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SOUTH ELMHAM COMMUNITY NEWS

ISSUE No. 164

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2026

ST MARGARET S.E VILLAGE LOSES TWO STALWARTS

HOMERSFIELD TREES COME DOWN IN A STORM

ST CROSS FLOODS ON THE ROADS

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SOUTH ELMHAM COMMUNITY NEWS

February - March 2026

Editor:

Phillip Kidner, Red House Farm, St Margaret South Elmham,
Harleston, Norfolk, IP20 0PJ, Tel: 01986 782289

Treasurer:

Jess Rawlin, White House, Margaret South Elmham,
Harleston, Norfolk, IP20 0PJ, Tel: 01986 783891

Village Representatives:

Homersfield	Sally Remblance	01986 788947
Flixton	Peter Madder-Smith	01986 896828
St Peter	Jezzer Donaldson	jezdonaldson@gmail.com
St Margaret	Phillip Kidner	01986 782289
St James	Lynda Bradley	01986 782582
St Cross	Libby French Mullen	01986 782230
	Ian Noakes	01986 782292

Thank you to those who send contributions, they help keep this magazine going and FREE to over 400 households.

NEXT COPY DEADLINE MARCH 7TH

The views and comments printed herein are not necessarily the views of the Editor or this publication

EDITORIAL

Keep a special eye out for your neighbours in these cold dark days. It's very easy to slip and fall. Meanwhile a democratically elected American President is trying to take over the world, there seems no restriction on him and it appears he can do what he likes. So what is the difference between him and Mr Putin. Both seem to think they can just invade a country and help themselves. Very dangerous.

GPC

The Grouped Parish Council of Flixton, St Cross and St Margaret South Elmham met at Flixton Village Hall on 11th November at 7.30pm. Among subjects discussed were a planning proposal for Chestnuts Walk at Flixton for light industrial units, glamping and camping site. The precept was agreed to leave it at last year's figure, so no increase. St Margaret and St Cross

defibrillators will be requiring new pads and batteries in the New Year, finance was agreed on this. Flixton Village Hall is seeking funding for an upgrade of its village Hall. Next Meeting 12th Jan at St Margaret 7.30pm

MOLE

It's been a bit of a sad time at St Margaret S.E as just before Christmas we lost two stalwarts of the village, both were heavily involved in village events and were in the front of the queue for setting up the village hall or BBQ on the Green and only too pleased to help anyone in a muddle. Bernard Duffield and Roger Smith, they will be missed, condolences to their families. November's Quiz was a closely fought affair with the entrants from Homersfield winning. The All Things Festive event in St Margarets church was not only a colourful event with Christmas lighting the paths, but inside the vast array of displays was impressive, the tombola and games kept everyone from child to adult entertained. The Christmas Lunch saw over 70 sitting down, the turkeys kindly donated by Philip Sands and a vast array of sweets, even Santa managed a visit much to the delight of the children and a few adults. Graham Hammond was presented with the Sam & Jean Earl Cup Community Cup, by Glen Earl for the person who has done the most in the Community. Thank You to all the cooks and helpers. This was followed at 6pm by the village Carol service in the church, the Saints Choir and St Margarets Hand Bell ringers were also there. A joyous occasion, with mulled wine and mince tarts to round the evening off. Then on the evening of Sunday 21st December Santa was back complete with Ronnie the reindeer, proceeding through the village passing out presents to the children and a few adults who claimed to have been good too. Down at Homersfield the annual pike fishing competition took place on Boxing day for the biggest pike caught between Homersfield and Mendham bridges, this is its 30th year. Several competitors took part in this prodigious event, which was won by Tim Saville, with Seb Webster winning the Bill Balls trophy for the smallest pike. Meanwhile Charlie Graham from St James has been promoted to Captain in the Army, although I doubt that cuts much ice at home.

THANK YOU

This magazine owes much to the late departed Rev Roger Smith who printed the first edition on the Roneo printer machine in Metfield Rectory in June of 1984. Also to the late departed Bernard Duffield who compiled it for several years. Rest In Peace



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FROM THE TRACTOR CAB

It's a bit confusing; Daffodils and Primroses out before Christmas, then snow and frosts of -5. Not unprecedented though as in 1894 they were still picking raspberries in December in Essex before a drop in temperature and snow intervened. The cold weather has bought several migrant birds to join their British cousins, such as blackbirds, thrushes, woodcocks, field-fares and waxwings, the latter comes over in irruptions. Most come for our warmer maritime climate from Scandinavia and Russia. Many of the geese, ducks and swans come from places such as Iceland, some such as the pink foot goose can be seen in huge gaggles eating sugar beet tops on the Norfolk coast. Most of the deer will have mated now and returned to their own sex group, the stags to one and the hinds to another. Many of our mammals grow a thicker winter coat for this time of year. In colder areas than here some, such as the mountain hare, change from brown to white to have the camouflage effect making it harder for their predators to see them.

ST MARGARET DIARY

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Sun 18th Jan | Horse Racing, 2pm, £6, to book 07974126902
bring your own drink and nibbles |
| Thurs 22nd Jan | Line dancing, 7.30 |
| Sun 1st Feb | Breakfast, 10am all invited, all welcome |
| Thurs 5th Feb | Line dancing, 7.30 |
| Fri 6th Feb | Film night, 7.30pm, £6. Bring your own nibbles and
drink, Raffle. Film to be confirmed see website:
stmargaretvillagehall |
| Thur 19th Feb | Line Dancing, 7.30 |
| Fri 20th Feb | Bingo, 7.30, bring your own drink and nibbles.
Raffle |
| Thurs 5th March | Line dancing, 7.30pm |
| Fri 13th March | Fun Quiz, 7.30pm, refreshments, raffle, bring your
own drink. Booking 07974126902 |
| Thurs 19th March | Line dancing, 7.30 pm |

SUNDAY BREAKFAST

Come and have breakfast while catching up
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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch plays a vital role in supporting the Constabulary and helping them to achieve the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

It is free to join Neighbourhood Watch and at the same time receive the new “Suffolk Connected” email messages. All you have to do is register on www.ourwatch.org.uk

St Margaret South Elmham has a scheme, but you can also do the postcode search under the header “Find my local NW” if you live in another village.

If there is a scheme where you live, join it. If no local scheme, you can apply to start your own scheme and the experienced volunteers give you all the necessary support and starter materials, free of charge.

ST MARGARET S.E CHURCH

All Things Festive 2025 – Thank You!

Our All Things Festive weekend was a wonderful celebration, bringing our village together in support of our church. Huge thanks to everyone who donated raffle and tombola prizes, gave time to clean, set up and decorate, and to all who baked and donated cakes and savouries for the refreshment stall.

The trees and displays were especially creative this year and received fantastic feedback. Themes included traditional carols with a twist to imaginative themes such as Harry Potter, Stick Man (by Ilketshall Nursery) Cliff Richard with Mistletoe and Wine, Alan Partridge in a Pear Tree and several panto favourites with the quiz to identify the displays hugely enjoyed by all. The tombola was once again very popular, and many enjoyed guessing the names of the reindeer family!

Thank you to everyone who attended, bought raffle tickets and shared teas and cakes with us. With the rain confirming a roof leak, we're pleased to say the funds raised will go towards finding and fixing it, helping keep our church in good repair as a valued community space.

Thanks to your support, the weekend raised just over £1,000 and welcomed more than 150 people. We hope this inspires even more of you to be part of next year's event by creating a tree or display of your own — we can't wait to see what you come up with!



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HOMERSFIELD

A lovely Carol Service was held in the Church on 22nd December. The Church was beautifully decorated again by the happy band of ladies (and Tom). We were honoured to have The Saints Choir and The Saints Bell Ringers in attendance.

Some very strong winds brought down several trees in Church Wood, blocking the main path, but these were quickly cleared, thanks to everyone who helped.

At the time of writing the village looks beautiful with a covering of snow but some of the roads are treacherous, take care when going out, by car, bicycle or on foot.

The new Church Wood Information Board is a real masterpiece, designed and created by Peter Kent. Thank you Peter.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sat 7th Feb Volunteer morning in Church Wood 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
meeting near the picnic bench in the wood.
Pruning, clearing paths and planting.
- Wed 11th and 25th Feb Services at St. Marys Church, 4pm.
- Sun 15th Feb Special Service at St. Marys in preparation for Lent.
4.00pm Refreshments after the service.
- Wed 18th Feb Ash Wednesday Service at St. Marys, 7.30 p.m.
- Sat 7th March Church Wood Volunteers (meeting by the picnic
bench) 10am-12pm. Pruning, clearing paths & planting.
- Sat 14th March Litter picking. Meeting at 10 a.m. near the telephone box.
Grabbers, bags, hoops and hi/viz waistcoats provided.
Please wear gloves.
- Tue 17th March Parish Council meeting 6p.m. Meeting at The Black
Swan. Members of the public are welcome to attend
the meeting.
- Sun 22nd March Holy Communion service, 10 a.m. at St. Marys
(coffee afterwards).

HOMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2026

All meetings are held in The Black Swan, Homersfield

- Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 6.00 pm
- Tuesday 17th March 2026 at 6.00 pm
- Tuesday 26th May 2026 at 6.00 pm

Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting

- Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 6.00 pm
- Tuesday 15th September 2026 at 6.00 pm
- Tuesday 17th November 2026 at 6.00 pm

~ Parishioners are Welcome to attend all Meetings ~

The agenda is displayed on the village noticeboard and published on HPC's website three days before the meeting. Planning meetings and additional meetings may be arranged as needed.

For further details contact the Clerk:
email: clerk@homersfield-pc.gov.uk or tel: 07774 734411
website: <https://homersfield-pc.gov.uk>



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ST PETER

As I write this, Christmas is over, snow is falling and there is a freezing wind blowing. Just a couple of weeks too late for a white Christmas. Still, at least Santa made it on time.

In November, parishioner Carol glittered gloriously as she was awarded Golfer of the Year by the Bungay and Waveney Golf Club. Well done Carol! She really is in pole position to win the 2026 St Peter's Sports Personality of The Year. A blue plaque may be in order.

December was, unsurprisingly, a busy month in the parish. The Christmas meal at St Peter's Hall was excellent and so convenient for us all. The carol service at the parish church was well-attended as usual. Despite his many abilities, our vicar was unable to conduct services in multiple parish churches at the same time, so the valiant John Awty fulfilled the roles of vicar, leading the service, and bell-ringer; amply demonstrating that some men can indeed multitask. Grateful thanks to everyone, including Pamela, who helped make the church look so pretty, for producing delicious mulled wine, sausage rolls and mince pies for everyone and for doing the readings during the service.

The star was placed over the parapet of the church this year by Wills, who gave Indiana Jones a run for his money by scaling the lofty tower on its rickety ladders, shuffling precariously around the narrow ledge by the bell and squeezing through the narrow hatch onto the roof. Next year he will be doing it blindfolded and dressed as a fridge. The star is now glowing on the north side of the spire again, after its brief occupancy of the south side last Christmas. Perhaps we need a second star, to avoid civil war in the parish. Is there a local volunteer with a little spare time and basic DIY skills who could make one for the parish?

Sadly, the parish said goodbye to another of its canine parishioners just before Christmas. This time Vinnie, our white Goldendoodle. He was approaching 15, so had a very good innings.

The 49 Club was won in November by Clodagh and in December by the Church.

A happy and healthy 2026 to one and all.

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Church Services

Rev Leon Collyer 01986 781345

18/01/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	St Margaret SE St Michael
25/01/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	St Lawrence Ilk St Margaret
01/02/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	St Peter Ilk St John
08/02/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	Flixton St Cross
15/02/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	Rumburgh Homersfield
22/02/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	St Michael St James
01/03/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	Ilk St Margaret St Margaret SE
08/03/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	Ilk St John St Lawrence
15/03/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	St Cross St Peter
22/03/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 4.00pm	Flixton Homersfield
29/03/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 5.00pm	St James Rumburgh
05/04/26	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	10.00am 5.00pm	St Margaret SE St Michael

MID WEEK SERVICES

FEBRUARY HOMERSFIELD

Wednesday 11 February 9.00am
Ash Wednesday 18 February 7.30pm
Wednesday 25 February 9.00am

MARCH FLIXTON

Wednesday 11 March 9.00am
Wednesday 18 March 9.00am
Wednesday 25 March Annunciation to Mary 9.00am

Fun At The Village Hall

Badminton, I've learnt, isn't for the faint hearted,
Some shouting and swearing have suddenly started!
No malice intended and all in good fun
As long as you're playing on the side that won!
Shuttlecocks getting stuck in the most peculiar places
And one player wearing amazing braces!
If that isn't enough excitement for you...
There's the thrill of trying Line Dancing too.
It's hard to learn The Cowboy Shuffle,
With my coordination it's more like The Cowboy Skuffle!
And just when I think I've got that one to flow
Everyone's moved on to Cotton Eye Jo!
Sally Remblance

Snow Coming

Just when the snow is starting to thaw
Hold on to your hats! There's going to be more!
You're told not to 'panic buy' but I couldn't resist,
I headed off to Lidl with an enormous list,
Everything from loo rolls to soup, trifles to leeks,
I can probably feed the whole village for weeks!
But for now, I'll just have to hunker down
Until the storm passes and I can venture back into town
Sally Remblance

ST CROSS

THE BRIGHT LIGHTS OF ST CROSS!

Christmas saw our village glow like a well-lit... Christmas tree! It was a vintage year for illuminations with both ends of the village well represented by colour and twinkling lights. Now that Twelfth Night has passed we return to normal, but luckily our corner of Suffolk continues to delight even without the illuminations.

COLD WEATHER

It seems our region was colder than the depths of Scotland! Even the Beck has frozen and is covered with snow. On the upside, the red deer have been in the open feeding. A superb sight.

WET WEATHER

Shortly before Christmas there was another vehicle stuck in the flooding on Mill Lane/Sandy Lane. This time it was a supermarket delivery van. Be aware that this road floods readily and your Parish Councillors have explored potential solutions with Judy Cloke, Suffolk County Councillor and Highways Agency. Unfortunately, due to the relative positions of the road in relation to the land and the Beck, there is no financially viable solution.

Please, if you see that the road is flooding, alert one of your Parish Councillors (contact details at the front of the magazine), and they will be able to have the road closed. This action will avoid the cost to the motorist and that of attending emergency services.

'A reader lives a thousand lives'

So says George RR Martin...

To fill your long winter evenings, don't forget your carefully curated Telephone Box library. There's (probably) something for everyone; even little ones. And soon the evenings will be drawing out and spring will be just around the corner!

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Jenni Baker

ST JAMES

CHURCH NEWS

The carol service on 21st December was very well attended and enjoyed by all. The service was opened with a solo by candlelight from Matthew, which set the tone for the whole service. The singing was led by The Waveney Valley Brass who also played Oh Holy Night for us to just sit and listen to. It was quite magical. Thanks go to all who filled the church with flowers and greenery, for cleaning the church and for the refreshments after the service.

If anyone would like to help with cleaning the church (once a month) please let Jane or Bernard know.

HALL AND VILLAGE NEWS

Christmas lunch, our final event of 2025, was a great success, with 90 people sitting down in a beautifully decorated hall to enjoy a three-course lunch with all the trimmings. It was all made possible by the involvement of a band of willing helpers who helped decorate the hall, prepare, cook and serve the food and finally clear and clean up the following day. Grateful thanks to all of them. A great raffle and games for the children rounded off the day.

FUTURE EVENTS

Some events to put into your new 2026 calendars:

Firstly, a reminder of:

Music for all will start on Monday, 12th January

Crafternoons will restart on Monday, 9th February

Pub Games Evening on Saturday 24th January at 7pm.

This will be a fun and sociable Games Night to kick off 2026. To include the games you used to find in traditional pubs. Darts, Dobble, Racing Demons, Table Football, Uno, Card Games and more.

Or just come along to socialise with friends.

No bar but there will be wines, craft beer, lager and non-alcoholic drinks, including Guinness Zero. To accompany "Bar Food" - sandwiches and chips served in a cone.

All included in £5.00, for adults. No need to book. Children welcome, under 16s free.

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FLIXTON

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Clearly a sad start to the New Year for some and also a difficult start for others in our community. The world seems to be in a state of turmoil and the country in quite a muddle. Both situations might be better resolved with sensible, pragmatic leadership. Something which has been sadly lacking for many years. So, while we may worry about the wider world, let's just hope this year brings some positive changes for Flixton.

ROAD DRAINS AND CULVERTS

The Environment Agency is preparing to carry out drainage ditch clearance along the beck beside The Street and in the Buck pub "meadow", something which they've been "planning to do" for too long now. Apparently they seem to have a concern about the "new" drainage pipe installed by SCC to replace the previous blocked one. So, it seems that the environment agency would rather that the road drains remain blocked and that homes should flood. Bizarre.

TERRY HUNT

In mid-December Terry had a road accident just west of the village along the B1062. He's still in Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and it looks like his recovery may take some time. Apart from the accident being traumatic for Terry, Sandra and their family, I'm sure that friends and neighbours are concerned and that we wish him well.

VILLAGE SUPPORT

A date in your diaries could be the 28th March, 10.00 am at the bus shelter for the next litter pick. As I've previously said, most of the residents volunteering for this kind of work are not getting any younger and we know that there are still some physically able people in the village who would be most welcome, so DON'T BE SHY. In addition, the Community Speed Watch Team is still looking for volunteers. Give me a call.

SPEEDING

Well the recently repaired metal footpath railing at the junction of Church Road and the B1062 is doing sterling work helping to reduce speeds. It's clearly served a purpose as an additional braking mechanism for someone, reverting to its previous, pre repaired S-shape. I realise that the bend is quite tricky to negotiate, although the 30mph speed limit ought to go



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Flixton continued...

some way toward helping those who don't know the area. There used to be a "sharp bend sign" at the roadside, east (Bungay side) of the junction, but the sign has fallen into disrepair. Maybe a "skateboard park" styled banking system would help drivers hurrying back towards Harleston. Any ideas welcome.

FIBRE BROADBAND

Work had begun but appears on hold around the village and along The Street. Some cables are in, but the existing underground ducts have been causing a problem as many are blocked with years of silt washed in because the drains were blocked.

Contact Pete Madder-Smith on 896828.

EYE BACH CHOIR

performing in Eye Parish Church, Saturday March 7 at 7.30pm

HARLESTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Did you know that singing in a choir brings huge personal physical, mental and social benefits? When you sing you release endorphins, which lift mood and reduce stress. In addition, singing can be really good for breathing, posture and help improve memory and concentration. If you or anyone you know is feeling a bit isolated, the sense of community singing with a choir is hard to beat.

Why not start your new year off with a bang, by joining Harleston Choral Society?

Our Summer performance of Carmina Burana was the highlight of our 25th anniversary year last year and demonstrated just how an amateur local choir can be challenged to achieve something truly spectacular – as our standing ovation proved!

If you would like to try us out, please do come along to the London Road Church in Harleston from January 5th 2026 on Monday nights from 7.30pm – 9.30pm for an uplifting and enjoyable experience. Tenors particularly welcome!

For more information contact Caroline Rodbourne at caroline@rodbourne.org.uk or take a look at our website: www.harlestonchoralsoc.org.uk

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