

Isleham Informer

Winter/New Year Edition • Issue 106 • February 2022 • www.isleham-village.co.uk

Plans on track for GALA 2022

Hi from the committee of the Isleham Gala, we hope you are all well and enjoying the New Year. We have had a nice few years break but have missed the fun of putting on the gala for the people of Isleham and surrounding villages so it is with much pleasure we can announce our Gala day on Saturday July 2nd 2022.



This is the 40th year since the gala began so we are keen to make it special! Plus we all hope the restrictions of Covid 19 will be behind us by then. Over the years we have seen so many lovely moments created, Kings and Queens crowned, potatoes judged, ladies in dresses digging deep in the tug of war and many, many happy families having a great time. Over the years the numbers attending is always high and the involvement of villagers is always good even if the weather has not always been kind.

We will have many of the usual events plus we are working hard to add some new elements to the mix, hoping to bring you some live music later in the day and add some new events for the children. We will of course be having the following:

Parade, Bands, BBQ, Children's competitions and races, Craft tent, Charity and local business stalls, Grand draw, Dog show, Isleham School Band, Fun fair, Bar, Food corner with many stalls, Art, Fruit and vegetable competitions, Fun run, Tug of war

We will announce the new events as soon as we have them confirmed.

For the parade we would love to see more floats both on trucks and walking, it's a fabulous opportunity to everyone to take part and for so many of our elderly neighbours this is their only way to be involved. This year we have the kind help of a volunteer to link farmers with associations and groups who might need transport please get in touch if you'd like to put a float together or need help with transport. See Barbara Murfitt/Zoe Leeson or email lisa@laconsult.co.uk.

As ever we are a small team and would welcome your help either in the planning or on the day. To make helping less onerous we would welcome help on key activities so volunteers can just get on with things without too many meetings (which by the way will be virtual so no need to even go out in the cold!)

We need help on the following:

Sponsorship/Ads programme – prior to event, Social Media & Publicity– prior to event, Announcer – on the day, Paramedic – on the day, Setting up stalls – on the day, Parking and clean up – paid support, Parade – on the day, Fun Run and Children's races – planning and on the day, Art, fruit, veg Competitions – planning and

Continued on page 11 + Pictures

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ARTS & COMMUNITY GROUP

Viva Arts and Community Group, Soham has spent the last three years undergoing a huge capital works project- the renovation of Spencer's Mill, Soham, into a fully accessible theatre and community space. Spencer Mill is now named The Viva Theatre and has a fully retractable tiered seating rake for 80 people, a high-spec performance space, an upstairs meeting room with kitchenette and ample free customer parking.

Inside the building visitors can enjoy learning about the history of the old Mill via a series of museum panels and interactive touch screen exhibits. Many of the original features have been restored including the original sack hoist.

We are also thrilled to announce...

VIVA'S NEW SATURDAY YOUTH THEATRE...

On stage in our brand-new theatre Viva now run Weekly Saturday Youth Theatre Classes for children **aged 5-14 years**. The children practice singing, dancing and acting on the stage and showcase their work in front of a real audience whilst gaining self-confidence, teamwork and leadership skills.

A NEW PROGRAMME OF LIVE THEATRE & CINEMA...

Viva will now host all its own shows at The Viva Theatre and will also welcome touring theatre groups, exhibitions, music events and more. The venue also has a large cinema and Viva have curated a varied and exciting programme of film and cinematic events for all ages.

To find out more visit viva-group.org.uk or call 01353 722 228.

****CALL US AND BE ADDED TO OUR WHAT'S ON MAILING LIST****

The Viva Theatre, Spencer Drive, Soham, CB7 6EE



Dates for Your Diary

If there is anything you would like included here for future issues: contact Glenda Preece,
T: 01638 780734 E: gjpreece@aol.com.

The *Isleham Informer* is published six times a year, every other month.

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DISCLAIMER: The *Informer* would like to point out that we have neither tried nor tested all of the products and services advertised in these pages and therefore cannot accept responsibility for the veracity of any claims made.

February 2022

Mon 7th	Isleham Parish Council	7.15pm
Thurs 10th	Fenland Friends	7.30pm
Fri 11th	Book Club	2pm
Mon 14th - Fri 18th	HALF TERM	
Wed 16th	Prize Bingo at the Bowls Club	
	Eyes down	8pm
Thurs 17th	Isleham Society	7.30pm
Sat 19th	Isleham Market	10-1pm

March 2022

Mon 7th	Isleham Parish Council	7.15pm
Thurs 10th	Fenland Friends	7.30pm
Fri 11th	Book Club	2pm
Thurs 17th	Isleham Society	7.30pm
Sat 19th	Isleham Market	10-1pm

Community Pantry at The Ark every Wednesday

10 - 12 noon

Useful Information

Mobile Library	Arrive	Depart
2nd Wednesday Church Street	12.25pm	1.00pm
3rd Thursday Mill Street	3.25pm	4.15pm
4th Wednesday Church St	9.45am	10.10am
Post Office	Mon - Thurs	9.00 - 11.30
Useful phone numbers		
Emergency for Police, Fire, Ambulance	999	
Police (Non-emergency).....	101	
Accident & Casualty (Addenbrooke's).....	01223	217118
Addenbrooke's Hospital (Cambridge).....	01223	245151
Newmarket Hospital	01638	564000
West Suffolk Hospital (Bury St Edmunds).....	01284	713000
Staploe Medical Centre (Soham)		
- Appointments.....	01353	624121
- Prescriptions & Dispensary	01353	727695
- Enquiries, Home Visits, Emergencies.....	01353	624123
Minor Treatment Centre, Ely.....	01353	656675
NHS Direct (for advice).....	0845	4647
GP Out-Of-Hours (non-emergency)	111	
Electricity Emergencies	0800	7838838
Gas Emergencies.....	0800	111999
Anglian Water Leaks	0800	771881
- 24 hour	0845	7145145
Social Services - office hours.....	0345	0455202
- out of hours emergency	01733	561370
Refuse Collection.....	01353	665555
RSPCA	07599	522716
- Cruelty line.....	0300	1234 999
Citizens Advice Bureau	Mildenhall	01638 719111
	Newmarket	0300 330 1151
District Councillor: Julia Huffer	01638	720013
Deputy Council Leader: Joshua Schumann.....	07841	524007
Parish Council Clerk: Richard Liddington	01638	781687
MP: Lucy Frazer.....	lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk	

Parish Councillors address list

Richard Radcliffe (Chairman)	45 Sun Street, Isleham Tel: 01638 780831
Derrick Beckett (Vice Chairman)	Appleyard Farm, 1 Houghtons Lane, Isleham Tel: 01638 780476
Vanessa Bruyneel-Smith	115 The Causeway, Isleham Tel: 01638 482410
Jeannette Malkin	17 Little London, Isleham Tel: 01638 780283
Bob Mitchell	10 Sparkes Close, Isleham Tel: 01638 780707
Marco Caferelli	22 Maltings lane CB7 5RZ,, Tel: 07971 335193
Glenda Preece	94 The Causeway, Isleham Tel: 01638 780734
Pauline Wilkes	6 Limestone Close, Isleham Tel: 01638 780640
Alan Dennis	2, Nursery Close, Isleham Tel: 01638 781092
Christopher Elmer	30 Limestone Close, Isleham Tel: 01638 780934
Dr Chris Corbin	5 Priory Gardens, Isleham Tel: 01638 780221
Richard Liddington (Parish Clerk)	Parish Office, The Beeches Tel: 01638 781687 Email: islehampc@gmail.co
Website: www.isleham-village.co.uk	

Notes from The Editor

Happy New Year to all our readers and thanks to the advertisers new and old. Well here we are into 2022 already. Great to see the Gala planned for 2nd July & the Beeches Entertainers putting on their postponed Pantomime.

*Many thanks must go to all that contribute articles and pictures and to all that help to put all the various pieces together and then distribute the *Informer*.*

Keep safe

Clive Patterson



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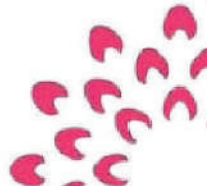
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Village Notes

COMMUNITY PANTRY UPDATE

We have been running the pantry from The Ark Church, Beck Road, on a Wednesday 10-12pm every week from the beginning of December 2021

It is proving to be a useful support to those struggling to make ends meet in these days.

We gave out 91 Parcels in December which included 20 Christmas parcels to St Andrews Primary school. This month we have helped provide food for over 100 Adults and 85 children.

We are so grateful for donations from individuals, Mildenhall Ely and The Lighthouse food banks and Soham and Ely Hygiene bank and our local Coop.

Please be aware that if your financial circumstances change for whatever reason, we are here for you to help fill the gap. There is plenty for all to share. So, please do not hesitate to collect a parcel for neighbour, friend or yourselves if this will help you to make ends meet.

We can also issue Food bank vouchers for longer term support.

Best wishes Claire Gillett



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2 metre social distancing procedures are in place.

We also attend two Farmers Markets:

Isleham Farmers Market with a Touch of Craft every 3rd Saturday each month and Freckenham Farmers Market every 4th Saturday of each month.

On-Farm Shop Opening Hours:

Tuesday: 10am-5.30pm Thursday & Friday: 9am-5.30pm

Saturday: 9am-4pm Sunday: 10am-12noon



Village clubs: information

CLUB	CONTACT		DAY/DATE	TIME	PLACE
1st Isleham Beavers (boys & girls 6-8yrs)	Emma Bucknall	07807 349754 gsl@islehamscouts.org.uk	Tuesday	5.15 - 6.15pm	The Beeches
1st Isleham Cubs (boys & girls 8-10yrs)	"	07807 349754 gsl@islehamscouts.org.uk	Tuesday	6.30 - 8.00pm	The Beeches
1st Isleham Scouts (boys & girls 8-10yrs)	"	07807 349754 gsl@islehamscouts.org.uk	Tuesday	6.30 - 8.00pm	The Beeches
Beeches Entertainers	Barbara Murfitt	07510 173412 / 01638 780373			
Book Club	Irene Brown	irene.c.brown@googlemail.com	2nd Friday	2.00pm	The Beeches
Bowls Club	Rowland Wells	01638 780191			The Bowls Club
Busy Bees	Pre-School Zara King	01638 781212 zara_covington@hotmail.co.uk	Wednesday	9.30 - 11.30pm	The Beeches
Craft Club	Margo Towley	01638 781524	Tuesday	1.30 - 4.00pm	Limestone Centre
Fenland Friends	Fiona Jones	01638 780440	2nd Thursday	7.30-9.30	The Beeches
Friends of Isleham Nature reserve	Avi Stacey	01638 780023	2nd Thursday Bi-Monthly	7.30pm	Various Please ring
Gala Committee	Lisa Alderson	07947 642333	3rd Monday	7.30pm	The Beeches
Isleham Joggers	Agnieska Beswick	07840 141694 agakardys@hotmail.com	Monday & Wednesday	6.30pm	The Beeches Car Park
Isleham Performing Arts	Ruth Bendall	07894 118801 ruthbendall@yahoo.co.uk	Wednesday Thursday	7pm - 8.30pm 9.30am - 10am 4pm - 5.30pm	The Beeches
Isleham Society	Mark Fletcher	fletchermark100@gmail.com	3rd Thursday	7.15 for 7.30	The Beeches
Isleham United Youth FC	Steve Isaacson	07545 395573			
Isleham United FC	Russ Boneham	07867429051/01638 780830 russ@innovoic.co.uk			
Isleham Tennis Club	Clint	07946 441351			
Isleham Cricket Club	Jamie Saunders Adrian Sheldrick	07872 507989 (Chairman) 07775 522765 (vice chairman)			
Pre-school Isleham Under Fives Ass. (IUFA)	TBA	01638 781212 islehampreschool@btconnect.com			
Pilates (Booking Essential)	Jo Simcock-Simms	07974 653775	Monday	10 - 11am 6.00 - 9.00pm	The Beeches
Pilates (Booking Essential)	"		Wednesday	12.00 - 1.00pm	The Beeches
Pilates (Booking Essential)	"		Friday	12.00 - 1.00pm	The Beeches
Tai Chi	Dave Coogan	01638 781705	Wednesday	1.15 - 2.15pm	The Beeches
The Beeches	Finn Blair	enquiries@thebeecheisleham.co.uk			
Yoga	Natasha	07738477746	Friday	10am - 11am	The Beeches

• If you would like your club, society, organisation's news and photos, or anything you (and the *Informer* team) think is of interest to the village to appear in the *Isleham Informer*, please contact any member of *Informer* staff - see page 3 for contact details. Please supply your article and photos by March 9th for our April issue. We also need the photographer's name where necessary and details of photos for captions: please do ask subjects to give their permission to appear in the *Informer* - children should have parents' permission.



Isleham Parish Council Update

JANUARY 2022

Parish Council Meetings are generally held on the first Monday of each month at The Beeches

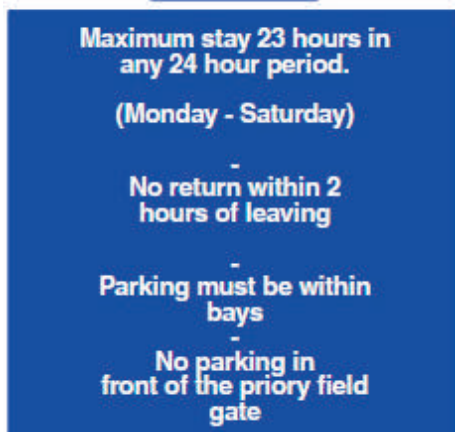
Members of the public are invited to attend the meetings and 15 minutes are set aside each month for public questions. (No food or drink to be bought into the meeting room, please.)

Full copies of the agendas and minutes are available on the Parish Council website, the notice boards outside The Beeches and at the junction between Church Street & Pound Lane and from the Parish Clerk, Richard Lidington: tel 01638 781687, email islehampc@gmail.com. Summarised agendas are also posted on the Isleham News Facebook page. If you would prefer a copy of the agenda emailing directly to you then please contact me at the email address above.

Priory Car Park

A polite reminder that new rules for parking in The Priory car park come into effect from the 1st February 2022

These rules aim to make more effective use of the car park by reducing the possibility of vehicles being abandoned or left for extended periods of time and expecting vehicles to be parked within the identified bays. The full rules are copied below and will be positioned inside the railings near the two entrances into the car park. We thank you for your cooperation in adhering to these rules.



Queens Jubilee

Most of you will be aware that the country will be celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at the beginning of June 2022, which includes an extra bank holiday on Friday 3rd June. Details of the jubilee, including possible celebration events can be found at <https://platinumjubilee.gov.uk/>

The Parish Council believe that some residents may be interested in organising their own street parties. As you can see from the link below obtaining permission for closing streets is not straightforward and it is already clear that there should there be interest in such celebrations then some coordination may be required, particularly in relation to writing risk assessments and traffic management. Similarly issues such as insurance and music licences will need to be looked into. Please look out for postings on the Isleham news Facebook page for updates.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/highway-events/organisingastreetevent

Planning Applications (December - January) *

21/01467/FUL Additional first floor windows to service existing mezzanine floor. Kelly Developments Ltd 28 Hall Barn Road Industrial Estate Hall Barn Road Isleham Mr A Fordman

Suggested Amendment

21/01533/FUL Single storey front extension and extension above garage. 18 Robins Close Isleham. Mr & Mrs J Kitchen

No Objection

21/01547/RMA Reserve matters for appearance, landscaping and layout of previously approved 20/00142/OUT for the Construction of 1no. detached dwelling and garaging for horticultural manager. Floral Farm Fordham Road Isleham Mr Caffarelli

No objection

21/01572/FUM Construction of 45 dwellings, new access, estate roads, driveways, parking areas, open space, external lighting, pumping station and associated Infrastructure Land West Of Station Road Isleham Havebury Housing

Objection

21/01584/TRE Proposal: T1 Cherry - reduce by 1.3m all over to attain a more aesthetic shape while gaining light in to the garden T2 Birch - reduce by 1.3m all over to attain a more aesthetic shape while gaining light in to the garden. 5 Dockings Lane Isleham Mr Barker

No objection

21/01636/FUL Construction of four market dwellings, garages, parking spaces, hard and soft landscaping, access and all other associated infrastructure. Land Accessed Between 2 And 4 Fordham Road Isleham. Agent / Bloor Homes

Objection

21/01642/FUL Conversion and extension of garage to annexe. 7 St Andrews Close Isleham . Mr & Mrs Dodd

Objection

21/01749/FUL Single storey rear extension and internal alterations. 19 Robins Close Isleham. Mr & Mrs Goldsack

No Objection

21/01817/RMA: Reserved matters for landscaping details of previously approved

20/00260/OUM, Erection of 17 dwellings and new access. Land Adjacent To 8 Hall Barn Road Isleham

Objection:

- The layout plans do not reflect the approved plans
- The amount of landscaping is less that that pro-

posed in the outline planning permission
There is a distinct lack of screening, particularly on the approach from Temple Road

Planning Approvals (December – January)

21/01360/VAR To vary condition 1 (Approved drawings) of previously approved 19/01030/FUL for construction of 4 bedroom detached dwelling with new vehicular access and associated works. Land Adjacent To 58 West Street Isleham

21/01618/TPO Proposal: T1 & T2 are both Tilia x europaea - Remove epicormic growth from the base of both trees to approx 6 metres up the trunk. To tidy up the appearance of both trees and allow pollard head to further establish. 54 West Street Isleham

Planning Refusals: (December-January)

21/01317/OUT Residential dwelling for plot 1 24 Prickwillow Road Isleham

21/01526/FUL Erection of double bay car port (on footprint of previous garage)

46 Pound Lane Isleham

Other Planning Matters: (December – January)

Bloor Homes Early Years Unit

Residents should note that CCC have declined the opportunity to develop a site at the front of the Bloor Homes development as an early years unit. Contact has been made with Bloor homes to see if the land could be gifted to the parish.

21/01763/CLE Certificate of Lawfulness - site west of 43 Pound Lane Isleham

Objection

*Details for the reasons for objections and reasons for refusal can be found on the minutes of meetings and on ECDC /WSDC planning website: <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/planning/current-planning-applications>

Neighbourhood Plan

Our draft Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted for formal consideration by East Cambridgeshire District Council. Following their review and an independent examination of the plan this will come back to residents for your formal consultation

Fly Tipping

Incidences of fly tipping should be reported directly to ECDC via their website: <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/waste/fly-tipping>

Recreation Ground

We would like to thank local residents for adhering to the rule of not bringing their dogs onto the recreation field

Allotment Matters

There are currently a small number of plots available on both the Dunstall (Station Rd) and Three Trees (Beck Road) sites. Please do contact me if you are interested in taking a plot. The cost of a 10 rod (approx. 250m² plot is just £16.25 per year

Vacancy

Isleham Parish Council are seeking a replacement 'litter picker' to collect litter from around the village.

The role is for 28 hours per month (flexibility by agreement) and is payable at the relevant national living wage, as shown below.

Anyone interested in this post should contact the Parish

Clerk at islehampc@gmail.com

National Living Wage

Aged 22 and above	£8.91
Aged 21 to 22 inclusive	£8.36
Aged 18 to 20 inclusive	£6.56
Aged 16 to 17	£4.62

Lucy Frazer MP

Matt Hancock MP and I recently wrote to the Planning Inspectorate to raise our concerns over the Sunnica application. We specifically highlighted the quality and substance of the engagement process with residents; Sunnica's decision to decline the open meeting to discuss their DCO submission; and the lack of briefing given to us as constituency MPs on any changes to the proposal put forward by Sunnica.



We shared constituent concerns over lack of access to information, the quality and extensiveness of webinars, the lack of time to review information, and Sunnica's unwillingness to provide further details about the Scheme during the consultation process and after.

We asked that the Planning Inspectorate consider our assessment that the consultation undertaken by Sunnica should be deemed inadequate as part of the ongoing acceptance phase of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project process.

Unfortunately, the Planning Inspectorate has decided to progress Sunnica's application to the Examination stage. This is, of course, very disappointing news. I would like to assure you that I will follow all further developments closely and I will continue to oppose Sunnica's application on behalf of my constituents.

Lucy Frazer QC MP
Member of Parliament for
South East Cambridgeshire
Financial Secretary to the Treasury
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

Isleham Bowls Club

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 16th February is our rearranged Christmas PRIZE BINGO.

Arrive before 7.45pm, eyes down 8pm.

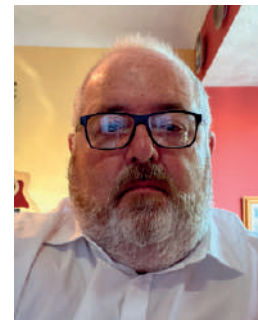
Friday 26th March is a trivia quiz evening, hosted by Bob Mitchell.

Teams of up to 4 at a cost of £4 per player.

All are welcome.

County Council update

A happy new year to everyone and I hope that you have traversed the Xmas holidays and festivities in good health? Omicrom and its allies are still about so I am reminded of my school motto from Soham VC. "Non Nobis sed omnibus" as people still contemplate vaccinations. It means "not for oneself but for others". Please do make sure you are as updated with vaccinations as you can be to protect the spreading of the disease to friends, relatives and others



We are in the heart of winter, albeit one of the mildest I've known. At this time of year pot holes appear and need quick attention. In another attempt to help us all I will always chase County Highways for any reported pot hole or path deformity reported but if you don't report them they can not repair them. It is simple to do and quick. Take the large pot hole that appeared in Fordham Rd just as one exits the village. Moaned about a lot, talked about on Facebook too but no one for sometime reported it to CC highways. It has been now and I believe it has been fixed but please follow this link and report any issues found. <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults>

The long awaited Station at Soham is once again open but at the moment trains are two hourly, and not well timed for start of day access to Cambridge. The plans are for an hourly service asap but works have to be completed to the network in the Ely area for this to happen. The station is great, easy access and parking, and a joy to use. I hope you find the time to do so.

There are many things this year planned to celebrate HM Queen attaining 75 years on the throne. From tree planting to an extra bank holiday. If anyone sees anything that they feel would benefit the village and need a hand to push over the line please let me know and I will be happy to help.

2020/21 were tough years and we have lost some great village characters for many reasons. I hope you all can come to terms with your loss and can draw comfort from the close knit community that we are lucky to live within. We welcome the new residents of the Fordham Rd and Ashfield Gardens developments, and anyone else now fortunate enough to reside in Isleham. Best wishes for 2022, and do contact me on any matter in which I can reasonably help.
Kind regards Mark Goldsack

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Walter Gunston brightening up the village



Christmas tree at The Beeches



Wally's car he toured the village with on Christmas Eve



Carols at the Social Centre organised by Mark Fletcher of the Isleham Society



The trees outside the church look magical



Wally decorated The Beeches for their Christmas Party

The Beeches Entertainers proudly present

Lots of fun for the whole family!

Children's fancy-dress competition!

The Beeches, Isleham

April 1st @ 7pm
April 2nd @ 2pm & 7.30pm

Tickets £7.50 adults/£3.50 children (cash only)
Available from The Beeches Bar,
February and March Farmers' Markets,
or call 07510 173412

Written by Lesley Gunn

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with Heather

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on the day, Classic Cars – planning and on the day, Kids corner – planning and on the day, Childrens dressing up competition – planning and on the day, Food corner - - planning and on the day Band/Entertainment – recruiting and arranging for the day.

No contribution is too small! Please email lisa@laconsult.co.uk if you think you can get involved.
Thank you for reading and we cannot wait to see you on the 2nd. Lisa Alderson

Pictures from past Gala days



Sunnica Update Jan 2022



Say No to Sunnica Community Action Group

The Sunnica application was accepted for examination by The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 16th December 21, it now moves into the pre-examination phase. Just to clarify - this DOES NOT mean the planning permission or final Development Consent Order has been granted.

Next steps:

The start of the pre-examination phase will be announced and advertised by Sunnica any day. We will also publicise this date and can help you with registration. Your Parish council should be able to support too.

Pre-examination

- Pre-examination lasts approximately 3 months.
- **To have your opinions heard YOU MUST register as an Interested Party by submitting your concerns about the scheme to the Planning Inspectorate** (this is called a Relevant Representation).

We need as many people as possible, from all the affected villages and towns, to provide Relevant Representations, so that PINS can fully gauge the sentiments of the local residents who will be living with this scheme.

- ANYONE can register, including multiple people from same household. Relevant Representations are no more than 500 written words and must be submitted within 4-6 weeks of the accepted application being published. Once you are registered as an Interested Party you can make more detailed representa-

Isleham Society

The St Andrew's Social Centre garden became a magical place on Thursday 23rd December for community carol singing, mulled wine, shepherds in the fields and the spectacular effects of Walter Gunston's lighting. Many thanks to all who helped in the arrangements. It was very special.



As I write this we are all still advised to be extremely careful about indoor gatherings. Opinions vary about how cautious to be, but for January the Isleham Society event is planned as a sociable and probably

tions, greater than 500 words. **Please start drafting yours NOW!**

- The easiest way to submit a Relevant Representation and register as an Interested Party is using the online form on the PINS website. Please call PINS on 0303 444 5000 to request a hard copy of this form if you cannot access the online version.

If you do not register within the limited time during the Pre-examination phase, your views cannot be heard at the Examination.

There is more useful information and links on our website <https://www.saynotosunnica.com/>

This is also a useful film <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/participating-in-the-process/>

SHOUT OUT:

Do you, or someone you know, have knowledge or expertise in ecology, landscape, or heritage to help us scrutinise various sections of the Sunnica scheme? Your community needs your help now, please contact the Action Group email: saynotosunnica@mail.com



very muddy, Saturday morning walking exploration of the village Parish Paths. We expect to be back in the Beeches in February for a very lively overview of Isleham history as seen by some of the folk who lived here (or might have). After that we expect to have a variety of talks and events, one or two, each month. Membership is £10 individual for the year (£15 for family membership) and everyone is welcome to join.



CHURCHES

The Ark Church



I'm sure you'll know how embarrassing it is to meet someone and they know you, but you can't place them. You stumble around and if you're brave enough, you might ask who they are. More likely you realise who they were an hour or so later! I am one of the leaders at the Ark church, I see a lot of people and I'm sorry to say this does happen to me more often than I'd like to admit! Twice now people have arrived on Sunday morning and said "Hello Martin" with big smiles on their faces. I was lost for words as I didn't have the faintest recognition of who they were! It turned out they recognised me from watching on-line services and had come for the first time to see for themselves.

We started filming Sunday mornings during lockdown, it takes a big team, and it can be technically demanding but people value it. We continue to offer it for those who still need to avoid crowds and for others who want to watch from around the UK, work shifts or are ill. Its not unusual to have 2 or 3 times as many people watch online compared to those who come along in person. Maybe you could have a look via the web site or YouTube channel. If you enjoy it feel free to come along and be the next person to catch me out!

You'll also find information about the food pantry, swap shop, youth groups and many other things happening at the Ark.

Martin Wells is one of the leaders at the Ark web site - www.thearkisleham.co.uk
You tube – The ark church Isleham
01638 780985

*The Ark will soon be running the marriage course – free for anyone in the village.
The Course is a series of seven sessions, designed to help married couples invest in their relationship and build a strong marriage.
Let us know if you are interested.*

St Andrew's Parish Church

Although the new year and any resolutions that came with it might seem a distant memory already by now, the arrival of spring, with its longer days and the signs of new life in nature bring us another opportunity for self-examination and reflection with longer lasting consequences. Easter falls relatively late this year, on Sunday 17 April, which means that the season of Lent begins on 2 March (Ash Wednesday), 46 days beforehand.*

Lent is often portrayed as a miserable time, when we give up one or more of life's little treats and conveniences that keep us going through normal times and carry stoically on, testing ourselves (and perhaps also our loved ones) as we sharpen up our self-discipline. If giving up chocolate, caffeine, or your favourite TV series for a short while is an end in itself, then chances are this March and April may be bit a bit of a miserable time, and you'll be counting the days until Lent is over.

But what if Lent were to be a time not of irritation and minor inconvenience, but of taking stock, making space to grow, and renewing our course towards Easter and beyond? And what if we didn't just think about that for ourselves, but for our neighbours, our community, and for the wider world too? What difference would it make?

All our experiences during the COVID pandemic have been different, and trying to compare them isn't helpful. But being forced to stop or change much of our usual activity did make us think. How were we going to fill the gaps?

Giving something up can free us for other things – a walk in the fresh air, time to phone a friend, pick up a book or a crafting project, a moment to notice the spring bulbs, or maybe even just time to chill. Time for ourselves is important for our well-being, but just as vital is the benefit to us of doing things for others. We may not like to think of it that way – helping others to help ourselves – but give and take are key ingredients of successful community.

Where will you find the gaps, and how will you fill them this spring? Whether it be a favour for a neighbour, giving time or donating in kind to a local or national charity, making a small change that helps you tread more lightly on the planet, may this be a time of growth and new life for us all.

Please visit www.threeriversgroup.co.uk for details of our activities during Lent, and for our Easter services across the Three Rivers Group parishes (Chippenham, Fordham, Isleham, Kennett & Snailwell). All welcome!

* The 40 weekdays of Lent mirror the time Jesus spent in the wilderness after he was baptized and to prepare himself for his ministry. It was a time of fasting, prayer and testing, and this was the spirit the early church tried to promote when it first instituted

the season in the year 325. If you're wondering why Lent starts 46 calendar days before Easter rather than 40, it's because the Sundays don't count – make of that what you will!

Pound Lane Free Church

Pastor: Mr. Dave Hall (01638 781343 or 01638 780636, email pastor@plfc.org.uk)

Elder: Mr. Matthew Hall

Every Sunday:

Sunday worship: 10.30a.m. & 6.30p.m.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper:

1st Sunday during evening service

3rd Sunday during morning service

Fellowship Lunches are served after the morning service on the third Sunday of the month.

Kingdom Kids (3yrs. – Yr3): 9.45a.m. - 10.30a.m.

Youth a.l.i.v.e. (Yr.4 – 18yrs.): 9.30a.m. - 10.15a.m.

There is a hearing loop installed as well as Braille songbooks. We have a comprehensive Child Protection Policy and a CRB check has been carried out on all children's and young people's workers.

For further information on any of the above or if you would like to speak to Pastor Dave:

Phone: 01638 781343 (Church Office)

01638 780636 (Pastor's home)

Email: pastor@plfc.org.uk or secretary@plfc.org.uk

Web site: www.plfc.org.uk

Full details of all our services, events, core beliefs and contact details are on our website: www.plfc.org.uk

Operation Christmas Child

We can tell you that boxes from the West Anglia warehouse went to Liberia, Central Asia and Albania, the warehouse processed over 40,000 boxes, of which just under 1,000 were collected at plfc. If you enclosed a barcode in with your boxes you should be hearing soon which country your box went to.

In these uncertain times, who can predict what will be open in the next few months? We try to keep our website up-to-date with what is open and what restrictions are in place. The last services we will close are the Sunday services and Coffee Mornings, so please do join us, if you are able to in worship on Sundays.

It would also be great to see you on Thursdays for Coffee Morning any time between 10.00am to 11.30am to meet friends, enjoy lovely homemade cakes, sausage rolls and cheese scones and an interesting 8 minutes of 'In the News this week'. The seating is well spaced, ventilation good, and all who serve food and drinks are taking a COVID LFT before the meeting and all good hygiene practices are observed. There is no charge for coming or for refreshments.

8 minutes of 'In the News this week'? If the answer is "yes" then please join us at plfc on a Thursday morning from 10.00am to 11.30am. The seating is well spaced, ventilation good, all who serve food and drinks are taking a COVID LFT before the meeting and all good hygiene practices are observed. There is no charge for coming or for refreshments.

Beeches Entertainers

It's (nearly) Panto Time! Oh yes it is!

The Beeches Entertainers have started rehearsals for this year's eagerly awaited Pantomime, Aladdin. Oh yes they have!

Having been postponed from 2020, the team are now back on track to get the production on stage at The Beeches on April 1st & 2nd. And there will be some different faces this year too.

"We're delighted to welcome some new members to the team for the pantomime. You'll see them as some of the main characters as well as in the chorus. It's great to see The Beeches Entertainers' team growing and reaching new people, and we'd love to see some new faces in the audiences as well. We know how much the panto is loved by the village and we hope that anyone who hasn't been before will come along this year for some fun."

"Rehearsals are taking place in accordance with government guidelines and by doing that we'll be doing all we can to keep everyone safe and well, and of course we're hoping we don't get a repeat of what happened in 2020 when we were just two weeks' away from going on stage when we had to cancel."

"We really look forward to getting back on stage and bringing fun and enjoyment for all the family. There's a baddie to boo (please do!), lots of laughs, some great sing-a-long songs, and of course, it's a great story. As usual there will be prizes for the children's fancy dress competition and plenty of chances for audience participation, so we want as many people as possible to come along and join in the fun!"

Tickets for The Beeches Entertainers production of Aladdin are going to be on sale at the Isleham Markets at The Beeches on February 19th and March 19th and other dates for ticket sales will be announced on The Beeches Entertainers Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/beechesentertainers>.

Tickets are £8 for adults and £4 for children (please note that it is cash sales only).



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On the slow train.....

Windows that slide up and down, and that you lean out of to open the door, the hiss of steam and smell of coal and hot oil, the chug of pistons gathering speed, that distant whistle ...

The Great Eastern Cambridge to Mildenhall single track branch line was just under twenty miles long and had 8 stations and 3 halts. How many of the eight can you name?* Construction began January 1883. The first section between Barnwell Junction and Fordham opened for passenger traffic June 1884 and the line was completed the following year at a total cost of £76,327. Four trains per day were timetabled each with First, Second, and Third class carriages. A speed limit of 30 mph was in force over the whole route in both directions. Fordham was a junction having originally been built on the Ely to Newmarket line. Isleham was sixteen and three quarter miles from Cambridge. The station had an Up and a Down platform and the main building with its ornate canopy included a Booking Office, a Parcels Office, a Waiting Room and the Station Master's house. There was also a goods yard with a coal merchant's shed. It seems rather good value at £2170 doesn't it? Isleham's first Station Master was George Vipan who held that position from 1885 to 1893.

Trains left Cambridge at 7.15am, 9.35am, 12.30pm and 5.53pm arriving Mildenhall at 8.55am, 10.37am, 1.25pm and 6.45pm.

Business was brisk. In 1892 10,175 passengers boarded the train at Mildenhall and 11,128 tons of goods and coal were dealt with there. By 1919 five trains a day were running each way but by 1922 that was back to four although the halts at Fen Ditton, Exning Road and Worlington Golf links had been added. A 'Market Day' return ticket Worlington to Cambridge cost 3s.11d.

Isleham Station, early 20th century

1939 brought blacked-out carriages, dimly lit stations and crowded trains. During the war on Dec. 4th 1940 there was an occasion when enemy aircraft dropped three high explosive bombs in what was an unusual aircraft attack on a minor branch line passenger train which had just left Exning Road Halt. Happily no fatalities

Nationalisation came to the railways in 1948 but does not seem to have greatly affected the line.

During the 1950's excursions to Yarmouth, Skegness and other places were popular, with trains carrying nearly two hundred passengers. Outgoing goods traffic from Isleham and Fordham consisted of flowers (often three or four hundred boxes a day), soft fruit, trees and sugar beet. Inward would be coal, coke, cattle food and fertilizer.

Diesel units were introduced in 1956 with 128 seats in two carriages. After two years diesel trains replaced the steam engines.

Rationalisation. 1961 'passenger rail facilities are

greater than can be justified for the sparsely populated area...it is proposed to convert Quy and Isleham to unstaffed public sidings'.

By 1962 it was becoming clear that the Cambridge - Mildenhall line would close for passenger traffic. Seventy seven years of complete and steady service... but the era was nearly over. British Rail sent out gangs of men to dismantle stations leaving a bare minimum of facilities for single line freight working. The last passenger train left Mildenhall on 16 June 1962 and the last goods train, carrying mainly sugar beet, on 10 July 1964. Change and decay set in. Much of the line has been taken up or overgrown or built over.

Fortunately for us a stretch of the line on The Isleham-Fordham Road is well cared for and managed by the volunteer Friends of Isleham Nature Reserve to support a range of wildlife habitats.

Can someone fill in the history of the station post-closure please, and the Tenrich Tyre connection and present occupancy?

All the above information comes from a booklet 'By Rail to Mildenhall' published by Mildenhall Museum in 1978 and lent to me by John Shead, and from 'The Mildenhall Branch' lent to me by Colin Cresswell.

I close with the Postscript to the Mildenhall Museum booklet, - and an invitation to send to me any stories you may have about the glory days when Isleham was connected to the outside world by train!

'The familiar sights and sounds of this country branch have passed away. The engine whistle, the slamming of carriage doors, the smell of smoke and steam on a crisp clear morning or a foggy wintry evening, are now no more. For many this branch is but a name on a map, to others it was half a lifetime's work, while to many more their journeys on it are largely forgotten.' If you are into nostalgia for the bye gone railway times listen to Flanders and Swann 'The Slow Train' and read Edward Thomas' poem 'Addlestrop'.

*The eight were Barnwell Junction, Stow-Cum-Quy, Bottisham and Lode, Swaffham Prior, Burwell, Fordham, Isleham, Mildenhall

A personal memory. Colin Cresswell has kindly described for us what the journey to Soham was like for a secondary school boy fifty years ago.

After being accustomed to walking, scootering or riding to the local school for six years, the 20-40 minutes bus journey to Soham must come as a bit of a shock to many of Isleham's 11year olds; and that's to say nothing of the walk to, and wait for, the bus with the possibility of rain and the cold of winter.

So it might be interesting to compare the same journey for those transferring to secondary school in Soham more than half a century ago.

It was an early start to cycle to the railway station in time for the first train at approx. 7.30am. The ride along Station Road would often develop into a wild chase as the smoke from the approaching train rose

Cont'd on page 16

Cont'd from page 15

between the fields in the direction of Mildenhall where its journey had started. Mrs Dennis, a gracious, long suffering lady, allowed cycles to be left in her small yard just prior to the station approach. All too often they were heaved in one on top of another in the mad rush to reach the station and cross the line to the Fordham bound platform.

On particularly cold mornings another generous person, Mr Raven the signalman, would invite frozen youngsters (when either they were early or the train was late) to enjoy the roaring fire in his signal box. This was all the more welcome because the heating system in the two or three ancient carriages which made up the train usually produced far more steam than heat!!

However, there was little time to settle into the chilly seats before a change had to be made at Fordham, the next station along the line. There it was a matter of waiting for the connecting train to arrive from Newmarket before another one-station hop to Soham. Had the school been a little nearer to the station there might not have been much more to be said but the distance at the Soham end was longer than the cycle ride in Isleham – and now of course, the cycles which would have eased the distance were back in Mrs Dennis' yard !!

The walk around Mill Corner, along the length of Clay Street and into High Street was a long one but there were numerous gateways and passages between houses so, with little traffic about and plenty of time since the journey from home had begun so early, the boys enjoyed some hectic games of football on the way. Retrieving the ball from gardens and yards could take up time but there was no excuse for being late at journey's end - the school playground! Overall, upwards of an hour was spent getting to school in those days; that was when the trains were on time!

The homeward train did not leave Soham until nearly 5pm so there was time after school for some homework, a detention (!) or a leisurely game of football along Clay Street. But again this

often concluded with a frantic dash along the station approach road when the distant signal indicated that the train was imminent.

For those arriving at the station in good time there was another experience which surely would not occur if the trains were still running today. Inexplicably, the little-used Soham station, still with makeshift buildings that dated from the disastrous explosion on an ammunition train towards the end of World War 2, boasted a W H Smith bookstall. And, perhaps even more unbelievably, the manager allowed the lads to borrow comics and other magazines to read on the nearby benches – well within his line of sight, of course! This may well have been the most people he had seen all day.

And so the morning journey was reversed with the change in Fordham and an arrival in Isleham station of about 5.20pm. During the winter months that meant cycling or walking home in the dark at the end of a full day, up to three hours of which were spent in travelling.

The journey now is not quite so varied but thankfully nor is it quite as time consuming!

Mark Fletcher
Isleham Society



Pictures from The Isleham Society photo collection

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ISLEHAM MARKET...



Returns on Saturday the 19th February 2022 (10am - 1pm)

We look forward to welcoming back our stallholders and customers again at our monthly markets.

We are always in search of new stallholders. Would you like a stall? If so, please contact Finn at the-beechesisleham@gmail.com for more information.

- Saturday 19th February
- Saturday 19th March
- Saturday 16th April
- Saturday 21st May
- Saturday 11th June
- Saturday 16th July - NO MARKET IN AUGUST
- Saturday 17th September
- Saturday 15th October

Our Christmas Market 2022 date is yet to be finalised. but please keep an eye out for details on our Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/IslehamCommunityCentre

See you soon The Beeches



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