



## *Parish Council Matters*

At the September meeting of the Parish Council, a petition was received calling for the decision to move the outdoor gym equipment to be reversed. A presentation was made and a formal complaint has been received by the Monitoring Officer of the Borough Council about the conduct of the Parish Council regarding this matter.

Following the presentation, the Chairman made the following statement. "The Parish Council very much regrets the division and bad feeling, both within the Council itself and in the Parish, that has resulted from the outdoor gym project.

The gym equipment was intended to be a positive addition to the village playing field. Sadly, it has proved to be a source of negativity, with two groups of people holding opposing opinions but both feeling that they were not consulted with or listened to.

The Parish Council has learned some hard lessons during this long saga. It has been challenging and, at times, unpleasant for everyone involved. Having an impartial review is to be welcomed. Whatever the outcome, I sincerely hope it is a step towards a more positive and harmonious community."

While we wait for the response of the Monitoring Officer, the installation of the new swings and the relocation of the gym equipment has been paused. In the meantime, a suggestion has been received to improve the play equipment for young children. This could also give their parents somewhere to meet. If you would like to discuss these ideas, please contact the Clerk.

Finally, the annual donation from the PC to the Great Massingham Community Car Scheme was agreed at £300.

The Council will next meet on Wednesday 22nd October, starting at 7.30pm in the Social Club, when there will be a presentation about plans for the development of Wyld Cabins on the Houghton Hall Estate. The meeting after that will be on 26th November. If you wish to discuss a Parish matter, please attend a meeting and raise it during the Public Participation session or write to the Clerk.

Thank you.

Email: [clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk)

Post: Hall Farm, Sedgeford Road, Docking, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8LJ

Website: [bircham-pc.gov.uk](http://bircham-pc.gov.uk)



Do remember that the *Bircham Times* can be delivered to parishioners by email. You can email us at [news@thebirchams.uk](mailto:news@thebirchams.uk) to request that (or for any other matter). In addition, we publish, in advance of the paper copy, on the 15th of every month on our website: [www.thebirchams.uk](http://www.thebirchams.uk)



## Transporting the Criminals

You never know when you might be living next door to one of the criminal classes but in the late 18th and 19th centuries the authorities had a way with transgressors. One such woman who fell foul of the law was Maria Kendle, who in the spring of 1841 was convicted of a heinous crime at Lynn's magistrates court and was sentenced to seven years' transportation to Van Diemen's Land (what we now know as Tasmania).

Between 1787 and 1868, some 160,000 convicts were transported aboard ships from the UK to Australia. Oftentimes, a death sentence that was handed down was commuted to "transportation for life" but on the other hand you could be sent abroad for what we today would consider the most minor of transgressions. About 4,000 of those who were transported to Australia came from Norfolk. Had Maria committed her crime some 16 years later she would have found that transportation was effectively "off the books" as a sentence, but then the men in charge would have come up some other truly unworthy sentence no doubt.

On June 14, 1841, Maria Kendle was incarcerated aboard *Garland Grove* and sent on a four-month voyage to Van Diemen's Land where she was to be held for a period of seven years. Her prison records in Australia state that her crime was not recorded. Not in Australia perhaps, except that it was in Norfolk, where her crime had been to steal a loaf of bread from Nicholas Softley, a man presumably with plenty of clout. We can follow Softley in the census records and he was a baker working in Lynn and Wells. Kendle's crime is referred to as "larceny by a servant" so we can presume she figures somehow in his employ. Beware the wronged employer!

But what really offends is how her punishment compared with that meted out to the other criminals sentenced on that April 14th day. By some coincidence there was another "Kendle" convicted at the Lynn Quarter Sessions under the recorder of the borough, Martin James West. Joseph Kendle was found guilty of stealing a jacket and was sentenced to ONE month's imprisonment; Thomas Knights, who stole a pocket knife, got seven DAYS' imprisonment (and a cheeky whipping); and William Leaford made off with silver spoons and got three months' imprisonment. You could even assault a police constable, as did John Hall, and "only" receive a fine of 40 shillings. Of course Maria doesn't sound like the kind of gal with 40s to her name, so transportation it was. It must have been a mighty fine loaf of bread, we suggest. One newspaper report suggests she was an "old offender", which we are tempted to believe meant "serial" rather than "aged". We think Maria was in her early 30s at the time.

Once Maria got to Tasmania the trail runs cold. But as to her origins? Well there was a Maria Kendle who appears in the 1841 (April) census living in East Rudham with labourer husband Robert and four very young children (the youngest a year old). She possibly reappears in the 1851 census as "Kendall" in Docking so we must assume she worked her way back to her family in that 10-year period before ending her days, widowed, but still working as a field worker in Docking in her 70s.

Quite what transportation achieved in this case is beyond reason to modern eyes. Another man convicted at the same time as Maria, this time for manslaughter, was transported to .... well actually he wasn't. He received a sentence of 7 DAYS and one assumes went on his merry way. Judicial sentencing in the 19th century really does seem to be have lain at the whim of judges.

Should you be interested in trying to fathom out whether any of your own ancestors were transported to Australia for crimes big or small, then the following give a good start.

<https://convictrecords.com.au/>

<https://www.library.gov.au/research/family-history/family-history-research-guide/convicts-research-guide>



## Words on Birds

### NUTHATCHES

As we drift into winter, one bird to look out for on your garden feeders is the nuthatch. Its shape alone with a very short tail and long spiky beak makes it noticeable. Both male and female are a pale blue-grey above with an obvious black streak through the eye and are reddish-brown underneath, with the male being more strongly coloured.

They are highly sedentary so if you have them visiting your garden in the winter, chances are they bred somewhere nearby. They nest in holes, sometimes taking over old woodpecker nests or using a natural cavity. The females are known to use mud to plaster up the entrance hole if it is too large, and even to plaster the inside walls. This is probably to deter predators and to prevent other species such as starlings taking over the nest. They feed on insects in the summer, which they seek out by creeping along tree trunks and branches, and are famous for being our only bird that creeps through trees downwards as well as upwards.

They switch to eating nuts in the winter and as well as hiding some in bark crevices as a food store, they will break open large nuts by wedging them in a crevice to hold them and hammering away at the shell with that daggerlike beak, a habit which probably gives the bird its name.

Steve Rooke

## "With Courage Nothing is Impossible"

On October 8 we were extremely fortunate to be invited to an open-day at RNLI Hunstanton based at the boathouse at Old Hunstanton. Here we were treated to an interesting talk about the origins of the RNLI, its foundations in 1824 and the ad hoc nature of what went before. The chat centred especially on the charity's work at Hunstanton, with Kate Craven, the visits officer, and Charles le Strange Meakin, chair, whose ancestor had a hand in the establishment of the station. For those who are familiar with the Beach Cafe at Old Hunstanton, you might not be aware that that building was the original premises of the lifeboat station!

That original station closed in 1931 but reopened in its new premises opposite the cafe in 1979. It's a lovely building and we were treated to the upstairs panoramic view that the staff get of the coastline. Downstairs and next door are where the boats are held... well boats loosely since the station has a hovercraft, *The Hunstanton Flyer*, alongside an inshore vessel, *Spirit of West Norfolk*. And an impressive tractor from which vessels are launched. Between them they get around 50 "shouts" a year.

The RNLI at Old Hunstanton operates thanks to a volunteer force of around 150 people in various guises, with the oldest in his nineties! This station, as with others around the coast, tends to be a family affair with generations of brave rescuers on hand to save those in peril.

## Dates for the Diary

**Bircham Windmill** Closed Sept 30

**RAF Bircham Newton** Open Days 10-4pm (see below)

**RAF Sculthorpe** Open Days 10am- . Closes after Nov 2

**Anmer Social Club** Coffee, cake and chat, Mondays 10-12, 07947 580555

**Snettisham Park** Open daily from February 1

**Houghton Hall & Gardens** Closed Sept 28

**Sandringham** Closed Oct 10

**Oct 17-25** Wells Festival of Literature, see page 5

**Oct 18** Sensational 60s Experience, Corn Exchange, King's Lynn, 7.30pm, £34

**Oct 19** Ready Steady Sew creative fundraiser at Westacre Theatre, £20

**Oct 20-26** UK Coffee Week

**Oct 21** Metropolitan Opera: *La Sonnambula* at Majestic Cinema, KL, 6.45pm

**Oct 23** NT Live at Westacre Theatre, 7pm, £14

**Oct 24-26** Fear in the Fens festival, Corn Exchange, KL, £28/£39

From **Oct 25** Alan Partridge Bisonification Garden opens at Pensthorpe

**Oct 25** *Black Bag*, Syderstone Village Screen Cinema, 7.30pm, £4

**Oct 25-31** Pumpkin Festival @ Pensthorpe from £16.95

**Oct 26** RAF Bircham Newton Open Day

**Oct 27** National Black Cat Day

**Oct 27-31** NORFOLK SCHOOLS HALF-TERM

**Oct 28-31** Witchcraft Week at Stories of Lynn, KL

**Oct 30** Pumpkin Festival @ Pensthorpe, 5.45-9.30pm, from £12.95 inc a pumpkin



## Foodie Fare

### THAI ONE-POT WINTER WARMER

Now that the temperature has dropped, here's a hearty recipe to warm you up. It takes the classic combination of potatoes and chicken, but adds the flavours of Thailand. The Thai ingredients needed are not obscure and available in pretty much all supermarkets these days. And it's a one-pot dish, so not much washing-up! However, be warned that it is probably not for those following a low-calorie diet.

Serves: 4

#### INGREDIENTS:

500g potatoes (waxy varieties work best)  
750g chicken breast or breast pieces

2 tbs vegetable oil  
2 tbs red Thai curry paste  
2 tbs Thai fish sauce  
400ml (1 can) coconut milk  
2 tbs light brown sugar  
2 tbs lime juice  
50g roasted peanuts (preferably unsalted)  
3 spring onions  
Salt to taste  
Handful of coriander leaves (optional)

Cooking pot: Pan (with a lid) large enough to hold all the above



#### METHOD:

Very finely shred the spring onions with a sharp knife or peeler and place in a bowl of cold water. These will be used later to garnish; placing in cold water will remove a little of the harshness.

Cut the potatoes into pieces about 35mm (1½ inch) square. If using new potatoes, just cut in half. Set them aside.

Next cut up the chicken into bite-size or slightly larger pieces. Heat the vegetable oil in the pan and lightly brown the chicken pieces on all sides. Remove them and set aside, leaving the oil behind.

Add the Thai curry paste to the hot oil and stir in, then add the fish sauce, coconut milk and sugar. Stir to keep the mixture lump-free while bringing to the boil, then add the chicken and potatoes.

Place the lid on, turn down the heat and simmer for 20/25 minutes until the potatoes have softened.

Add lime juice and salt to taste and serve topped with the peanuts, shredded spring onions (and optional coriander).

You might be tempted to serve with rice, but bear in mind that coconut milk is massively calorific (c. 195 calories per 100ml). Add to that the calories from the potatoes and chicken and you can see how this really is a meal in itself – a true rib-sticker!

LR



## Wells Festival of Literature

No need to head west to Hay's Festival of Books when you can pop up the coast to Wells this October for some literary fun and enlightenment. The 33rd Wells Festival of Literature promises to be a super get-together of many literary names from a vast array of genres: from Stuart Maconie to Sebastian Faulks, Carol Klein to Ian Dale, and Prue Leith to Lyse Doucet.

The programme includes talks, poetry readings, a literary quiz and much more on topics such as food, gardening, sport, global politics, history, the ancient worlds, AI, philosophy, religion, art, as well as the best in new fiction of course

The festival runs October 17-25 and tickets for the sessions are priced at £12.50. They and the full programme are available from: <https://wellsfestivalofliterature.org.uk/contact-us/>

## Remembrance: An Episode in Gallipoli

As we commemorate in November the sacrifice of generations over the past century-plus, we retell an episode from the First World War that started close to home.

Thanks to a 1999 film, entitled *All the King's Men*, starring David Jason most of us know a little about E Company, 5th Norfolk Regiment. Otherwise known as the Sandringham Regiment, it was a voluntary unit of men raised in 1908 from workers and tenants from the Sandringham Estate. Jason played Captain Frank Reginald Beck, who before the First World War was the land agent at Sandringham and who was pivotal in training the men.

On August 12, 1915, during the Dardanelles Campaign, Beck's Sandringham Company was part of a larger attack at Anafarta that "went missing". The story ran that a cloud had descended and swallowed up the men. None of them returned. Newspaper reports were blunt and scant. There was no news and into the void of a lack of information supernatural ideas took hold.

After the war Queen Alexandra added to the impetus to search for news of the Sandringhams. Subsequently, a regimental cap badge was found, and the news was relayed to Rev Charles Pierrepont Edwards on graves registration work, who discovered 122 bodies believed to have been Norfolks because of their shoulder flashes. The men had apparently been shot in the head, since it was widely supposed that the Turkish forces routinely did not take prisoners. Turkish embassy officials angrily refuted the claims.



The Sandringham War Memorial contains the names of the estate men who died that day and a number are also commemorated at West Newton.

## Dates for the Diary

- Nov 1** Hunstanton Cliff-top Fireworks, from 4.30pm, from £5
- Nov 2** Round Table Fireworks at Fakenham Racecourse from 3pm
- Nov 2** RAF Sculthorpe Open Day, from 10am
- Nov 5** BiB @ Bircham Stores, 9am
- Nov 6** Bircham Banter, 2.30-4pm
- Nov 6** Stanhoe & Barwick WI, Mike Simons: Maldon Handmade Chocolates, 2pm
- Nov 7** Fawkes in the Walks, King's Lynn, entertainment from 6pm, voluntary donation
- Nov 7-Dec 21** Burnham Deepdale Xmas Pop-up Shops
- Nov 8** Thursford Xmas Spectacular, from £44
- Nov 9** RAF Bircham Newton – Remembrance Day
- Nov 11** Valuation Day at Westacre Theatre, 12-2pm
- Nov 12-Dec 24** Luminare at Sandringham, entry times 4.30-8.30pm, car park £6, timed tickets £27.25/£18.20
- Nov 14-16** Sandringham Christmas Craft, Food & Gift Fair, £12/£6
- Nov 16** RAF Sculthorpe Open Day, 10am
- Nov 22** *The Penguin Lessons*, Syderstone Village Screen Cinema, 7.30pm, £4
- Nov 23** Pensthorpe Xmas Market, 10-3pm, £3
- Nov 22 and 27** Xmas Wreath Workshop @ Pensthorpe 10-1pm, £60
- Nov 29** RSPCA East Winch Xmas Market
- from **Nov 29** N Norfolk Pole Experience (various dates until Dec 23) @ Pensthorpe, from £19.95/£22.95
- Nov 30** Xmas Dog Walk & Jumper Competition, Hunstanton
- Nov 30** Hunstanton Winter Wonderland and Xmas Lights Switch On



## *Bircham in Bloom*

Bircham in Bloom comprises a number of people drawn from the villages. These villagers have come together, voluntarily, with the aim of enhancing the village environment, encouraging wildlife and promoting social amenity through various planting schemes.

We now have 19 active members with a dedicated BiB WhatsApp Group that is used not only to organise BiB activities, but also to share surplus plants and produce, discuss plants and planting issues and even to share cookery tips!

There are 25 areas around the villages that BiB deals with. We undertake a number of activities generally in small working groups, including:

- Maintenance – pruning, dead heading, grass cutting, weeding, feeding and general tidying-up.
- New planting, including shrubs and bulbs.
- Watering during the dry spells in the summer.

BiB has also been in consultation with the Parish Council on various matters, including the additional timber sleepers to the playing field entrance, the treatment of the playing field entrance path, resurfacing to the trod, and improvement to the ground under the notice board outside the bus shelter. We have also prepared a proposal for the playing field boundaries following consultation with the chairman of the cricket club and adjoining property owners. This proposal was presented at the Parish Council Meeting in September.

BiB has a number of meetings during the year, the next one being on November 5 at 9:30am at the Bircham Stores. Please note that we are alternating the meetings between mornings and evenings to try to increase the potential attendees.

We are always seeking new members, particularly from Bircham Tofts and Bircham Newton. New members will also help us take on more work. So, if you can, please join us or if you want to find out more about BiB, please reach out to the Parish Council who can put you in touch with us.

Chris Fellowes

## *Household Hazardous Waste Days*

After a successful venture in the spring, the county council is repeating its Household Hazardous Waste Day this autumn. The closest sites is at Hempton (NR21 7DY or [///fencing.polices.vines](http://fencing.polices.vines)) on Friday and Saturday November 21-22. Bookings are as per normal recycling (see page 8) but slots are only open eight days before the event.

"Hazardous" does have its limitations though: so paint cans, pesticides, anti-freeze, drain cleaners and flammable liquids are good; asbestos, fireworks, fuels, clinical waste or gas bottles are not. See full list at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/38615/Hazardous-waste-items>

## *Stanhoe & Barwick WI*

Forthcoming events to be held at the Stanhoe Reading Room, Cross Lane, PE31 8PS at 2pm.

November 6 Mike Simons, Chocolatier. Maldon Handmade Chocolate

December 4 Junya Lewis. Christmas Traditions

Visitors are always welcome. Our charge is £5, which includes refreshments.

Contact [stanhoeandbarwickwi@gmail.com](mailto:stanhoeandbarwickwi@gmail.com) for more details.



## Traffic Update

A resident of Bircham Tofts sent us the following ad hoc traffic census.

Date: Friday October 10; Vantage point: Bircham Tofts pond

Towards Great Bircham: 27 cars and 2 vans

Towards the College: 39 cars and 6 vans and some brave cyclists

Oh, did we forget to mention that was during a 10-MINUTE period between 4.20 and 4.30pm? Seems it is not just the speed of traffic in the village but the sheer volume of it. This was, of course, during the period of roadworks in Docking causing diversions, but still there are many of us in the village, going back only a few years, who remember when this would have been a daily norm and not a 10-minute window. See also page 9 for some consequences.

## St Mary's 100 Club Draw

**OCTOBER RESULTS:** 1st prize no **68**; 2nd prize no. **60** (1st prize wins £25; 2nd prize £10).

Thank you to all who support the Club Draw. For further details on entering the draw, please email me on [slilliweb10@gmail.com](mailto:slilliweb10@gmail.com) and I will send you an application form.

Sally

## Bircham Banter

Next Banter session is on Thursday November 6 from 2.30 to 4pm in St Mary's Church. Do come along and join with the regulars for chat, tea/coffee and cake, especially if you are new to the village. You'll be made very welcome!!

Pauline



**VILLAGE SCREEN CINEMA**  
at Amy Robsart Village Hall, Syderstone  
Saturday October 25/November 22 at 7.30pm



### **Black Bag (15).**

National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) agent George Woodhouse faces a challenging assignment. There's a mole in the agency with plans to activate a destructive cyber worm called Severus. George is tasked with identifying the mole. His list of five suspects includes four of his agency friends and colleagues at the NCSC, with the fifth being his beloved wife Kathryn St. Jean. Should he be loyal to his marriage or to his country?  
Starring Michael Fassbender and Cate Blanchett.

### **The Penguin Lessons (12A).**

Disillusioned teacher Tom Michell gets a job teaching English and rugby in a school for rich kids in Buenos Aires. It's 1976 and Argentina is controlled by a military dictatorship, but Tom is more interested in spending time on the beach than in either his pupils or the political situation. During a weekend trip to Uruguay he rescues an orphaned penguin and smuggles it back into the school, little suspecting that this is the beginning of a personal and political awakening. Starring Steve Coogan (and some penguins).

Doors open 7pm; Price £4 – pay on the door; hearing loop and ice creams available  
Bookings can be made by email [syderstonecinema\\_arvh@outlook.com](mailto:syderstonecinema_arvh@outlook.com) or call 01485 578244.

On behalf of the Syderstone Cinema Team



### **MOBILE POST OFFICE**

Scheduled stop at Bircham Social Club, Church Lane is as follows.

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| Monday   | 10:45-11:30 |
| Tuesday  | 10:45-11:30 |
| Thursday | 10:45-11:30 |
| Friday   | 12:10-12:55 |

### **MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE**

Fridays November 7/December 5  
Stops at:

|               |             |
|---------------|-------------|
| Monks Close   | 15:15-15:35 |
| Village Shop  | 15:45-16:00 |
| Social Club   | 16:05-16:15 |
| Windmill Hill | 16:20-16:35 |

### **RECYCLING CENTRE**

For pre-booking your visit at **any** Norfolk centre:  
<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/62632/Norfolk-Recycling-Centre-bookings>  
Or phone 0344 800 8020

### **BUS 33/33A**

To Hunstanton (from King's Head): Mon-Fri  
07:36 10:36 13:36 17:16; Sat 8:21 10:36  
13:36 15:41

Return from Stand A Bus Station

To Lynn (from Bircham Stores): Mon-Fri  
07:17 09:23 12:23 15:38 15:43; Sat 09:23  
12:23 15:38 17:08

Return from Stand E Bus Station

### **GREAT MASSINGHAM AREA COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME**

Offering a reliable door-to-door car service,  
7 days a week for anyone without personal  
transport. Book on 01485 520823  
Please give at least 2 days' notice

## *Bircham Weather*

The average maximum temperature in September was 19.1°C, close to the long-term norm, whilst the rainfall totalled 42mm, around 75% of the average. This continued the trend established throughout this year with July remaining the only month to exceed the expected amount of rain.

Westerly winds dominated the opening days of the month, bringing a mix of sunshine and 6.3mm of rain although temperatures remained on the warm side, exceeding 20°C daily until the 10th.

From the 5th to the 9th, high pressure became re-established, resulting in plenty of sunshine and completely dry conditions. This was the longest dry spell of the month, which also produced the highest temperature when 26.5°C was recorded on the 7th, although it was a relatively short spell compared to those of previous months as the rainfall was more evenly distributed throughout September.

Fresh westerlies returned by the 10th, ushering in a showery period and accompanied by gale force gusts on the 15th, this being followed by the wettest day on the 17th when 12.4mm was recorded. Conditions improved again by the 18th though and the following day saw a return to sunny conditions with a maximum temperature of 24.3°C before a shift to north-westerly winds on the 21st led to cooler weather with a maximum of just 13.7°C.

Although values recovered slightly thereafter, they remained below 20°C for the rest of the month, influenced by a persistent north-easterly flow from the 22nd to the 25th, this also being responsible for an overnight minimum of just 4.5°C on the 23rd.

The final days of September were characterised by misty mornings followed by sunny days but by then it was evident that our star had begun its seemingly gradual descent toward the horizon for another season.

Bryan



## Curl Up With a Good Book

**Long Island** (2024) by Colm Tóibín

*Long Island* by the Irish writer Colm Tóibín is a sequel to his earlier work, *Brooklyn* – although it can certainly be enjoyed without reading the latter. It tells the story of Eilis Lacey, who left Ireland and set up a new life in New York. She is now married to Tony, who has a close, almost smothering Italian family in very close proximity. They have two children who have never visited Ireland and so are essentially growing up as second generation Italian-Americans.

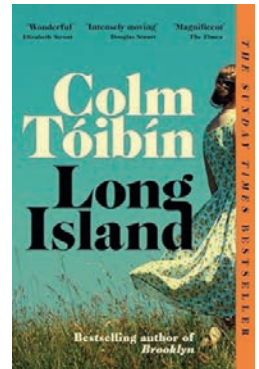
In the opening passage of time a dramatic event takes place that inevitably sets the whole tone of the novel and its moral dilemma runs throughout.

Colm Tóibín is a fine writer who excels in the slow unfolding of complex inner lives. He deals with the sense of displacement felt by emigration and starting a new life. The regrets, the conflicts, the divided loyalties, the obligations and above all the maintenance of self respect. These are dealt with with subtle strength and the reader is gently swept into the world and dilemma that the main characters are having to deal with.

The atmosphere he creates is exacerbated by the slow pace of change in mid-century Ireland, the tension is created, often by periods of heavy silence, glances rather than arguments. Without giving too much away the underlying theme of the book is the tension created between duty and desire. The forever question of what could have been.

As with his previous novels he deals with the mess of real life and its many complexities. Tóibín is a gentle slow-paced writer who will not appeal to those that enjoy a more fast action thriller, but he offers a more realistic and compelling view of human nature where small decisions have long-term consequences.

Terry



## Health News

It's that time of the year again when – if of a certain age – we get to proffer up our upper arm in anticipation (or not) of a friendly free jab from a GP or other medical clinician.

Flu jab: Over 65s or in a high-risk group

Covid jab: Available to over 75s and anyone else who is immunocompromised

For those eligible, flu and covid vaccinations can be given together.

Call Bayfield Surgery on 01485 521135 to arrange an appointment or use the NHS Account App or access via the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/account/>

## Bircham Tofts Slaughter

It's very sad to see the increased traffic volumes and speed laying waste to Bircham Tofts' wildfowl population. It seems every time we wander down there, there's another corpse in the road – another traffic casualty. Even more distressing was a reader's report of witnessing a severely injured, yet alive, goose minus a leg and half a wing stumbling around after being hit, presumably, by a vehicle.

Maybe we need some wildfowl warning signs on the road each side of the pond. Although, given the average driver's adherence to warning signs, it's doubtful it would make a scrap of difference. Perhaps a beware-of-rhinos sign might make them pay more attention!





## *Bircham Bowls in 2025*

The fourth year of Bircham Bowls Club came to an end in mid-September with the Divisional play-offs and the Knockout Trophy final being contested at Houghton Hall bowling green.

The club has gone from strength to strength this year with 20 playing members and as many social members. On finals day Lee Pattinson, winner of Ash Division, played the (until then) unbeaten Bryan Shaw, who had won the Oak Division. The result was a win for Lee, who retained his title from 2024. Lee also won the Knockout Trophy, edging out Hugh Porter. Congratulations to Lee on doing the "Double" and well done to Hugh, who was participating in only his second season of bowling.

The 3rd/4th place play-off between Gloria Daniels, second in Ash, and Chris Weldon, second in Oak, saw Gloria build up an early lead before Chris chipped away to win a closely fought match.

Congratulations to all members who fulfilled between them 83 League, plus 15 Knockout fixtures. We look forward to an equally enjoyable 2026.

Chris Weldon

## *Hunstanton Soap-Box Derby*

An estimated 8,000 spectators and 51 teams attended the annual Hunstanton Soap-Box Derby on September 21 and watched and cheered as a thrilling variety of "vehicles" descended the town's hay-bale-lined streets. With scratch vehicles named the Flying Fire Extinguisher, Hethersett Humdingers, Rusty Nutz, General Lee, the Bed Rockers and Storm Force RNLI.

King's Lynn Round Table 54 won the adults' 16-49 category while the Birkin's Boys, a Veteran team led and piloted by Charles le Strange Meakin won their category in a sleek silver racing machine.

The Concours d'Elegance award for the best turned out machine went to GipseY Bridge Old Boys.

## *Formula 1*

Local boy George Russell won his second GP of the season in Singapore at the beginning of October. Can he take the title and will McLaren team-mates Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris take each other out? It's a very long shot of course but we're all up for a local good news story.

## *National Hunt Racing Returns*

The National Hunt racing season begins for Fakenham Racecourse on Friday October 17. Under 17s go free and there will be a parade of ex-racehorses around midday to encourage you to get through the doors nice and early.

The last two events for 2025 take place on Wednesday October 29 – Greene King Raceday (alongside Greene King Beer Festival) – and the Sky Bet Christmas Raceday held on Sunday December 21.