

Issue 59
Apr 2026 — May2026



WEST ROW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

There will be a PARISH REFERENDUM held on 7TH MAY 2026 to decide whether the Plan, produced by West Row Parish Council, is approved. If there is a majority YES vote, then the Plan will be used to guide future development in the Parish through to 2041. See further details on back page for more info.



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Scan to EMAIL

DIARY DATES

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NEXT ISSUE:

Published June

Our deadline for

June/July 2026

is:

15th May 2026 12 p.m.

Please email Helen Webber at
helen.webber60@gmail.com

100 Club Winner

Congratulations to this
time's winner

Sandra Shipp

£71.00

For Further information or to
join, contact Sharon The Parish
clerk at

clerk@westrow-pc.gov.uk

The 100 Club helps support
the printing of the Parish

<u>April</u>			
Fri 3rd	Baptist Chapel	Good Friday Service All Welcome	6.00 p.m.
Sun 5th	Baptist Chapel	Easter Morning Easter Evening All Welcome	10.45 a.m. 6 p.m
Sun 5th	St Peter's Church	Holy Communion	11.00 a.m.
Mon 6th	Car Park Near Bowls Club	Easter Egg Scavenger	10.00 a.m.
Sun 12th	St Peter's Church	Holy Communion	11.00 a.m.
Sun 19th	St Peter's Church	Morning Worship with APCM	11.00 a.m.
Tues 21st	Baptist Chapel	Community Lunch Contact Richard 07796 616679	12.30 p.m
Sat 25th	Bowls Club	Bingo	7 p.m
Sun 26th	St Peter's Church	Holy Communion	11.00 a.m.
	Please Note	No Fish & Chips This month	
<u>May</u>			
Sun 3rd	St Peter's Church	Sunday Celebration	11.00 a.m.
Sat 9th	Baptist Chapel	Cream Tea & Wet Felt Picture Workshop See Page 5	10 a.m.
Sun 10th	St Peter's Church	Holy Communion	11.00 a.m.
Sun 17th	St Peter's Church	Sunday Celebration	11.00 a.m.
Tues 19th	Baptist Chapel	Community Lunch Contact Richard 07796 616679	12.30 p.m
Thurs 21st	Parish Office	Annual Meeting with Nick Timothy	7 p.m
Sun 24th	St Peter's Church	Holy Communion	11.00 a.m.
Fri 29th	West Row Village Hall	Fish & Chip Lunch	12.30 p.m.
Sat 30th	Bowls Club	Bingo	7 p.m

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A note from the EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the Spring edition of the West Row Echo which I hope you will have time to read and perhaps take some actions!

As usual, Down The Shed, on page 15, gives a detailed report of activities and shows its appreciation to the villagers who offer their services to keep this valuable facility going.

The ever expanding and pro active Bowls Club has an informative report, especially cementing Anglo - American relationships. Full details can be found on Page 22.

Don't forget to have your say, by voting, for the West Row Neighbourhood Plan, details of which are on the last page of the ECHO.

A reminder to all the youngsters in the Village that there is an Easter Egg Hunt on 6th. April. See page 31 for further details.

On page 26, is a very interesting article 'Helping Children Become Confident Readers'. With so many children entering school nowadays lacking basic skills and some never having picked up a book, the article is of great help to parents and grandparents. It would be interesting to hear from any villager their response to this article.

Wishing all readers a very Happy Easter.
Peter Rolfe
Editor

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First Quiz of 2026 answers

- 1. Cobbler 2. Black Velvet 3. Baked Alaska 4. Sauternes 5. Nut roast 6. Milk stout 7. Pancake
- 8. Gorgonzola 9. Whisky Mac 10. Bitter Lemon 11. Laver bread 12. Ovaltine 13. Treacle tart
- 14. Lemon Meringue pie 15. Mineral water 16. Pickled Herring 17. Shandy 18. Hot dog
- 19. Cappuccino 20. Prosecco

There were 13 entries, eight with all 20 correct answers, and the winner, drawn by lot, was Ann Matthews, Folly Road, Mildenhall.

The Parish Echo editorial team takes no responsibility for endorsements of, or statements made in published adverts which are accepted in good faith. However, we reserve the right to refuse any advertisement, article, or item that we feel is considered inappropriate for publication.

UPCOMING EVENTS



B **BINGO NIGHT**
WITH MERV & CO
at
**West Row
Bowls Club**
Saturday
25th
April
7:00-7:30PM
GREAT PRIZES!
MUST BE 18+ TO PLAY
Licenced Bar - Raffle
for more details - Ring 01842 861618

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B **BINGO NIGHT**
WITH MERV & CO
at
**West Row
Bowls Club**
Saturday
30th
May
7:00-7:30PM
GREAT PRIZES!
MUST BE 18+ TO PLAY
Licenced Bar - Raffle
for more details - Ring 01842 861618

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BETLE DRIVE GAME & RAFFLE

Saturday 25th April 2026 2pm to 4pm

Mildenhall Social Club Pavilion £5 a ticket

Please purchase in advance for catering purposes

In aid of the Mildenhall & District Poppy Appeal

Charity Number 219279 Please contact

Poppy Appeal Organiser Marion 07751 196867

Deputy Appeal Organiser Helen 07309 114235

Raffle prizes are always appreciated.

St Peter's Church West Row Presents



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Trevor Nichols*

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May 16 at 7p.m.

Tickets £15 each

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**CHEESE
AND
WINE**



UPCOMING EVENTS



Sat 4th April 2026

drop in from

10:00 to 12:00

@ St. Peter's Church

West Row

It's Free!

Easter Crafts, Refreshments and Fun

St. Peter's, West Row is by the War Memorial

Saturday 9th May

10 O/C

West Row Baptist Church

Cream Tea & Wet Felt Picture Workshop

(In aid of Caring For Life)

If wishing to attend or find out more

Contact Louise

07900 272662



Advertising Rates

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to discuss your advertising
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clerk@westrow-pc.gov.uk/07860 358493

Please see the current advertising rates for the
year. This cover 6 editions and we currently
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Size	Dimensions & Orientation	Colour
Eighth of a page of A4	96.5mm x 67.5mm Landscape	£25.00
Quarter of a Page of A4	96.5mm x 140mm Landscape or Portrait	£45.00
Half a Page of A4	198mm x 140mm Landscape	£90.00
Full Page A4	210mm x 297mm Portrait	£120.00

FORTHCOMING POPPY APPEAL EVENTS FOR 2026

SATURDAY 25TH April—Beetle Drive

The Pavillion Hall at Mildenhall Social Club
2-4 p.m. £5 a ticket in advance

Saturday 27th June—Armed Forces Afternoon Tea

Riverside Hotel £20—2—5.30 p.m
Includes a singer to entertain

Saturday 11th July - Bus Trip to The Hut at Felixstowe

From Mildenhall Bus Station at 9 a.m. Departs from
Felixstowe at 4.30 p.m—
Plus Fish & Chip Lunch available to order

Saturday 22nd August - Bus Trip to Sheringham - Poppy Line Steam Trains Festival on the Rails Event

Can be booked direct on 01263 820800—L eave
Mildenhall Bus Station at 9 a.m. Sheringham at 4.30
p.m—£20

Wednesday 11th November—Remembrance 2 Course Lunch & Concert at the Riverside Hotel £25—1-4.30 pm

Saturday 5th December—Bus Trip to Norwich for Shopping, Sightseeing & Peter Pan the Pantomime

To book direct with the Theatre Royal 01603 630000
Departs Mildenhall Bus Station at 9 a.m—Departs from
Theatre Street Norwich at 4.30 p.m—£20

Marion 07751 196867

Introducing the West Row Academy Parents & Friends Association



West Row village school sits at the heart of our community and it gives me great pleasure to share that the Parents & Friends Association and all the fantastic contributions they make to the school have been able to continue, with a new committee voted in this January.

We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the previous committee for all the hard work they did raising funds and putting on brilliant events for pupils. As a brand new committee stepping in we have big boots to fill but are looking forward to the challenge.

Our fundraising efforts kicked off with a Valentine's Day bake sale and the support was overwhelmingly positive, raising £280 to go towards school trips and resources, directly benefitting pupils. There are more events in the pipeline for the rest of the Spring and Summer terms, and we are actively looking for new ways to fundraise and make connections with the wider West Row community.

If you are a parent, relative or carer of a child at West Row Academy do consider volunteering with us - we're a very friendly bunch and there are a variety of ways you can get involved, from helping at events to promoting our work on social media. Contact Harriet Horsham if interested via harriet_horsham@hotmail.co.uk Anyone with children at the school is also very welcome to join our Facebook group - just search for West Row Academy PFA.

We look forward to working more closely with the wider village community and can't wait to share all our exciting plans with you

Harriet Horsham

Chairperson and Co-Trustee
West Row Academy PFA



West Row Academy PFA at our Valentine's Day bake sale

Clerk: Sharon Vale

Email : clerk@westrow-pc.gov.uk

Website : <https://westrow-pc.gov.uk>

Parish Update - April 2026— May 2026



Cemetery

Suffolk County Council are very close to transferring a parcel of land on Chapel Road to the Parish Council for the creation of our Non-Denomination Cemetery.

Our plan has been submitted, and we are hopeful that planning permission will be granted in the near future. More details will follow.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood plan is in it's final stages.

The Plan that we have been working on recently completed the "independent examination" stage, where it was reviewed by a government inspector, and has been approved to proceed to the final step, which is to hold a local referendum. This vote will take place alongside the County Council elections on 7th May. If the Plan is approved, then West Suffolk Council will be legally required to follow it from now through to 2041. Therefore, this is an important vote and an opportunity for the Parish to have a say in its future. Please see the back page and separate leaflet for more details.

Easter Egg Hunt

On Easter Monday the 6th of April, we will be hosting our Village Easter Egg Hunt based around the Parish Office and in the area of the football field and play area.

This will include a scavenger walk which when completed will be rewarded with an Easter Egg, and there will be face painting and refreshments provided.

Please come along with your children for a fun time. More information can be found Page 31 in the Echo.

Speeding within the Village

You may have noticed that Pott Hall Road now has White sharks teeth and 30 roundals painted on the road surface.

This was an action we took after residents asked us to do something to try to slow down the traffic along Pott Hall Road.

I would like to thank Colin Noble for covering 50% of the cost of this work.

I was disappointed to discover that a tractor hit the Speed Indicator Device located on Pott Hall Road, it has caused considerable damage to the unit, and may result in it being out of operation for a while.

Parish Keeper

Our Parish Keeper started work at the tail end of February, and has started making improvements to the footpath between West Row and Mildenhall, and already we have had comments from residents saying that they are pleased with what he is doing.

This work is a bit like painting the forth bridge, and as he only works for us a few hours a week, it will take time to tidy all the areas of the village we would like to tackle.

If anybody has any thoughts of any areas in the village that require some TLC please contact The Parish Clerk or any Councillor.

Defibrillator

Our Defibrillators have been deployed on 2 occasions lately, but I am pleased to report that on both occasions, they were not required to be used.

Dates for your Diary

6th April, Easter Monday Easter Egg Hunt to take place near the Village Play Area more details to follow .

21st May Annual Parish Meeting—Your Local MP Nick Timothy will be attending for an Open Question time.

More details to follow.

Remember: Parish Councillors meet 3rd Wednesday 7pm in the Parish Office (the old Outdoor Bowls Club). Members of the public are most welcome. Ideas of what you think we should consider. Contact Sharon Vale – Parish Clerk.

Parish Surgeries are usually held in the Parish Office, 3rd Saturday of each month, 10am-11am. All welcome to attend and to bring your concerns to the Parish Councillors' attention. If you'd like clarification on anything the PC is involved in, just come along and ask.

Alan Fisher, Chair

LAKENHEATH FEN RSPB

March is the month of the Crane at RSPB Lakenheath Fen

When March comes around, the arrival of early spring is undeniable and the wildlife is changing thick and fast. The first of our migrant birds are here- such as the beautifully-patterned and very shy Garganey, a delicate duck that breeds within the reedbeds out of sight and sound of all of us. The first Sand Martins and Swallows will be back and Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs will be singing all over the reserve.

March is also when our Cranes really get going- as it is the month when they should begin to incubate their eggs. If you were to visit us in the coming weeks, there is a good chance you will hear them- both males and females emit an extraordinary, ghostly and exotic-sounding 'bugle' when they are courting each other or defending their territory. Cranes generally mate for life, but they will invest in re-affirming their pair bond ahead of laying eggs, which includes complex dancing sequences involving energetic leaps into the air and even pirouettes. Bugling accompanies this and despite being social throughout winter, once a pair has decided to settle back into their breeding grounds, they become very territorial.

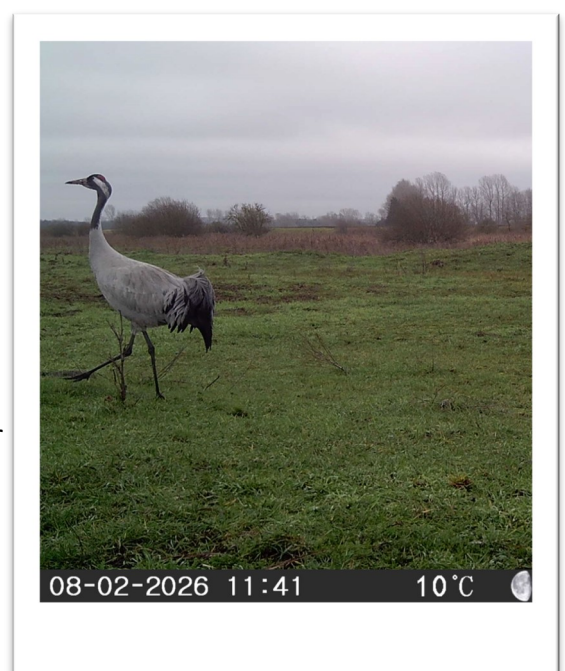
We have three pairs at present at RSPB Lakenheath Fen, who we refer to as A2, B2 and C2. We are sometimes criticised for not 'naming' the birds with more romantic names but there is a useful logic to our system- the letter refers to the area they nest in and the number to the current pair who occupies the plot- so A2 are the second pair in our history to have occupied territory A. A2 are our oldest pair- they have nested with us for many years and have quite a good success rate with raising chicks, but they haven't managed to do so for two years. B2 came along for the first time in 2020 and we believe they were a new pairing of first-time breeders because they seemed inexperienced. We observed them from afar leaving their eggs unattended, and we later found out they laid them close to a path in their first year- making them an easy target for passing ground predators. However, they learnt quickly and in 2021 fledged their first chick- and they now have 5 under their belt, having raised two chicks for the past two years.

Pair C2 are our newest pair and turned up early in 2025- they didn't seem to attempt to nest which is normal behaviour for young birds, or perhaps something wasn't to their liking in their newly-acquired territory. However, they are back, which reassuringly shows us their intention is to breed here this year- so we wait to see what is in store for them. Towards the end of March, we expect each pair to lay two eggs which will take around a month to hatch. Then, ten to twelve weeks of constant and careful supervision by their parents lies ahead- and with luck, one or both of the young birds will reach flying age. The odds of this happening for each individual chick at our reserve is around 40%, which is incredible given how many risks these birds face from adverse weather, ground predators and the eagle eyes of Marsh Harriers when they are very young- who will have their own chicks to feed and support. Their parents do a wonderful job and we will do our best to support them to raise their young in ideal habitat with minimum disturbance.

We hope to update you towards the end of the summer with how the Cranes have done- hopefully with some lovely images from our trail cameras which we use to keep an eye on them remotely.

Heidi Jones (Visitor Experience Officer, RSPB Lakenheath Fen).

Image from trail camera showing a crane- the male bird of Pair C2- credited to the RSPB.



LAKENHEATH FEN RSPB DIARY DATES

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

Spring Wildlife Walks

28 March, 19 April, 31 May (9:30am-12:30pm)

Join us to celebrate what Spring has to offer- we will go looking for the warblers, Cuckoos and Hobbies that have recently arrived back from Africa. We should hear booming Bitterns too!

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

Spring Open Day

Sunday 19 April (9am-5pm)

For one day only we will be offering free entry to all at RSPB Lakenheath Fen. We hope this day helps everyone to enjoy the reserve, especially if you haven't been here before.

Moth Mornings

27 March, 24 April, 29 May (10am to 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 18's); non-RSPB members £6 (£3 for Under 18's).

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

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

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

Join in with Harrier & Bittern Nest Watches

Tuesdays 12 & 26 May (also 9 June) (7:30am – 12:30pm)

Join a warden for the morning to help us carry out Marsh Harrier and Bittern nesting surveys. You will sit atop high seats with spectacular views across the reedbeds. Please feel free to bring your camera and ask questions.

Pastries and hot drinks will be provided for breakfast, as well as transport down the reserve.

RSPB members £64; non-RSPB members £80.

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Or visit our website westrowvillagehall.co.uk or visit us on Facebook

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(pwldance.co.uk)

TUES 7-8pm

"Pilates for All" – Karen Peachey-Gallagher. All abilities & ages. Contact Karen (07554 119550)

THURS 6-6.45pm

"STEP AEROBICS" – Open to everyone! Booking essential. Contact Karen Peachey-Gallagher (07554 119550)

THURS 7.30-9.30pm

Jive Class – contact Caroline 07886 492772

FRI 12.30pm

Monthly Fish & Chip Lunch & Social— Contact Alan Fisher (07715 957292)
email: churchman14@btinternet.com

FRI 5.30-7.30pm

Martial Arts Training with Darren Hart. Children & Adults welcome –
contact Darren on 07717 886917

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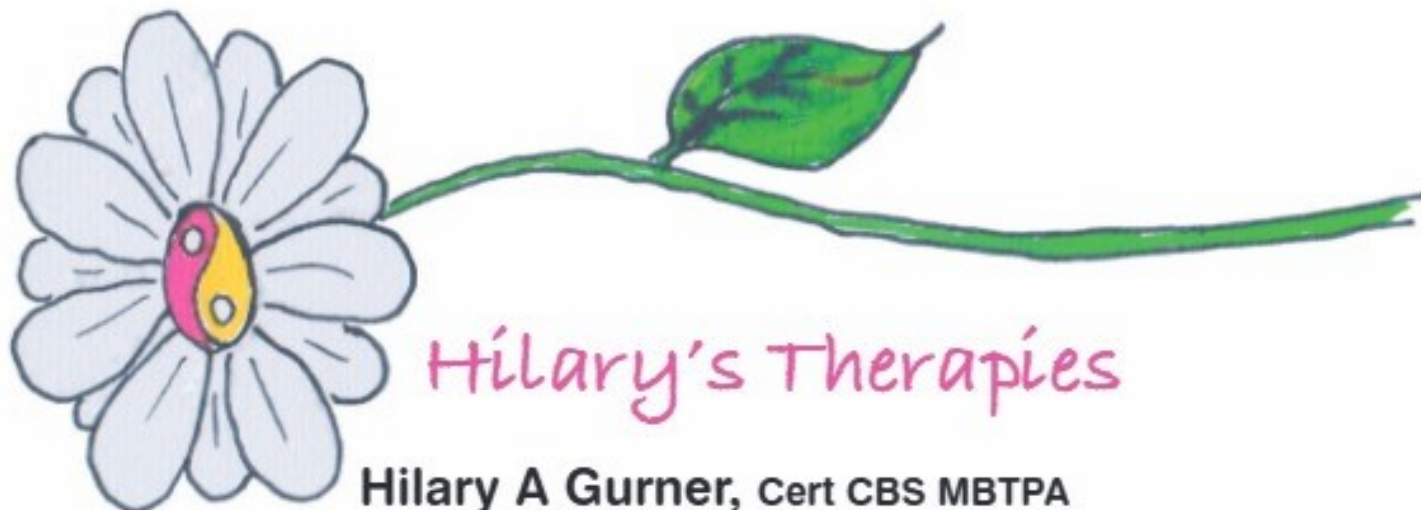


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- THURSDAYS 11AM- ST JOHNS COMMUNITY CENTRE, MILDENHALL.
- THURSDAYS 2PM- ST MARYS HOUSE, MILDENHALL.
- FRIDAY 11AM- PARKWAY HOUSE, BURY ST EDMUNDS.
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DOWN THE SHED April 2026 — May 2026

theshedcharity@gmail.com

WELCOME EVERYONE to the Spring edition. If you are interested in what we do – swing over to our Facebook page “The Shed”

The video will be on the front page for a short while, if not visible, go to “Media”, then “Videos” and click on it to run.

It needs tweaking and remains work in progress.

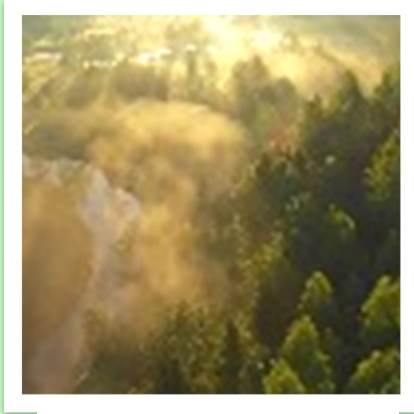
Hopefully you will see improvements made and understand what we are about. *Namely to provide a haven for those seeking solace or company. Refreshments and/or exercise. A calm place away from noise - well apart from aeroplanes, building works and the occasional lawnmower.*

We also provide sustenance for those going through tough times. We stock ambient supplies (tinned food, cereals, dried goods, and the basics to get by.) All supplied by our kind local supermarkets.

Visit Little Shed where we have a plentiful supply of bread and pastries, your chance to try something new. Please keep the lids on the clear boxes (for obvious reasons), so replace any that have “slipped”. We thank Ian “999 Pest Control” for keeping our furry friends away, and Bill for keeping the weeds at bay.

We also highlight other volunteers who don’t usually get a mention: **Dave (and Viv)** for collecting supermarket supplies and his carpentry skills when asked. **Kim, Chrystal and Chris** who stepped in to fill the breach while Jan is recovering from surgery. These are out in all weathers collecting, then displaying and rotating the fresh veg. and bread, so you have a fabulous selection.

Speaking of food collections, these heroes are up at the crack of dawn – or roaming the roads in the dead of night to bring the stock back home. Listed by their collection days:



A Year at The Shed 2026

Nicoleta and Brian Butcher
Dave and Viv Bowers
Geoff and Geraldine Dabrowa
Peter Alder, Chris Markham,
Paul Winbolt, & last but certainly not least: Kim Misch:
We also thank Janine Hamill, Roxanne Whitmore and Nicola Rash for St. Mary’s

We also thank Maxine, Stacey and Danielle who help out at Little Shed.

These guys keep the stocks rolling in - and out, without whom we could not help others.

This edition is also time to thank our regular volunteers.

And down Memory Corner, here is a picture of the original Band of Brothers. Some familiar faces and some long overdue a visit ??



Our current volunteers include Paul H. (Head Gardener), Jackie (2nd Head Gardener), Penny, Viv and Dave, Kim, Jan, Jet2 Ann, Michael and Jean, and Ian. Newbies are Luke and James. All welcome and very much needed

NEW ACTIVITIES:

In May we hope to host our Annual Spring Fling when everyone can enjoy our facilities, some food and great company.

We are in the process of erecting Little Shed Take 2, spring cleaning plans include painting EVERYTHING, staining furniture and cleaning anything that is not nailed down.

Our new Pantry is up and running, **PLUS** we will be opening our Tea Room once the weather improves.

If you can help – you will be made most welcome. (07887 668 145). Email above

If you can visit - please do. Tues, Thurs & / or Saturday’s from 10am

OPERATION TURTLE DOVE



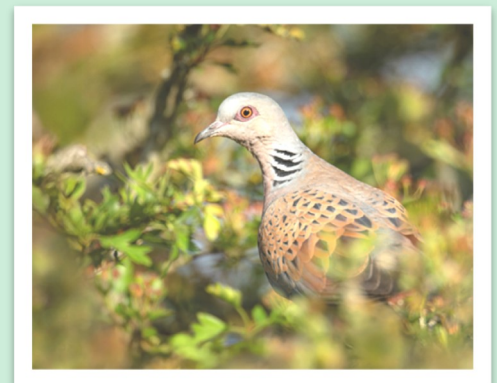
Have you heard the distinctive 'purring' call of a Turtle Dove in your town, village or garden over the summer? Perhaps you have spotted a 'different looking dove while out walking the dog or walking to school? This striking bird of the British summertime is a long-distance migratory bird from Africa arriving in Britain in April and staying through the summer before departing back south in September.

This small member of the dove family is identifiable by its black barring on the neck, unique and distinctive tortoiseshell patterning on the wings and bold black tail with bright white edge band.

Sadly, with a decline of 99% since the 1960s, primarily thought to be due to loss of suitable nesting habitat, Turtle Doves are on the Birds of Conservation Concern Red List (BOCC is compiled by a coalition of the UK's leading bird conservation and monitoring organisations and reviews the status of all regularly occurring birds in the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man). The Red List currently consists of 70 species which are globally threatened, have a historical population decline, or a decline of at least 50% of the UK breeding population in the last 25 years.

Operation Turtle Dove is a partnership between the RSPB, Fair to Nature, the Pensthorpe Conservation Trust, and Natural England with the shared aim to 'Get Britain Turtle Dove Ready' and help recover the population by providing advice and assistance on creating and increasing suitable Turtle Dove breeding habitat.

In Breckland, Matt Horsham works part time as a Community Project Officer, offering Turtle Dove advice and support to small landowners and community groups. This will complement the ongoing work by farmers to help build up the network of suitable habitat across the Brecks.



If you have seen or been told of Turtle Doves in your area or are interested in managing your wild spaces (such as community gardens, parks, smallholdings etc) for Turtle Doves, then Operation Turtle Dove would love to hear from you.

Contact: www.operationturtledove.org/contact

Further Information

Operation Turtle Dove website: www.operationturtledove.org

Turtle Dove Bird Facts: www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/turtle-dove

Birds of Conservation Concern (Red List): www.bto.org/our-work/science/publications/reports/birds-conservation-concern



Positive Signs for Our School

As Chair of Governors, I wanted to take the opportunity to share some encouraging developments at the Academy.

Over recent months, there has been a noticeable change in the level of interest and involvement from parents. More families are engaging with the school, attending events and offering their support. This growing participation is a strong sign that the improvements being made are being seen and valued, and it has created a more positive and welcoming atmosphere around the school.

I am also pleased to say that there are no vacancies on the Governing Board for the first time in many years and very soon you will be able to visit the school website to see who the Governors are, their various roles on the Governing Board and a little about each of them. This is a significant milestone and provides the school with a strong foundation of commitment, skills and shared purpose as we continue to move forward.

Alongside this, the Parent and Friends Association has been revitalised with new members and fresh enthusiasm. Their first event, a cake sale, was extremely successful and demonstrated just how much can be achieved when people come together. It was a lovely example of the school and community connecting in a simple but meaningful way.

These are important steps, but they are just the beginning. We want our school to be a place that sits at the very heart of West Row village life — a school that the community feels proud of and involved in. There are many ways to contribute, whether through volunteering, supporting events, sharing ideas or simply being present.

If you have ever considered getting involved, now is a wonderful time to do so. Together, we can continue to build a thriving school that serves our children and brings our village community even closer together.

Thank you all for your ongoing support, it is really appreciated.

Evan King

Chair of Governors



From the Pastor's Desk

evan@westrowbaptistchurch.org.uk

From Suitcases to Scribbles: Easter Reflections from a Desk, not a Distant Shore

This article was meant to be written somewhere very different. If all had gone to plan, I would by now be enjoying the warmth of Goa or looking out across the Indian Ocean in Sri Lanka, notebook resting beside me as the days slipped by slowly. Instead, I am at my desk at home, the kettle having boiled more times than I care to admit, the suitcase still in the corner of the room, empty, and our flights changed and scheduled for later in the week, not stopping off in the gulf as had been planned.

The reason is not illness or poor organisation. It is war. The current conflict involving Iran has once again shown how events far beyond our village can reach quietly into ordinary lives. Travel routes close, advice changes, and suddenly plans that felt solid dissolve overnight. For most of us, war feels distant — something we encounter through headlines and news bulletins. It belongs elsewhere. And yet here I am, not in a hotel room but at my desk, because “elsewhere” still has consequences

Life in West Row continues much as usual. Dogs are walked, greetings exchanged, bins put out on the right day. The river keeps moving at its unhurried pace. Yet the same world that allows us this calm is also capable of great disorder. The contrast is unsettling.

Of course, a delayed and shortened holiday is a small inconvenience compared with what many are facing: violence, displacement, loss, and fear. Still, even a minor disruption can serve as a reminder that the sense of control we feel over our lives is more fragile than we like to admit.

While sitting at my desk, I found myself thinking of Jesus' words in Matthew 24:6–14, where He speaks of wars and rumours of wars, nations in conflict, and hearts troubled by fear. His message is not that such things are unusual, but that they are to be expected in a fallen world. History, according to Jesus, will not steadily improve until human effort finally fixes everything. Instead, it will be marked by brokenness right up to the end. Yet His instruction is striking: do not be alarmed. Not because suffering does not matter, but because turmoil does not mean God has lost control.

As we approach Easter, this matters deeply. The Christian faith does not pretend the world is better than it is. It insists the opposite. According to the Bible, the root problem is not merely political or social, but spiritual. The disorder we see “out there” reflects a deeper disorder “in here” — in the human heart. This is where Easter speaks most clearly. The message of Easter is not that Jesus came to offer encouragement while we muddle through. It is that He came to deal decisively with sin, judgement, and death itself. Easter reminds us that salvation is not achieved by human improvement or moral effort, but by God's grace alone. Jesus lived the life we have not lived, died the death sinners deserve, and rose again in victory. His resurrection is God's declaration that the debt of sin has been paid in full. Forgiveness is not earned; it is received by repentance and faith — by turning from sin and trusting in Christ alone for salvation.

This also explains why the Bible speaks so plainly about Christ's return. Easter does not remove judgement; it guarantees it. The risen Christ will return, not only as Saviour, but as Judge. And that truth is not meant to terrify those who trust Him, but to assure them. Those who belong to Christ need not fear the final day, because judgement has already fallen — at the cross. God through Matthew 24 in the Bible does not call us to panic or speculation. He calls us to readiness. Not readiness in the sense of stockpiling supplies or decoding headlines, but readiness of heart.

In village life, hope often looks very ordinary: checking on a neighbour, showing kindness, carrying on faithfully. But Christian hope goes deeper than optimism about tomorrow's news. It rests on the certainty of what Easter declares — that Christ is risen, reigning, and returning. I have rebooked our holiday. Planes will fly again until Jesus returns, and routes will reopen. But the interruption has left me with a question that lingers, and one that feels especially appropriate in a season that looks to both the cross and the empty tomb.

So, from my desk rather than a distant shore, I leave you with this: If Christ were to return today — to judge the living and the dead — have you repented of your sin and trusted in Him for salvation, so that you will enjoy the life hereafter? In short: are you ready for the end of the world?

I really hope so!

Evan

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” John 14 v 6



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WEST ROW

BOWLS CLUB NEWS

The Indoor season will soon be coming to a close. Most League positions have been finalised and the latter stages of the knockout cup competitions are being played as well as the Club competitions.

The Club's Finals weekend will be held on 11th. & 12th. April.

In February, the Club hosted twelve USAF personnel from the 100th Air Fuelling Wing. All attending received basic coaching in bowls and a couple of competitions were held. About a dozen club members helped out and refreshments were provided which were appreciated by all who attended.



The Club finished runners up in the Suffolk mixed County League, just one point behind Risbygate IBC. The Men's County League team are hoping for a mid table finish.

During the past indoor season, ten new bowlers have joined the Club and as a reminder, anyone who wishes to try out the sport should come along to the Club on a Wednesday evening, from 6.00 p.m. - 7.00p.m. The first five coaching sessions are offered free of charge and then anyone wishing to join is asked to pay a Beginner membership fee of £20. This entitles a Beginner member to practise at any time the Club is open and a rink is free. A rink fee of £2.00 per hour is charged. A selection of bowls and shoes are available to borrow.

Towards the end of April the outdoor season will be under way and coaching will be offered to anyone who wishes to try out the sport on grass.

The Club is open most evenings so why not drop in to see what the Club has on offer and maybe give bowls a try!

For more information regarding any aspect of the Club

please contact Club Coach, Peter Rolfe, tel: 07501 640328 or

email: peter.rolfe3@btopenworld.com



Recent winners of the Yard Stick Challenge

St Peter's Church West Row



Churchwardens: Beryl Austin 01638 712708 - Debbie Eaglen
Elders: Tricia Leverington

CONTACT:

Vicar: Rev'd Mark McCaghrey
Tel.: 01638 495001
Email:
mark.larkandlee@outlook.com

“Tis impossible to be sure of anything but Death and Taxes”, it says in the 716 play *The Cobler of Preston*. In my thirty years as a Vicar, the surety of death has been a significant part of the weft and weave of my ministry. I have lost count of the number of funerals I have conducted. Some have had a church or crematorium so full people have stood outside. Some have been just me and the undertaker by the graveside. Some of have been after a life well lived. Some of a life never lived.

In the seminal film *Bladerunner* the character Roy Batty says as of his life as he dies “All these moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain.” Is that all that there is to life, a few moments lost at the point of our demise? Is a funeral nothing more than an opportunity to briefly hold the drops of those moments before they are lost in the torrent of time’s passing?

Every funeral I have conducted starts with these words of Jesus “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” (John’s gospel chapter 11, verses 25 and 26). The Christian funeral service is founded on the firm belief that on the first Easter Day Jesus rose from the dead and that as a result he offers us too the gift of life after death – that what happened for him can happen for us.

But to receive this gift of life we must also receive the gift of his death. On the cross Jesus took everything that separates us from our Creator and so opens the way for us to spend eternity with him. This doesn’t happen without an acknowledgement that we need what Jesus has done for us on the cross. Or to put it another way, the only door to life after death is through the cross.

Easter means different things for different people. For some it is an opportunity to grab an extra long weekend. For others it marks a moment of remembering those that they have lost. But for me as a Christian it is most of all an opportunity to acknowledge my need of the cross of Christ, and to give thanks that because Jesus is alive I can look at death knowing that it has been defeated – that he has done everything I need to receive that gift of life after death. In Jesus we can be sure not just of death, or taxes but also life eternal. May you know this too this Eastertide.

DOWN THE ALLOTMENTS

Spring Activities on the Allotment: April & May



Maximising Your Plot During the Heart of Growing Season

As spring takes hold and the days lengthen, April and May are pivotal months for allotment holders across Britain. These months offer the perfect opportunity to prepare your plot, sow seeds, and nurture young plants, setting the stage for a bountiful summer harvest.

Preparing the Soil

One of the first tasks in April is to ensure your soil is ready for planting. Remove any remaining weeds, fork over the beds, and add compost or well-rotted manure to boost fertility. If the weather has been wet, wait until the soil is dry enough to avoid compaction. Early preparation pays dividends later in the season.

Sowing Seeds and Planting

April is ideal for sowing hardy vegetable seeds directly outdoors, such as carrots, parsnips, beetroot, onions, and peas. You can also start salad crops like lettuce and radishes. In May, the soil is warmer, allowing for sowing tender crops such as runner beans, courgettes, and sweetcorn. If you have a greenhouse or cold frame, start tomatoes, cucumbers, and chillies indoors for transplanting later.

Maintaining Fruit Bushes and Trees

During these months, inspect your fruit bushes and trees for signs of disease or pests. Mulch around the base to conserve moisture and suppress weeds. Thin out any congested branches and support young shoots as needed. Strawberries may need netting to protect them from birds as flowers emerge.

Weeding and Watering

Regular weeding is essential throughout April and May, as competing plants can quickly take over. Keep an eye on rainfall and supplement with watering during dry spells, especially for newly sown seeds and seedlings. Water in the early morning or late evening to minimise evaporation.

Supporting Young Plants

As seedlings grow, thin them out to avoid overcrowding and ensure healthy development. Install supports for peas and beans, using bamboo canes or string. Keep an eye out for slugs and snails, which can devastate young plants; employ organic deterrents or barriers where possible.

Flowers and Wildlife

April and May are also excellent months to sow flower seeds such as nasturtiums, calendula, and sunflowers, which attract pollinators and brighten the plot. Encourage wildlife by leaving a corner of your allotment wild or installing a small pond or bug hotel.

General Maintenance

Check paths, fences, and garden structures for repairs after winter. Clean tools and organise your shed, making sure everything is ready for the busy months ahead. Take time to plan your crop rotations to maintain soil health and reduce pest build-up. With a little effort and careful planning, your allotment in April and May will flourish, setting you up for a productive and enjoyable growing season. Happy gardening!

Early Spring Quiz of 2026

All answers are (M) male or (F) female actors – some old / some not so old!

- e.g. (M) Safe rock retailers (5,7) ANS PETER SELLERS
-
- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. (M) This cat likes to sail? (3,6) | ANS..... |
| 2. (M) Dandy meets river crossings? (4,7) | ANS..... |
| 3. (F) Orchestra and summer fruit? (5,5) | ANS..... |
| 4. (F) Narrow valley gains a point nearby?(5,5) | ANS..... |
| 5. (M) Invoice joins mint? (4,6) | ANS..... |
| 6. (F) Main line dock relocates (6,6) | ANS..... |
| 7. (F) Some one seeking ivy's Christmas mate? (5,6) | ANS..... |
| 8. (M) Obscure Hardy character comes to rule ? (4,3) | ANS..... |
| 9. (M) Crane accessories in a honey type? (3,6) | ANS..... |
| 10.(F) Sounds like Sir Larry meets fuel supplier? (6,6) | ANS..... |
| 11.(F) Old SA province that is by left chap?(7,7) | ANS..... |
| 12.(M) Great Oxford bell tied up with skeins(3,5)? | ANS..... |
| 13.(M) City in Indiana followed by elderly gent? (4,6) | ANS..... |
| 14.(F) An often misquoted outspoken suffragette?(5,5) | ANS..... |
| 15.(F) Petrucio's lady has success by getting second chance on court?(4,7) | ANS..... |
| 16.(M) Untangle seen on mail? (4,6) | ANS..... |
| 17. (M) John Wayne nods about this rock? (6,7) | ANS..... |
| 18.(F) Old dead queen may veto farm?(4,8) | ANS..... |
| 19.(M) Potter's fisher with plenty of clubs?(6,5) | ANS..... |
| 20.(F) Bigger dram inn is confused? (6,7) | ANS..... |

NAME OF ENTRANT.....
ADDRESS.....
Contact tel. no

**N.B. PLEASE POST YOUR ENTRY IN THE BOWLS CLUB SILVER LETTER BOX
SITUATED ON THE FENCE BY 15th April 2026**

Helping Children Become Confident Readers



Many children find learning to read harder than expected, and this can feel worrying for families. The good news is that reading is not a mysterious talent that some children have and others don't. Decades of research in cognitive science and neuroscience show that reading is a taught skill. With the right methods, repetition and support, every child can make progress.

When children learn to read, their brains build new pathways that connect sounds, letters and meaning. This process doesn't happen naturally; it develops through structured teaching. The most effective method, supported by the science of reading, is a sound-to-print approach. Children learn that the marks on the page stand for the sounds we make, and that by connecting those sounds in order, they can read any word. This is the foundation of systematic synthetic phonics, which teaches children to break words into sounds, blend them together and recognise patterns. It gives them a reliable strategy they can use every time they meet a new word.

At home, small, consistent routines make a big difference. Reading together for a few minutes each day, practising common sounds, and revisiting familiar books all help strengthen those neural connections. Children benefit from overlearning—going over the same skills again and again until they become automatic. This isn't a sign of falling behind; it's how the brain learns best.

A multi-sensory approach can also be helpful. Tracing letters, saying sounds aloud, using magnetic letters, tapping out phonemes or writing in sand or shaving foam all activate different parts of the brain. The more senses involved, the stronger the learning becomes.

Tutoring can provide the focused, individualised support that some children need to catch up or gain confidence. A structured programme delivered in small steps allows children to experience success quickly, which is essential for motivation. Many struggling readers simply need teaching that matches how their brain processes information. With targeted practice, repetition and encouragement, progress often comes faster than families expect.

Most importantly, children need to feel safe, supported and believed in. Reading difficulties are not a reflection of intelligence or potential. They are a sign that a child needs teaching that works with the way the brain learns. With the right approach, any child can learn to read.

If you have concerns about your child's reading, early support can make a real difference. A calm, structured approach—at home and in tutoring—can help them build the skills and confidence they need to thrive.

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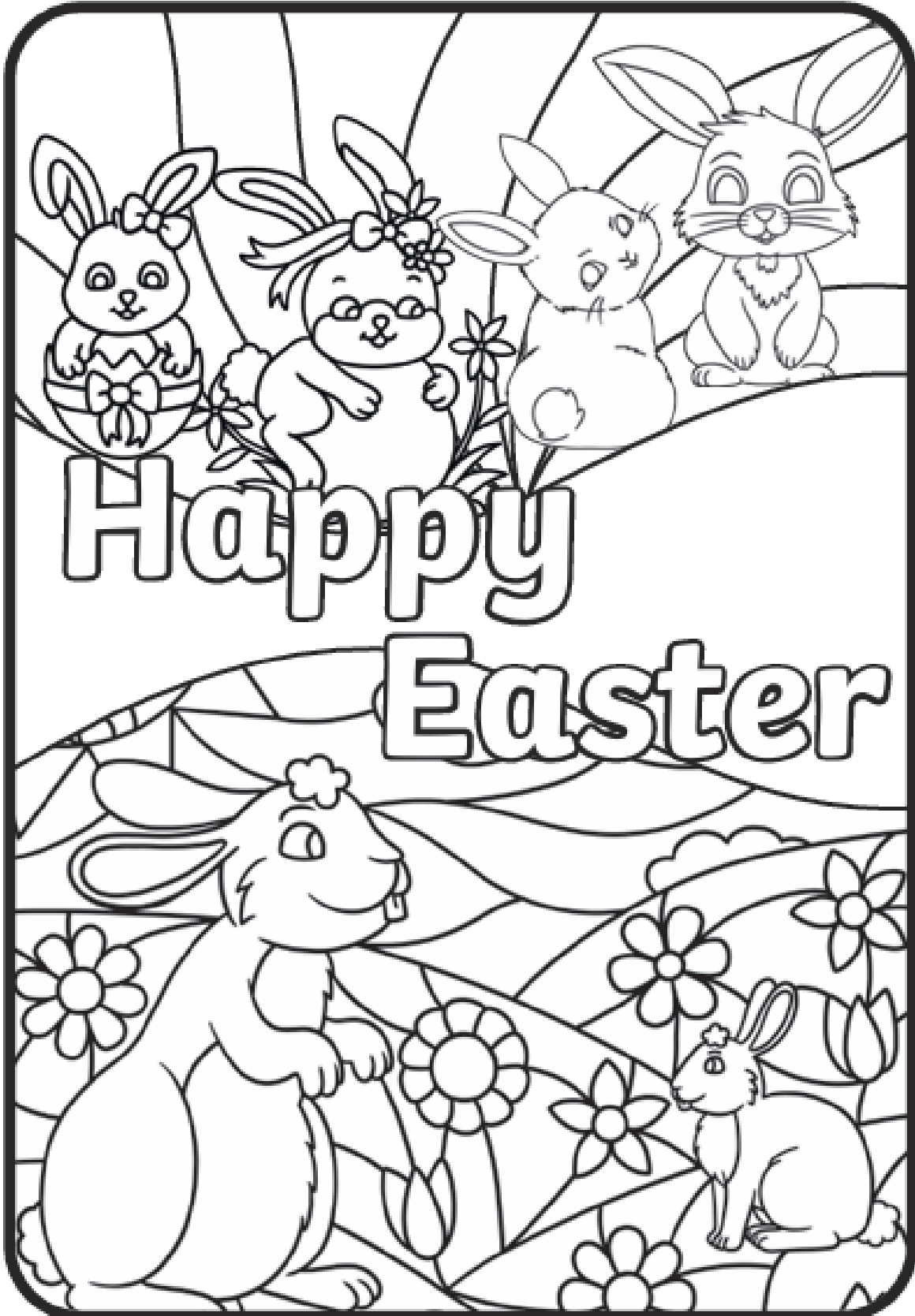


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CHILDRENS CORNER

WORD SEARCH CHALLENGE

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G	R	A	S	S	L	M	O	O	N	K	Y
H	A	T	Z	C	L	O	U	D	S	V	I
F	R	O	G	B	E	A	R	D	U	C	K
W	I	N	D	Y	S	T	A	R	S	U	N
R	I	V	E	R	P	F	I	S	H	T	O
B	I	R	D	S	H	I	P	L	A	N	E
C	A	T	S	K	Y	D	O	G	M	E	T
D	E	E	R	T	U	R	T	L	E	X	A
S	N	A	K	E	F	L	O	W	E	R	B
M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N	H	I	L	L

WORD LIST

BEAR	FROG	SHIP
BIRD	GRASS	SNAKE
CAT	HAT	STAR
CLOUD	HILL	STORM
DEER	MOUNTAIN	SUN
DOG	MOON	TREE
DUCK	PLANT	WIND
FISH	RAINBOW	
FLOWER	RIVER	



West Row Parish Council

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WEST ROW

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The proposed Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of West Row, which has been put together by the Parish Council, has now been approved to proceed to a

PARISH REFERENDUM

ALL REGISTERED VOTERS WILL BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE “YES” OR “NO” TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THE PLAN

THE VOTE WILL TAKE PLACE WITH THE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS ON

THURSDAY, 7TH MAY 2026

VOTERS WILL BE GIVEN A SEPARATE BALLOT PAPER TO CAST THEIR REFERENDUM VOTE

THE PLAN AND ITS DOCUMENTS CAN BE VIEWED AT

www.westrow-pc.gov.uk

The Parish Council will also be holding an informative event at the Outdoor Bowls Club from 10am – 12pm on Saturday, 18th April 2026 where copies of the Plan will be available to view. If you would like to view the Plan but do not have internet access and are unable to attend the event, please contact the Parish Clerk on 07860 358 493.

THE PLAN HAS BEEN PREPARED ON BEHALF OF THE PARISH FOLLOWING PUBLIC MEETINGS, A PARISH SURVEY, MULTIPLE CONSULTATION STAGES, AND AN INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION.

WEST ROW PARISH COUNCIL HIGHLY ENCOURAGES ALL VOTERS IN THE PARISH TO REVIEW THE PLAN AND USE THEIR VOTE ON 7TH MAY.