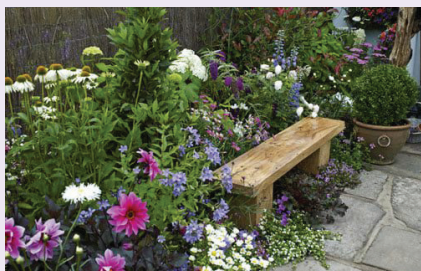


Peacock's Meadow: Blooming Marvellous!

The Peacocks Meadow committee are delighted to announce that we have received a grant from the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Youth and Community Fund. The funds will enable us to construct a sensory garden area. This will not only be a lovely addition for all our visitors, but will benefit disabled, and special needs visitors. We will be working over the summer. Young volunteers will work alongside older residents in an intergenerational project. All are welcome to take part.



Peacocks Meadow to be wheelchair user friendly!



Peacocks meadow will smell divine this summer!

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The Littleport Anthem

Written by Elizabeth Sutherland Fleming

Men till the fields at Littleport,
The spreading fields and low;
And as they toil amid the soil
I wonder if they know
That where they drop the yellow grain
An ocean used to flow;
And little ships to little quays
Came gladly after tossing seas,
And sailors laughed and took their ease,
Long, long ago
Men till the fields at Littleport,
I wonder if they stir
Amid the stones, the crumbled bones
Of some old seafarer;
And feel the salt tang on their lips
Of winds that used to blow;
Or hear across a vanished bay
Old sailor shanties soft and gay,
From dust of those that went their way
Long, long ago.
When evenings close on Littleport,
I wonder if the tide
From distant Lynn comes surging in,
And ruby lanterns glow
On slender masts that throng the sea
From Shippea Hill to Southery;
And all is as it used to be
Long, long ago.



Welney Wetland Centre



photo credit: Sky Vertical

Writing this whilst we are all experiencing our third lockdown, we're sure you will be eagerly awaiting spring as we have had to survive a difficult winter. For us, a time which would normally see Welney Wetland Centre as a buzzing hive of activity for wildlife and people. As our winter swan spectacle normally draws the largest crowds to the centre, this winter is very far removed from the normal. Despite the lack of people, thousands of birds have returned for winter. Escaping colder countries to keep themselves as fit and well as is needed to see them through the leaner months and finishing off feather moults to make sure they are in the best conditions possible for the fast approaching breeding season. With a much reduced team on site, we are working to maintain as much winter wildlife surveying as possible, preparing the reserve in time for spring as well as bringing highlights and news to you.

We have again experienced a flooded winter this year. The second deep and prolonged flood of the Ouse Washes in as many years. The Ouse Washes hold a dual purpose as a fragment of the wide

expanse of wetland habitat which would have covered the Fens region in centuries gone by, as well as protecting the homes, businesses and arable farmland which today covers much of the area along the length of the River Great Ouse from seasonal flooding. The water needs to go somewhere and it is better to be on the Ouse Washes than sitting on farmland (even more so than it does now) or damaging the interiors of homes. However too much water, for too long, and occurring too often is not good for the habitat, or the birds using the site over winter.

During flooded winters, wading birds, dabbling and grazing ducks struggle to find food on the washes when the water is bank to bank, so they disperse into the local area. This can deplete food in those areas with more birds feeding and so the flocks have to travel further in search of food or are forced to choose less suitable feeding areas. In very deep floods the swans may even choose not to roost on the Washes in large numbers, favouring the shallow pools on Lady Fen, reservoirs or the flooded areas on arable fields.



Project Godwit Facilities and Lady Fen

Not all the vegetation on the reserve appreciates sitting under a huge amount of water all winter, the invertebrates within the soils are affected too and large amounts of silt can be carried from further upstream to be deposited right across the wetlands. The River Great Ouse is the fifth

largest river in England and runs for 143 miles, with a catchment that spans over five counties. Most of the water that ends up on the Washes comes from further upstream – Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire. So in some winters, like the one we are



Black-Tailed Godwit by Mark Whiffin.

experiencing now as well as last year, this is a considerable volume of water to be accommodating.

We always hope for a swift draining of the washes ahead of spring, as it is one thing to have to find an alternate feeding or roosting site, but a bigger problem to try and find an alternative site to lay eggs and raise young for our ground nesting birds. In particular, the black-tailed godwits will be returning to the UK from late March, eager to start displaying and setting up territories in April.

We will be putting up regular updates of bird sightings, counts and reserve work on our website and social media accounts throughout this most recent lockdown. At present with no fixed end date, so take a look to find out more about the work we do and the wildlife we love to share with you, we hope you enjoy hearing about it all. We had opened up the perimeter

route around Lady Fen during this winter and that seemed to be very appreciated by visitors. It was great to maintain the wellbeing of those visiting by providing extra outdoor spaces for people to enjoy connecting with nature whilst maintaining distance from one another. We will be closing this access for the duration of the breeding season, but due to its success this year, will look to reopen it in the summer through to next winter.

We look forward to reopening and welcoming back visitors again as soon as it is safe for us to do so. The support of our members and visitors is vital to continue caring for healthy wetlands and the species that rely on this habitat for their home. But also, to ensure that these places are in the condition we need to be able to enjoy them for our own wellbeing. We need to be there for nature, because nature is there for us when we need it.



Welney Wetland Centre

Plan your visit and book online
www.wt.org.uk/Welney



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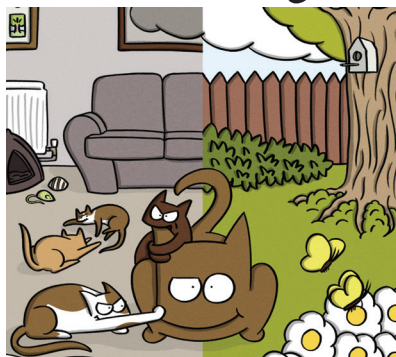


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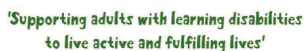
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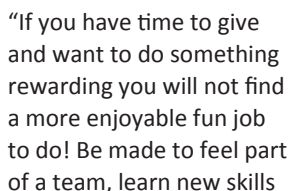




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A word cloud with the words arranged in a circular pattern. The most prominent words are "Volunteering" at the top, "volunteer" on the left, "initiative" at the bottom, and "VOLUNTEER" on the right. Other visible words include "service", "time", "fun", "love", "generous", "self feeling", "build", "talent", "altruistic", "quality", "available", "good", "human", "respect", "involved", "offer", "however", "improve", "wonderful", "developments", "under", "life", "treasures", "activity", "worth", "thank", "promote", "growth", "skills", and "you". The colors range from dark blue to light yellow.



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A photograph of a man with short brown hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, giving a thumbs up gesture. He is smiling broadly. The background shows an indoor setting with a white door and a red fire extinguisher.

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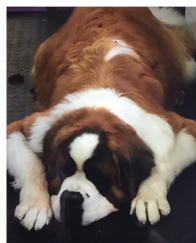
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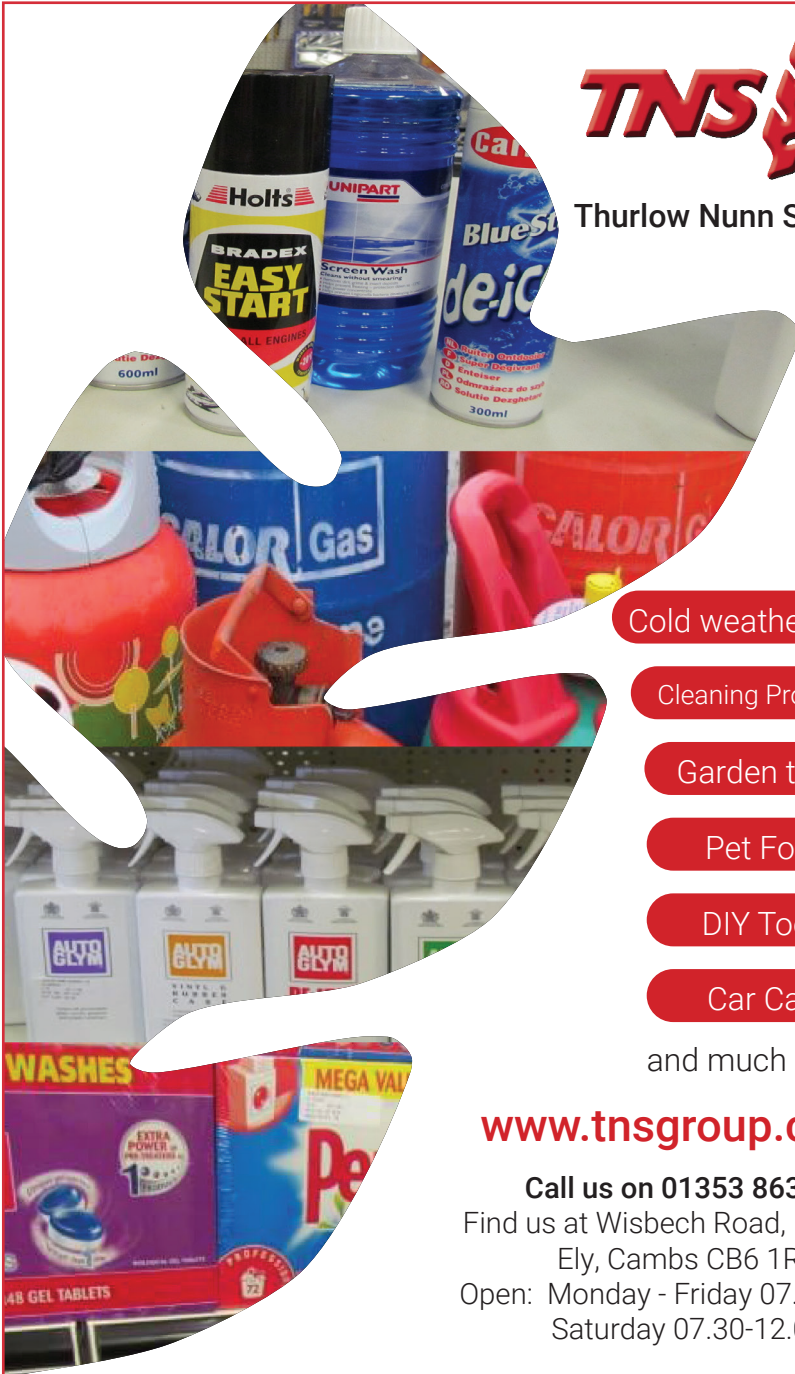
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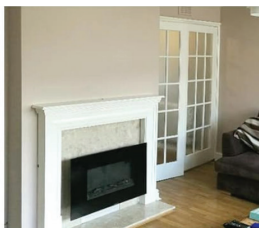
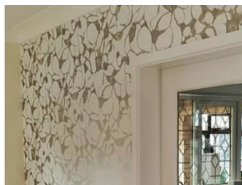
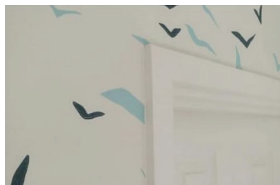
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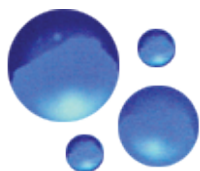
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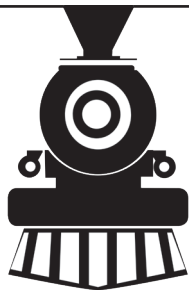
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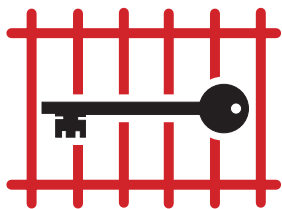
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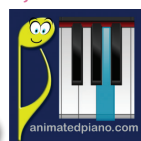
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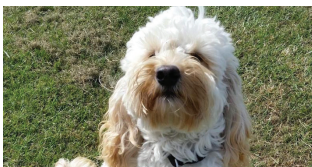
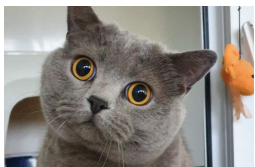
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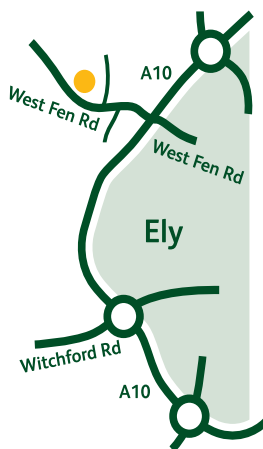
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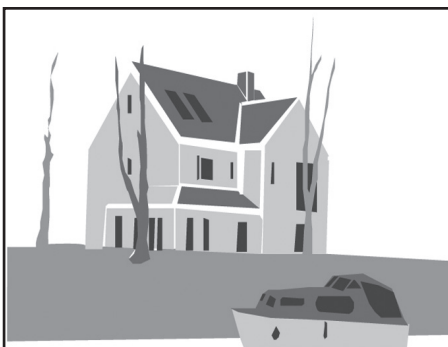


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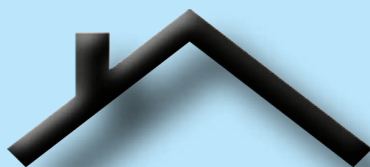
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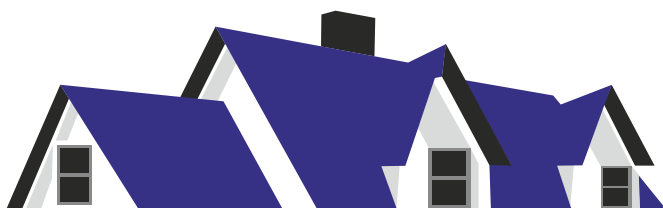
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