



THE BEACON

Beck Row, Holywell Row and Kenny Hill



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February – March 2026

Hello Readers

How is it the end of January already? Christmas and New Year seem so far away...

Have any readers any celebrations or big events they wish to advertise this coming year. Last year we had the VE and VJ celebrations – which were of course nationwide.

Inside this issue are some photos and a report of the event that were taken when Santa was on his trip around the village, more people than ever came out to support this event.

Also advertised this time is the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Easter falls really quite early this year. Good Friday is 3rd April so to make sure no-one misses the Easter Egg Hunt the poster is in this issue.

Thank you to the volunteer who has come forward to deliver the Beacon to the 'Birds' estate, however if you are interested in becoming a deliverer, for any area within the village, please contact **Kay Sallis on 07484 107694.**

I think that just leaves me to say a massive thank you to all involved with the putting the Beacon together and delivering in all weathers.

Sue French

What's Going On Locally...

St John's Church

Sunday Services 9.30am

1st Sunday – Encounter Service (in hall) and follows on at 11am with Messy Church (for families)

2nd Sunday – Service of the Word

3rd Sunday – Lightwave Breakfast Church (in hall)

4th Sunday – Holy Communion



Community Events (by donation)

1st Tuesday – Lunch 12 noon
(book with Kathy 07963 958017)

2nd Tuesday – Soup and Chickenfoot 12 noon

3rd Tuesday – Coffee Morning 10am

4th Tuesday – Soup and Bingo 12 noon

Temp contact details - The best church contact is the Rural Dean, Revd Canon Chris Childs on 01638 429212 or revcchilds@aol.com

BECK ROW LADIES CLUB

2pm – 4pm

2nd Monday of each month
St John's Church Hall, Beck Row

The Methodist Church



Sunday Services

Beck Row Methodist Church 11am

Holywell Row Methodist Church 6.30pm

Rev. David McAloon - 01842 753819

The Mildenhall Scale Model Club

now meets in St. John's Church Hall

7pm - 10pm

every 1st and 3rd

Wednesday

Gary Wenko • T: 01638 714543

THURSDAY CLUB

2pm – 4pm

3rd Thursday of the month
(over 50s)

at Beck Row Methodist Church

For further details please
contact Maggie Walker
on 01638 715447



St J's
Stay and Play

FREE

Every Wednesday
9.15am to 11.30am

at St. John's Church Hall

All children aged 0-5 and their
parents/carers welcome



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Wishing you all a very Happy New Year from all at St John's. Our services are every Sunday at 9.30am, and follow a pattern of:



1st Sunday – Lightwave 'Encounter' Service led by Angie Finn (in hall)

2nd Sunday – Service of the Word led by a member of the Brecks Group clergy

3rd Sunday – Breakfast Church led by Angie Finn (in hall)

4th Sunday – Holy Communion led by a member of the Brecks Group clergy

Everyone is most welcome to join us, and for refreshments in the hall afterwards.

We are still minus a vicar, but having different members of the Breck Group take the services alongside our own Dan Mullin, is refreshing, as everyone has a different style of preaching and thoughts. So whilst it would be lovely to see a new permanent face at St John's, this interregnum is proving very interesting.

Warm Rooms continues every Tuesday. We had a record number enjoy our Christmas Lunch, and we look forward to seeing you for food, companionship, laughter and a few games of Chickenfoot and Bingo, depending on the week! Contact Kathy for more information on 07963 958017.

St J's Stay and Play recommenced after the Christmas break and runs from 9am – 11.30am every Wednesday morning. It is free to come, refreshments provided, all are welcome from birth onwards.

Coffee Connections for parents and carers, runs alternate Friday mornings, term time only, 9am – 11am. A chance for those looking after little ones to enjoy adult company, learn new skills, take part in discussions etc, knowing that the children are playing with Angie. Contact Angie for more information on 07501 748253.



SATURDAY AFTERNOON BINGO

at

ST JOHN'S CHURCH HALL, BECK ROW

2pm

£5 per book to play, refreshments and raffle

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2026

7th February, 7th March, 11th April



Beck Row Methodist Church

Thursdays

5.30pm & 7pm

with Terri

07725 761922

Fridays

7am & 9am

with Caroline

07516 668517

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In midwinter it seems a good idea to shine a spotlight on three birds that visit us just for the colder months. Two of them are thrush species - closely related to our more familiar Blackbirds and Song thrushes that we see in our parks and gardens - and these are the Redwing and Fieldfare.

The third - the Waxwing - is scarcer, much less reliable (most winters there aren't many around) and they have a curious affinity for urban places, rather than our countryside.

You might encounter Redwing and Fieldfare first in October, and it's usually Redwing that get here first - they migrate here from Scandinavia and eastern Europe to escape harsh weather. Being smaller than the Fieldfare, they are not quite so robust and seem to need to escape rough weather sooner than their more substantial cousins, who might find it easier to stick it out for longer due to their larger size. A week or two later sees the first Fieldfare arrive, and the best way to detect them is to listen out as they fly overhead. Redwings have a high-pitched 'seep' call which they repeat, and when they first arrive you are quite likely to hear them overnight as they migrate around the clock and Redwings never seem to stop calling. They get their name for the rusty-red patch under their wings - if birds had armpits this is where you could describe it as being - but when they are perched with their wings folded you can often still see a bit of this red patch.

Fieldfare are darker and more serious looking birds - their heavy black eyestripe on a stone-grey head and harsh chattering call makes them seem a bit stern. If you disturb them, they sound like they are telling you off! Like Redwings they are sociable, and it is common to see them guzzling berries in groups on hedgerow bushes, especially Hawthorn. They will also come to gardens to feed on windfall apples and pears where they are often joined by other thrushes such as Blackbirds. Both species are big fans of earthworms, so you may see them in fields and meadows that have not been treated too heavily with pesticides.

Although Redwing and Fieldfare are quite common to see in winter, Waxwings are not - though we do get 'influx' years where particularly cold conditions on the continent cause mass immigrations into the UK, and then nature lovers are in for a real treat! Unlike the thrushes discussed earlier than are most often found in rural settings, Waxwings love berries of any kind and are quite confident around people. As a result, many groups of them are found in good years in places like supermarket car parks, industrial estates and urban gardens - so long as there are plenty of berries for them to gorge themselves on. They are a stunning bird - with a ground colour of warm peachy-brown with a black facial mask, white eyebrows and striking red, yellow and black wingtips. In fact, the red patch is what gives them their name - as it looks like old-fashioned red wax used to seal letters. If the berry supply is good, a group can spend weeks in one spot before having to move on to find more fruit to gorge on!



Waxwing
(Photo: Pat Rolph)

In the remaining weeks of winter, do keep an eye out for these winter visitors while they are still here. Redwing and Fieldfare are a common sight at RSPB Lakenheath Fen, especially on the wooded Brandon Fen trail (they are often rummaging through the leaf litter under the trees). But if you pop into your nearest town or supermarket car park, do keep an eye out for the jazzy Waxwings too, which really do look far too exotic for our British climate!

With best wishes for a safe and peaceful winter.

By Heidi Jones - Visitor Experience Officer,
RSPB Lakenheath Fen,
Station Road, Lakenheath, Suffolk IP27 9AD

rspb.org.uk



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Blueberry and Lemon Cakes

Ingredients

- 100g/4oz butter softened
- 100g/4oz golden castor
- 2 large eggs beaten
- zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 140g/5oz S R flour
- 50g/2oz blueberries



Topping

- 250ml/9 fl oz soured cream
- 25g/1oz icing sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



Method

1. Lightly grease with butter a 12 hole muffin tin or more smaller size ones.
2. Cut 2 strips of baking parchment per hole about 1.5 cm wide and about 20cm long, and cut each strip in half.
3. Put in a cross in each hole. I found this necessary - see photo. They need to be about 1cm above each hole.
4. Heat oven to 180°C/160°C fan.
5. Beat sugar and butter until pale.
6. Beat in eggs a little at a time and mix, half the lemon juice and all the zest.
7. Add half the flour, stir and then the rest of the lemon juice and the flour.
8. Spoon 1 heaped tbsp in a muffin tin and heaped tsp in the smaller hole if using, smooth surface and add a couple of blueberries on each.
9. Bake for 10 minutes.

Topping

1. Whisk the cream, icing sugar egg and vanilla until smooth.
2. Take cakes out - should be pale and just firm and gently press down to flatten the top.
3. Spoon the topping over each cake nearly to the top and add more blueberries.
4. Cook for 5-7 minutes until topping just set with a bit of a wobble.
5. Cool in the tin, then ease away from the sides and lift out using the baking paper handles.

Really worth the effort!



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**Mildenhall Museum -
Information**

**The Museum is closed until
3rd March 2026**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Thursday 5th February
AGM - 2pm**

followed by a talk by
Kevin Boardman entitled -
The Kitchen

Thursday 5th March - 7.30pm
a talk by Roger Pugh - entitled -
*Uncle Sam's Roots in
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Snowy Smiles and Festive Cheer at Beck Row Primary School



The recent snowfall brought great excitement to Beck Row Primary School, where pupils made the most of the winter weather with laughter, learning and plenty of fun outdoors. Wrapped up warmly, the children enjoyed playing in the snow, building snow creations and sharing special moments with friends – a joyful sight for staff and families alike.

We are also delighted to share that our building works have now been successfully completed. Our new SEN nurture area, Reception space and Gardening area are ready for use and already making a positive difference to our school community. These improved facilities will support our pupils' learning, wellbeing and development for many years to come.



The school would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the kind people of Beck Row who generously donated wellies and Christmas decorations. Thanks to your support, our children were able to enjoy the snowy weather comfortably and our school was beautifully decorated for the festive season. We can confidently say we were the most festive school around!

Beck Row Primary School is incredibly grateful for the continued support of our local community. Your kindness helps us create happy memories and enriching experiences for our children, whatever the season.

Charley Minter, Principal

e: Charley.Minter@atrust.org.uk

w: <http://www.academytransformationtrust.co.uk>



News from Beck Row Methodist Church



We have two dates for events at the church:
Coffee Morning Saturday 7th February and Saturday 4th April.

We hope to see you there for cakes and coffee and stalls for your entertainment. It is always fun to join the people from all around the area.

A Local Family Business – Still Independent After 30 Years

People of the Parish! Brad here from Beatrice Carter. The Beacon has kindly given me the space this month to say a bit more about who we are and how we operate as a family-run estate agency.

Beatrice Carter Property has been operating in Mildenhall for over 30 years. We're still a family business, still independent, and still run locally.

We're not a franchise and we're not owned by a corporate group. There's no head office, no outside investors, and no pressure to hit targets that don't make sense for the people we work with.

That independence shapes how we operate day to day. We don't charge additional fees on maintenance jobs and we don't take commission from contractors. If something needs fixing, it gets dealt with properly and transparently.

Our values are straightforward: treat people properly, give honest advice, and make balanced decisions. Sometimes that means having conversations people don't necessarily want to hear, but we'd rather be straight than say what sounds good in the moment.

Our vision is simple - to remain an independent, family-run estate agent, focused on long-term relationships rather than quick wins, and to continue serving Mildenhall and the surrounding villages the right way.

It's a simple approach, but it's worked for 30 years and we see no reason to change it now.

Kind regards, Brad Jaggard - M: 07821 091391 T: 01638 712383



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We are sure you will not be surprised that we can report so little on recent matches as they have, like a lot of clubs in the area, been cancelled because of bad weather. We hope conditions will improve and quickly as the league timetables are quite full.

We noticed that one gentleman on the local Beck Row Community Page was asking about young players at Beck Row. Just as a reminder Lakenheath FC young players use our pitch on a Saturday morning and we already have some Beck Row players joining them so if you wish to come along you are very welcome and the contact details are below.

We also need to report that one of the stalwarts of the club, Josie Rose the wife of our chairman Graham is, as I write, in West Suffolk hospital quite ill. We all wish her a speedy recovery and hope she will be back at home soon and restored to good health. Everyone enjoys her refreshments she had provided over many years.

Contact details are as follows:

Chairman: Graham Rose 01638 714968

Youth Coach: Richard Horrex richardhorrex@gmail.com, 07540 201223

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES CLUB

We have received some funding from the Parish Council and Suffolk Council to enable us to continue running the Holiday Club every Monday morning in the school holidays at St John's Church Hall.

The activities are led by Angie Finn from Lightwave, who you might know from her work in the school, at St J's Stay and Play and Coffee Connections.

The sessions run from 9.30am to 11.30am, and comprise games, craft, activities, music etc, and include Brunch which is served at approximately 11am. There is no charge, but booking is advisable directly to Angie at angie.finn@lightwave.community

Future dates will be:
**Mondays 16th February 2026,
30th March 2026, 25th May 2026.**



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SARS – Suffolk's Emergency Medical Charity: Local Heroes and Lasting Impact

By Emma Murrow, Parish Resident

Hello, everyone! My name is Emma Murrow and I'm writing as a proud member of our parish and wife of Steve Murrow. Many of you will know Steve and our good friend Josh Davis, both parish residents, for their bright red outfits, blue lights, sirens and dashing around the area at all hours. I wanted to share a little about their work with SARS and to thank our wonderful community for its ongoing support.

About SARS: Saving Lives in Suffolk

Suffolk Accident Rescue Service, or SARS, is a charity that's been making a difference in our county since 1972. Their mission is to provide expert voluntary medical care at the scenes of serious medical emergencies and accidents when every second counts. SARS volunteers are specially trained doctors and paramedics who respond to incidents across Suffolk, often alongside the ambulance service, bringing life-saving skills and equipment directly to those in need. The charity relies entirely on donations, and every penny goes towards keeping this vital service running in our community.

Local Responders: Steve and Josh's Commitment

Steve and Josh are both part of the SARS team. What makes their roles so special is that they respond as volunteers from home, whenever they're available. Whether we're sitting down to a Sunday roast or settling in for a quiet evening, they're always prepared to grab their kit and head out the door if someone nearby needs urgent help.

Their calmness under pressure and quick thinking have made a real difference in emergencies right here in our parish. It's not unusual for either of them to be called out at unsociable hours or to return home exhausted but quietly satisfied they've helped someone in crisis.

Family Life: The Highs and Lows of Volunteering

From a family perspective, watching Steve rush off to an emergency can be a mix of nerves and pride. There are times when dinner is left to go cold, or plans are put on hold. Our children have grown up understanding that Dad's job as a volunteer can't always wait. It's not always easy, but knowing Steve is doing his best to save lives – sometimes even those of people we know – makes every sacrifice worthwhile. Our family has learnt to cherish the moments together and to support Steve (and Josh's family) so they can do what they do best: help others.



Heartfelt Thanks to Our Community

I want to extend a special thank you to everyone in our parish. Your encouragement, kindness, and understanding – especially to those who have been affected by emergencies – mean the world to us. You remind Steve, Josh, and all the SARS team why their work is so important. Every "thank you", every prepaid Costa and every word of support give them a real boost on tough days.

There has been so much support over the years that it's difficult to mention everyone, but I wanted to send a special thanks to my Mum, Sandra and our dear friends Jan, Heather, Sally and Carol for all their hard work with the Parish Café. Their afternoon teas and hot lunches help a number of different charities over a year, but SARS is lucky enough to receive regular donations from their hard work and the communities support of them. THANK YOU!

Defibrillator Initiative: A Lifesaving Legacy

We are especially grateful to our Parish Council and all who have donated to provide five public access defibrillators around the parish. These devices can make the difference between life and death in sudden cardiac emergencies. Knowing that our community is equipped and ready to help – even before SARS or the ambulance service arrives – is a testament to the care and generosity of our neighbours. Thank you for making this possible, and for looking out for one another.

Let's Keep Going, Together

SARS can only continue with the support of communities like ours. If you'd like to learn more, lend a hand, or donate, please visit www.sars999.org.uk. On behalf of Steve, Josh and our families, thank you for being the heartbeat of our village – and for giving our volunteers the chance to do what they do best. Together, we're all helping save lives in Suffolk.



Holywell Row Village Hall – Bingo Sessions 2026

Bingo sessions are going to be held on the 4th Friday of each month in the Village Hall.

2026 dates - 27th February, 27th March and 24th April.

Bingo starts at 7.30pm:
10 games for £5. There is a prize for 1 line and a prize for a full house in each game.

*The Hall is available to hire at reasonable rates.
Please contact Pauline on 07714 063190.*



Gardening Tips

During January and February not much happens and with our unexpected cold snap consideration needs to be placed on trees and shrubs that could be planted as soon as the ground is not frozen or waterlogged. Bare root plants can be considered in this regard. This means shrubs and trees dug up from a nursery field while dormant that will arrive with no soil on the roots, hence the name. The advantage, they are much cheaper than plants grown in pots. Roses are a good example. Plant them as soon as they arrive and at the same level as they were growing in the nursery field, which will be indicated by the darker soil mark on the stem. Compost is not essential but give them a good heel in.



Hawthorn



Holly berries



Yew Berries



Field Maple

You could plant a small wildlife hedge with bare root plants, native deciduous plants are best such as field maple, hawthorn, wild roses (Rosa Carina), or evergreens for berries in winter such as yew and holly. By getting these plants cheaper you feel you are doing something worthwhile in the most dormant months of the year. spring splashes of colour.



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Beck Row Sleigh

We say it most years, but this time everyone agrees that the latest Beck Row Sleigh annual tour really was the best yet! It was certainly the best weather we've had for the event to date as, despite the forecast, it remained dry and surprisingly mild throughout.

Father Christmas, his elves and the rest of the team travelling in the open sleigh without the luxury of a heated cab were still quite chilly by the end of the night, but it's worth it to be part of such a magical outing.

This year the procession was bigger and brighter than ever, with the sleigh boasting several thousand extra lights and a brand-new red nose for Rudolph as well as being joined by seven other well lit and decorated vehicles. The extra sparkle gave everyone plenty to cheer and wave at while we navigated turning the sleigh and the rest of the procession round in some quite tight spots around the village.



The crowds were out in force too, with significantly more people outside lining the streets and enthusiastically waving us round than in previous years. In some spots, huge groups gathered to welcome the convoy. One road had us momentarily worried as we drove along with hardly anyone in sight, only to turn the corner and discover a street party in progress with people wandering around with food and glasses of wine! It's great to see this event bringing people together with real community spirit. The real magic, though, was in the children's reactions. Hundreds of little ones

beamed and waved frantically as the procession passed with many literally jumping for joy the moment they spotted Father Christmas or got caught in a shower of festive snow. Several also approached the sleigh to thrust a carefully written letter into Santa's hand and we hope that all of those children received the gifts they wished for! Such excited reactions are what makes all the work that goes into planning this event worthwhile.

A massive, heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who helped make it such a resounding success: the team on the sleigh and those who brought along their decorated vehicles, those who lent equipment, helped with the build, provided tech support and updated social media, and of course all of the villagers who came out to jump, wave, smile and cheer us on.

Plans are already underway for this year's event, which will mark our 10th year.

Father Christmas has already pencilled in the date in his busy schedule for this milestone event, and we're determined to make it extra special! Someone joked about lighting up their dog and joining the procession... and now we're seriously thinking about making it happen. Make sure you're following the Beck Row Sleigh Facebook page to see details of this year's event.

Here's to many more years of festive magic in our village.

Beck Row Sleigh Team



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G.PP@hotmail.co.uk



One bird that has turned up during the particularly cold period we have just had is the snipe. I remember seeing one on the ice of the dolvers at Holywell Row and thinking what an unusual bird with its long bill and small body. Well now there is at least one there on the dolvers again.

Snipe are resident to the UK but during winter cold spells numbers are inflated by continental immigrants.

Snipe take to the air with a characteristic squelching call. After this warning call, snipe panicking, fly zigzag, towering up and disappearing high into the distance only to resettle within eyesight not far from where they began.

The most interesting attribute of the snipe is a vigorous 'sewing machine' probing action which enables distant recognition simply by the rhythm of its head movements.



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Places for all events need to be booked online - please visit
<https://bit.ly/LakenheathFenEvents> to read more and book tickets.

Moth Mornings

27 February, 27 March, 24 April, 29 May (10am-11am)

Learn more about the amazing world of moths - join us to admire what we catch in our harmless trap.

RSPB members £5 (£2.50 for Under 18s);
non-RSPB members £6 (£3 for Under 18s).

Bittern Walks

Saturday 25 April, Sunday 17 May (9:30am-12:30pm)

In 1995 the reserve was created to provide a home for beautiful but threatened Bitterns. Their booming calls are thankfully now a common sound in Spring - and on these walks we will be looking for them during peak season.

RSPB members £12 (£6 for Under 18s);
non-RSPB members £15 (£7.50 for Under 18s).

Dawn Chorus Guided Walk

Sunday 3 May (5-8am)

A bright and early start should be rewarded with a wide variety of birdsong from our resident and summer visitors - we should hear a range of common species as well as scarcer birds joining in such as Bittern and Cuckoo, typical of the habitat here. Come along to learn a little or just appreciate this natural wonder. Coffee included afterwards!

RSPB members £15 (£7.50 for Under 18s);
non-RSPB members £18 (£9 for Under 18s).

Hobby Walks

Saturday 9 May, Sunday 24 May (1-4pm)

From May onwards, we are graced with the presence of these elegant raptors for the summer, and when they first arrive there can be dozens here at once. Come along to one of the UK's best reserves for spotting them, with a knowledgeable guide on hand.

RSPB members £12 (£6 for Under 18s);
non-RSPB members £15 (£7.50 for Under 18s).

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 Diane Higson



FARMING DIARY

It has seemed a very hard end of 2025 to the start of 2026. Bird flu is still in the area and only two days ago I learned of a new case in ducks at Mundford only 20 miles away over the border in Norfolk. So far, our vigilance, perseverance, hard work and plain good luck have managed to keep it away from this farm and we pray that this continues! As I wrote last time the birds are not allowed out under a nationwide housing order and this makes work much harder with all the bio security measures we have to adhere to and repetitively carry out as well as the birds being under our feet all the time. They get bored and it is vital we give them things to pick at otherwise they will start to pick on each other. I am currently throwing in vegetable peelings, vegetable leaves and other unwanted food scraps that I pick up from the kitchens where I deliver eggs, and this seems to work quite well.

It has been oh so cold. Our water has frozen up on the farm a few times and although we have many large plastic pods we fill up and put in which is an effective way of keeping the birds hydrated, carrying water about in freezing conditions is still an exhausting and time-consuming task. As well as being on the farm I have a market stall located outside Marks and Spencer in Bury St Edmunds. I know I'm getting on a bit, and my blood is getting a bit thin now but my God it is cold there at 6.45am. There seems to be a wind tunnel in between McDonalds and Abbeygate Street, and I am right in the middle of it. It is acknowledged that this is the coldest spot in Western Europe on many occasions with only a couple of spots in Siberia being more unpleasant. On a brighter note, heated socks for Christmas and my son in law concocting a way of hooking an electric fan heater on to the council's electricity supply have made things a lot more pleasant recently.

These last few weeks has seen me lose a couple of dear friends and with the terrible news that another one is about to lose a year long battle with cancer the long bright days of February can't come quick enough.

December and January haven't all been a dark dismal cold slog though as there have been some real highlights as well. My granddaughter Grace started Great Heath school last September in Mildenhall. With a birthday at the end of August she is the youngest pupil in the school, but when appearing in the school nativity play she was not unnerved at all. I think she has been spending too much time with Grandad because although being physically the smallest her voice was about 10 decibels louder than anyone else as she belted out Wiggling Nativity. It made my Christmas. As I talk to other people on my stall and other places about their Christmas arrangements, I realise that I am truly blessed to live next door to my grandchildren and we all had a lovely Christmas

together with the added advantage I can slink home for a little sleep when I need one without really being missed.

I have managed to take a bit of time off during the holiday period. Whilst a good lot of this time has been spent at various play parks etc., I have been able to do some things for me. I've been to a couple of gigs at Bury and Cambridge featuring The Sweet and the punk poet John Ottaway. These were blasts from the 1970s, and like me they have not aged all that well, but it was great to relive the music and humour of my youth.

I've been to a bit of football, and my team is now very close to the top two in the Championship and although the standard is very poor this year, I am optimistic of a quick return to the Premiership.

Myself and the same three friends that have gone for the past 25 years have also been to the LAMMA show which is this country's premier farming equipment show and located for 2 days in mid-January at the N.E.C. in Birmingham. As always we enjoyed a sumptuous lunch, numerous coffee breaks and a lot of chatting about all things not necessarily farming or farm machinery related. We all enjoyed the day out a great deal, much more than in previous years for



some reason but can't put our finger on it. I enclose a photo of the biggest machine there - a 600 horse power Case tractor available for about half a million pounds, some hand tools which I probably need and should have spent more time looking at and the hat which was in fact my only purchase. Very stylish I hope you will agree.



I look forward to a lighter, warmer February when geese and ducks start laying and young chickens reach their laying peak.



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News from the Parish Council

Beck Row, Holywell Row & Kenny Hill

February 2026 - March 2026 edition

Email: clerk@beckrowparish.gov.uk

Website: beckrowparish.gov.uk

Summary of December 2025 meeting –

The Parish budget for 2026/27 was approved at the meeting. After consideration of expenditure and income a Precept application of £62,750 was submitted in January and will be received in April 2026.

Discussion took place regarding the future necessity of extending the burial area at St John's Church. This is something that needs looking at in preparation for the future, perhaps a 10-to-20-year plan. It may not be possible for an extension to St John's Churchyard, factors such as whether West Suffolk Council would even grant further expansion on to Aspal Close. The Parish Council, as a burial authority, has the power to provide and maintain burial grounds and Cemeteries within its jurisdiction (Local Government Act 1972) so may wish to consider a Cemetery as an option as a multi-denomination burial ground. Council Members agreed it was important to have this initial discussion.

Summary of January 2026 meeting –

Following requests and queries over the provision of local grit bins, it was discussed as an agenda item. The intention of the bins is as a self-help option for Parish Councils, not for individual use. Suffolk County Council asks the Parish Council to ensure that the contents are used to make roads safer and onus is on the Parish Council to monitor how and where the grit is used. This involves manpower that the Parish Council does not have.

There remains a concern over potential legal liability and the bins have proven

unpopular with other Parish Councils with reports of theft of the grit shortly after delivery meaning the contents are not then used as intended and could be used incorrectly, potentially causing accidents. The bins therefore remain an unpopular option for the Parish Council who don't have the resources or sufficient volunteers to police the bins to maintain compliance and liability cover. Grit can be purchased for individuals to use at local hardware stores should they wish to grit their own driveways or paths.

The Parish Council would like to thank Emma and Sandra for the winter plants and decoration to the planters by the village sign! Offering their time to source the plants and bed them in – Community spirit at its finest, thank you.



There remains the need for Speedwatch volunteers to come forward before the scheme can get underway. If you are willing to offer a small amount of your time to address the issue of speeding in your Parish then please contact the Clerk for an application form.

Minutes of the meetings can be found at beckrowparish.gov.uk

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Happy New Year

Lizzie unlocked the front door and gazed around the hallway. Her voiced echoed around the empty bungalow as she said in a shaky and emotional utterance, 'It's happened, I'm at last in my new home. I wonder what you would have thought of it, Harold?'

'My name's not Harold, love, I'm Tony, but I think it's lovely', the leader of the removals company laughed as he wandered past her with a clipboard in his hand. 'We'll soon have you moved in and settled.' His team had already started to open up the side of their large removals van to bring in her furniture and the boxes which she had so carefully packed and marked with room numbers. She hoped the contents would be much easier to unpack than the time she had spent carefully arranging her precious items into the large cartons.

It seemed to have taken so long since deciding to move, to sell and to find a suitable place. She felt happy and, to a great extent, relieved when the doorbell chimed rang. There were two people, standing in the doorway, 'Hallo,' one of them muttered, 'we're from next door.'

Lizzie's immediate reaction was to shake their hands because she was so pleased that they'd taken the trouble to welcome their new neighbour.

'Oh, how nice, my name's Lizzie and I'm delighted to meet you and what are your names?'

They ignored her outstretched hand, 'We haven't come here for introductions, we keep ourselves to ourselves. How long is that large wagon going to block the views from our front windows?'

Lizzie was dumbstruck and the ensuing silence almost crackled with intensity. Luckily, Tony was nearby, helping to move the large sofa into the lounge and replied, 'We'll have it moved as soon as we've unpacked it, mate.'

Lizzie felt numb with the shock of such an unusual and unfriendly start to her new life in a village which she had believed to be pleasant and welcoming. She watched the miserable couple march into their front door. 'You can't pick your neighbours, love, but you have got a lovely home and I'm sure you'll find welcoming people not far away.' Tony's comforting words for Lizzie were thoughtful but the tears still trickled down her cheeks.

As the weeks went by, Lizzie felt more settled

as she made the bungalow more of a home. She'd joined the local WI and had started 'French Conversation' with a lovely group from U3A. However, her neighbours still felt hostile and would glare at her as she walked out to the village shops. From odd bits of overheard gossip, she discovered that the neighbours were frosty to everybody which somehow made her feel a bit less isolated.

It had always been Lizzie's intention to help the environment by having solar panels fitted on her roof. She carefully picked a recommended company and when their rep assessed the job, he said he would need to erect scaffolding. 'Unfortunately, there's not enough room between your boundary and the property so you'll need to ask your neighbours to allow us onto their garden and for the scaffolding posts to rest on their property for seven to nine days. It's not usually an issue.' Lizzie thought that he didn't know her neighbours.

She managed to pluck up the courage and knocked on her neighbour's door. 'Yes, what do you want?' In a quavering voice she said, 'I'm having solar panels fitted on my roof and I wondered whether it would be possible for you to allow access for the workmen and their scaffolding on the edge of your garden? It would only be for a few days.'

The man exploded, 'You must have more money than sense. I can't imagine anybody gullible enough to have that sort of thing fitted on their roof. I tell you now, if anything is blown off your roof and damages our property, we'll take you to the cleaners. And the answer to your request is NO; there'll be no strange workmen on our property, most of them are foreign and can't be trusted.' The door slammed in Lizzie's bewildered face.

It was now coming up to Christmas and, as Lizzie was writing her cards, she suddenly thought of next door. She still had kind thoughts at this festive time so she wrote them a card, also wishing them the very best for the new year. She popped it into their door that evening when it was dark. When she got up the next morning there was a torn-up card on her doormat with a message on the ripped envelope, 'We don't do cards especially to strangers like you'. Lizzie wasn't surprised about the rejection but was disappointed by the vicious way they had rejected her call for friendship and neighbourliness.

A few days later, Lizzie went to the supermarket for her Christmas shop. She didn't have any family but Jenny, one of her new WI friends, had invited her round for a sherry and mince pie. Lizzie had also arranged for Jenny to come over for Boxing Day tea and had decided to buy a nice gammon joint to roast for sandwiches. She'd seen it advertised on TV. She was just coming out of the bakery department when she heard a kerfuffle nearby. The hysterical voice of a woman yelling. 'He's having another heart attack, oh, don't die, don't die Terry, help, help, help', echoed through the crowded store.

Lizzie rushed to the scene and took control of the situation. All of her lifetime NHS professional expertise sprang into action. She hadn't recognised the voice but soon realised that it was her male neighbour laying on the floor in the throes of a severe heart/respiratory problem. After ensuring that somebody had dialled 999 and, after clearing the area of unnecessary bystanders, she started CPR. She performed chest compressions alternating with rescue breaths in the correct ratios. Somebody brought a defibrillator which she used followed by further CPR until the ambulance crew eventually arrived and took over. Throughout this time, her female neighbour, open-mouthed at first, started repeating, 'Thanks, thanks, thank you so much.' Lizzie felt that her efforts had not been in vain but wasn't sure of her neighbour's future. Although exhausted, she continued her shopping whilst receiving praise from shoppers and staff.

Lizzie had a reasonable but quiet Christmas but all the time wondering about next door. She hadn't seen anybody entering or leaving the property. On New Year's Eve, her doorbell rang and standing at the door was her sheepish-looking neighbours with a large beribboned basket of goodies. 'Oh, thank God you survived that awful episode, I've been concerned.'

'We just don't know what to say except a big thank you and a heart-felt sorry,' the female neighbour genuinely uttered.

'Come in, come in,' Lizzie stood aside to let them through, 'make yourselves comfy in here and I'll put the kettle on.'

'We don't know what we would have done if you hadn't rushed over to help, I'm Vera and you saved Terry's life; the ambulance crew and the hospital doctors all said so. Terry's had stents and a new valve fitted in his heart and the future looks so good. You see,' Vera appeared as though she hadn't got time to pause for breath.

Lizzie interrupted, 'I'm so glad for you but let me make you some tea and we'll discuss it slow-time. How do you like it?'

Terry and Vera gradually explained that they'd been neighbours to a lady, named Isobel, they really liked and trusted and they had become bosom friends, to the extent that they 'baby-sat' Isobel's dog whilst she went on her frequent holidays abroad. They were never sure about where she went. The problems arose after Terry had retired and was looking for an investment plan for the nearly half a million pounds he had accrued in his pension plan. Without any consideration, they put all of that money into an investment plan which Isobel's overseas friend recommended.

At this point, Vera broke down, 'We were embezzled, yes, that's the word, embezzled. Isobel just disappeared whilst we were visiting my mother. Her place was empty when we returned and we then discovered that she was only renting her property with no forwarding address. We took our paperwork to the police and our solicitor said that we weren't the only ones who Isobel had befriended and fooled. Unfortunately, the paperwork was vague and there was no trace of her overseas financial expert. The police had passed details to Interpol in the vague hope that they'd find the fraudsters. You see, we've been on the breadline and have never been able to do what we'd planned for our retirement.' Lizzie comforted Vera as she wept uncontrollably. Through the tears, Vera explained why they never got close to neighbours again and treated them with contempt. 'We never felt we could trust anybody ever again,' Vera sobbed.

As the days went on, Lizzie, Vera and Terry began to feel far more comfortable in their neighbourhood as the friendships grew. To top it all, Vera and Terry were relieved and hopeful with the news that Isobel, or whatever her real name was, and her financial friend had been traced to Monaco and legal proceedings were in place. Lizzie raised a glass to them and hoped that 2026 would be a year of plenty, friendships and holidays.





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We would like to thank all those who contributed to this parish magazine, as well as all those who have helped to deliver it. Should you wish to get in touch regarding anything in this magazine or if you wish to contribute something towards the next issue you may contact us by 12th March 2026 in the following ways:

If your household does not receive a magazine please let us know.

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