

...YOUR FREE LOCAL NEWS

DECEMBER 2025

# SAXMUNDHAM NEWS



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## A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR



Volunteers have been busy looking after our river, the Fromus, monitoring it as part of the 4 Rivers Recovery Project and others have been clearing it of Himalayan Balsam, cue the Balsam Bashers! When I walk over the bridge it is disappointing to see people have seen fit to throw in the odd shopping trolley or traffic cone, but I was startled by a splash a few weeks ago and was greeted with the sight of a little muntjac enjoying a drink. It would be lovely to see more wildlife thriving in and around the Fromus so the efforts of local volunteers are very welcome! Well done all.

As 2025 comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the contributors to the Saxmundham News and our loyal advertisers, without whom there would be no Tide Collection. Do get in touch if you wish to advertise – the more adverts we get the more pages and content we can add!

### Quote of the Month

Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful - **Norman Vincent Peale**

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# IP17GNS – WARMING HEARTS THIS CHRISTMAS

The festive season is always a busy and joyful time for IP17GNS, and this year is no exception! We're bringing a mix of free community fun, festive giving and neighbourly kindness to Saxmundham and the surrounding villages.

## A Festive Pit Stop at the Christmas Fayre

During the Saxmundham Christmas Fayre on Saturday 6th December (3–7pm), IP17GNS will be hosting a free 'pit stop' at the Gannon Rooms on Station Approach. Step inside, warm up, and enjoy a free hot chocolate, craft activities, and friendly company. We're just outside the main road closure area, so please take care on the road if you're walking down. Pop in, say hello, and take a breather from the festive bustle - everyone is welcome!

## Join Our Reverse Advent Calendar Appeal

Throughout December, we'll also be running our Reverse Advent Calendar initiative. Instead of opening a door each day, we invite you to place an item into a box to donate - such as food, toiletries, or small treats - helping local individuals and families in need this winter. Boxes can be dropped off at the Gannon Rooms - see IP17GNS.com for opening times. It's a simple, meaningful way to share the spirit of giving.

## Free Christmas Dinners – Delivered by a Friendly Elf!

We're delighted to once again offer free Christmas Dinners for those who might otherwise be spending the day alone or unable to cook for themselves. Dinners are lovingly prepared from scratch by volunteers using fresh, local ingredients, and delivered to your door on Christmas morning — complete with a few festive extras. Eligible residents living in Saxmundham, Carlton, Kelsale and Benhall can book by emailing [hello@ip17gns.com](mailto:hello@ip17gns.com) or calling 01728 901510 before Friday 12th December. If you're booking on behalf of someone else, please make sure they're aware to avoid confusion.

## Pantomime Fun to Start the New Year!

The festive cheer continues in January with our family pantomime - Dick Whittington! Packed with laughs, songs and silliness, it's the perfect way to brighten up the new year. Tickets are just £4.50 including refreshments, available via Eventbrite (search 'Dick Whittington Saxmundham' or find the link on our website and Facebook page).

## Together at Christmas

Whether you're joining in the fun, lending a hand, or making a small donation (find our PayPal link on [ip17gns.com](http://ip17gns.com)), your support helps us make sure no one in our community feels left out this Christmas.



**CROWN TWO OADBRIDGE**

**CELEBRATE WITH US THIS New Year's Eve**

This year, we're doing things a little differently!  
We have two celebrations:

**Aussie Celebration**  
12 noon - 4pm  
An Aussie-style afternoon with a BBQ menu, live DJ, magician and fireworks streamed from Australia, making it ideal for a family celebration!  
Tickets £29 per adult and £10 per child (up to age 15)

**Traditional UK Celebration**  
7pm - midnight  
Join us for a glass of fizz and Gourmet Buffet evening celebration, complete with live DJ throughout the evening.  
Tickets £49 per person.

Booking essential, visit [www.crowntwooadbridge.co.uk/christmas](http://www.crowntwooadbridge.co.uk/christmas) or pop in and chat with a member of our Folk!



**THORPENESS COUNTRY CLUB**

**Christmas Party Nights**

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December    Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December  
Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December    Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December

Includes a welcome drink on arrival, our two-course celebration menu, a DJ playing well-loved songs from throughout the decades and a photobooth.

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**CELEBRATE WITH US THIS NEW YEAR'S EVE**

Ticket includes a welcome glass of fizz, canapés, four-course dinner, live music, Champagne toast and fireworks display on the lawn at midnight.

**£95 per person**

To book your party or New Year's Eve today, visit [www.thorpenesscountryclub.co.uk](http://www.thorpenesscountryclub.co.uk) or call 01728 452176.

# SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL

**Your monthly update, December 2025 - Delivering improvements and working on your priorities.**

**Town Council in Action - Current work in progress, driven by what matters to you.**

Saxmundham Town Council engages on major Energy and Infrastructure Projects: November was a busy month for Saxmundham Town Council as we continue to represent the interests of our community in relation to several major infrastructure schemes affecting our area. Cllr Geraldine Barker represented Saxmundham at the Preliminary Meeting, Open Floor Hearing and Issue Specific Hearings during the examination of the Sea Link project. Speaking strongly on behalf of residents, she raised concerns about the overlap between examination timetables for multiple projects and the potential disruption residents could face during construction. She also highlighted the risks of noise, vibration and extended working hours and stressed the importance of proper coordination between major projects to minimise community impact.

Several Town Councillors and Officers also attended the public exhibition for the Suffolk Water Recycling, Transfer and Storage Project at the Fromus Centre. The proposed 28km pipeline will run from the Suffolk/Norfolk border to Sizewell C, passing through Saxmundham. While not an energy project, it is partly funded by Sizewell C Co and is likely to bring further disruption during construction. We have carefully reviewed the proposals to understand any potential impacts on Saxmundham and the surrounding area and drafted a response to the non-statutory consultation, which is published on our website: Energy Projects - Saxmundham.

Saxmundham Town Council will continue to speak up for our community throughout these consultations and examinations to ensure that local voices are heard and that appropriate mitigation measures are secured.

**Local Highlights - People and projects shaping Saxmundham.**

**Get into the festive spirit in the heart of Saxmundham: Get ready for a magical celebration at the Saxmundham Christmas Fayre. on Saturday 6th December, 3 – 7pm!**

The town centre will come alive with festive market stalls, live entertainment, children's activities, and delicious food and drink. You can find Santa's Grotto at the Fomus Centre, and don't forget to visit the Gannon Rooms for free family crafts. The festive season is also the perfect time to **support independent businesses by shopping local**. Every purchase made in Saxmundham's shops and market stalls helps sustain local jobs, strengthens our town centre, and keeps money circulating within the community. Shopping locally also means discovering unique gifts and enjoying a friendly, personal service. So, wrap up warm, soak up the festive atmosphere, and discover everything Saxmundham has to offer this Christmas - from one-of-a-kind presents and handmade treats to warm smiles and true community spirit.

**Community Calendar - Opportunities to join in.**

**Saxmundham Christmas Fayre –**

**Saturday 6th December 3 -7pm**

Festive market, grotto, entertainment, late-night shopping – fun for all the family in the town centre.

**Town Council Meeting:** Monday 8th December, 7pm

**Family Pantomime:** Dick Wittington – Sunday 4th January, 2pm

**Town Council Meeting:** Monday 12th January, 7pm

**Pinboard:** Short updates and reminders.

The installation of new equipment at Seaman Avenue play park is complete and proving popular with local families! The Town Council offices will be operating reduced opening hours over the festive period. These will be posted on our website, the Town House notice board, and our social media pages.

Saturday markets are now paused for the winter. Dates for 2026 will be confirmed early next year.

Thank you to everyone who supports the Wednesday and Saturday markets, helping to keep our heritage alive and thriving.







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# SAXMUNDHAM REMEMBERS

Saxmundham turned out in force for Remembrance this year. Grateful thanks are extended to the clergy of SKC, who hosted this year's parade service on Sunday at St John's and at the Act of Remembrance in Fromus Square for 11:11:11. Leiston RBL Band led the Parade from Market Place to Church.

The parade was joined by so many representatives of Associations from our community. Particularly impressive were our younger Standard bearers, led by Alf Bloomfield, current Saxmundham and Suffolk County Standard Bearer. As ever, we were marshalled by Denis Bloomfield, our local Secretary and current Chair of Suffolk County RBL. Somehow he manages to shepherd everyone into the right place at the right time!

Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Stephen Singleton laid the first wreath on behalf of The King on Sunday and that honour went to former Marine and Afghanistan veteran, Andy Perkins on Tuesday.

Many thanks to all the Associations and Businesses who laid wreaths over the two days, and to the Council for organising the road closures.

Saxmundham Poppy Appeal will report on total monies raised during the Appeal once the counting and verifications are complete.

The beautiful Poppy stones were carefully refreshed by our local Guides, each one of the 53 stones bears the name of one of the Fallen, immortalised on the Fromus Memorial.



Former Marine and Afghanistan veteran, Andy Perkins



Dave Preece, Rector - Saxmundham with Kelsale-cum-Carlton

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Name of Premises: socialbar

Postal Address of Premises: 15 High Street Saxmundham Suffolk IP17 1DF

This application may be viewed at:

<b>East Suffolk Council</b>	
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Woodbridge	Lowestoft
Suffolk IP12 1RT	Suffolk NR33 0EQ

Proposed Variation:

To add plays, films, live and recorded music, performance of dance, anything of a similar description, late night refreshment indoors Monday to Sunday 23:00 until midnight.

To vary the sale of alcohol times Monday to Sunday 08:00 to midnight (currently 09:00 to 22:00)

Dates between which representations may be made to the Licensing Authority:

Start Date: 18 November 2025  
Closing Date: 16 December 2025

Representations must be made in writing to the Licensing Team, East Suffolk Council (as the Licensing Authority) at the above address, or by e-mail to [licensing@east.suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@east.suffolk.gov.uk) It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is unlimited

## ALDEBURGH AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY (ADLHS)

Discover History, Mystery, and Local Stories at the ADLHS Lectures 2025/6!

Aldeburgh and District Local History Society (ADLHS) explores the local history of the area covered by Aldeburgh, Thorpeness, Leiston, Snape, Iken, and Sudbourne.

Join us for a fascinating series of evening lectures. Most talks take place at the Old Generator Station in Aldeburgh with a special ticketed event in December at the Jubilee Hall.

Each month, expert speakers bring Suffolk's rich past to life. In October Geoffrey Robinson explored "Sudden Deaths in Suffolk 1800-1850," revealing the secrets of rural coroner's inquests and in November John Ogden told the dramatic story of "Orford's Atlantic Wall Breakers" and the local impact of WWII military testing.

Lectures to look forward to:

**December 17th: James Thellusson presents "Dickens, Aldeburgh and the will that changed the world"** - a tale of legal intrigue and family fortune. (Ticketed event at Jubilee Hall; advance purchase required.)

**January 21st: Members Evening** - enjoy short talks by society friends and members which will include Aldeburgh's MPs pre-1832 and Queen Mary's religious persecutions in the Town.  
**February 18th: Sally Sibley will talk about the latest discoveries from Sutton Hoo**, following Time Team's recent excavations.  
**March 18th: Dr Tom Johnson will talk on "Households and Everyday Life in Fifteenth-Century Walberswick"**.

All lectures start at 6pm. Don't miss this chance to connect with local history in your community.



# THE TRIUMPH OF THE BALSAM BASHERS

Cast your minds back to the summer months and many of you might have enjoyed a walk on a wonderful sunny Monday morning on the 30th of June as I did by the rivers in and around the Saxmundham. Many might have admired an attractive pink flowering plant, but few would have realised it was Himalayan Balsam, an invasive species that can destroy our local river systems. Fortunately, I had seen it a few years earlier on The River Blyth in Halesworth but I wasn't sure of the best course of action.

Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) is classified as an illegal weed for 3 reasons:

1. It grows remarkable quickly compared with native species so shades them out and stops them growing naturally on riverbanks.
2. It erodes riverbanks because of its shallow rooting system. On the other hand, this makes them easy to pull up and dispose of.
3. It attracts bees and causes them to become addicted to its pollen, so once they've tasted it they refuse to pollinate any other plant. Therefore, native plant species don't get pollinated because all the bees are all off pollinating the Himalayan Balsam.

Following advice from Professor Peter Hobson (Anglia Ruskin University) I realised we needed a plan of action as Himalayan Balsam had invaded the The Gull stream on the Saxmundham/Kelsale-cum-Carlton border and had entered the River Fromus in Saxmundham (see below).

On the surface it's a very pretty plant that would grace any



garden by its presence, and that (as with the Rhododendron) was why the Victorians introduced it to the UK in the first place and planted it in many gardens.

However, it's now illegal to plant it in the UK or to move it from any site that it inhabits. Therefore, it has to be pulled up (by hand) and left to dry as far up the riverbank as possible (preferably by hanging it over a fence so it can't fall or be washed back into the water. Fortunately, a willing and winning team was galvanised into action made up of KADWAG and BAPS members, who pulled 95% of it by hand over a seven week period from July to August. The HB naturally travels downstream and although it was the Gull Stream that was overrun with HB the River Fromus has been affected quite badly causing us to spend a week on the Fromus in Saxmundham pulling it.

It was also found in Benhall but thankfully it hasn't quite reached the RSPB site at Snape. The results can be seen in this photo where a huge clump off Himalayan Balsam can be seen lying on the bank to dry out.



It was very important that this was done before it seeded as it can explosively eject its seeds up to 7m away, which is why it spreads so rapidly along riverbanks.

## A big thank you to all the Balsam bashers!

Once we'd removed as much of it as possible, we held a party to celebrate, in September, in Keith Dickerson's garden at Kelsale (see photo below) and each 'basher' received an award certificate. Thanks to Keith for hosting.

Unfortunately, it won't have gone away completely - the seeds can lie dormant in the ground for up to 2 years so we anticipate we may have to repeat the exercise next year.

We are now organising regular walks along the full length of our river Fromus plus its tributaries - The Gull Stream and the Brook, which run through the Brook farm housing estate, to help watch out for emerging signs of it growing back.

We are part of The 4 Rivers Recovery



**Ken Bate**, Biodiversity Action Partnership Saxmundham



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Wed 10th Dec at 2.00pm  
Thurs 11th Dec at 7.15pm  
Fri 19th & Sat 20th Dec at 7.15pm  
Sun 21st Dec at 6.00pm

### WICKED FOR GOOD PG

Fri 5th Dec at 2.00pm  
Sat 6th Dec at 7.30pm  
Tues 9th Dec at 2.00pm  
Wed 10th Dec at 7.15pm

### NUREMBERG 15

Sun 7th Dec at 7.30pm. LIVE ON STAGE

### WE THREE KINGS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL

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Wed 17th Dec at 2.00pm  
Thurs 18th Dec at 7.15pm

### WAKE UP DEAD MAN A KNIVES OUT MYSTERY 12A

Sat 13th Dec at 7.30pm. LIVE ON STAGE

### JIVE TALKIN' BEE GEES TRIBUTE

Sun 14th Dec at 3.00pm  
Wed 17th Dec at 7.15pm

### BLUE MOON 15

Sun 21st Dec at 3.00pm

### THE CHORAL 12A

Mon 22nd, Tues 23rd & Wed 23rd Dec at 11.30am

### THE MAGIC REINDEER SAVING SANTA'S SLEIGH U

Mon 22nd, Tues 23rd & Wed 23rd Dec at 2.00pm

### A PAW PATROL CHRISTMAS U

Fri 26th, Sat 27th & Sun 28th Dec at 3.00pm

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# SAXMUNDHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

It has been a busy month at Saxmundham Primary School with lots of exciting enrichment opportunities. Year one and two pupils enjoyed their visit to Carlton Park to research play equipment before designing their own playgrounds in geography lessons.

We are so lucky to have this wonderful playground on our doorstep and even the staff enjoyed a quick go on the slide and zipwire! Thank you to the lovely parents who volunteered to come with us - we couldn't do these trips without you.



Year six pupils had a fantastic time on their school residential trip to Norfolk Lakes. They were able to experience a range of activities, including canoeing, low ropes, paddleboarding, orienteering, fencing and caving to name a few. The children rose to every challenge and it was amazing to see their confidence grow in such a short amount of time. We are so proud of their bravery and determination.



Pupils in Oak, Beech and Poplar had a very exciting visit from Cimone from Sizewell and two Lotus engineers for an exciting electricity workshop. Pupils were able to make circuits to make a light, buzzer and motor work. They then extended their learning by making a parallel circuit as well as a series circuit. At the end of the activities, the children were able to see the Lotus cars and be passengers!

It has certainly sparked an interest in becoming electrical engineers in the future! Many thanks to Ms Denny for organising this.

Pupils in choir, who are made up of pupils from years 2 - 6, took part in a workshop ahead of our visit to Snape Maltings for the Big Sing. Aga, an amazing musician and workshop leader, took us through some of the tricky parts of the song and really helped to develop our confidence in performing. We can't wait to tell you how we got on next month!

Pupils in year five were lucky enough to go on a school trip to London by train. Eleanor in Beech class has written a brilliant recount of the day:

*"Firstly on the trip to London, we gathered in the hall and set off to the train station with our bags on our backs and smiles on our faces.*

*Hearts beating with excitement awaiting the arrival of the train. As it pulled in, we all hopped onto the carriage closest to us and searched for seats. We eventually reached London, but instead of going straight to the views there were more trains involved: this time the underground. As soon as we exited, we immediately gazed upon Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. All excited for the adventures to come. We took a photo stop and went round the corner to see the London Eye looming over the river Thames. We walked around to get to the Houses of Parliament tour. As we entered, we were all surprised by the fact it was so secure like an airport. We got escorted to the entrance hall and got little headphones so we could hear the tour guide.*

*We went through to the Lords' room and learnt about the interesting debates that go on in there. We wandered around and learnt how big decisions were made and about the law. We even had a little debate about if we should have pizza for breakfast, lunch and dinner! Finally, the long tour ended and we were all exhausted from all the walking and we had our well-earned lunch."*

It was an incredible day and many members of the public commented on how well behaved and polite the children were.

**Jayne Head**



# Local, family run business The KBB Centre on why we should SHOP LOCAL and SUPPORT INDEPENDENT.

The KBB Centre is a family run business based in Ipswich. Owned and managed by brothers Roger and Patrick Peck. They have a long standing history in Ipswich with their family having been in the kitchen and bathroom industry in Suffolk since the mid 70's.

In the early 1970's Roger and Patrick's late father, Alan Peck, started a home improvement business in Ipswich called Star Lines. It had a very catchy advertising jingle, with many locals singing 'Let's go down to Star Lines' to the tune of Mike Oldfield's 'In Dulce Jubilo'. People still remember it to this day. Star Lines was ahead of its time back then, being the first Kitchen and Bathroom showroom in Ipswich. Both Roger and Patrick worked at Star Lines during their youth, and although they went on to do other things in the industry throughout the years, they came back to their roots and established KBB in 2003 and over the last 20 years they have built up the business with hard work, long hours, determination and an eye for detail.

Carrying on their family tradition the brothers strive to encourage people to shop local and support their independent businesses. They say "The kitchen and bathroom industry has changed immensely since the Star Lines days. There is now so much competition from chain stores and online shopping. When you buy online or from a lot of large chains or faceless superstores, you're just a statistic; an order which has to be fulfilled and you will most likely be forgotten. When you buy from a small business, such as ourselves, your purchase – no matter how big or small – means a great deal. You will also receive a more personal, caring service and get more value for your money. We like to build a relationship with our customers and give advice and recommendations when needed. Large organisations with an abundance of customers often don't care about the customer, as long as a sale has been made and their statistics look good. However, we rely on word of mouth. We understand that we need to provide the best service possible in order to be recommended to others.



"We believe buying locally from local people is so important. Our service is from people who really care and have been in the local industry for many years. It makes a huge difference to where and how you shop. It's tough being a small business owner. We live and breathe for our business. It's a big jump from being an employee to an employer to try to make a better life for yourself and your family. We urge people to support their local independents. Small businesses do not have a huge marketing budget and every little bit of help counts from sharing social media posts, leaving positive reviews and recommending them to anyone you can. It all means a great deal to small business owners"





# The KBB Centre

## LARGE KITCHEN, BATHROOM & BEDROOM SHOWROOM

### AN INDEPENDENT, FAMILY RUN BUSINESS.

With 2 floors and over 6000 square ft of kitchen, bathrooms and bedrooms on display The KBB Centre is one of the largest INDEPENDENT kitchen and bathroom showrooms in East Anglia. Owned and run by brothers Roger and Patrick Peck, with more than 60 years' experience in the industry, the brothers recognise that buying a new kitchen, bathroom or bedroom is a big investment and customer service is central to everything they do, with many customers staying loyal for years to come. They pride themselves on their long-standing history in the town, their extensive knowledge of the industry, their personal customer service and their belief that the best sort of advertising is recommendation.

### A ONE STOP SHOP

The KBB Centre can do as much, or as little, of your installation as you require. From 'Supply only' to complete project management. Having in house installers, electricians, plasterers, painters and plumbers, we can take the hassle out of your home projects. Let us do the work for you.



Kitchens



Bathrooms



Bedrooms



Office

### SHOP LOCAL

Support your local independent businesses – they work a whole lot harder than the big chains to serve you and they do it with love and pride in the service they provide.



85 Dales Road  
Ipswich  
IP1 4JR



01473 742200



[info@kbbeastanglia.co.uk](mailto:info@kbbeastanglia.co.uk)



[kbbeastanglia.com](http://kbbeastanglia.com)

# SKC CHURCH

**A Benefice comprising of St. John's Church, Saxmundham, St. Mary & St. Peter's Church, Kelsale @ St. Peter's Church, Carlton.**

Where is the place for awe and wonder in your Christmas plans? I'm not talking about the sense of *'I wonder what they've got me for Christmas'* or *'I wonder if anyone will remember me this Christmas'* but the deep sense of awe and wonder that stops you in your tracks and makes you really think.

If you have ever spent time near young children you'll know that they ask a lot of questions and are naturally curious. Sometimes in our daily routines and busyness we can lose that sense of curiosity and wonder. We stop asking questions about how things work or why things are the way they are and get focused on tasks and jobs.

For many of us, Advent and Christmas are incredibly busy times. There can be lots of events to plan and organise, presents to think about and buy, food and gatherings to sort and run. Can I invite you this Advent and Christmas not to forget to pause and ask questions? See if you can regain a sense of awe and wonder this year.

Have you ever wondered about the Christmas story? In church we celebrate the creator of the universe, the God who sustains and maintains everything, being born as a helpless baby. We believe that Jesus gave up the extraordinary power and glory of heaven to become an ordinary baby. However, in the well known carol *'O Little Town of Bethlehem'* we sing *'The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.'* This baby is anything but ordinary.

I wonder how Jesus' parents felt that first Christmas. I wonder how many people noticed that a moment had happened that changed history forever. I wonder what your hopes and fears are and whether you've tried talking to Jesus about them.

This year, in the midst of wrapping and tinsel, mince pies and mulled wine, carols and presents, will you pause with me and ask the question: what if the Christmas story is true? What if God did really come to earth as the baby Jesus?

What difference could that truth make to your life? As a church we will be exploring the events of that first Christmas in our Sunday services and in our carol services. We would love to see you this Christmas!

With love,

**Dave Preece**

Rector Saxmundham with Kelsale cum Carlton

For more information on our Christmas services visit [www.skc.church/christmas](http://www.skc.church/christmas)



## SAXMUNDHAM ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

**On Saturday 6th December Saxmundham will be holding their Christmas Fayre in the centre of the town, between 3 – 7pm.** This is a chance for our Adventure Playground to raise much needed funds for the upkeep of the playground. We will have our popular Tombola Stall, (in the High Street) plus some fantastic craft Items for sale. All made locally by Pam McIntyre and Kay Bott.

We will also have a stall in Fishers, Market Place, where Pam and Kay's craft Items will be on sale. The money raised will go towards maintenance and any new equipment needed on the playground.

Many thanks to Sizewell C Community Fund for the grant of **£26,768.00** which will pay for new fencing surrounding the playground and replacing two picnic tables plus safety surface for several items of play equipment.

This work will be carried out in the next few months.

In the New Year we will be looking for volunteers to help clear growth around the old fencing and cutting back low branches (dates will be confirmed in next month's News).

**Adventure Playground Committee**



# AWARD FOR SAX COMMUNITY FRIDGE

## Project that tackles social isolation and food waste awarded £12k from Sizewell C Community Fund

An innovative project that brings the community together by redistributing surplus food has received a £12,117 grant from the Sizewell C Community Fund.

SAX Community Fridge, run entirely by volunteers, collects fresh produce from supermarkets, bakeries and greengrocers and shares it out at regular community drop-in sessions in Saxmundham. Held in the Riverside Garden behind the Old Bank, the sessions offer food that is near or just past its 'best before' date and would otherwise go to landfill. Those attending are also able to enjoy a coffee, cake and chat with others, in turn boosting wellbeing and tackling social isolation.

Jenna, a mother of two who recently moved to Saxmundham from the Midlands, said: "Coming to the Community Fridge each week has given us a real sense of community and it's amazing the difference it has made to our food bill. Everybody has been so lovely, and now when we walk through town we have people to wave at because we've met so many wonderful people here."

The newly awarded funding will support the project over the next three years, covering the cost of coffee, tea and cake which form an essential part of the welcome which SAX Community Fridge provides to local people. It will also help meet running costs, such as such as rent and volunteer expenses.

Lead volunteer Martin Thorold, who helps to run the project alongside its founder Marion Hedley Lewis, said: "We are absolutely delighted to have received a grant from the Sizewell C Community Fund. Whilst our core goal is preventing food waste, what we're most proud of is the community that's grown around our twice-weekly sessions in Saxmundham. Each gathering welcomes between 50 and 100 visitors who come not just for food, but also to enjoy coffee, cake and conversation. Now in our fourth year, these sessions have helped reduce loneliness and support mental health while bringing together people from across the area who might not otherwise meet."

The Sizewell C Community Fund is managed by Suffolk Community Foundation. It is making around £2m available each year to projects in the East Suffolk Council area which promote the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the communities closest to, and most impacted by, the construction of Sizewell C, and which enhance people's quality of life. SAX Community Fridge was one of eight projects awarded a share of just over £660,000 in the latest round of grants. Others to benefit included Ogilvie Pavilion & Sports Ground in Aldringham-cum-Thorpe, Rural Coffee Caravan, Cohere Arts and an initiative to upgrade Saxmundham adventure playground. The latest awards take the total distributed since the fund was launched just over a year ago to around £3m. For more information about the fund, eligibility criteria and how to apply, visit [www.suffolkcf.org.uk](http://www.suffolkcf.org.uk) or call 01473 602 602.



Lead volunteers Martin Thorold & Marion Hedley Lewis



Volunteer Jenna



Volunteer Hazel

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**DEC 4 Saxmundham History Society meeting. 'The Fisherman's Mission' by Andy Malcolm.** 2.30pm in the URC, Chapel Road, Saxmundham. IP17 1BJ. Visitors £3. Annual membership £18. Enquiries to Jenny 01728 604608

**DEC 5 Christmas Coffee Morning.** Raffle, Tombola, Christmas Cards and Gifts. Cakes, tea, coffee and good company! Raising funds for St Margaret's Church, Leiston. 10am – 12noon at Leiston Community Centre

**DEC 6 Christmas Fayre.** Refreshments, Cakes, Gifts, Raffle and lots of stalls. 12noon to 3pm at the Dolphin Inn, Thorpeness. Free admission.

**DEC 7 Made in Benhall.** Meet a wide range of local artists, crafters and makers with a hugely diverse range of high quality products on sale at very affordable prices. Entry is free. 10am – 2pm at Benhall Club.

**DEC 13 Framlingham's Phoenix Singers.** The programme includes Mozart's beautiful mature works 'Ave Verum' and 'Vespers' as well as carols for audience. 7pm at Framlingham College Chapel. For tickets and full details visit [www.phoenixsingers.org.uk](http://www.phoenixsingers.org.uk)

**DEC 14 The Goldcrest Ensemble.** A programme of music which includes Bach, Debussy and Fauré. 3pm at Snape Church. IP171QW. Entry by donation. Refreshments will be served.

# ALL ABOUT HEARING

## New hearing and earwax removal clinic opens in Wickham Market

Residents of Saxmundham will soon have even easier access to high-quality, local hearing care as one of the region's most trusted audiology providers prepares to open a third outreach clinic in the area.

All About Hearing, which is run by mother and son duo Karen Finch and Matthew Coward, will officially launch the new clinic on Monday 1st December 2025, from Wickham Market Medical Centre. This new service will complement its existing clinics already established in nearby Framlingham and Woodbridge.

Offering a full range of hearing services from comprehensive assessments and expert earwax removal to advanced hearing aid solutions, All About Hearing is known for combining clinical excellence with compassionate, personalised care. Their trusted team of Audiologists has earned a reputation as leaders in independent hearing care across the region.

To ensure everyone can benefit from expert hearing support, the company also offers home visit services, helping those who are less mobile.

Karen Finch, Lead Audiologist, said,

*"We're absolutely delighted to be bringing our services to Wickham Market. Residents in this part of Suffolk have limited access to timely, high-quality hearing care, and many people are forced to travel much further than they should for essential support. Patients deserve convenient access to trustworthy, professional hearing care close to home, and this new clinic allows us to support even more people within their own community."*

### Special launch offer

To celebrate the launch, the team are offering anyone concerned about their hearing health, the opportunity to book a half price hearing assessment or earwax removal appointment (saving £30) with their expert Audiologists.

The offer runs until 28th February 2026.

For more information or to book an appointment, visit [www.allabouthearing.co.uk](http://www.allabouthearing.co.uk) or call 01728 733138.



## Expert hearing care & earwax removal

### Now open in Wickham Market!

All About Hearing are your local, independent hearing specialists. With over 70 years combined audiology experience, you can rest assured your hearing is in good hands.

**Better hearing starts here!**

**01728 733138**  
**[allabouthearing.co.uk](http://allabouthearing.co.uk)**

### INTRODUCTORY OFFER

**HALF PRICE hearing tests and earwax removal**



### WICKHAM MARKET MEDICAL CENTRE

Chapel Lane, Wickham Market, IP13 0SB

Clinics also available in Framlingham & Woodbridge.



Karen Finch RHAD FSHAA FRSA

### Limited spaces available

\*Normal price £60. Offer price £30.  
Offer valid until 28/02/26. Offer valid at Wickham Market only.





# HOW HEALTHY IS THE RIVER FROMUS?

In March, Kelsale & District Wildlife Action (KADWAG) applied for and received enabling funding from our East Suffolk Councillor, Julia Ewart, to kick start our involvement in monitoring the water quality of the River Fromus. This enables us to work with the Biodiversity Action Partnership Saxmundham (BAPS) plus other parish and town councils as part of the East Suffolk Council (ESC) 4 Rivers Recovery project which covers the Rivers Deben, Alde & Ore, Blyth and Waveney.

Using our enabling funding we've now bought some of the equipment necessary to do this and have set up a series of monitoring points along the length of the Fromus and its tributaries (see map, right). At these we will monitor the levels of e.coli, ammonia, nitrates and phosphates present in the river so we can identify any pollution and the possible causes, and ways that the health of the river might be improved. Although our series of monitoring points extends the whole length of the Fromus we agreed with the Saxmundham Blue Spaces Team that they will monitor the water quality under the bridge next to Waitrose in Saxmundham and that the Alde & Ore Association will monitor the water quality of the Fromus at Benhall Green ford and at the exit of the sewage works at Aldecar Lane, Benhall.

Both KADWAG and BAPS members have attended water quality testing workshops held by The Deben Climate Centre. We're also setting up a series of regular walks along the River Fromus and its tributaries so that we can observe how the river changes over the year, measure the water levels and quality, and identify the vegetation (including any Himalayan Balsam) present. If you'd like to join one of these planned walks please contact Ken Bate on 07745 156142 or email [bateken@hotmail.com](mailto:bateken@hotmail.com). We are part of The 4 Rivers Recovery Project.

## Ken Bate

Biodiversity Action Partnership Saxmundham

## Proposed water quality monitoring points



**RF01** As near as possible to the source of the Fromus near Coe Wood

**RF02** After the Fromus leaves Coe Wood as it enters the Fromus Reserve

**RF03** After the Fromus leaves the Fromus Reserve before it enters Kelsale village (to check for effluent from the cattle on the Fromus and from Kelsale Lodge)

**RF04** After the Fromus passes through the centre of Kelsale under the bridges (to check for run off from house drains)

**RF05** After the entry of water from the Gull Stream (near MP) to check for pollution from Gull stream (previously reported near Sandy Lane)

**RF06** After the stream from the Brook Farm estate has entered the Fromus

**RF07** Before the Fromus goes under Church Street bridge near Waitrose in Saxmundham (the Sax Blue Spaces Team monitor phosphates and nitrates here)

**GS01** Gull Stream at Vale Farm Bridge, Carlton

**GS02** Gull Stream between Sandy Lane and footbridge

**GS03** Gull Stream near Carlton Church (after land drain pipe)

**GS04** Gull Stream near destroyed brick footbridge south of Carlton Industrial Estate (near tyre)

**BF01** The Brook (Brook Farm) output from balancing ponds

**B01** At the B1121 road bridge in Benhall

**B02** At the ford in Benhall (The Alde & Ore Association will monitor here)

**B03** At the FB after the sewage works at Benhall Low Street (The Alde & Ore Association will monitor here)

**B04** At the FB near Botany Farm, Gromford after possible agricultural run-off

# ALDE VALLEY SUFFOLK FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

## Tracing Your Non-Conformist Ancestors – Liz Yule.

This talk will look at the legislation which affected how our nonconformist ancestors worshipped, what records can be found, and how to spot an ancestor who worshipped away from the Established Church.

Liz is a native of East Anglia but now lives in Canterbury, and nonconformity has been a particular area of interest within her own ancestry, but also because both of her parents-in-law served as United Reformed Church ministers.

This hybrid talk takes place on Monday 15th December at 2.30pm, in person at the Fromus Centre, Street Farm Road, Saxmundham, IP17 1AL and, for members only, on Zoom.

The speaker will be talking to us on Zoom. The talk starts at 2.30pm. No need to book – just turn up – at £1 for members, £3 for visitors, including tea/coffee/biscuits. Free car-park.

Only members can take part in our meetings on Zoom, but it's only £8 for a year's membership – see <https://avsfhg.org.uk/membership/> (website under construction) and Zooming is free.



Liz Yule

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### Christmas with Aldeburgh Museum.

This year 2025, marks 80 years since the end of WW2. Earlier this year, Aldeburgh marked VE Day with vintage music, beacon lighting, church services and a parade by 1379 Squadron Air Training Corps.

As a final homage to this 80 year anniversary, Aldeburgh Museum's fifth 'People and Place' Christmas exhibition will be 'Aldeburgh at War' 1939-1945.

On display will be photographs and war time artefacts from the Museum's collection as well as some 'on loan'.

Held in the Aldeburgh Gallery in the High Street the exhibition is FREE and will run from Sunday 28th December until Thursday 2nd January. Please check our website and social media for opening times; [www.aldeburghmuseum.org.uk](http://www.aldeburghmuseum.org.uk)

There will also be the opportunity to purchase an Exhibition book, available for sale both at the Exhibition and in the Museum, which gives a glimpse into the War years here and what happened to the town and some of its buildings.

Visit and discover what happened in/around Aldeburgh in WW2. The Museum is open weekends and selected days between Christmas and New Year between 1-4pm. See website for details.





# FROM YOUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR...



December is a month dominated by preparations for Christmas and, when it finally arrives, I hope you and your loved ones have an enjoyable time – right through to the New Year.

Local Government continues, although many staff save up some of their leave to take a complete break between Christmas Eve and Monday 5 January.

Perhaps by then we all need a bit of a rest especially as we are dogged by uncertainty and having to wait for decisions, as I will describe...

In my time as a County Councillor I have never known a period of greater uncertainty. Although we do know that there will be an election for a new Mayor of Suffolk and Norfolk on 7 May we are, at the time of writing, still unclear about all the powers and responsibilities of that Office and how a transfer of powers to the Mayor will take place, and when – on the day of election, during the first month or over a longer agreed period? Perhaps we will have the answer to many of our questions by Christmas so that we can fully understand for what, not just whom, we are voting.

Also, we do not know if County Council elections will take place on the same day next year. If so, it will be for an administration of just two years' duration before the County Council, along with our District Councils and Ipswich Borough Council, will all be abolished for some form of Unitary government, also still yet to be decided. The situation is complicated further by the fact that there will be another round of elections in May 2027 for a Shadow Authority who will oversee the arrangements for Unitary government – perhaps one Council, perhaps three, and with even two Unitary Councils not able to be ruled out. What a recipe to try to decipher and for which to plan!

We expect to have a Government decision on County Council elections in January, but the legal deadline for a decision stretches into the second half of February. We hope to hear about the form of Unitary government in Suffolk around March, but it could be a little later. The certain date is that the new form of Suffolk local government will start on 1 April 2028, which gives about two years to plan and implement the necessary changes. That means a huge amount of transformational work on a scale perhaps not fully appreciated at present.

Current staff will have to plan and implement these changes whilst continuing with their present responsibilities, and this will be combined with a high level of uncertainty about their own job security as no present positions are absolutely guaranteed into the future.

What we must promise to the people of Suffolk and our businesses is that during this transitional period we will not take our eye off the ball, and by that I mean we must ensure 'business as usual' in delivering all the expected services at the present high levels of efficiency and effectiveness without being too distracted by change and necessary, new arrangements. We have to not just hope but actually ensure that the new Unitary system does not come at the expense of lower levels of service delivery over the intervening two years.

Financially, we are waiting for decisions in at least two areas. First, we had expected to hear by now from Government about their plans to reform the SEND (pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and EHCPs (school children awarded an Educational Health and Care Plan). Suffolk, like most English counties and existing Unitary councils have been toiling relentlessly, battling to keep up with ever-rising demand from those young people who have these special needs. It also costs a huge sum of money to do so, and national and local funding has been woefully inadequate for many years, especially since the effects of Covid, which has been perhaps the prime reason for the large increase in demand. National Government promised to publish their proposals to deal with this major problem this autumn, but those announcements have been delayed into the early part of the New Year. We need to hear urgently what they are, and whether or not they will actually help with the scale of present problems. But we have to wait...

Finally, we are waiting for details of a financial settlement for local government. By the time you read this, the Budget announcements, whatever they may be, will be clear. But the actual details of our settlement are not likely to be received until close to Christmas Eve, leaving the time available for analysis and implementation very constrained before the County Council settles its own budget on 12 February. And please do bear in mind that during January our draft budget has to be put before our Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet before it can progress to the decision point.

I'm sorry that none of this is particular Christmas fare of good cheer. But I hope it demonstrates the difficulty that Councillors, as your representatives, have to work with. We will get there, but perhaps now you can better understand, if not entirely sympathise with, why we do look forward to our Christmas and New Year break. Merry Christmas!

As usual, please feel free to contact me on any matter which is within the responsibilities of the County Council. My contact details are below.

**Richard Smith**

[richard.smith@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:richard.smith@suffolk.gov.uk) 07545 423817

# PROJECT UPDATE

## DECEMBER 2025

Thank you for your patience this year whilst we build Suffolk's new power station. We know our work is causing disruption at this stage of the project and we apologise for this whilst our teams work as swiftly as possible to build new roads and make improvements to Suffolk's rail line. We look forward to meeting with you next year to discuss our plans and invite you to attend our public forums, the next ones are listed below. You can also subscribe for updates of our works online too through the **Sizewell C Works Tracker**.

VISIT THE WORKS  
TRACKER SITE



Main Development Site Forum	Wednesday 14 January 2026	Leiston Town Athletic Association
Northern Transport Forum	Wednesday 4 February 2026	High Lodge Darsham
Southern Transport Forum	Wednesday 4 March 2026	Stratford St Andrew Riverside Centre
Community Forum	Thursday 19 March 2026	Woodbridge Rugby Club
Main Development Site Forum	Wednesday 15 April 2026	Leiston Town Athletic Association
Northern Transport Forum	Wednesday 6 May 2026	High Lodge Darsham
Southern Transport Forum	Wednesday 3 June 2026	Stratford St Andrew Riverside Centre
Main Development Site Forum	Wednesday 8 July 2026	Leiston Town Athletic Association
Northern Transport Forum	Wednesday 5 August 2026	High Lodge Darsham
Southern Transport Forum	Wednesday 2 September 2026	Stratford St Andrew Riverside Centre
Main Development Site Forum	Wednesday 7 October 2026	Leiston Town Athletic Association
Community Forum	Thursday 22 October 2026	Sizewell Visitors Centre
Northern Transport Forum	Wednesday 4 November 2026	High Lodge Darsham
Southern Transport Forum	Wednesday 2 December 2026	Stratford St Andrew Riverside Centre



All forum timings: 18:00-20:00 (arrival from 17:45)  
To find out more about our upcoming forums  
visit [sizewellc.com/community/forums](https://sizewellc.com/community/forums)

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# SAXMUNDHAM SCOUT GROUP

It's been a busy and exciting term for the Saxmundham Scout Group! Our Scouts have been out and about in the community, proudly volunteering their time to support the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. You may have spotted them at Tesco or Waitrose, selling poppies and helping to raise funds.



The Cubs have been putting their cooking skills to the test as they prepare for the upcoming District Cooking Competition. They have also enjoyed a campfire with compulsory marshmallow toasting and campfire songs. The Beavers have also been having plenty of fun this term, enjoying a hike through Carlton Woods and getting creative with some pumpkin carving in time for Halloween.

All of our sections also took part in this year's Jamboree on the Internet (JOTI) where they had the opportunity to chat with Scouts from around the world.

We currently have spaces available in all sections for both young people and adult volunteers. If you would like to get involved, we'd love to hear from you! Please get in touch at [1stsaxmundham@suffolkscouts.org.uk](mailto:1stsaxmundham@suffolkscouts.org.uk).

Scouts (ages 10-14) meet on Wednesdays.

Cubs (ages 8-10) meet on Thursdays.

Beavers (ages 6-8) meet on Fridays.

All at the Scout Hut on Memorial Field.

Alice Davis



**BRIAN**  
LIVING MELTON

**Melton's famous resident, Brian, shares his stories, views and observations on everyday life with his own column, exclusive to The Tide Collection magazines.**

Cor to heck - I dunt believe that Christmas is almost here agen - where hev the year gorn? It only seem five minutes since I put the tinsel back in the lorft.

When I wuz just a little ol boy, we hed to make do with a stocking filled with fruit and nuts and if I wuz lucky, I got a clockwork toy or a new hat, scarf and gloves that mother would hev knitted me. The hats never did fit propley and the scarf wuz too long, but they ment the world to me.

I expect we'll get lumbered with the same ol squit on the telly agen this year. Me and mother used to like to watch the The Two Ronnies and Morecambe and Wise and mother hed a sorft spot for Mike Yarwood. He always used to make her laugh with his impersonations.

I will be getting the tree out of the lorft on the fust of December like I always do. I hed that tree since Woolworths closed in Ipswich and that still stand straight, as long as



I put a bit of wood under one of the feet.

I still hev the same fairy too. Mother got that from one of her catalogs back in the day. That nearly fell in the open fire once when the dorg jogged the tree with it's tail. The fairy fell into the coal bucket and got dutty, so mother give it a good scrub in the sink and after that one of the eyes wuz wonky. If you give it a good shake, sometimes the eye go back to how it should be.

The only new thing I bort was a set of the led lights, cuz the old ones popped and I dint hev any spare bulbs. The new lights are hooly bright, but not as bright as the ones on the neighbours house. It light up like Blackpool alloomination, but the kiddies like to see them and to be fair, they are so bright, that save me hevvin to put my lights on in the living room.

I hope you all hev a nice Christmas and remember, it's not about what you get, but who you spend it with. The presents will break, but the memories will last forever.

*Season's Greetings*

# SAXMUNDHAM RUNNING & FITNESS CLUB

## Five Mile Race Round Up

*"Always a great event, well run and all ages and abilities welcome. Absolutely brilliant", "Very friendly atmosphere and very well organised. Definitely back again next year", "Many thanks for a very well organised event", "This is, without a doubt, my favourite race of the year" were just some of the comments following the club's annual 5 Mile Race which took place in October.*

John Axtell, chairman of Saxmundham Running and Fitness Club, said: *"This year The Saxons are celebrating 20 years since Gordon Merfield, our Lifetime President, established the club, and since then we have gone from strength to strength. We were delighted that the race was a sell-out this year, and so we were excited to welcome runners from far and wide to our club HQ in Carlton Park Sports Pavilion, on a dry and breezy morning to help us celebrate our anniversary. Overall, the weather was incredibly kind to us with blue skies and ideal temperatures for running.*

*"There is always a buzz of excitement around the club in the weeks leading up to the event, which reaches fever pitch on the day itself. The organisation of an event like this has to be meticulously planned, and leading the Race Committee so efficiently was Sarah Vick, our Race Director. Of course, the whole club pulled together, with everyone contributing to the success of the day. Thanks to those involved in clearing and marking the course, all the marshals who kept runners safe and provided encouragement, the catering team, all the club bakers who provided a glorious display of cakes and bakes for sale, the photographers, our generous sponsors, and the aforementioned members of the Race Committee. Everyone played an important role in showing why we are all so proud to be Saxons.*

*"The events started with the Junior Fun Run, which is always a joy. It is always great to see such large numbers of children warming up together and enjoying their running, and inspiring to see the quality of talent on display. The main event started with a mass start, but it didn't take long for the field to spread, with some runners taking an early and unassailable lead.*

*"We thank all runners for their participation and congratulate you all on your effort. All runners received a handsome medal and a goody bag. We would love to see you all come back in 2026".*

*"Daisy Glover of Framlingham Flyers was first female with a course record of 28.10. Owen Rees of Ipswich Phoenix Running Club won the male race in 26.59. Congratulations to everyone.*

*"It would be great if you all could join us in October next year when we're sure to have another fun-filled day of meeting friends, socialising and running."*

For more information visit [www.thesaxons.org.uk](http://www.thesaxons.org.uk)



Saxons Five Mile Race



Saxons' refreshment team

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