



DECEMBER 2025

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# CONTACT

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EAST HARLING - WEST HARLING - BRIDGHAM - ROUDHAM -  
BRETtenham - LARLING - RUSHFORD

VILLAGE NEWS AND EVENTS



**You are warmly invited to join in the Christmas  
And Christingle Services and  
Concerts across the Villages  
See details on pages 3 and 18**

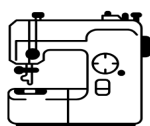
**There will be joyous singing with our choirs  
and festive delicious treats afterwards  
Mince pie anyone?!**

Also published on line on the following web pages  
<https://www.facebook.com/ehsspp20/>

<https://www.harlingguiltcrossbenefice.org.uk/our-churches/east-harling-st-peter-and-st-paul/contact/>

<https://roudhamandlarling-pc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/2020/08/17/contact-magazine/> for  
Roudham and Larling

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Tel: 01953 573077

Assistant Priest: Revd Lynn Fry Tel: 07554930054, Email: [lynnandtony@outlook.com](mailto:lynnandtony@outlook.com)

## Welcome to our Services in December 2025

	7 <sup>th</sup> December Advent 2	14 <sup>th</sup> December Advent 3	21 <sup>st</sup> December Advent 4	28 <sup>th</sup> December Holy Innocents
<b>East Harling</b>	11:00 All Age Worship	09:30 Holy Communion	09:30 Holy Communion  18:00 Carol Service	10:00 Benefice Service
<b>Garboldisham</b>	09:30 Holy Communion	18:00 Carol Service	09:30 Holy Communion	
<b>Wretham</b>	09:30 BCP Matins	17:00 Carol Service		
<b>Bridgham</b>	11:00 Holy Communion		11:00 Family Christingle	
<b>Larling</b>		11:00 Holy Communion		
<b>Rushford</b>	16:30 Carol Service			
<b>Blo'Norton</b>		11:00 Holy Communion	16:00 Carol Service	

## ~ Additional Christmas Services ~

 <b>East Harling</b>	<b>24/12/2025</b> 16:00 - Christingle 23:15 – Midnight Mass  <b>25/12/2025</b> 10:00 – Family Communion	<b>Garboldisham</b>	<b>24/12/2025</b> 15:00 – Crib Service 23:30 – Midnight Mass
<b>Brettenham</b>	19/12/2025 19.00pm – Carols by Candlelight	<b>Wretham</b>	<b>25/12/2025</b> 09:30 – Holy Communion
<b>Riddlesworth</b>	<b>25/12/2025</b> 10:00 – Family Carol Service with Communion	<b>Shropham</b>	18/12/2025 – 18:00 Family Carol Service
<b>Bridgham</b>	<b>24/12/2025</b> 19:00 – First Mass of Christmas	<b>Larling</b> 	22/12/2025 – 19:30 Carols at Larling



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SJP APPROVED 18/03/2025

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**Parish Records 2025 ~  
~ Funerals ~**

We offer our sincere condolences to the Family and Friends of: -  
**DOUGLAS FROST** whose funeral was held in East Harling Parish Church on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025, followed by interment in East Harling Cemetery

**DORIS ELIZABETH FLOYD** whose funeral was held in East Harling Parish Church on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025 followed by interment in the Cemetery.

**STEPHEN GEOFFREY OVERTON** whose funeral was held in East Harling Parish Church on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2025 followed by cremation.

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**~ Floodlighting ~**

Requests to sponsor the floodlighting of East Harling Church should be posted/delivered to: Susan Dolling 4 Hamblings Piece, East Harling. NR16 2PZ

Please make sure your requests are clearly written, include the date and add your name and contact number in case of any queries. Donation of minimum £5/night should be enclosed (cheques payable to East Harling PCC please).

Thank you to all who sponsor the floodlighting of East Harling Church

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**PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOOD BANK**

The Parish Church in East Harling is a drop off point for the Food Bank. In the run up to Christmas as well as all non-perishable food items and toiletries we will be collecting

**Selection Boxes**

Please help us if you can by donating these before **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December**

The Selection Boxes can also be dropped off at 7 Drakes Close in East Harling.

Thank You!

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**AUCTION OF PROMISES**

The Parish Church of SS Peter & Paul would like to thank all the businesses and individuals for their promises, donations and support which helped us raise the wonderful amount of £1,604 towards the Church Roof Repairs. Very special thanks to our entertaining and gifted auctioneer Mike Sarson from T W GAZE.

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**METHODIST CHAPEL WHITE HART STREET**  
**METHODIST SERVICES FOR DECEMBER**

7th 10.30am Mr Dennis Cartwright

No Soul Cafe this month

14th 6.30pm Carol service led by Mr Pat Mottram

21st 10.30am Rev David Ely Communion service

6.00pm with E H Church for Carol service

28th 6.30pm Rev Paul Mellor Communion service

**Quidenham Carmelite Monastery Chapel  
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Sunday Mass 10.30am

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Children must be accompanied by an adult.

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**White Hart Street**

**CAROL  
SERVICE**

**Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Dec**

**6.30pm**

**ALL WELCOME!**

**Followed by Refreshments!**

## *Benefice News*

As December arrives and our communities begin to sparkle with lights and decorations, we find ourselves in that familiar mix of bustle and beauty that marks this time of year.



Advent and Christmas come to us again — seasons rich in meaning, both for those who celebrate them as part of the Christian story and for those who simply value the warmth, generosity, and togetherness they bring.

In the Christian calendar, Advent is a season of waiting — not a frantic countdown, but a time of quiet preparation. It's about hope: the hope that light will come into the darkness, that love will overcome fear, and that peace will take root in the world. The Advent candles we light in church each Sunday remind us of this growing light — a symbol as old as time, yet as new as every sunrise.



And then comes Christmas: God's love made visible in a child born in simplicity and vulnerability. The story of Jesus' birth still speaks powerfully today — reminding us that greatness can be found in humility, and that peace begins not with power but with compassion.

Yet even for those who may not share the faith behind the story, Christmas offers something deeply human: a chance to pause, to connect with one another, and to give thanks. In homes, schools, churches and village halls across our parishes, we'll gather to sing, to laugh, to share food and gifts — gestures that echo the generosity at the heart of the first Christmas.



Whether your December is filled with candlelight services or carols around the tree, with quiet moments or noisy family gatherings, may you find space for wonder.

And may the light of this season — the light of Christ — bring peace and hope to every household in our communities.

A very happy and blessed Christmas to you all,

*Caryll and all the Ministry Team*

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## UNDERSTANDING AND IMPROVING WELLBEING (thanks to Ben Conradie- Ed)

According to the World Health Organisation, Well-being encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose.

It is not simply the absence of illness, but a balance of emotional, social, and physical health that allows individuals to live fulfilling and meaningful lives. True wellbeing encompasses how people feel about themselves, how they manage stress, maintain relationships, and find purpose in their daily activities.

Improving wellbeing starts with small, intentional actions. Regular physical activity, such as walking or yoga, boosts mood and energy while reducing anxiety. Eating a balanced diet rich in whole foods nourishes the body and supports mental clarity. Equally important is adequate rest—quality sleep restores both body and mind. Maintaining social connections, spending time in nature, and practising gratitude all contribute to a sense of belonging and contentment.

.Mindfulness and meditation can help manage negative thoughts and build resilience, allowing you to respond calmly to life's challenges. Setting achievable goals and taking time for hobbies or creative expression can further enhance satisfaction and purpose. Ultimately, wellbeing is a personal journey—one that requires awareness, self-care, and balance across all areas of life to thrive.

Obviously if you are working and/or looking after a family - perhaps traveling long distances to work, these suggestions probably seem a bit unrealistic or indeed impossible. However, there are many organisations offering support locally. Please see some adverts of groups, clubs and organisations throughout our magazine. Each one offers something unique to support your well being, be it a chat at a coffee morning, playing tennis under the floodlights, going along to practice nights for the Harling Singers, or the Church Choir (Fridays at 7.15!) watch a film with fellow villagers or just joining a Gardening or Book Club.

Look after yourselves!!

## What's on at the Village Hall

Check our website [www.harlingoldschoolvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.harlingoldschoolvillagehall.co.uk)



WED 3 DEC  
Coffee morning  
and Xmas tombola  
10-12 noon

SAT 6 DEC  
afternoon and evening to  
coincide with the Light  
switch on.



Christmas Market and mulled  
wine held at the Village Hall  
from 1pm-6pm

*Merry Christmas*

On behalf of all of the volunteers on the Management Committee of the village hall, thanks for all your support this year. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.



East Harling Methodist Church invites YOU to...

## 'Monday Craft Café'

10am-12noon on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of the month

Next on 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December

In the Hall behind  
East Harling Methodist Church.  
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We will be having a Christmas Swap at our December Coffee Morning on

**6<sup>th</sup> December in East Harling Church.**

You can deliver your swaps to the box at the back of the church or bring them with you to the coffee morning. We only have table-top space so please don't bring giant Christmas trees!

Thanks ECO-Church Team



## **UNDERSTANDING BRECKLAND COUNCIL'S LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

Breckland Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan, which is the document that sets out where new homes, jobs, and services should be located across the district over the coming years. This process is called the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan stage.

At this stage, the Council is asking for views on potential development sites, planning policies, and future growth options. It's an important early opportunity for residents, parish councils, and local organisations to have their say before any final decisions are made.

Once all comments have been reviewed, the Council will move to the next stages:

2026 – Regulation 19 Stage: A more detailed and formal version of the Local Plan will be published. This will include the Council's preferred sites and policies. There will be another chance for public comment, though this stage is more focused on whether the plan meets national planning requirements.

2027 – Examination and Adoption: The final plan will be submitted to a Government Planning Inspector for examination. If approved, it will be formally adopted by Breckland Council and guide planning decisions for years to come.

This is a key time for communities to get involved and help shape how our towns and villages grow in the future. A chance to grow our village in a positive and progressive way. View all the applications at [www.breckland.gov.uk/local-plan-2025](http://www.breckland.gov.uk/local-plan-2025)

View the alternative sites <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/23009/Alternatives-Call-For-Sites-2025-Phase-2-Site-Assessments/pdf/Alternatives>

Breckland Council are inviting comments up until 23:59 on Monday 15th December. Either online [www.breckland.gov.uk/Regulation-18](http://www.breckland.gov.uk/Regulation-18)

Or email [Localplan@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:Localplan@breckland.gov.uk)

Or write to Planning Policy Team, Breckland Council, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, NR19 1EE

Your detailed response should give reasons based on evidence and supporting information necessary to support/object/justify your response.

Kate Filby, Parish Clerk, East Harling





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## THE GARDEN IN DECEMBER



It is hard to second guess the weather. It used to be simple – December was cold following a cool, wet, and sometimes frosty November. The grass had stopped growing and the lawnmower was oiled and put away until the Spring. What you do in the garden this month is very much determined by the weather.

**Outside taps.** Turn them off from indoors if you can, if not insulate them.

**Perennials** that die back to nothing each year can be cut down to the ground, but if there are any seedheads leave them for the tits and finches and cut them back later. Keep short plants free from piles of leaves to prevent rot getting into the crown.

**Lawns.** When weather permits mow with blades set to about 5 cm high which reduces the risk of disease but gives some protection from very cold weather. If you are encouraging wildflowers cut a little higher.

**Trees and shrubs (including roses)** Continue to plant bare root trees, shrubs and hedges when the ground is not frozen. Stake taller plants to prevent rocking in the wind. Check ties from time to time and re-firm the earth if necessary.

**Cuttings.** Hardwood cuttings can still be taken.

**Vegetables** Continue to harvest whatever is ready. Support taller brussels sprout plants.

**Fruit** Continue winter pruning of fruit trees (not stone fruit) and bushes until mid-February. Finish pruning grape vines by the end of the month. Keep some 30 cms lengths of woody prunings, cut at an angle just below a bud and straight across just above a bud (this way you will know which way up to plant them). Plant several in a large pot or cuttings bed and keep watered through the summer and they will be ready to plant out next autumn.

Winter prune established blackcurrant bushes. They fruit best on strong young growth, so remove thick old growth at the base to leave a structured open bush. (Note:

Red currants and white currants fruit on older growth, so only prune for shape).

Plant rhubarb between now and late February. Dig in plenty of well-rotted manure or compost and plant with the crown just below the surface.

**Bulbs** It is not too late to plant daffodil and tulip bulbs. Check potted bulbs planted in September and move any that are ready to an unheated greenhouse, cold frame, or cool windowsill.

**Wildlife** keep feeders topped up and a water source (birds still need to drink when it is icy, so check bowls and replenish regularly).

Don't turn compost heaps in cold conditions as it might disturb hibernating grass snakes, slow worms, or hedgehogs.

If you have any fallen fruits that are still laying on the ground, they can be left if they are not causing a problem – the birds and small mammals will be glad of them if it turns cold.

**Plan and dream.** Seed catalogues are available online now. Why not try something new next year. Seeds make a thoughtful and inexpensive gift – perfect for a secret Santa (choose a variety to match the character of the recipient – soft, sunny, prickly, cabbage looking???)!

Good gardening, and happy Christmas!

*Kevin*

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## **!!CHRISTMAS GREETINGS!!**



On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to wish everyone in our community a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy 2026.

I would also like to take this moment to express our heartfelt thanks to all the wonderful volunteers across the Parish. Whether you helped with events, fundraising, coffee mornings, the community garden, traffic monitoring, or any of the many activities that help bring our village together — your time, care and kindness truly make a difference.

A big thank you as well to our local businesses who have sponsored events or offered their services so generously, and to our 11 Parish Councillors, who give so much of their time throughout the year to support and care for our village.

We are incredibly lucky to live in such a supportive and warm-hearted community.

Thank you to each and every one of you.

Wishing you joy, peace, and a wonderful year ahead.

Kate Filby CILCA (Proper Officer)

Harling Parish Council

### **BOOK REVIEW –2025-** **(Thanks to Sally Mac)**

Here are some books you may be interested in trying, and here's hoping you get some book tokens over the Christmas period to enjoy some of these. They may not all be to your taste, but they are certainly a mixed bag. All books are available in hard copy/audio books.



#### **Ultra-Processed People – Chris van Tulleken**

This book was recommended by a friend who knows me well and my interest in nutrition. All I can say is as interesting as it is, it is not an easy read by any stretch and took me several goes to finish it. Worth the read though if you can skip some of the more technical information.

The basis of the book is to really understand what you are eating every day. If you are for instance finding it hard to lose weight, it's not you it's the food you choose to eat. I'd have thought that was obvious!

Ultra- processed food which is industrially processed and marketed food is made to be addictive, whether it is by adding extra sugar, salt, or extra flavourings.

I had thought I had a healthy regime- not until I read this book. Bread is a great example, whether purchased from a supermarket shelf or bakery, there are substances that have been added to make them more appealing to you. This book has lots of accolades given to it, but you as the reader need to decide early on if you have the stamina to read it and change your ways. It most certainly is food for thought.

#### **You are Here – David Nicholls**

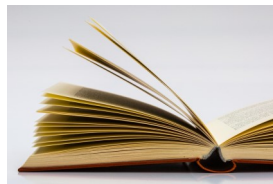
I had heard of David Nicholls before but never read any of his books, so this was a first for me. I couldn't put it down from the moment I started it. I found the characters to be very insightful and great to hear more about. I wanted to connect with them immediately. It really does make you want to walk the Northumberland Coastal Path, a really lovely book and would highly recommend it.

#### **The Lie, A fast paced and unpredictable psychological crime thriller by Mark Hurst**

This author was recommended to me by a friend in an online book group. I can see why she recommended it as it is absolutely compulsive reading if you like crime books with a twist. This one certainly doesn't disappoint. This is the first book in a series of two, with another series called Destiny. It is worth reading them in order if you like them, as characters from this first book turn up again in the last book of the Destiny series.

The synopsis of the story:

When Samantha and David decide to have a night out separately with their friends, events overtake them, and the lies lead them down a path of destruction. To everyone else, it looked like Samantha and David had the perfect life. From meeting at university and falling in love to starting a successful business together, they made a great team. However, as everybody knows, appearances can be deceptive. I just couldn't put this book down and found it very addictive, finishing at 04.00am once morning! Such a great read.



#### **The Couple before us: A completely gripping and nail-biting psychological thriller by Daniel Hurst**

Like father like son, Daniel is Mark's son. His writing is not disappointing at all; it could be written by his father. It is the story of a young family moving to a brand new house on an estate. It is described as being a gorgeous house, it doesn't quite sound that way to me. The mum is pregnant expecting their daughter any moment it seems, yet her mind is working overtime in thinking that someone else has lived in the house beforehand with other people on the estate being killed here there and everywhere.

Sure, this character has a very vivid imagination, the surprises that keep showing during the reading of the book, it does make you think, she is right, what happened to the previous owners?

I won't say any more as I don't want to spoil the ending for you. It is another "must" read in my view, great for those days when the weather is hardly encouraging, try it, you won't be disappointed.

#### **Book Review continues on Page 16**

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## Lest We Forget

November 11<sup>th</sup> marked Armistice Day, commemorated each year to recognise the Armistice signed between the Allies of World War I and Germany. That agreement took effect at 11am – the “eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month” of 1918. As the Member of Parliament for South West Norfolk, it is an honour to participate in Remembrance Day activities, and I was deeply moved by the services I attended in both Thetford and Downham Market, and I was pleased to also support the Festival of Remembrance in Swaffham. I was thrilled to see so many children and young people involved in Remembrance services across our three towns, with a number of children laying their own wreaths. I always feel this is such an important part of our collective responsibility – keeping the memory of such awful conflicts in our minds and sharing this history with future generations.

It is crucial that the service of those who made the ultimate sacrifice is recognised and we must collectively work to ensure that such conflicts never happen again.

Since becoming an MP, I have been concerned by the state of military housing in the constituency, and it is something I receive complaints about by serving personnel. I am committed to ensuring improvements are made, and I was pleased with the recent announcement of the Defence Housing Strategy. This £9 billion investment will see improvements made to over 40,000 military homes and the building of 100,000 new homes on Ministry of Defence land to drive growth.

Locally, 826 homes in South West Norfolk will be supported by the initiative. Our British service personnel – and their families – make extraordinary sacrifices to keep us all safe. In this new era of threat, we rely on them more every day. The least they deserve in return is a decent home.

Separately, I am also continuing my work in bringing 15 long-standing empty homes at RAF Feltwell back into use

Last week, I also welcomed the government announcement that Türkiye will be purchasing 20 Typhoon fighter jets in a deal worth up to £8 billion. This game-changing defence deal is the largest UK fighter jet

order in a generation and will support 1000 jobs across the East of England.

I am committed to supporting our armed forces personnel, veterans and their families, and am proud of the Labour Government's work to ensure those who have served our country are looked after.

If you are a veteran, a member of our armed forces or a dependant, and have any matters that you need support with, please get in touch: [terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:terry.jermy.mp@parliament.uk)

---

## EAST HARLING GARDENING CLUB

A really interesting meeting in November with ideas for encouraging wildlife into our gardens.

This month no meeting, but Christmas supper will be served for members and spouses / partners who have booked with Mary Wright. Saturday 13 December at 6.30 for 7 pm. If you haven't already let Mary know whether you want turkey or beef please do so urgently as we need to order the meat. If you have any food allergies again let Mary know (we can cater for most things, but only if we know)

January will be our traditional quiz night - more details next month. New Members and visitors always welcome!

---

## BOOK REVIEW Continued from Page 14 **An Orphans Story: An emotional WW2 evacuee saga from this bestselling author Cathy Sharp**

I hadn't previously read any of this author's books before, but this was another recommendation so I felt I should try it. She also writes under the name of Rosie Clarke. I most certainly wasn't disappointed, although at times it is rather gut wrenching because of the circumstances this young boy finds himself in. It kept me gripped from the very start. After the death of his beloved father, Arthur and a group of other young evacuees are sent far away to Canada for their own safety on the eve of the Second World War. Alone and afraid, with no family to protect him, Arthur faces an unknown future.

But even on the other side of the world he can't escape the war. Faced with more upheaval, Arthur begins to doubt he will ever find his forever family. With so much heartache and turmoil, can he hold on to his dream of love and happiness? It really is a great read.





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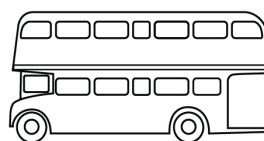
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DIARY DATES 2025 for fundraising events, outings etc. in the parishes in the Harling United Benefice.

Full details appear in the magazine pages

A note on short forms for Venues for some events

1. EHSSC is East Harling Sports and Social Club (opposite E Harling Church on Church Road)
2. OSH is Old School Hall in Harling on School Lane
3. Feline Care is on Roudham road
4. BVH is Bridgham Village Hall

## **DECEMBER 2025**

- 1<sup>st</sup> HUB 10 -12 followed by Exercise Class 12-1pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> E Harling Film Night OSH 7.15 for 7.30  
3<sup>rd</sup> OSH Coffee Morning and Tombola  
3<sup>rd</sup> BVH Wednesday Social 11-1pm  
6<sup>th</sup> E Harling Church Community Café and Christmas Swaps 10-12 noon  
6<sup>th</sup> Feline Care pop up shop 10-1pm weather permitting  
6<sup>th</sup> Bridgham Church Christmas Concert Palgrave players from 2.30pm see page 18  
6<sup>th</sup> Christmas market OSH 1pm – 6pm with Christmas light switch on at 6pm  
8<sup>th</sup> HUB 10-12 noon NO Exercise Class today  
12<sup>th</sup> EHSSC Bingo Eyes down 7.30pm  
13<sup>th</sup> Gardening Club Christmas Lunch OSH 6.30pm  
15<sup>th</sup> THE HUB CHRISTMAS PARTY 10-1pm Followed by Exercise Class 1-2pm  
17<sup>th</sup> BVH Wednesday Social 11-1pm  
27<sup>th</sup> Bridgham Church Coffee Morning in Bridham Village Hall 10-12noon

## **JANUARY 2026**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> No Community Café this month  
6<sup>th</sup> No Film Club this month  
13<sup>th</sup> Gardening Club Quiz night 7.30 OSH  
26<sup>th</sup> Feline Care Pop up Shop 10-1pm weather permitting

## **FEBRUARY 2026**

- 7<sup>th</sup> Community Café E Harling Church 10-12noon  
6<sup>th</sup> Film Club OSH 7.15 for 7.30  
10<sup>th</sup> Gardening Club 7.30 OSH

**CONTACT** is published monthly by East Harling Parochial Church Council and items for the January edition should be submitted to the editor by email by 12<sup>th</sup> December at the **ABSOLUTE LATEST**.

Please ensure that the sender's name and address or telephone number is included in all communications. Please don't wait until the last day as we cannot guarantee last minute items will be printed.

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[ehcontactmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:ehcontactmagazine@gmail.com)

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## **East Harling Church**



### **SATURDAY 6th December**

#### **CHRISTMAS SWAPS**

Come and join us for a joyful exchange of Christmas Baubles, Christmas ornaments, tree lights, Christmas jumpers and party dresses!

#### **Seasonal Refreshments ! 10am-12.00 noon**

Coffee, tea and soft drinks  
delicious home-made cakes  
second hand book stall

**Everyone Welcome!**



## **Tuesday 2nd December FILM NIGHT**

**In Harling Old School Hall  
Film starts at 7.30 pm  
Open at 7.15pm for crisps, pop-corn, soft drinks, teas & coffees  
Bring Your Own Bottle!**

In the 1960s, four scrappy young men from New Jersey form a band. They have the magic sound that propels them from singing under streetlights to singing in spotlights. Their increasing popularity soon involves them in the seamier side of life including mafia threats and family fall outs—a great film, funny, gripping and joyful with a really good story line.

**£5.00 donation  
EVERYONE WELCOME**

### **Please Note THE HUB**

15<sup>th</sup>. THE HUB CHRISTMAS PARTY. 10 am until 1 pm followed by the Exercise Class 1pm until 2pm.

22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> no Hub or Exercise class.  
We would like to wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a healthy New year