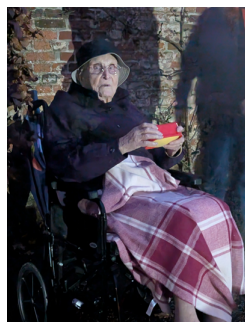


February 2026

Great Waltham's 17th Christmas Tree Festival



The Community Network and Parochial Church Council joined up to organise a festive weekend. The Christmas trees were decorated on a theme of "an occupation." The Community Network's tree celebrating NHS nurses and doctors was voted the best by the poll of nearly 400 people who visited during the Saturday fayre. The Essex Police Band and the Village Choir gave us a rousing concert attended by 100 people.



On Sunday, the Parish Council lights at Banbury Square were switched on by Betty Croot, who celebrated her 100th birthday in 2025. Afterwards, hundreds of parents and children went into the church for an enchanting Christingle service.



Gingerbread & Christmas Pudding Workshops

The Community Network organized

their 8th Christmas Pudding Workshop, attended by 40 adults. It included a fun quiz and carols from the village choir in the interval. But we also decided to run a Gingerbread Workshop for our younger villagers. Twenty children mixed, rolled, cut out, baked and decorated their gingerbread men. In the interval while the gingerbread men were in the oven, they had hot chocolate and decorated little wooden gingerbread men tree decorations. They took them home in beautiful boxes.



The Community Network plans to run these events again in 2026.

The Broads Green Christmas Tree



Many gathered in Broads Green for the lighting of the first village Christmas tree. A d a m Greenaway who had initiated the project said;

The Broads Green Christmas tree was an immense success! Thank you for the support of the Parish Council; and thank you to all the residents of Broads Green who supported me with transport, frames, supports, decorations, maintenance and donations. A real community effort and we received great feedback from residents and people passing through the village!

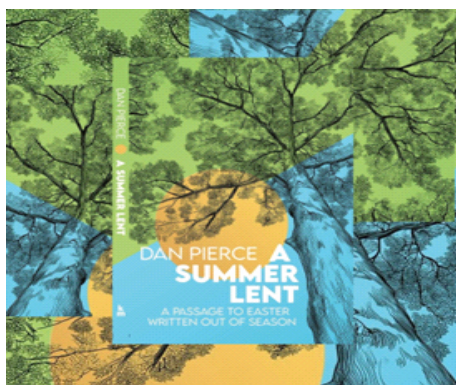
Inside this months Great Waltham Parish News

Local club updates, Christmas celebrations in the parish, local events, children's playground update, parish council news, church notices, local events, and more than **two pages of adverts for almost every need.**



From The Vicarage

Last summer I embarked on the Christian practice of Lent which is usually undertaken in the build up to Easter in the springtime. I had been wrestling some destructive habits and struggling to pray so Lent at that time was a peculiar gift to me. Once I began pondering Lent out of season – snap! Lent did what I suppose Lent has done for many centuries to those who have given themselves fully to its rehearsals. As a result I wrote a collection of poetry, prose and prayer, A SUMMER LENT. If you observe Lent or you're thinking about it please use the QR code to grab my book as a companion in the lead up to Easter. Peace. Dan.



Services at Blackchapel, North End February 2026

Sunday 1st at 3pm
Sunday 15th at 3pm



Joan Harvey

16th April 1929 – 15th January
2026

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Joan on the 15th January 2026.

Joan lived with her husband, Ted, in Mill Cottage Howe Street for many years before moving to Norfolk. Some of you may remember them both from their time in the village.

Although there will not be a funeral service, all are welcome at Great Waltham Church graveyard on Monday 16th February 26 at 12pm for some words of remembrance.

GREAT WALTHAM FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our next meeting will be Monday 16th Feb when we will have a music quiz and plan the year ahead.



Church of England Services February 2026

Sunday 1 st	11.00am	Communion	Great Waltham
Sunday 8 th	11.00am	Communion	Ford End
Sunday 15 th	11.00am	Communion	Great Waltham
Weds 18 th	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday Service	Little Waltham
Sunday 22 nd	10.00am	Family Service	Ford End
	11.00am	Communion	Chignalls

Still Waters every Thursday Evening 6.00pm – 6.30pm held at St Martin's Little Waltham

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Contact: Alison Creighton Parish Administrator
Tel: 07957 228467
admin@littleandgreat.org.uk

World Day of Prayer

Will be held on
Friday 6th March
at St Andrews Church
Good Easter
11am



"I will give you rest"

Each year, on this day, Christians of many cultures, traditions and races in over 120 countries around the world reunite in prayer. Our sisters in Nigeria invite us to join them for the World Day of Prayer on Friday 6th March 2026. The service they have prepared reflects on the theme "I will give you rest." The World Day of Prayer is an international, women led ecumenical movement that shares the hopes, concerns and prayers of women around the globe. Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggles and anxieties. **Please join us, everyone is welcome.**

Little Waltham United Reformed Church Services for February 2026

Contact: Liz Hagon - 01245 360874
All services begin at 10.30am

Sunday 1st - Colin Rackham
Sunday 8th - John Amos
Sunday 15th - John De Lacy
Sunday 22nd - Ian Miller

Other Events

Coffee and Cake - Thursday 5th at 10am until 12 noon
Coffee Morning - Saturday 21st at 10am until 11am



LITTLE WALTHAM GARDENING CLUB

Happy New Year!

March 4th - we hold our AGM, when hopefully a few volunteers will come forward to help running the Club as the Secretary is definitely standing down after 40 plus years in March 2027. Members will have every opportunity to put forward their views about running the Club. It would be a great shame if Little Waltham Gardening Club were to close.

SPRING SHOW, SATURDAY 11th APRIL in The Memorial Hall.

There are classes for everyone - you don't need to be a Gardening Club member or live in Little Waltham. We will have classes for spring flowers and veg, cookery, craft, flower arranging and photography.

Schedules of classes can be downloaded from www.littlewalthamgardeningclub.co.uk

Or from Marion (01245 361857), or Maggie (01245 360042)

Please don't be shy of entering, we'd welcome as many entries as possible.

Please let Marion know which classes you would like to enter by Wednesday 8th April. Entries to be on the show benches by 10.15 please.

MAKE A DATE IN YOUR DIARY - please come to visit our show between 1.30 - 4.30pm . We'll have a bumper plant stall and homemade refreshments.

Wednesday 6th May - evening meeting. ' A Passion for Pelargoniums' and 'Fuchsias - the three virtues', by Nick Dobson. We have afternoon outings planned for May, June, July and August. Please see website for more information.

All our evening meetings (at 7.30pm), and the Spring Show take place in the Memorial Hall where there is plenty of parking. Visitors and new members are very welcome - please come to see what we do one evening - we always learn something new! Visitors -£3.00 Annual Subscription - £10.00

For more information, please phone M Williams (01245 360042), or 07772 463397)

Looking forward to meeting you.

Maggie Williams (Chairperson and acting secretary)

www.littlewalthamgardeningclub.co.uk

The Great Waltham Playground Makeover – Exciting Update!

We're excited to share that Project Playground is now moving from planning into action, with stage one officially underway. Orders for the new Toddler Area have been placed and, subject to the weather, we're hopeful this will be installed by the end of March. This progress has only been possible thanks to the fantastic support we've received so far. We've successfully used £17,000 in grant funding, alongside over £3,000 raised through public donations and sponsorship from local companies. Stage one represents a major milestone for the project, this phase totalling around £62,000.

With the Toddler Area taking shape, our focus now turns to stage two – the Junior Area. This next phase will require significant fundraising, with a target of around £100,000 to create an exciting and inclusive space for older children.

It's been wonderful to see the community enthusiasm for the project so far, and we're incredibly grateful to everyone who has been involved.

As always, every donation, share, and show of support helps us get closer to creating a playground the whole community can enjoy for years to come. If you have any fundraising ideas or want to get involved with the project please do contact us on: gtwalthamplayground@gmail.com

And please do donate/share: gofundme.com/f/great-waltham-playground-refresh-2025



VILLAGE PANCAKE RACES

Sunday 22nd Feb 2pm

Blossom Way
(off Cherry Garden Rd)

Teams of 4 – can be children,
adults or mixed – open to all
£1 per person (Adult or Child)

Bring your own pan and pancake

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joanna.2.steel@btinternet.com or your Scout Leader

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Should there be inclement weather on the
day, check out CN's webpage for update:

<https://e-voice.org.uk/greatwalthamparish/gw-community-network/>



Walthambury WI



It has been a busy couple of months. At our December Christmas meeting we enjoyed a variety of food contributed by WI members and were entertained by Great Waltham Village Choir. Thank you to the choir for making it a very special evening. The newly formed 'Book Group' met in December to plan for the future. The village annual Christmas Tree Festival, organised by the Community Network, took place in Great Waltham Church where many trees were decorated by local organisations, including a beautiful tree by our WI.

We are looking forward to several outings in February including, lunch at the Beehive, seeing the snowdrops at Easton Lodge and the 'Illegal Eagles' & 'We Will Rock You' at the Chelmsford Theatre. We thoroughly enjoyed a talk by Andrew Wiltshire- 'Introducing Beatrix Potter' on 13th January. Our next meeting is on Tuesday 10th February at the British Legion Hall at 7:00 for 7:30 start and will be a craft workshop lead by Karen Odinga.



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Ford End Senior Tea



The next tea will be on Monday 9th February 2pm at Woodstock, Church Lane, Ford End. If you are new or thinking of coming do phone so I can decide how many cakes to provide. Hope to see you all and catch up for a good chat.

Anyone interested or has not been before or for more information please ring Sheila Bearman on 01245 237335 or 07977 077945

Great Waltham Parish Community Care Group

The aim of the group is to provide short term and ongoing help to meet the needs of elderly local residents for whom there is no statutory provision. Predominately this will involve providing transport to local doctor and hospital appointments.

If you require the services of the group, please call our co-ordinators who are
 Gill Mitchel 01245 362215
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Great Waltham Horticultural Society



On November 26th 2025 we held an Extraordinary General Meeting regarding the future of the Society. Eleven people came excluding the committee and it was sadly decided by the majority the society would cease as of December 31st 2025.

Members will be informed as to the future of the Hut which we have been discussing with the Parish Council.

We would like to thank everyone who has been part of the Society through helping and being a member.



Great Waltham C of E Primary School

It was a pleasure to welcome the parents and carers of children in Class Europe to join us for lunch recently. The children were so proud to share their dining experience, and it was wonderful to see families enjoying time together in school. Thank you to everyone who was able to come along and make the occasion so special.

We also wanted to share a glimpse of the incredible creativity happening in Year 6. As part of their Inuit art project, the pupils have been working on soap carvings inspired by traditional Inuit sculpture. The results are truly impressive — intricate, expressive, and a testament to the children's patience and artistic skill.



FORD END GARDEN CLUB

At our first meeting of 2026 we welcomed Chris Heaffey for his talk 'Plod to Plot' when he regaled us with tales from his time in the Essex Police Force. Chris was stationed in a number of stations throughout Essex, transferred to the CID and served at Stansted Airport. When Chris retired he turned to his interest in gardening and growing vegetables which came from spending time in his grandfather's greenhouse as a young boy. A farmer with land adjacent to Earls Colne airfield donated three acres to the local community for the development of allotments and Chris decided to cultivate one of these. This project has grown and thrived with many social events organised by the allotment holders taking place to share their produce and experience of growing many types of fruit and vegetables.

At the end of the evening Chris was asked to judge our hyacinth competition and there were many beautiful entries from which to choose the overall winner. The hyacinths this year were a deep blue with lovely scent and the winner was judged to be Peter Jackson, so many congratulations to him.

Our February meeting is on Wednesday the 18th and we have Mary Williams coming to talk about 'Planting Seeds'. This will start at 7.30pm in the Ford End village hall and everyone is welcome as we love to see new faces.

The Garden Club plant sale and coffee morning this year will be on Saturday 9th May.



A Very Busy Christmas for Great Waltham Village Choir

The village choir gave seven performances over the Christmas period around the Great Waltham Parish. It started in November with carol singing at the Community Network Christmas Pudding Workshop when the choir sang carols and songs for and with the pudding makers. An enjoyable and stirring time was had by all. This was followed by singing at the Great Waltham Primary School Christmas Fair. A boisterous event for the choir in the village hall. On the 6th December the choir performed at the annual Community Network Christmas Concert in the church alongside the Essex Police Band. The concert is always a highlight of the year for the village choir and inspiring occasion. Next came a performance at the Great Waltham WI Christmas Dinner on the 9th December and what an enjoyable occasion for both the choir and the members of the WI. The singing of the choir and the WI raised the roof of the British Legion roof.

This year, for the first time, the choir sang carols round the tree in Banbury Square and invited villagers to join them. The weather was kind to us and about forty choir members and villagers assembled to sing as you can see from the photograph taken by Barry Teader. On the 18th December the choir sang carols at The Green Man and on the 30th December we sang at the Bee Hive Parishioners Christmas Dinner. A very jolly occasion for all involved and the refreshment provided by Michael was much appreciated.

Many thanks to all those who invited the choir to their function and a big thank you to the choir who gave their time so willingly to entertain and enhance the Christmas of so many.



Great Waltham Parish Council

The Pavilion, Great Waltham Recreation Ground, South Street, Great Waltham, CM3 1DF.
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This is a summary of some items discussed at the November and December 2025 meetings of the Parish Council. For full details, please check out the full and approved minutes of all Council meetings on the parish website (e-voice.org.uk/greatwalthamparish).

We agreed responses to two important consultations. First, that on local government reorganisation in Essex, where of those being consulted on we agreed to support the five new unitary-authorities model. And second, Chelmsford City Council's request for input on its proposals for additional housing sites to help meet new targets. Here we restricted our comments to the only site in the parish, land south of Ford End School, and stated a preference for fewer than the 75 new dwellings being proposed, but still including as part of the development traffic management upgrades (principally an average speed camera system on the B1008 through the village), and improvement works for Ford End recreation ground, village hall, and school.

The first phase of the Great Waltham Recreation Ground play area upgrade (for the refurbishment of the toddlers' area) was approved at a cost of £ £62,220, excluding VAT. The project work to fundraise for the remainder of the proposed new equipment will continue in 2026/27 and beyond.

We agreed to chair the committee of local residents to help facilitate the erection of the Christmas tree at Broad's Green. We also agreed to renew the public car parking agreement with Great Waltham Village Hall for another year. We approved costs to replace the wooden posts and renovate the chains around the war memorial at Banbury Square, and also those to replace the roof of the adjacent bus stop shelter with slates rather than the current cedar shingles, this being seen as a sensible long-term approach approved by the City Council heritage officer.

We noted the decision to wind-up Great Waltham Horticultural Society, and agreed to work with it to determine the future of the trading hut located on the Brook Mead allotment site.

We agreed the Council's new budget and precept demand. Subject to higher authority ratification, the parish council element of Great Waltham residents' 2026/27 Council Tax bill will increase by 4.9%, following the 1.9% decrease for 2025/26.


The Council's next monthly meeting will be on Tuesday 17th February 2026 at Ford End Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend our public meetings. Steve Gilbert Chair

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From Darkness to Light: A Choral Journey Through Easter

7.30pm Saturday 14 March 2026	Conductor: Alastair Merry	Featuring music by: Byrd, Casals, Howells, MacMillan, Rossini, Tallis, Tavener
Church of St Mary & St Lawrence Great Waltham CM3 1AR	Tickets: £13.50 adults (advance purchase) £6 under 16s Email: stondonsingers@gmail.com Leave a message: 01277 880769 £15 on the door (limited availability)	

CIO 1154435




Join Leah and Ferne for an exciting evening of bingo!

Help them raise funds for their World
Challenge expedition to Africa in July 2026

Enjoy the games, win raffle prizes, and
support an inspiring cause!

Adults Cash Bingo - £10 per ticket
Kids Bingo - £4 per ticket
Raffle tickets available now £1 a ticket, £5 a strip
FOOD AVAILABLE ON THE NIGHT

27 FEB 2026 | 6 PM
ADULTS BINGO 7PM
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - GREAT WALTHAM



TO BOOK TICKETS - MESSAGE CLARE 07552427956 OR CHRIS 07949942363



Martin Palmeri's Magnificat

**Saturday 28th March 2026
7pm**
Wessex Auditorium, Brentwood School
**With special guest
Martin Palmeri**
Brentwood & Ingatstone Choral Society
Waltham Singers - Director Andrew Fardell
Conductor: Art Wangcharoensab
Bandoneon: Julian Rowlands
Tickets: £15
(under 16s £8)
For tickets go to:
<https://www.brentwoodandingatstonechoral.org.uk>
or scan the QR code
BICS Charity Number:
801138



GREAT WALTHAM VISITS CEYRAT - JULY 2026



In late July, Twinning members from the parish will visit our twinned town of Ceyrat for a week, staying with French hosts in their homes, and being taken out and about to places of interest, organised by Ceyrat Twinning. We have members of all ages, families, couples, singles. No need to speak French – we all muddle through somehow!

Thinking about it???? NOW is the time to act! See our webpage on the greatwalthamparish website or email me for more information – joanna.2.steel@btinternet.com.

Thank you for all of the contributions to this edition of the Great Waltham Parish News. Please send your contributions for the next issue, together with any enquiries or advertising requests, by email to: gwp parishnews@gmail.com. **The last date for inclusion in the March issue is February 19th 2026**