

# THE Grapevine

March 2026

Your community guide for Colton, Easton and Marlingford



**Showground Parkrun?**

**Bring it on!**

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**Stories of  
old Colton**

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**PLUS**

- Local information
- Community interest
- Church services  
(Benefice) page 28

**REMEMBER: clocks go FORWARD on March 29!**

## Useful contacts

<b>St Peter's VC Primary School, Easton</b>	01603 880553
<b>Easton College</b>	01603 731200
<b>Easton College Tennis Centre</b>	01603 731302 easton.tennis@ccn.ac.uk
<b>Colton Village Hall</b>	Marion Morse – 01603 880227 Dominic Castle – 01603 880191
<b>Little Owls at Colton Village Hall</b>	Katie Kemp 07790 276499
<b>Colton Art Group</b>	Rosanna Ellis – 07765 294347
<b>Colton Carpet Bowls Club</b>	Dennis Mickelburgh – 01603 880391 Avalon, The Street, Colton
<b>Easton Bowls Club Secretary</b>	Jan Hudson - 01603 880811 eastonbowls.bh@btinternet.com
<b>Easton Crafters' Club</b>	Mrs Janet Morris – 01603 471144
<b>Easton Football Club</b>	Michael Cossey – 01603 880143 73, Marlingford Way, Easton
<b>Easton Good Companions</b>	Pamela Hooker – 01603 880867
<b>Easton Gym Club</b>	01603 960511 enquiries@eastongymnasticsclub.com
<b>Easton Judo Club Coach</b>	Chris Abel – 0845 388 6895 chris@eastonjudoclub.co.uk 29, Goulburn Rd, Norwich
<b>Easton Junior Football</b>	Gavin Tipple – 01603 731585 gtipple@easton-college.ac.uk
<b>Easton Sports Centre</b>	Colin Brzeczek 01603 731263
<b>Easton Post Office</b>	Open Tues and Thurs 9am-2pm 01603 880007
<b>Easton Village Hall</b>	Roly and Christine Chapman 01603 880654
<b>Easton WI Secretary</b>	Sandra Bowman 01603 881538
<b>Marlingford Village Hall</b> Bookings	Sue Hester M: 07887 686046 susan.hester@btinternet.com
<b>Community Car Scheme for Easton only</b>	Jean and Dave Ditton – 01603 880857
<b>Citizens' Advice Bureau</b>	Wymondham 03444 111444
<b>Relate</b>	01603 625333
<b>Samaritans</b>	0330 094 5717

## Doctors surgeries

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

## Hospitals

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

## Police

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

## Parish Council Clerks

**Easton:** [clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### Marlingford & Colton

**Maria Hutson** 01603 850118  
[clerk@marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk)

### Councillor South Norfolk District and Norfolk County

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

## Location of defibrillators:

**Colton - Village hall**, Norwich Rd; NR9 5BY

**Easton - Village hall**, Marlingford Rd,  
NR9 5AD

**Rembrandt Restaurant**, 65 Dereham Rd.

**Lower Easton**, 76 Ringland Rd;

**Marlingford:** The Bell, Bawburgh Road.  
NR9 5HX

## The Grapevine

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**Front cover:** Spring daffodils.

**Picture:** Annette Hudson.

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# Information on local bus service connections

Norfolk County Council has announced the following **revised timetable**, which is effective from 3rd November 2025. The times listed here are confirmed by NCC Passenger Transport Department and also correspond with the timetables published on the current bus company websites.

## NEW BUS TIMETABLE Service 808, on Tuesdays and Thursdays only:

From	At	Arrives	Connects to:
Marlingford Bell	09:06	Easton: Dereham Road bus shelter at 09:22  (or Longwater Retail Park, Link Road at 09:27)**	Konect 4 service from Easton to Norwich bus station at 09:26  Arrives 10.00  (or from Longwater to Norwich at 09:33)
Colton, The Street pond	09:14		
Colton, junction Norwich Road and The Street	09:20		
		Connects with	Arrives
Konect 4 service from Norwich to Longwater at 12:15  Arriving 12:47 (or Easton: Dereham Road bus shelter at 12.52)	<b>808 service from</b> Longwater Retail Park, Link Road at 12:55  (or Easton: Dereham Road bus shelter at 13:00)	Colton junction with Norwich Road and The Street	13:03
		Colton, The Street pond	13:06
		Marlingford Bell	13:07
Longwater Retail Park, Link Road at 11:15  (Easton: Dereham Road bus shelter at 11:20)	<b>**ADDITIONAL SERVICE FROM LONGWATER ONLY</b>	Colton junction with Norwich Road and The Street	11:23
		Colton, The Street pond	11:24
		Marlingford Bell	11:29

The Flexibus Service will also continue to be provided, with the service now being supplied by Our Bus. In addition to the current arrangements, there will be a new pre-booked service to N&NUH at 07:50 and 17:45. To book a bus, call **0800 0351350 or 01493 224361**

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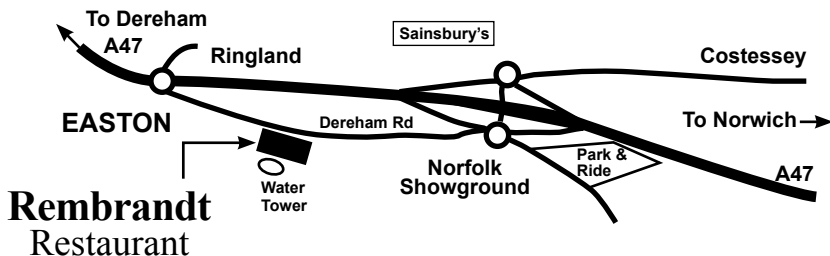
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*For latest information*

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- The Stitch Festival - Islington,**  
Fri 20 Mar £58.00pp
- Battle Picnic Proms: Burghley House**  
Sat 11 Jul £66.00pp
- Highclere Castle (Downton Abbey)**  
Mon 13 Jul £80.00pp
- Jesus Christ Superstar**  
starring Sam Ryder  
Thu 23 Jul £99.00pp
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Fri 24 July £54.00 pp
- Anything Goes! Kilworth House**  
with lunch Sun 26 July £145.00 pp

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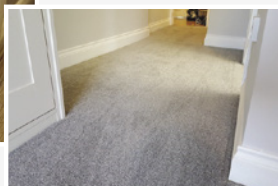
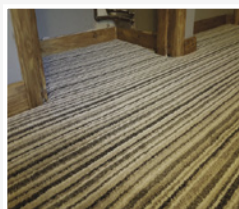
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# THE Grapevine

## Global traditions of Easter celebration

Easter celebrations vary worldwide. In the United States, children enjoy egg hunts and chocolate bunnies. In Spain, vibrant *Semana Santa* (pictured) processions depict Jesus' passion. Italy features the *Scoppio del Carro*, a cart explosion with its origins in the first crusade. In Greece, traditional red eggs symbolise Christ's blood and feasting follows midnight services. Sweden celebrates with children dressing as 'Easter witches,' while in Finland, youngsters parade with drawings.



Australia has a unique twist, replacing the Easter Bunny with the Easter Bilby to raise awareness for endangered species. Each country intertwines local customs with Christian traditions, creating a rich tapestry of celebration.

*Chatty*

## Where you can find online editions and how you can help keep your magazine going!

See the **Easton parish council** ([eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk)) and the **Marlingford and Colton parish council** ([marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk](http://marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk)) websites, the **Nextdoor** website and on the **Easton Matters** and **Festival Park Facebook** pages. If you would like digital copies, please send your email address to: [annettegh57@gmail.com](mailto:annettegh57@gmail.com) and you will be added to a list of subscribers. Our printed editions are published

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**Please consider helping to keep us publishing by making a donation towards the cost of more printed editions.**

**You can do so by bank transfer:**

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**The Grapevine Magazine**

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**Sort code: 20-99-08**

It only takes a moment – Thank you!

**Deadline for items for the April issue: Wednesday, March 25 2026**

**Email as word doc to: [annettegh57@gmail.com](mailto:annettegh57@gmail.com)**

# YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEWS

## Colton Village Hall

● **Village Hall AGM** followed by **Mothers' Day Afternoon Tea** – time TBA - look out for posters!  
Cake: £1.50. Tea, coffee: £1

● **Easter Bingo**

**Saturday, March 28**

A fun family evening with prizes!

Doors open 6.30pm.

Eyes down, 7pm.

● **Sofa SOS!**

We're looking to make the hall a little more comfortable with some small sofas so if you have an old, but decent sofa going begging please get in touch! (we could also use a few small tables...) Donations gratefully received. Contact **Dominic Castle** on **01603 880191**.

## Easton Village Hall

● **Easton Pop In – use it or lose it!**

Pop In is as it says on the tin, you just POP IN. It's open for everyone every Tuesday from 10 till 12 at the village hall. All are welcome you can just POP IN or stay as long as you like. We are a friendly lot, mostly single people chatting and drinking tea or coffee. So when you are popping into the post office, POP IN to see us.

*Brenda and Tony*

● **Good Companions**

Good Companions is no longer and

we are looking for a new name so at the moment we are calling ourselves Thirsty Thursday.. and other suggestions would be nice.

March 31 is a private meeting for all OLD members only.

April 30 and May 28 booked for our afternoon meetings with no age qualifications so everybody welcome – 2pm till 4pm at Easton Village Hall. See you then.

● **Easton Crafters**

Easton Crafters are organising a trip to **Lincoln Craft Show** on **April 26**. If anyone would like to go or wants more information, please get in touch with **Janet** on **01603 471144**.

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

● **Easton WI**

Easton WI meets on the second Thursday of the month (except August) at Easton Village Hall at 7.30pm. All welcome!

## Bawburgh Village Hall

**Talks for everyone**

**Opals – Maria Pennington**

**Tuesday, March 10 at 7.30pm**

Maria Pennington is a professional jeweller, trainer and merchandiser to the jewellery trade. Her talk this year will be on 'Opals',

a magical gem of many colours which was thought to be a symbol of hope, purity and truth.

**Helen Murray talks: Fishermen, Bathers and Beach Folk**

**Tuesday, April 14th at 7.30pm**

Helen's talk this year is based on her latest book, 'Fishermen, Bathers and Beach Folk' exploring the life of the young Quaker artist, Juliet Seebohm, and the colourful lives of those she captured in her sketchbook of Cromer during the summers of 1883 and 1884.



**Entrance £3 includes tea or coffee.**

# EASTER PRIZE BINGO



**Saturday March 28**

**Colton Village Hall**

Doors open: **6.30pm**

Eyes down: **7.00pm**



**PLUS RAFFLE**

Refreshments available at 'half-time'  
but please bring your own alcohol.  
Donations of prizes gratefully received.

## A sincere thank you to departing village stalwarts

Many of you will know, having seen the 'For Sale' board outside John and Dorothy Bailey's house in Mill Road, they are planning to leave Marlingford. John was born in the Mill House, his grandparents having worked for the estate. After John and Dorothy were married, they moved to their bungalow in Mill Road which they had built in 1968. Richard and Rachel completed their family. Without John this village would be the poorer. A modest man, not known to seek praise but praise is certainly due. Whether it was being a pivotal member of our pantomime team, running The Big

Breakfasts, litter picking, village hall maintenance or making soup for the Christmas Fair, John and Dorothy have been our untiring friends.

He oversaw the recent refurbishment of the village hall and was the lead member of the committee staying in constant contact with the builder during various Covid lockdowns. Now that there is no John saying, "I'll do that or I'll sort that out" it is a real loss not only to the village hall committee but to Marlingford village. We wish him and Dorothy a very happy time in the future and we all say a sincere thank you .

**Marlingford Village Hall Committee**

## Showing some love for Gazelles' Valentine's Run

On the morning of Sunday, February 8, there was a colourful array of people running past my house for about one-and-a-half hours. They were members of Norwich-based club Norfolk Gazelles and were taking part in the Valentine's Run.

On Sunday, they started and finished at Easton College, having run just over six miles.



Their route took them past Colton Village Hall where they could refresh with some water, down the hill to Barford Road, Marlingford then left at The Bell, back to Easton College. The first runners I saw went flashing past, then the pace and numbers began to ease. These were still enjoying the experience but not trying to win. They all appreciated the waves and encouraging calls of the bystanders. The winner was Cole Gibbons, taking 30 minutes 39 seconds and the fastest female was Holly Archer, taking 33 minutes 44 seconds.

*Felicity Maton*

## Help your youngsters trade screen time for wellness

Easton College is launching a new offer for young people to work out in their refurbished fitness suite alongside their grown-ups. They offer a resistance room with strength-training equipment, a cardio suite, a versatile fitness space and a dance studio perfect for classes, stretching or movement sessions. This is a unique offer for under-16s to benefit from safe, supervised activity, guided by trained staff, while enjoying all the important physical and mental health rewards of regular exercise.

### How it works

The offer is designed for young people aged 12+ and their grown-up (parent, guardian etc.) They must work out with their grown-up at all times. Members can access gym spaces, resistance room areas and cardio suite. There is a free induction included to ensure safety, confidence, and good technique. The monthly costs is £26 for the young person and their grown up. For more information, a tour round the facilities, or to book an induction please email: [collegehire@ccn.ac.uk](mailto:collegehire@ccn.ac.uk).

## News from Easton Women's Institute

### Successful crafting

Easton WI sadly had to cancel our January meeting due to the very cold, wet weather.

However, we did manage to meet in February when Sandra Roberts came and led a craft session to make small greeting cards. All of us completed a card to take home although some people needed more help than others!

### Birthday celebrations

Our WI will be celebrating its 73rd birthday meeting on Thursday March 12 at 7.30pm in the village hall. We will be having a **Murder Mystery** evening led by **Julie Porter** followed by a buffet and a raffle. We have invited other WIs and would be happy to welcome visitors to this meeting

### Community cupboard

Our meeting on April 9 will have **Charlie Mclean** (pictured) from



Easton talking about the **Easton Community Cupboard**. If anyone has any donations of items to put in this cupboard they will be welcome at the meeting.

### New members welcome!

As I said in *The Grapevine* last month, we would be very happy to welcome some new members to our WI. There has been a WI in Easton since 1953 and we would like it to continue for many more years to come. Our programme for the next 12 months is now complete and copies are available for anyone who is interested. Contact the WI on the number on the inside cover of *The Grapevine* to get a copy. Hopefully the weather will be a lot better by the time you are reading this and the sun will be visible again.

*Mary Blathwayt*

## Your Local Safer Neighbourhood Team

### Beat Manager

**Stuart Barnard Sgt 499**

E: [SNTCostessey@norfolk.police.uk](mailto:SNTCostessey@norfolk.police.uk)



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



Christmas Day Parkrun at Colney drew a huge field.

Pictures: Dominic Castle

## Parkrun – informal healthy and great fun!

**There could be a new Parkrun starting up at the Royal Norfolk Showground soon. DOM CASTLE explains more about this popular phenomenon.**

I've never been much of an athlete. At school, I especially hated the winter cross-country runs, slithering ankle-deep in chilly, gloopy mud or slip-sliding around lethally frozen paths. I was always perilously close to the cut-off time after which late finishers would be sent round again. I don't actually recall this ever happening, presumably because the teachers didn't fancy hanging around in the cold for another minute longer than necessary but the threat seemed real enough.

Summer was no better – boring laps of the running track, sometimes enlivened by the chance to drop a relay baton at a critical moment or whack a knee painfully into a hurdle or feel the sharp sting of running spikes puncturing tender skin.

Like I said, I've never been much of an athlete.

And yet now, in my 63rd year, I get up every Saturday morning, slip into shorts and running shoes and head off to run three miles around the undulating grounds of the University of East Anglia at Colney Parkrun in the company of 300+ folk of all ages and abilities. Sometimes we're slithering ankle-deep in chilly,

gloopy mud or slip-sliding around on frozen paths and I love it. I'm still no good at it – I shuffle around in 35 minutes with a best of a fraction under 30 minutes – but that doesn't matter. It's not a race, so no-one comes last.

It is other things, though; a chance to meet friends each week and maybe have a little informal competition, the chance to boost your health, get the old heart pumping and the open up the lungs, the chance to feel part of something.

It's something big as well; there are 1,400 Parkruns in the UK alone every Saturday plus many more around the globe. Parkruns are welcoming communities.

I mean, if 300 of you turn up on a freezing February morning to go for a run, you've immediately got that in common and if you become a regular, you soon start to see familiar faces and exchange a smile or a nod. Out on the course, even though the spring-heeled Jacks and Jills can zip around in as little as 17 minutes, there's no angry shouting or barking of slower runners.

It's all wonderfully good-humoured. You don't even have to run. You can just walk around, or run for a bit and walk, whatever you like – it's up to you and no-one's judging. You can take the dog along. I take Skye, our whippet, capable of blistering speed off the lead but



Dom on Parkrun volunteer duty with trusty hound Skye.

happy to walk briskly alongside me for half-an-hour or so in return for a broken digestive (free tea, coffee and biscuits for humans are on offer). She did accidentally trip up a runner on the start line the other week – he sprang to his feet and brushed off the apologies with a smile.

Parkrunners are nice people! And, if you don't run, you can help out – volunteers at these free events act as marshals on the course, help collect timing tokens at the end (runs are timed so you can check your progress) and walk the course at the back to keep company with those moving at a more leisurely pace. I hope the proposed Parkrun at the showground goes ahead – it would be a winner. (Even though it's not a race...)

## Fond memories of a village community

**The Mickelburghs have been in Colton for 63 years. Here they share more memories of old Colton.**

The Kidners owned the Old Hall and the fruit farm (now the nurseries) which grew apples, pears, plums, strawberries and blackcurrants. People would arrive in double-decker buses from all around to pick the fruit.

At one time, there was a blacksmiths in the village run by the Dunnells. Gill and Dennis have dug up lots of horseshoes in the garden. Mr and Mrs Kim Alston lived the other side of Norwich Road in Honingham Thorpe with their children Ian and Jane.

Further along Norwich Road, there used to be a fishing rod factory owned by Len Lister where some of the women in the village worked.

At one time there were about four pubs in Colton – The Horse and Groom, The Old Negroes Head and two more further down

The Street, but those two had gone by the time Dennis and Gill moved to Colton.

The building that is now the Barking Buck pub (previously the Norfolk Lurcher and still known by many of the locals as The Ugly Bug) used to be a cart shed where



The old village hall in Colton.

tractors and other farm machinery was repaired. This was bought by Peter Crowland who converted it into a pub.

There used to be village fetes held there each year featuring a Donkey Derby, Tug-o-War and fancy dress for children. There were also gymkhanas run by Mrs Bothway in a field near the village hall.

Another pub in the village – The Old Negroes Head – was owned by Mrs Brighty. She had a lodger called Albert Tubby who worked at Easton College. Albert knew Gill's brother who was a student at the college. He offered to babysit for the Mickelburghs one evening so they could go to Mrs Brighty's pub.

Gill remembers that they found themselves sitting in her lounge and Mrs Brighty had to keep going down to the cellar to get the drinks! There was also a very successful bowls club at The Negroes Head.

One member – John Ottaway – represented England in the Commonwealth Games winning a



Building the new village hall.

gold medal in the Men's Fours at the 2002 Commonwealth Games. There were some rows of council houses either side of the The Street, now The Oaks. Further along Norwich Road stood four small terraced cottages where lived Mrs Madders, Mr and Mrs Tuttle, Mr and Mrs Cartwright and Mr and Mrs Folgate.

The village hall was a wooden Nissen hut from the 1920s heated by a tortoise stove similar to a log burner. There was no kitchen and no toilets. In spite of that, the residents put on many shows for the entertainment of the village – there was always a good turnout. Dennis, who often did the master of ceremony duties, remembers villager Roger Rix, the magician, whose act involved a guillotine and a brave volunteer from the audience offering to demonstrate being parted from their head... The balloon dance by Dennis and fellow villagers Roy and Maurice is something that's still talked about today...!



Who needs Netflix? Colton villagers knew how to entertain themselves!



Colton village Hall Committee 1986: Back row - Gill and Dennis Mickelburgh, Bob Falgate, John Skipper, Valerie Riches, Roger Rix, Maurice Durrant. Front: Joan Jordan, Sue Rix, Jean Skelton, Lynne Skipper.

Near to St Andrew's Church, was the original village school – now a private residence. Gill and Dennis's children went to Honingham School driven there by Mrs Dunnell who acted as taxi driver for the village children. Girls who passed the 11 plus then went to Neatherd High School in Dereham and the boys went to school in Swaffham driven there by a villager from East Tuddenham. Although there were no specific buses to the schools, Colton did have a very good bus service running both to Norwich and to Dereham. Gill used the bus service when she was night sister at the West Norwich Hospital. They didn't have a telephone at home – there was a phone box outside Pear Tree Cottage where Dennis had to run to call the midwife when Gill was expecting.

Gill remembers neighbour Valerie and her husband Roy who used to grow roses. She recalls once helping him take the thorns off before they could be grafted. He had a shop called Rose Roses over where the fruit farm shed used to be where he sold his flowers. He even won a prize at the Chelsea Flower Show once for a rose he created called Laura Louise – named after his mother and his mother-in-law!

The Sundial cottages were there



Dennis and Gill enjoy a more recent village hall event.

when they moved to Colton.

The owners of the middle cottage – Dorothy and Alan – bought the pit there which Dorothy peopled with little gnomes that sat among the pathways.

The pond was in the village and opposite that there was a windmill. Gill remembers Valerie and her going to the Old Hall to see Mr Bothway about getting a piece of land for the children of Colton. He agreed to let them play on the land behind the village hall.

They held fetes to raise money for equipment for the play area which included a sand pit, climbing frame and swings made by villager Roger Rix. In those days there were several groups in the village who benefitted from funds raised by the fetes and community events including the Women's Institute, The British Legion, a church group, the Youth Club run by Peter Skelton, the village hall, the Bowls club and an old peoples club.

# Brilliant benefit of being an older adult...

**Here's some info on age-related bus passes:**

**Q What age do I have to be to get an older person's bus pass?**

**A** When you reach State Pension age, which is currently 66 for both women and men.

**Q Where you can use your bus pass?**

**A** On all local bus services throughout England including:

- London buses – you have free travel on buses across England, including London. However, there may be specific rules about when you can travel for free, so check your local council's free bus pass guidance before travelling.

- Rural services (such as Coasthopper) Check for local travel variations if using your pass outside of the Norfolk County Council area.

**When can you use your bus pass?**

- Monday to Friday: On all off-peak services (from 9.30am until the last bus of the day)
- Saturday and Sunday: On all services at all times
- Bank Holidays: On all services at all times

Some rural services in Norfolk accept travel bus passes before 9.30am on weekdays. To check, visit: [norfolk.gov.uk/article/39805/Exemptions](http://norfolk.gov.uk/article/39805/Exemptions)

**Can I use it on Park and Ride?**

**A** You have discounted rate on Park



and Ride services in Norfolk. For details, visit: [travelnorfolk.co.uk/park-and-ride](http://travelnorfolk.co.uk/park-and-ride)

**What your bus pass does not entitle you to:**

- Train travel
- National coach services (such as National Express – to get senior concessions on National Express you need to buy a senior coachcard which costs £15 a year and gets you a third off the cost of your travel across the year).
- In Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland

**Q After applying, when will you receive your bus pass?**

**A** Usually within 10 working days of receipt of your form. Travel bus passes are normally sent out within five to 10 working days. If you have applied for a new travel bus pass before your date of eligibility, your bus pass will be issued up to 10 working days before your eligibility date. Your eligibility date is your 66th birthday.

## Working for safer journeys in South Norfolk



Since being elected as your MP for South Norfolk, road safety has been one of the biggest sources of casework I have dealt with. Too many residents have told me the same thing: the roads that they rely on every day are simply not safe enough. Whether you are walking your children to school, commuting to work, cycling for leisure, or driving to visit family and friends, your safety should never be a concern. Yet for many people across South Norfolk, it is. One of the realities of representing a rural constituency is that driving is not a luxury for residents, rather it is part of everyday life. With inconsistent and limited bus services, and villages separated by long, winding roads, relying on a car is often the only realistic option for residents to get to work, school, shops or access healthcare. The risks faced on rural roads are also very different from those in towns and cities and are too often overlooked. Narrow lanes, deteriorating road surfaces, speeding traffic, blind bends, overgrown hedgerows and a lack

of pavements or safe crossing points all combine to make every day journeys feel dangerous. Agricultural vehicles share space with commuters. School buses navigate roads never designed for modern traffic volumes. Cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians frequently tell me they feel particularly vulnerable. All of this makes the condition of our rural roads not just inconvenient, but dangerous. In 2024 alone, eight people tragically lost their lives on roads in our constituency, alongside 45 serious injuries and more than 200 other injuries sustained. Behind every number is a family affected, a community changed, and countless near misses that never make the statistics. That is why I launched my Rural Road Safety Survey: to hear directly from the people who know these roads best and use them day in and day out. I want to sincerely thank the 937 residents who took part and shared their experiences. Your responses have helped to shape “Safer Journeys”, my new report into rural road safety in South Norfolk. The report brings together the real experiences of the people who use our roads every day. It sets out clear, practical recommendations

for improvement and includes responses from the public bodies responsible for keeping our roads safe. Above all, it is about ensuring that rural voices are heard and acted upon. I will now take the findings of Safer Journeys forward. That means raising these issues in Westminster, pressing ministers to recognise the specific challenges rural areas face, and holding decision-makers to account. I will continue to engage directly with Norfolk County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner to push for practical changes that improve safety on the ground. Although these changes will not happen overnight, with sustained pressure and clear evidence, I will endeavour to deliver

meaningful progress.

This report is not the end of the conversation. It is the beginning of a determined effort to make our roads safer. Road safety is not a partisan issue; it is a community issue. Everyone deserves to feel safe when travelling in their own area, whether on foot, on a bike, on horseback or in a car.

If you wish to, you can read the report in full here:

[bengoldsborough.co.uk/rural-road-safety-report](https://bengoldsborough.co.uk/rural-road-safety-report)

Thanks again to everyone who took the time to share their experiences. Together, we can make rural road safety a priority and work towards safer journeys for all.

***Ben Goldsborough MP***



Our rural roads can be a challenge to road users.

Picture: Freepik

# Marlingford and Colton Parish Council

**Your Parish Councillors:**  
**Mr J Morse, Chairman**

**Vice Chairman**  
**Mark Pfeiffer**

**Cllr Deborah Perfect**

## Pot holes and highway issues

Cold wet weather can lead to a deterioration in roads and verges. Highways, part of Norfolk County Council is responsible for keeping the roads and verges in good order. Any issues can be reported here Report a highways problem - Norfolk County Council Residents are reminded to please ensure that boundary hedges are maintained and do not obstruct the highway and any road signs are kept clear.

## Resignation and vacancies – reminder

Marlingford and Colton Parish Council can have a maximum of seven councillors. It currently has just three, the minimum legally allowed to be able to operate. The parish council is very keen to recruit new councillors and welcomes residents to get in touch or attend the next meeting on Tuesday 10th March To be eligible to be considered as a parish councillor you must:

- be at least 18 years old

- be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights
- meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
  1. You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish in which you wish to stand from the day of your nomination onwards.
  2. You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination.
  3. Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election has been in the parish area.
  4. You have lived in the parish area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination.If you have any questions regarding becoming a parish councillor please contact the clerk on the details at the end of this report.

## Big South Norfolk Litter Pick

**SAVE THE DATE!** South Norfolk District Council has confirmed that it will once again be supporting villages with the annual

### Big South Norfolk Litter Pick.

It's a great opportunity for villagers to get together and tidy up the thoughtlessly discarded litter making an eyesore of our local verges. Please save the morning of Saturday, March 14, 10am, Marlingford Village Hall and Saturday, March 28, 9.30 – 12pm, Colton Village Hall to join us for a couple of hours that make such a difference. Bags and equipment will be kindly supplied by SNDC. Really hope to see our regulars and some new faces that Saturday morning. Exact timings and location to be confirmed nearer the time. For more



information please contact the clerk on the details at the end of this report.

### A47 between North Tuddenham and Easton

Work on the A47 will continue this year with road closures expected. For more details on the work schedule and road closures go to; [nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a47-north-tuddenham-to-easton-improvements/](https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/east/a47-north-tuddenham-to-easton-improvements/)

## Parish council meetings and public inclusion

Parish council meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of alternate months at 7pm.

The next meeting will be held on:

- **Tuesday, March 10, 7pm,  
Colton Village Hall**

At each meeting there is an opportunity for members of the public to speak and raise any issues they may have. You are

also welcome to simply come along and listen to the meeting. Councillors look forward to welcoming residents to the next meeting.

**Maria Hutson**, clerk to Marlingford and Colton Parish Council,

T: **01603 850118**

E: [clerk@marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk)

W: [marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk](https://marlingfordandcolton-pc.gov.uk)

# Easton Parish Council

## Your parish councillors:

**Chairman – Mark Caton**

**Vice-chair – Jan Hudson**

**Cllr David Lewis**

**Cllr Des Fulcher**

**Cllr Peter McCarter**

**Cllr Roly Chapman**

**Cllr Mark Cordy**

**Cllr Mike Jobling**

**Cllr Mike Bowman**

**Cllr Alexis Main**

Easton Parish Council met on Tuesday, February 3 2026 with councillors, clerk, and members of the public in attendance. .

Following the formal approval of the January minutes, councillors received a comprehensive report from the District and County councillor.

## County developments

Highways funding featured prominently in the report. Norfolk County Council which maintains approximately 6,000 miles of roads will see a substantial increase in government grant for highway maintenance rising from £56m in 2025/26 to £83m by 2029/30. This investment is intended to support pothole repairs and preventative resurfacing works.

Libraries across the county are hosting DigiFest throughout February as part of Norfolk County Council's digital inclusion strategy. Now in its seventh year, the initiative offers

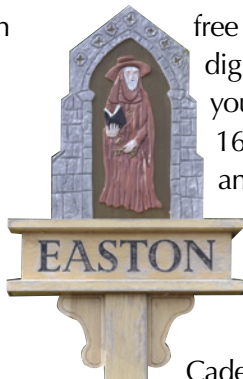
free events aimed at developing digital skills among children and young people up to the age of 16, including coding, animation and introductory AI activities.

The fire service is also expanding its youth engagement with plans to open an additional Fire Cadet Unit in Fakenham. Updates were provided on the rollout of

body-worn cameras for fire service personnel and trading standards officers enhancing operational safety and investigative effectiveness.

In education, councillors were advised that government funding has been approved for two new SEND schools in Downham Market and Great Yarmouth reducing the need for lengthy travel for children with special educational needs.

The report concluded with an update on devolution and local government reform. While the election of a regional mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk has been postponed until 2028, preparations continue.



Elections for the new unitary councils are expected to take place in 2027 ahead of the planned reorganisation.

### **Planning and development**

No new planning applications or decisions were reported during the meeting.

Persimmon Homes provided an update on current development works. A construction access road is being installed on Church Lane, enabling construction traffic to avoid Dereham Road. Residents were advised of forthcoming road closures including Marlingford Road from mid-March to late April and Hall Lane from late April to mid-July subject to potential revisions. The anticipated completion of new allotments has been delayed until spring 2027, due to forthcoming archaeological investigations.

### **Finance and Community Centre**

Routine financial matters were approved, including staff salary payments and service costs, and the January 2026 bank reconciliation was signed by the chair.

Councillors received an update on the community centre project. A quantity surveyor's report, commissioned with the support of South Norfolk Council estimates a cost of approximately £82,000 plus VAT to complete the building. The council will review the report in detail and respond accordingly.

Progress is also being made on legal, insurance and broadband arrangements associated with the centre.

### **Public participation and parish maintenance**

Members of the public raised concerns regarding parking on grass verges, dog fouling and the inappropriate disposal of clothing donations. The clerk will liaise with South Norfolk Council regarding regular emptying of dog waste bins. Reports on parish play areas confirmed that all equipment remains in good condition. Councillors also agreed to remind residents to cut back any bushes or trees overhanging public footpaths to maintain accessibility.

### **Next steps**

Items identified for the next agenda include broadband provision for the community centre, parish management software, updates on the A47 roundabout removal and a footpath at College Heights.

### **Next meeting**

The next parish council meeting is scheduled for

- **Tuesday, March 3 at 7pm in Easton Village Hall.**

Residents are always welcome to attend and take part in the public discussion.

**E: [clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

**W: [eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://eastonparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

# Help with 'Open the Book' at Easton school

On most Thursday mornings in term time, a small group of volunteers led by Rev Laura Montgomery go into St Peter's Academy, Easton, to do '**Open the Book**'.

This involves using the *Lion Children's Storybook Bible* to tell the children bible stories and to act them out with the help of a few children volunteers while wearing simple costumes.

We are always looking out for fresh volunteers who are willing to join in with acting or making props. There are no scripts to memorise.



If you are free on Thursday mornings, maybe you could join our friendly group? There would be a basic safeguarding check which the school carry out.

If you would like to know more please get in touch with **Sue Knight** on **07876717487** or email **sueandcliff1@yahoo.co.uk**

## Church services March and April 2026

### March

Sunday 1	10.00am	<b>Easton</b> – Holy Communion – 2nd of Lent
Sunday 8	10.00am	<b>Colton</b> – All age – HC – 3rd of Lent
Sunday 15	10.00am	<b>Marlingford</b> – all age – HC – <b>Mothering Sunday</b>
Sunday 22	10.00am	<b>Bawburgh</b> – HC – 5th of Lent
Sunday 29 Clocks go forward	10.00am	<b>Colton</b> – HC – <b>Palm Sunday</b>

### April

Thursday 2	5.00pm	<b>Bawburgh</b> – HC – <b>Maundy Thursday</b> with handwashing
Friday 3	2-3.00pm	<b>Marlingford</b> – <b>Good Friday</b> – an hour at the Cross
Sunday 5	10.00am	<b>Easton</b> – all age – HC – <b>Easter Day</b>
Sunday 12	10.00am	<b>Colton</b> – all age – HC – 2nd of Easter
Sunday 19	10.00am	<b>Marlingford</b> – HC – 3rd of Easter
Sunday 26	10.00am	<b>Bawburgh</b> – HC – 4th of Easter

# The Rambling Vine



A hare taking a leaf out of the tortoise's book...

Picture: Kev/Pixabay

## Time to forget the rush and relish patience

March is an in-between month. It is no longer quite winter, the snowdrops are fading and the daffodils are thinking about it, but it is not fully spring either. The trees still look bare from a distance. The mornings can feel sharp. The ground, if we are honest, is mostly mud. Something is happening, but it is happening quietly. We are not always very good at waiting. We prefer clear beginnings and happy endings. We like to know how the story turns out. We might be inclined to glance at the clock in a slow queue or to feel restless when progress seems delayed. Waiting can feel uncomfortable, even unnecessary.

And yet so much of life is lived in the middle.

Seeds wait in the soil before they show any sign of life. Buds form long before they dare to open. Farmers and gardeners understand this rhythm well. There is work to be done, but there is also a kind of trust required. You cannot rush what is still forming.

In the Church's year, we are also in a season of waiting. Lent has begun, a time when we slow down a little and allow space for reflection. The great joy of resurrection lies ahead, but we do not leap there too quickly. We stay with the story as it unfolds. We allow anticipation to grow.

Waiting, in the Christian sense, is not passive. It is attentive. It is watchful. It is hopeful. It trusts that even when nothing much seems to be happening on the surface, God is at work beneath it.

Perhaps March invites us to practise that kind of waiting.

To notice small signs of change.

To accept that not everything

blooms on our timetable.

To trust that unseen growth is still growth.

The world around us is preparing for spring. The Church is preparing for new life. And we, perhaps, are invited simply to be patient. Patient with the season, with one another, and even with ourselves.

*Rev Laura Montgomery*



## Mobile library 2026 – March dates

**Marlingford – Route: CEN 423 Thursday: March 19**

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

**Colton –Route: CEN 319 Wednesday: March 18**

Ex post Office 9.45am 10.00am NR9 5DB

**Easton –Route: CEN 423 Thursday: March 19**

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

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Hethersett, Norwich, NR9 3EN

**HINGHAM:** 01953 850330  
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