

Cottingham and Middleton News

November/December 2026

Available online at cottinghamnews.co.uk



Welcome to the final edition of Cottingham and Middleton News for 2026.

As ever at this time of year, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the co-ordinators and distributors who work so hard to deliver the newsletters to your door, and our Parish Councils for funding the printing. It's a true team effort!

I'd also like to wish our readers all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

Regards, Jane Smith, Editor

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jane@cottinghamnews.co.uk

Next issue: February 2027



Going for a Gander!

Congratulations to Ganders Goat who have won the International Green Apple Award for Environmental Excellence in the 2026 International Green Apple Environment Awards.

The Green Apple Awards recognise organisations making a significant contribution to environmental improvement through innovation, commitment and measurable action, and Ganders Goat have been chosen from more than 700 entries worldwide. The Green Apple Awards are organised by The Green Organisation, an independent, non-profit organisation founded in 1994 to recognise, reward and promote environmental excellence worldwide.



Goatcycling will once again be taking place this year! The goats of Ganders Farm would like to help recycle your Christmas tree in one of the best possible ways! You can sign your tree up for collection at gandersgoat.com/product/christmas-tree-goatcycle from mid December, with a donation to Northamptonshire Search and Rescue, then the Ganders Girls will do the rest (well the humans will have to collect as they can't drive!). Don't forget to have your tree, plastic and ornament free, in an accessible location on the collection date.

Christmas with Valley Voice

Christmas is the busiest time of year for the Welland Valley Voice Choir, with several engagements coming up. Hopefully you'll be able to catch the choir at one or more of these events.

- **Sat 28 November** (afternoon) – Christmas Market, Coronation Park, Corby
- **Fri 4 December** (evening) – Christmas Gala, Rothwell
- **Sat 5 December** – Great Easton Christmas Fayre
- **Fri 18 December** (evening) – the choir will be out and about singing carols at Great Easton Village Hall, East Carlton Cricket Club and The Royal George, Cottingham
- **Sun 20 December**, 4pm – Carol Service, Cottingham Church



In the New Year, the choir will be developing new repertoire and also plans to attend the National Choir Festival in Manchester at the end of February. So if you fancy joining a choir, come along and give it a try! Email valleyvoicechoir@gmail.com, visit their website at valleyvoicechoir.co.uk or find them on Facebook @ChoirValleyVoice.

Village History – display and website

If you're interested in the history of our villages, we now have a new display case up at the church containing village artefacts, including some pieces of Roman pottery, kindly loaned by **Sue Robertson**, that were discovered in Bury Close when excavating for the new bungalows in 1961. We also have various booklets and other items on display covering the last 100 years of village life. If you have any items of village history that you think may be of interest for the display, please contact **Jane Smith** on email jane@cottinghamnews.co.uk or call her on **07800 523077**. Items can either be donated or loaned and they will be kept in a locked cabinet.

The village history website has also undergone a major overhaul and is now live at cottinghamhistory.co.uk. The site includes lots of new information, but there is heaps more to go online. The plan is to also expand the site to include more information about Middleton. Please also contact Jane if you have any photographs or memories for the website.

Parish Councils

Cottingham

Clerk: Rachel Faulkner
07584 212067,
4 Corby Road, Cottingham
LE16 8XH, email
clerk@cottingham-pc.gov.uk

Parish Councillors
Andy Mackie (Chair)
Jon Hinton (Vice Chair)
Charlotte Burnham
George West-Robinson
Graham Tweed
Sue Morphy
Terri McLean-Bowman

Next meetings, Village Hall
Wed 9 December 2026, 7pm
Wed 6 January 2027, 7pm

cottingham-pc.gov.uk

Middleton

Clerk: Justina Medwell
07813 696387, 5 Main Street, Middleton, LE16 8YU, email **clerk@middleton-northants-pc.gov.uk**

Parish Councillors
Sian Coughlan (Chair)
Caroline Boucher (Vice Chair)
Katy Bowyer
Shaun Roper-Caldbeck
3 vacancies

Next meetings, Village Hall
No December meeting
Tue 12 January 2027, 5.30pm

middleton-northants-pc.gov.uk

Just for Fun...



Our very own **Mr Bip** has recorded a new CD, 'Just for Fun', which is available at the Village Shop for £10, with all proceeds going to the shop. Pop in and get your copy now!

From... The Village Store & Café

As the weather turns cooler, there's always a warm welcome from the volunteers and staff in the Village Store and Café. Freshly brewed coffee, homemade cakes, warm sausage rolls, samosas and pasties, plus a full breakfast or a bacon roll, as well as daily provisions and newspapers. We're open Monday to Saturday 8am–1pm and Sunday 9am–1pm, and we serve food up until 12.30pm.

Autumn Craft Fayre

We were totally blown away by our Autumn Craft Fayre, held over three days in October. The unique hand crafted items kindly made and donated by Anne Lovell's sister **Helen Tomblin** raised almost £700 for the shop, and we've also had a number of other generous benefactors this year donating tomato plants, herbs and veggies as well as monetary gifts. The Committee will make a decision in the New Year as to how best to spend these funds to improve the shop facilities and stock offered. A massive thank you to all our supporters and also our wonderful customers for your continued support.

Volunteers

After many years as a volunteer, **Gerry Campbell** has sadly decided to leave our band of volunteers due to personal circumstances. She has been one of the first to help cover the rota when we have gaps. Thank you Gerry, you will be greatly missed by everyone but always welcome to check up on us and make sure we're still doing things right!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the shop, which is part of your community. We always lose a few through the year for various reasons, so are always looking for new people to join us. Maybe you've recently retired, moved into the village, looking to meet new people or just find you have a few hours available to offer your help? You don't need to commit to a regular slot, just a few hours a month is so helpful. No experience is necessary and you'll always have an experienced person or member of staff with you. It's great fun, flexible hours and most importantly you will be valued. **Anne Lovell** takes care of the rota and our volunteers – give her a call (keep her busy!) for more information on **07791 741722**, or email annelovell@btopenworld.com.

Pull up a Chair

Last Tuesday of the month at 2pm in the shop is our widows and widowers get together. We're finding it supportive to share the experiences we never expected to find ourselves in and get a few pointers and recommendations as well as have a giggle and a cuppa. For more information, contact **Paula Orton** on **07771 546346**, email paula.orton50@yahoo.co.uk, or just pop along. Our last get together for the year will be on Tuesday 24 November (no get together in December).

Accessibility

Just to remind folks with mobility needs or pushchairs that we have a ramp to give everyone access into the café to enjoy a warm welcome, a coffee, cake (or tea and a bacon roll) and a chat.

Christmas goodies

We have an array of fabulous gifts and Christmas cards (as well as stamps) in store, including Grandma Wild's mince pies and gift tinned biscuits, scented candles, Christmas stockings and stocking fillers. We also have our **Christmas Craft Fayre**, featuring a wide range of festive items and gifts from our village crafters, taking place from 27–29 November, with all proceeds to be shared between the shop and the church.

RNIB used stamp collection

A reminder that we collect used stamps for the RNIB. Simply trim the stamps from the envelope or packaging, leaving approximately 1cm of paper around the edges so the perforations are not damaged, then pop them in the box in the shop.

Shop Christmas Opening

25 & 26 Dec: CLOSED

1 Jan: CLOSED

All other days, open as normal

Church Loo Project *from Cottingham Parochial Church Council (PCC)*



The project to install a toilet at St Mary Magdalene Church is progressing extremely well. The fundraising total now stands at **£34,854**, following an extremely generous £11,000 donation that has boosted funds significantly. This total also includes £500 from the Harvest Concert with Sound Sensation (pictured right), £236 from Woollentops and £125 from the sale of china, kindly donated by Alison Jones.

The Peterborough Diocese Advisory Committee visited St Mary Magdalene on 9 November and we're pleased to say they are fully supportive of the project. The next step is for the PCC to consult archaeologists to establish options for drainage/sewerage. A full specification can then be drawn up and formal quotes obtained for the work, before the 'faculty' (planning application) is submitted for approval. Thank you to everyone who has supported this project so far. We are making great progress!

Update from Middleton Residents Action Group (RAG)

Middleton Parish Council (MPC) and Middleton RAG have asked North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) to review its decision to validate a new planning application for six Gypsy and Traveller pitches at Oakley Park South, which was received by MPC on 18 September 2026.

The proposal is substantially the same as an application for six Gypsy and Traveller pitches that was approved in 2023. However, following what MPC and RAG describe as the unlawful implementation of that permission, including clearance of the entire site and covering the land with hardcore, Oakley Park South has been subject to ongoing enforcement action by NNC since 2024.

The site owners appealed against two of four enforcement notices issued. These appeals were considered by the Planning Inspectorate, with one appeal quashed and one dismissed in May 2026. There are therefore currently three live enforcement notices relating to Oakley Park and Oakley Park South.

These notices require the removal of all caravans and associated infrastructure, together with the full reinstatement of the hedgerows and land to their original condition. The compliance deadline was the end of October 2026. None of these requirements have yet been met.

MPC and RAG have also asked NNC to consider using its powers under the Town and Country Planning Act to decline to determine the new application on two grounds: (1) that it constitutes a repeat application, and (2) that both the applicant and the site are currently subject to ongoing enforcement action.

We are now awaiting a decision on this planning application at an NNC Planning Meeting, which both MPC and RAG plan to attend to make representations.

Woollentops raises £1.5K

It was just over a year ago that Woollentops started needle felting mini sculptures from Cottingham Alpaca fleece. And we're delighted to report that these have now raised more than £1,500 for local causes including Cottingham Church, Shop and Friends of Green Spaces (FroGS), Hal's Urban Hedgehogs in Corby and Animals in Need, Northamptonshire. You can find a breakdown of the funds raised on Woollentops' Facebook page @Woollentops.

Woollentops is planning a second auction of mini needle-felted alpacas in the run up to Christmas and is also making tree hanging Gingerbread Biscuits (gingerbread men made from Biscuit's fleece) for the Christmas Craft Fayre at the Village Shop from 27–29 November. Please keep your eye on the village social media for the latest information.

Exploring Faith

The Welland Valley Benefice is running courses in the New Year to help you explore the Christian Faith.
All are welcome.

Courses start in Wilbarston on 5 January and in Stoke Albany on 6 January, then run weekly for six weeks.
For more information see cottinghamnews.co.uk/exploring-faith

Useful Contacts

Northants Police **101**
www.northants.police.uk
PCSO 7074, Ali Wallace
NeighbourhoodTeamCorbyTown@northants.police.uk

Corby Urgent Care Centre
01536 202121
cucc@onemedicalgroup.co.uk

Safer Corby Team, for reporting anti-social behaviour
01536 464603, safercorby.cbc@northnorthants.gov.uk

Safer Corby Partnerships Officer
Suzanne Preston, **463177**, suzanne.preston@northnorthants.gov.uk

North Northants Council
Street lighting, environmental issues, highways etc
0300 126 3000, customerfirst.cbc@northnorthants.gov.uk

Corby Neighbourhood Wardens
karen.millsop@northnorthants.gov.uk
brian.houston@northnorthants.gov.uk

Local Councillors (Desborough Ward)
David Howes, 07968 348369
Harry Howes, 07597 044115
Bill McIlhenney, 07359 634662
Email: firstname.surname@northnorthants.gov.uk

Village Store and Café, 770097
info@cottinghamshop.co.uk
cottinghamshop.co.uk

Cottingham & Middleton Village Hall
Email: cottmidvh@outlook.com
cottinghamandmiddletonvh.com

St Mary Magdalene Church
Rev Amanda Oliver,
rev.ajoliver@gmail.com

Warm Space, Village Hall
Angela Preston-Jones, 07594 682671
cottinghamchurch@gmail.com



Clubs and Groups

Cottingham Crafters, contact Viv on **07983 395356**.

Rockingham Forest Wheelers
David Hill, **07718 881258**

Royal George Golf Society
Norman Golding, **07768 536344**

East Carlton Cricket Club
Marion Goodman, **07901 941224**

East Carlton Walking Group
Pam Grayson, **772565**

Valley Voice Community Choir
Pete Smith, **07971 989081**
valleyvoicechoir@gmail.com
valleyvoicechoir.co.uk

What's On

For latest events, including church services across the Benefice for the festive season, please see cottinghamnews.co.uk



Our village crafters will also be visiting Warm Space on Wednesday 9 December with a lovely selection of Christmas Craft items to purchase. Proceeds from the November Craft Fayre are being split between the shop and the church, and all monies taken at Warm Space will be donated back to Warm Space.

Fri 27 November, 6pm
Village Social, Village Hall

See cottinghamandmiddletonvh.com

Wreath making

Fri 27 Nov, Cottingham School Hall, 7pm

Join Tanya for her annual wreath making workshop. The cost is £35 including a glass of Bucks Fizz, tea, coffee, biscuits and all materials. Contact **Tanya** on **07854 800184** to book your place. Home wreath making kits are also available and can be ordered from Tanya, to collect on 27 November.

Fri 20 Nov, The Royal George, 7pm

The Royal George is running a wreath making class outside on the heated decking to include a wreath making set, a glass of prosecco and a mince pie. The cost is £48 and pre-booking is required on **01536 689101**.





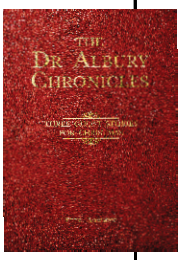
St Mary Magdalene Church

Sat 12 December, 5.30pm
Sun 13 December, 4.30pm

Returning to Cottingham Church for a fourth year, three new Ghost Stories for Christmas await you, written by **Pete Bowman** and read by **George West–Robinson**.

Tickets are £10 each from **Angela** on **07594 682671**, email cottinghamchurch@gmail.com. Proceeds will go to the church with a donation to Cottingham Friends of Green Spaces (FroGS). Please note that, due to some adult themes, these stories are not suitable for under 12s.

The Dr Albury Chronicles



The first three Dr Albury ghost stories are now available in a 64-page paperback book. They're £7 each and will be available to purchase at the Ghost Story events, or you can order them from **Pete Bowman** on petebowman397@gmail.com. All profits to the church.





Tue 22 December, 2pm
at the Village Hall

If you're an individual or couple who would enjoy some company and a bit of festive cheer this Christmas, come along for an afternoon of friendship, a traditional Christmas dinner, festive drinks, crackers and, most importantly, great company! Please note allergies can't be catered for. **Suggested donation £5**.

To book your place or find out more, contact **Morgan** on **07858 743584** or **Leigh** on **07813 926408**.

St Mary Magdalene Church and Friends present

Christmas Eve Nativity Walk

4pm start near the Village Shop

Wrap up warm, bring lanterns and singing voices
All children welcome to dress up and join in as angels and shepherds
Refreshments in church afterwards
Collection for Corby Food Bank



Would you be interested in playing a part in this traditional annual Christmas Eve village event? There are lots of parts, big and small, all ages are welcome and you don't need to memorise lines! People are also needed to assist with sound and lighting, and marshalling to keep everyone safe. If you'd like to take part or help out, please contact **Angela** on **07594 682671**, email cottinghamchurch@gmail.com or **Richard** on richardperforming@gmail.com.

Christmas Church Services



Christmas Eve Midnight Service
East Carlton

Christmas Day, 10am, Festive Communion Service, Wilbarston

Newsletter written and produced by Jane Smith, 3 Corby Road, 07800 523077.
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