

Somersham *4U*

A VOICE FOR THE COMMUNITY

June/July/August 2025



Parish Council



Hello Somersham

Chairman's Report

I am glad to report that we have now increased the number of councillors to ten – to be able to hold a meeting and get business done we require a minimum of 5 councillors present. So, if you want to see what goes on and have a say in what might go on, please contact the Executive Officer at the parish office...another five wanted !

Farmers Market update – after taking legal advice it is not possible to hold a market within 7 miles of an existing one. Somersham is within this mileage limit to St Ives, so a farmers' market cannot take place in Somersham (even though we have a charter from King John.)

The repair café at the Millennium Pavilion should be open by the time you read this. The café is designed to support men's mental health, so please pop on down and see what it's all about.

I was privileged to be invited to a "Mission Ready" event at Basingbourn barracks recently. We were treated to some displays, including modern first aid in the field, mine detecting, a virtual range and what it like to be trapped in an overturned vehicle. It was very interesting to see the developments in weapons and army life in general. Anyone who has served would not recognise the way things are done now, or the dress and appearance of those doing those things. A real eye opener! It appears the modern forces want to rely a lot on reserves and are promoting the idea to employers.

The Neighbourhood Plan is continuing to evolve and there will be a stall at the Carnival – so please do stop by and say what you think.

There are a lot of changes going to take place in the next 2/3 years regarding the county and district councils and the way in which they are run. As more definite details become available, we will let you know. Who remembers the sort out in 1972?

There will be elections held on 1st May and by the time you read this these will be over and done, with new people in the 'hot seats'.

Also, huge congratulations go to our Executive Officer Irene Healiss for successfully passing the Community Governance at Level 4. We wish her all the best as she carries on to Level 5.



Daryl Potter, Somersham Parish Council Chairman



Coffee with a Cop - Saturday 16th August. This is your chance to have a chat with our local police officer. Please see details on page 11.

The Somersham Carnival events will run from Sunday 22nd to Saturday 28th June 2025.

FREE sports sessions for 5-11 year olds will again run on the Norwood playing field during the school summer holidays Wednesday 23rd July and Wednesday 27th August. Please see details page 11.

Community News

Council Tax for Somersham

There have been several comments on social media recently about the level of council tax in Somersham compared to other towns and villages. This has also led to some ill-informed comments and speculation. Hopefully you will find the following information useful.

Parish Councillors are elected by parish residents every four years to take decisions on behalf of the community. They receive no remuneration. The role is entirely voluntary. All meetings are held, and decisions taken in public every four weeks with agendas published beforehand. Each meeting includes a public forum where all are welcome. Meeting minutes and accounts are all published on the council website.

The parish precept, or Council Tax demand, is a simple calculation. It is the number and cost of facilities divided by the number of taxable properties.

In response to local expectations the council has over the last 25 years been proactive and ambitious, seeking to provide as much as possible for local residents. As a result, Somersham has far more to offer than any other village in this part of the county. This includes the Millennium Sports Facility, Norwood Recreation Field, Play Area, Multi-Purpose Sports Area, Squash Court, Car Park, Library, Lake, Nature Reserve as well as the Timebank and Changing Lives activities, plus a full time grounds/handyman. Highway improvements have also been introduced in response to residents' complaints about speeding traffic. These are all provided or assisted by your parish council and managed by staff and an office.

As the village grows over the next few years, the number of tax contributing households will increase, without the need for any significant increase in facilities. This means that council tax should not need to rise as it has in the past.

Comparison has been made with St Ives which charges only slightly more Council Tax than Somersham. St Ives Town has four times the number of properties, but their council does not provide four times the benefits. Market Towns are different in that they are seen as strategic settlements expected to cater for a much wider geographical area than the town. Consequently, the Sports and Leisure facilities, Library, Car Parks etc are provided by the County and District Councils, not the Town Council. Market towns also qualify for grants from the Combined Authority.



SOMERSHAM REMEMBERS

VE DAY

80th ANNIVERSARY

Thursday 8th May 2025



Thank you to all who took part and attended the evening

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS 2025

Parish Council meetings are held in the Millennium Pavilion, The Trundle, Somersham PE28 3JS with a prompt start of 7.30 pm.

Agendas and Minutes can be found on the council's website www.somersham-pc.gov.uk

MONDAY 9th JUNE 2025
MONDAY 14th JULY 2025
MONDAY 11th AUGUST 2025

STALLS AT THE CROSS

JAN/FEB/MAR 25

SAT 1ST March - Friends of Somersham Church....£120.10

Community News

As local residents, you may be aware that East Hunts Care Ride has now ceased operation. Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre (HVC) were recently approached to continue providing the much needed Community Car Scheme in your area, and HVC were anxious not to leave vulnerable and elderly residents without transport. We are delighted to report that HVC have agreed to take over the running of the scheme, continuing the provision of a Community Car Scheme for Somersham, Bluntisham, Earith and Colne.



This service is for anyone who needs to make essential journeys eg. for medical appointments shopping and social meetings, where no suitable public transport exists.

The journeys are made possible by volunteers who use their own cars to provide transport. It is helpful for us to know at the time of booking if a wheelchair, walker or an assistance dog needs to be transported and if you require any assistance getting in and out of the car. We would also appreciate as much notice as possible, ideally 7 days although we understand this is not always possible.

There is a charge of 45 pence per mile for the journey, based upon mileage travelled by the driver plus a booking fee of £2 per journey to cover running costs. This is made payable to the driver at the end of the journey. A minimum fee of £2 will apply for short journeys of 5 miles or less plus the £2 booking fee.

Our St Ives office is open from 12:30 to 15:00 Monday to Thursday - 01480 301462 - to book your journey you can call during office hours or leave us a message on the answer phone and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.



The Gingerbread Man



On Sunday 23rd March, Aesops Touring Theatre Company performed at the Millennium Pavilion for children age 2 to 7 years old.

The show was fun, educational and lively, with songs and dances the children could join in with. The children were very excited and involved, and loved every minute of the show. With songs such as "You can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man" and "Polly put the kettle on" they were involved from the very start.

This free performance was arranged by Somersham Parish Council and funded by Vibrant Communities Funding.

Huge thanks go to the performers from the theatre company, and Tia and Sophia who helped greet the audience at the front door.



Community News



The Royal British Legion Somersham & District Branch

Did you know we have a hall (with kitchen) available for hire at a competitive price for both regular and one-off events? Branch members receive a discount on bookings. Please contact Dee Wright on 07852 821296 for details.

Somersham RBL have both a main branch and a Women's Section – new members both to branch and committee are always welcomed!

This year sees the 80th Anniversary of both VE Day (May) and VJ Day (August) and we intend to commemorate both.

This year's calendar of events will see us busy with:

- 8th May – participation in village wide VE Day celebration
- 10th May – VE Day Celebration Party/event
- 28th June – attendance at Somersham Carnival
- 17th August – VJ Day Celebration Party/event
- 18th October – Oktoberfest!
- 23rd October – 9th November - Poppy Appeal
- 9 & 11th November – Remembrance parade and service
- 12th November – AGM
- November/December – participation in the Christmas Tree Festival
- December – Branch Christmas Party



SOMERSHAM TOWN BOWLS CLUB

BOWLS - A GAME FOR EVERYONE



We believe everybody should realise the joy and benefit of playing a sport and there are so many reasons why bowls is ideally placed to unlock these fantastic advantages. Here are four reasons to give bowls a try:

- 1. Playing bowls is very doable.** Whatever your physique, bowls is a sport for everybody and it will help improve your fitness levels and mental wellbeing.
- 2. Bowls is not expensive.** To get going you don't need lots of new kit and we put on taster sessions for free.
- 3. Compared to most sports, age and gender differences have less of an effect on a game of bowls,** so it's a perfect sport to spend time and enjoy a bit of friendly competition with friends and family.
- 4. Bowls clubs are sociable places full of people looking to have fun,** so bowls is a great way to relax, make new friends and feel part of your local community.

Bowls is a game for people of all ages, our youngest player is just twelve and our most senior eighty-eight. We are always looking to promote our game and can supply everything required for you to try it for yourself.

Our season runs from April to September and we offer free taster session at any time including our Big Bowls Open Day on Saturday 24th May from 1-5pm. There will be activities for both adults and children and the clubhouse will be serving refreshments. You can take up bowls purely as a hobby and play for enjoyment and exercise. However, for those with a more competitive streak the club competes in all local ladies, men's and mixed leagues.

As you leave the village towards Earith our green and clubhouse can be found on the right, approximately 200m before Bridge End Garage, down a shingle lane. Look for the sign attached to the telegraph pole adjacent to the entrance. If you are passing and the gates are open please come and say hello, a warm welcome is guaranteed. Alternatively, you can email Joy our club secretary at SomershamTownBowlsClub@gmail.com call her on 07980 118726 or pop a note in the mailbox mounted on the club entrance gates.

Readers Letters

WELCOME TO OUR NEW FEATURE - READERS LETTERS

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR VIEWS, COMMENTS OR INTERESTING FACTS FROM
OUR READERS

HAVE YOUR SAY !!

Do you have any upcoming events that you wish to let the people of Somersham know about?

Have you any news or information that you think would benefit members of our community?

Has anyone you know, or yourselves, been involved or will be involved, in any activity, adventure or achievement that you are proud to share? If so we would love to hear from you.

**Please use
somersham4U.newsletter@somersham-pc.gov.uk
for content and matters relating to the newsletter**

You may have noticed the building site at Montana in Pidley Road where Michael Murray has his sign workshop. After the demolition and clearance of the original structure it has been a long wait for the construction phase of a new house to begin. The new house is special for a number of reasons the most significant of which is that the walls are made using earth blocks with no cement.

Why am I Malcolm Carrington writing this for the Somersham 4U Newsletter? There is a link between my house 20/22 High Street, the old thatched house and the new build. Essentially, we are using the same technology in my house dated 1490 and the new house 2025 and that is 535 years of proven technology.

In 1490 the builders knew their materials which had been in use from the early round houses, basically earth and sticks in a timber frame. When my wife Margaret and I rebuilt our house, we learnt how to work the wonderful material daub [earth and straw] and helped to create Eartha the East Anglia Telluric houses Association. Over the course of 3 decades we worked on many historic and listed buildings and I was a part time tutor for Madingley College, Cambs University to teach earth construction. However, I retired in 2012 but felt that earth construction was not considered a modern building material.

So, what are the benefits of an Earthen structure?

The walls are breathable ie. the walls vent moisture which controls humidity in a room preventing mould. They store heat in the winter and keep heat out in the summer. They do not burn, they are low carbon, totally sustainable with no waste. As the blocks dry, they carbonate which means they take in CO2 from the atmosphere and can do this for up to 150 years, each year becoming stronger. The new house will be monitored by Bath and Vaisala for strength and moisture control.

Malcolm Carrington

Community News



SOMERSHAM WOMENS INSTITUTE



Somersham WI has enjoyed a full programme this spring, including a talk on Costa Rica, candle making, a talk on the Guinot skincare clinic in St Ives, a chocolate themed party and a talk on Magistrates Courts. Coming up in the summer is our garden party, a First Aid presentation and our annual trip. We are cider tasting in September and scaring ourselves for Halloween.

Nationally, the WI will start campaigning later this year on the resolution 'Bystanders Can Be Life Savers' with the aim of increasing public confidence and training in the delivery of CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and working with local organisations to help improve access to defibrillators.... Who knows where the defibrillators are in Somersham?

Come and join us! We love having visitors and new members.

3rd Tuesday of the month at the Millennium Pavilion at 7.15 for a 7.30 p.m. start

There is a small visitor's fee of £5

For more information please contact either Claire Callan, President 01354 693546 or Mary Slevin, Secretary 01487 209426



Somersham Primary School

It has been another busy term at Somersham Primary School, and it hardly seems possible that we are now in the final term of the school year! Currently, teachers and children are preparing for many of the traditional summer term activities and events: revising for end of year assessments, preparing for Sports Day, planning school trips, writing end of year reports and thinking about transition to new classes and secondary schools.

There were lots of successes over the spring term, and we were very proud of everything the children achieved. Highlights included:

- *Somersham entered the Cambridgeshire English Challenge: an opportunity for a small group of Year 6 children to demonstrate their knowledge in language and literature. Somersham **won** their regional heat and then went onto the County final. They performed fantastically in this, and finished second overall! This was a great achievement.*
- *Year 6 children also participated in the Rotary Club Quiz. This is an opportunity for the schools around St. Ives to take part in a live quiz, where a Rotary Club member phones in the scores after each round. The children engaged really well with this and some of their general knowledge was very impressive!*
- *Our children in Years 3 and 4 entertained their parents, carers and the whole school community with a terrific performance of 'The Jungle Book' full of singing, dancing and acting. They worked so hard to produce this and it was enjoyed by all.*
- *Our A and B netball teams both won their area heats and the A team will go to the county final, which takes place at the end of May. Our school football team is in the semi-final of the Dickenson Cup and we are looking forward to this match. It is great that we are enjoying such sporting success and that the children are representing the school so well.*
- *On an individual level, one of our Year 5 children won the 'Meridian Innovator' competition earlier this term. This is a competition run by Meridian Trust, where the children have to devise an original invention. This year's theme was a device for a car infotainment system, and one of our children won this with an ingenious idea called the 'Alco-Beeper' which detected alcohol on the breath of a driver before they began to drive.*

We look forward to sharing further successes at the end of the summer term!

Jonathan Clarke Headteacher

Community News

The Friends of Somersham Church

Diary Dates for 2025

Produce Stall at The Cross—Sat. 5th July & 6th September 8.30-11am.

Church Open Day—guided tours both inside and outside the church with access to the bell chamber in the tower—refreshments available.

Tours will start at 2pm on **Saturday 7th June.**

FSPC Stall at Somersham Carnival—Saturday 28th June

Annual Garden Party by invitation only —**Saturday 16th August** at 2.30pm

Our **Annual 'Proms Concert'** on **Saturday October 4th** at 7pm with the Somersham Town Band and the A1 Acapella , a popular male voice choir.



We look forward to meeting up with members and anyone with an interest in the maintenance of the only Grade1 building in the village and keeping it in good order for our children and grandchildren to enjoy.

SOMERSHAM LIBRARY SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

This event, coordinated by the Cambridgeshire Library Service, is held each year during the schools' summer holidays. The Challenge is to read six books (or more) during the summer break as a way of encouraging primary school children to continue with their reading journey.

Each year there is a different theme, and the children are provided with a relevant booklet to track their progress in the challenge. Children can take a book of their choice out from the library and once they have read it, they return it, and a volunteer will ask them some simple questions about the book which will allow them to share some of their story knowledge. Following this they will be able to collect their sticker to add to their booklet.

A presentation is usually held a week or so following the return to school for those children who have completed the challenge. We endeavour to make it a special occasion by inviting published authors to hand out the medals and certificates to the children and to chat with them about reading and writing books.

We hope to see many of you enjoying the challenge this summer!



Somersham Town Band

Engagements 2025 June - Oct

June

Sat 14th 19.30-21.30 Buckden Towers VE 80th Anniversary Prom Concert, Buckden Towers Garden, High St, Buckden

Sat 28th Time TBC Somersham Carnival

Sun 29th Time TBC Hemingford Abbots Flower Festival, Old Rectory, Hemingford Abbots

July

Sat 5th 13.00-16.00 Fenstanton Village Fayre, Fenstanton School Playing Fields

Sat 12th 13.45-16.30 Paxfest & Fun Dog Show, QEII Playing Fields, Little Paxton, PE19 6EY

Sun 27th 14.30-16.30 Music on the Green, Abbey Green, Ramsey

Aug

Sun 24th 14.30-16.30 Ely Riverside Concert, Jubilee Terrace, Ely

Sept

Sun 21st 19.00 -21.00 St Ives Prom Concert, Corn Exchange, The Pavement, St Ives

Oct

Sat 4th 19.00-21.30 Somersham Prom Concert, St John the Baptist, Somersham

Sat 18th 19.00-21.00 Oktoberfest, Centurion Club, High St, Somersham

December events details will be published in next edition
This engagement list will be periodically updated at the notice board at The Cross.

Community News



REMEMBRANCE DAY ROAD CLOSURE

This year for the first time, The Royal British Legion require a full road closure (similar to that on 1st December Christmas Lights closure) for their Remembrance Day Parade.

This means that a minimum of three fully trained and qualified Road Operatives and one Supervisor will be required to assist with a road closure at the Cross from 10.30am to 11.30 am on Sunday 9th November.

The qualification required is for supervisors and operatives who are required to carry out roles and responsibilities in accordance with standards prescribed by awarding bodies and as required by the New Roads and Street Works Act, such as:

NRSA - New Roads & Street Works - Signing, Lighting and Guarding - For Operatives

NRSA - New Roads & Street Works - Signing, Lighting and Guarding - For Supervisors

If you have the necessary qualification and are interested in helping out in November please contact the Executive Officer, Somersham Parish Council at executiveofficer@somersham-pc.gov.uk

On This Day.....



17 Jul 1717 King George I sailed down the River Thames for a concert, in a barge with 50 musicians. It was the premiere of Frideric Handel's Water Music which George I was said to have enjoyed so much that he made the exhausted musicians play the three suites three times over the course of the outing.

17 Jun 1823 Charles Macintosh patented the waterproof cloth he used to make raincoats, after experimenting with waste rubber products from Glasgow's new gas works.

4 Aug 1923 The BBC began using the 'pips' as a time signal in its broadcasts.

7 Aug 1925 Britain introduced the Daylight Saving Act - bringing in British summer time so the nation changed clocks by one hour twice a year.

14 Jul 1940 World War II: Britain tackled the threat of a German invasion by forming the Home Guard - a part-time volunteer army, generally comprising men too old for national service.



12 Aug 1949 Big Ben ran at its slowest for 90 years as flocks of starlings took roost on the minute hands, slowing it by four and a half minutes.

3 Jun 1978 The Guinness Book of Records entered the record books as the most stolen book from British libraries.



Contact the editorial team

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**Deadline for next issue
31st July 2025**

Community News

Somersham Nature Reserve

Summer will soon be upon the Nature Reserve and the leaves will have changed from their fresh greens of spring into the darker greens of summer. Hopefully the common terns have returned and made use of the tern rafts on the lake, including the one freshly refurbished earlier in the spring by Adam and Tim. On sunny days the meadow will be full of butterflies including common blue and Essex Skippers. If you are really lucky you may see common lizards sun-bathing along the old railway line, an activity known as “basking”.

Our events programme continues through the summer months giving you the chance to come and learn more about the nature on your doorstep:

Thursday 26 June: Carnival Week “Jungle Safari” walk. Meet at Station Approach entrance to Nature Reserve at 7pm

Saturday 19 July: Insect Walk. Meet at Springfields entrance to Nature Reserve at 10am

Saturday 9 August: Bat Walk. Meet at Station Approach entrance to Nature Reserve at 8.30pm

Saturday 6 September: Lake Fun Day. Somersham Nature Reserve Lake 10am-4pm

Sunday 12 October: Apple Day. Somersham Nature Reserve Orchard 1pm – 4pm

Look out for Facebook posts and posters around the reserve for more details of these events.

Norwood Quilters Exhibition 2025

Norwood Quilters are a group that have been meeting in Somersham for over 25 years.

We started meeting in a member’s home as a small group of friends learning patchwork, applique and quilting and over the years have branched out into creative textiles but still with an emphasis on P&Q.

We meet once a fortnight at the Millennium Hall and hold an exhibition in St John’s Church every three years. Proceeds from these Exhibitions are shared between the Church and a chosen charity. Over the years we have donated over £11,000 between the Church and other charities including MAGPAS, various Cancer Charities, The Arthur Rank Hospice and Parkinsons Research.

This year the chosen charity is Refuge which supports women who have been abused.

Our next Exhibition is on Friday 19 and Saturday 20 September 10 am – 5 pm at St John's Church, Somersham.
Entry is £5 to include refreshments.
There will also be a raffle and the ever popular sales table with items made by members of the group.



SOMERSHAM SPORTS SESSION

Norwood Playing Field,
Somersham, PE28 3HE

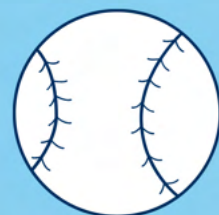
2pm - 4pm

Wednesday 23rd July 2025
 Wednesday 27th August 2025

Join us for some FREE fun & active sessions for 5-11 year olds, with a range of sports on offer.

Pre-booking is essential
 To book please email
deputy.clerk@somersham-pc.gov.uk

- Qualified coaches
- A chance to try new sports



Community News





Lake Fun Day

**Springfield entrance to the Lake of Somersham Nature Reserve
Saturday 6th September 2025**

FREE Angling coaching available all day 10am—4pm

Catch a fish and see up close in the Viewing tank

Trophies & prize packs awarded for best catch categories

Adult, Children and family slots available

Spaces limited, booking is advised, Contact Tim: 07707 501 674

Or just turn up from 12 noon to enjoy our other FREE activities:

On site toilet and hand washing facilities provided



Pond dipping, nature trail, wild play, crafts, face painting & more!



On sale from midday - 3pm:

BBQ & Refreshments provided by Somersham 1st Scouts Group- Proceeds go towards the new hut!

Plus a licensed bar & Franks Ices!

Visit Somersham Lake Fun Day on Facebook for more info:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/260492966709640>
 (07599 628 106/ timebank@somersham-pc.gov.uk)



Join your local officer at St John the Baptist Church, Somersham

Date: 16th August
Time: 10.00am-12.00pm



Local Plan Additional Sites

The Local Plan sets a vision and policy framework for future development within the district, ensuring local needs are met.



Have Your Say on Potential Development Sites 23 April to 4 June

We're consulting on additional sites that have been put forward for possible development — including housing, employment, mixed use, and more.

- Each site has been assessed for its suitability, and now we want your views.
- Tell us if you agree or disagree with our assessments and help shape the future of your district.

Your feedback, along with housing and job needs, our growth strategy, and supporting evidence, will help decide which sites go forward in the new Local Plan.

You can also comment on our Sustainability Appraisal, which looks at each site's environmental, social and economic impact.

Don't miss this opportunity to get involved!



Scan the QR code to respond to the consultation or go to:
consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/kse/event/38343

✉ local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk



Pentecost celebration with food and more

Visiting preachers — "Giving"

Philemon — Grace requests ...

Visiting preachers — "Giving"

Community News



**SOMERSHAM
CARNIVAL
JUNGLE SAFARI**
22nd till 28th June 2025

We are back with a **ROAR**

**SOMERSHAM
CARNIVAL
JUNGLE SAFARI**
22nd till 28th June 2025

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR REGUAR UPDATES AND INFORMATION!

Kids Disco, Quiz, Darts, Bingo, Country Crafts, Dog show,
and the big day itself, BE THERE!