The Link

QR code for *The Link*

Quendon & Rickling Parish and Church NEWS

December 2026/ January 2027

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Cotoneaster horizontalis in autumn sunshine

Priest in Charge of the parish of Quendon and Rickling,
The Rev'd. Peter Allen, The Vicarage, 5, Meadowford, Newport, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3QL
Telephone: L: 01799 732059; M: 07878 176551 Working days Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday
Curate: The Revd Gavin Sunshine Mobile: 07379 299845
Churchwardens - **Quendon:** Mrs Christine Osbourn 01799 543367
Rickling: contact church.jo@yahoo.com
Treasurer - **Quendon and Rickling:** Mrs Sandra Arnold 01799 543075

From the Vicarage Study

Rev. Peter Allen,
Priest-in-Charge of Newport with Widdington, Quendon and Rickling.

A Time for Waiting - An Advent message from the churches of Quendon and Rickling

Hello, Quendon. Hello, Rickling.

It's us again. Your churches.

We've been standing here for centuries, watching the seasons come and go, the fields change colour, the children grow up and the generations pass through our doors. And now, once again, we're approaching that rather wonderful time of year. Advent.

But before we get there, something important happens in the Church's calendar. On the last Sunday before Advent, we celebrate Christ the King. Now, you might think that's a rather strange way to end the Church's year. We celebrate a King, and then, just one week later, we begin preparing for the birth of a baby.

But perhaps that's exactly the point.

The King we worship didn't arrive with an army, a palace or a golden crown. He came into the world as a child, born to an ordinary young woman called Mary.

And before that first Christmas, there was a great deal of waiting.

We've watched plenty of waiting over the centuries. We've watched farmers waiting for rain, families waiting for loved ones to return, children counting the days until Christmas, and people sitting quietly in our pews, waiting for news that might change their lives.

Some waiting is filled with excitement. Some is filled with worry. And sometimes we wait for something without even knowing what it is we're hoping for.

I wonder what you're waiting for this Christmas?

Perhaps it's the arrival of children or grandchildren. Perhaps you're waiting for an answer, a change in circumstances, or simply a little peace.

And that brings us to two remarkable women.

Mary and Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was older and had spent many years longing for a child. She had almost certainly reached the point where she thought it would never happen. Then, quite unexpectedly, she discovered she was pregnant.

Meanwhile, Mary, a young woman preparing for marriage, received the astonishing

news that she too was going to have a baby. Not just any baby, but Jesus.

Can you imagine the questions Mary must have had? What would people think? What would Joseph say? What would happen next?

And what did Mary do? She went to visit Elizabeth.

I love that part of the Christmas story.

Two women, at very different stages of life, both carrying children, both facing an extraordinary future, finding comfort and encouragement in one another. And when Mary arrived, Elizabeth's baby leapt in her womb. Before Jesus was even born, there was joy, recognition and hope. Neither woman had all the answers. Neither knew exactly what lay ahead. But they had faith, and for a little while, they had each other.

Perhaps that's something worth remembering in Quendon and Rickling this Christmas.

We don't always need to have the answers. Sometimes we simply need someone to sit beside us while we wait. A neighbour who calls. A friend who listens. Someone who notices when we haven't been around.

And perhaps that's part of what we've been here for, all these years.

We've welcomed generations through our doors. We've heard prayers of thanksgiving and prayers whispered through tears. We've celebrated new beginnings and stood quietly alongside those facing difficult endings.

And through it all, we've tried to remind you that God is present, even in the waiting.

Advent isn't simply a countdown to Christmas Day.

It's an invitation to slow down, to prepare our hearts, and to remember that sometimes the most wonderful things begin long before we can see them.

So, Quendon and Rickling, as the lights go up and the carols begin, we'd love you to come and spend a little time with us.

Come with your families, your neighbours, your questions or your hopes. Come and celebrate the King who came as a child.

And if you're waiting for something this Christmas, remember Mary and Elizabeth.

Sometimes the greatest gift isn't having all the answers.

It's discovering that we don't have to wait alone. We've been here through generations of waiting.

And we'll be very glad to welcome you again this Christmas.

With every blessing,

Revd Gavin Sunshine

Curate, Newport, Widdington, Quendon and Rickling

We record the following deaths:

George Tuck, Judith Rich and Thelma Wilson.

All long term and valued members of this village.

Church Services in the Benefice

Sunday 6th December
09.30 Newport Contemporary Communion
11.15 Widdington Christingle Service
Sunday 13 December
09.30am Newport Nativity and All Age Service
4pm Quendon Carol Service
Sunday 20th December
3pm Widdington Carol Service
6.30 pm Newport Carol Service
Thursday 24th (Christmas Eve)
3pm Woddongton Crib Service
5pm Newport Crib service
11.30pm Newport Midnight Communion
Friday 25 December (Christmas Day)
9.00 am Quendon Christmas Day Holy Communion
10am Newport Christmas Day Service
10.15 Widdington Christmas Day Service
Sunday 27 December
10.00 am – Benefice Service, St Mary's Church, Newport
Everyone is warmly welcome to join us as we celebrate Advent, Christmas and the birth of Jesus Christ.
January 2027 service dates and times will be published once confirmed.

From The Editor

I wish all the readers of *The Link* magazine and everyone involved with its production, our contributors, our kind deliverers, as well as our loyal advertisers a very happy Christmas and a successful year in 2027.



Sandra Arnold

The Cricketers Arms
RICKLING GREEN

QUENDON & RICKLING VILLAGE
PARISH COUNCIL

SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCE

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS SWITCH-ON

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE CRICKETERS ARMS

FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER

FROM 5.30PM - LIGHTS-ON 6PM
THE CRICKETERS ARMS



BRASS BAND

CAROL SINGING

MULLED WINE

MINCE PIES

For Crimes and suspicious activity NOW phone	**999**
You can report **non-urgent incidents** or **suspicious activity** and **crimes that have already happened** online at https://www.essex.police.uk/ and click on the appropriate button ("Chat" feature is bottom right of screen). Alternatively phone **101** but online contact is preferred.	
Fraud and other cyber crime **Report Fraud** replaces the previous Action Fraud service and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau, offering a more streamlined service where the public can tell the police about **cyber crime** and fraud as well as providing a **Report Fraud Victim Service** which offers dedicated, and specialist help to victims. You can report **suspicious e-mails**, **text messages** and **telephone calls**, **fake web-sites** and even **fake advertisements**. **Report Fraud** is at https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/	0300 123 2040
CRIMESTOPPERS To give information anonymously phone or report it online at www.crimestoppers-uk.org	0800 555 111
The information you provide is very important to us, so please make sure that we can use it effectively, by reporting it correctly through the proper channels. Thank you.	

Parish Information

Welcome Packs

The Parish Council provides a Welcome Pack of information for new residents to the Village. If any newcomers to the village have not received a copy of the pack, do please let the Clerk know on the contact details below and a welcome pack will be provided. If an e-mail address is provided the pack can be sent digitally.

Allotments (Quendon Hall Estate):

Peter Warwick, No.5 Thistley Crescent, Green Road, Rickling
Telephone: **01799 543526**

Highway Problems

The Essex Highways website is available for anyone noticing a problem to report it:
http://www.essexhighways.org/Report-a-problem.aspx
A tracking facility for all reported faults is available.

Contact our Parish Council

Details of Parish Council meetings may be found on the village web-site:
https://www.quendonandrickling.co.uk
and on village notice boards. All are welcome to attend.

The Parish Clerk is Keith Williams
Email:
quendonandrickling.clerk@hotmail.com
Telephone: **01279 814473**

Contact our District Councillors

Email: cllremanuel@uttlesford.gov.uk
Telephone: **01799 543487**
Mobile Telephone: **07801 039550**

Email: cllrhargreaves@uttlesford.gov.uk
Telephone: **01799 540411**
Mobile Telephone: **07854 687748**

See also DCs' regular reports in *The Link*.

Contact our County Councillor

Cllr Raymond Gooding
Essex County Council
County Hall, Duke Street
Chelmsford, CM1 1LX
Email: cllr.ray.gooding@essex.gov.uk
Telephone: **01279 813103**
Mobile Telephone: **07778 643759**

Contact our Member of Parliament

Kemi Badenoch, MP
House of Commons,
London, SW1A 0AA
Email: kemi.badenoch.mp@parliament.uk
Telephone: **02072 191943**

Quendon & Rickling 100 Club

Congratulations to the latest winners

November 2026

1st Prize	K Gray	£26
2nd Prize	S Cundy	£15
3rd Prize	S Cundy	£ 5

Quendon & Rickling 100 Club generates a source of funds for the Village Hall and both our two churches, All Saints, Rickling and St Simon & St Jude.

From the Parish Council Chair

As I write this month's Link contribution, I can't help reflecting on how quickly 2026 has been and gone. Maybe a sign of me getting old?

On behalf of the PC, our thanks to Sandra and her helpers for producing the monthly newsletter.

It has been a bit of a roller coaster 12 months with disruptions around the village including; road closures and a super hot summer which really didn't do the village green much good! The headline was, IMHO, the long-running and eventually withdrawn, development plan for Belcham's Lane. We will keep a watching brief on this topic.

So, as we head towards Christmas and 2027 at the speed of Santa's Sleigh, the PC have been discussing, in addition to regular activities, new projects we could consider to benefit the village. One idea is a village bookshelf where residents could deposit, read and swap books. We've seen this as a nice idea in other villages placed in unused telephone boxes. A location and type of facility is open for suggestion as are any other ideas you may have. Just let the Parish Clerk have your ideas, please.

Depending on when you receive your copy of the Link, you may have already enjoyed the PC's annual Christmas Tree lighting ceremony (4th December) at the Cricketer's Arms. The PC did get an early present in the addition of a new councillor who we welcomed at the November meeting. There's always space for another!

It therefore only leaves me, on behalf of the PC, to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2027.

Gari Spearpoint

District Councillors' Report

The government has blocked councillors from deciding some planning applications

The Government has reduced the number of applications which can be considered by elected councillors on the Planning Committee. The result is that in November the UDC Planning Committee did not meet because it had no applications it is permitted

to consider. To meet decision deadlines the Committee meets every month of the year regardless of holidays and has sometimes met twice in a month. This is the first time anyone can remember a cancellation for lack of business.

Applications for developments of up to nine homes must now be decided by planning officers, and councillors can no longer "call in" applications to the committee. The changes also remove committee involvement in the detailed matters which follow in-principle approval of larger developments. An experienced committee can pick out issues and design improvements which an officer may not see. We think the changes are unnecessary interference and make no sense.

UDC has changed its procedures to comply with the new legislation, but councillors have raised concerns with Government about the loss of local democratic scrutiny. This is particularly relevant in rural areas such as ours, where a development which may appear small in national terms can have a significant impact on a village.

The Council is writing to the Secretary of State about these concerns and supports the Local Government Association's call for an early review of the new system.

The significance for Quendon is that for the likely scale of applications here neither ward councillors nor the committee will have any say. It strengthens the case for the Neighbourhood Plan where we are setting development limits and rules specific to the village. The Plan examiner has sent some initial questions following his visit and responses to these are in hand.

Beyond planning – supporting our communities

Judy and I tend to cover finance and planning. But a great deal else goes on, for example through the Council's Communities team.

A new Rural and Farm Forum has been established to focus on issues affecting Uttlesford's farming and rural communities. The Council's Community Safety Partnership is also supporting work with Essex Police aimed at improving the ability to tackle rural crime, including specialist off-road policing, trail cameras and deployable automatic number plate recognition equipment. These measures can help in tackling problems such as hare coursing and other crime affecting farms and the countryside.

The team also deals directly with anti-social behaviour. Between January and the end of September this year, the Council investigated 155 reports, working alongside the police, housing providers and other agencies where necessary.

Another important area is supporting local voluntary and community organisations. This year the Council awarded more than £82,500 through its one-off community grants programme, with 32 of the 35 applications receiving funding.

Other work ranges from domestic abuse support and safeguarding, to youth projects, healthy living, dementia-friendly communities and help for older residents. The Council also brings parish councils together through its Parish Forum, where the most recent meeting covered policing, planning and infrastructure, emergency planning and local government reorganisation.

Much of this work happens quietly and in partnership with other organisations, but it illustrates the surprisingly wide range of services in which UDC is involved.

Cabinet members do reports for full Council meetings and the Communities report is here

https://uttlesford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s45566/Communties%20Portfolio%20Report.pdf

Seasons Greetings to everyone!

Councillor Surgeries

These are in Dorringtons every Friday from 10.30 to 11.30.

Our contact details are:



cllremanuel@uttlesford.gov.uk
01799 543487 or **07801 039550**



cllrhargreaves@uttlesford.gov.uk
01799 540411 or **07854 687748**

Other News from Uttlesford District Council

You can get email newsletters and alerts on a whole range of topics via Keep me posted – sign up and find out more at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/keepmeposted.

07874-385541 u3a www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted

Stansted Mountfitchet U3A

Walks and Talks

Our link to the natural world that benefits us in body and mind, is something all gardeners know. Proving this concept, the Garden Group's last visit of the year was to the Walled Garden in Bengeo, where they found, as they have in many of the gardens, great enthusiasm and a deep knowledge on the part of the owner, a garden designer and key member of the Hardy Plant Society. She gave plenty of insight into unusual cultivars while showing the Garden Group members around her densely planted garden. Even at the late time of year, there was still plenty of colour to admire in the salvias, asters, hydrangeas and grasses.

2026 has proved to be a year of excellent talks in Stansted u3a. A variety of thought-provoking, engaging presentations commanded large audiences and provoked some lively questions and discussion. Most recently Dr. Kevin Bryant gave penetrating insight into attitudes towards ADHD and Autism challenging some long-held misrepresentations. Then, as the US mid-terms approached, Don Mobley tackled the issue of "The Constitution versus Unitary Executive Power". As a former member of the USAF and now resident in the UK, he was well-qualified to deliver a searching examination of the evolution of the Constitution and how well or otherwise it is

serving America and the world. More talks are planned for 2027, including subjects as diverse as Judy Garland, Richard III - saint or sinner, and the rivalry of artists Tintoretto and Veronese in 16th century Venice.

The Creative Writing Group members have published their second book of short stories. If you love reading, like a good story but don't have the time or inclination for a full-length novel, Leaving the Ordinary World fits the bill perfectly. Priced at a very reasonable £8 it's an ideal Christmas gift for any book lover.

Phone 07847 385541 or visit www.stansted.u3asite.uk to find out about this and all our activities. New members are very welcome.

Julia Cook



THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

I hope readers are already familiar with the What's On page on our website, www.hundredparishes.org.uk. There, you can find information about forthcoming concerts, fetes, open gardens, walks and much more. Our webmaster, Dave Plummer, does an excellent job of including activities that fit with our aim to encourage awareness and enjoyment of the local area. I am pleased to report that Dave was recently appointed as a trustee of the society.



Debden Church

With Christmas approaching, I encourage you to check out What's On where you will find details of Christmas markets and fairs and the first Christmas tree festival to be held in Debden Church – from December 11 to 13.



St Mary's Saffron Walden

Saffron Walden's Christmas fair will be on 28th November at St. Mary's church where you can buy mulled wine and mince pies. I understand that Father Christmas will be making a visit.

Father Christmas's sleigh will see him put in several personal appearances locally including a visit to Stansted Mountfitchet's windmill on December 12th.

Nancy May, our local soprano, will be leading a Christmas Celebration concert on 6th December at St. Andrews Church, Shalford, starting at 3pm. This is a lovely church where a brass war memorial includes the

name of artist Eric Ravilious. He lived in Shalford for two years before his death in 1942, on active service as a war artist. One of his woodcuts is used as the Hundred Parishes Society's logo.

What's On includes a number of walks organised by local groups – and if you want to do your own thing you can always download a description of one of the Hundred Parishes routes.

At any time, if you know of a suitable activity that could be included on our What's On page, please email us at hundredparishes@btinternet.com.

Happy Christmas.

Ken McDonald, Secretary



Stansted Mountfitchet Windmill



Shalford Church

Quendon & Rickling Golf Society

The last day out this year for the Quendon & Rickling Golf Society was at Ash Valley Golf Club (near Little Hadham) on Thursday 5th November. Of the twenty that met, very few of us had played the course before.

And what a lovely surprise it was, a glorious spot of undulating countryside with magnificent views. The 'undulations' meant that it was a little hilly in places but we all managed to complete the course in spite of a chill wind. The club made us very welcome with the usual golfers treats and although the course needs a little bit of tender-loving-care in places, we all enjoyed the day.

A few golfers received the famous 'Q&R Winner' golf ball for their efforts but there were no outright winners as such, for as always it is the getting together, having a good time with lots of banter that make our outings so special.

We will be holding our AGM, really a chance to get together again before Christmas, in December. Apart from a glass of wine and a mince pie, one of the agenda items is to take stock on how things went in 2026 and to discuss what we would like to do and where to go in 2027.

As always we welcome anyone to join us who has an interest in golf, no matter how capable they are. If you are not already a member but would like to meet us at our

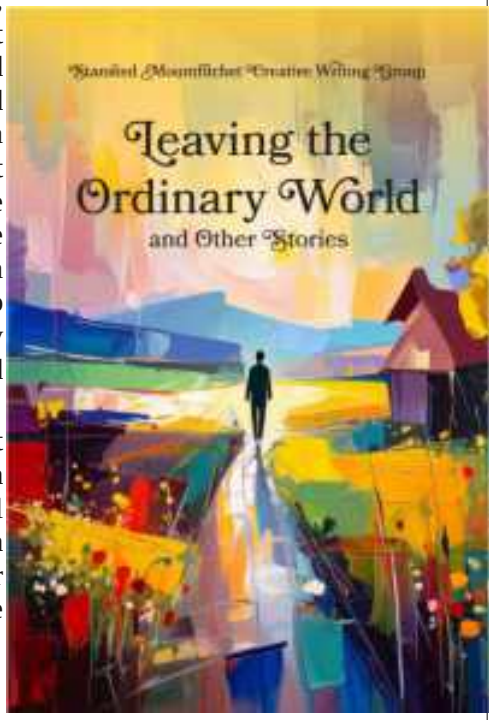
AGM just let me know and I will willingly give you the details.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of all our local golfers, to wish you a very Merry Christmas and to … keep golfin' in 2027.

Brandon Chapman

07909 686627

CREATIVE WRITERS COME OUT – AGAIN!!



Building on the success of their last one, members of the Stansted Mountfitchet Creative Writing Group are pleased, and proud to announce the publication of their second anthology. Leaving The Ordinary World is a vibrant new collection of even more short stories inviting readers into a world where the ordinary becomes extraordinary. Each tale offers a fresh adventure ranging from enigmatic to playful, mysterious to heartwarming, ensuring surprises at every turn. This book will delight, entertain and linger in the mind long after the final page.

If you love reading, like a good story but don't have the time or inclination for a full-length novel Leaving The Ordinary World fits the bill perfectly. Priced at a very reasonable £8 it's an ideal Christmas gift for any book lover. For more details and how to obtain a copy, please email stanstedcreativewritinggroup@gmail.com; you'll be very glad you did.

Stansted Mountfitchet Creative Writing Group

Caution Remember



Queen Wasps are trying to find places to hibernate. Remember to check clothes and shoes for them. You do not want to get stung while disturbing them. Please avoid killing her. Wasps may be a bit stingy, but they devour lots of garden pests. Just put her out the door.



Quendon Bowling Club News

Bowling

The still relatively warm conditions along with the much-needed rain means that the challenging work of the greens team over the last two months is beginning to see results. The continuing feeding and spiking have helped tremendously with the re-seeded and over seeded areas, both of which are growing well. Focus now moves to the surrounding grassed areas and gardens and also the ongoing maintenance of the clubhouse and the greenkeeping equipment

We continue to play in the indoor league on a Thursday afternoon at Saffron Walden with mixed results. Our Wednesday afternoon carpet bowls in the clubhouse continues and inexperienced players are always welcome. This is a game played, not surprisingly, on a long mat laid out in the clubhouse and is played with small bowls about the size of an orange, a very friendly and light-hearted afternoon with tea, biscuits and sometimes cake. If you are interested in either of the above, please contact me (details below)

Social Members / Evenings

We have a strong social side with various events throughout the year. In the non-bowling season, we are open from 7.00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month, and our "specials" are advertised on the Parish notice boards and various WhatsApp

pages and Facebook or call Ray Hart (number below).

Our Family Fortunes game show evening was an enormous success and enjoyed by all. By the time you read this we will have held our Trivia quiz night, and our next event will be a Christmas Party Night on Saturday 19th December. All are welcome for an evening of festive fun and games. Wear your Christmas costume, be it full fancy dress or just festive knitwear.

On Saturday 16th January we will be having a "pub games" night and a "pub pentathlon". Pub games both old and new with the individual scoring for five of them counting towards a gold medal

Our bar prices are incredibly competitive and apart from various board games we also offer a pool table and darts board and of course good, friendly company for those dark evenings that are coming.

You can visit our social club 3 times as guests before having to sign as a social member, the cost of which is very reasonable £30.00 a year. You do not need to bowl to become a social member just come for the Craic.

Looking for a venue

Our Clubhouse is also available for hire by the hour, half day and full day at very reasonable rates and has recently been used several times by local people, and we have bookings going forward. If you need a venue for your club, meeting, party celebration please contact Ray Hart on 07973 632923 by either text or WhatsApp for further details.

Finally on behalf of all the club members I would like to extend our thanks and best wishes for the festive season to all of you who have supported our social evenings throughout 2026. Without your support it would be very difficult to keep this village asset going. See you in the New Year.

Seasons Greetings Ray Hart



Newport and District Flower Club

We welcomed Naomi Wells to our club again in October but as a teacher this time rather than a demonstrator. Naomi was, in fact, a school teacher for many years so was well suited to instructing us at our workshop. Our project was to create an arrangement in a box or to try our skills at a hand tied bouquet. All materials were supplied including flowers, foliage, boxes and all the mechanics needed to put everything together. Some members chose to decorate their boxes by wrapping them in plain or patterned paper which created many different looks. It was great to see such variety in all the designs. Naomi also shared her skills at leaf manipulation which many of us were able to include. I, for one, still cannot master the art of 'spiralling' a hand tied arrangement but practice makes perfect they say! Christmas is now upon us so we look to a new year where the club will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary. We have many exciting plans and demonstrators to welcome so please

come and join us. In the meantime you can see our entry in the Christmas Tree Festival at Elsenham Church between 5th and 6th December 2026.

7pm for 7.30pm start – third Wednesday of the month
Ugley Village Hall
Cambridge Road
CM22 6HR
Sandra Honour – Programme Secretary
Email: ugleybunchflowerclub@gmail.com
Facebook : Ugley Bunch Flower Club



December 2026 Maces Farms

As we head towards another year, the farm is looking good going into winter. I'm just hoping the weather doesn't throw anything too extreme at us over the coming months, although a bit of snow at Christmas would be nice! Ideally, we could do with some nice steady rain, enough to top up the reservoirs and groundwater levels, but not so much that the crops end up sitting in waterlogged fields. We don't ask for much, do we!



First Wheat vibe

High Field



The team are keeping busy loading lorries with grain, maintaining hedges and getting on with the usual repairs and maintenance around the farm. We're also looking to recruit a new member of staff, as Ollie will be leaving us at Christmas to move on to pastures new. We wish him all the very best in his next venture.



Cultivating ploughed land for Spring Oats

Most of the crops have now had a follow-up spray of herbicide and nutrition, and unfortunately this year we've also had to include an insecticide. I'm really pleased with how much we've managed to reduce our insecticide use over the last five years through careful management and monitoring. However, with the unusually hot weather this year, we've seen high numbers of bird cherry-oat aphids migrating into the crops, which meant we needed to treat this autumn.



Winter Beans

We regularly monitor aphid numbers and only use an insecticide when they reach the threshold where treatment is justified. These aphids can carry a disease called Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV), which can cause serious yield losses if it gets into the crop early on.

One thing I'm particularly proud of is that we haven't sprayed an insecticide on our flowering crops, such as oilseed rape and beans, for over four years now. This is also one of the main reasons we're planting more hedges across the farm. The more biodiversity we can encourage through our woodlands, hedgerows and grass margins, the more beneficial insects we can support. These include natural predators like parasitic wasps that help keep pest numbers under control for us.

It's all about trying to get the balance right, working with nature where we can, while still protecting the crops and producing a good harvest.

Example of a beneficial insect

The Parasitoid Wasp



I always find this fascinating, nature is brutal, it's like something from a horror movie.
Seasons Greetings from the team here at Maces Farms
Mark Gemmill
Macesfarms@Pegasi.co.uk

APOPO



Growing Food on Land Once Mined: Felismino

Felismino is a farmer, father and grandfather from Aliwaio do Galo in Angola's Cuanza Sul province. His family has lived and worked on the same land for generations. As a child during the civil war, he was kidnapped with his family and spent several years with soldiers before escaping and walking home with other children.

Today, Felismino supports his family by farming and working as a driver, transporting

produce to Luanda. Landmines prevented him from cultivating part of his family's land for years. Following APOPO's clearance, he now has more ground to grow food for his family and crops to sell, although farming by hand and getting produce to market remain daily challenges.

In Angola, landmines are also found outside identified minefields. APOPO responds to community reports of these hazards through operations known as "spot tasks."

The day after this interview, Felismino's 18-year-old son brought him a landmine found on a different plot, separate from the land APOPO had cleared. It was taken to the village leader, who placed it on his roof to keep others from touching it. The next day, APOPO's team disarmed that mine and another at the discovery site, cordoning off the area for future manual clearance.

The incident highlights the importance of explosive ordnance risk education, which teaches people never to touch or move suspicious items and to report their location. Unfortunately, that advice does not always reach everyone or get followed.

For Felismino, clearance of his family's land has already made a difference, giving him more ground to cultivate and the freedom to work it safely.



On 30 October, the Government of Flanders approved a grant of up to €1 million to expand APOPO's work with mine detection dogs in Ukraine. Starting in 2027, the funding will help teams survey more land suspected of containing landmines or unexploded ordnance. Pinpointing those hazards helps deminers focus clearance where it is needed, so communities can safely return to the land they depend on.

The funding comes at a time when APOPO aims to deploy 16 more detection dogs in Ukraine and train at least 16 more Ukrainian handlers and four team leaders, as well as recruit at least two more dog trainers by the end of 2027. Ukrainian staff will learn how to manage and deploy technical survey dogs (TSDs) and mine detection dogs (MDDs) and how to assess the quality of their work in the field.

APOPO's first deployment in Ukraine in 2024 brought together 16 technical survey dogs and eight Ukrainian women handlers through a partnership with the UNDP and Mines Advisory Group. By July 2025, the programme had grown to six teams with 48 dogs and 24 handlers. Two more technical survey dog teams were deployed in October 2025 through a Swiss-funded partnership with the Ukrainian Deminers Association, taking the total number of dogs to 64.

An Item From the Information Commisioners

A Solar firm made almost 500 nuisance calls every day for a year. They recieved £105,000 fine for nearly 200,000 nuisance calls in 13 months.

Complaints to the ICO about automated nuisance marketing calls continue to rise with 4,734 received in October, almost a 250% increase from July.

The ICO have fined a solar panel company £105,000 after it made nearly 200,000 nuisance marketing calls over the course of 13 months – an average of almost 500 calls a day or one every three and a half minutes.

Bluon Energy Ltd, based in London, made 194,379 unsolicited direct marketing calls between April 2024 and April 2025 to people registered with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS). The calls offered a "free survey" for solar panels and led to 61 complaints to the ICO and the TPS during this period.

The investigation found that the company bought leads from third-party data suppliers without checking that people had consented to being called. It also operated under at least three different trading names, including Greentech Solar, Green Line Solar and Solar Diagnostics Checks.

Complaints described the callers as "aggressive and pushy," with one complainant wrongly informed that their TPS registration "didn't count" and another told that the ICO "could not do anything to [the company]."

Emergency Life-saving



Should someone suffer a cardiac arrest or show symptoms of a heart attack e.g. pains in the chest, then your first action should always be to phone the ambulance service on 999. The service will refer you to our Automated External Defibrillator which is at the front entrance to Quendon & Rickling Village Hall. Another is sited outside Reception at the front of Rickling School. Anyone can save a life by using one of them until an ambulance arrives. In addition you can seek help from any of the volunteers listed below.

Name	Home Telephone	Locality
Robert Arnold	01799 543075	Northern end - Cambridge Road
Sandra Arnold	01799 543075	Northern end - Cambridge Road
Chris Phillips	01799 542351	Middle - Cambridge Road
Sue Phillips	01799 542351	Middle - Cambridge Road
Wendy Stannard	01799 541869	Middle - Cambridge Road
Paul Carrol	07889 344869	Southern end - Cambridge Road
Joanne Hales	07903 596011	Rickling Green
Janice Hart	01799 541196	Rickling Green/Brick Kiln Lane/Rickling
Ann Merrit	07801 235758	Rickling Green/Brick Kiln Lane
Sue Joannou	07805 037586	Rickling Green
Jacolin Lampon	07710 281382	Southern End - Cambridge Road

For further information see www.communityheartbeat.org.uk/

Remember: Using the defibrillator can't cause injury. Doing nothing can.

What's On

Where no organiser is shown for any event in Q&R Village Hall, contact the Hall Manager, Christine Osbourn on 01799 543367 for details

Event	Date	Time	Place	Notes
Saffron Searchers	*1st Monday/month*	20.00-22.00	Q&R Village Hall	
Dance Exercise	*Tuesdays*	*10.30-11.30*	Q&R Village Hall	Christine Alexander
U3A Choir	*2nd/4th Wednesdays*	*11.15-13.15*	Q&R Village Hall	
Pilates	*Tuesdays*	18.30 -19.30	Q&R Village Hall	Vikki 07810 826465
Pilates	*Thursdays*	09.00-10.00	Q&R Village Hall	Vikki 07810 826465
Pilates	*Thursdays*	18.30-19.30	Q&R Village Hall	Vikki 07810 826465
Carpet Bowls	*Wednesdays*	pm	Quendon Bowling Club	Ray Hart 07973 632923
Social Evening	*2nd & 4th Fridays*	*19.00-23.00*	Quendon Bowling Club	
Light swith on	4th December	17.30 onwards	The Cricketers Arms	
Carol Service	13th December	16.00	Quendon Church	
Christmas Party Night	19th December		Quendon Bowling Club	
Communion	25th December	9am	Quendon Church	
Benefice Service	27th December	10.00 -11.00	Newport Church	

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The Link is delivered free of charge to every household in the villages of Quendon and Rickling and is available online at: https://www.quendonandrickling.co.uk

All correspondence for *The Link* should be addressed to the editor, Sandra Arnold, by e-mail: thelink@arnold-q.uk, or at Talbots, Cambridge Road, Quendon, CB11 3XJ; otherwise telephone 01799 543075

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