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A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR



Wayne Burns and his team did not disappoint, as always, with another panto wrapped up. Family fun for all with plenty of colour and laughs!

Well done to all the cast and people behind the scenes who put so much work into producing these very professional performances of Mother Goose, enjoyed by all. Booking is already open of next year's 'Sleeping Beauty'!

Drop me a line if you would like to boost your business in the new year by advertising in the Leiston Observer or any of our other five titles. My email is: lou@tidecollection.com

Quote of the month

I don't exercise. If God had wanted me to bend over, he would have put diamonds on the floor.

Joan Rivers

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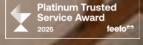
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MOTHER GOOSE - TEAM B PRODUCTIONS' BEST YET?

A review by Georgy Jamieson – www.suffolktheatre.co.uk

Team B Productions always deliver a very professional show with their pantomime, but this year they have surpassed themselves. Mother Goose is their best panto yet, and you wouldn't think you were watching an amateur theatre group at all. This was slick, professional and very funny.

A good panto dame can make or break a production, and this one has an absolute belter with Mother Goose herself at the very centre of the story. Wayne Burns is, as always, a consummate professional and plays the part perfectly. He also wrote the script, which is packed full of gags for all ages, and he directed the show with a great pace so that the action doesn't flag, and the songs drive the story forward.

Mother Goose's sons also provide a lot of the comedy in the show. Jack Goose, played by Matt Piercy, is our romantic hero in love with the Squire Purchase's (Marcus Ward) daughter, Jill, played with charm by Sky Henson. Toby Young showed great comic timing as Silly Billy, who sells poor Amber the cow (Jake Robinson and Kelly Eagle) at market in exchange for Priscilla the Goose (Lauren Major).

A standout performance was Noleen Skudder as the villain Demon Dark Heart, who was gloriously wicked, had great stage presence and audience interaction, along with a strong singing voice. I loved the dance she did, which was a nod to a TikTok trend. She was ably assisted by her henchwoman Gonk, played by Vici Hadfield, and the two worked well together.

Grace Clutterbuck is a cheery presence as Fairy Good Feather, along with Mandy Baskett as Mayor Goosepimple, Patrick Norman as The Storyteller, a supporting performance from Deborah Paul and the charming dancers from the Chloe Kinrade School of Dance, make up the rest of this talented cast.

I must also mention excellent musical direction by Tom Horton and wonderful lighting, sound and effects by the team Stephen Ginger, Sonny Cracknell, Shaun Emmerson (SE Audio) and Ron Bloomfield.



Tickets for next year's Team B panto, Sleeping Beauty, have gone on sale already, and if you don't want to miss out on great local entertainment, then get booking now.

Photos: Lucy Halpin Photography





FROM LEISTON-CUM SIZEWELL TOWN COUNCIL

Civic Matters: Leiston Town Council currently has a vacancy following the recent resignation of a councillor. This comes at an important time for our community, as the Council faces two major challenges in the years ahead – the construction of Sizewell C and the planned Local Government Reorganisation. It is vital that we continue to build a resilient and effective Council that can work on behalf of residents to secure strong mitigation measures for hosting Sizewell C, and to ensure that the local voice is properly represented during any future changes to local government structures.

The Town Council manages a wide range of community assets, including Victory Road and King George's Avenue recreation parks, the Community Orchard, Haylings Pond, Leiston Film Theatre, the Waterloo Centre, Leiston Community Centre, Dinsdale Road public conveniences, and two allotment sites. These facilities play an important role in the life of our town, and we are keen to attract committed and enthusiastic members of the community to help shape their future. If you are interested in becoming a Town Councillor and making a positive difference to Leiston, please contact the Town Clerk for more information.

Progress Report

Millennium Wood: The Council would like to thank the Sizewell C Community Benefits Forum and contractor Tru7 for their generous support in demolishing old sheds and removing rubbish from the Haylings Road allotment site. They are also assisting the Council in developing a forward management plan for this small but valuable community space. Our next step is to involve residents and allotment holders in transforming the area into a small woodland for everyone to enjoy. If you would like to be involved in this project, please contact the Town Council office.

Leiston Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association (LAHGA): Council officers recently met with representatives of the LAHGA. This was a productive meeting with many positive ideas discussed for future improvements. We look forward to working together to develop these plans further. Allotments bring enormous pleasure and benefit to individuals and families and now is an excellent time to consider investing a small annual fee to secure a plot for your own enjoyment and products if your labour. If you are interested in taking on an allotment site, we currently have vacancies available.

Haylings Pond: Work has now begun on installing a new accessible pathway at Haylings Pond to improve access for all visitors. We would welcome feedback from residents on this project and any suggestions for further improvements.

Small Grants Scheme: Each year the Town Council sets aside income from its investments to support local community organisations through small grants. If your group has a project that could benefit from financial assistance, please contact the Town Council office for details of how to apply.

Council Meetings: A reminder that Full Council meets on the second Tuesday of each month at the Leiston Community Centre from 6.45pm.

Agendas are posted on the noticeboard outside the Council Offices and published online at: www.leistontowncouncil.gov.uk

For further information on any of the above, please contact the Town Council Offices on 01728 830388 or email office@leistontowncouncil.gov.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you.

LEISTON YOUTH CLUB

A Safe Place for the Town's Young People

At Leiston Youth Club we offer a vital, safe and comfortable environment for young people aged 8 to 18 to connect, socialise and grow. For a nominal fee of 50p per night (first night is free) we offer a diverse range of activities that cater to different interests, ensuring something for everyone.

Our programme of activities is designed to encourage both creative and physical activity including getting involved in our new cooking club, art and craft projects with a local artist and active games like football, rounders and basketball, (weather and daylight permitting of course!)

Above all we prioritise a social and safe space where members can meet existing friends and make new ones, away from external pressures. Where young people can access information, support and advice from our qualified youth workers. Our holistic approach to youth wellbeing helps build essential social skills and self-confidence.

It's also lots of fun!

The youth club operates during term time. Monday nights are for our Junior members aged 8 - 11 and still in primary school or equivalent.

We run from 6.30 to 8.30pm.

Thursday night is senior club, aimed at age 11+ and also runs from 6.30 to 8.30pm

If you would like to know more, search for Leiston Youth Club on Facebook or contact us at leistonyouthclub@yahoo.co.uk

We hope to see some new faces soon!



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Credit: Sharon Cudworth Photography

LEISTON GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

February already – and the bulbs are beginning to come up and at last it is getting a lot lighter in the mornings and evenings. And the birds are singing! Spring will come!

Just to remind you all that the Leiston Good Neighbour Scheme covers Leiston, Sizewell and Knodishall. We have a small group of volunteers and the kind of service we can provide covers such things as: Meeting up for a chat; Telephone support; Helping to fill in forms; Giving information about other services and facilities locally; Helping people who are temporarily having difficulties getting out, for example collecting a prescription, or a small amount of emergency shopping. We have carried out approximately 250 such activities since April.

Our hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm – we do not cover weekends, although we do have an answerphone, so you can ring out of hours and we will get back to you on the next working day. The Allotment project went well last year, with the group meeting weekly on Wednesday mornings, and people also go up at other times to tend to their plots. Over the winter, the group has been meeting for coffee and chat at Coffee Link in the Co-op instead, as it is too cold to go up to the allotment. Work will be starting soon though which is exciting, and there are always new projects and plans on how to develop the allotment further. Anyone is welcome to join – just come to the Community Allotment on a Wednesday morning and have a coffee, tea and biscuits, to see what goes on.

If you would like any help, you know someone who might benefit or you would like to volunteer please contact us on 07724 777465 or email leistongood-neighbour@gmail.com



SAXVETERANS' BREAKFAST CLUB

Saxveterans Breakfast Club (SVBC) has been operating for a year now and has almost forty members and is growing rapidly. Keith Cartwright-Jones of Saxmundham Judo Club has been instrumental in forming the group with Jane Anderson and paving the way for a recognised veterans' group in the area.

SVBC is run for veterans in principle, to offer peer support for those living within our community, to combat veteran social isolation by providing a relaxed, safe and welcoming space for all ranks and services (serving and veterans) to meet, share experiences and build camaraderie over breakfast and regular social meet ups.

During the Christmas break a walk was organized by Stuart (ex-para) from Sizewell to Thorpeness in which members were joined by Military Preparation College for Training (MPTC) Juniors in Ipswich. 16 to 19 yr olds got an opportunity to enjoy fresh air, exercise and talk to veterans of their experiences in the forces. A shot of homemade sloe gin, upon finishing was very welcome, thank you Stuart.

If you wish to join us and be included in the many events and breakfasts that are planned for 2026 please get in touch with either Jane or Keith.

Keith: Email: judokeef@gmail.com; Tel: 07939 059788
 Jane: Email: saxmundhampao@gmail.com



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LEISTON FOOTBALL CLUB

Blues boss hails Leiston's TikTok generation

Leiston boss Chris Wigger is looking for more consistency from his team in 2026, as the Blues look forward to a final few months of the season.

The Blues have enjoyed some terrific results so far this season, especially on the road. But they've also slipped up when many, including Wigger, would not have thought they would do so. It's something he wants to address.

"Consistency. That's where we are lacking a bit right now," Wigger said.

"We went to Halesowen back in December and put on a superb performance at a very formidable ground and set of fans, picked up three points, then we couldn't replicate a week later in front of our own bumper crowd at Leiston in a derby against Needham. And yet we prepare no differently."

"It's frustrating of course for all of us. But we are also a young group, and inconsistencies can be part of the journey."

Leiston were buoyed by that bumper crowd of almost 600 at the Flannery Stadium in the clash with Needham just after Christmas, with more young Blues fans coming through the turnstiles than for many seasons. Something Wigger loves to see.

"I keep saying let's get people through the gate," Wigger said.

"We are trying to create a community feel. Leiston is such a great place to be on matchdays. I'm seeing more young people coming through the turnstiles. These youngsters bring a real enthusiasm with them. The TikTok generation as they're called. They're a credit to the football club and we love having them coming to support us."

TikTok FAN: Leiston first-team boss, Chris Wigger.

Photo: Ben Cunningham



Leiston skipper, Seb Dunbar, made his 450th appearance for the Club back in December. The Club presented him with a club shirt in honour of his achievements.



Pictured are Leiston chairman, Andy Crisp, left, vice-chairman, Peter Mayhew, right, first-team manager Chris Wigger, second right, and Seb himself. Photo: Steve Cooper

First Team home fixtures in February

Saturday, 14th Bromsgrove Sporting (Southern League) @ 3pm

Tuesday 17th Needham Market (Suffolk Premier Cup) @ 7.45pm

The Leiston experience... how to get involved

At the Flannery Stadium, there are always opportunities to volunteer and get involved at Leiston Football Club.

Step 3 is just three Steps below the actual Football League 2, and the professional game. That's the standard of football at the Club.

It's a high level of non-league football, some of the best in the country. Visitors to Leiston include the likes of Worcester City, Harborough Town, Kettering Town, Stamford, Stourbridge and local derbies against AFC Sudbury, Bury Town and Needham Market.

Founded in 1880 Leiston Football Club is one of the oldest and most established non-league clubs in the UK. If you would like to be involved at Leiston Football Club, from becoming a match day volunteer through to bespoke sponsorship packages for the 25/26 season, that include Matchday, ball and individual player sponsorship, contact Andy Crisp on 07769 904555 or e-mail acrisp5@aol.com and see how you as an individual or your business can enjoy being part of the Leiston FC experience. More companies and individuals are getting on board, and we are truly grateful for their support and sponsorship. For information on the club, news and teams, head over to www.leistonfc.co.uk or follow Leiston on X, Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok and Instagram.

The Engineers Arms
Leiston 01728 635883



February

Saturday 7th
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Alibi

Sunday 8th
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What's On at **Leiston** Film Theatre

Fri 6th & Sat 7th Feb at 7.15pm
Sun 8th Feb at 6.00pm
Tues 10th Feb at 7.15pm
Wed 11th Feb at 3.00pm
Thurs 12th Feb at 7.15pm

RENTAL FAMILY 12A

Fri 13th & Sat 14th Feb at 7.15pm
Sun 15th Feb at 6.00pm
Tues 17th & Wed 18th Feb at 2.00pm
Thurs 19th Feb at 3.00pm

KANGAROO PG

Tues 17th & Wed 18th Feb at 7.00pm
AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH 12A

Fri 20th, Sat 21st, Tues 24th &
Thurs 26th Feb at 7.15pm

PRIMATE 18

Sun 22nd Feb at 6.00pm

HAMNET 12A

Sun 22nd Feb at 3.00pm
Wed 25th Feb at 7.15pm

I SWEAR 15

Fri 27th Feb at 7.15pm
Sun 1st Mar at 6.00pm
Mon 2nd Mar at 1.00pm
Tues 3rd Mar at 7.15pm
Wed 4th Mar at 3.00pm
Thurs 5th Mar at 7.15pm

WUTHERING HEIGHTS 15

Sat 28th Feb at 7.30pm. LIVE ON STAGE
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THE ALTER EAGLES

Wed 4th Mar at 7.00pm
Sun 8th Mar at 2.00pm

OTHELLO 15

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Tel: 01728 830549, or visit:
www.leistonfilmtheatre.co.uk

LIVE WELL HUB LEISTON



Working alongside the DWP The Live Well Hub has hosted its first 'Introduction to Construction' Course; the course has been well attended giving participants in the local area a valuable insight into the construction industry.

During the course participants have learnt a variety of relevant skills including using the space in our Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) to learn how to operate a digger!

On **Monday 16th February** we welcome you to join 'Way to Go' on our first guided cycle ride. You can bring your own cycle or use one of the rentable bikes stationed here or at other venues throughout the town. Rides/Walks will be at 10 - 11.30am and 1.30 - 3pm.

Also, on this date the bike doctor will be available to teach you how to repair your bicycle. With it being during Half Term holidays places for this are limited so book a slot to avoid disappointment, email: walkingandcycling@suffolk.gov.uk

Reminder: Combat2Coffee will be present at the Hub 10am – 12noon on the third Friday of each month, offering a warm welcome to veterans and their families.

Keep an eye out for more classes/courses being hosted here that may be of interest to you or your connections on posters and on social media and help us spread the word.

We are looking to expand our service over the coming months so please get in touch if you have any ideas of organisations or activities you'd like to see or if you have suggestions on opening hours that may enable more of our community to access what is currently on offer here.

The Live Well Hub is in the Waterloo Centre, off Waterloo Avenue, IP16 4HF (the site of the old Middle School) You can contact us on 01728 808 388 or 07955 437 070 or email livewell@leistontowncouncil.gov.uk or livewellmanager@leistontowncouncil.gov.uk. S

Should you have any questions or if you would like to enquire about hiring space at The Live Well Hub

LEISTON BOWLS CLUB

The Leiston Town Bowls Club are saddened to report the losing of one of our stalwarts, our treasured greenkeeper Peter Baggott passed away after a few years of suffering. He will be sorely missed by the whole Bowls club and beyond. Peter helped build the bowls green and then nurtured it over the last few decades. Peter was an accomplished bowler, having won many bowls titles over the years but was better known for the work he did on Leistons Bowls Green. Anyone who played on it had nothing but praise for its playing surface.

Leiston's facilities are admired county wide, the green is one of the best playing surfaces in the county.

Suffolk County Bowls were proud to use it for their home games. Peter was also well known for the quality of the organisation and playing opportunities so many bowlers county wide and beyond enjoyed over the years, with The Leiston Town annual bowls tournaments. A quiet man, who loved his bowls and the LTAA green, visiting it daily throughout the years.

As age affected his commitment to the green, he groomed, trained and nurtured his replacement to ensure the LTAA Bowls green loses none of its enjoyment. Skilled bowler, Secretary, Chairman, Treasurer, Peter has done it all, missed but never forgotten.

Rest in Peace Peter and thank you for your dedication to Leiston Town Bowls Club.

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NEWS FROM THE LEISTON AND DISTRICT PHILATELIC SOCIETY

On the 26th November the Society held its annual auction of stamps, collections and philatelic ephemera. 331 lots were submitted for sale. 18 bidders were in the room and 45 on the book. Highest price paid for one lot was £120 for a pair of £2 'Machin' stamps with a missing £ sign due to a printing fault. Three stamps issued during the siege of Mafeking, during the Boer War in South Africa, fetched £70 and a cover bearing a strip of three Queen Victoria twopenny blues made the same price of £70. The final result was a very successful auction, with most lots selling at reserve or above.

On the 10th December the Society held its annual Christmas Social and Quiz, when members were pleased to welcome as guests the Mayor of Leiston, Cllr. Lesley Hill, accompanied by fellow member of the Council, Cllr. David Moseley. Guests, members and partners took part in a philatelic based quiz, which was won by Alan Martin and the Mayor took a commendable third place. Wine, soft drinks and festive nibbles were enjoyed by all and the afternoon was rounded off by the cutting of a special cake to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the founding of the Society in 1970.

Founder member Mr. George Woolnough came forward to cut the cake assisted by the Mayor and all present enjoyed a slice!

Going into the New Year, the Society has organised a series of monthly meetings at the United Church Hall, Leiston High Street, which will include a members' competition in February followed by displays and presentations of 'Birds on Stamps', in March, '1971 Strike Mail' in April and 'Paiforce' in June. The Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place on 27th May.

Anyone interested in stamp collecting or the activities of the Society are welcome to come along to any meeting - just turn up - you will find the members very welcoming and have collectively a wealth of information at your disposal! Membership of the Society costs just £5 per annum!

Contact andy.soutar@btinternet.com or alanmartin42@btinternet.com for further information regarding dates and times of meetings.

Alan Martin

CITIZENS ADVICE EAST

Staying Warm This Winter: How to get help

As temperatures drop, many households are feeling the pressure of rising energy bills. Whether you are struggling to pay for a tank of heating oil, worried about a prepayment meter running low, or living in a cold, draughty home, East Suffolk Council and its partners have several support schemes available to help you stay safe and warm this winter.

For those in urgent financial need, the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme (LWAS) can help. Managed by Suffolk County Council, it offers financial help for essentials like heating and electricity. Generally, this is targeted at households with an income below £30,000 and limited savings. If you have not received one of these payments since 1st October you can apply on-line at <https://residents.suffolk.gov.uk> or ask Citizens Advice to help you apply.

If you use a prepayment meter and are at risk of self-disconnecting because you cannot afford to top up, East Suffolk Council has a dedicated support team, they can be contacted by emailing prepay@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or calling 07769 366229. You can also contact Citizens Advice for access to vouchers.

The Surviving Winter Scheme, run in partnership with the Suffolk Community Foundation and Citizens Advice, provides direct grants toward heating costs for elderly and vulnerable households in fuel poverty.

For residents who rely on heating oil, the council has partnered with Eastern Savings and Loans to offer interest-free loans of up to £500.

This allows households to purchase a bulk delivery of oil and spread the cost over 12 months, avoiding the high prices often associated with smaller, emergency orders.

The Warm Homes Healthy People project from East Suffolk Council can provide help and advice to make your home more energy efficient and therefore cheaper to keep warm. There is further information at: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/energy-efficiency-and-warm-homes.

Warm Homes Suffolk offers significant grants for home improvements such as loft and cavity wall insulation, air source heat pumps, and solar panels. These grants are typically available to homeowners or private tenants whose properties have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D or lower, and a household income of less than £36,000. You can check your eligibility by visiting www.warmhomessuffolk.org or by calling 03456 037 686.

Beyond financial aid, the Council supports a network of 'Warm Welcomes' (formerly known as Warm Spaces). These are local libraries, community centres, and church halls that open their doors to provide a heated environment, a hot drink, and a friendly face during the day.

If you are struggling, do not wait for a crisis to occur. Contact the above schemes or us through our website: www.caes.org.uk/email-service. You can also phone us on 0808 278 7866 (lines open 10-2 Mon-Fri). We have a dedicated Energy Team who can help you. Our website www.caes.org.uk also gives details of our drop-in outreach sessions and how to make an appointment at one of our offices.

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ALDEBURGH AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Aldeburgh and District Local History Society: 'Sutton Hoo - the Story Continues', a lecture by Sally Sibley. Wednesday February 18th at the Old Generator Station, Kings Field, Aldeburgh, IP15 5HY starting at 6pm, £5.

Time Team returned to NT Sutton Hoo for a second season in May 2025, the most intensive period of excavation at the site in the last 25 years. In collaboration with more than 80 international volunteers, the National Trust and FAS Heritage, they continued to open trenches and test pits at the world famous Anglo-Saxon burial site.



Sally giving a talk

Sally Sibley has been a volunteer for 13 years and was instrumental in creating the Talks Service, regularly travelling around the region giving presentations about the site.



She'll describe some of these momentous investigations and what has been discovered so far.

Left: Close-up of the face guard of the helmet replica



Below: Replica finds used in the Netflix film 'The Dig'

Photos: Sally Sibley

LEISTON ALLOTMENT HOLDERS & GARDENERS ASSOCIATION- FEBRUARY

This month is often one of the coldest months. Snowdrops and other bulbs in flower are a reminder that spring is near, and warmer spells should allow gardeners to prepare the ground for planting. Where cloches are available, these can be useful on any vacant prepared ground, to help warm up the soil for future early sowings.

Vegetables: Chit early potatoes in a well-lit frost-free place. If any parsnips are left from last year, these should now be harvested. Early vegetables like peas and beetroot can be sown with protection such as cloches, or under protective cover like a frame.

Fruit: This is the last time for pruning autumn fruiting raspberries. All canes that fruited last year should now be cut down to almost ground level, before giving a general purpose fertilizer and finally mulching. Apply a weedkiller on ground around fruit trees. Complete tar oil winter wash on fruit trees before the buds start to swell.

Flowers: Increase your stock of dahlias. Any damaged areas cut away with a sharp knife. Stand the tubers up in trays, fairly close, with a covering of compost, but leave the top exposed. Tubers kept warm and humid will soon have shoots.

These can be taken as "softwood" cuttings which will soon "shoot" in a propagating frame.

Greenhouse: Remember to ventilate on mild days, closing up again by mid-afternoon. Pot on overwintered fuchsias, coleus and pelargoniums into 5" pots. Only the hardiest seeds should be sown now in an unheated greenhouse. Many seeds will do much better by waiting a month to six weeks before sowing. However, some hardy annuals grown for cut flowers can be sown now. Try to keep the warmest part of your greenhouse or polytunnel as near to 70oC as you can.

Hedges / Shrubs: It's not too late to cut back overgrown shrubs, etc. such as beech.

Drought: Plants in containers often run short of water, especially during summers like last year. Think big - the more compost your containers contain the less likely they are to dry out. When compost in your containers is proving impossible to re-wet, add a drop of washing up liquid to your watering can, also not forgetting a good mulch will also help.

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FROM LEISTON VETS

Choosing a new puppy

Getting a new puppy is a very exciting time but you should carefully consider which breed will be suitable for you and your lifestyle and where to buy your puppy from. It is advisable to buy from a responsible, reputable breeder. Before you decide talk to your vet who will usually be able to help you find a breeder and give you advice on which breed would best suit your lifestyle. A responsible breeder will be able to show you their Local Authority license if they are breeding and selling pets as a business and provide genuine paperwork/certificates for puppy vaccinations, microchipping (it is a legal requirement for pups to be microchipped by the breeder before they are sold), worming and results for a health test where relevant. A good breeder will be able to tell you all about the puppies and will arrange a time for you to visit to meet them, along with their mum and siblings, in the place where they were born and raised. They usually will allow you to meet the puppy more than once to ensure you and the puppy are compatible in order to make sure their puppies are going to a good home. Please do not buy a puppy from a puppy farm even if you feel sorry for it, as this encourages the puppy farms to continue their poor practice. Many puppy farms interbreed the dogs causing long term health issues. Do not be rushed into getting a puppy and ensure the puppy is healthy and the breeder is reputable.

When choosing a puppy, you should make sure that the puppy is bright, active and friendly. Avoid a puppy that appears timid or afraid of you as you may well find that they experience behavioural issues later in life. The puppy's skin should be clean and dry, with no signs of soreness and the fur should be shiny and soft with no sign of fleas or mites. The puppy's breathing should be quiet and effortless with no snoring, coughing, grunting or wheezing.

The eyes should be clear and bright, with no sign of dirt or redness. Ears should be clean with no smell or signs of wax inside that could mean ear mites. The puppy's nose should be cold and slightly wet, with open nostrils and the mouth should be clean, with white teeth and pink healthy gums. The puppy's body condition should have no ribs showing.

The backend should be clean and dry under the tail and the legs should be strong and sturdy, with no limping, lameness or difficulty walking.

We at Leiston Veterinary Clinic are happy to help you with advice on buying your new puppy. Puppies generally have their first vaccination at 8 weeks of age with a second Vaccination at 10-12 weeks of age. The vet will also be able to perform a full health check on your puppy at their vaccination and be able to advise on worming and diet to help ensure your puppy's health.

Good luck with your puppy hunting!



Leiston Veterinary Clinic

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SAUCY BY THE SEA!

Local funnyman and panto quipster Wayne Burns makes an appearance on stage at Aldeburgh's iconic Jubilee Hall in March, with an evening of unpredictable adult comedy. Renowned for his performances in Pantomime, Wayne makes a welcome appearance with an evening of general nonsense. Be prepared for chaotic comedy, as Wayne performs mischievous magic, delivers disorder with a host of props and puppets and serves up shrieks of laughter with his saucy and often spontaneous sense of humour.

Wayne's roots actually lie in Aldeburgh and he last appeared on the Jubilee Hall stage at the tender age of 19, when he produced a fund-raising variety show and he is looking forward to returning! "As my ancestral home, Aldeburgh has a special place in my heart. I love walking along the seafront with an ice cream, admiring the variety of walking aids and being awestruck at the unique parking techniques of residents and visitors! I cannot wait to take to the stage in this quintessentially British seaside resort, to see what Aldeburgh makes of my mad-cap sense of humour!" he said.

The show also includes live music from the fabulous Flashdance 80s Band, who will entertain the audience with a host of top 80s hits during the first half.

Saucy by the Sea appears live at Aldeburgh's Jubilee Hall on Friday 20th March at 7.30pm.

Limited tickets (£19.95) are still available on 01728 454022 or online at: www.aldeburghjubileehall.co.uk

(18+) If easily offended, please sit in the front!

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FEB 7 Waterloo: A Tribute To ABBA. From the iconic Waterloo, Mamma Mia and Voulez-Vous and so many more, this sensational show is an experience not to be missed by any ABBA fan. The iconic lyrics composed by Benny and Björn are sung in wonderful, captivating harmony from the opening refrain to the final sing-along chorus of this two-hour spectacular, featuring a full live cast & band, stunning costumes, and breathtaking choreography. 7.30pm at Spa Pavilion Felixstowe. Disclaimer: Please note that this is a tribute production and is not affiliated or endorsed by the ABBA Estate. Email: boxoffice@felixstowespaco.uk, phone: 01394284962. Website: spapavilionfelixstowe.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/117366

FEB 8 Halesworth Harmony rehearsal at The Cut. Come along for a free taster session - no experience is necessary, everything is taught by ear, and you'll receive a warm welcome. 10.30am – 12.30pm. For further details, email: halesworth.harmony@gmail.com.

FEB 10 RSPB Minsmere Safari. Our guides will treat you like a VIP as they take you on an exclusive tour in our 4x4 vehicles, introducing you to some of Minsmere's special wildlife, habitats and hidden history. These safaris provide excellent photographic opportunities. Four people maximum per vehicle. All ticket prices include reserve entry fees and a hot drink in the cafe. Email: minsmerc@rspb.org.uk, phone: 01728 648281. Website: events.rspb.org.uk/minsmere

FEB 18 Aldeburgh and District Local History Society (ADLHS) Lecture. The new year brings fresh discoveries, with Sally Sibley giving an update on the latest archaeological work at Sutton Hoo following the return of the Time Team to the world-famous Anglo-Saxon burial site. The talk will reveal some of the findings from the most intensive period of excavation there in 25 years. 6pm at the Old Generator Station, Kings Field.

FEB 26 Saxmundham History Society meeting. 'GHQ Auxilliary' by Christopher Pratt. We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month at 2.30pm in the URC, Chapel Road, Saxmundham. IP17 1BJ. Visitors £3. Annual membership £18. Enquiries to Jenny 01728 604608.

FEB 27 Everyman Folk Club. Steve Turner. With a dazzling technique and musical insight, Steve is known as a pioneer of highly sophisticated English concertina song accompaniments, stretching the boundaries of traditional forms. With one of the best voices on the folk scene, he is a multi-instrumentalist who also accompanies himself on the cittern, as well as playing mandolin and tenor banjo. A masterful performance of traditional and newer songs. Tickets £10 in advance or £12 on the door. 7.30pm at The Riverside Centre, Gt Glemham Road, Stratford St Andrew. IP17 1LL. Email: everyman@wheatstone.co.uk

LEISTON SCOUT GROUP

As we head into 2026 our membership continues to grow with over 60 members in our sections. With this growth we need more volunteers to help run the sections. One of our Beaver section leaders is due to have a baby in April and will be standing down, so for this section to continue we need a new volunteer to become a leader. Beavers are 6 – 8yrs of age.

2026 is a big birthday year for Scouting - Squirrels are 5 yrs old, Beavers 40 years and Cubs 110 years so there will be many celebrations both in the District and nationally.

The Leiston group has a long waiting list to join Beavers and it is our intention, with the help of the Deben District team to try and open a Squirrel section.

This is for 4 -6 year olds, so please contact us for an informal chat. We would like to open an Explorer unit for age 14 yrs plus, so if anyone would like to open and run this section please get in touch.

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PROJECT UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2026

There has been good progress on the Sizewell C project in the first month of 2026.

We will continue to keep the community informed throughout the year and our Works Tracker will be continuously updated. We will also be making further improvements throughout the year including overlaying the Causeway one.network traffic management website with the Works Tracker to ensure consistency and live traffic management updates. To sign up for email and/or SMS updates, please create an account by visiting www.szcworkstracker.co.uk and clicking the subscribe button.

A key focus of the project in the first half of 2026 is getting the Friday Street and Yoxford roundabouts linked to the A12 and open to the road network, which we expect to be in late spring. This will require necessary traffic management (two-way traffic lights and cones) in place as the roundabouts are prepared to be connected to the A12, and weekend closures of

the A12, which are outlined on the Works Tracker. Both the Southern Park and Ride (Wickham Market) and Northern Park and Ride (Darsham) will open in phases, with full openings later in the year.

From the New Year, works along Sizewell beach will start including, the construction of the temporary Main Bulk Import Facility and installation of the Temporary Marine Outfall pipeline, which will eject clean surface water from the main site. This will require footpath restrictions, which will be lifted over the weekends (17:00 Friday – 17:00 Sunday).

The first part of the bridge across the Site of Special Scientific Interest, that links the Temporary Construction Area to the Main Construction Area, has been successfully installed. The bridge will streamline vehicle movement between our sites and will reduce traffic on the local road network.

Thank you for your patience as we work towards the completion of many of the road schemes and as always if you need to speak to us please contact us via the **FREEPHONE 0800 197 6102***.

FORUM SCHEDULE

Forum timings

2026 | 18:00 - 20:00
(Arrival from 17:45)

VISIT THE WORKS TRACKER SITE



Northern Transport Forum	Wed 4 February	High Lodge Darsham
Southern Transport Forum	Wed 4 March	Stratford St Andrew Riverside Centre
Community Forum	Thurs 19 March	Sizewell Sports and Social Club

For more information and for more forum dates visit sizewellc.com/community/forums

*Calls to 0800 numbers are free from UK landlines. Call costs from mobile and international numbers may vary.



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RNLI ALDEBURGH - THE FIRST 100 YEARS

Aldeburgh's lifeboats guard a dangerous and exposed stretch of coast, where wind and tide can change the seashore overnight. The shingle beach is constantly shifting through the force of the sea.

In 1826, the Suffolk Association for Saving Lives of Shipwreck Seamen was formed and a lifeboat was sent to Sizewell Gap, where it served until 1852. The station moved to Aldeburgh in 1851 and was taken over by the RNLI in 1852.

The first lifeboat at Aldeburgh was the first of several sailing lifeboats operated throughout the 19th century, all of which were launched from the beach.

In October 1870, the 40ft self-righter George Hounsfeld was placed on station. She was one of the largest of her type, and was intended primarily to be sailed, so she could get to casualties further out than the smaller lifeboats in use elsewhere. George Hounsfeld was replaced in 1890 by an even larger boat, a 46ft by 12ft 6in Norfolk & Suffolk sailing craft, which was funded by an anonymous gift and named Aldeburgh. On 11 November 1891 she was involved in an outstanding service, being launched to the barque Winnifred, of Laurvig, which had stranded on one of the sandbanks offshore. Coxswain James Cable and Second Coxswain William Mann were awarded the RNLI Silver Medal for their courage during this rescue.

In December 1899, tragedy struck the station and six crew died. The RNLI awarded Charles Ward the Silver Medal for his courage and determination to save his comrades. Despite the loss of six volunteers, a new crew was formed and, by the end of the month, the station was operational again, with the lifeboat Reserve No1, on duty.

Another temporary lifeboat, Bolton, took over in 1901, and in November 1902 a brand-new lifeboat, City of Winchester, was placed on station. The new Norfolk & Suffolk sailing craft, measuring 46ft by 14ft, was one of the largest of her type, and became one of the station's best known lifeboats, serving for 26 years.

Celebrate 200 years of your local lifeboat station: Aldeburgh Lifeboat station is open every Saturday from 10.30am to 4pm. Pop in and meet Ralph, the Atlantic 85 lifeboat and read the station history in boards around the boat hall.

Brew with the Crew: On the last Saturday of every month you can chat with volunteer crew members over a cuppa. Come along and ask your questions, sign up to join or share your link to the lifeboat family. Check social media for timings.

Please be aware that all training exercises, station drop in and Brew with the Crew are subject to operational requirements.

Follow RNLI Aldeburgh on social media for dates and time of Brew with the Crew, planned training exercises and to learn more about their history.

Jo Litt

Facebook @RNLIAldeburghLifeboat
Instagram @rnli.aldeburgh



ALDEBURGH PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The next meeting of the Aldeburgh Photography Group will be held on Wednesday 18 February at 7.30pm in the Aldeburgh Library.

This month we are very pleased to welcome Simon Reid. Simon is a local freelance photographer whose assignments have included corporate portraits, football players, McLaren sports cars and even one for PG Tips teabags. Since 2012 he has worked exclusively shooting motorsport and track day events at motor racing circuits all over the UK and Europe.

It is Simon's experience of photographing autosport and events that will be the focus of his presentation at this meeting.

We are a friendly group and we are keen to welcome everyone from beginners to experienced photographers, from users of iPhones to the latest DSLRs.

We do not run competitions which put too many amateur photographers off joining local photography groups. Instead, we aim to help each other learn and improve our work.

If you want to know more, please contact us via our website (www.aldeburghphotographygroup.org.uk).

Kathryn Ellis



ALDE VALLEY SUFFOLK FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

'Army Records' – Graham Bandy

This talk will include researching soldiers' papers, regimental diaries & uniforms.

Graham Bandy has had a passion for military history since he was a young child. He is a very well known speaker and lecturer for the Society of Genealogists.

The talk takes place on **Monday 16th February** at 2.30pm, in person at the Fromus Centre, Street Farm Road, Saxmundham, IP17 1AL (behind the library) and, for members only, on Zoom. The speaker will be talking to us on Zoom. No need to book – just turn up - free for members and £5 for visitors, including tea/coffee/biscuits. Good, free car-parking. Only members can take part in our meetings on Zoom, but it only costs £10 for a year's membership – see <https://avsfhg.org.uk/membership/> (website under construction) and Zooming is free.

If you have any photographs of military uniforms or medals that you would like to ask Graham Bandy about, please send them to sec@avsfhg.org.uk several days before the talk.

Tracing Your Non-Conformist Ancestors – Report of a talk by Liz Yule

Marking its final monthly meeting of 2025, Alde Valley Suffolk Family History Group (AVSFHG) was delighted to host a return visit from the seasonally named Liz Yule, Director of Research at the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, Canterbury.

Liz began her talk about non-conformity with a thought-provoking slide charting the see-sawing of the dominant religion in England following the Reformation and the inevitable confusion for worshippers. Having neatly set the scene with definitions of several key non-conformist groups, Liz then walked us through numerous key dates and associated legislation impacting religious persuasions. Spanning a period of some 300 years, these included the 1558 Act of Uniformity, that required all to attend Church every Sunday, the 1689 Act of Toleration, providing Protestant dissenters with some freedom to worship away from the Anglican church, and the Catholic Relief Acts of 1778 and 1829.

Liz ended this part of her absorbing talk with the surprising fact that in 1851, 87% of the Welsh population was classed as non-conformist.

Her attention next turned to the records created by non-conformists, pointing out that no formal registers are likely to be found before the beginning of the 18th century, with Catholic registers generally absent until the 19th century. In this section she highlighted the creation of the Protestant Dissenters Library at Dr. Williams' Library, London. Largely devoted to birth records of Baptists, Independents and Presbyterians, this collection amounts to some 87,000 records, some dating back to 1716.

Before concluding her talk with an interesting case study focused on her East Anglian LEMAN forebears, Liz also highlighted various 'clues' signposting non-conformist ancestors. Some of these were more obvious, including the descriptions of the deceased in burial registers as 'Papists', others were more obscure, for example biblical forenames such as Abraham, Isaac or Ruth, not reflective of Protestant monarchs.

There followed an extremely lively question and answer session during which it was suggested to Liz that further research might reveal an ancestral connection with the Sir John Leman High School in Beccles. A couple of other attendees also referenced pictures in their possession of baptisms in local village ponds, again suggesting non-conformist beliefs.

Chris Broom

Further programme:

Monday 16th March: Members' Brick Walls

Monday 20th April: Annual General Meeting

Monday 18th May: Apprenticeship Records by Richard Holt

This issue was designed, printed & published by Leiston Press.

Leiston Observer is your free local paper, 2000 copies are printed every month.

We distribute the magazines door to door and to many varied outlets.

Monday 2nd March, copy deadline is 14th February - but the earlier the better to ensure inclusion.

Contacts/advertisers/Editorial:

Louise Gissing at Leiston Press, Unit 1b Masterlord Industrial Estate, Station Road, Leiston, IP16 4JD

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Reports, press releases; letters and other editorial contributions with news value are all welcome but are accepted on the understanding that there is no guarantee of inclusion and that they will be selected and edited at the editor's discretion.

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