



The newsletter for the community of Orford and Gedgrave

Issue No. 408 March 2026

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All copy must be received by midday on Thursday 19 March 2026, preferably by email to:

orfordtrust@outlook.com or put through the Town Hall letterbox

Priority for inclusion is given to articles that are about or directly affect the community of Orford and Gedgrave and inclusion is subject to editing and availability of space. Contributors should be aware that this newsletter is published on the website of Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council and the New Orford Town Trust (www.orfordparishandtrust.onesuffolk.net)

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL ISSUE OF VILLAGE VOICE IS MIDDAY ON THURSDAY 19 MARCH

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY

Following the recent resignation of a Parish Councillor there is currently a vacancy on Orford and Gedgrave Parish Council and this will be filled by co-option at the Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 11 March. Anyone wishing to be considered for this vacancy should write a letter to the Clerk to arrive before noon on Tuesday 10 March 2026. Applicants must be eighteen years of age or over and have had their main residence or place of work in Orford, or within three miles of Orford, for the past twelve months. The Parish Council as a body also acts as the Trustee for the New Orford Town Trust. If you wish to discuss details of the role of a Parish Councillor, please call me at the office on 459172.

Benches – the Parish Council is looking to replace some benches at the Recreation Ground and in Broad Street. If anyone would like to sponsor or contribute to a bench please contact the Clerk.

Marie Backhouse, Clerk/RFO to Orford & Gedgrave Parish Council, 01394 459172, clerk@orfordandgedgrave-pc.gov.uk

TOWN HALL NEWSPAPER KIOSK

We have recently had the former newspaper kiosk spruced up. We wondered if there is there anybody in the village who might be interested in using that area for something like a pop-up shop or something similar which we haven't thought of! If so, please do get in touch.

Kara Reed, Clerk to New Orford Town Trust, orfordtrust@outlook.com, 01394 459172

ORFORD SPORTS & RECREATION CLUB

The members annual coach trips have been arranged for Saturday 27 June to Cambridge and Thursday 17 September to Great Yarmouth, incorporating the races. More details to follow.

Coming up:

- Saturday 4 April, live music with Dr and the Epics
- Saturday 2 May: Aricho Roadshow Disco

Don't forget Friday night club nights and keep an eye on the board and Facebook page for bingo and darts nights.

Mark Smy, Secretary, 450358

March dates for your diary

- Each Monday: badminton - Orford Town Hall, 10am-12noon
- Each Monday: art class - Bart's Hall, 10am-1pm, all welcome (tel 07714 644584 for more details)
- Each Monday and Wednesday: Methodist Chapel tea room, lunch, afternoon tea, 11am-2pm
- Each Tuesday: chair pilates - Orford Sports and Recreation Club, 11.30am-12.30pm (tel Suzanne Kearney for more details, 07944 991138)
- Each Tuesday: pickleball - Orford Town Hall, 7-9pm
- Each Wednesday: badminton - Orford Town Hall, 7-9pm
- Each Thursday: bellringing - Orford Church, 7.30pm
- Each Friday: pickleball - Orford Town Hall, 10am-12noon
- Each Saturday: Orford Country Market - Orford Town Hall, white 9.30am-1pm
- Thursday 5 March: Gardening Club - Orford Town Hall, 7.30pm
- Thursday 19 March: Orford & District Surgery Charitable Incorporated Organisation AGM - Orford Sports & Recreation Club, 7pm

ORFORD OPEN GARDENS 2026 – SAVE THE DATE

Please save Sunday 24 May in your diary for this year's Orford Open Gardens. There will be a range of beautiful gardens to visit, some opening for the first time this year, a refreshment stall with home-baked cakes and savouries, a raffle and a plant sale.

Watch out for further information in a future issue. In the meantime, if you are interested in opening your garden this year or in future years, or have any questions about Open Gardens, please call Libby Archer on 0771 341 3494.

Libby Archer

ORFORD & DISTRICT SURGERY CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION AGM,

Thursday 19 March 7pm, at Orford Sports & Recreation Club
Are you a patient of the Peninsula Practice Doctors Surgery and use Chapman House, Orford?

Come along to the next Annual General Meeting of the Orford and District Surgery Charitable Incorporated Organisation, the charity that owns Chapman House and can support funding for equipment, staffing, courses and research requested by the Doctors for Orford Surgery. Hear how money has been spent and potential funding

opportunities for the next year. There is also funding available from the charity to help maintain the independence of the frail, elderly and/or disabled of Butley, Chillesford, Iken, Orford and Gedgrave and Sudbourne.

The Trustees will welcome your attendance along with suggestions.
Corinne Lusher, Secretary, ODSCIO, 01394 450849

LOOKING FOR OTTERS

In 2023, an enthusiastic group of volunteers living in the area formed the Alde and Ore Otter group, with the aim of finding out more about our local otters – a key indicator of the health of our local river and water ecosystems – by recording signs and sightings, as well as using trail cameras to learn about their numbers and behaviour.

As a member of the Otter Group living in Orford, I'm interested in all signs and sightings of otters here and in the surrounding area, so I need your help. If you see an otter, or have heard of an otter sighting, I'd really like to hear from you. Please do get in touch and let me know the date and time of your sighting, as well as the location and any other details you can remember.

And if you fancy helping the team by looking for signs of our local otters or even giving us permission to place a camera on your land if you know you have otters present, then please contact me.

Rob Yarham, Alde and Ore Otter Group,
robert.yarham@zen.co.uk, 07545 376074

ORFORD FLOWER SHOW

The advance schedule for this year's Flower Show will be available in the Village Shop from the end of February. The full list of 176 classes, plus the two special cake and chutney recipes.

The 2026 Flower Show will be on Saturday 29 August at 1pm.

Jill Fullerton-Smith

ORFORD AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

2026: our fiftieth anniversary of the Gardening Club!!

We always welcome new members and guests...

Our next event:

Thursday 5 March, Orford Town Hall, 7.30pm
Jaime Blake – Chair of Norfolk and Suffolk Hardy Plant Society, 'Around the World in 80 Plants'

We are very pleased to have secured Jaime, who has spent her professional career at Bressingham, and her talk has its origins in that garden which I'm sure many of you will have visited over the years since the days of 'Foggy Bottom' on TV with Adrian Bloom!

Her talk will look at the wide range of plants we can grow in this country and where they originate in the world, which is particularly pertinent in this changing climate. She will illustrate with slides, anecdotes and her own experience of growing them at Bressingham.

Frances Tophill – 'Rewild your Garden: Create a haven for Birds, Bees and Butterflies'

Frances came up from Dartmoor to speak to a capacity crowd of our members and guests from a very wide area!! Sadly we had to turn a large number of people away...

To quote from the email sent by one of our guests at the above event 'It was a resounding success, and judging by the rapturous final applause, it was clearly enjoyed by everyone in attendance. Frances is such a fluent and knowledgeable speaker; she presented her gardening philosophy with incredible clarity, supported by truly beautiful and illustrative slides. Her commitment to sustainability and education is deeply admirable – certainly something for us all to aspire to in our own gardens.'

We were very pleased to have lecturers and students from Otley College attend and ask for Frances' advice to them, which she gave happily.

Another guest asked her about how she was planning to go about her first Chelsea Flower Show Garden this year. She gave a very comprehensive response which included her saying that she was not a garden designer and had many other people and

organisations to work with to create this sustainable garden for The King's Foundation, including David Beckham.

Polly Sharkey, Chair, creativefutures98@btinternet.com

ORFORD MUSEUM EVENTS AT BUTLEY PRIORY

Thursday 16 April: Simon Pearson and Fiona Gorman: A Surgeon and a Maverick: The Life and Pioneering Work of Magdi Yacoub

Magdi Yacoub has been at the forefront of cardiac surgery for more than fifty years and, at the age of ninety, is still leading research in Britain and Egypt where his teams are developing heart valves from stem cells and pioneering new treatments. He was born and brought up in Egypt, where he studied medicine as a teenage prodigy, and set out to become a cardiac specialist after a young aunt died from heart disease. His career is both colourful and tumultuous.

In the early 1960s Yacoub moved to London to work with Professor Sir Russell Brock, one of the great pioneers of open-heart surgery. Ten years later, he joined the medical team at Harefield Hospital, a small rural hospital that he transformed into one of the world's leading cardiac centres. He performed some of the first heart transplants in Britain, the first heart-lung transplant in Europe, and developed new operations that improved the lives of millions of people, particularly children, across the globe. Yacoub worked eighteen-hour days, repeatedly clashed with the medical establishment, but transformed the world of cardiac medicine and championed the NHS. He became close friends with Princess Diana, treated the rich and famous, including Eric Morecambe and Omar Sharif, and was showered with honours, including a knighthood and the Order of Merit.

Simon Pearson and Fiona Gorman are a husband-and-wife team of author/editors who both worked for *The Times* in London for more than thirty years. Their biography of Yacoub – published by the American University in Cairo Press – involved more than fifty interviews over two years with former patients, their families, Yacoub's colleagues, friends and rivals, not to mention many hours spent with Yacoub himself.

Simon has written three books, including *The Great Escaper: The Life and Death of Roger Bushell*, which was edited by Fiona, and became a *Sunday Times* bestseller. They lived in south London for most of their careers but moved to Suffolk two years ago. They have three sons.

This talk will start at 6pm and last about an hour. Tickets cost £15 for Friends, £20 for guests and include a glass of wine (served from 5.30pm). Please book through our website at www.orfordmuseum.org.uk.

On Thursday 28 May the Three Inch Fools will return to Butley Priory after their highly successful performance last August of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with an epic tale of Arthurian adventure and medieval mayhem: *King Arthur and the Holy Fail*. In a land of daring quests, dashing knights, and endless jousting, there lived a would-be hero (waiting in the wings) who went by the name of Arthur.

When Camelot is rocked to its core by a tragic – and frankly improbable incident involving a large table of an undisclosed shape, Arthur is thrust into the quest of a lifetime. Will he bravely battle through blistering cold and scorching fire to save his beloved realm, or will he crumble as fate refuses to cooperate? Destiny awaits, chivalry calls, and the quest to end all quests begins. Saddle up – things are about to get legendary.

The performance will start at 5pm and last until 7pm (doors open at 4.45pm). It will take place outdoors, so please bring chairs, rugs and a picnic. There will be a twenty-minute interval. The show will go on unless the weather forces a postponement in which case it will be re-scheduled to a future date.

Elizabeth Spinney

MARCH AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S

Sunday 1 March: Second Sunday of Lent

9.30am Holy Communion at Orford – Revd Mandy Reynolds

Sunday 8 March: third Sunday of Lent
 8am BCP Holy Communion at Orford – Revd Mandy Reynolds
 10am Family Service at Orford – Guy Marshall

Sunday 15 March, fourth Sunday of Lent – Mothering Sunday
 11am Holy Communion at Orford – Revd Mandy Reynolds and Guy Marshall

Sunday 29 March: Palm Sunday
 10am Meet at Orford Stores for Palm Sunday Procession with donkey
 10.30am Orford Cluster United Holy Communion at Orford – Revd Mandy Reynolds and Revd Robin Alderson

Friday 3 April: Good Friday
 4pm Stations of the Cross at Orford– Revd Mandy Reynolds

Sunday 4 April: Easter Day
 8am BCP Holy Communion at Orford – Revd Mandy Reynolds
 10am Family Service at Orford – Guy Marshall

Diana Grayburn, Church Warden, 450771

MARCH AT ORFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday 1 March 10.30am Stephen Caley
 Sunday 8 March 10.30am Informal Café Service
 Sunday 15 March Mothering Sunday - *Flowers for all*
 10.30am Rev Saul – Holy Communion
 Sunday 22 March Passiontide begins
 10.30am Stephen Caley

Sunday 29 March Palm Sunday – *Blessing of Palm Crosses*
 10.30am Stephen Caley

Friday 3 April Good Friday Reflection 11am, followed by lunch

Sunday 5 April Easter Day Praise 10.30am, with the Easter Garden

You are welcome to join with us for any of our services and meetings. Refreshments are served after the morning service.

Chapel Tea Room open every Monday and Wednesday from 11am, and soon to extend its opening times throughout the spring and summer. A great lunch time menu and with scones and cakes and plenty of art, crafts, cards, second hand books and jigsaws and much more.

The Bible Society’s Bible Course ‘The Big Story’ continues with sessions 7 and 8 on Wednesday 4 and 11 March at 3pm.

Recent Sunday services have included an informal Café Worship and an Agape (sharing stories and giving thanks) – both these services have been well received.

A recent Saturday Church for young and old was well supported with ages from nine years through to eighty years - the day of fun and food concluded with a fifteen-minute service. We plan to repeat this throughout the year and, as always, it is open to anyone who would like to attend.

Shrove Tuesday lunch time soup and pancakes with several visitors enjoying this popular event – and the youngsters happy to play (and some to learn) chess. Another delightful late morning and lunchtime for all!

Stephen Caley

THE PENINSULA PRACTICE

DAY	ALDERTON	ORFORD	ALDEBURGH
Monday	8.00 to 14.30	8.00 to 18.30	8.00 to 18.30
Tuesday	8.00 to 18.30	CLOSED	8.00 to 18.30
Wednesday	8.00 to 18.30	8.00 to 13.00	8.00 to 18.30
Thursday	8.00 to 18.30	8.00 to 13.00	8.00 to 18.30
Friday	8.00 to 18.30	8.00 to 13.00	8.00 to 18.30



01394 450235

We can help with any of the following:

- Friendship and companionship
- Collection of medication
- Shopping
- Dog walking / feeding pets
- Form filling and help with technology
- One-off garden tidy
- Minor household repairs
- A healthy meal
- Transport to hospital and GP appointments
- Provision of a personal care alarm and key safe
- A Community Larder located in the entrance to the King's Head car park
- Identification of scams and scammers and support for those affected
- Friday Soup at Bart's Hall
- Other activities as requested and agreed