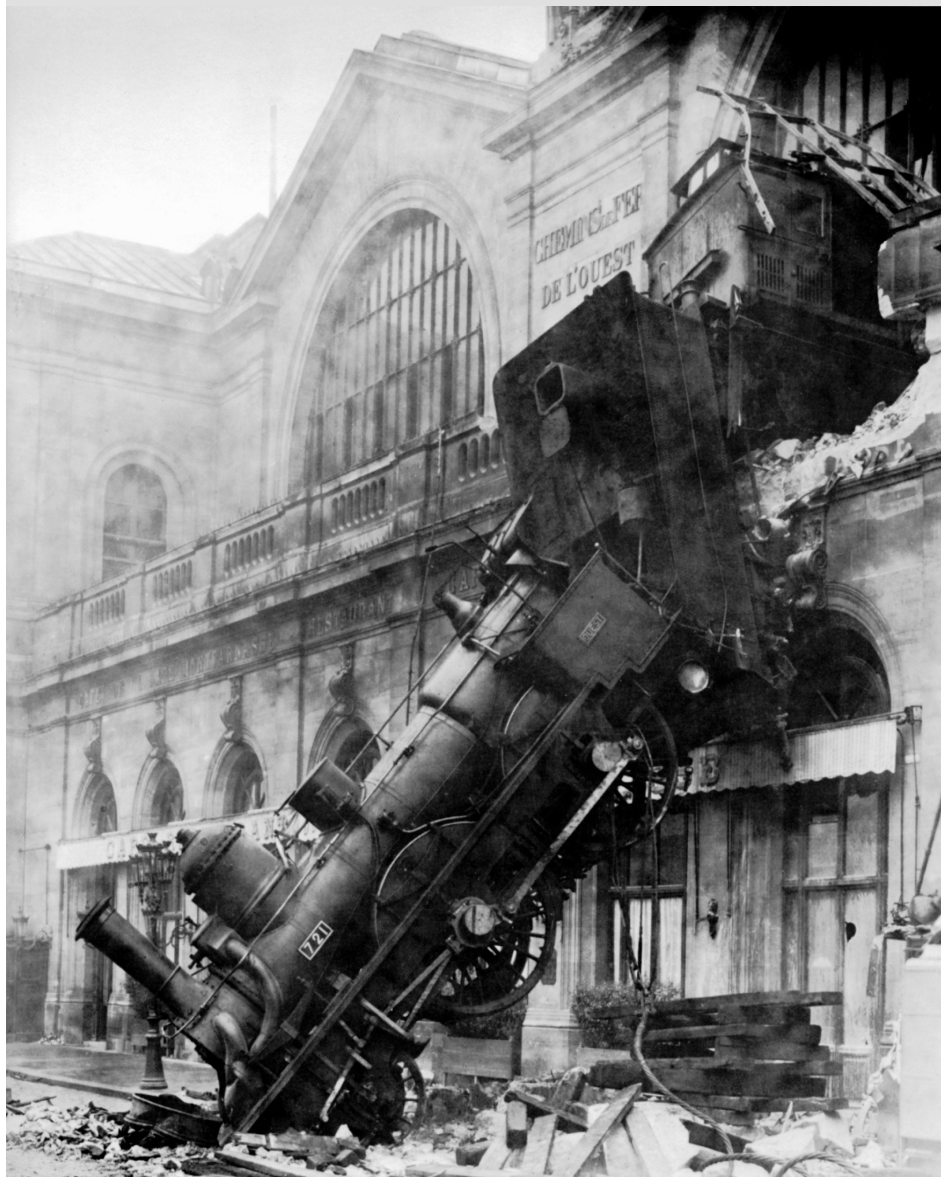


# COMBERTON CONTACT

## MAY 2024



## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### COMBERTON SURGERY

58 Green End, Comberton, CB23 7DY

01223 262500

#### Opening times Monday to Friday

Surgery 8:00 - 12:30 & 13:30 - 18:00

Dispensary 8:00 -12:30 & 14:00 - 18:00

Prescriptions can be collected outside of opening hours by signing up to use our Pharmaself machine at Comberton (see website for details)

[www.combertonandeversdensurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.combertonandeversdensurgery.nhs.uk)

### EVERSDEN SURGERY

33 Harlton Road, Little Eversden, CB23 1HB

01223 262579

#### Opening times Monday to Friday

Surgery 8:00 - 12:30 & 13:30 - 18:00

Dispensary 8:00 -12:30 & 14:00 - 18:00

#### Phones at both surgeries go to night service at 18:00

Repeat prescription requests will only be taken over the phone for housebound patients.

**BOURN SURGERY 01954 719313**

[ourn.surgery@nhs.net](mailto:ourn.surgery@nhs.net)

<b>Age Concern</b> Cambridge Information & Advice Line	<b>01354 696677</b>
<b>Apple Tree Dentist</b> 1-3 West Street, Comberton	<b>262838</b>
<b>Ash Croft Veterinary Surgery</b> 169 St Neots Rd, Hardwick	<b>01954 210250</b>
<b>Baptist Church</b> Church Office	<b>264707</b>
<b>Benefits Agency</b> Chesterton Road, Cambridge	<b>545200</b>
<b>Comberton Catholics</b> (Fr John Minh)	<b>832397</b>
<b>Comberton Library</b>	<b>0345 045 5225</b>
<b>Comberton Playgroup</b>	<b>262373</b>
<b>Comberton Village College</b>	<b>262503</b>
Adult Education	<b>264721</b>
<b>Cambridge Water Emergencies</b>	<b>01223 706050</b>
<b>Anglia Water Sewerage Emergencies</b>	<b>03457 145 145</b>
<b>Environmental Health Services (South Cambs)</b>	<b>03450 450500</b>
<b>Meridian Primary School</b>	<b>262423</b>
<b>Nursery Way Sheltered Housing</b>	<b>264434</b>
<b>Parkside Police Station</b>	<b>01480 456111</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>364455</b>
<b>Social Services</b>	<b>264466</b>
(emergency out-of-hours)	<b>01733 561370</b>
<b>St Mary's Church</b> (Curate Chris Westgarth)	<b>07710 661003</b>
<b>Street Light Failure reporting helpline</b>	<b>01954 233330</b>
<b>Village Help Scheme</b> (Chairman Barbara Mitton), See panel on page 7 for transport bookings	<b>262073</b>
<b>Wood Green Animal Shelter</b>	<b>01480 830014</b>
Stray dogs (South Cambs DC)	<b>443000</b>

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## Regular dates for your diary

Day	Time	What	Where
Monday	Morning	Monday Studio	VH
Monday	9.30am - 11am	Messy Play (term time only)	CP
Monday	9.45am - 11am	Comberton Walkers	BC
Monday	6pm - 7pm	Tang Soo Do Junior 6-11	MS
Monday	7pm - 9pm	Tang Soo Do	MS
1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	7pm - 9pm	Carpet Bowls	VH
3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	7pm - 9pm	Comberton Winemakers	VH
Tuesday	10.30am - 12 noon	Cafe	VH
Tuesday	1.30pm - 4pm	Fabric and Yarns	BC
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	8pm (Except Aug)	Comberton WI	VH
4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	8pm - 9:30pm	Comberton Antiquarian Society	VH
Wednesday	10am - 11:30am	Comberton Baby & Toddler Group	VH
Wednesday	2pm - 3:30pm (term time only)	Bumps & Babes	BC
Wednesday	5.30pm-6.30pm	Pilates Class - book via <a href="http://www.faybpilates.co.uk">www.faybpilates.co.uk</a>	MS
Wednesday	6.45pm-7.45pm	U15 Football Club	CVC
Wednesday	7pm - 9pm	Tang Soo Do	MS
Thursday	9.30am - 11am	Messy Play (term time only)	CP
Thursday	5.45pm-6.45pm	U8 Football Club	CVC
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	2.30pm	Comberton Friendship	VH
4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday (not Dec & Aug)	2.30pm - 4pm	Oasis Teas	VH
3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	7pm (7:30pm start)	Bingo Party	VH

VH = Village Hall                      CVC = Comberton Village College  
 BC = Baptist Church                MS = Meridian School  
 CP = Comberton Playgroup

## Parish Council

Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

We welcome public attendance and the agendas and minutes can be found at <http://parish-council.comberton.org/decisions/meetings/>

## Wheelie Bin Collection Dates

Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> April	Blue/Green
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	Black
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	Blue/Green
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> May	Black
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Blue/Green
Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> May	Black
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> June	Blue/Green



## Advertising Rates

	Size (w x h)	Annual (10 editions)	Single Edition
<b>Whole page</b>	122mm x 183mm	£475	£60
<b>3/5 page</b>	122mm x 109mm	£285	£36
<b>2/5 page</b>	122mm x 72mm	£190	£24
<b>1/5 page</b>	122mm x 35mm	£95	£12
<b>1/5 page</b>	60mm x 72mm	£95	£12
<b>Back page (colour)</b>	122mm x 183mm	One-off only	£90

## Comberton Contact Team

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[treasurer@combertoncontact.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@combertoncontact.org.uk) 38 Westlands

Distribution Marian Dymott 01223 263292

Please supply copy via email in a plain text format and images in jpg, png or pdf with 300 dpi. Please send any submissions for the June magazine by 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Submissions will only be acknowledged if requested and this may take up to a week.

## From the Editor

The statutory consultation for East West Rail is starting soon and everyone in the village needs to be heard. To find out more about the process please attend the event on 22<sup>nd</sup> May from 2pm - 7pm in the Village Hall.

The opening of the Co-op last month is a welcome addition to the commercial facilities in the village, along with the renaissance of the Three Horseshoes, but I often wonder what it was like in the past.

A regular contributor prompted me to ask if there is anyone in the village with memories of early days trading, photographs especially welcome. He writes "As a resident of West Street, I know that in the past it was the commercial street in Comberton, In addition to at least three pubs (The Old Plough, The White Horse and another) there was the doctor's surgery and post office".

If you have memories or photographs of old shops and businesses in Comberton please get in touch.

James Gilbert      07768 421049      [editor@combertoncontact.org.uk](mailto:editor@combertoncontact.org.uk)

## Comberton Village Website

Regular updates are available at [www.comberton.org](http://www.comberton.org)

## Local Government Contacts

Parish Council Chair      Jennifer Martin  
[jen.martin@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:jen.martin@comberton-pc.gov.uk)

Parish Council Clerk      Jessie Brewer  
[clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk)  
Comberton Parish Council  
PO Box 1549  
CAMBRIDGE DO  
CB1 0ZS

District Councillors      Ariel Cahn      01223 232186  
[cllr.cahna@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.cahna@scambs.gov.uk)

Dr Lisa Redrup      07855 324580  
[cllr.redrup@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.redrup@scambs.gov.uk)

County Councillor      Michael Atkins      07968 264637  
[michael.atkins@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:michael.atkins@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

# Village Help Scheme

## Volunteer Drivers Schedule

To book transport please see the dates below and call the appropriate number

For the following weeks:

29 April 2024	Barbara Mitton	01223 262073
06 May 2024	Barbara Mitton	01223 262073
13 May 2024	Gill Redman	01223 262246
20 May 2024	Gill Redman	01223 262246
27 May 2024	Joan Wells	01223 262746
03 June 2024	Joan Wells	01223 262746

### Please Note

With the closure of the Butchers payments should now be made at the pub.

More drivers are **URGENTLY** required for this essential service.

For more information please contact

Mrs Gill Redman on 01223 262246

Mrs Barbara Mitton on 01223 262073



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# The Parish Church of St Mary, Comberton

In the Benefice of The Lordsbridge Team



## Friday 17th May from 7.00am Lordsbridge Pilgrimage



Visit all of the churches in  
the Team on one day!

Contact  
[clarecoates@lordsbridge.org](mailto:clarecoates@lordsbridge.org)

### Activities



Every Wednesday at 11am - **Men's Shed** at Madingley Hall  
Thurs 9th May at 7.00am - **Ascension Day** at St Peter's Church, Barton  
Thursday 23rd May at 2.30pm - **Oasis Teas** in the Village Hall

### Regular Services in St Mary's Church Building



Sun 5th May at 9.30am - **Holy Communion**  
Sun 12th May at 8.00am - **BCP Holy Communion**  
9.30am - **Holy Communion**  
Sun 19th May at 9.30am - **Holy Communion**  
Sun 26th May at 8.00am - **BCP Holy Communion**  
9.30am - **Holy Communion**

### On-line Services



Zoom Church: Sunday at 11am - ID: **8231 1473 640**  
Tuesday Morning Prayer on Zoom at 9.30am - ID: **495 061 1016**  
Wednesday Compline on Zoom at 8pm - ID: **899 215 191**

### Quiet Prayer



Our church building is usually open from  
7.30am-4pm for visits & individual prayer.

### On-line Giving

We can now accept on-line donations;  
more information on our website.



Find us on Facebook:  
St Mary's Church, Comberton

**For information about Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals,**  
please contact The Rev'd Chris Westgarth

[http://](http://www.stmaryscomberton.org)

[www.stmaryscomberton.org](http://www.stmaryscomberton.org)

**Curates: The Rev'd Chris Westgarth**

[chris.westgarth1@btinternet.com](mailto:chris.westgarth1@btinternet.com)

Tel: 07710 661003

### Churchwardens:

**Michael Edwards**, 01223 262748, [michael@kentings.co.uk](mailto:michael@kentings.co.uk)

**Teresa Taylor**, 07717 001429, [ptc.taylor@btinternet.com](mailto:ptc.taylor@btinternet.com)

**The Rev'd Barnabas Leeke**

[barnabas.leeke@lordsbridge.org](mailto:barnabas.leeke@lordsbridge.org)

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# Meridian Primary School

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Greetings Neighbours,

Meridian Primary School hopes you had an enjoyable Easter holiday.

### ***Hair Donation***

One of our amazing pupils has been doing something wonderful outside of school! A big well done to Isabella who has had 17 inches of hair cut and donated to the 'Little Princess Trust', a fantastic charity that provides real-hair wigs to children or young people free of charge who have lost their hair through cancer treatment or other conditions. She has also raised an incredible amount of money about £800 so far! We are all very proud of her.

### ***Our Continued Success of Netball Tournament on Tuesday 19th March***

Well done to our Y6 netballers. Both teams played really well and did us proud! They both shared their great efforts in assembly to the school. Team A came second in their league - only one point difference between them and the first place team. Team B also came second in their league - first and second place had to be decided by goal difference as they got the same amount of points! This means both teams are through to finals next term. What a great achievement!

### ***GenR8 Whole School Easter Assembly on Tuesday 19th March***

On Tuesday 19th March, GenR8, volunteer team visited our school, delivered a special Easter assembly centred around the theme of 'A New Start'. This was a lively, fun assembly with puppet demonstrations on the topics of forgiveness and fresh starts. Our children were also encouraged to reflect on times when they may have hurt someone and to consider how they could apologise and make things right.

### ***Meridian won in the Humanities Quiz on Wednesday 20th March***

Six children from Years 5 and 6, Chiara, Bea, Luke, Sidney, Sophie and George, represented the school in the Humanities Quiz organised by the CB23 Network on Wednesday 20th March and won! The Meridian team emerged victorious among 12 competing teams from 10 schools. The children faced challenges testing their knowledge in 6 rounds of questions and 2 table rounds covering various topics, including some linked to the curriculum and others related to current affairs in geography, history and R.E. They got full marks in a few of the rounds! Both the participating children and the attending adults thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. Congratulations to everyone involved. Geography is one of our priority subjects this year, so it's a wonderful achievement.

Kind regards

**Mrs Carole Etchie** and **Everyone**  
**Headteacher** at **Meridian**



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# Comberton Luncheon Club

3 May - Black Horse, Dry Drayton

7 June - Three Horseshoes,  
Madingley

28 June - Toft Golf Course

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**AIP Approved 12/02/2024**





# May Challenge

Sponsored by Costcutter of Comberton

## FIGURE IT OUT...IT DOES ADD UP

Treated in a particular way the number 29 becomes 2 and 39 becomes 3. As an extra clue 888 becomes 6!

Your task is to use the conversion procedure (when you have discovered it) to produce the alternate numbers for 4444, 5555 and 9999. For the record it is not possible to end up with a number higher than 9 regardless how large the starting number is. For example 3764828319 becomes 3. Get the abacus out of the attic.

Apologies to those of you who hate arithmetic or figures generally, with a vengeance, but some obsessives (like me) delight in numerical gymnastics.

Entries to store please no later than 14th May. First all correct entry out of the hat wins a prize generously donated by Costcutter.

Name/Address.....

## East West Rail In Comberton 22nd May

At this event EWR will explain the statutory consultation process and how and when the Comberton community can be involved, ahead of the launch of the first stage of statutory consultation in June.

This session is an information-only event to understand the process of statutory consultation. The opportunity for feedback on the EWR proposals will be during the statutory consultation.

It is important that as a community we understand the process so we can voice our opinions effectively when the time comes.

**Wednesday 22 May Comberton Village Hall 2pm – 7pm**

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# Comberton Women's Institute

The Speaker for our April meeting was Rosie Zanders, a Blue Badge Guide, who spoke about Cambridge Per Diem - Cambridge Day by Day. Rosie's talk was very informative giving reflections for different periods of time in Cambridge. This included Cambridge and its inhabitants past and present.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 14th May. It is our Resolutions meeting. The Resolution going forward to our National Federation of Women's Institutes Annual Meeting in London this year will be 'Dental Health Matters'. We will be discussing this in our meeting. This will be followed by a Beetle Drive and refreshments.

There is a chronic shortage of NHS dentists and people are suffering health issues as a result. The NFWI calls on the Government to increase investment in the training and retention of dentists and to review the current inadequate NHS contracts in order to ensure everyone can access an NHS dentist wherever they live.

Our meetings start at 8pm and are held in Comberton Village Hall on the second Tuesday of each month except for August when we have an outing. Everyone is very welcome to attend.

Sue Lewis  
Comberton WI



**Grumble in the Jungle**  
**Holiday Club**  
Tuesday 23rd - Friday 26th July  
10am-12.30pm  
Reception - Year 6  
Free - but registration essential  
More details and booking forms to follow  
**Comberton Baptist Church**  
[www.c-b-c.org.uk](http://www.c-b-c.org.uk)



**Oasis Tea**  
23 May - 2.30pm  
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# East West Rail Farming Impact

As farmers who stand to have land taken for the purpose of East West Rail, we are obviously biased. However, we believe that we should all be feeling rattled about what stands to happen in our area, it will affect each and every one of us in a major way.

Huge road closures and traffic chaos for years, large swathes of land taken over by noisy and polluting construction machinery around our village, a diesel freight line disturbing our nights and running directly past our school, the loss of views and countryside, not to mention the damage to wildlife.

On our land alone, ancient trees and hedgerows will be destroyed. This will be the case over miles of unspoilt, fertile, food producing, greenbelt land. We monitor wildlife across the area with a conservation group and the careful management of activity will have been futile if this goes ahead.

The cost of this line is exorbitant, it is thought nearly £4 million per passenger that uses it. The business case presented by EWR itself is terrible, and yet they are charging ahead regardless. In our troubled times, wouldn't the billions be better spent elsewhere, or at least, wouldn't you think EWR would have chosen one of the alternative route proposals to this most expensive and environmentally damaging option?

Please speak up, consider the detriment to the environment and countryside, the inconvenience it will cause you, and add your voice to those expressing concern. Contact your MP and join the Cambridge Approaches Group ([cambridgeapproaches.org](http://cambridgeapproaches.org)). Their latest meeting of 26th March is available to listen to online and gives much more detail about the impact the railway will have.

EWR are holding a meeting in Comberton Village Hall on May 22nd, 2-7p.m. I hope many will attend and the strength of feeling in our village will be unmistakable.

Mike & Sarah Tebbit

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Are you interested in nature?

Can you help?

Following the successful meeting in February the Parish Council Nature Recovery Group has identified priorities. The first step is to assess and map habitats of conservation interest around the village, along hedges, footpaths and in wild areas.

To do this we would like to recruit volunteers who think they would enjoy spending a few hours walking footpaths in the parish, recording what they see and helping to compile a habitat and land use map of the parish. We need to do this so that we can assess the priorities for possible improvements.

We have organized a session at 10:00h on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May in the village hall, where volunteers can learn how to identify and map habitats before going out into the southern part of the parish to start making a map together. We will start in the churchyard of St Marys and work out from there. The whole exercise will last 4-5 hours. Please wear suitable footwear and consider bringing a packed lunch. We will then do the same thing on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May, again starting at 10.00 in the village hall with the hope that we can map the northern half of our parish.

Please let us know by May 1<sup>st</sup>, using the email address below if you are interested in joining us for either or both of these days so that we know how many people to expect on each day. We very much look forward to seeing you.

We know there are lots of people in the village who have the skills and interest in helping with this citizen science project so do come and help!

If you are interested and can spare some time, please get in touch by May 1<sup>st</sup> by emailing [combertonnaturenet@outlook.com](mailto:combertonnaturenet@outlook.com)

Parish Council Nature Recovery Group

[combertonnaturenet@outlook.com](mailto:combertonnaturenet@outlook.com)

## Tennis on the Recreation Ground

Last Autumn a few adults expressed an interest in playing social tennis on the two courts on the Recreation Ground. We thought we might start to play again after the May Weekend. If you have never played or not played for a while, free gentle coaching could be available. If you are interested and wish to sort out suitable day and time contact [terrywall01@gmail.com](mailto:terrywall01@gmail.com).

This is not a club. No subs, no teams, no dress rules.

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The Miracle Club is a heartfelt story of friendship, family, and forgiveness.

**Wednesday 15th May 2024**

**Doors open 7.30 Film begins 7.45**

**Tickets £5 on the door**

For further information or if you would like a lift please  
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*This event is sponsored by Comberton Village Hall Trustees*

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# Comberton Parish Council Bulletin - May 2024

Visit the Parish Council website

<https://comberton-pc.gov.uk/> regularly for agendas and minutes of our meetings and updates on our work, as well as contact details.



Being a Parish Councillor is a voluntary task. We share the load but there is only so much we can do. We still have three vacancies and could deliver more for the village if more residents came to join us. Contact the clerk if you are interested or if you have any questions.

A new zebra crossing is being installed on Barton Road near Meridian Primary School as part of the Comberton Greenway. It will improve road safety for all pedestrians crossing the road in this area. The next pieces of road works in the village will be at the South Street / Green End junction.



## Yoga Breathwork & Relaxation Class

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## Parish Council Bulletin (continued)



East West Rail will hold an information event in the Village Hall in Comberton on Wednesday 22nd May from 2 pm to 7 pm.

This event is aimed at providing information about the statutory consultation process which will start in June. The session on 22nd May is not a formal consultation event and there will be no specific design information or proposals available to view. Details of the proposed design about the route will be shared when the statutory consultation begins.

Formed in July 2020, Cambridge Approaches is a grassroots organisation focused on ensuring the best route is found for the East West Rail project. It supports a northern approach to Cambridge. You can watch their latest briefing online:

<https://cambridgeapproaches.org/ewr-briefing-and-discussion-recordings/>



*Cllr Claire Michel, Vice-chair*

The Parish Council meets on the 2nd Wed of each month at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall. Residents can attend the full meeting and the first 15 min are reserved for their comments

Parish Council clerk: [clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@comberton-pc.gov.uk)

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## COMBERTON ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 28th May at 8pm in the Village Hall when Dr. Martyn Thomas will give a talk entitled

### Women in medicine

Dr. Thomas is a retired General Practitioner with an interest in the history of Medicine. His talk will tell the story of how women struggled to become doctors. He will examine the role of Florence Nightingale & Mary Seacole in nursing and the works of women such as Edith Cavell, Marie Curie, Marie Stopes & Dame Cicely Saunders.

This should be a most interesting evening. Everyone welcome.



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THE BIG SLEEP (F)

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LITTLE AND LARGE (E)

STUART LITTLE (F)

THE BIG KNIFE (F)

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BIG BILL CAMPBELL AND HIS ROCKY MOUNTAIN RHYTHM (M) \*\*\*

THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (F)

THE BIG COUNTRY (F)

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## Work on the Nave Roof, St Mary's Church

The scaffolding went up on the 2nd April and H Austwick Roofing Ltd started the repair work a day or two later. The main work involves fashioning a lead roll along the ridge to make it better protected against the weather. This begins with welding tabs along the lines of the new ridge roll and then reflecting them back to anchor the new lead in place. One could see that progressive work when looking down from the Tower.



There is still no rumble of heavy machinery coming up Royston Lane to start levelling the Car park. Cobb and Sons have promised to start on 29th April. Let's hope there is a quiet spell as well as good weather - a Funeral on 5th April was attended by 220 people and 38 cars were rammed onto the car park and the green beside. More cars lined South Street. Together with 22 cars in the 'special permission' car park at the end of Church Lane, I counted 90 cars!

The car park upgrade has been subject to continuous planning going back as far as 2018. It will be very much welcomed when it begins!

David Hughes, Chairman of the Friends of St Marys

## Comberton Allotments & Gardens Association

### Spring Plant Sale Sunday 12th May - 10.30 am

Our Plant Sale this year will again be on a **Sunday** and in the **Village Hall**. We should have lots of fine flower and vegetable plants to sell at very reasonable prices. If you carefully cultivate them through the summer they may even win you prizes in the Autumn Show!

This is a 'bring and buy' event so if you have surplus vegetable or flower plants or shrubs please bring along and add to our stock - profits help to support the cost of staging the Village Autumn Show.

FREE ENTRY so come early and bag the best bargains.

**Best kept Allotment Competition** – A reminder that this year's trophy will be awarded to the Best Kept allotment on the South Street site.

Robin Worship; CAGA Secretary ([robin.worship7@gmail.com](mailto:robin.worship7@gmail.com))

# Comberton Village Hall Lettings Charges

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Weekend eve.	£70	£85	£20 *	£30 *	£145	£165
	Meeting Room		Meeting Room		Meeting Room	
All sessions	£17.50	£22.50	£17.50	£22.50	£30	£32.50
	Community Room		Community Room		Community Room	
All sessions	£15	£20	£15	£20	£25	£27.50

Unless otherwise stated, charges are per session. Sessions are 9am to 1pm, 2pm to 5:30pm and 6pm to 10:30pm (midnight on Fri/Sat/Sun).

A refundable deposit of £50 is required at the time of booking.

Prices for commercial lettings and weddings are available on request.

\*Additional information for groups:

- Affiliated Community groups holding evening group social or fundraising events will be charged the residents evening rates. Non-affiliated groups holding similar events will be charged the non-residents evening rates.
- Groups working with children and/or vulnerable adults will need to have child protection and vulnerable adult policies & procedures in place.
- Annual affiliation fee of £10 is due on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

More information, including hall availability, can be found at [www.combertonvillagehall.org](http://www.combertonvillagehall.org)

To make a booking contact the Village Hall Administrator, Janice Sutton at [combertonvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:combertonvillagehall@gmail.com) or on 07435 324408 (9am to 9pm).

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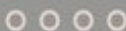
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## Lot

Listen to me, hear the timeless beating of my heart. See the world through my eyes, taste and smell with my senses. Look, there is the lark, rising up from the ground, soaring up and up, calling out, here I am, here I am! And there is a field of glossy buttercups. Pick one and place it under your chin. If it reflects a yellow glow on your skin, then you like butter for certain. There too, is a timid muntjac crossing my path. I know you do not like them much - they tend to eat whatever there is to be had, but they keep company with me and I enjoy that. By my side, there are undulations in the ground where medieval oxen gave their strength to pull a plough so peasants could grow food for their families. For generations, farmers have continued to work the land.

At dusk, in the summer months I often see bats darting and swooping overhead. I might catch a glimpse of a fox out hunting or hear a snuffling hedgehog. And beneath the reach of human ears, there are dark, moist earth-sounds: the burrowing of worms, the growth of roots to support hedgerows that in due time will bear blackberry, sloe, hip and haw. I notice how we keep in touch, you with me, me with you. There is no need for thoughts to be spoken or written or sung.

Yet you want to stop that connection, you have set your mind on stopping me in my track, on taking great swathes of land so you can join one place of learning to another. You aim to destroy me and places near me, to cut through acres of land in pursuit of imagined benefits.

My name is Lot, and across my gentle, ancient way, a railway is planned to be built. You call this East West Rail. It will slice through me, disrupting and calling halt to softer interactions, bringing harsh noise, tainting the air and destroying once-fertile land.

Even though you may achieve your aim, time will announce the cost, the sadness, the loss. By then, it will be too late.

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