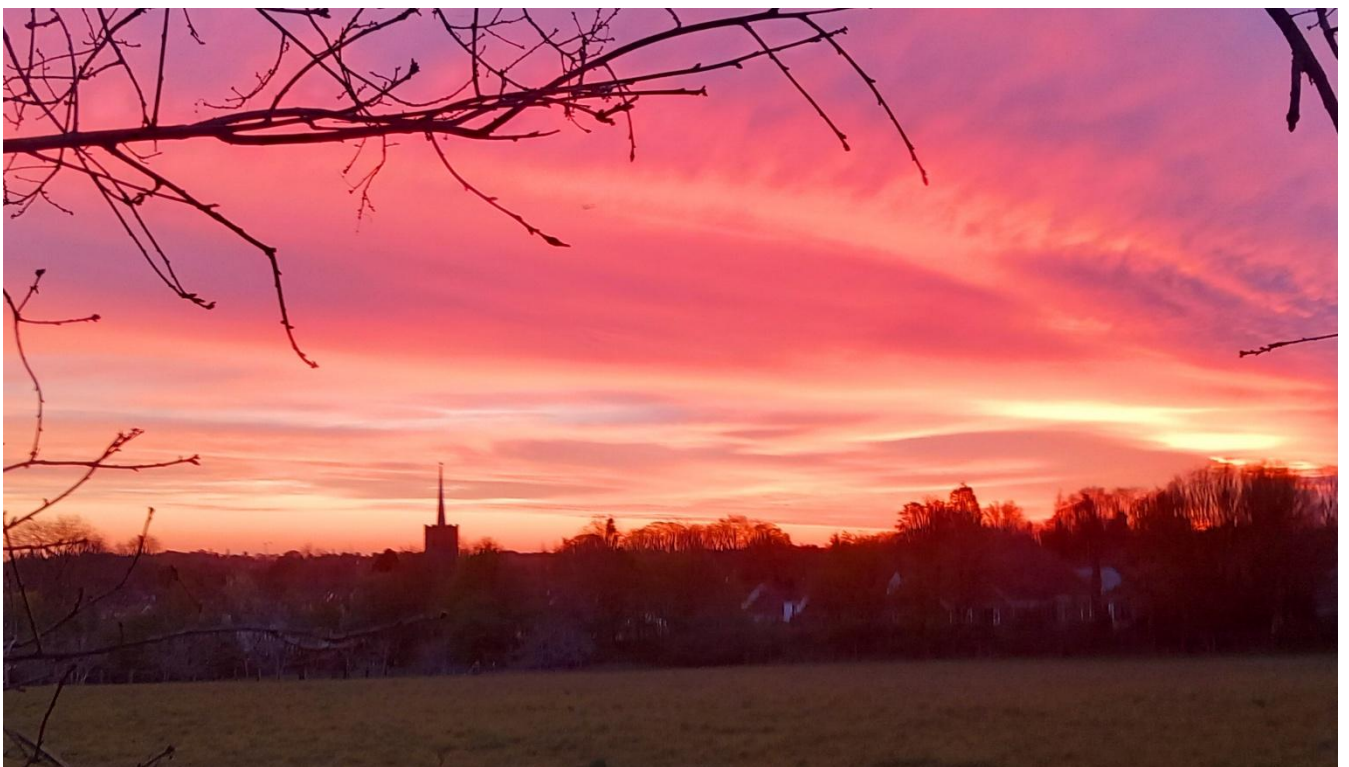


MIDDLETON - CUM - FORDLEY



NEWSLETTER

May 2026

Editorial

Two lovely photos of village scenes for this month's front cover – thank you Mark and Brian N. Thanks also to Ashley for the unusual “snow” picture below.

Lots of things happening in the coming months – starting with live music at The Bell on Sunday 3rd May (see below). May is AGM month for several groups, not usually the most exciting of events but very necessary. New members will be **very** welcome at any of them.

Contributions for the next issue can be emailed to barbara.barker.t21@btinternet.com or dropped in to 6 Meadowview, Rectory Road by **Tuesday 26th May** please. This (and past issues) can be found on the Parish website :

www.middletoncumfordley.org.uk



Donations may be made to:
HSBC Middleton Newsletter
sort code 40-28-33
account number 61054236

SNOW IN MIDDLETON IN APRIL? NO - THE SEED OF THE ASPEN POPLAR



**'SUFFOLK SKIES'
PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION**



An exhibition of landscape photographs featuring local Suffolk scenes captured by Middleton photographer:
DAVID CALVERT FRPS FBIPP

8th - 14th May 2026
The Fisherman's Hut Gallery, Beach Road, Dunwich. IP17 3EN
(Next door to the Flora Tea Rooms)

www.calvertfineart.co.uk
 calvertfineart

ZIGZAG BOXCAR



MIDDLETON BELL

LIVE

SUNDAY 3rd MAY
JOIN US! 3-6PM

Potential for a Care Farm as Part of the breakup of Causeway Farm



Many of you will be aware that, as part of Suffolk County Council's plans for the breakup of Causeway Farm, they are exploring the possibility of establishing a Care Farm on the field next to the Village Hall. The provider they are in discussion with is The Nest Farms, who currently run a highly successful care farm just outside Framlingham.

Hannah Tuckwell, who leads The Nest, has been clear that she would only consider opening a Care Farm in Middleton if there is strong support from the village. To help everyone understand what is being proposed, Hannah will join the first part of the Annual Parish Meeting on 13th May (6pm at the Village Hall) to outline her ideas and answer any questions people may have.

It is apparently common for communities to have understandable concerns when a care farm is first proposed. However, experience elsewhere shows that once established, care farms typically become genuine assets, contributing to local wellbeing, connection, and community life. Hopefully, Hannah will be able to describe that potential for Middleton.

So please do come to the Annual Parish Meeting to hear about The Nest's plans and have any questions you may have answered.

Giles Piercy 07710 381 436

Have a go at tennis!

FAMILY TENNIS DAY

Saturday 9th May 26 | 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Saxmundham Sports Tennis Club
Carlton Park, North Entrance,
Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1AT

What's happening:

- Free family coaching with Matt 10am-11am
- Free play on courts 11am to 1.30am
- Free beginners coaching 11.30am-12.30pm
- Refreshments provided
- Borrow raquets and balls

Everyone welcome - just turn up!

Visit www.saxtennis.co.uk/events for more

Cratfield Young Artists At Middleton

Showcasing the next generation of top rank professional musicians

Middleton, ... 23.

Sunday May 10 at 3pm

Lumas Winds
Beth Stone *flute*
Ewan Millar *oboe*
Rennie Sutherland *clarinet*
Florence Plane *bassoon*
Benjamin Hartnell-Booth *horn*
Programme: Mozart, JS Bach, Bernstein, Bozza, Coleman, Beamish

Tickets £17.00 from
www.concertsatcratfield.org
Holy Trinity Church, Middleton, East Suffolk, IP17 3NW

Middleton Resident, retired gent, requires lady driver able to drive medium size manual car for daytime trips out to Aldeburgh, Woodbridge, Halesworth, Southwold areas. Must have up to date clean licence and live in Middleton or Westleton with home and mobile phones. Please contact David 07706859260 daytime.



Middleton Recreation Ground Trust

Sports and Social Day

Official opening of the new Sports and Play Equipment



Saturday 30th May



1pm



Recreation Ground



Residents Rounders Match

Fitness Equipment Coaching

Children's Play Equipment

Boules taster and targets

Croquet and more...

BBQ and BAR



Search and Rescue at Middleton Pavilion

In recent months drone pilots from Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue (SULSAR) have been given permission to use the recreation ground at Middleton Pavilion as a take-off & landing area for drone team training sessions.

SULSAR is a registered charity whose members assist the emergency services in the search for vulnerable high-risk missing children & adults throughout the whole of Suffolk. All SULSAR members are unpaid volunteers. SULSAR drone pilots all hold advanced CAA qualifications

The Pavilion area is an ideal training site for those SULSAR pilots based in the east of the county thanks to its slightly elevated position, parking availability, & it being located far enough away from surrounding houses for the drones to (hopefully) not cause a nuisance to local residents

The drone team are very grateful to have been allowed to fly from the Pavilion, if you see us there do come & say hello, we're happy to answer questions about the work of the drone team & SULSAR as a whole.



Clothes Collection – 15th May

Have a clear-out and make a difference! ♻️

We're collecting unwanted clothes to raise funds for our school.

👉 How to donate:

- Drop off items at the school before 15th May
- OR we can arrange a collection from you — just get in touch!

📦 Want to help even more?

We've created an Amazon Wishlist to support the school with much-needed items. As we don't run many fundraising events, every contribution really counts ❤️



www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1UJP2UFZ1JNJZ?ref=cm_sw_em_r_un_un_Vb7huTROZ2wS4

☎ 07973 963 559

✉ middletonpta@gmail.com

🙏 Thank you for helping us support our children and school community

Bloomin' Marvellous – Help Our School Shine!

Dear Residents,

We're excited to share that Middleton Primary School will be entering the *Bloomin' Marvellous* competition this year. The project is being organised by our School Trust on behalf of the schools within the Trust.

This year, our garden will be specially themed around the beloved children's book *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*, and we're hoping to bring this seaside story to life with a colourful, creative display inspired by the coast.

To help us create our beach-themed garden, we are kindly asking for donations of materials and plants.

We are looking for:

- **Oil-based red paint (weather-resistant for outdoor use)**
- **Blue and yellow flowers or plants**
- **Beach-themed garden decorations**
- **Blue glass stones (to create a "sea" effect)**
- **Shells**
- **Driftwood**
- **Small boats or nautical ornaments**

Any contribution, big or small, would be greatly appreciated and will help bring this project to life for our pupils and the wider community to enjoy.

If you are able to donate or would like to get involved, please contact the school office or drop items off during school hours. Please could all donations be supplied by **8th May**.

Thank you for helping us make something truly *bloomin' marvellous*!

Middleton Primary School
Rectory Road, Middleton, Saxmundham, IP17 3NW
Tel: 01728 648251

Office open hours: Term time - 8.30am-3.15pm - Monday to Friday





**A Call out for : Cakes, Chutneys, Jams
and help on the day
6th & 7th June 2026**

We are looking forward to another open gardens event.
Last year we received some delicious contributions from people of the village and we would welcome these again this year.
We would also welcome people to help us with setting up and working in the refreshments team, so if you feel you could join us for a shift, we would be very grateful.
Please contact : Christine Burgess Tel: 07826840478 or email: christineburgess29@gmail.com

Major fundraiser for Holy Trinity church & donations this year to East Anglian Air Ambulance

MIDDLETON OPEN GARDENS



**Date for your diary
MIDDLETON OPEN GARDENS**


**6th/7th June 2026
(11 am - 5pm)**

The preparation for this popular event has now started -
Showcasing both formal and informal gardens, within
Middleton village, we aim to offer something for all who
appreciate the beauty and joy of the country garden

There will be an arts/craft/vintage and plants/flower stalls
at the pub barn and wildlife
activities in one of the gardens.

Serving refreshments at the pavilion all day

Fund raising for Holy Trinity Church, Middleton, also this year
supporting the East Anglian Ambulance and Project40seven

The Lettering Arts Trust is popping up in Aldeburgh

Pop up Shop and Letter carving talk

Date: 13th June from 10am - 5pm

Where: Aldeburgh Church Hall, Victoria Rd, Aldeburgh IP15 5DY

Time: Open all day 10:00 – 17:00

11:30 Tour of letter carving in the church yard and talk

12:00 – 13:00 Drinks

Cost: Free event



The Lettering Arts Trust is a charity supporting the heritage craft of letter carving in stone. There are practitioners of this craft with businesses around Suffolk and the UK. All profits from our commissions service go to our apprenticeships and training programmes.

We would really appreciate any publicity you can give us for our event in Aldeburgh on Saturday 13th June,

There are several letter carvers in Suffolk and Norfolk with thriving businesses, creating memorials, public art and other lettering in stone, who would be happy to let you know more about their highly skilled craft and invite you into their workshops, if you were interested in doing a general interview or feature.

Kind regards,

Lucy McDowell

HOLY TRINITY – MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY

A Church Service and a Concert during May

Sunday 10 May

3pm Cratfield Young Musicians
(see notice below)

Sunday 24 May

11am Holy Communion

The Benefice Service this month will take place at 10am on Sunday 3rd May at St Peter's, Sibton

EASTER

On a sunny Easter Sunday our church looked very colourful with the many spring flower arrangements, and the Easter Garden on the chancel steps was beautiful. Warm thanks to all who contributed to this celebration.

It was a delight to have so many join us, including a very young baby and a sweet toddler for the lovely service taken by Rev. Ruth.

Rita

POP UP BRUNCH

This is such a joyful way to enjoy a Sunday morning. The smell of bacon cooking and the pleasure of seeing so many other delicious things to choose from, plus freshly brewed coffee, or tea.

Numbers increase each time giving our friends and neighbours a chance to catch up with each other, and the feeling of welcome is a pleasure to be part of with lots of chatter and laughter. It is so lovely to open up our church in this way.

A big thank you to the Pop-Up team...


Rita

Upcoming Events at Holy Trinity Church Save the date!

- **Sunday 10 May, 3pm, Cratfield Young Musicians at Middleton (tickets £17 from www.concertsatcratfield.org)**
- **Friday 19th June, 7pm, Jorge Jimenez violinist with harp accompaniment (further details to follow)**
- **Sunday 5 July, 2pm, Peter Berry talks on Living with Alzheimer's**




COME AND JOIN US FOR A TALK
Living well with Alzheimer's
With Peter Berry



Time: 2.30pm
Date: 5th July 2026
Location: Holy Trinity Church, Middleton

Refreshments will be available



There will be an opportunity to buy our books
All donations to Alzheimer's Research UK

Cratfield Young Artists at Middleton Sunday 19th April saw the first of the above concerts in Holy Trinity given by 2 very talented young musicians on piano and viola. They commented on the excellent acoustics of our church and we were treated to an afternoon of amazing music thoroughly enjoyed by the large audience. We are very grateful that Holy Trinity has been chosen to host these concerts and look forward to the next one on May 10th.

Rita

Obituaries



Holy Trinity PCC wish to extend sincere condolences to the families of Nick Sheppard of Mill Street and Joe Shakles of Rectory Road at this sad time.

Our thoughts are with you.

Rita

Holy Trinity Church

We're excited to be hosting the launch of the new album *Curiosa: Lost & Found Tunes* by Jorge Jiménez. This May and June he will be touring it around the UK, and we have the pleasure of seeing him perform at **Holy Trinity Church on the 20th June at 7pm.**

Jorge says of the album "In CURIOSA, we take you on a journey across five centuries — from medieval laments and Renaissance dances to the brilliance of Bach and the fire of the Spanish Baroque. Performed on period instruments, a blend of iconic composers with forgotten and traditional melodies, brought to life through improvisation and our original arrangements."

Tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.com/whats-on/suffolk/holy-trinity-church-middleton/curiosa-lost-found-tunes/2026-06-20/19:00/t-dkkpedk>

or on the door from 6pm

Jorge is one of the most sought after violinists of our day. He is known for his painstaking and exciting approach, performing music in the style and on instruments for which it was composed, from the Middle Ages to the 21st century. With his eclectic solo violin programs, Jorge has toured extensively through Europe, South America and Canada.

For more information on Jorge Jiménez, visit: <https://www.jorge-jimenez.es/>



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Holy Trinity Church, Middleton APCM
will be held on
Thursday 14 May at 2.30pm in the church
Everyone is welcome

Holy Dusters

6 May - Nicola & Margaret
3 June - Paul and Amanda
1 July - Camilla and Val
12 August – Christine & David

20 May – Liz and Mark
17 June - Rob
15 July - Trish and Graham

New dusters always welcome, of all faiths and none

Thought for the Month

"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough."
Meister Eckhart



Curiosa
Lost & Found Tunes
Jorge Jiménez baroque violin
Joy Smith, harps & percussion

Saturday 20 June
19:00
Holy Trinity Church
Middleton
Suffolk
IP17 3NJ

Scan to book 

Tickets: £15
Concessions: £12
(Under 16 Free)
Book online: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/jorge-jimenez/t-dkkpedk>
Or on the door from 1h before the concert
More info: 07580441394

★★★★★ "effortless technical finesse" The Strad Magazine
★★★★★ "Risky and Original" El Mundo
★★★★★ "Madness Crowned by success" Scherzo Magazine

Middleton-cum-Fordley
Annual Parish Meeting

Village Hall
Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 6pm

Discussions will include Causeway Farm /
Hastoe Field and The Bell Inn

We will also be offering a Q & A session with the Parish
Councillors, along with the usual updates from local
groups/committees.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to speak with
your Parish Council and find out what is happening in
your village.

MIDDLETON-cum- FORDLEY VILLAGE HALL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held on Monday 11th May 2026 at 7pm
in the Village Hall.

New faces will be exceedingly welcome.

MIDDLETON-cum- FORDLEY COMMUNITY
COUNCIL

Annual General Meeting

will be held on Monday 18th May 2026
in the Village Hall 7pm

Everyone is welcome – do you have ideas for new events you'd like
to see put on ? Can you offer help at events? Come and see us.

Litter problem

As some of you may know, I have been litter picking around the village for a number of years. Less than a fortnight ago I cleared the stretch between Nick's garage and Anneson's Corner on the B1125. Today I went out there again and collected 51 bottles and cans (including 2 vodka bottles), plus the usual crisp packets, chocolate bar wrappers, cigarette packets and other assorted detritus. Judging by the number of Costa cups and McDonald wrappers, the culprits are coming from some distance. Of particular note is the repeat offender who is evidently supplied with home-made meals, packed in takeaway plastic trays and carefully marked with the contents (lasagne, black bean, couscous etc, and the extra instruction to HEAT!), which he/she barely touches before discarding on to the verge, often in a supermarket plastic bag, as if that makes it more acceptable! I find it appalling that drivers are so inconsiderate of the environment. I'm not sure if anything can be done to resolve the problem, but let's all be vigilant and try to keep our village clean and tidy.

Thank you

Elizabeth Mitchels



Changes to your garden waste collection day from 1 June 2026

The new Better Recycling and waste collection service starts in East Suffolk on 1 June and as part of this new service, there will be changes to your collection day for garden waste.

As a subscriber to our garden waste service, this means that your regular fortnightly collection will remain in place, but your collection day will change.

From 1 June 2026, your collection day will be as follows:



Tuesday 2nd, 16th, 30th June
Tuesday 14th July

Garden waste collections will continue fortnightly thereafter throughout the year.

Unfortunately, in the transition to these new collection days, some households may not receive a garden waste collection within the normal fortnightly period.

We are therefore providing a two-week extension to your subscription to ensure that a full 26 collections are made throughout the year, as per the conditions of your agreement.

Recycling and general waste collections

In May, you will receive a printed calendar showing your collection days for general waste (black lid), paper and card recycling (green lid) and glass, cartons, cans and plastic containers (blue lid). You will also receive a detailed information pack explaining what items can go into each bin from 1 June.

[Check when your next collection is due.](#)

Thank you for your co-operation in supporting these changes for Better Recycling in East Suffolk.

[More information about Better Recycling in East Suffolk.](#)

Kind regards
Garden Waste Team.

WINNERS (AND SADLY SOME LOSERS!!)



Rita Higgs is the 2025/6 winner of Middleton Carpet Bowls Club in-house singles competition.



Trish Cooke and Peter Vincent retained the Vincent Cribbage League Pairs cup that they won last year.



Mark James won the inaugural Jim Adams Memorial Cribbage (in-house singles) trophy.



Beaux Belles finished top of the table in the Winter boules league. (Shame this is a summer photo !!!)



Archie Reynolds was the recipient of the previous MCC bursary.

“Thank you very much for my new football boots, they arrived a couple of weeks ago. I play for Leiston U16 and am the leading top goal scorer. These boots will help me perform even better during the season to come.”



DIVISION 1								
Pos	Team	Played	Games Won	Games Lost	For	Against	Shot Diff	Points Games Won
1	Beaux Belles Middleton	8	16	8	252	214	38	16
2	Eels Footboulers	8	14	10	252	230	22	14
3	Hacheston Hotshots	8	13	11	247	231	16	13
4	Leiston Hotshots	8	9	15	223	251	-28	9
5	Wheatsheaf Huskies	8	8	16	221	269	-48	8

	Pl	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Avg
1 Knodishall	12	9	1	2	504	337	85	7.08
2 Kelsale	12	10	0	2	492	344	82	6.83
3 Middleton	12	6	2	4	410	438	66	5.50
4 Wenhaston	12	5	1	6	440	433	52	4.33
5 Riverside	12	5	0	7	368	469	49	4.08
6 Darsham	12	2	1	9	394	453	45	3.75
7 Leiston St Marg FC	12	2	1	9	355	489	41	3.42

Middleton Carpet bowls had their best season for many years finishing 3rd and held top spot for quite a few weeks early on.



And then there's the crib

Last year league winners, this year bottom of the pile but now the proud owners of a magnificent wooden spoon!

Oh well – the only way is up!

Save The Bell Inn

Dear Friends and Neighbours

We are delighted to confirm that attendees at Wednesday evening's meeting voted unanimously to launch a campaign to buy The Bell Inn on behalf of the local community. Nearly 100 people joined us at the event, and in addition we received over 30 supportive emails. This is an exciting opportunity that we hope the whole village will get behind.



We will be setting up a Community Benefit Society (CBS), which will enable us to sell community shares to buy the pub, and we expect to launch the campaign in June (we have until 20th September to raise the money). In the meantime, we will be negotiating with Adnams, recruiting Directors to sit on the pub's management Board, setting up the CBS and a bank account, writing a business plan and the share prospectus as well as getting our marketing ready and organising the fundraising campaign.

If you'd like to help us make this a success, we'd love you to get involved. In particular:

1. **Join the steering group** (that will become Board of Directors for the new CBS). We are looking for people with the following skills and experience: *Legal, Finance/Accountancy, Pub management, Building Management/Development, Health and Safety/Risk management, Fundraising, Marketing/PR/Social Media, Community (someone with strong connections in Middleton), Catering/Chef with experience of running your own successful business or venture. If you have other professional skills* i.e. as a *website developer, photographer, valuer, architect* or anything else that may be useful that you'd be willing to share, we'd love to hear from you too.
2. **Start thinking about how you can help us to make this happen:**
 - a. **How many shares you can afford to buy?** Shares will probably start at £50 with a maximum purchase of £100,000. We need as many people to buy shares as possible, at whatever level they can afford. We will ask you to pledge an amount before we launch to gauge the level of support.

Also ask your friends, family or businesses you are connected with to support us – by buying shares themselves (or donating) and contacting their friends and customers.

Further details will be available in our share prospectus which will be available in June.
 - b. **What skills, hobbies or professional expertise can you offer?** Either helping to set up or run events or fundraise (we'll look to have a big raffle and other events to raise awareness and keep the momentum going).

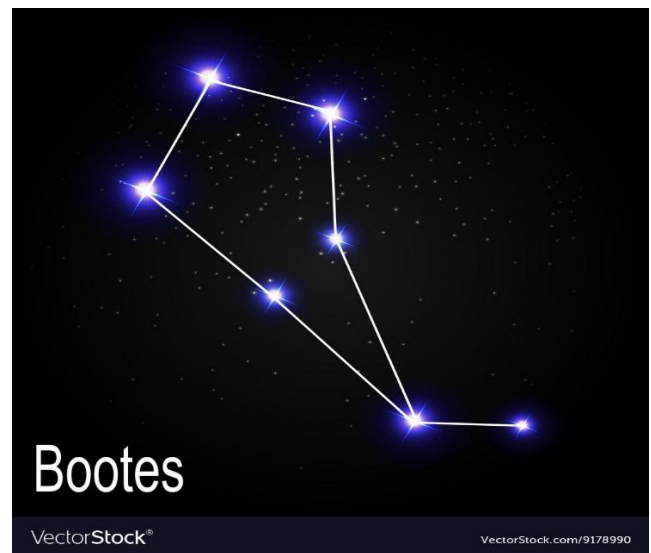
We'll keep in touch with you on our progress. Please contact Gillian at: middleton.community.council@gmail.com if you want to join the steering group, can help in other ways or would like to receive information by email (if you don't already receive this). If you'd like to chat in person, please contact either Barbara or Gillian direct.

Middleton Dark Skies

May Highlights

Planets on view **Venus** is shining at its brightest this month out towards the west, unusually sitting in a dark sky and setting towards midnight by the end of the month, when it also joins Jupiter in the constellation of Gemini. **Mars** is still lost in the glare of the Sun. **Jupiter** is sitting in the constellation of Gemini, below and slightly to the left of the constellation's main stars, Castor and Pollux, and setting at around 1.00 am. **Saturn** returns this month, rising in the east at 3.00 am by the end of the month.

Constellations The constellation of **Draco** (The Dragon) is not the easiest to find although it is one of the biggest in the northern sky. It is easily overlooked as it is outshone by its two neighbours, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, the Great and Little Bears. The constellation contains 17 main stars, one of which, Thuban, was in ancient Egyptian times considered the North Star around which all other stars in the Northern Hemisphere appeared to rotate. Due to the slight 'wobble' in the Earth's axis, the star Polaris has now taken over this role. The constellation contains many double, or binary stars, and several that are known to have planets orbiting them. In Greek myth, Draco was defeated several times, once by Hercules, so that he could possess the Golden Apples, once by Jason, so that he could possess the Golden Fleece, and also by the goddess Athena during the battle with the Titans. Looking south, **Boötes**, (The Herdsman or Ploughman) It is one of the largest constellations in the northern hemisphere, with its four brightest stars forming a distinctive 'kite' shape. It is sitting high in the sky and almost directly south at around 11.00 pm



Draco (The Dragon)

Boötes (The Herdsman)

The Moon. Going by the name of The Flower Moon this month, also Corn Planting Moon or Hare Moon, it will be full on the 1st of the month. There will also be a second full moon this month which occurs on the 31st and is known as a Blue Moon. Having two full moons in one month only occurs every 2-3 years, so is a relatively rare event, which is where the expression 'Once in a blue moon' originates. Watch out on the 19th in the western evening sky, for the crescent moon sitting in the constellation of Gemini between the bright planets Jupiter and Venus.

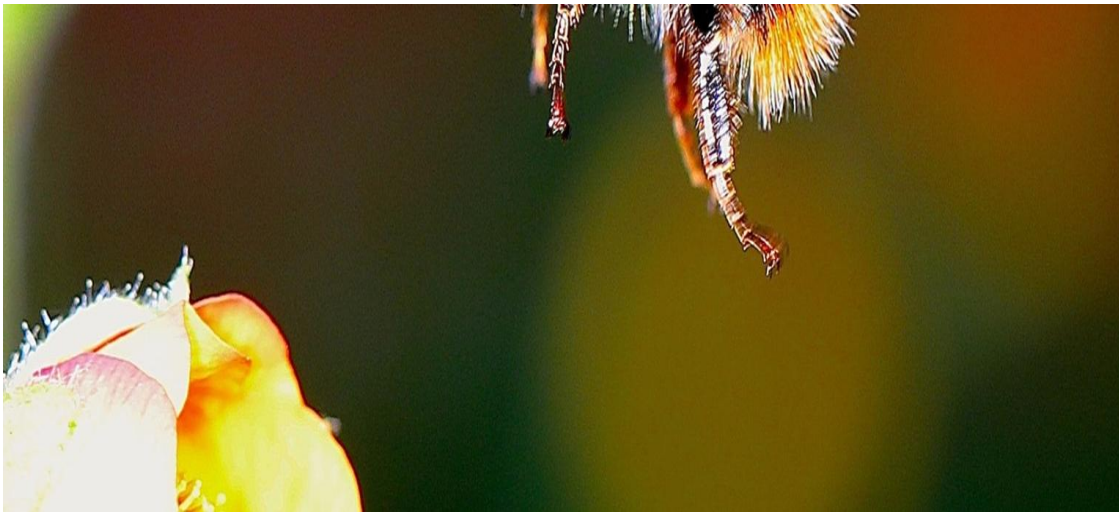
Meteors The Eta Aquarids shower reaches its peak in the early hours of the 6th, but unfortunately, as it was last year, it is all but washed out by a bright Moon.

Artificial Satellites. Plenty of these to see, just stand out for 30 mins or so and you should be able to spot several moving across the sky. They usually move from the West to the East, but there are also several that move South to North. Some satellites move in small groups or in a line, so always fun to watch out for these. It's also worth checking out on line when the Space Station will be overhead.

Brian Near

May Nature Notes

Bumblebees are among the most endearing and familiar of our garden insects. The sight and sound of bees, droning methodically from flower to flower, is a quintessential part of a summer's day. In Britain, there are currently twenty-four species of bumblebee. Of the eighteen species of social bumblebee only seven species can currently be regarded as widespread and relatively frequent, the remaining species have a restricted distribution and have mostly declined substantially during the course of the twentieth century. In addition there are a further six species, known as cuckoo bumblebees, which parasitize true bumblebees. Cuckoo bumblebees were once like other bumblebees, but have switched to a parasitic existence. The females are especially powerful and force their way into the nests of their bumblebee hosts. They kill or evict the queen and take over her workers as their own, using them to rear their own offspring. Cuckoo bumblebees do not produce workers of their own. Each cuckoo species prefers to attack a particular species of bumblebee.



Queen bumblebees are one of the first insects we see in the spring as she emerges from hibernation, looking to replenish the body fats that were lost during hibernation, with pollen and nectar. She will then seek out nest sites to start the new colony; these are in warm, well-insulated places, often in old mouse or vole nests with a plentiful supply of pollen and nectar nearby. In the nest, the queen makes a pot from secreted wax, which she fills with nectar, to sustain her when she attends her first brood. She also collects pollen to form a pollen lump, on this, she lays her eggs; this will feed the growing larvae until, after going through several moults, they produce a cocoon into which they pupate. After a few weeks, the first workers emerge; it is the job of these first workers to maintain the nest and to forage for nectar to feed the adults and for pollen to feed the larvae (a typical colony will range from a few dozen to a few hundred bees, the vast majority being workers). Meanwhile, the queen will continue to lay successive batches of eggs, until, towards the end of the season some of the eggs will develop into queens rather than workers. The old queens and workers will then die and once they have mated with the new queens so do the males. When the new queens leave the nest, they will feed to build up fat reserves and once mated seek suitable sites to hibernate. Hibernation sites are usually on a north-facing bank, but it appears the number of hibernation sites available is limited as the same sites are used every year.

Like many insect groups bumblebees are struggling to find enough food and good nesting spots to survive. The loss of habitat is the prime cause, through outright loss because of building and infrastructure projects, habitat fragmentation and reduced habitat quality (modern agriculture leaves little room for insects). Additionally, there is increased competition for the remaining resources with 'farmed' honeybees. That is why gardens have become increasingly important to bumblebees (and other insects) for their survival; a flower rich garden will provide the food they need from March to September. However, they need to be the right kinds of flowers, exotic or highly cultivated garden flowers are unsuitable, as they produce little pollen and nectar. Traditional cottage garden flowers and native wildflowers such as lavender, lupins, aquilegia and sage, together with foxgloves, native bluebells and other wild flowers like viper's bugloss, comfrey, sainfoin, tufted vetch, bird's foot trefoil, teasel, thistles and knapweed are the most useful, as bumblebee species differ in the length of their tongues and they provide the necessary variation in flower types.

MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8
APRIL 2026 AT 7pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL

"Please note that the Parish Council will be pleased to consider adding additional items suggested by residents please do so via the Parish Clerk on clerk@middletonparishcouncil.gov.uk".

1 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Steve Thorpe (acting Chair)
Cllr Julian Cusack
Cllr Charles Macdowell
Cllr Chris Reynolds
Cllr Kathryn Rowe
Cllr Michele Kendall
Cllr Giles Piercy

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr Ian Widgington

In attendance:

Parish Clerk
Members of the public x 9

2 Councillors' Declarations of Interest. It was noted, with regards to Planning Application DC/26/0116/OUT, that Cllr Cusack lives on Back Road.

3 Public Forum. District Councillor Katie Graham reported the following.

- Suffolk's District and Borough Councils welcome the Government's decision on the future shape of local government in the county by way of three unitary authorities. Under the new arrangements, the new councils will come into operation in April 2028, with elections scheduled for next year to establish the shadow authorities responsible for shaping and overseeing the transition. Our area will be known as Central and Eastern Suffolk.
- The examination process for SeaLink closes on 5 May.
- Lionlink is still in pre-application. Consultation closed on 8 March. The next stage will be environmental surveys and data collection to inform the environmental impact assessment, which is required before the submission of a DCO.
- Landscaping will now take place at both the new Yoxford roundabout and Friday Street roundabout. The Orwell logistics park in Felixstowe is open. The green rail route is making progress with first trains operational.
- Scottish Power works are now underway, with substation and civil ground works started in early March.

4 Minutes

a) The Council approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 March 2026.

b) Matters arising and Action Points

- * The purchase of a speed indicator device costs between £1,500 and £2,500, paid for by MPC. Westleton Parish Council have agreed to lend MPC their SID.
- * Planning Application DC/26/0548/TPO. At the planning meeting held on 17 March the parish council felt unable to make an informed decision regarding this application as it was unclear as to whether the owners were aware of the request (the application applicant is not the owner of the tree). Following the meeting and upon enquiry with ESC it was confirmed that the owners are aware of the application. No further submission was made to ESC by MPC.
- * The parish clerk has completed all necessary elements for becoming the primary user on the parish account. Confirmation from HSBC awaited.
- * Re-adopted documents have been uploaded onto the village website.
- * ESC Planning have been advised on application DC/26/0489/FUL.
- * Newsletter contact details supplied to resident for notifying village residents of works to their property.

5 Causeway Farm. The house is going on the market, with an option to purchase one of the fields to the north of the property. There will be an application made to build houses on the existing footprint of the barns. The part of Hastoe Field not included in the new development has been offered to the parish council. The land to the north of the causeway which goes down to the Minsmere River is marsh land and is being considered by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust for management. SCC are interested to hear views from the village residents regarding the 39-acre field around the village hall, in terms of what we would like to see happen to the land. A meeting is due to take place on 11 April amongst residents that surround the field to discuss further. It has been agreed with SCC, in principle, where footpaths will be placed on the land, but this will be dependent on what happens to the land. SCC are also in discussion with a care farm, to be located on the land, following full support of the village. Any meeting regarding this will not take place now until after the local elections. A community woodland has also been suggested for the land. It was agreed at this meeting to include Causeway Farm in the Annual Parish Meeting in May.

A MoP mentioned the underground tanks on the farm that house farmyard water and a slurry pit. It was agreed at the meeting that this needs to be raised with SCC as a potential problem. **Action: Cllr Piercy to write to SCC**

6 Sizewell C and other Energy Projects. Once the SLR is built, the B1125 will continue to be used in a similar way as it is now. The B1122, on the other hand, will become a quiet back road, used to access the properties along it. SZC have agreed to MPC's footpath requests. There will still be a lot of work taking place on the B1122 this year, along with the level crossings in Leiston and Darsham and the park and ride. The level crossing at Lovers Lane junction is and will continue to be a major place of works for a long time, with many closures. Suffolk County Council run a website called One Connect which details closures relating to SZC works, and other works across the county.

MPC is in receipt of two emails from Fordley Road residents regarding both rat-running and the SLR. What happens between now and when the SLR opens? Fordley Road will be closed, thus putting an end to the rat running completely. Fordley Road will not reopen until the SLR is operational, at which point Fordley Road will join the SLR on the southside and the northside will be blocked off. Once the SLR is open the residents along Fordley Road will be looking for better passing places and speed limits, which MPC will continue to support. Contact was made with SCC regarding these issues, before Christmas, and for which MPC have been chasing a response since. It was agreed that Cllr Thorpe will raise again at the next SZC main site development forum, to include bringing forward the 30mph limit, adopting proper passing places and erecting 'unsuitable for HGVs' signs (all noted in February's minutes).

Speeding continues to be a problem along the B1125. SCC have confirmed that MPC must purchase their own speed indicator device. Westleton Parish Council have offered to loan MPC their SID. To insure the item (based on a value of £2,500) there would be no increase if it were fixed (infrastructure) but if it were to be moved around it would come under 'all risks' at a cost of £44 per annum. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to contact Westleton Parish Council to arrange loan of SID. Advise Clerk so that insurance may be arranged.**

7 Emergency Planning Group – c/f

8 Councillors Reports

- a) Village Hall Management Committee. Nothing to report.
- b) Middleton Primary School. Nothing to report.
- c) Highways, footpaths and trees. A large report has been received, today, from SZC regarding B1125 footpaths. This will be digested and reported upon at May's meeting.
- d) Middleton Moor Management Group. In December of last year MPC received £1,261.51 as the annual instalment under our agreement with the Rural Payments Agency, this is an increase of some £400 on the previous year. We have another three years for the agreement to run. Cllr Cusack is in receipt of a claim form for the current year which states that we are in keeping with the agreement. Permission was given to Cllr Cusack to make the claim. **Action: Cllr Cusack to complete as necessary.**

Upon enquiry, it was confirmed that attempts would be made to carry out works on the pond next winter. A MoP confirmed that the pond is neglected. It was confirmed that the previous contractors will not be returning to carry out further works. Natural England will respond to suggestions made by us in terms of pond maintenance, but they do not suggest works to be done nor indeed carry out the works. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the Moor residents when and if there is anything to report regarding the pond.

9 Finance

- a) The latest financial position was received and accepted by all.
- b) The following payments were authorised.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Cler Expenses	Parish Clerk	£206.53	LGA 1972 s.111
Overtime for March 12.5 hours	Parish Clerk	£241.50	LGA 1972 s.112
Village Hall Hire 25/26	Middleton Village Hall	£220.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Donation for photocopying	Middleton Village Hall	£5.00	LGA 1972 s.137
P30 NIC Q4 (ending 5.4.26)	HMRC	£98.53	LGA 1972 s.112

10 Internal Controls. This document is now up to date and was signed off at the meeting. **Action: Clerk to upload onto the village website.**

11 The Bell Inn. The pub is now in the control of Adnams and is for sale. The village has expressed an interest in acquiring the pub (as an asset of community value). Following the expression of interest, there is now a six week period in which to confirm an interest in bidding. From the date at which the pub went on the market there is a six-month period whereby Adnams are prevented from selling the pub. At the end of the six months Adnams may sell the property to whomever they want. The pub is worth around £300,000, including land. Change of use is unlikely. There is an appetite in the village for community ownership, which would require raising the funds, including running costs. The pub does run at a profit of around £30,000 per annum. **Action: Cllr Piercy to create a letter (from the Chairperson) to Adnams advising of the village's intention to put in a bid for the pub** (this will not be from Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council). A Community Benefit Trust will need to be established, which is a vehicle that would be ideally placed to run a pub. Those that are interested put money in and thereby own a share in the pub. Votes would be the same regardless of how many shares are owned. There is an option to exit from the scheme and retrieve funds that were put in. In terms of legal fees, it would be helpful to have a

financial commitment from MPC. Middleton Community Council are prepared to offer £300 if MPC can match fund their figure. It was proposed at this meeting that MPC offer £2,000 towards the course and this was agreed.

The Bell Inn will be added to the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting in May.

12 Planning Applications

- a) DC/26/0116/OUT. Outline application (all matters reserved) – proposed outline scheme for 14 dwellings. Land off Back Road, Middleton. Views and comments were invited and the following concerns noted:
- * The area is technically countryside, outside the village boundary and in normal circumstances this application would not be supported by the local planning authority as set out in the Suffolk Coastal local plan.
 - * It is thought that possible ways around this for ESC would be to say that it is an exception site, as defined in the Suffolk Coastal local plan, meaning that it is a site outside of the planning boundary of the village but is adjacent to the village and a good place for social housing. However, this application is not for social housing, but for market housing.
 - * This application could be presented as a 'cluster', which are sometimes allowed in the countryside.
 - * To approve this application would set a precedent for allowing building outside of the village envelope.
 - * Errors were noted in the application, as follows: two miles n/e of Saxmundham – it is 6 miles. Land that cannot be farmed - this is not true; the land has not been farmed out of choice. Four miles from Woodbridge – it is 20 miles.
 - * The layout is suburban in nature and not in keeping with the village.
 - * It was also noted that Minsmere Rise was approved for three dwellings, when in fact seven dwellings were built. A repeat of this would be unacceptable.
 - * Acorus, the council's agent who are making the application, are relying on the fact that ESC does not have enough designated residential building land to meet its obligations.
 - * Residents bought properties on the understanding that a development such as this would not take place.
 - * Should the development go ahead, there is no social parking.
 - * Existing residents would be overlooked
 - * Development would lower existing property values.

The parish council do not approve this application on the grounds that it does not comply with the current plan policy.

Residents were encouraged to make their own submissions of objection to ESC. It was also suggested that Hastoe Housing Association be encouraged to write an objection. **Action: Cllr Thorpe to write to Hastoe Housing Association accordingly.**

Dist Cllr Graham offered to contact the planning officer on this application to discuss further.

Action: Cllr Cusack to advise the clerk of wording for the objection to be submitted.

b) DC/26/0910/FUL. The provision of a rear single storey extension. 3 Minsmere Rise, Middleton. MPC support this application. **Action: Clerk to advise ESC Planning.**

c) DC/26/0754/LBC. Listed Building Consent for an oil boiler on the west wall of the property. The Stone House, The Causeway, Middleton. MPC support this application. **Action: Clerk to advise ESC Planning.**

13 Village Noticeboard. Quotes have been sought.

14 Correspondence. MPC are in receipt of a request for a bench to be placed on the playing field, in memory of a resident. It was agreed to offer a space for a bench to be erected, of a similar standard to the WI bench by the church. **Action: Clerk to advise accordingly.**

15 Items for Next Agenda. Annual Parish Meeting - Causeway Farm, The Bell Inn and Q&A. **Action: Clerk to write to village groups for annual reports. Action: Clerk to create a piece for the newsletter to advertise.**

16 Next Meeting. Annual Parish Meeting agreed for Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 6pm, at the Village Hall, followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Middleton-cum-Fordley Parish Council

would like a cupboard built in the pavilion at the recreation ground. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in this paid work, please contact Councillor Chris Reynolds, creynolds@middletonparishcouncil.gov.uk for further information.

Thank you.

**MIDDLETON CUM FORDLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING AS SOLE TRUSTEE OF
THE MIDDLETON RECREATION GROUND TRUST
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 APRIL 2026
AT 8.45pm AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

1 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr Steve Thorpe (acting Chair)
Cllr Julian Cusack
Cllr Charles Macdowell
Cllr Chris Reynolds
Cllr Kathryn Rowe
Cllr Michele Kendall
Cllr Giles Piercy

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr Ian Widdington

In attendance:

Parish Clerk
Member of the public x 1

2 To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations. None.

3 Minutes

Minutes approved of Trustee Meeting held on 11 March 2026.

Matters arising

- A baseline survey has been created and agreed. Next steps will be to make it available to pavilion users by way of a QR code advertised in the property.
- PAT testing and general electrical testing was carried out at the pavilion on 7 April 2026.
- The clerk has sourced a company (Fire Protection Online Ltd) to carry out an inspection of the pavilion and advise on fire extinguisher requirements.
- Payment has been made to Alde Electrical Services Ltd.
- Overtime hours have been paid to the Pavilion Manager.
- British Gas / solar panels - ongoing

4 To review Safety Inspection Report

The latest report has been received and noted. (12.03.26 Operational Inspection.) It was confirmed that the deteriorating timber on the basket swing is not an urgent matter and has plenty of life left in it.

5 SZC Community Fund. Middleton Community Council will be emptying the shed on 25 April, it will be moved, temporarily, to behind the pavilion, where the contents will be replaced. Once the container has arrived the shed contents will be transferred across and the shed disposed of. It is anticipated that the container will go on the existing concrete pad using plastic feet. A date will be agreed for delivery between Cllrs Reynolds and Piercy.

Wording on the boards providing instructions for the use of equipment will include 'Middleton Recreation Ground Trust', the pavilion manager email address and the clerk email address.

The meeting agreed that once all the new purchases for the recreation ground are in place, a grand opening will be organised by the parish council.

6 Pavilion

- a) Fire Safety Update. **Action: Clerk to organise pavilion inspection by Fire Protection Online Ltd**
- b) Marketing plan for Pavilion. The Pavilion Manager is working on a marketing plan. Our marketing budget from the SZC fund is £1,000 per year.
- c) Pavilion cupboard. It was agreed to put an advert in the village newsletter requesting quotes for the building of a cupboard. **Action: Clerk to provide an advert for the newsletter, to include Cllr Reynolds contact details for further information.**

7 Finance

The following payment was approved.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
First Aid Kit & Fire Exit Signs	Clerk, ratify (firstaid4less.co.uk)	£33.63	LGA 1972 s.137

8 Correspondence. No correspondence.

9 Matters for discussion. The solar panels are yet to be connected to the MPC British Gas account, despite numerous efforts on our part. It was agreed to seek an alternative option from Octopus. **Action: Clerk to make enquiries.**

10 Consider Items for the next Agenda.

11 Next Meeting

Agreed for Wednesday 13 May 2026 to follow on after the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

**Cream tea
afternoon**

Raffle
2.00-4.30

12 June 2026

**To raise
money for
the East
Anglian Air
Ambulance**


**East Anglian
Air Ambulance**

**East Anglian
Air Ambulance**

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DIARY DATES 2026

May

Sunday 3rd Live music at the Bell with Zigzag Boxcar **3-6pm**
Thursday 7th "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Sunday 10th Cratfield Young Artists concert in church **3pm**
Monday 11th Village Hall Committee AGM **7pm**
Wednesday 13th Annual Parish Meeting, Village Hall, **7pm**
Thursday 14th Annual Parochial Church Meeting **2.30pm**
Monday 18th MCC AGM **7pm**
Tuesday 26th Procrastiknitters – Village Hall from **2pm**
Saturday 30th Sports and Social Day - Playing field – **1pm**

June

Thursday 4th "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Sat/Sun 6th /7th Open Gardens
Saturday 6th Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**
Wednesday 10th Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**
Friday 12th Charity Cream Tea afternoon Middleton Bell **2-4pm**
Saturday 20th Concert by Jorge Jimenez – violinist – in church **7pm**
Saturday 27th MCC midsummer quiz
Tuesday 30th Procrastiknitters – Village Hall from **2pm**

July

Thursday 2nd "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Sunday 5th Peter Berry talks on 'Living with Alzheimer's' **2pm** in church
Wednesday 8th Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**
Saturday 11th Summer boules open tournament, Playing Field **10am**
Tuesday 28th Procrastiknitters – Village Hall from **2pm**

August

Thursday 6th "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Saturday 29th Annual Village Fete - Playing Field **2pm**

September

Thursday 3rd "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Wednesday 9th Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**
Saturday 19th Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**

October

Thursday 1st "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Saturday 10th Autumn Fayre
Wednesday 14th Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

November

Thursday 5th "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Wednesday 11th Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**

December

Thursday 3rd "Squit Night" – live music at The Bell – from **8pm**
Saturday 5th Santa boules – Open tournament - Playing field **10am**
Saturday 5th Vinyl Night at the Bell from **6pm**
Wednesday 9th Parish Council Meeting , Village Hall, **7pm**
Saturday 12th MCC Christmas Party



Graham Cooke *DipMIT MPTA*
Piano Tuner/Technician
Tel: 01728 648900
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E-mail: grcooke@btinternet.com



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