

HUNTINGFIELD HARE



Issue 78 February - March 2020

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The Hare is delivered to all residents and businesses in Huntingfield free of charge. It is also available on the village website (see below). If you live outside Huntingfield and would like a hard-copy of the Hare then we request a £10 annual donation towards print and postage.

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A colour copy of the Hare is available in the Huntingfield Arms, in the Hub and at the Church.

Contact the Hare:

huntingfieldhare@gmail.com

Find us online:

www.huntingfield.onesuffolk.net

Your editorial team is:

Helen Cannon

01986 799103 6 Bridge Street

Liz Forrester

01986 798912 The Coach House

Sue Tyler

01986 798403 The Firs

Finally, the Huntingfield Hare is still on the lookout for a new editor. If you are looking for a new challenge/project please get in touch.

Odd goings on in the village...



Hanging toast in the trees?

Huntingfield celebrated our very first village Wassail on the evening of 17 January. Much fun was had (and noise was made) by a hearty turnout of local folk. Hanging toast in the trees is just one of the traditions attached to the ceremony. See page 7

Our sign all wrapped up?

Thanks go to Ali Bridges who helped in replacing the newly refurbished village signs. As they had to be glued to the post he made sure they were very well secured. Grateful thanks also go to David and Sue Gentleman who funded the refurbishment. It's good to see the signs back in place: now we all know where we are!



Strange folk in the church?

Some strange people have been seen lurking around the Church for the past months.

What were they up to?
Find out on page 2

And finally, a lovely photo of the sheep on a frosty morning, submitted by Lucy, our local shepherd



Mildred – The Power of a Dream: reviewed

Many of us had read the book and some of us had met the author; however, it was not until playwright Ken Burnett clothed the characters and brought them off the page and into St Mary's Church that Mildred's story came to life.



No easy task since, unusually for that period, there does not appear to be any existing letters, diaries or even accounts of William and Mildred's eight years of travel around Europe. It was essential to the truth of



the story that we in the audience were able to forget that most of the cast were well known to us and therefore could identify with the characters they represented.

Nothing said or done was overly dramatised or sensationalist. Regardless of their major or minor roles, every individual became part of the whole. An achievement that only had a ceiling as the other star in the galaxy!

Sheila Freeman



Comments and feedback received by the Groynes:

"Two enthusiastic women from Lowestoft told me they'd no idea what to expect, they'd come a long way and loved every moment of it."

"At the door a group of women on leaving praised the performance, the story and the spectacle literally 'to the rooftops'."

"...your performance made me switch off from the outside world and I was immersed in your magnificent play. I was totally focused and enjoyed every moment of it."



"Everybody clearly enjoyed it as much as we did, and it was well worth all your enormous effort. We liked your nod to Shakespeare with the rude mechanicals, and the denouement with

the illuminated ceiling - and the choir was terrific."

"Thanks so much for all the hard work you've put into Mildred! It was a journey for me; I learned a lot and it's been a great pleasure to be involved, to see the production move from shaky first steps to the final performance."



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"Mildred Holland, the Huntingfield paintress, was brought to life beautifully by Old Groynes Theatre Company. 'The power of the dream' was before our eyes, gazing up to the lovely church roof. Mildred's drive and spirit shone through amid humour and a zestful cast. A great production; I went home inspired!"

From the writer, director and performer, Ken Burnett

I hope I speak for other Old Groynes when I say that taking part in any OG production is a combination of the magnificent and the absurd. We aim very high and all of us work exceptionally hard at it, paradoxically putting in countless hours of effort in return for miniscule rewards in terms of audience size and, in Mildred's case, for just over two hours on stage across both performances.

All that effort, then suddenly it's over. Why do we do it? Others will have their own answers, but for me it's

about our village coming together in a common endeavor; it's about aiming higher than we might otherwise and achieving more than we expected. The sense of satisfaction after a performance is palpable, as is the nigh overwhelming sense of anti-climax. I have fun writing the play, much less fun directing and rehearsing for it, then have my faith restored through the performances. That's been the pattern for me, so far.

Of course, I love the people. Together in these plays, for the most part, we have great fun!

Petanque Club News



This is my first report since taking over as Captain of the Huntingfield Hares. I am happy to report that my duties so far have not been too onerous!

We have thirteen paid up members for the forthcoming season, although two of those are just in a supportive role. We always have room for more members --no experience is needed. The League meeting takes place on the 6th February when we will find out who our opponents are for the forthcoming season which is due to start in March. Hopefully we will see some warmer weather soon so we can get back on the piste to sharpen up our game ready for the new season to begin!

Julie Collett

Hub News

Now the festive season is over classes have resumed at The Hub with some new additions by one of our regular users, Coastal Leisure Learning. Two workshops are being offered: Rag Rug Making on 2nd March and Make a Teddy Bear on 16th and 23rd March. They are also currently running a short course (5 weeks) to Be Your Own House Detective on Wednesday afternoons. Details of all their courses and workshops at the Hub can be found at www.coastalleisurelearning.co.uk or call 01728 833171. The courses and workshops will only run if they have enough take-up so please support them if you can.

The Hub itself also relies on the support of the local communities it was built to serve. We are always looking out for new trustees to join our team. If you are interested in getting involved in what happens at your village hall please have a chat with one of us (details on page 12).

The Hub Trustees

Rural Coffee Caravan



Our combined Thursday club and Rural Coffee Caravan goes from strength to strength with visitors from other villages

coming to join us for FREE coffee/tea and homemade cake. All are welcome so pass the word on to friends and family. The next sessions will be **Thursday February 6th** between 10.30am and 12.30pm and at the same time on **5th March**.

Do come and join us - it's open and free to all. There is a raft of helpful information and assistance from the RCC team. Whatever takes your fancy - join in the craft corner with various materials supplied or the gamers – who play scrabble or dominoes etc. Alternatively, just have a cuppa and a chat!

Fruit Tree Grafting Workshop

Thursday 12th March, 10am – 4pm

Tutor: Paul Read

A one-day hands on workshop, learning and practising how to graft fruit trees at the Millennium Green and The Hub. No previous grafting experience is required. There are 6 free places for Huntingfield residents.

Register your interest by phoning 01986 799110, leaving you name and contact details. Please speak slowly and clearly. Confirmation details will be sent by the end of February.

Orchard Visit in April

Advance notice: a visit to the orchards owned by Paul Read (just outside of Diss) is being planned for April. Look out for more information in the next Hare. *Huntingfield Millennium Green Trust*

News from our local MP: Thérèse Coffey

As this is my first column since the General Election, I want to thank the electors of Suffolk Coastal, who once again put their faith in me. The voters gave my party a majority to get Brexit done and now that we have left the EU, it means we can focus on other important issues, like the NHS, schools, creating safer streets and building a better Britain for everyone, regardless of how they voted.

Talking of the NHS, following their latest inspection, the Care Quality Commission has declared that the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Trust, which looks after mental health in our area, remains in special measures. Whilst it's good to see some that some progress is being made especially in relation to safety and culture, there is clearly still a lot to do to complete the turnaround. I'm comforted that the inspectors reported on a 'shift in approach' from the new leadership and that 'foundations had been laid' to deal with the issues. Most staff that inspectors spoke to felt more listened to and believed the trust is moving forwards. Despite the improvements, it is right that the Trust remains in special measures as that will ensure the ongoing scrutiny from the CQC for the benefit of patients.

As a result of complaints from constituents about changes British Gas has made as to how people top-up their pre-payment metres, I organised a letter to their Chief Executive, signed by 94 Conservative MPs, asking him to reconsider. Their switch from PayPoint to PayZone and the subsequent reduction in the number of places where people can go to top up their prepayment metres over the counter has caused huge inconvenience. I appreciate that British Gas needs to work as efficiently as possible but this must not come at the cost of customers from the most vulnerable sections of our community.

I met Greater Anglia and Network Rail after the poor unreliable service experienced in the last two months. The first difficulty was prompted by safety concerns by Network Rail after a serious incident on another branch line which led to significant speed restrictions for a while. The more concerning issue is regarding the new bimodal (diesel/electric) trains and its safety software which is having glitches, triggering trains to shut down when there is no fault but with direct consequences. I will keep on this as I know how disruptive delays and cancellations have been.



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Notes from the sheep pen..

Baa to you all!



I think old floppy hat must quite like playing with his iPad on cold windy days. Surely it would be easier to sit in a comfortable

chair and read the paper? You humans are strange!

What a lovely winter we are enjoying: okay, a bit wet but, hey ho, the grass continues to grow. Lucy mentioned the other day she had seen someone cutting their lawn. Crikey, we do that all the time without the use of petrol so we must be better for the environment.

A quietish time for us as we are heavy in lamb with only a few short weeks to go. We have been vaccinated for foot rot, clostridial diseases and copper deficiency – and may be due a short back and sides around the business end if time allows. We have done our usual job of tidying up the arable crops, e.g. parsley, mustard and winter cover crops, both because the harvesters left a mess due to soil conditions at the time and to help with soil conditioning for the spring planting. The Dorset flock (the ones with their lambs by the road) are growing pretty well, especially as they are getting extra “fodder beet” to help them along.

Us older girls will be back close to Huntingfield by the end of February in preparation for lambing so let's hope for a kind end to winter.

.. and from Pat!

Moo to you!

Like Ewe, we too are very pregnant but our babies are only due from mid-March. Many of us had to be returned to the home farm due to the exceptionally wet winter but we are very much looking forward to returning before our calves start to pop out. If you happen to travel towards Southwold off the A12 some of us can be seen with our calves - all born at Heveningham in the autumn.

Our feed is silage which was made in June close to the village and fodder beet which comes from the next parish. So much for all this nonsense we hear about our emissions creating global warming, whatever next!



Lucy has completed the pregnancy scanning of the spring calving herd and our boyfriends have certainly done the business! Heifers less than 1% empty and cows 3%. The not so good news is that there are 14 sets of twins so that will keep the team on their toes.

Enough from me for the moment.

Pat, as in Cow!

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Budding Ideas

February is such a funny old month. It's been a relatively mild winter so far and we've been teased with the early emergence of snowdrops, crocus and daffodils - tantalising hints of spring. However, despite the mild temperatures, we have weathered some pretty awful storms so far and February can often be the coldest month of all. It was only two years ago to the month I recall driving through snow drifts en route to Halesworth.

We can't rely on the weather being consistent in any way, shape or form so, regardless of what has been thrown at us in previous years, you really need to make the most of your last chance to finish winter work and push ahead with anything you can do. Just make sure you've got your thermals and your wellies on and carry on gardening!



February is the last month to tidy before spring growth really starts including pruning back evergreen and late flowering shrubs such as cornus and buddleja and cutting down deciduous grasses before the new growth starts to appear. It's also time to re-assess the bones of the garden: plan out what you can do to improve the layout and structure of your plot.

It's also the time to prune roses if you didn't do this in October/November: climbers, ramblers and shrub roses will all benefit from reduction and removal of dead or poor-quality stems. Tidy up the framework and aim for a 'wineglass' shape for shrub roses to create plants which will produce as many flowers as possible with an attractive shape. Tie in the long whippy growth of climbers horizontally to help build a framework and produce more flowering shoots.

The garden can look really bare at this time of year and there will undoubtedly be some gaps. There is nothing wrong with a quick fix so think about filling spaces with potted bulbs from nurseries; miniature narcissi such as



'Tete-a-tete', iris reticulata, scillas and crocus will all add a wonderful splash of colour whatever the weather and come back year on year. Snowdrops look great but planting

the bulbs is notoriously unreliable so make sure that you plant them 'in the green', i.e. after flowering has finished and there are only clumps of foliage remaining.

It's too early to be planting or sowing vegetables outdoors but a great time to prepare beds - cover them with polythene, cloches or old carpet which will help warm the ground and allow it to dry out a little - particularly useful after the wet weather we have had.

Keep off the lawn if you can BUT, if the weather is mild, you may well find the grass is growing again. If the ground is firm and the grass fairly dry go ahead and give it a cut, but make sure that the blades on the mower are set to their highest position to just take off the grass tips - this way the lawn will be resilient to frost and poor growing conditions. If you can, leave it until the weather is warmer and the grass really is starting to grow as this is less likely to stress the lawn.

Of course, if we are knee deep in snow, we are all off the hook as far as gardening is concerned in which case I would strongly recommend settling down in your favourite armchair with a glass of something, drool over all the latest plant catalogues and dream of sunnier spring days.

Lori Kingsley-Adams
Budding Idea

Feature plants for February/March



Chimonanthus praecox - 'Wintersweet' (left).

Spectacular flowers before foliage, but will take several years to flower with scented and unusual flowers.

Daphne odora (right): fabulous evergreen /semi evergreen, likes sun/semi shade, and perfect next to an entrance as it's seriously scented.



Mahonia japonica - once again, beautiful early scented, evergreen shrub but a big beast to prune as it's very spikey.

The first Huntingfield Wassail



Our first Huntingfield Wassail was held on Old Twelfth Night, Friday 17th January. It was a great pleasure to see so many

of our neighbours and children at the Huntingfield Arms on a mercifully dry but chilly winter night.

Wassailing is an ancient English custom, traditionally carried out on the Old Twelfth Night thus pre-dating the Calendar Act of 1750 at least and probably by a considerably longer time. It has been suggested that its origins were in Saxon times, but no one really knows. The word 'wassail' is from the old English 'was hael' meaning 'be healthy'. There are at least two kinds of wassailing; the house to house variety involves villagers demanding beer and tit bits from their richer neighbours, but ours was what has sometimes been called an apple wassail. In this case wassailers believed that a good apple crop could be got by noisily scaring the bad spirits from the trees and making offerings of white toast to nourish the apples. In all cases a wassail bowl filled with spiced ale or cider is passed around.

Proceedings started at the Arms with an address by the King of the Wassail (*self-appointed, not very democratic – must be some mistake? Ed*) before a procession to the Millennium Green was formed. Once there a fire was lit in the beacon and mulled cider and ale were shared. Whilst the cider was thought quite nice the warm ale was not exactly a hit (*err disgusting more like it. Ed*) The King agreed additional R&D was required before attempting to make this again.



The assembled throng loudly recited a rhyme to the trees and then joined in with a lusty rendition of the

Gloucestershire Wassail song. Following this a great clamour arose from the crowd to frighten the bad spirits away from the apple trees and fireworks were set off to make sure. Finally, the ladies and children were invited to place white toast amongst the branches of the tree. Being quite chilly by that time we all headed back to the Arms to warm up with a nice bowl of soup.

Thanks to all our neighbours, parents and children for making the effort to come out and help to make this fun. We do hope everybody enjoyed themselves; it really wouldn't have been the same without the enthusiastic support. Wassail!



Our best wishes to everybody for a prosperous 2020 from the Millennium Green Trustees.

Jim Wardale



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Emma's Column



At the latest meeting on 15th January the issue of flooding was, unsurprisingly, on the agenda. There have been various reports to both the Suffolk

Highways Agency and the parish council regarding flooded roads in the centre of the village following some of the torrential downpours we have experienced. We have received various responses from Highways, resulting in little being done from their aspect. However, many thanks go to Joe Thompson, Tony Howe, Brian Lucas and the Heveningham Hall Estate who have all helped clear various blocked gullies and drains which have alleviated some of the problems and helped the standing water drain much more quickly. There still appears to be an issue with water from Brick Kiln Lane which we are continuing to investigate. Thanks to Stephen Burroughes, our local County Councillor, who offered to put in a request to Highways regarding this issue.

Other items moving forward are the new bins which have been purchased and the SID (speed indicator device) which will be purchased shortly. We are also chasing up the handrail for the steps on the green.

Open for discussion is the upcoming VE Day 75 on Friday 8th May. This will be a bank holiday (moved from the usual May Day) so a long weekend for all of us. At the moment there are no plans in place as to how the village should celebrate this event and we would love to have some input from your good selves. If you have any ideas please contact one of the councillors (details on back page).

That's all to report from the latest meeting. Our parish council meetings generally take place on the second Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm in The Hub. Please come along and support the meetings – they are open to the public. Details can be found on the website at <http://huntingfield.onesuffolk.net/huntingfield-parish-council/> or on the parish notice board.

Emma Ward. Chair of Huntingfield Parish Council

Hundred Club results

November

1st	Tom McGee	£30
2nd	Jeremy Blackmore	£15
3rd	Terry Baker	£5

December

1st	Sheila Freeman	£30
2nd	Tom McGee	£15
3rd	Carol Lofthouse	£5

The village 100 Club exists to raise money for the upkeep and maintenance of our wonderful Millennium Green and wildlife orchard. Many thanks to everyone who has subscribed this year. *Sue Brewer*

Bingo



Three Bingo nights have now taken place with an average of 20 people attending. A fun night with CASH prizes! Bring along your own nibbles & drinks - or buy from the Arms. We also ask for you to bring a prize for the raffle draw as the money from this pays the hire of The Hub - anything left over is added to the prize pot. Put these dates in your diary.

21st February	20th March
17th April	15th May

Doors open 7pm - Eyes Down 7.15pm

Thank you

Steve and Sara at the Huntingfield Arms would like to thank everyone who agreed to pay a supplement on the price of their Christmas dinner. Over the festive period this raised £550 which was donated to Cancer Research UK. Well done to all.

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Nature Notes



So far this winter has been a mild one in terms of temperature; warmer and wetter winters seems to be the norm now and we have certainly had a lot of rain so far. This relatively warmer weather has led to local sightings normally seen much later in the season. Flowers such as snowdrops, aconites and even daffodils have bloomed by mid January, honey bees have been active and some birds are singing. I have even seen breeding activity by a pair of wood pigeons.

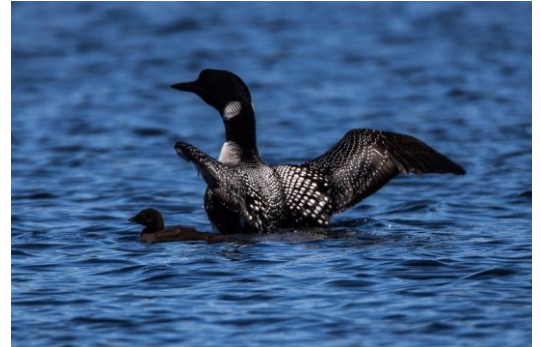
Late summer flowers are still in bloom in my garden including hollyhocks and even a rose. We may still get an icy snap (remember "The Beast from the East") which means that these plants and animals presuming spring is arriving may suffer in the ice and snow. However, it does seem increasingly likely that prolonged cold spells are a thing of the past.



Global change brought about by human activity is now in the news daily with Greta Thunberg and Donald Trump being at opposite ends of this crucial debate which I won't go into here. There is no doubt though, as said, that signs of spring are arriving earlier. For example, the British Trust for Ornithology nest record scheme shows that 42 species of British birds, including some resident garden birds such as Dunnock and Blackbird, are breeding on average ten days earlier than in the 1960s. So, in the next few weeks watch out for birds carrying nesting material and also listen as local birds such as the Chaffinch, Blackbird and Wren will start to sing in earnest.

Whilst it may be warming here, more northerly regions are still very cold and icy at this time of year and migrant species of birds move here to find food that would be unavailable in winter in the type of habitat where they usually breed.

Recently in East Suffolk I have seen Great Northern Divers at Weybread Pits: these goose sized



birds dive to catch fish and crustaceans such as crayfish. They breed in small numbers in Northern Scotland but we have several thousand wintering in the UK although they originate in Iceland, Greenland and possibly North America. They are usually seen out at sea so the two seen at Weybread were unusual. There have been 11 Bewick Swans at Leiston and 25 Snow Buntings at Walberswick - both species probably come here from Iceland which is an incredible journey across hundreds of miles of bleak cold sea, especially for the sparrow-sized Buntings.



More locally a female Goosander, a diving duck that eats small fish, is present at the time of writing on the large

Heveningham Hall lake. There were some here last winter: these birds do breed in the UK but again in fairly small numbers so it's more likely that the Heveningham bird was from Scandinavia.

Before my next notes spring should really be here so do listen in early March for my first sign of spring, the song of the Chiffchaff (squeaky wheelbarrow), hopefully a local Cuckoo and look out for the first Swallow.

Tony Howe



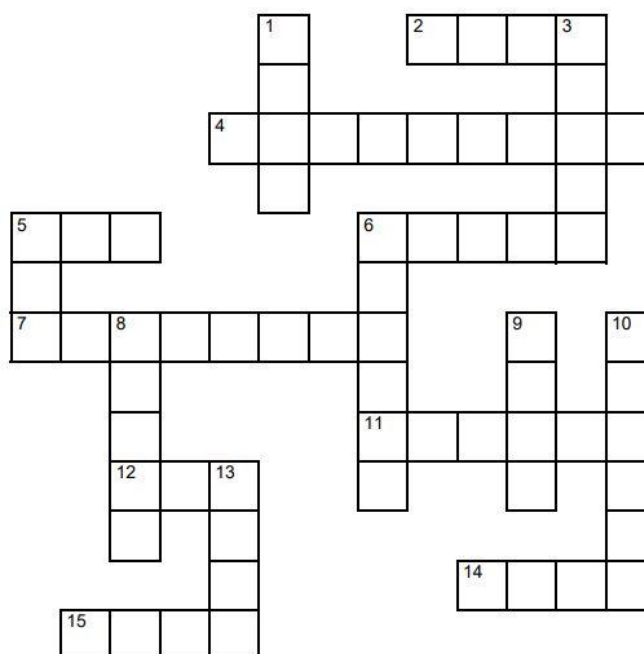
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Kids Corner

Congratulations to Bronwen who won our word search in the Dec/Jan issue.
Please fill in the answers and deliver to 6 Bridge Street or email to
huntingfieldhare@gmail.com. Crossword time this issue..clues at the bottom should
help. The first correct entry to drop through the letterbox/inbox wins. Good luck!



Across


2. Sheep
4. Crocodile
5. Fox
6. Dog
7. Duck
11. Eagle
12. Bear
14. Deer
15. Kangaroo

Down

1. Horse
2. Rabbit
5. Goat
6. Pig
8. Chicken
9. Cow
10. Cat
13. Human


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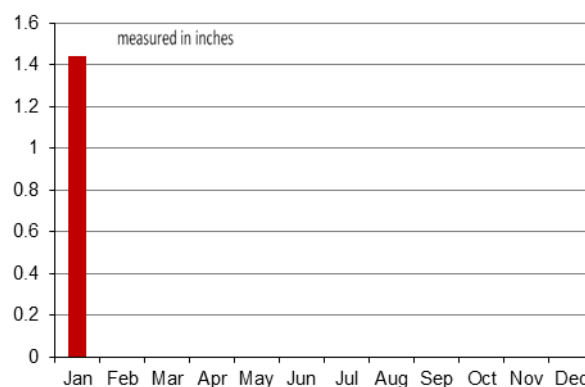
Weather report: December 2019 - January 2020

Where's the sun gone is the main question as I write. Well as per usual, blame it on the jet stream which has been meandering to the north and south of the UK. It has driven either a succession of low pressure areas towards us with associated episodes of mild, and often wet and windy, weather or – as has happened just recently - intense areas of very high pressure (up to 1045 millibars which broke records going back many years) which trapped layers of cloud. Hence the many grey days in January and, therefore, low amounts of visible sunshine. On the other hand, we started with a wetter January this year than last with 1.44" (36.68mm) of rainfall as compared with last year when it was just 1.03" (26.16mm).

The main surprise for 2019 was the copious rainfall between Sept and December when I recorded 14.24" (361.7 mms). Although it appeared we were heading for a dryish year, with the annual total being below average, this redressed the balance to a total for the year of 27.39" (695.7 mms).

The annual average rainfall for the period 1991-2019 is 26.51" (673.27mms) so 2019 was .88" (22.35mm) inches above the average. However, regionally this varies a great deal and on a local basis just a couple of heavy showers can greatly influence the totals. What lies ahead for this coming year? I make no predictions but would say that more extreme weather events of all types will be more of a norm.

Richard Tyler



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What's on – dates for your diary

February

6th Rural Coffee Caravan, The Hub, 10.30am-12.30pm (p. 4)
 7th Deli Fridge at the Arms
 8th Hub Brunch, 10.30-11.30am
 9th Service at St Mary's, 9.30am
 20th Chinese Night at The Arms, 7pm. Booking required.
 20th Craft Club, The Hub, 1-3pm (page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**)
 21st Kids Club, 4-5.30pm
 21st Bingo, 7pm, The Hub
 25th Mobile library, 3.10pm (page 12)

March

2nd Rag Rug Making Workshop, The Hub (page 3)
 5th Rural Coffee Caravan, The Hub, 10.30am-12.30pm (p. 4)
 6th Kids Club, 4-5.30pm
 8th Service at St Mary's, 9.30am
 12th Grafting Course, The Hub, 10am – 4pm (page 4)
 14th Hub Brunch, 10.30-11.30am
 16th & 23rd Make a Teddy Bear Workshop, The Hub (page 3)
 19th Craft Club (page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**)
 20th Kids Club, 4-5.30pm
 20th Bingo, 7pm, The Hub
 24th Mobile library, 3.10pm (page 12)

Regular events at The Hub

Zumba	Monday	11 am-noon
Pilates	Tuesday	10-11 am
	Thursday	9-10 am
Jive & Swing Dance	Tuesday	7.30-9.30 pm
Stretch & Strengthen	Wednesday	10-11 am
Italian (Year 2)	Tuesday	2-4 pm (book via Coastal Leisure Learning - see page 3)
Painting & Drawing	Friday	2-4 pm (book via Coastal Leisure Learning - see page 3)
Become a House Detective	Wednesday	2-4 pm (book via Coastal Leisure Learning - see page 3)
Table Tennis	Thursday	7.30-9.30 pm
Kids Club	Friday fortnightly	4-5.30 pm
Craft Club	3 rd Thursday of the month	1-3 pm (see page Error! Bookmark not defined.)

Mobile Library



The mobile library will be in Huntingfield on **25th February and 24th March – outside the Hub from 3.10-3.30 pm.** Information on our route (13) can be found at <https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/mobiles-home/saxmundham-mobile-library-route-13/>.

Come along and join if you're not already a library member. Books can be ordered and brought right to your door-step.

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David Burrows	The Old Post Office	798165
Jackie Driver	Katanning	799135
Guy Newton	Huntingfield Hall	
Karen Forster (Clerk)	huntingfieldclerk@gmail.com	

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Sheila Freeman	The Longhouse	798774

The Kids Club Team

Sally Clarke, Jos Bailey, Linda Burrows, Marta Camus, Jackie Driver, Carla Kruger, Charlotte Yule

Events Group

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Sally Clarke 785348	Linda Berry 798165

Parochial Church Council

Churchwarden:

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PCC Members:

Linda Berry, Huntingfield
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 Sally Clarke, Huntingfield
 Jackie Driver, Huntingfield
 Sue Tyler, Huntingfield

The Hub Committee

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Christine Barnes	(Heveningham)
Ken Burnett	798177
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