

...YOUR FREE LOCAL NEWS

MAY 2026

SOUTHWOLD ORGAN



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by ALAN AYCKBOURN

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Saturday	May 9	Laxfield Village Hall	01986 87246	openspacetheatre.org
Thursday	May 14	Beccles Public Hall	01502 730649	becclespublichall.co.uk
Friday	May 15	The Cut Nazechurch	03503 833211	theout.org.uk
Friday	May 22	Southwold Arts Centre	01502 725712	southwoldartscentre.co.uk

For more information and to book tickets for all venues, visit openspacetheatre.org

19-21 JUNE 2026

BEERS & BEATS

WEEKENDER - at The Randolph

Four local, independently brewed

SELECTION OF 10 INDEPENDENT BREWS

19th - Live music from 6pm

20th - BBQ/Hog Roast served 12-3:30pm
Live music from 12:30pm with The Bakery, followed by Class of Britpop from 4:30pm

21st - BBQ/Hog Roast served 12-3:30pm
Live music from 12:30pm with The Austin Beats!

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**WHAT'S ON AT THE SAIL LOFT?
Spring 2026:**

Welcome to The Sail Loft, here you will find all the exciting things that we have going on over the next few months.

SAIL LOFT BI-ANNUAL BEER, CIDER & BURGER FESTIVAL WEEKEND

8th 9th 10th May with live music & Dj's throughout & our amazing festival burger menu

Thursday April 23rd

St George's day - steak & chips meal & pint £20

SPRING OFFER -

Exciting £10 main course value menu available April, May & June.

* NOT AVAILABLE DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



01502 725713 • www.sailloftsouthwold.uk
53 Ferry Road, Southwold IP18 6HQ



A NOTE FROM OUR EDITOR



Several charities would like you to get involved this month and you can have fun along the way – the Fun Dog Show and mini-fete returns, to fund ambulances for Help2Ukraine and there is a Fancy dress parade planned for August to support the Brain Tumour charity, so plenty of time to sort out costumes – children love to dress up! Also the Halesworth to Southwold Narrow Gauge Railway charity and Southwold Railway have Open Days, including a miniature railway. Enjoy!


Please drop me a line to boost your business by advertising with us, in any or all of our six titles, or if you have any news or events you would like to share with our readers.

Email: lou@tidecollection.com

Quote of the month

The world is full of people looking for spectacular happiness while they snub contentment.

Doug Larson



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- *Take a stroll at the bottom of Skilmans Hill and enjoy snowdrops, daffodils, birdsong and more thanks to hard working volunteers*



Southwold Summer Theatre

Southwold Arts Centre,
St Edmund Hall,
Cumberland Road
IP18 6JP



29th July to 8th August

The Importance of Being Earnest

Wilde's ultimate Romcom of Errors.
ACT tribute production to
Jill Freud & Company

19th to 29th August

SHOW and TELL

Dark-comedy Gold
by 'National Treasure'
Alan Ayckbourn

12th to 15th August

Love From a Stranger

Classic Agatha Christie mystery
thriller adapted by Louise Page

2nd to 5th September

Tons of Money

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by Will Evans & Arthur Valentine

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FIRST LIGHT FESTIVAL

FREE midsummer multi-arts celebration
20 - 21 June 2026, South Beach, Lowestoft



Suffolk's free festival returns to Lowestoft's South Beach for a weekend of unique experiences and performances celebrating the summer solstice...

FREE MUSIC HIGHLIGHTS

DJ Jamz Supernova, Seth Lakeman, Another Taste, Polly Gibbons, Jason Singh, Lizzie Berchie, ShunTa, Cut Capers, N'Famady Kouyaté, Ashton Jones, Levi Fruits & Friends, Caswell, Like Optimists, Magnolia...

+ COMEDY, POETRY, SCIENCE, FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Patrick Grant, Simon Day, John Hegley, Luke Wright, Laurence Edwards, Inua Ellams, Ashley Hickson-Lovence, DanceEast, Natural History Museum, Gainsborough's House, Sunrise Yoga, Cabaret, Silent Disco, Wild Beach Camping, Campervan Glamping + more!

Explore the full line up at firstlightlowestoft.com



Summer begins at Lowestoft's First Light Festival! Taking place on South Beach - the UK's most easterly point and first place to see the sunrise - the free multi-arts festival returns on 20-21 June with an expansive line-up spanning music, comedy, spoken word, visual arts, workshops and more. This year's festival features over 200 free performances - New additions include a cabaret night at East Point Pavilion, a dedicated Vertical Space teen zone, and a glamping option for visitors. While the main beach programme remains free, ticketed events will run on Saturday evening after 9:30pm.

Celebrate the Summer Solstice: At the heart of First Light Festival is its iconic Dawn Celebration, held this year on the summer solstice itself (Sunday 21 June). Beginning at 4am, the programme opens with beach yoga followed by a live improvised performance from sound artist Jason Singh. Festivalgoers can then share a communal fish feast while watching the sunrise - marking a symbolic start to summer. A special highlight follows: a new co-commission between Aldeburgh Festival, Britten Pears Arts and First Light, with interdisciplinary artist Tendertwin creating a work inspired by Benjamin Britten in the 50th anniversary year of his death.

Festival Highlights: Across the weekend, the Sunlight Stage will host a diverse international music line-up, including BBC 6 Music's Jamz Supernova, Dutch disco collective Another Taste, soul artist Ashton Jones, neo-soul singer Lizzie Berchie, folk musician Seth Lakeman, Balkan-inspired group ShunTA and West African artist N'famady Kouyaté. The First Word Stage brings spoken word and comedy, featuring Luke Wright, Inua Ellams, Elf Lyons, Louise Exactly, Bradley Taylor and John Hegley.

Meanwhile, the Talks and Interstellar Ideas tent includes appearances from Patrick Grant, Chris Lintott, Ashley Hickson-Lovence, George McKay and Julian Barnwell, covering topics from music and literature to history and discovery. Visual arts remain a key part of the festival, with sculptor Laurence Edwards' *The Long Wait* returning to the beach for the summer. Other installations include Maddie Exton's *'Meet me at First Light'*, *Hotel Kittiwake*, *Leviathan*, and the *Noon to Moon* exhibition alongside the Easterly Artists showcase in Kensington Gardens.

Family Fun: Families highlights include social dance sessions ranging from Charleston to hip hop, interactive theatre, wellbeing sessions on the sand, and the new Vertical Space zone for young people, offering creative drop-ins, DJ sessions, gaming and sports. Camping options are also expanding, with wild beach camping, cliff-top campervan spots, and - for the first time - pre-bookable fully equipped VW campervans available.

Sundown Events: Saturday night's ticketed programme offers a variety of after-dark experiences: an after-party with Jamz Supernova, intimate jazz from Polly Gibbons, classical and acoustic performances at St Peter & St John Church, a debut cabaret show at East Point Pavilion, and the ever-popular Silent Disco. Blending culture, community and coastal beauty, First Light Festival continues to offer a unique way to welcome the summer - starting with the UK's first sunrise.

The festival will run from 12pm noon to sundown (9.30pm) on Saturday, and from 10am - 4pm on Sunday, with a Dawn sunrise programme from 3.30am on Sunday morning.

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL NEWS

The Town Council is delighted to welcome the opening of **Station Road Express**. Congratulations to Siva and his family on the opening of their independent convenience shop, located on the corner of Station Road and Blyth Road. The shop brings a friendly, local presence to the entrance of the town, and their hard work and dedication in bringing this venture to life are already clearly evident.

Siva and his family are already well known within the local community, as they also run Boydens Store in Reydon, where they have built a strong reputation for friendly service and commitment to local customers.



The opening of the shop marks the culmination of the Town Council's Station Road Project, which began in 2019. This initiative has already supported the arrival of new businesses to the area, including those now operating from the Enterprise Hub managed by Menta.

Independent businesses play a vital role in keeping our town vibrant and connected, and it is always encouraging to see new ventures taking root within the community. It is hoped that residents will show their support by shopping locally and helping Station Road Express, along with our other independent businesses, to flourish.

With strong community backing, we are confident that such businesses will thrive and become a valued part of everyday life in Southwold. We wish Siva and his family every success in this exciting new chapter at Station Road Express.

New Residents' Handbook Launched for Southwold, Reydon and Walberswick

We are delighted to announce the publication of the very first Residents' Handbook for the parishes of Southwold, Reydon and Walberswick.

This new handbook has been created to celebrate and support our vibrant local community, bringing together useful information about local groups, activities, organisations and opportunities across the three parishes. It is designed to help both new and long-standing residents discover what's on offer and encourage greater community involvement.

Sufficient copies have been produced to ensure that every household across the three parishes can receive one. Distribution will take place over the coming weeks, so please keep an eye out for your copy arriving soon. For those who would like an additional copy, these will be available to collect from the Southwold Tourist Information Centre and Southwold library.

An online version of the handbook will also be available on the Southwold Town Council website: www.southwoldtown.com, ensuring it remains accessible and can be kept up to date. As this is the first edition, we recognise that there may be some groups or organisations not yet included. We warmly welcome feedback and contributions for future editions to help make the handbook as comprehensive and useful as possible. (send to admin@southwold-tc.gov.uk)

We hope this new handbook will inspire residents to connect, get involved, and make the most of everything our wonderful community has to offer.

Hello Southwold



We are your local community radio station, broadcasting online to bring you a varied mix of music programmes, stories and information about what's on in our area.

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'ON OUR DOORSTEP' OUTDOOR HOLIDAY ACTIVITY AT THE OLD HOSPITAL

Over the Easter holiday, on a sunny day without a cloud in sight, 18 children, ages 5 to 12, from the Old Hospital's Family Tea Club, set out from The Canteen on an expedition to build a bug hotel at the Old Hospital allotment. Starting at 9am promptly, this was an all-day activity involving many adult volunteers whose responsibilities included removing safety hazards in advance, planning the construction, and on the day, nursing a small number of miniscule wounds, cured with a splash of water, waving hands in the air, and, for the most severe, surgical extraction of a tiny splinter by 'nurse' Andrea whose career as a GP Practice Manager had prepared her well for this role.

Having negotiated crossing Station Road successfully, first stop was the allotment on Rope Walk. There, they picked up wheelbarrows and received a briefing from Elaine Glendinning. Elaine is a former primary school head teacher who worked in Great Yarmouth, a member of the Old Hospital's Management Committee, and a nan to six. Thank goodness she was there for she saved the day when a seven-year-old collapsed in tears after she was relieved of responsibility for negotiating a wheelbarrow of woodland debris down a treacherous curve. Where others had failed, Elaine coaxed her into rejoining the expedition.

Next stop was a mysterious part of the Common lying between the old railroad track and the footpath to St Felix. Here, the children collected pebbles, bits of rubble, leaves, bracken, rotted wood, moss and grass, had a picnic snack, climbed an old oak tree and explored the web of paths trodden by deer.

Then back to the allotment where construction began, interrupted by a barbeque on a fire pit, Easter egg hunt, and then back to finishing the build. Final inspection identified some snagging issues but, with children due back at the Old Hospital for 3pm pick-up, these were left for another day. A quick survey of the children elicited the following answers to the question, "What did you enjoy most?" Building the bug house came top of the list, followed by making the fire, and from a 12-year-old who was tasked to hide the eggs, 'helping'. When the final child departed, Elaine Glendinning said, "We left with 18, we came back with 18. That's what I call a success."

From Jessica Jeans and Sydney Barbrook at the Old Hospital, a very big thank you to volunteers Rob, Andrea, Tina, Matt, Elaine, Hannah, Mike (from the Men's Shed) who advised on construction, to Southwold Town Council who funded the fire pit, the Reydon Trust who funded the Easter eggs and to Cllr David Beavan who gave funding to the Old Hospital for children's activities.

The children had a memorable time, exploring a natural world on their doorstep that they had never known was there.

In the future, we hope to do more 'on our doorstep' outdoor activities for children attending the Family Tea Club. Early stage thinking - a hike and picnic in the Walberswick dunes via the Blyth River ferry.

The Old Hospital Family Tea Club is open to any family with children attending local primary schools.

It provides a free hot meal at 3.30pm every Wednesday at the Canteen during the school term. If you would like to join, contact sydney@theoldhospitalsouthwold.co.uk.



REYDON COMMUNITY QUIZ

This month's Reydon Community quiz took place on Friday 20 March, with Amanda as question master. Winners were 'What no Broadside?' with 111 points, in second place 'If Onlys' with 108 points and in third place 'Threes Company' with 106 points.

The evening raised £280. This will be split between our local Rainbows/Brownies group and our Scouts/Cubs pack.

This will support our local youngsters and the wonderful volunteers who run these groups.

With thanks to everyone who supports the quiz. Dates for the next season will be announced later in the year.

We currently have room for another team so do contact me if you are interested in joining us, email: ahumphry@talktalk.net

PROJECT UPDATE

MAY 2026

The Friday Street Roundabout and Yoxford Roundabout are now open to traffic. This is a significant milestone for the Sizewell C infrastructure improvement works, making two notorious junctions on the A12 a lot safer.

Delivered as part of Sizewell C's commitment to strengthening regional infrastructure, the new roundabouts replace older junctions that had become increasingly congested and challenging to navigate at peak times. The redesigned layouts now provide safer access to the A1094 at Friday Street and the B1122 at Yoxford, reducing queuing and lowering the risk of accidents. Whilst traffic management in the area will reduce, works around the roundabout will continue as the now redundant parts of the A12 are removed and prepared for landscaping, and the construction of the two-village bypass that will eventually connect to the Friday Street Roundabout continues.

The Southern and Northern Park and Ride car parks are open and our workforce are being bussed from the locations onto site. At the Northern Park and Ride, there are now 280 spaces, and 80 spaces at the Southern Park and Ride.

The roundabout that links the Northern Park and Ride with the A12 and Willow Marsh Lane continues to be constructed and linked to the road network; we expect the works to be completed by early summer.

A12 road improvements

We have recently completed the first of three signalised road crossings along the A12 in Yoxford. The next crossing will be constructed in Marlesford and is due to commence in May. Works will then proceed onto Little Glemham for the third signalised crossing. These works will require traffic management along the A12 and will be outlined on the **Sizewell C Works Tracker**.

In the wider road network, Sizewell C will be making general improvements on local roads, in particular on the B1122, B1125 and B1119. These works will improve safety accessibility and include high friction surfacing, new footways, vegetation management for improved visibility, signage, and village gateways. The first work to commence will be the B1122 footpath improvements starting in mid-April.

This work will involve traffic management during the day and some night time closures to maximise time and lessen disruption on the road network during the working day. We are also conducting these works in collaboration with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) in the area, in particular Scottish Power Renewables.



Scan the QR code for further details about the collaboration.

FORUM

SCHEDULE

Forum timings

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

Northern Transport Forum Wednesday 6 May High Lodge Darsham

Southern Transport Forum Wednesday 3 June Stratford St. Andrew Riverside Centre

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.



SOUTHWOLD FUN DOG SHOW & FETE

Over the last few years, a group from Southwold and around have fundraised to get four ambulances in convoy with another four from H2U (East Riding), stuffed full of medical equipment and supplies to Lviv in Ukraine. The journey takes four days from Rotterdam, across Germany, Poland and then into Ukraine. And yet, four incredibly gruelling years on, the need for ambulances and medical equipment is as great as ever for both the military and civilians.

Help2Ukraine (Suffolk) is excited to be bringing back the Southwold Dog Show by popular demand. Last year's judges, Emma Freud, Richard Curtis and Georgie Glenn did an amazing job because it was so hard to choose a runner up and winner from all the fabulous canines.

FANCY DRESS PARADE!

This year I will be holding a fundraising event which involves participants getting themselves sponsored for a parade in their chosen fancy dress. We will assemble near the pier, parade along the seafront, up and over South Green, down the High Street and across to the common, where everyone will gather for a mass picnic.

It's something I did back in 2007 and again in 2008. It's a fun family event which also raises money for an important cause, The Brain Tumour Charity.

Fact: Brain tumours kill more children and adults under 40 than any other form of cancer, yet less than 3% of research money is spent on brain tumour research. The Brain Tumour Charity are the biggest funders of research.

Why not join in the fun and raise some much needed funds for research at the same time?

It is essential participants register to take part so please email: john_huggins@btinternet.com

John Huggins

As Emma said: "Fantastic to do an event for Ukraine. To keep such disasters in the front consciousness"

Richard summed it up in his comic way as there being a "general feeling of brutal competition but warm affection".

The Southwold Fun Dog Show comes with a mini fete with tombolas (both human and doggy), a raffle, tea and cakes, BBQ and beer, doggy portraits and children's games. We will also have a doggy book stall and the Catholic Tower will be open for fabulous views of across Southwold and Reydon and Walberswick. This will be held on **Saturday May 23rd, 2026** in the Paddock, opposite the Roman Catholic Church, IP18 6AH. **From 11am - 3pm.**



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Fri 1st May at 7.15pm
 Sat 2nd May at 4.00pm & 7.15pm
 Sun 3rd May at 12.00pm
 Mon 4th & Tues 5th May at 7.15pm
 Wed 6th May at 3.00pm & 7.15pm
 Thurs 7th & Fri 8th May at 7.15pm
 Sat 9th May at 4.00pm & 7.15pm
 Sun 10th May at 6.00pm
 Mon 11th & Tues 12th May at 7.15pm
 Wed 13th May at 3.00pm & 7.15pm
 Thurs 14th May at 7.15pm
 Sat 23rd May at 7.30pm
 Mon 25th May at 6.00pm

MICHAEL 12A

Sat 2nd & Sat 9th May at 1.00pm

THE MAGIC FARAWAY TREE U

Sun 10th May at 3.00pm

EPiC: ELVIS PRESLEY IN CONCERT 12A

Fri 15th & Sat 16th May at 7.15pm
 Sun 17th May at 6.00pm
 Mon 18th May at 1.00pm & 7.15pm
 Tues 19th May at 7.15pm
 Wed 20th May at 2.00pm
 Thurs 21st May at 7.15pm

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA 2 12A

Sun 17th May at 3.00pm
 Wed 27th May at 1.00pm

GLENROTHAN 12A

Fri 22nd May at 4.30pm & 7.15pm
 Sat 23rd May at 2.00pm & 5.00pm
 Sun 24th May at 3.00pm & 6.00pm
 Mon 25th, Tues 26th, Wed 27th,
 Thurs 28th & Fri 29th May at 3.00pm
 Sat 30th May at 2.00pm & 5.00pm
 Sun 31st May at 3.00pm & 6.00pm

THE SHEEP DETECTIVES PG

Tues 26th, Wed 27th &
 Thurs 28th May at 7.15pm

YOU, ME & TUSCANY 12A

High Street, Leiston, Suffolk. IP16 4BZ
 Tel: 01728 830549, or visit:
www.leistonfilmtheatre.co.uk

ALDEBURGH MUSIC CLUB

Aldeburgh Music Club present **FOLK SONGS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

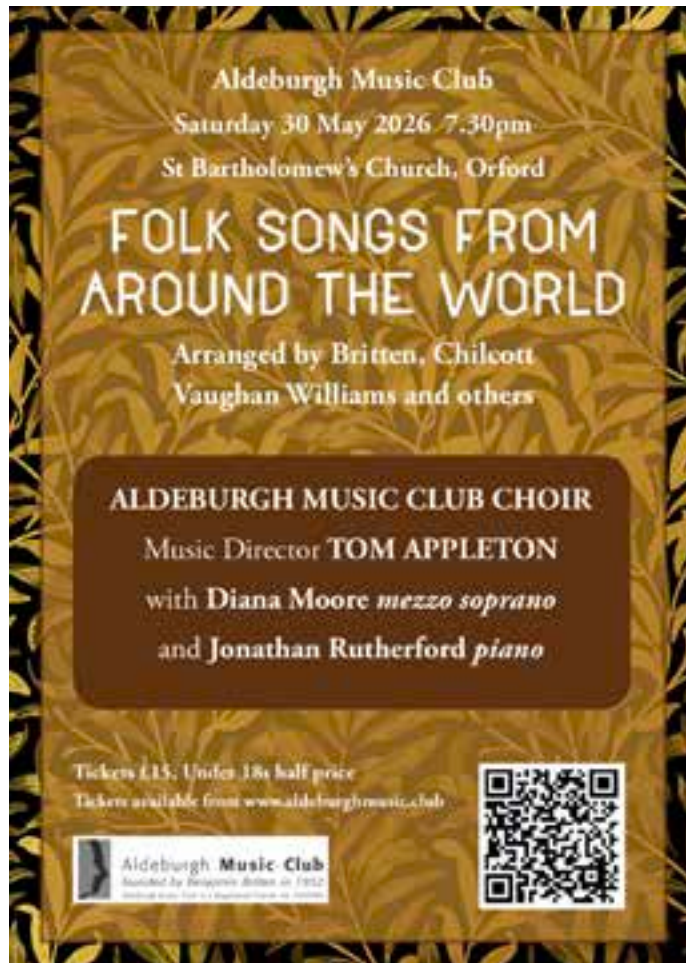
Saturday 30th May 2026 at Orford Church

Following their successful all-Mozart concert at Snape in March, **ALDEBURGH MUSIC CLUB CHOIR** turn to something completely different for their next concert.

At Orford Church on 30th May, the choir will be presenting an evening of **FOLK SONGS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**, in choral arrangements by a range of composers including Vaughan Williams, Bob Chilcott and John Rutter.

Also in the programme, Aldeburgh Music Club's Vice President, the mezzo soprano Diana Moore, will be singing a number of Benjamin Britten's folk song arrangements, accompanied at the piano by Jonathan Rutherford.

The concert begins at 7.30pm, and tickets are available from the Music Club's website, www.aldeburghmusic.club



SOLE BAY MEN'S SHED

Sole Bay Men's Shed, is gaining momentum with its attendance at 'Open Sessions' and just added an evening session.

The Shed is now open each **Wednesday evening 18:30 - 21:30, Thursday afternoon 13:00 - 17:00 and Saturday morning 09:00 - 13:00**. The Shed is open to new members from the age of 18. Whether you have tool experience or not, it doesn't matter. We are a fully inclusive group. What skills we have between us, we share and offer training in the use of power tools, if you want to learn. We also have a designated social room, where members can come along just for a cuppa and a chat.



Membership is £20 for the year. If you would like further information, please email John, our membership secretary at solebaymensshed@btinternet.com

At each session we have been busy making items for customers. This is how we will keep up with our outgoings and keep the Shed open.

We have been busy building shelves for our tools, but the main work to generate income has been the making of several Swift boxes and Bat boxes. We also want to progress the completion of a small rowing boat/boat tender, which was donated and hope to have it for sale before the end of April.

We received a donation of tools from EPIC (Organisers of the Southwold Half Marathon), plus a further donation from a lady who wishes to remain anonymous, which will also help to replace some of our aging tools.

John Huggins
Membership Secretary

SUFFOLK OPEN STUDIOS ART EXHIBITION



Holton Lodge Barn Gallery, Holton
Halesworth
14th - 25th May 10am - 4pm
www.suffolkopenstudios.org

THE ART STATION

Healing Generational Trauma Through Interactive Straw Art



Did you get in trouble at home for drawing on the walls? If so, you must visit The Art Station, where you will not only be encouraged to draw or write on walls, but you will also be rewarded with a corn dolly created by Kristina Tonev, a Suffolk-based artist who is currently inviting audiences to 'The Mother Lode' exhibition part two, where they can immerse themselves in the straw installation.

"It was very powerful, had an ancient folk vibe, some kind of ceremonial but also intimate, domestic process ritual activity was taking place, artist hands created a fascinating focal point, it was absorbing, immersive, mysterious, and also had a grand scale. The material was evocative and the smell pricked something in the deep psyche, the oddness of straw in winter lent a surreal quality and the universal activity that people across the globe would know" - Laurence Edwards, British Sculptor.

This exhibition encourages children and young people to stay playful, while also allowing older generations to reconnect with their inner child and have fun in a safe, caring setting. The Mother Lode is a series of solo exhibitions by artists who are also mothers, exploring motherhood as a profound creative force rather than a detour from artistic practice.



The Art Station PRESENTS

SAX ARTS FEST

FREE arts festival in Saxmundham

Saturday 13th June
12pm – 9pm

www.theartstation.uk

Supported with funding from SZC Tourism Event Grant, East Suffolk Council and Saxmundham Town Council.

JOIN US - SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY! WE ARE RECRUITING...



GENERAL MANAGER – FLEXIBLE WORKING (28 HOURS PW) – £ COMPETITIVE

IP17GNS is keen to hire a manager who will be pivotal to our next phase of development. Our trustees, team of 35+ volunteer superstars and service delivery co-ordinator are now ready to meet the emerging needs of our community through an exciting range of targeted services. There's so much more we can and want to do and this is where you come in...

As well as helping deliver our day-to-day services, you will be responsible for a number of strategic goals:

- evolving new community support initiatives
- developing our volunteer base
- improving stakeholder engagement
- researching and leading on fundraising, and
- ensuring all our governance remains on track.

It's a challenging role which would benefit from knowledge and/or experience of the charity sector; good links to the area and an understanding of the challenges faced by our community. You should be a self-starter, a brilliant networker with proven ability to lead, manage and motivate. You will need excellent IT skills as well as being a natural communicator. It's a big job, but for the right person, the rewards will be immense!

For further details or to apply, please contact Jacqui Newvell, Managing Trustee, IP17GNS – email: jacqui@ip17gns.com or call in when we are open. We are located at The Gannon Rooms, Station Approach, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1BW. **The closing date to apply is Monday, 18 May 2026.**

HALESWORTH TO SOUTHWOLD NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY CHARITY

Over Easter the charity ran its first Open Day of 2026 at Blythburgh Station. The event was a major success for the volunteer organisation, with a substantial income from donations, memberships, sales and – for the first time - tickets. Nearly 100 passengers were carried (not all at once!) in our one small coach, on what was a very short trip, but was nevertheless the first time a passenger train has run on the original railway track since 1929. The locomotive is a heritage battery-electric, which is solar-charged – and it was showing some signs of flagging under the strain at the end of the day!

We supplied tea, coffee and home-made snacks free of charge in the village hall (but many kind donations were received). Films, displays, and model railways also entertained our visitors, with guided tours and our extensive live-steam large-scale model railway forming a background to the trains themselves at the station. Two replica wagons – including a unique Victorian design with a flexible wheelbase, originally owned by coal merchants MOY - could also be seen here – as could our collection of unearthed railway artefacts from the site.

The winter spruce-up of Walberswick station is complete. Three volunteers have managed a large amount of work here – and part of the important historic site has emerged from the damaging undergrowth. (Natural England specify that bracken, particularly, be removed from archaeological sites, as it is so harmful). The Edwardian station base has re-emerged, and the stone bases which supported the building are still there. Gorse bushes are long-lived, and we believe that we have identified two which were photographed 100 years ago beside the station – these have been carefully conserved. The station bench which commemorates the railway's centenary of opening has also been re-furbished.

The HSNGR have offered to re-erect the station platform sign (smaller than the original) and a small information board about the station, the railway - and the Walberswick Common Lands Trust - for the interest of the passing walkers and cyclists – so we hope that these can be put up before summer.

Until the signage can be agreed, the team's interest now moves to similar work at The Folly in Halesworth: there will be several guided walks this year, at Halesworth events, so the track we have re-laid at the junction and at the 1914 locomotive shed should be as well presented as we can manage.

On **Sunday May 17th**, there will be a second Open Day at Blythburgh Station. Entry is free. We'll be open between 10.30 and 15.45, and there will again be light refreshments, films, displays, guided tours, the restored original railway Goods Shed, and replica wagons - and passenger train rides (very short ones) in the station, at a small charge – celebrating the first year of our passenger service. Our loco is three-quarters of a century old, so don't expect speed...

Southwold Organ readers may be wondering why a Halesworth-based organization now features in this publication. It's thanks to the generosity of the Editor Louise Gissing. Our charitable remit covers the entire line to Southwold, where we co-operate with our colleagues, the Southwold Railway Trust, based at Steamworks in Blyth Road. Both railway charities are fully dedicated to making the long-anticipated dream of restoring this iconic branch line into a reality, and we work together to that end.

James Hewett, Trustee

SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY UPDATE

We have now had our first Open Day of 2026 and a great success it was too. We had 124 visitors all looking for something fun to do on a grey day in Southwold. We made a start on our new museum with a new bespoke display cabinet in the station building.

More time is needed to get the museum to where we see it benefitting our visitors. Sadly, we have not managed to raise the £100,000 needed to have a replica passenger carriage made (still time to donate) so we are now looking at replacing our very tired volunteer welfare facility and buying a second engine shed. This new shed will be to house our diesel locomotives, thus giving us more space in the existing shed, and extending our workshop.

This will cost around £50,000 so we are still looking for donations for this project.



If you wish to donate you can do so through our website or send an email to: treasurer@southwoldrailway.co.uk

Open afternoons: 3rd & 24th May, 1 – 6pm at Steamworks, Blyth Road, Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6AZ

Free Entry.

The miniature railway will be running, cafe, shop and model railway display will be open for the day. There's plenty for the family to do and see. Ride on our miniature steam railway, sample refreshments in our cafe. View our model railway display and browse in our shop. For more information email: mail@southwoldrailway.co.uk, phone: 01502 725422 or visit: www.southwoldrailway.co.uk



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VOXCETERA CHAMBER CHOIR

WVOXCETERA CHAMBER CHOIR returns to Blythburgh with **I AM A CLOUD**: An evening of sacred sounds, folk songs and beautiful new choral music. With Ian Burdge, cellist, and Martyn Noble, pianist & organist on **Saturday 23 May 2026, 7.30pm** at Holy Trinity Church, Blythburgh, Suffolk.

Following their popular concerts in 2024 and 2025, London-based chamber choir Voxcetera will return to the 'Cathedral of the Marshes' in Blythburgh, to share a programme of sacred and secular choral music.

Concert-goers will enjoy highlights from Dvořák's Stabat Mater, his moving setting of a medieval prayer to the grieving mother of Christ, which made the Czech composer's name internationally; and the dazzling, inventive and beautiful Vigil Mass for choir, cello and organ by William Petter, who died 10 years ago aged just 34.

Other treats include haunting arrangements of British and French folk songs; short works by Britten and Fauré; the ecstatic 'I Am A Cloud' from Majel Connerly's song cycle The Rivers Are Our Brothers; and the glorious, shimmering 'Sunday' from Sondheim's musical Sunday in the Park with George.

Jane Hopkins, Voxcetera's founding conductor, says: "We've been blessed with such attentive and enthusiastic audiences at Blythburgh, and the acoustics and simple beauty of Holy Trinity Church make it a joy to sing in.

So, we couldn't resist sharing a new programme of moving and uplifting choral music, from well-known composers including Britten, Fauré, Poulenc and Dvořák to some newer treats.

"I'm particularly excited to present William Petter's Vigil Mass with our guest cellist Ian Burdge. It's a new discovery for us, 20 minutes of sublime and ethereal writing for choir, organ and cello, and it proved a resounding hit at a recent concert on home turf in London. It will sound magical in this special space."

Tickets are available now from www.voxcetera.co.uk.



Voxcetera Chamber Choir **I Am A Cloud**

returns to Blythburgh with cellist **Ian Burdge** and pianist & organist **Martyn Noble**
 Conductor: **Jane Hopkins**

Sacred sounds, folk songs and other sublime choral music including pieces by Dvořák, Fauré, Poulenc, Britten and Chilcott, and the ecstatic "I Am A Cloud" by Majel Connerly.

Sat. 23 May, 7.30pm Holy Trinity Church, Blythburgh
 Book tickets (£15) from voxcetera.co.uk | Under 18s half price



Southwold Museum & Historical Society

BATTLE OF SOLE BAY DINNER
 to commemorate the anniversary of the battle which took place off the coast of Southwold on 7 June 1672

FRIDAY, 12 JUNE 2026
 at Southwold Golf Club
 6.30 for 7.00

After Dinner Speaker: Dr George Southcombe,
 Wadham College, Oxford.
 Specialist in late 17th century history.

Ticket Price : £45 per person



SOUTHWOLD MUSEUM

Come and see what others have enjoyed :

Brilliant, we have learnt so much and it was a lot of fun — L&D age 9

Fascinating! Our favourite museum, so happy to be here again.

Hard to imagine a better collection of Southwold's history.

Free entry. Donations welcome.



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MIDDLETON OPEN GARDENS

6th & 7th June 2026

Our ever-popular Open Gardens event offers an eclectic and exciting mix of gardens, some conventional and formal, others more informal or relaxed, including some new to our event. Approximately 18 gardens will be open (the total may vary from day to day).

In the pretty village of Middleton, there are gardens stretching down to the Minsmere River and others overlooking Middleton Moor. Some with views of the marshes and others across the fields; some with the Spire of Holy Trinity church seen piercing the sky in the distance. Many of the gardens have a story to tell, of both their creation and their development over the years.

Several of the gardeners cleverly borrow the beautiful surrounding Suffolk landscape to attract animals, insects, plants and birds. You will also find a herd of alpacas grazing quietly in fields within the village.

Displays by children of Middleton primary school will be exhibited in the church. The pub barn will also host an exhibition of Art, crafts and vintage clothes, and there will be a plant/flower stall. Refreshments will be available all day.

Middleton Open Gardens

6th & 7th June

18 Gardens

11am
to 5pm

Refreshments
at the pavilion

available all day



(last entry 4.15pm)

Adults £5.00 - children free

Arts, Crafts,
Vintage &
Plants event
at the Pub barn

Family Bug
Hunting
Sessions

Have fun, catching and learning
about the many different
wildlife species that inhabit our
gardens



Guides available from:
Recreation Ground, Fletchers Lane (IP17 3NZ)
& at Middleton Moor (IP17 3LW)

Major fundraiser for Holy Trinity Church, Middleton
Also supporting East Anglian Air Ambulance & Project40seven
Contact Christine Burgess: 07826 840478 or christineburgess29@gmail.com



Tuesday May 12th 2pm at the Arts Centre, Southwold

**ON ILLUSION AND DELUSION - PERFORMATIVE
SCIENCE AND QUACKERY**

Tony Lidington



This talk explores the ways in which popular culture and science have been fused and confused over the years and how the definitions of what is real, unreal, imaginary, fake or hallucinatory, are all woven together. Learn how pseudo-science and empirical knowledge blur and merge over time, to create a blended muddle of perception that we sometimes call truth.

Tony Lidington is a leading authority on British popular entertainment forms. He has run theatre venues, companies, festivals and events, specialising in historical popular entertainment and their application to contemporary contexts. He regularly broadcasts for both radio and television and is a part-time lecturer at Exeter University.

Guests are welcome at all our events. £10 entrance charge.



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BLYTH VALLEY ROTARY

Blyth Valley Rotary, formerly known as Southwold and District Rotary, was established in April 1960 and is part of Rotary International, a global charitable organisation with over 1.6 million members and over 35,000 clubs in 200 countries. We are a non-profit organisation, which means every penny we raise goes to a worthwhile cause. All members of Rotary are volunteers. We are a non-religious, non-political, and inclusive group.

Despite having only 32 members, Blyth Valley Rotary and its friends do an incredible job serving our community by raising funds for good causes, both locally and sometimes internationally. We cover towns and villages in the Blyth Valley region, including Halesworth, Wrentham, Wangford, Reydon, Walberswick, Blythburgh, and Southwold.

We organise many events, including our annual Southwold Christmas Day Swim, which, in 2025, despite having to cancel the event due to treacherous weather, raised over £3,000 through the valued supporters and donations, to be shared between Southwold RNLI, the Peartree Fund, and the Parkinson's Charity. Additionally, we apply our organisational skills to help manage successful events such as the Women Who Inspire Evening, Starlight Walk, Brass on the Grass, Southwold Street Festival, Henham Steam Country Fair, Covehithe Plough Day, Bikes to Africa and we support Light Up Southwold and the Reydon Christmas Lights, the Reydon Community Pantry, Southwold Food Bank, local school projects, and we started a RotaKids group at St. Felix School this year.

We typically meet on Thursdays at 6:30pm at the Sole Bay Bowls Club in Reydon.

Our meetings include a drink and a meal, followed by a short discussion about our future plans or a guest speaker.

Our club strapline is *'Doing good is not only fulfilling but also creates a positive ripple in the world around us. Together, we can transform lives, uplift our community, and find fun in helping others. Let's unite to inspire and protect one another! We are Blyth Valley Rotary.'*

We have social evenings, theatre trips, boules evenings, putting-green-friendly games, and more.

At Blyth Valley Rotary's 66th Charter Night, in April our Speaker was Grp Capt Andrew Coe (OBE), a retired RAF officer who transitioned to the private sector in 2025 after 28 years in the military. He is a Mentor for NATO DIANA and the Founder.

In 2025, after a 28-year military career - including service as a Tornado G4 pilot in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Romania, and various senior leadership roles in high-profile international operations. If you would like to get involved in our community and learn more about Blyth Valley Rotary, please visit our website: www.blythvalleyrotary.co.uk or contact our Secretary, Steven Seagar, email: info@blythvalleyrotary.

We welcome friends of Rotary to join us for any of our events or functions.

Claire Guppy

on behalf of Blyth Valley Rotary



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EXHIBITION AT THE CANTEEN

Rebecca Bergese paintings - 28 April - 28 June



Rebecca grew up in London and after leaving school first studied psychology, later working in the NHS as a Child Psychotherapist. She also worked for a short, exciting, time in the theatre as a costume designer, but always wanted to use a paintbrush rather than the sewing machine. So, she studied Fine Art between 2005 and

2009 at Chelsea College of Art, part of UAL, graduating with a BA in 2009.

In 2017, after living most of her life in a city, she moved to Suffolk, to be nearer the sky and trees. Since childhood gardens and green spaces have been a haven for her, food for dreams and memories that find their way into the imagined landscapes and gardens of her paintings. Using colour to evoke atmosphere, the paintings represent the space that could exist between reality and thought, a transitional space that invites us to find something of our own amongst the undergrowth.

Her paintings have been shown in exhibitions across the United Kingdom and in Europe, including the Royal Watercolour Society, the ING Discerning Eye, and Wells Open Contemporary. She is a member of Colchester Art Society and Easterly Artists and shows regularly with both groups. She was awarded a prize by The Sentinel Gallery, Wivenhoe in 2018.

SOUTHWOLD LIBRARY

Wednesday 6th May Drop in 3.30 - 4.30pm: Come and Read to Amber Canine Concern Therapy Dog. Amber loves being read to by young readers. First Wednesday of the month. All children welcome!

Saturday 9th May, 2pm: Introduction to Homeopathy: A Talk with Rebecca from Hepburn Holistics. The talk will cover the history of homeopathy, how it's currently used around the world and some first-aid remedies people can use at home. Free talk, no need to book.

Saturday 23rd May, 10am – 4pm @ St Edmunds Green, Southwold: Friends of Southwold Library Fete & Plant Sale Fete including plants, books, crafts, cakes, tombola & games. Would you be able to give us any plants? If you think you can please contact the library.

Tuesday 26th May, 11am & 2pm: Bee Crafts! Make bee themed decorations, flying bees and much more. Free crafts - no need to book.

Wednesday 27th May, 11am & 2pm: Mr Bean Magic Workshops: For Children Aged 7+. Learn some magic tricks from the magical Mr Bean. £2 per child. Limited spaces. Book at the library or www.ticketsource.co.uk/southwoldlibrary

COFFEE & CAKE MORNING

Supporting The Leprosy Mission
Come for coffee, cake & community

Saturday 18th May
10am – 1pm
St Edmund's Church Southwold
£5 coffee and cake
(any additional donations welcome)

Did you know?
 • Leprosy is curable
 (DD4 covers admin treatment and support to once-off diagnosed individuals)
 • It still exists in 120+ countries
 • Upto 250,000 people diagnosed each year
 • Early treatment prevents disability

help bring healing, dignity & hope
The Leprosy Mission

Thursday 28th May, 11am & 2pm: Pirate Crafts Games & Fun for all the Family @ Southwold Boating Lakes & Tearoom. Make a pirate hat, treasure chest, parrot, sword and much more! Free stories, games & fun.

Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th June at Southwold Arts Centre, St Edmunds Hall: Friends of Southwold Library present Slaughter in Southwold: Southwold Library Crime Writers Festival. Authors Talks and lunches with authors. Tickets £7 per talk, £30 Saturday, £25 Sunday or £55 for the weekend

Whodunnit Puzzle Sheet available - £1. Solve the crime and you could win a £10 Book Token. Raffle for a Luxury crime related hamper. Book at the library or via the website: www.ticketsource.co.uk/slaughterinsouthwold

Southwold Community Cinema: One Battle After Another (2025) 15 Wednesday 27th May, 3pm. Bob is a washed-up revolutionary who lives in a state of stoned paranoia, surviving off-grid with his spirited and self-reliant daughter, Willa.

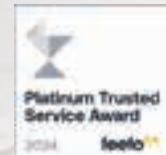
Please contact the library for details of the many regular activities held at the library. Tel: 01502 442817; Email: southwold.library@suffolklibraries.co.uk



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VIEW TO THE NORTH

Amazingly we have had a few days with pure blue sky. The usual raptors that I see on my morning walks are marsh harriers and kestrels. Recently there have been some red kites, the presence of which have disturbed the crows, and I watched one being mobbed.



The gulls have been becoming much noisier now that the nesting season is approaching. Their raucous cries contrast with the warblers that are beginning to return. I heard my first chiffchaff along North Road on April 1st. Soon after the sedge warblers appeared in the reed beds. Colleagues have seen blackcaps, whitethroat and a willow warbler. The sand martins have arrived, it will soon be time for swallows and swifts. I saw on social media that wheatears have been seen in Southwold area. I have yet to see one, it is one of my favourite migrants; maybe I will have photographed one by the next time I write. I was pleased to see a pair of robins nesting in the ivy on the garden fence.

The beach huts have been put back on the promenade, always a good sign that summer is approaching. There have been some mornings that the waves have made it difficult to walk in front of them. That was particularly true when there was a very high tide with an additional one metre surge.



When it has not been too blustery, I have been able to fly the drone. It is always interesting to see Reydon and Southwold from a different perspective. I started one flight close to St. James' Green which gave good views of the lighthouse, Adnams' brewery, and the church. Buss creek and Reydon are in the distance. The clarity of the image always surprises me as the onboard camera is only the size of a match box.



The nights when it has been clear I have been able to capture some deep sky objects (DSOs). The Pinwheel Galaxy (Messier 101) is a spiral galaxy 22 million light years away. It was discovered by Pierre Méchain in 1781 and can be seen in constellation Ursa Major. It is a large galaxy with a diameter of 252,000 light years, the Milky Way, in contrast is only 87,400 light years.



As the days get longer the opportunities for capturing DSOs diminishes. However, nights will become warmer and I will be putting my moth trap out to see what nocturnal fliers there are.

Halcyon

BAWDSEY RADAR MUSEUM

May is quite a busy month at the block. The Museum is open every Thursday, Sunday and both Bank Holidays during May.

On **Sunday 3rd May** we will be running our award winning virtual reality 'climb the 360 feet transmitter tower'.

This is an opportunity to experience what everyone stationed at RAF Bawdsey had to go through.

Sunday 24th May sees a veteran car run stop at the Museum, while on **24th and 25th May**, the popular 1940s' Café will be in operation too.

The Museum will also be present at the Suffolk Show on **27th and 28th May** at the Trinity Park Show Ground.

Please visit: www.bawdseyradar.org.uk
Email: info@bawdseyradar.org.uk or
Phone 07821 162879.

WATERS COPSE AND A DAY TO REMEMBER

Waters Copse lies at the bottom of Skilmans Hill behind the free car park on Gardner Road. Named after Ronnie Waters, a former Mayor, Town Councillor and butcher. The copse, as of 2020 was in dire straits. Overrun by brambles, nettles and Alexander there was only one pathway through from the Common to the road. Then Covid struck!

Ben Marriner rang up a few of his friends and the group got together to tackle the problem of Waters Copse. The volunteers set to with a zeal unmatched. The two principal movers were Ben and Bill Hancock and it was Bill who tempered our enthusiastic efforts at immaculate husbandry, steering us to tending nature in a more considerate way. Instead of clearing the site and removing everything Bill showed us how to build bug hotels and even created a beaver dam. He approved our digging out of the Alexander but insisted we pile it in heaps to rot slowly down. We have not seen a beaver yet however!

Paths have been driven north and south and east and west to create a delightful passageway from the car park on Godyll Road right down and across the bridge, kindly put in by Southwold Town Council, to the Ferry Road footpath. These paths have been laid with wood chippings, some of which were from the offcuts from the Long Ship at Woodbridge. It is now possible to walk from the harbour to the centre of the high street and only cross one road.

Areas have been scoured to reveal snowdrops, daffodils, flowering blackcurrant, honeysuckle, wild garlic and a few bluebells. A space has been made for the talking bench. The increased bird song been remarked on, our resident mole has built his piles in the pathways and the rabbits play at dawn and dusk. The copse is there for everyone and if you have not seen it please do come and visit. The volunteers who have carried out all this work will make you most welcome - you might even like to join them one Thursday morning. Meet at the bottom of Skilmans Hill at 9am.

On one final note, as a result of Ben's initiative he and Anthea were invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.....and you can't beat that.

Clive Debenham



A royal send off from the volunteers



L to R: Bill Hancock & Ben Marriner

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

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

The next issue will be published on Monday 1st June, deadline 14th May -
but the earlier the better to ensure inclusion

Contacts/Advertisers/Editorial : Louise Gissing at Leiston Press, Unit 1b Masterlord Industrial Estate,
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Opening hours

Monday	8.30am - *7pm
Tuesday	8.30am - 5pm
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Thursday	8.30am - *7pm
Friday	8.30am - 2pm
Saturday	Closed

**Hygienist appointments available after 5pm with Rita Hendley*



