

ASSOCIATION

NEWS



MAY 2026

CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS (useful numbers)

If your club or organisation is not listed here and you would like to be included, then please let me know on 01787 210354 or email bronwenstacey@btinternet.com

Allotments Secretary	Karl Debenham <i>The new Chair is Bryn Hurren</i>	07584 996211
Assington Baby and Toddler Group	Rev Tricia Box	07747 124592
Assington Books, Village Hall (see post office for times)	Michelle Bourner	07954 221773
Assington Farmshop	Maxine Gardiner	01787 211610
Assington Post Office, Village Hall	Mon 1.30-3.30, Wed 9-12	
Boxford CEVC Primary School (office@boxford.suffolk.sch.uk)	Head: Emma Lea	01787 210332
Brownies, Boxford	Moira Grant	01787 211513
Churchwarden	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
Community Choir	Nettie Osman	07957 394780
County Councillor (james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk)	James Finch	01473 264993
District Councillor (Assington)	Lee Parker	07970 196884
Doctors surgery – Sudbury	Hardwicke House	01787 370011
Doctors surgery – Bures	Bures	01787 227529
Floodline 24/7	SCC Flood Management	0345 606 6171
Footpath Warden	Nettie Osman	07957 394780
Horticultural Society	Karen Wiles	
Member of Parliament (james.cartlidge.mp@parliament.uk)	James Cartlidge	020 7219 4875
Mobile Library - Vicary Estate Junction	Saturday 16th May	3pm - 3.30pm
Parish Council	Simon Thorogood	01787 227400
bronwenstacey@btinternet.com	Bronwen Stacey	01787 210354
david.wiles@live.co.uk	David Wiles	07811 108702
tony@howcroft.net	Tony Howcroft	
andrewpeterhill@hotmail.com	Andrew Hill	01787 827112
	Mark Armitage	
	Kimberly Howard	
Parish Council - Clerk (clerk@assington-pc.gov.uk)	Christine Hargan	01449 674727
Pub – The Shoulder of Mutton	restaurant@shouldermutton.co.uk	01787 703309
Stoke by Nayland C of E Primary School (admin@sbn.suffolk.sch.uk)	Head: Mrs Kelly McGrath	01206 262418
Vicar (vicar@parishchurch.co.uk)	The Revd Daniel Whiffin	07309 947039
Village Hall – Bookings	Karen Wiles	07983 002072
Village Hall - Caretaker	Sean Mills	07547 190948
Village Hall - Charity Secretary		
Womens Institute, Boxford (annie-phillips@hotmail.co.uk)	Annie Phillips	01787 211729

The Assington News is a community magazine funded primarily through adverts and donations, for which we are always most grateful. **ADVERTS. RATES pa : £20 for 1/8 size page advert, £35 for 1/4 page advert, £60 for 1/2 page advert, £120 for a full page advert. Contact Jeff Stacey, 01787 210354, assingtonassociation@icloud.com**

The Assington Association Bank Account details for payments and donations:

Account no: **01345159**. Sort Code: **30-98-31**. Please make cheques payable to **The Assington Association**.

The ASSINGTON NEWS NOW IN COLOUR ONLINE at <https://assington-pc.gov.uk/assington-news/>

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✉ **meadowgraceph@gmail.com**

📷 **instagram.com meadowgraceph**



TIGER HILL NATURE RESERVE UPDATE

From Nick Miller

Hello it's been a busy couple of years on the Nature Reserve at Tiger Hill. But there are always beautiful things to see. Recent years have been untypical because of weather patterns, and I keep hoping for a "normal" year. With the long periods of either drought or very wet, wildlife has had its ups and downs.

We got a brief film of Otter, on 10th March. Bats are having a hard time in Britain, as their habitats are always under threat (eg felling of old dead trees, however sonic recording has made study easier and we now know ten species are established at Tiger Hill. Nuthatches continue to do well here, and we've so far retained our Marsh Tits, which are decreasing nationally. Nightingales are a less regular sound than in the past, but two were singing through last summer, and there was an increase in the area. Barn Owl chicks have



been raised and ringed every year in our nest box, including in the very bad year of 2025. Increased sightings of Frogs and Toads have been very welcome.

The survey of Dormice, with footprint tunnels, is still having a nil result, there were large numbers before Muntjac deer attacked the woodland undergrowth. Last year, muntjac numbers curiously were low, and the undergrowth was visibly improving; but in 2026 they've returned in force and the gaps are dreadful - to add to that, Fallow deer have started moving in. This is all bad news for small birds and mammals.

Some good news for plant life is an increase in variety of Fern species, along the Brook. Also Yellow Flag Iris, which floods have transported from their wild population upstream. The mild weather this Spring has brought the unprecedented change of Bluebells starting to flower en masse in March!

One group of species that's been increasing is Slime Moulds, that produce conspicuous growths for brief periods. Drought brought an unprecedented lack of Fungi in 2025, however the winter Fungi have been abundant, such as Golden Brain and Scarlet Elf Cup.

Two new fungus species did appear in the summer, Date Waxcap and Persistent

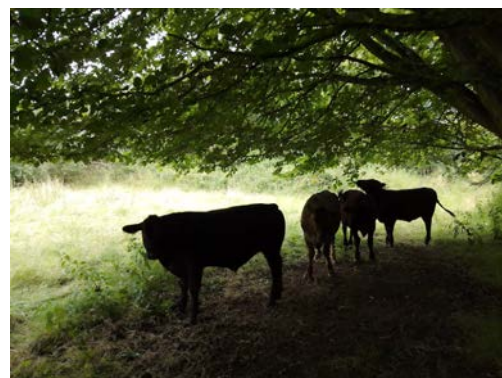


Waxcap, which are scarce species. We've cut and raked the dead mats of grass resulting from extremes of weather in recent years, and our heathland flowers which had been choked out, are returning. We gradually get more insect records, and a good one was the Scarce Snakefly, which is considered a rarity - though more likely it's unseen, high in the trees, and there was a long-overdue re-appearance of Glow-worms here on 6th July 2025, on the lawn at Warren Cottage.



Returning to the weather, effects on habitats here are not good. It's obviously good that wet mild winters produce long thick grass on the damp grazing meadows, but on the heathy land, if drought then occurs, a dead matted thatch results, which completely suppresses our special heathland flowers. 2025 saw an exceptional drought, which left grazing animals without grass, and without much of a hay harvest. Wet also seems to be to blame for several years of desperately low Butterfly numbers; while the 2025 drought seems to be the cause of unprecedented severe lack of Fungi.

Grassland: For fifteen years now, difficulty with the Grassland here has resulted from lack of rabbits, due to Rabbit Haemorrhagic disease. The consequences have been needing to arrange sheep and cattle grazing, putting up fences, fighting back scrub encroachment, and mowing and raking. On Long Meadow, control of Marsh Thistle has again improved; an unprecedented invasion of Broom seedlings had to be pulled by hand, and it has taken a long time to regain some control of Gorse,



which spread when Rabbits disappeared. All these weather and species changes in recent years, have made the work excessive, but at present we're winning.

Woodland: The problems have been massive loss of brambly undergrowth, which is likely the main reason for losses of Nightingales and Dormice. The problems have been over-shading by steady growth of Oak trees, and most of all the destruction by Muntjac Deer. We're tackling the trees by coppicing and some thinning, and the Muntjac problem by fencing and culling. This is similar to work in the other woods locally. We take care to retain dead wood with cavities for wildlife. Much of the woodland here is dominated by bracken, so we plant some Hazel and Hawthorn in those areas to improve woodland connectivity.



The hope is that extra work and expenditure in recent years is resulting in some lasting improvements. Thanks to Dan Mead, Steven Smith and Ollie Coyne for their reliable work, and to the Dedham Vale volunteers who visited twice in the last year. Before the changes in the Rabbit and Deer populations, the nature reserve was more self-sustaining. Whereas in Britain there's currently a fashion for letting trees invade land, most nature conservation continues to be maintaining mixed long-standing grassland and woodland habitats such as ours.



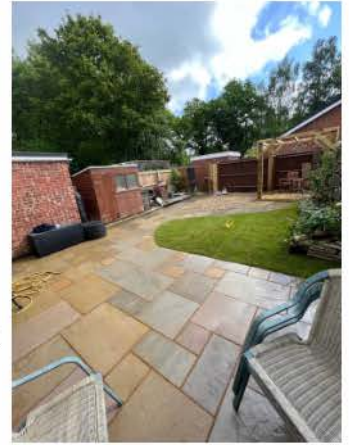
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CHOIR NEWS

From Nettie



Hi everyone, I hope you're all doing well. I wanted to share a huge thank you to everyone who joined us for our Easter Saturday concert at the Church. The choir performed an uplifting and fun programme, and your support helped us raise £313.57 towards the new kitchen and loo facilities. We're so grateful to all who attended and contributed.

We're already looking forward to our next performance at **Leestock on 23rd May**, and the whole choir is buzzing with excitement. It's going to be a fantastic event.

Warmest thanks, Nettie
www.happysounds.co.uk

and from Bronwen:

Huge thanks to Nettie and all the Happysounds choir members who performed a wonderfully entertaining concert in church on Easter Saturday.



The blue sky and sunshine enlivened us all and the refreshments were much appreciated by many in the audience as we settled down to enjoy the varied selection of popular songs and harmonies delivered faultlessly by the choir; it was a lovely addition to this special celebratory weekend in the church calendar.

The PCC is most grateful to Nettie and the choir, for the generous donation of all the profits of the day, of £313.57 to be put towards the Tower Project.

We are pleased to report that we now have £101,000 (in round terms) in the "kitty" for the Project and have calculated that we now need "only" £49,000 more, and we can begin the works. Thanks to everyone, we are getting there!!



Peter Robb

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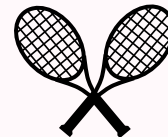
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PARISH CHURCH NEWS



<https://www.assingtonchurch.org.uk>

*Letter from Sylvia Gaspar,
Reader,
at Bures
with Assington
and
Little Cornard*



Dear Friends

May blossom, May Queen, Maypole - words that have connection with celebrating brighter, warmer days often filled with colour in the hedgerows and gardens. Crowning the May Queen with a coronet of May blossom and celebrating with dancing around the Maypole was a regular village event in years past. Bures isn't the only village that will have an Open Gardens Day to lift the spirits. An opportunity to enjoy the creativity of the gardeners and infinite variety of gardens, big, small and everywhere in between.

The long dark days of winter and the switchback experiences of March, one day summer, the next winter again, begin to fade into the back ground.

Of course life's experiences are much wider than the weather – really! Those who are facing pain, fear of the future, deep sorrow are not easily cheered by flowers and carefully tended lawns. Even without these hardships many of us can sometimes feel life is more a daily routine than an experience to look forward to each day. What gives life a meaning?

If we look beyond ourselves to the God of all creation our own horizons get wider too. Jesus wants us to enjoy that wider, God-filled life. When telling people about lost sheep being found he adds there is even greater celebrations in heaven each time another person says 'here I am, feeling lost, Jesus please show me your fulfilling life.'

I trust this May will bring you joy in the bright days and peaceful confidence whatever the weather.

With love, Sylvia

Update on the Tower Project

Simon and Bronwen have spent, and continue to spend many weary hours filling in applications for grants, which would hopefully provide us with the remaining outstanding amount needed to be able to start work.

The Happysounds Choir performed a wonderfully entertaining concert of songs in Church on Easter Saturday, and have most generously donated the £313.57 profits of the day towards this project.

WE ARE GETTING THERE!

We are pleased to report that we now have £101,000 (in round terms) in the "kitty" for the Project and have calculated that we now need "only" £49,000 more, and we can begin the works.



ALL WELCOME TO ASSINGTON MAY CHURCH SERVICES

3rd May @ 10.30am HOLY COMMUNION

*(10 May : Bures Holy Communion @10.30am
Lt Cornard Evening Prayers @ 16.30pm)*

**17th May @ 10.30am HOLY COMMUNION
CELEBRATION SERVICE**

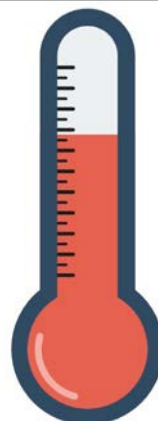
*(24th May: Bures Morning Worship @10.30am
Lt Cornard Holy Communion @10.30am)*

**31st May @ 10.30am BENEFICE
HOLY COMMUNION**

**THE CHURCH IS OPEN FOR VISITORS
ON FRIDAYS, SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS,
and at other times by prior arrangement with key
holders.**

**Bronwen Stacey 01787 210354
John Symons 01787 211534**

Vicar: Daniel Whiffin 07309 947039
email: vicar@parishchurch.co.uk
Associate Priest :
Rev Simon White 07572 418555
Reader emeritus:
Dr John Symons 211534
Churchwarden: Bronwen Stacey 210354
Organists: Bronwen Stacey
Peter Dakin
Secretary: Emily Cartlidge 07967 724266



**Assington Church
TOWER PROJECT**



QRCode
If you would like to
make a donation
towards the
Tower Project
Our Grateful Thanks

THINGS TO DO



Assington Baby & Toddler Group

Mums, dads, grandparents, carers and childminders living in and around Assington. Bring your little ones to a friendly, accompanied babies and toddlers group in the lovely, airy Village Hall

14 May,
11 & 25 June, 9 July
10 September

Thursday twice a month in termtime
from 9:30-11.00 am, at £3 per family

Revd Tricia Box - 07747124592



Little Cornard
All Saints Church
Flower Festival
Weekend

9th & 10th May 2026
11am ~ 4pm

FULLY STOCKED PLANT MARQUEE
FLORAL DISPLAYS
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Sunday 10th May 4:30pm

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www.littlecornardchurch.org.uk



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GAMES & BBQ

Saturday 13th June
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£5 ADULTS
(BBQ INCLUDED)

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Activities:
Parent and child (or adult!) wheelbarrow race
3 legged race
Egg and spoon race
Sack race
Cricket/Rounders

Spectators welcome – participation is optional!
BBQ

Drinks provided by The Shoulder of Mutton Mini bar
Marshmallows and S'mores around the firepit

A social event for the village, whilst also raising funds for the church tower project



'Last Tuesday'

Coffee and Chat
in the Village Hall

The next meeting will be on
Tuesday 26th May
at 10am.

See you there!



BOXFORD BOWLS CLUB OPEN DAY

Boxford BC invites you to come and have a go at Bowls!

- **Sunday 17th May 2026**
- 10am to 4pm
- Free to attend
- Open to Adults and Children over 12 (accompanied by adult)
- Need to wear flat shoes or trainers
- Light refreshments available
- Located behind The Fleece Hotel, Boxford

For more information please email or call Boxford Bowls Club at

boxfordbowlsclub@gmail.com

Tel: 01787-211133



*You are invited to attend
the
Annual General Meeting
of the*

Assington Village Hall Charity

*which is to be held in the Village
Hall*

*on **Monday, 18th May**
@ 6.30pm*

**TO ADVERTISE IN THIS MAGAZINE
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A FULL PAGE COSTS £120

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Bronwen Stacey :

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Minutes of the Assington Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 30 March 2026 at 7pm in Assington Village Hall.

4 members of the public and 7 Parish Councillors were present

1. Apologies for absence None
2. Chairman's welcome
3. The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the contributors for providing their reports.
4. Confirmation and signing of Minutes of Meeting held on 31st March 2025
5. The minutes were signed by Cllr Thorogood, Chair of the Parish Council
6. Matters arising from the Minutes None
7. REPORTS

Mr J Finch (County Councillor)

Cllr Finch reported that this would be the last meeting he will attend as a County Councillor as he is retiring. The meeting thanked him for all his work on behalf of the community and his attendance at the meetings during his tenure.

• One Suffolk Business Case: The Government has now announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Suffolk in 2028, opting for three unitary authorities despite clear evidence that this is not the best outcome for Suffolk. This is a major milestone in the future of local government in the county and reshapes how councils are structured and how services are delivered across the county. Each of the three new unitary councils will cover their own new geographical area: West Suffolk, East Suffolk, and South Suffolk and Ipswich.

• New SEND school and centre of excellence to be built in Bury St Edmunds Run by Eastern Education Group and funded by the Department for Education, the school in Gastonbury Road will provide 90 places for students aged 14 to 19-years-old with special educational needs and disabilities In a first for Suffolk The new school will also become a centre of excellence and hub for SEND guidance, offering expertise to mainstream schools. Examples of this approach include providing outreach staff to work with mainstream schools and offering specialist expertise and training opportunities. This hub model is increasingly encouraged by the Department for Education and is reflected in guidance from Ofsted around inclusive practice and system leadership. It launches Suffolk County Council's ambition to implement this model across the county with a number of other education settings. This news comes just a week after it was announced that Suffolk County Council and Unity Schools Partnership will open a new SEND school in Saxmundham for 126 students with severe learning difficulties. Both new provisions have been agreed by Suffolk County Council in line with its SEND sufficiency plans, which outline how specialist provision should be delivered across the county. This new special school in Bury St Edmunds will share a site with Chalk Hill School special school which is due to open in Easter 2026. Chalk Hill will occupy the former Horringer Middle School building, while the second school will be built by the Department for Education on a field on the site. Eastern Education Group will run both schools.

• Suffolk County Council's chief executive, Nicola Beach to step down Nicola will leave at the end of March 2026 and the process to appoint a new chief executive will begin shortly. Reflecting on her decision, Nicola said: "Serving the people of Suffolk has been a great privilege and I am immensely proud of what has been achieved together over the last eight years. Leaving this job has not been an easy decision, and I have thought long and hard about it. However, I believe this is the right time to hand over leadership to those who can steer and support colleagues through local government reorganisation over the next two years, whatever option the Government decides to implement. "I would like to thank all of my colleagues,

Matthew Hicks and his Cabinet and all councillors for their support and I wish them the very best for the future. I do not have another role lined up – I am simply looking forward to a new change of pace and lifestyle, enjoying this wonderful county and taking time to travel and see family and friends." Cllr Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, said: "Nicola has led the council through an important period of change and achievement. She is very well-regarded, hardworking and has an exceptional knowledge of the complexity of public service, plus an unfaltering desire to deliver the best services for the people of Suffolk – the county that she loves. "Under her tenure and with strong political leadership, Suffolk County Council is well positioned to rise to the challenge and opportunity of local government reorganisation. Her legacy will be enduring and deeply felt. I want to thank her for her outstanding leadership and dedication, and I wish her all the best for the future.

• Public's chance to try the ADASTRA trial driverless shuttle Residents across Suffolk are being invited to see for themselves how self-driving shuttle technology could shape the future of local travel and to have their say on how it should work for their communities. Suffolk County Council is holding two events where the public can ride on the ADASTRA prototype, ask questions and share their views. The council wants to understand not just whether autonomous shuttles are acceptable, but how they could best serve local needs as part of the wider transport system. The council has been working with design experts Smart City Consultancy to assess the technical, operational, and regulatory requirements of incorporating autonomous shuttle services into a potential future network of mobility hubs across the county. Shuttles could potentially link future residential developments with strategic bus routes, improve accessibility, and support sustainable transport especially in rural areas. Shuttles could travel shorter routes to feed main bus and train service corridors where the frequency of buses and trains could be increased, and journey times can be shorter. Councillor Chris Chambers, Suffolk County Council Cabinet member for Transport Strategy, said: "Autonomous vehicles are not trying to replace cars, they are a means to fix specific, expensive gaps in transportation.

• Virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions for the Stour Valley Fostering is a flexible role with options for short term care from a weekend a month to longer term opportunities, all providing life-changing support for local children. If you want to find out more about what it's like to foster or adopt with us, please call a member of the team on 01473 264800

Mr L Parker (District Councillor)

District Councillor Annual Report for Reporting Period: 31 March 2025 – 1 April 2026

• This report summarises key developments and announcements published by Babergh District Council during the past municipal year. It provides parish councils and residents with a brief overview of district level activity which may affect local communities.

• APRIL 2025

The Government consultation on Norfolk and Suffolk devolution proposals concluded. The consultation explored the creation of a Mayoral Combined County Authority covering both counties, transferring certain powers from central government to a regional authority. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils considered their responses through Full Council meetings.

• MAY, JUNE and JULY 2025

Consultations were launched on a review of the Council's Licensing Policy and on revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedules. CIL is used to collect contributions from developers to fund infrastructure such as roads, community facilities and green spaces needed to support new development.

The Council approved updates to the Community Infrastructure Levy expenditure framework. This framework guides how CIL funds are prioritised and allocated to infrastructure projects across the district.

• AUGUST 2025

The five district and borough councils in Suffolk jointly launched the 'Three Councils for Suffolk' proposal for local

government reorganisation, proposing three new unitary councils replacing the current two - tier structure.

• SEPTEMBER 2025

Work continued on the review of the Joint Local Plan with Mid Suffolk District Council. Evidence documents including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identified potential sites submitted for possible future development.

• OCTOBER 2025

A Schools Green Skills Summit brought together students from across Suffolk to debate climate change and sustainability challenges while promoting green careers.

• NOVEMBER 2025

The Hitcham Neighbourhood Development Plan was formally adopted following a successful referendum. Neighbourhood plans form part of the statutory development plan and guide planning decisions locally.

• DECEMBER 2025

Residents were encouraged to apply for Warm Homes Suffolk funding to improve home energy efficiency, including insulation, solar panels and heat pumps.

• JANUARY 2026

The councils called on Government to strengthen regulation governing the spreading of sewage sludge on farmland due to environmental concerns. Babergh and Mid Suffolk also supported Ipswich's bid to become UK City of Culture 2029.

• FEBRUARY 2026 – COUNCIL BUDGET 2026/27

In February 2026 Babergh District Council approved its 2026/27 budget, designed to maintain key services while responding to continuing financial pressures facing local government. Council agreed a 2.99% increase to the Babergh element of Council Tax, which is the maximum increase permitted without a local referendum.

For a Band D property the Babergh portion of Council Tax will increase from £193.73 to £199.52 per year – an increase of £5.79 annually, equivalent to approximately 11p per week. District councils receive less than 10% of the total council tax bill, with the majority going to Suffolk County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and town and parish councils.

• MARCH 2026

Plans progressed to deliver a new café and toilet facilities at Belle Vue Park in Sudbury as part of wider park improvements. Work also continued on the Community Governance Review which considers parish boundaries and governance arrangements.

CONCLUSION

Over the past year BDC has continued work on planning policy, environmental initiatives, community funding programmes and preparations for potential local government reorganisation in Suffolk, and is committed to supporting strong local communities.

Mr S Thorogood (Assington Parish Council)

Well here we are again another year flies past.

The Parish Council have done their very best to represent you, to help keep our community running smoothly, to help each other where possible and to keep your Council Tax as low as possible.

This year the Parish Council said goodbye to Helen Wallace who is now enjoying her retirement with her partner and dog, we thank her for her work over her 10 year term as a councillor. Every cloud, as they say has a silver lining. The Parish Council has welcomed two new Councillors, namely Kim Howard and Mark Armitage and we look forward to working with them.

We also welcomed a new Footpath Warden, Nettie who unfortunately is standing down due to family responsibilities. So if you are aware of a keen hiker who would be willing to report issues on the paths please volunteer to the Clerk.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has again proven its worth and is acknowledged by Babergh District Council. It continues to protect our village from being over developed as a number of planning applications which were outside of the development area have been refused. We continue to gain 25% of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) on new build

projects. The Team are working again to update the Plan in order to integrate the Government's statutory requirement of additional houses in villages and towns across Suffolk.

This year CIL money has been used to subsidise Council Tax on maintaining standards in the village for items such as grass and hedge trimming, emptying dog and litter bins, to pay for street lighting and to pay for refurbishment of the permissive path in The Street.

The National Grid works on the infrastructure from Bramford to Tilbury are underway and despite our best efforts have created mayhem on community roads.

We have responded to 21 Planning applications in 19 locations within the village.

I would like to once again thank Lee Parker and James Finch for their attendance at our meetings and for their willingness to offer help and advice when needed. I would like to thank the Clerk (and the Temporary Clerk for standing in and helping us out this evening) and all the Assington Parish Councillors for their help and support over the last year. And finally, my thanks to Dave Crimmin our internal auditor, for ensuring that we comply with legislation.

Mr J Stacey (Assington Association)

The Assington Association continues to manage the funding of 10 editions of the Assington News each year, produced by Bronwen Stacey as Editor.

On the 1st October 2025 I took over from Bob Cowlin as the Treasurer.

In the period from March 2025 to February 2026 the cost of producing Assington News was £2,244.38, made up of £2,134.35 for printing, £40.28 in bank charges and £69.75 for postage costs. Copies are no longer posted to advertisers, they are asked to check the copy that is put on the Parish Council website. The few other copies that were posted are now delivered by the Treasurer by bicycle.

In the same period the income from advertisers was £1,341.50. The number of advertisers is reducing with the increasing use of on line advertising. The shortfall of £902.88 was covered by generous donations, which totalled £1,882.37. This included the contribution from the Parish Council, donations from individuals, plus other sources such as the profit from the Horticultural Show.

The balance of the Assington Association account at the end of February was £3441.29.

Mr D Wiles (Assington Village Charity)

Assington Village Hall Annual Report

The last 12 months have been a challenge with the cost-of-living crisis and potential hirers being very selective on where they go to use facilities as the hire cost plays an ever-important consideration and not so much the condition or location of the facility. Taking this into consideration we have not increased the hire charges, and they remain very favourable to residents and competitive with the other local village halls. We very much appreciate the continued support of the organisations and groups that continue to use the hall, with the Ryes School and Lapwing hiring several times a week. We are now getting more enquiries and bookings for children's parties and have two weddings this year. We have no football hirers this year. The hall is already booked for the village fete and the 49th Horticultural show.

We now have a secretary who does an excellent job for us. The hall remains compliant with all regulations for a public facility; our health and safety documentation is up to date along with statutory maintenance testing. All risk assessments are current and cover all areas of the facility. We had a major heating breakdown that was due to the age of the original equipment in the loft space which hit us with a 3k invoice but is all working efficiently now. Thomas is on top of the grounds maintenance .

We have replaced the veranda roof as it was in poor condition and are sourcing quotes for the internal decoration of the facility. Just before Christmas we installed BT infinity

into the hall after the withdrawal of county broadband without notice to us!

We are sourcing resident feedback that is vital to be able to apply for a grant for an outside gym facility at the rear of the children's playground. We have advertised on social media (on all 3 Assington sites) which at 92 respondees has been good. We have until the end of May to submit the application to be checked on all the criteria required and sent before Council Cabinet in September. Hopefully if it is granted the facility will be installed ready for next spring.

We have purchased 10 new round tables to use for functions that we received at a discounted rate from The Stoke by Nayland resort.

Fly tipping of bottles has been an issue and the playground gate being broken twice.

Our accounts are in good order and are submitted annually for audit as required by the charities commission and the hall is fully insured, and minutes for the previous AGM submitted also.

We have vacancies that we are struggling to fill being a caretaker and cleaner, and the chairman's position, hopefully we might get some response from advertising.

I would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support.

In summary a reasonably good year but I think hard times ahead.

Rev Whiffin (Parochial Church Council)

No report received

Tricia Box Assington Baby and Toddler Group

Since September our lower numbers have slowly risen again, with a maximum total of 15 babies and toddlers one week in the autumn. That was a particularly busy morning for Barista Bill and Tricia Kemp, his great assistant, as they made endless mugs of tea and coffee and then bowls of snacks and drinks for all the little ones after story and song time!

We have a central core of Assington families and it is such a joy to ensure they all get to know one another - one of the main reasons we exist as a Group! The children are brought along by their mothers, their grandparents or their nannies, in almost equal number.

The toddlers have fun drawing, painting or making something with Anne Johnson. Once they each prepared an apple crumble to take home!

Every storytime, Tricia includes a Bible story or perhaps a prayer or a simple worship song.

Many grateful thanks to all our helpers including the wonderful White family who set up the hall with toys before we arrive!

Mr B Hurren (Allotments Association)

barnworkshopuk@gmail.com 07771 508348

Although we are now approaching our spring planting season, work on the allotment is rather limited at the moment to planning what we might like to do, if ever it stops raining!

We have first of our twice yearly meetings in the village hall on Sunday 29th March 10.00.am. This is to appoint officers for the coming year, look at maintenance issues and requirements for the coming year. Elected officers

Bryn Hurren : Chair; Karl Debenham : Secretary; Lisa Brooks: Treasurer.

Maintenance.

We have 7 broken perimeter fence posts, an ongoing problem, we are quite happy to raise a working party to install new posts, if provided.

I understand that you have had an estimated water invoice from Wave for a period when the water is turned off, I have taken accurate reading and your clerk is aware.

We have a full house again this year with 15 tenants on the 12 plots, 3 are sharing plots that are split to form 6 half plots,

each full plot measures 15 X 12 yards and is approximately one third of the size of the original stated size to feed a whole family. The fee per full plot is £35.00 and £17.50 per annum for a half plot.

We have one local person on the waiting list and if anyone else wants to put their name down, then please get in contact with any plothead or let me know. I usually try to be on my own plot on Sundays, so pop in and have a look around. Or just knock on the door of no. Ten.

I have noticed that we are getting consistent dog fouling on the path, leading up to and past the allotment gate and while trying to adjust the entrance gate recently, I put my foot in it and created a nasty smell. Please bag it up and take it to nearby Poo-Bin. This is very anti-social and responsibility of dog owner to clear up after Rover's walkies We have young children and toddlers visiting the allotment gardens and passing-by.

Thanks to all involved in creating and maintaining this brilliant facility.

8. **Any Other Business** None

9. The meeting concluded at 19.56pm

The Annual Meeting was followed directly by the APC Meeting

Matters of Interest discussed included:

■ **Planning**

- **Applications:** None received.
- Cllr Parker suggested that concerns on two sites in the village be taken up with Planning Enforcement
- Cllr Howard was appointed as an additional member of the planning committee

■ **Licensed Path, Footpaths, and APC Assets**

- A memorial bench has been installed near the playground
- Additional work to landscape the verges to permissive path, trimming a hedge in The Street and planting two small greens at Threeways and Rose Green – It was noted that 3 cuts may not be required in the conservation area, it was resolved to accept the quote based on 2 cuts per area and to request the flexibility for a third cut if necessary
- Hedge outside Woodfield – the homeowner has cut one side, it was suggested that the new contractor is asked to cut the other side, this was resolved at £25 per hour for a maximum of 1.5 hours.
- Trip hazard to entrance and exit of footpath – Cllr Thorogood and Stacey met with contractor on site, who agreed to level the area. Correspondence has been received to suggest that SCC Highways have been to site to confirm that the works are acceptable and the contractor will not do any further work. Cllr Thorogood requested the name of the Highways Officer. It was resolved that the Clerk will contact the officer for confirmation that the work was inspected. It was also suggested that the PC consider within policies an adequate description of works. It was resolved that the new contractor would be asked to look to make the area safe.

■ **Neighbourhood Plan Review**

- An update was given by Cllr Hill. Following advice from DCllr Parker, it was resolved to follow up with the consultant to go ahead with review/renewal of the plan.

■ **Questions to the Chair**

- Outside Gym – planning permission is needed, quotes need to be submitted to Babergh but it is likely that they will only part-fund. The PC was asked whether it would offer funds to assist, and following suggestions that further grants may be available, it was mooted that, if so, the PC would support in principal.
- It was asked whether it would be acceptable to the PC if the church were to add small signs to the footpath sign posts at top end of village? It was questioned if they were perhaps SCC assets, but approval was given.
- An Oak Tree by the post box requires maintenance, is this the responsibility of the PC? It was suggested make contact with Highways initially.

■ **Time date and place of next meeting** Monday 11th May 2026 to be held in Assington Village Hall at 7.00pm.

■ The meeting was closed at 21.00

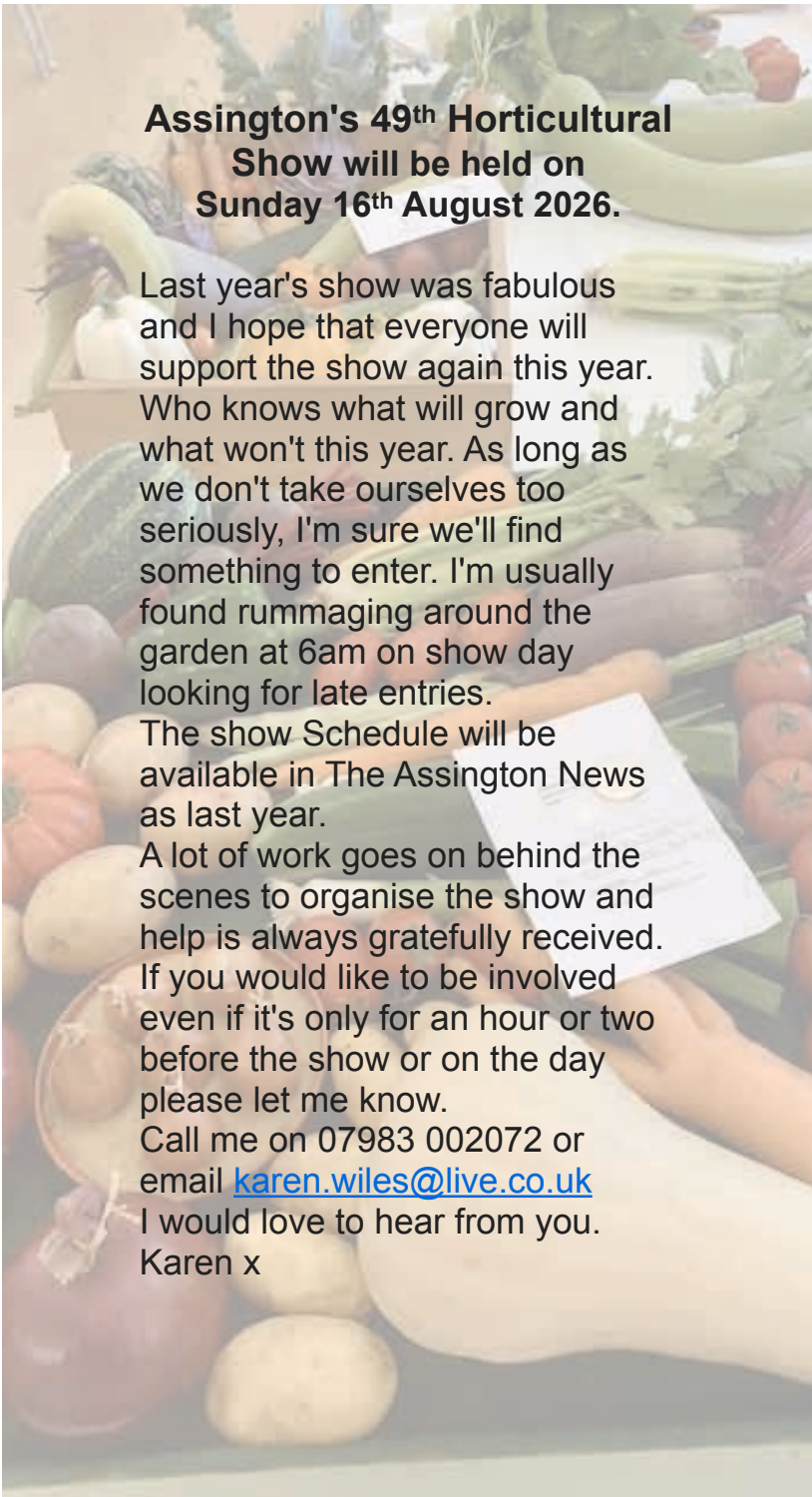
Assington's 49th Horticultural Show will be held on Sunday 16th August 2026.

Last year's show was fabulous and I hope that everyone will support the show again this year. Who knows what will grow and what won't this year. As long as we don't take ourselves too seriously, I'm sure we'll find something to enter. I'm usually found rummaging around the garden at 6am on show day looking for late entries.

The show Schedule will be available in The Assington News as last year.

A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to organise the show and help is always gratefully received. If you would like to be involved even if it's only for an hour or two before the show or on the day please let me know.

Call me on 07983 002072 or email karen.wiles@live.co.uk I would love to hear from you.
Karen x



ASSINGTON RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

Bob Cowlin (temperatures) and Bill Milner (rainfall)

HISTORY annual rainfall :

2016	599.5	2021	582.3
2017	571	2022	419
2018	559	2023	662
2019	597	2024	620
2020	636	2025	382

2025 was the driest year since Bill began keeping records in 1977

2022	mm	max°C	min°C
JAN	7	12	-6.5
FEB	46	13	-4
MAR	29	18	-2
APR	9.5	22	-6
MAY	37	25	0
JUNE	33.5	30	2
JULY	5	36.5	6
AUG	11.5	32	7
SEPT	25	25	1
OCT	63	18	0
NOV	107.5	14	-2
DEC	45	10	-9.5

2023	mm	max°C	min°C
JAN	41	10	-7
FEB	3	14	-7
MAR	78	15	-6.5
APRIL	65	8	-2
MAY	19	22	1
JUNE	15.5	30.5	6
JULY	72.5	28	8
AUG	65	29	4
SEP	41.5	30.5	5
OCT	137	23	-2
NOV	61.5	11	-7
DEC	63	11	-3

2024	mm	max°C	min°C
JAN	47	9	-7
FEB	95	9	-1
MAR	38	18	-4
APR	49	18.5	-3
MAY	83.5	25	3
JUNE	17.5	28	2
JULY	84.5	30	4
AUG	17.01	30.5	5
SEP	66	26.5	-0.5
OCT	53.5	19	-2
NOV	41	14	-4
DEC	28	10.5	-2.5

2025	mm	max°C	min°C
JAN	39	9	-9
FEB	32	13	-6
MAR	5	18	-7
APR	25	26	-2.5
MAY	14	27	-0.5
JUN	36.5	31	6
JULY	44	33	5
AUG	11.5	30	6
SEP	26.5	24	0
OCT	38.5	19	0
NOV	82.5	14	-2
DEC	27.5	10	-4

2026	mm	max°C	min°C
JAN	90	7	-9
FEB	76	14	-3
MAR	19	15	-3



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MAY (1940) DUNKIRK

Early in the Second World War, in late May 1940, the Allied forces of British, French and Belgian troops were trapped by the invading German army on the coast of France and Belgium, in the area around Dunkirk. The desperate and near-miraculous rescue that followed – controlled from Dover Castle – saved the Allied cause in Europe from total collapse, and was the biggest evacuation in military history.

The Second World War had begun in western Europe on 1 September 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. In Belgium and France there was a long winter of waiting as German and Allied forces, which included the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), faced each other along the border defences.

Then on 10 May 1940, two German armies moved eastward. A smaller one swept through Holland and Belgium into northern France, drawing the main Allied forces north to meet it. The other, main German force advanced through Luxembourg, broke through the French lines at Sedan, and sliced across northern France to the coast. Moving rapidly with armoured columns, these armies trapped the Allies in an ever-decreasing pocket.

The Germans took Boulogne on 25 May and Calais the next day, leaving Dunkirk as the only viable port from which the BEF, part of the French army and the remains of the Belgian army could escape.

Operation codenamed Dynamo was the rescue operation implemented by the Royal Navy. It was co-ordinated by Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay and his small team in Dover Castle. There, beneath the fortress, a network of tunnels deep within the cliffs became the nerve centre controlling the evacuation of Allied forces.

From 19 May, realising that rescue by sea would be necessary, Ramsay and his staff at Dover were making plans and arranging for ships to evacuate the BEF. On 26 May they were ordered to put their plans into action.

The Allies had to defend a small pocket around Dunkirk that was under constant attack. Many thousands of men were crammed into streets and buildings, and along the beaches – so they were very vulnerable to intense German air attacks and shelling. There was little time to plan and organise an orderly evacuation, and effective means of communication were scarce.



Troops of the British Expeditionary Force marching through the ruined port of Dunkirk in May 1940

The best place from which to evacuate troops was the main docks, which – of course – the Germans had put out of action. The two alternatives – the spindly breakwater, or mole, on the east side of the harbour, and the beaches to the north of the port – were far from ideal. The beaches at Dunkirk shelve gently into the sea. Even at high tide, a destroyer couldn't approach within a mile of the shore, and troops had to be ferried out in small craft.

Rescue was painfully slow at first – only 8,000 men were rescued on the first day. It took several days for the operation to gather pace.

The little ships played an important part in the evacuation. Ramsay and his team quickly realised that small boats would be able to get close to the beach and ferry the troops out to larger ships. By 31 May, hundreds of civilian vessels – from fishing smacks and cockle boats to lifeboats and sailing barges – had answered the Royal Navy's call for help and crossed the English Channel to Dunkirk.

Crewed mainly by volunteers, these tiny vessels bravely and repeatedly picked up soldiers queuing patiently on the beaches and in the water, and ferried them out to the waiting



larger ships, under severe attack from German aircraft and artillery. Many also took troops back across the Channel themselves.

But it's a common misconception that the little ships evacuated most of the men. In fact, over two-thirds (239,465) reached safety via the mole, while 98,761 were rescued from the beaches. And the role of the Royal Navy, especially its destroyers, was paramount in the operation. Its 'big ships' – mainly destroyers, minesweepers and requisitioned merchant vessels with naval crews – crossed to Dunkirk time and time again, without rest, and suffered terrible losses.



Dunkirk, and the surrender of France that followed some three weeks later, left Britain isolated, vulnerable and under threat of imminent invasion. The BEF had abandoned or destroyed nearly all its heavy equipment at Dunkirk. Hitler declared the evacuation a decisive victory for Germany.

But by rescuing the bulk of the army, in what was the biggest evacuation in military history, Operation Dynamo returned to Britain a priceless asset – most of her trained and experienced troops. If they had been lost, the whole conflict might have taken a very different course. It was a critical moment for Britain in the Second World War.....

'We must be very careful not to assign to this deliverance the attributes of a victory. Wars are not won by evacuations.' Winston Churchill, 4 June 1940



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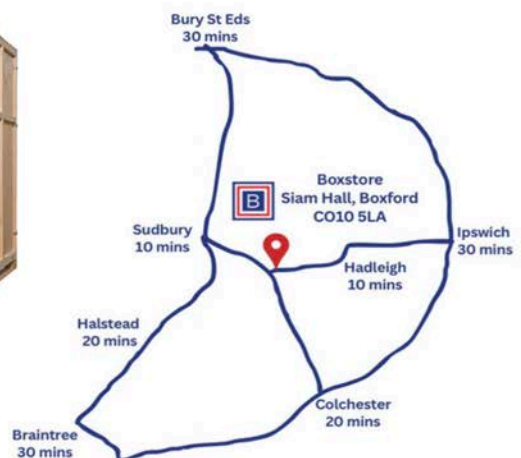


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